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## An Analysis of Human Trafficking in the Southeastern United States: Improving Law Enforcement Training & Techniques

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An Analysis of Human Trafficking in the Southeastern United States:

Improving Law Enforcement Training & Techniques

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### **Abstract**

Human trafficking is an international criminal phenomenon that disregards human morals and beliefs. The United States is not immune to these heinous acts that unfortunately remain largely unseen by law enforcement and legal authorities. This research presents a comprehensive analysis of the crime in the southeastern region of the United States. By focusing on the region, and more specifically the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the research provides valuable insights to both the states within the focus region, as well as states across the country. Research topics on human trafficking vary greatly; however, this research considers existing laws in order to analyze current law enforcement and training efforts, along with suggestions stemming from interviews and surveys with professionals in the field, as well as outside research conducted nationally and internationally. Concept analysis was utilized to compare the combative efforts of differing locations and agencies against the suggestions and case studies analyzed from outside research. The methodology, combined with survey results, allowed for a collaboration of efforts and ideas that were generated into a comprehensive set of suggestions and implications for future research. Additionally, findings highlight the need for improved training and approach methods, an increased amount of cross-sector collaboration with law enforcement, and the possibility of implementing a “John’s” approach. In short, the research findings add to the existing body of knowledge on combating human trafficking with an emphasis on more effective laws and enforcement efforts within Kentucky and surrounding states.

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**List of Acronyms**

- DOJ – Department of Justice
- DHS – Department of Homeland Security
- FBI – Federal Bureau of Investigation
- GIS – Geographic Information System
- HTVRA – Human Trafficking Victims’ Rights Act
- IRTPA - Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act
- JVTA – Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act
- KRS – Kentucky Revised Statues
- RICO – Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organizations
- TIP – Trafficking in Persons report
- TVPA – Victim of Trafficking & Violence Protection Act
- VAWA – Violence Against Women Act

## **Introduction**

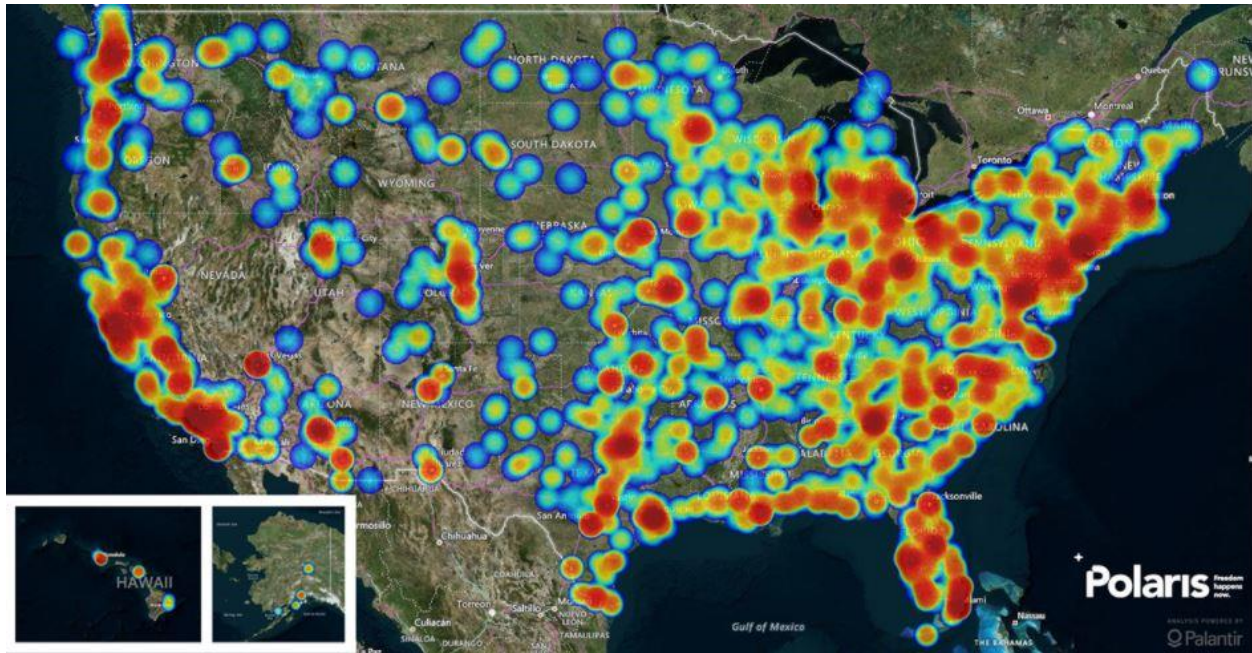
The prevalence of human trafficking internationally is not unbeknownst to the world. Even within the United States, human trafficking is often considered a metropolitan crime contained to larger cities such as New York City or Los Angeles. Though human trafficking does occur at heightened volumes in such cities, it is equally as certain that the crime is not contained to urban areas. This research recognizes and analyzes the occurrence of human trafficking throughout the southeastern region of the United States, with a specific focus on activities in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Due to the frequency of the crime, this research aims to determine if the current laws and enforcement methods are effective. With a determination on the quality of the current efforts, existing and future methodologies can be more closely scrutinized and improved. These evaluations have the potential to identify weaknesses within the system, which will then provide a foundation for improvements to policies and training agendas.

