Commercial sexual exploitation of young women

Crystal Pauline Castillo

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COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF YOUNG WOMEN

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Social Work

by
Crystal Pauline Castillo
June 2011
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Approved by:

Pa Der Vang, Faculty Supervisor
Social Work

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M.S.W. Research Coordinator
ABSTRACT

In the United States sex trafficking happens every day and the most common form of it is through prostitution. The average age for a young girl to begin prostituting is 12 years old. We live in a country where if a 14 year old has sex with an 18 year its considered rape, but if she is prostituting it is seen as a choice and she is treated as a criminal. This study was conducted to identify the incidence of juvenile prostitution in San Bernardino and Riverside County and the characteristics of the crimes. Surveys were completed on-line by law enforcement agencies in San Bernardino and Riverside County. The findings from this study identified two emerging themes 1) there is a general protocol to follow through on for cases of human trafficking and 2) there is a lack of specialized training. The tests significantly showed that low arrest rates were related to the perception that juvenile prostitutes are victims and that they are being screened for trafficking. This study also examined how these agencies are servicing those arrested for prostitution.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my faculty advisor Professor Pa Der Vang for her time and continued support with this research project. Thank you for your guidance and encouragement.

I would like to also thank all the participants of this study for taking the time to make my research project possible.
DEDICATION

To my wonderful husband I could not have done it without your support and love. And to my children Andrew and Ethan who were inspiration for me to continue with school and to continue striving to be a better person.

To my mom and dad who have always been there for me. They went out of their way to provide encouragement and helped me in anyway possible to make sure I continued my education. To the rest of my family and friends thank you for being supportive and helping me to continue in school. Without the support of everyone I would not have been able to continue on this journey and I am thankful for the opportunity you allowed me.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking is thought to be the third largest illegal trade in the world (Aguilar-Millan, Foltz, Jackson, Oberg, 2008, p. 45). One of the most severe forms of it is through sex trafficking, which is the "recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act" (U.S. Department of State, 2004). This research project looks specifically at females under 18 who have been subjected to commercial sexual exploitation and how law enforcement handles the situation. In the United States sex trafficking happens every day and the most common form of it is through prostitution (Aguilar-Millan, Foltz, Jackson, Oberg, 2008, p. 45). In the past these young women were treated as criminals. However, these women are now starting to be treated as victims who are in need of support and services.

Problem Statement

Human trafficking is the trade of human beings across and within borders. Victims are subject to force,
fraud, or coercion for the purpose of domestic or migratory labor or sexual exploitation (U.S. Department of State, 2004). It is estimated that around 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked annually across national borders and that millions are trafficked within their own country. Approximately 14,500 to 17,500 people are trafficked into the United States each year (U.S. Department of State, 2004). The United Nations estimates that globally there are about 27 million men, women, and children living in slavery. Human trafficking is the third largest illegal trade, falling behind drugs and guns. It is estimated to generate around $32 billion a year (Aguilar-Millan, Foltz, Jackson, Oberg, 2008, p. 45).

Human trafficking is an invisible crime. It is not obvious how many are enslaved. Victims are unwilling to come forward out of fear for their lives and their families. Also many victims are forced to engage in criminal activity or are in the country illegally, which inhibits them from reporting. The invisible nature of the crime is why it is extremely hard to collect data on this subject. Of those trafficked across international borders 50% are children and 70% are women and most of them will
be forced into the sex industry. It is estimated that 200,000 children will be at risk of being trafficked into the sex industry within the United States alone (U.S. Department of State, 2009).

F.B.I. arrest statistics showed that for 2008 in the state of California there were 13,385 arrests for prostitution/commercialized vice and out of that 487 were females under the age of 18 (U.S. Department of Justice, 2008). Arrest statistics for the United States showed that 25,164 women were arrested for prostitution. These statistics however do not accurately reflect how many women and young girls are in the sex industry because it does not give statistics on how many are detained and also the use of false identification and the hidden nature of the crime make it difficult to accurately track. Prostitution is a crime that criminalizes the prostitutes rather than the patron of services. This usually results in jail time and fines, while their pimps and johns are out free. Most women in prostitution are under control of a pimp and if they are underage they are usually being controlled by an older man or woman and many women are trafficked across states.
In 2001, the government enacted The Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and annually they come out with a report on what has been done to fight trafficking. They work with government domestically as well as internationally to coordinate efforts. They also provide funding for research (U.S. Department of State, 2009).

One of the most notable laws is the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act that was enacted in October 2000. It was followed by the Protect Act, which was enacted on April 2003 by President Bush (U.S. Department of State, 2004). The bill serves to protect children and to punish the offenders who travel abroad to abuse minors. There also is no statute of limitations on cases and offenders are subject to child abuse/exploitation laws even if it is in a different country (U.S. Department of State, 2004).

In December 2003 The Trafficking Victims Prevention Act was signed into law by President Bush. This act is meant to give the necessary tools to confront trafficking in foreign countries. It also has stricter punishments for those convicted of trafficking and mandates that
strict statistics be kept on human trafficking (U.S.
Department of State, 2004).

In recent years more attention has been brought to
the issue of domestic trafficking within the states.
State and local agencies have started working together
and creating task forces to fight against sexual
exploitation of children. In 2003 the Innocence Lost
Initiative was put into effect after prostitutes were
being murdered in high numbers at truck stops in
Oklahoma. The task force targeted 14 cities with the
highest number of child prostitution cases and visited
the truck stops, which led to the arrest of 45 pimps and
over 100 prostitutes some as young as 14 (U.S. News,
2005).

Other task forces that have been created are the
Crimes against Children Program and Child Abduction Rapid
Deployment (CARD). These are at the federal level and
focus on sexual exploitation of minors. They work to
combine state and local agencies so they can ensure rapid
and effective services to recover children at risk or in
danger (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2010). New York
City was the first state to put in effect the Safe Harbor
for Exploited Children Act in June of 2008. This bill
ensures that anyone under 16 who is arrested for prostitution must be treated as a trafficking victim. Also anyone who is under 18 and has been sexually exploited are eligible for services such as counseling, safe houses and law enforcement must be provided with training on how to identify trafficking victims (Polaris Project Action Center, 2011).

Locally very few organizations are set up to service child prostitutes. In New York there is Girls Educational and Mentoring Services (GEMS), which is set up for those who have been sexually exploited or domestically trafficked. The organization provides housing, counseling, and array of services to help these women succeed. It is one of the largest providers for women escaping lives of sexual exploitation (GEMS, 2010). On the west coast in Los Angeles there is Children of the Night, which works solely with child prostitutes. It provides an intense schedule of counseling, schooling, and other therapeutic means. Each girl has a caseworker who evaluates their personal physical and psychological needs (Children of the Night, 2010). Unfortunately it only services 24 girls at a time, which does not compare
to how many young women in that area are subjected to sexual exploitation and domestic trafficking.

In San Bernardino County the Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation (CASE) was formed in partnership with county agencies and community members. Their goal is to raise awareness of the problem of sexual exploitation and child prostitution as well as provide more effective training for law enforcement. They want to ensure child prostitutes are treated as victims and are provided with adequate services and also develop prevention and intervention strategies (San Bernardino County District Attorneys Office, 2010).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine if law enforcement is properly trained to screen for trafficking victims. If a sex trafficking victim is identified what services are offered to commercially sexually exploited juvenile females. In the Inland Empire many young women are at risk of becoming victims of sexual exploitation and minimal services are available for prevention or safehouses.
The first step to providing proper services to this cliental is to make sure that social service agencies as well as law enforcement are properly trained on how to screen for possible sex trafficking victims. Juvenile prostitutes should be seen as victims rather than criminals being detained. Child Welfare agencies need to be properly trained to identify and screen for children who may be possible victims or at risk of sex trafficking. The sooner a child is identified the sooner they are able to receive adequate services that will address their specific needs. This early intervention may prevent a child from becoming a victim or keep a child from returning to their life with their pimp.

One of the most important things that needs to be done is to get an accurate account of how many children are being commercially sexually exploited. Once you have an idea of how many, it gives you a better idea of what services you need and what area is in greater need of services.

This research focuses specifically on the Inland Empire. Questionnaires were emailed to law enforcement agencies in San Bernardino and Riverside County. The questions asked whether or not they have had experience
with sex trafficking cases as well as finding out the knowledge and perceptions of law enforcement in regards to juvenile prostitutes. Law enforcement is usually the agency which will be most in contact with possible victims. It is important to ensure that law enforcement is trained and has a knowledge base of how to identify and service any possible victims.

It is important to have numbers of young women involved in commercial sexual exploitation. Knowing if there have been any possible victims identified will let social workers know if law enforcement agencies are properly screening any suspected cases of trafficking. Also if there was a reference, was proper protocol followed to ensure the child received proper services? Finding out the knowledge and perceptions of law enforcement towards juvenile prostitutes will help social workers understand whether the girls are being perceived as delinquents or victims. Advocacy and awareness are the main components in fighting against trafficking, because it keeps agencies, law enforcement and the community aware of the problem and who the victims are.
Significance of the Project for Social Work

Trafficking of women for the purpose of sexual exploitation is an issue that affects all social services areas as well as law enforcement. Homeless shelters, runaway centers, public health agencies, mental health, schools and child welfare agencies are all services that should be trained and educated in sex trafficking victims so they know how to identify and service them best. The criminal justice field could also benefit from further research in this field. If law enforcement is trained on how to screen and provide the proper services for women and children arrested for prostitution it would save money by not sending them to juvenile detention centers and could hopefully rehabilitate them so they can lead healthy adult lives.