## **Problem Statement**

Human trafficking is a criminal phenomenon estimated to impact approximately 20-40 million people every year worldwide (Human Rights First, 2017) (Polaris, 2017). Within the United States specifically, it is estimated that there are hundreds of thousands of victims (Polaris, 2017). The crime extends into the southeastern region of the United States, where traffickers often target women and children for sex trafficking and men for labor trafficking. Within the Commonwealth of Kentucky in 2017 alone, there were 81 confirmed cases of identified human trafficking. The reality of this crime and the law enforcement efforts against it will be evaluated

throughout entirety of this report. Figure 1, below, provides a visual display of the prevalence and span of human trafficking in the United States from 2017 statistics.



*Figure 1: 2017 human trafficking cases & hotline calls from Polaris (Polaris Project, 2018)*

### **Background & Purpose**

When evaluating the statistics associated with human trafficking, the prominence of the crime can be startling. Legislation passed over the previous decade has required various levels of government tracked statistics and created an annual report to demonstrate how anti-human trafficking efforts have improved and what is still needed. The 2017 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report indicated that in 2016 there were a total of 14,897 international prosecutions, 9,071 international convictions, and 66,520 identified victims (Department of State, 2017).

Domestically, the collective data for 2016 is consistently imprecise. The Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Crime in the United States report outlines human trafficking cases, including both traffickers and victims, based on offenses, clearances, age, race, and ethnicity, but

provides no data on prosecutions, charges, or convictions (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2016). Similarly, recent data reported in the TIP, annually produced by the Department of State, presents unfulfilled information. According to the report, in 2016 the following agencies opened the corresponding number of investigations into suspected human trafficking cases (Department of State, 2016):

- Department of Homeland Security (DHS): 1,029
- Department of Justice (DOJ): 1,800
- DOJ Task Forces: 982

Out of the statistics indicated above, the TIP only broke down the statistics for the DOJ. Accordingly, the DOJ initiated 241 prosecutions, charged 531 defendants, and successfully convicted 439 traffickers (Department of State, 2016). The inconclusiveness of this data creates a significant gap when attempting to comprehend and compare statistics.

Within the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the reporting of human trafficking statistics was mandated under KRS 15.706 and thus created the annual Kentucky Human Trafficking Report. The data reported for 2016 exists within the fiscal year of 10/1/2015 to 9/30/2016. Within the reported period, there were a total of "...169 reported incidents involving 208 victims..." (Department for Community Based Services, 2016). Unfortunately, the breakdown of prosecutions, charges, and convictions is again absent from the mandated report. Due to the lack of specific information from various resources, the comparison among international, national, and state cases cannot successfully be done for any one category. The chart below visualizes the statistics and gaps among the three levels of reporting highlighted in this section.



Human Trafficking Arrest Statistics					
	Reports	Prosecutions	Charges	Convictions	Victims
Internationally	N/A	14,897	N/A	9,071	66,520
United States of America	3,811	241 (DOJ)	531 (DOJ)	439 (DOJ)	N/A
Kentucky	169	N/A	N/A	N/A	208

*Figure 2: Human Trafficking Arrest Statistics*

The statistics provided above indicate the necessity of this research and the effort law enforcement must continue to exert in the fight against this heinous crime. The research, or lack thereof, on improving law enforcement’s training and capabilities highlights the need for increased efforts and research. Knowing what has and is happening, where it is occurring, and who is being targeted is the first step in acknowledging methods to improve law enforcement efforts. As such, the following information closely examines associated legislation, current law enforcement techniques and research, and potential methods to implement within training and enforcement.