Understanding this problem further is important because if one is trained and educated in human trafficking victims one is able to better serve this hidden population because by identifying them one is able to offer them services that meet their specific needs. Understanding the service needs of this population will change social work practice because it will open up services to a population that is under-identified and
mis-understood. Also looking at the treatment needs of those who have been sexually exploited could potentially change how social workers treat female juvenile and adult women prostitution offenders. Specifically the study looks at what screening process and services are being offered to young girls who have been detained or arrested for prostitution. Are these young girls being properly investigated to make sure they are not victims of sex trafficking before they are being prosecuted?
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Prostitution or commercial sexual exploitation is a huge form of human trafficking, but instead of these women and children being screened for possible victimization they are criminalized worse than the men who pay for sex. It is estimated that 1/3 of street prostitutes in major cities in the United States are children and instead of protecting them they are being ignored (Hodge, 2008, p. 145). Throughout the study two things were examined: 1) Are law enforcement properly trained to screen for trafficking victims? 2) If a sex trafficking victim is identified what services are being offered?

History of Enslavement and Trafficking

Throughout history slavery has been a tool of wars and power. It dates back to biblical times with the Jews being enslaved and it is still as prevalent today as it was back then. Buying another human being is as simple as buying anything else. Especially with the advances of the internet you are able to buy virtually anything or anyone
from all over the world. The only difference is slaves used to be seen as property and a status symbol by being able to afford them. Now young women who are involved in commercial sexual exploitation are being sold for sex for $5 and are seen as being disposable (Logan & Walker, 2009).

Countries that suffer from extreme poverty and political instability are targets for traffickers. People living in poverty usually lack social connections and their desperation for money make them easy targets. It is not uncommon for family members to sell their children into slavery or prostitution.

Also political instability is a social problem that is connected with human trafficking. In countries, such as Africa, that are war torn, people are easily forced or kidnapped into slavery, because there is no government to look out for the people. Poverty is one of the driving factors for trafficking. Many individuals who are enslaved do so willingly hoping for a better life. In Albania they suffer from poverty and low status of women. Parents’ desperation to marry off their daughters leaves them prey to traffickers who promise a better life for their daughters. It is estimated that around 30,000 women
were sold as sex slaves abroad (Gjermeni, Haxhiymer, & Van Hook, 2006).

Transnational trafficking is done through criminal networks that already exist. Human trafficking has high profits with low risk, because of the lack of laws and prosecution rates (Aguilar-Millan, Foltz, Jackson & Oberg, 2008). Trafficking is extremely lucrative, an example the article gives is you can kidnap a girl from Nepal and sell her to India for $1,000. She then can be sold to a wealthier nation such as the United States for $20,000. Also slaves are seen as continued revenue. Selling items such as drugs and guns is a one-time sale, but owning women prostitutes provides continuous income (Aguilar-Millan, Foltz, Jackson, Oberg, 2008 p. 144).

Historically prostitution was seen as an occupation or duty of women. Throughout history brothels provided women known as “comfort women” to keep those at war company. In some countries prostitution is a legal business. These acts support the myth that women choose prostitution. Twenty-five states allow prostitution with no repercussion to those who buy the services. Nine states allow pimps to be involved in the business of prostitution, while overwhelmingly forty-seven states
classify prostitution as a crime (Schauer & Wheaton, 2006).

Sex Trafficking in the United States of America

The United States of America has an overwhelming market for the sex industry, which ranks them as the second largest country to have women and children trafficked into the United States. Selling women is a lucrative business with low risk because the lack of laws that prosecute for trafficking. Women who have been trafficked into the United States are being domestically trafficked and are moved around regularly and are usually kept isolated away from people other than their Johns. During a “softening” or “seasoning process” the victim may be physically, sexually and psychologically abused to break them down and put fear in them so they do not try to escape. Tactics such as gang rapes are used to exert power and show that the victim has no other use than sex (Schauer & Wheaton, 2006).

In the article Ending Sex Trafficking of Children in Atlanta, 2007 researchers Boxill and Richardson, examined the lives of juvenile prostitutes. They came into contact with twelve year old Monica who ran away from home to
escape the abuse. While at a bus stop she was forced into a trunk and driven to several different areas where she is raped. She is then stripped naked and left in a hotel for various men to have sex with her. Her terrifying story is not unique but typical of what these victims endure. Factors such as a history of sexual abuse, low-economic standing, and poor family functioning are huge indicators and risk factors for these girls to become victims of sex trafficking.

The average age for a young girl to start prostituting is twelve and the average age of juvenile prostitutes on the street is fourteen (Boxill & Richardson, 2007). These young girls cannot consent to sex with a boyfriend age 18 and over but are treated as criminals for selling sex. A child has a greater chance of being sexually exploited than dying from firearms, accidents, homicides, and suicides (Boxill, & Richardson, 2007). Sex trafficking is across all races. In certain areas where a certain ethnic group are majority there will be more prostitutes of that ethnicity, but typically juvenile prostitutes are from white middle-class families (Boxill & Richardson, 2007).
Another risk factor for a child to be sexually exploited that is not widely thought about is children who revolve in and out of local authority care such as: foster care, juvenile detention, and the child welfare systems. Frequent placement moves create an environment of instability and the child may be stigmatized as being damaged or different. This may lead the child to frequently run away and the life of prostitution may offer them that life of acceptance and stability that they yearn for (Coy, 2009). Many girls reported being removed from abusive home situations but were never offered any therapeutic support to help them overcome and understand their problems. They were also never taught any preventive measures so as to not continue being in abusive situations.

When a juvenile is arrested for prostitution, how they are treated by law enforcement is highly indicative of whether or not they will seek further services. Children involved in prostitution have to deal with dual labels. One is as a juvenile delinquent, while on the other hand they are victims (Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Wolak, 2010). If they are put in juvenile detention centers they are not receiving the proper counseling and
if they become involved in the child welfare system they may be over-looked. Some agencies may not have the resources or expertise to properly treat a victim of sexual exploitation. These conflicting labels leave the victim feeling unimportant and they may choose to live a life on the street where they are accepted for their choices (Finkelhor et al., 2010).

Human trafficking is a highly lucrative business with very low risk, especially when the victims are children. Most children on the streets are not able to provide food and shelter for themselves and are happy that someone has taken an interest in them. Also children are easy to coerce, because they feel they have no rights and by having them commit crimes of prostitution makes them fearful of law enforcement and child protection agencies (Logan & Walker, 2009).

Becoming a victim of human trafficking typically happens in three ways: 1) you’re born into slavery 2) kidnapped, sold, or physically forced or 3) tricked (Logan & Walker, 2009). Traffickers do not blindly select their victims; they chose those most vulnerable such as those in poverty and children. Also once someone becomes a victim of trafficking they are mentally and physically
beaten down, which enables the trafficker to have control. There are four main themes that keep people trapped in prostitution: 1) fear, 2) lack of knowledge of resources and alternatives, 3) physical confinement and 4) psychological confinement (Logan & Walker, 2009). Once a victim has been made submissive, cognitive changes begin to occur in the victims. Their perception of self-worth is low and they may become numb allowing themselves only to feel enough to survive (Logan & Walker, 2009).

Theories Guiding Conceptualization

The ecological perspective is one theory that guides this study because it examines how the individual works in their environment and also looks at their relationships (Lesser & Pope, 2007). Risk factors for girls in prostitution include having an unstable home life. Many girls have experienced abuse or neglect, which may have the child believe that abuse is a natural pattern of life. These unstable thought processes about reality leave children vulnerable to predators and more likely to stay and live with the circumstances.
Stockholm Syndrome is also an important theory to understand when dealing with victims of sex trafficking. This occurs when someone is held captive against their will and shown acts of kindness to coerce them into certain behaviors (Lesser & Pope, 2007). Young girls may be given affection as well as material items. Most young girls who run away from home are looking for someone to love them. The girls may be involved with a pimp and other prostitutes and may see that going through with what their pimps want ensures them with a sense of family. The girl may see their pimp as a father figure who loves them and the other prostitutes as mentors and friends (Logan & Walker, 2009).

Also victims of sexual abuse suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, which is when someone has suffered long-term traumatic events that affect how they interact mentally and behaviorally (Lesser & Pope, 2007). Many of these girls will endure severe physical, mental, and psychological abuse. Many children who have suffered from sexual abuse suffer from this. Their distorted sense of reality has them perceiving themselves as different and that their situation is their fault. Children with PTSD have difficulty trusting, which prevents them from
having friendships or connecting with someone on a personal level. The child could also develop a trauma bond with their abuser. The attachment between the victim and abuser starts to be perceived as positive and the victim begins to care for their abusive caregiver (Lesser & Pope, 2007).

Children who are victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking require intensive therapy. They require professionals with knowledge of these kinds of abuse. Along with psychological counseling they may have extensive medical needs. Many of these girls were forced to have unsafe sex with hundreds of men. Many have HIV or other STD's that have gone untreated. They also need to be taught basic living skills. These girls were taught that to survive they needed to have sex and they need to be re-educated on how to live in day to day life. Girls who were victims of sex trafficking require a lot of rehabilitation and unfortunately there are very few agencies set up to service their needs.

What Needs To Be Done

The article *Lost Girl*, 2009 investigates how a twelve year old girl Nikki, enters the world of
prostitution and because of the control her pimps held over her she continued prostituting for eight long years before seeking help from an organization that specializes in women who are escaping a life of sexual exploitation. Through her years prostituting she was detained several times (some of which occurred when she was under 18) and she was never offered any type of counseling services. Instead she was released with no services to help her escape the life she was enduring.

Victims of sex trafficking do not have many options when reaching out for help. Rachel Lloyd is the founder of Girls Educational Mentoring Services (GEMS) and has recognized the need for safe house for the girls. She services the New York area, where it is still legal to incarcerate children under 18 in prison. She is fighting to get trafficking victims released from prison and into her agency (Kalergis, 2009). Libby Spears is also an advocate bringing awareness to sex trafficking. Based out of LA she has traveled around the United States filming a documentary exposing the issue of American-born children who are victims of sex trafficking.

Along with advocates there needs to be collaboration between agencies. Child welfare agencies take care of
possible victims their way, while juvenile justice agencies are doing it another way. Without communication and coordination children are falling through the cracks and are not being helped (Boxill & Richardson, 2007). Also the focus of services needs to be unified. These children are in need of adequate emotional resources and their psychological impact needs to be addressed instead of focusing on teaching them to be independent. These children have suffered at important developmental milestones and because of that need to be retrained on how to function in society. Also agencies need to be evaluated as to why children are not returning for services (Pearce, 2006).