**Literature Review**

**Human Trafficking Federal Laws**

The United States federal laws dictating the combative human trafficking efforts and justice system for those guilty of trafficking have rapidly evolved over the past two decades. The federal laws have often played a significant role in the creation of state laws. Both federal and state legislation have been heavily influenced by a range of research conducted nationally and internationally. The prior and current federal laws that impact anti-human trafficking efforts will

be analyzed in the following sections in an effort to better understand legislation's role in law enforcement training and techniques.

With the passing of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act (TVPA) in 2000, anti-human trafficking laws and research have quickly advanced. The TVPA was a monumental Act that made way for further advancement. These more current laws, however, are not the first U.S. laws to address the heinous crime of human trafficking. Despite that the initial laws passed had a dissimilar motive and intent than those passed within the past two decades, they did provide the foundation for modern laws and research currently occurring.

The Mann Act, passed by Congress in June of 1910, is significantly different in nature and intent than the current laws addressing human trafficking. The Mann Act was neither created nor passed with the intent of being an anti-human trafficking Act. At the time of its passage, the concept of human trafficking was nearly nonexistent. Rather, prostitution was the focal point of law enforcement and Congressional law. However, the Mann Act, though consistently controversial since its conception, was aimed at both prostitution and forced prostitution (NPR, 2008). For the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the perception of forced prostitution was similar, if not the same, as the modern understanding of human trafficking but with strong racial undertones. In 1978 and again in 1986, the Act was amended to include the protection of minors and to make an alteration of wording that better allows the Mann Act to aid in the fight against human trafficking.

However, the history of the Mann Act has been morally questioned by many due to the true motives of the Act. In the early 1900s, the fear of "White Slavery" gained momentum because of rumors indicating that immigrants had infiltrated the country to forcibly prostitute women across vast networks spanning the nation (NPR, 2008). Perhaps mere rumors fueled by

the media helped its formation, but the Mann Act was an early predecessor to the laws that have emerged since the turn of the century.

### **The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act (TVPA)**

Between the passage of the Mann Act and the 21<sup>st</sup> century, minimal legislature was proposed or passed through Congress that even resembled concern for human trafficking. This 90-year legal silence on the matter speaks to the way human trafficking had previously been perceived by the public and elected officials. Rather, the focus of laws targeted sexual assault and domestic violence. Legislation such as the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994 targeted these issues and continued to build a platform for human trafficking acts. In 2000, the silence was broken with the passage of The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act (TVPA). The TVPA of 2000 would be the first of many laws and amendments to address human trafficking in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The TVPA, law H.R. 3244, was monumental in identifying and targeting the crime of human trafficking. The law, however, is not confined to human trafficking alone. Following the passage of the Act, President Clinton's remarks regarding the law worked to summarize the intentions and aspects of the law. His remarks summarized that the Act "...improve[d] the ability of Federal prosecutors to prosecute interstate crimes...create[d] an interstate cyberstalking offense...reauthorize[d] the Violence against Women Act's (VAWA) grant programs through the Fiscal Year 2005" (Clinton, 2000). The TVPA, along with renewed help from the VAWA, strengthened national efforts, heightened awareness globally, and began the process of increasing resources for law enforcement to combat the crime. The following list highlights the most critical aspects the TVPA authorized (Polaris, 2017):

- Deemed human trafficking and related offenses as federal crimes
- Created more severe penalties for traffickers
- Mandated restitution be paid to victims
- Established the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons
- Required the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report be published every year
- Created T-Visa's, an avenue to citizenship for foreign victims

Following the TVPA in 2000, a series of four reauthorization acts were passed between the years 2003 and 2008. These acts continued to amend and supplement the TVPA of 2000. The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003 most notably created an avenue for victims to sue their traffickers, provided additional resources and provisions for foreign victims, and a requirement that the Attorney General report to Congress annually regarding the U.S.'s activities and efforts to combat human trafficking (Polaris, 2017). As part of this reauthorization, human trafficking was added to the list of crimes eligible to be charged for under the Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organizations (RICO) statute from 1970.

### **Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organizations (RICO)**

The RICO statutes were passed as a federal law enforcement tool to prosecute individuals participating in organized crime. Racketeering, the act of offering a dishonest service or committing organized crime, includes the "...act or threat involving murder, kidnapping, gambling, arson, robbery, bribery, extortion, dealing in obscene matter, or dealing in a controlled substance..." (Cornell Law School, 2018). By extending RICO to include human trafficking as an organized crime, law enforcement and the federal government can more effectively prosecute offenders.