More support services are needed to address the children who are on the street instead of waiting for them. In Canada they have implemented the Mobile Access Project (MAP). It targets the Downtown East Side of Vancouver. Their goal is to distribute information, give out, and dispose of needles, as well as giving out condoms and offering counseling services (Bowen, et al. 2009). Their goal was not to raid these neighborhoods but rather be consistent so that anyone who needed help could rely on them being there. This kind of approach is what
cities in the United States need. Communities need something that is at the street level, and reliable. These girls do not actively look for help because they believe they made choices and that they are criminals, but if they had a service that was always readily available they may be more inclined to seek services.

Human trafficking is different than other crimes. It is more difficult to identify, there is prejudice towards the victims, the victims’ needs are greater, there are fear and safety concerns, there is limited access, and the criminal cases are complex (Logan & Walker, 2009). More resources are needed for services, legal protections and outreach and most importantly training, education and protocols need to be implemented in all agencies dealing with children. There needs to be a uniform screening process that enables possible victims to be identified. And if they are classified as victims there needs to be protocol for what is done with them. Public awareness is also essential, because anyone can report suspected cases of abuse.
Summary

Recently in the Inland Empire there have been a couple of cases where prostitution rings were busted and the pimps are being prosecuted, while the children are being sent to rehabilitation centers. Hopefully with these latest cases further information will be available in regards to the type of treatment services that are being offered and how much police departments utilize these services for these women. With this study it will be used to bring awareness to the issue of human trafficking so that agencies are aware of this unique population and are properly trained to serve this population.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

For this study research was done using quantitative and qualitative data. Data was collected from law enforcement agencies in Riverside and San Bernardino County. The researcher contacted each law enforcement agency and received permission for the agency to participate in the study. The questionnaires were available online at surveymonkey.com. The questionnaire link was emailed to the designated contact person for the agency and that person distributed the questionnaire link to officers in the agency. The research examined how law enforcement agencies perceive juvenile prostitutes and what their knowledge base is in regards to human trafficking. Examining the officers’ responses will give an idea of what the attitude is towards juvenile prostitution and what is being done to serve this population.
Study Design

The research design used for this study is quantitative and qualitative. Questionnaires were emailed to officers in law enforcement agencies in San Bernardino and Riverside County. The questions asked if their agency has had any cases of juvenile prostitution and what were the characteristics of the crime. Another component of the questionnaire is a Likert scale, which measured the officer's attitudes or perceptions of juvenile prostitutes. The last part of the questionnaire included a series of open ended questions, which examines the knowledge officers have of human trafficking and what steps their agencies have taken to better educate their officers in human trafficking.

Examining how law enforcement agencies handle cases of potential sex trafficking victims lets social workers know what areas of training are needed and how victims are being treated when they are in the system. Overall the research is looking at commercially sexually exploited young women and what is being done to serve this population. Law enforcement is usually the first contact any juvenile in prostitution will come into contact with. Their experience with them will determine,
whether the child will try to seek help. With the results of these questionnaires it can identify any needs to be done to improve screening and intervention services for this population.

Sampling

For this study a convenience sample was used. Questionnaires were emailed to officers in law enforcement agencies in San Bernardino and Riverside County. There was no identifying information asked of the officers. The questions were only directed to cases involving juvenile prostitution and their characteristics. Some of the questions show the officers’ perception of juvenile prostitutes and what knowledge they have in human trafficking.

Data Collection and Instruments

A questionnaire (Appendix A) was used to gather data. The independent variables are how many juveniles were detained and arrested for the calendar year 2009? How do officers perceive juvenile prostitutes? The dependent variables are the characteristics of the crimes reported, how many cases for each characteristic, and what were the age ranges of the girls detained or
arrested? Other dependent variables are how juvenile prostitutes are perceived, and are the officers knowledgeable in human trafficking and do their agencies offer specialized training for this population.

Procedures

For this research project questionnaires were emailed to officers in law enforcement agencies in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. The researcher made contact through email or telephone with each law enforcement agency asking permission for the questionnaire to be distributed in their agency. If the agency allowed their officers to participate the researcher emailed the questionnaire to the contact person and they distributed the questionnaire to officers in their agency. The questionnaire included the informed consent form (Appendix B). This gave the officers an overview of what the data will be used for and who is conducting the research and what institute is involved in the research project. The informed consent also explained to the officers that they are not obligated to participate in this study and there would be no
repercussions for not participating. There was also no compensation for participating.

Protection of Human Subjects

The informed consent form was emailed along with the questionnaire. There was no identifying information asked of the officers. It was emailed to them so they had no pressure or obligation to participate in the study. The questions are in regards to cases involving juvenile prostitution, how they perceive them and what knowledge they have about human trafficking. All questions are voluntary and there is a no opinion option on the Likert scale so if any questions are uncomfortable they do not have to state their opinion.

Data Analysis

A bivariate analysis was used to analyze the data. The data was separated into three categories. The first category was how many cases of juvenile prostitution and their characteristics. The second category was the perception officers have of juvenile prostitution. The third category was based on how knowledgeable the officers were of human trafficking.
Bivariate statistical tests such as correlation and t-tests were used. These show connections of officer’s perceptions of juvenile prostitutes to their knowledge base in human trafficking. Using descriptive statistics research shows how the variables are distributed in the sample. Looking at the qualitative data analytical induction was used to show themes and relationships throughout the data and relates it to the original research question (Grinnell & Unrau, 2008). Examining the quantitative and qualitative data gives an idea of how law enforcement agencies are dealing with possible sex trafficking victims.

Summary

This research study hopes to find out how many juvenile prostitution cases have occurred in 2009, in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Seeing what is already being done to identify and treat this population will help us to strengthen those methods. The study is also aimed at educating agencies on sex trafficking victims and changing negative perceptions of juvenile prostitutes.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter will explain the data collected and how it relates to perceptions and knowledge of juvenile prostitution and human trafficking. Researcher examined how many juveniles were arrested for prostitution and examined the characteristics of their arrests. The arrest rates were also examined to explain if officer perceptions lead to more arrests.

Presentation of the Findings

The sample in this study consisted of twenty-three participants from San Bernardino and Riverside County law enforcement. The survey questionnaire focused on juvenile prostitution cases that occurred in 2009. The first question on the survey required a "yes" or "no" response. Of the twenty-three participants seven indicated that they were involved in arresting a juvenile for prostitution in 2009.

Frequencies were run on the independent variable, which is how many juveniles were arrested for
prostitution and the dependent variable, the characteristics of the crimes. It was reported in the data that three individuals were arrested for prostitution involving a pimp. One juvenile arrested for prostitution was involved with organized crime. Three juveniles arrested for prostitution were found to be acting on their own. One case involved a family member who was prostituting another family member.

Question number five on the questionnaire focused on any adults who had been arrested for crimes involving juvenile prostitution. The survey required a "yes" or "no" response. Of the twenty-three participants four indicated that they were involved in arresting a juvenile for prostitution in 2009. When frequencies were run on the characteristics of the crimes, three arrests involved pimps with juveniles, two involved pimps with juveniles from out-of-state and one was arrested with a juvenile who was prostituting on their own.

Questions 8-11 were a likert scale looking at perceptions. This section of the survey was completed by eighteen participants. A regression analysis was run on comparing the incidence of arrest with perceived perceptions of the officers. Using ANOVA the data
examined the relationship between arrest rates and if juveniles arrested were perceived as criminals. Using ANOVA the relationship between those two variables is not significant ($P = .419$). This is not significant because there were low arrest rates ($n = 7$) for the study which would indicate the perception would be that juvenile prostitutes are not perceived as criminals. Using ANOVA, the relationship between arrest rates and the perception that juveniles are perceived as victims was shown to be significant ($P = .056$). The low arrest ($n = 7$) relates to the idea that juvenile prostitutes are being perceived as victims so instead of arresting them they are being offered different services and interventions.

Another test that showed significance when looking at officer perceptions is that each juvenile arrested for prostitution is screened for trafficking. Using ANOVA test the study looked at the relationship between arrest rates and the perception that all juvenile prostitutes are being screened for trafficking. The relationship between the variables is significant ($P = .005$). It’s predicted that for each juvenile arrested for prostitution they are being screened for trafficking.
Qualitative Analysis

The last portion of the questionnaire focused on the officer's knowledge of human trafficking. The questions were open-ended and were completed by 13 participants. Analytical induction was used to identify themes from the responses. All responses indicated knowledge in human trafficking. The two themes that emerged from the responses are 1) there is a general protocol to follow through on for cases of human trafficking and 2) there is a lack of specialized training. The officers are aware of the bigger issue of human trafficking but are not trained to identify victims in their communities.

The first question asked them to define human trafficking. Most officers were able to define it as it is stated in trafficking laws and had the basic understanding that it involved individuals being held against their will. The second question asked if the officers have attended any training specific to human trafficking in calendar year 2009. Five respondents answered yes indicating the majority have not been involved in any training in 2009. Question three asked if there was any protocol when working with a victim of sexual exploitation. Eight participants indicated there
was protocol and it involved an investigation and placing the victim in an appropriate placement. In question four it asked officers if there is a specialized task force for sexual exploitation victims. Eight of the participants responded there is no task force, which is consistent with question number two that indicated that few officers had been involved with training in 2009. Question number five asked if law enforcement collaborated with other agencies or the community when working with sexually exploited victims. Nine participants indicated they involved other entities when working with these cases. This relates to question number three because with the use of protocol many responded that child welfare was utilized when following protocol for this procedure.

Summary

This chapter discussed the results and explained the data collected and how it relates to perceptions and knowledge of juvenile prostitution and human trafficking. The results showed a relation between arrest rates and the perception of the officers. The low arrest rates were consistent with the perception that juveniles detained
for prostitution are being perceived as victims. Also it was significant that for juvenile prostitutes who were detained they were most likely screened for human trafficking. Finally even though there seems to be a shift in perceptions from criminal to victim for juvenile prostitutes it is clear from the findings there still is a need for specialized training and specialized task force to meet the needs of this special population.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter will discuss the findings that were gathered. This study was conducted as an exploratory project examining law enforcement in Riverside and San Bernardino County. This research project looked at officer’s experience with sex trafficking cases as well as finding out the knowledge and perceptions of law enforcement to see if those outcomes would have an affect on arrest rates of juvenile prostitutes.