**PROTECT Act of 2003**

The Prosecutorial Remedies and Other Tools to end the Exploitation of Children Today Act of 2003 (PROTECT) specified felony offenses towards minors and enhanced the penalties for such crimes. Felonies towards minors incorporated in the PROTECT Act include "...sexual exploitation of children, selling or buying of children, transportation for illegal sexual activity, intent to solicit any person to engage in criminal sexual activity...", but are not limited to these human trafficking related crimes (108th Congress, 2003). Additional felonies punishable under the PROTECT Act include those related to child abuse, pornography, and kidnapping. Sections 105 through 108 of the PROTECT Act, established provisions allowing for life imprisonment, criminal liability charges, and prohibitions of traveling rights (108th Congress, 2003). Many of the crimes acknowledged and punishable under the PROTECT Act overlap within cases; as such, the creation of the PROTECT Act has allowed for more timely and effective prosecutions.

**Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015 (JVTA)**

The most recent federal law addressing human trafficking established a host of new amendments and provisions to improve responses to cases and the aid provided to victims. JVTA created new tools for law enforcement agencies while simultaneously providing more services for victims. A number of provisions and improvements under JVTA include but are not limited to (114th Congress, 2015):

- Established the Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund
  - Grants to states to combat trafficking, provide protection and assistance for victims
  - Funds cannot be used for health or medical care for trafficking victims
- Imposed \$5,000 federal fine on individuals convicted of trafficking related offenses

- Criminal fines used to finance the Domestic Trafficking Victims' Fund, victim service programs, and law enforcement state grants
- Amended the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000
  - Extended benefits and services available to U.S. citizens and permanent resident victims
- Amended the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005
  - Replaced and re-established residential treatment facilities for juvenile victims; renewed DOJ efforts to develop, improve, or expand trafficking deterrence programs
- Eased wiretapping investigative warrant process for federal prosecutors
- Created the survivor-led U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking

The amendments and policies outlined in the JVTA have supported federal, state, and local efforts to improve law enforcement and victim services. For law enforcement specifically, the timeline for acquiring a wiretapping warrant during human trafficking cases has been significantly shortened due to the expanded authority given to the DOJ through the JVTA.

Other laws and Acts associated with human trafficking include the Travel Act, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2013, the Customs and Facilitations and Trade Enforcement Act of 2009, the Civil Asset Forfeiture Reform Act of 2000, and the Tariff Act of 1930. These laws provide additional leverage for law enforcement within the realm of national and international travel, labor trafficking and fair labor standards, and land owner responsibility. Comparatively, these laws serve as supplements to the laws explained in-depth in this section. As a supplement to the information provided above, the following image provides a brief visual explanation of the breadth and purpose of the main human trafficking policies.

Legislation	Year	Primary Focus	Purpose
<b>Mann Act</b>	1910	Prostitution	Basis for human trafficking laws
<b>RICO</b>	1970	Organized Crime	Expanded prosecuting capabilities
<b>VAWA</b>	1994	Abused Women	Basis for TVPA
<b>TVPA</b>	2000	Federal Focus on Human Trafficking	Improved enforcement efforts and increased penalties
<b>PROTECT Act</b>	2003	Exploitation of Minors	Extended definitions & penalties for trafficking of minors
<b>JVTA</b>	2015	Federal fines; Task Forces	Victim Services & Investigative Process

Figure 3: Chart of the focus and purpose of major U.S. anti-human trafficking laws

**Kentucky State Laws**

Human trafficking, as defined by Kentucky legislature, is “A person guilty of human trafficking when the person intentionally subjects one or more persons to human trafficking”, under which it is initially considered a Class C Felony (Human Trafficking, 2007). If the victim has experienced physical injury, the case transforms into a Class B Felony, and if the victim is under the age of 18, the case automatically becomes one Class level higher than the crime itself (Human Trafficking, 2007). These definitions observed by the Commonwealth of Kentucky were enacted in 2007 with the first passing of anti-human trafficking legislature within the Commonwealth.

This set of legislation, Senate Bill 43, was passed seven years after the federal passage of the TVPA. By passing Senate Bill 43, Kentucky enacted a set of statutes regarding human

trafficking that would pave the way for more legislation in the coming years. Comparatively among states, the statutes passed were years behind other states laws and policies, but simultaneously ahead of many other states. As all 50 states have now done, the 2007 Kentucky legislation criminalized the act and/or promotion of human trafficking in Kentucky (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2018).

Among the most notable statutes in the 2007 legislation, KRS 336.075 requires the Labor Cabinet to “...report all incidents of human trafficking...about which the cabinet knows or has reasonable cause to believe...to a local law enforcement agency or the Department of Kentucky State Police (KSP)...” (Reports of human trafficking Immunity, 2013). This requirement set the foundation for communication between prosecution and law enforcement on human trafficking cases. Under the statutes passed in 2007, a variety of efforts were achieved and the inception of anti-human trafficking laws in Kentucky was successfully accepted.