Discussion

Using a regression analysis and the ANOVA test it was significant that perceptions of the officers were that juveniles arrested for prostitution were perceived as victims and were being screened for trafficking. This was consistent with the low arrest rates.

Looking at the qualitative part of the study two major themes emerged. The first theme indicated that there is a protocol that officers are trained to follow when coming in contact with a potential victim of human trafficking. The officer’s knowledge of human trafficking
was broad and didn’t specify if they had a protocol for juveniles who are domestically trafficked. The second theme was that there is a lack of specialized training for officers who come in contact with juvenile prostitutes. Examining officer’s responses some indicated they have only had experience with international trafficking and that their protocol and training was specific to "illegal aliens" who were trafficked into the United States.

When examining officer perceptions it was interesting because when looking at the data it indicated a shift in perception. Instead of juvenile prostitutes being perceived as criminals they are being perceived as victims, which potentially contributed to the low arrest rates. The results also indicated that if a juvenile was detained they were most likely screened for trafficking. This could be contributed to the Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation (C.A.S.E.), which is actively working with law enforcement in San Bernardino County. The coalition is comprised of members from Department of Behavioral Health, Sheriff’s Department, Children and Family Services, District Attorney, Children’s Network, Public
Defender and Probation (San Bernardino County District Attorneys Office, 2010).

C.A.S.E. is focused on education, prevention, intervention and suppression. They have been educating the community through different trainings geared towards law enforcement and other agencies (San Bernardino County District Attorneys Office, 2010). Since the inception of the coalition was not until 2009 some of the responses may have not reflected the trainings law enforcement may have gone to in 2010. The exposure of juvenile prostitution through C.A.S.E. may be the cause of the shift in perception.

It is estimated that between 14,500 to 17,500 people are trafficked into the United States each year. Within the United States it is estimated that 200,000 children are trafficked into the sex industry within the United States (U.S. Department of State, 2009). Looking at these statistics it makes someone wonder why there are not specialized teams and trainings in every law enforcement agency specific to juvenile prostitutes. When analyzing the qualitative data one question asks "How do you define human trafficking?" and another question asks "If you become aware of a juvenile who is a suspected victim of
trafficking is there a specific protocol you follow? If yes what actions are required?" Three respondents believed that human trafficking only involved when an individual is brought from out of the country and their protocol for identifying trafficking victims is contacting Immigration Services or Border Patrol. The emerging themes showed that human trafficking is being recognized as a problem nationally but still fails to be recognized as an issue in the community.

Limitations

The limitations of this study are the sample size and the inconsistency of the questionnaire responses. Considering the wide range of Riverside and San Bernardino County the small sample size does not represent the entire law enforcement community for both counties. The researcher made contact with law enforcement agencies in both counties and gained permission for the questionnaire to be made available online for participating officers. Due to various reasons many agencies declined to participate. Another limitation was that the questionnaire was only partially completed by some participants. Each section of the questionnaire
did not represent the full sample size. Since the data was self reported and the source was anonymous the authenticity of the information could not be assured.

Recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy and Research

Trafficking of women for the purpose of sexual exploitation is an issue that affects all social services areas as well as law enforcement. Working as social workers with this population need to be aware of the issues they may be dealing with when working with a client who has experienced trafficking. Victims of sex trafficking have medical and mental health needs. They have economic issues and suffer psychological trauma. They will need to be involved in intensive therapy and will also need to be taught basic living skills (Pearce, 2006). More services need to be available to this population. Juvenile prostitutes endure discrimination because of the nature of their crimes, their needs are greater, there are fear and safety concerns, there is limited access, and the criminal cases are complex (Logan & Walker, 2009).

Polaris Project Action Center is an organization committed to fighting all forms of trafficking. They
provide services to U.S. citizens and foreign national victims. Currently in California there are five state legislation bills on human trafficking. AB90 is focused on removing force, fraud, or coercion from the definition of human trafficking. Without those guidelines it opens up services to more victims. AB702 would allow convictions of prostitution for identified trafficking victims to be expunged from victim’s records. AB12 Abolition of Child Commerce, Exploitation, and Sexual Slavery Act of 2011 would add an extra $25,000 to the fines of individuals who solicit prostitution from minors under the age of 16. The money would be contributed to the Victim-Witness Assistance Fund. This fund was set up to provide funding for counselling and prevention programs for individuals who have experienced sexual exploitation or sexual abuse. AB918 would constitute human trafficking as gang activity making the crime more punishable. AB861 Conflict Minerals would prohibit companies from the Congo and Democratic Republic from bidding on state contracts if they do not comply with disclosure agreements (Polaris Project, 2010).

It is important for social workers to be actively involved in the development of policy and legislation.
Social workers have unique knowledge of what the service needs are for this population. Also more research needs to be done on the effects and service needs of victim’s of human trafficking. With more research it will strengthen policies and legislation aimed at prevention and intervention for victims of trafficking. All service agencies that come into contact with these victims need to be educated and trained on how to work with this population.

Conclusions

Even with all the recent exposure of human trafficking many law enforcement agencies were still ambivalent about participating in this study. There is a change however in the perception of juvenile prostitutes. In this study the officers who chose to participate demonstrated knowledge in human trafficking and perceived juvenile prostitutes as victims. Advocacy and awareness are the most important tools in combating human trafficking. Specialized training for law enforcement to identify juvenile victims in their community is important because they are usually the first ones who come into contact with the victims. This study hopes to bring
awareness to the issue of human trafficking so that agencies are aware of this unique population and law enforcement will acknowledge that there is a need for specialized training to help identify and treat these victims.
APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE
Questionnaire on Sexually Exploited Female Juveniles

1. In the calendar year 2009 did your agency detain or arrest any female juveniles for crimes involving prostitution? (Please circle one)
   Yes
   No
   If you answered Yes to #1 please answer the following questions.

2. What is the range of ages of the female juveniles who have been detained or arrested for crimes involving prostitution?
   o 9-12
   o 13-15
   o 16-18
   o Other

3. Did any of the cases involve: (Circle all that apply)
   a. Pimps with juvenile prostitutes
   b. Businesses or other places fronting for prostitution (e.g., massage parlors, escort services).
   c. Organized crime or gang-related juvenile prostitution.
   d. Juveniles who were not U.S. citizens.
   e. Juveniles from out-of-state.
   f. Juveniles acting on their own who used prostitution to get money or goods.
   g. Sexual abuse where juveniles were prostituted by family members or acquaintances.

4. For all those that apply above can you please list how many cases were involved for each characteristic?

5. In the calendar year 2009, did your agency detain or arrest any adults for crimes involving female juvenile prostitution? (Please circle one)
   Yes
   No

6. If Yes to #5 did any of the cases involve the same characteristics listed above? List how many cases were involved for each characteristic.
7. In the calendar year 2009, did your agency detain or make any arrests where someone who produced or wanted to produce child pornography, paid money (or some monetary value) to use a female juvenile in sexually explicit pictures? If yes please indicate age ranges of the juvenile females.
   o 9-12
   o 13-15
   o 16-18
   o Other
   o None Reported

For the following questions please circle the answer that best expresses how you feel to the statement.
   1 – strongly agree
   2 – somewhat agree
   3 – neutral/no opinion
   4 – somewhat disagree
   5 – strongly disagree

8. When a juvenile is picked up on suspicion of prostitution she will be arrested and released to her parents or a child welfare agency?
   1 2 3 4 5

9. In your opinion if a female juvenile is detained for prostitution will she be perceived as a victim?
   1 2 3 4 5

10. In your opinion if a female juvenile is detained for prostitution will she be perceived as a criminal?
    1 2 3 4 5

11. When arresting women suspected of prostitution are they regularly screened to see if they are possible victims of sex trafficking?
    1 2 3 4 5

Please answer each question honestly and to the best of your knowledge.

12. How do you define human trafficking?

13. In the calendar year 2009 have you attended any training programs on how to identify and service victims of sex trafficking?

14. If you become aware of a juvenile who is a suspected victim of trafficking is there a specific protocol you follow? If yes what actions are required?
15. Does your agency have a specialized task force focused on rescuing juveniles from commercial sexual exploitation?

16. Does your agency coordinate with other agencies and/or the community when trying to refer a possible victim of trafficking to adequate services?
INFORMED CONSENT

This research study examines how female juvenile prostitutes are being perceived in law enforcement and what is being done to serve this population. This study is being conducted by Crystal Castillo under the supervision of Dr. Pa Der Vang, Assistant Professor of Social Work, California State University, San Bernardino. This study has been approved by the School of Social Work Sub-Committee of the Institutional Review Board, California State University, San Bernardino.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions and knowledge law enforcement have towards juvenile prostitutes and human trafficking.

DESCRIPTION: This study contains a questionnaire asking how many cases of juvenile prostitution you see and what their characteristics were.

PARTICIPATION: Participation is completely voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. At anytime you may discontinue your participation without penalty or loss of benefit.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Your participation in this research study will remain confidential and no identifying information will be asked of you. Questionnaires will be mailed to a designated address where only the researcher will have access to the mail box.

DURATION: The questionnaire may take a lengthy amount of time due to the fact that it asks questions about cases from all of 2009.

RISKS: Every attempt has been made to keep questions on perceptions and knowledge at a comfortable level.

BENEFITS: There are no benefits to participants for participating in this survey. Law enforcement is the first line of defense against trafficking. The better educated officers are the more aware they are. This will help to better combat trafficking.

CONTACT: Dr. Pa Der Vang, Assistant Professor of Social Work, Supervisor. You can reach her by e-mail at or by phone (909) 537-3775.

RESULTS: The results from this research study can be obtained at the Pfau Library located at California State University San Bernardino after September, 2011.
REFERENCES