Six years after the Commonwealth’s initial passage of legislation, the Human Trafficking Victims’ Rights Act OF 2013 (HTVRA) ushered in the adoption of more laws and adaptations to previous statutes. The numerous results of the HTVRA have aided Kentucky law enforcement in identifying victims and prosecuting traffickers. By adopting the HTVRA, children suspected to be human trafficking victims are treated as a case of negligence, which in turn allows for the child to be taken into protective custody by law enforcement (Kentucky Legislature HB3, 2013). This portion alone aims to further protect victims through law enforcement protection. Of particular interest to this research, KRS 15.334 under the HTVRA requires law enforcement and prosecution receive educational training on human trafficking and KRS Chapter 16 requires KSP to dedicate a unit specifically to human trafficking cases within the Commonwealth (Kentucky Legislature HB3, 2013). The legislation passed through HTVRA aimed to ensure all KSP and



local law enforcement officers will receive the proper training needed to effectively identify and respond to human trafficking cases and victims. However, despite the goal of the legislation, it requires only eight hours of training on sexual assault topics, which includes but is not limited to: child abuse, sexual abuse, rape, domestic violence, neglect of the elderly, and human trafficking (Kentucky Legislature HB3, 2013). These six extremely difficult and complex topics are all combined into an eight-hour training session for cadets. For crimes such as these, it could be assumed that a mere 2 hours of training per topic for a law enforcement officer is not sufficient.

The figure below briefly outlines key laws within the Kentucky Revised Statutes that directly or indirectly effect law enforcement efforts to combat human trafficking.

<b>KY Legislation</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>KRS 15.334</b>	2016	Mandates sexual assault training for law enforcement
<b>KRS 15.706</b>	2013	Collect & report statistical data on sexual offenses, including trafficking
<b>KRS 15.718</b>	2013	Mandate sexual assault training for Kentucky attorneys & staff
<b>KRS 336.075</b>	2013	Requires Cabinet report suspected human trafficking to law enforcement
<b>KRS 529.100</b>	2007	Criminalizes the act of human trafficking
<b>KRS 529.110</b>	2007	Criminalizes the promotion of human trafficking
<b>KRS 529.130</b>	2013	Requires additional fines from person convicted; fines are redirected to victim’s services fund
<b>KRS 529.140</b>	2013	Determines placement of funds from 529.130; Law enforcement agencies receive partial funds for further training
<b>KRS 620.030</b>	2013	Requires any authority figure report suspected human trafficking cases

*Figure 4: Chart briefing the purpose of main Kentucky statutes against human trafficking*

Though not directly influencing the efforts of law enforcement, KRS 529.120, 529.180, 620.029, and 620.040 play a critical role within the Commonwealth and the fight against human trafficking. These statutes enacted between 2013 and 2015 were monumental in how law enforcement, prosecutors, and investigators are required to address and aid victims. Once law enforcement has taken a victim into protective custody, the statutes mentioned in this paragraph would need to be reviewed.

**Southeastern Region: State Laws**

As more states have enacted anti-human trafficking legislation, the Polaris organization has ranked each state based on ten key categories of laws that provide a basic legal framework for combating and punishing traffickers, and supporting victims. The ten key categories are:

1. Sex trafficking provision
2. Labor trafficking provision
3. Asset forfeiture and/or investigative tools
4. Training and/or human trafficking task force
5. Lower burden of proof for sex trafficking of minors
6. Posting human trafficking hotline
7. Posting human trafficking hotline
8. Safe harbor: protecting minors
9. Victim assistance, access to civil damages
10. Vacating convictions for sex trafficking victims

Based off of these ten categories, Kentucky received a score of nine; thus, ranking it as a tier one state. 39 states received a tier 1 score, 9 states and D.C. received a tier 2 score, and 2 states received a tier 3 score. 11 of the 12 southeastern states being analyzed in this research received a score high enough to rank as a tier 1 state; thus, these 11 southeastern states have passed legislation to meet federal standards for law enforcement and victim services. When the Polaris report was released in 2014, West Virginia's legislation did not meet requirements for Asset Forfeiture, Posting Human Trafficking Hotline, Safe Harbor for Protecting Minors, or Victim Assistance (Polaris, 2014). The Polaris graphic below visualizes the ranking of U.S. states, and highlights how legislation in the southeastern region compares to rest of the nation.

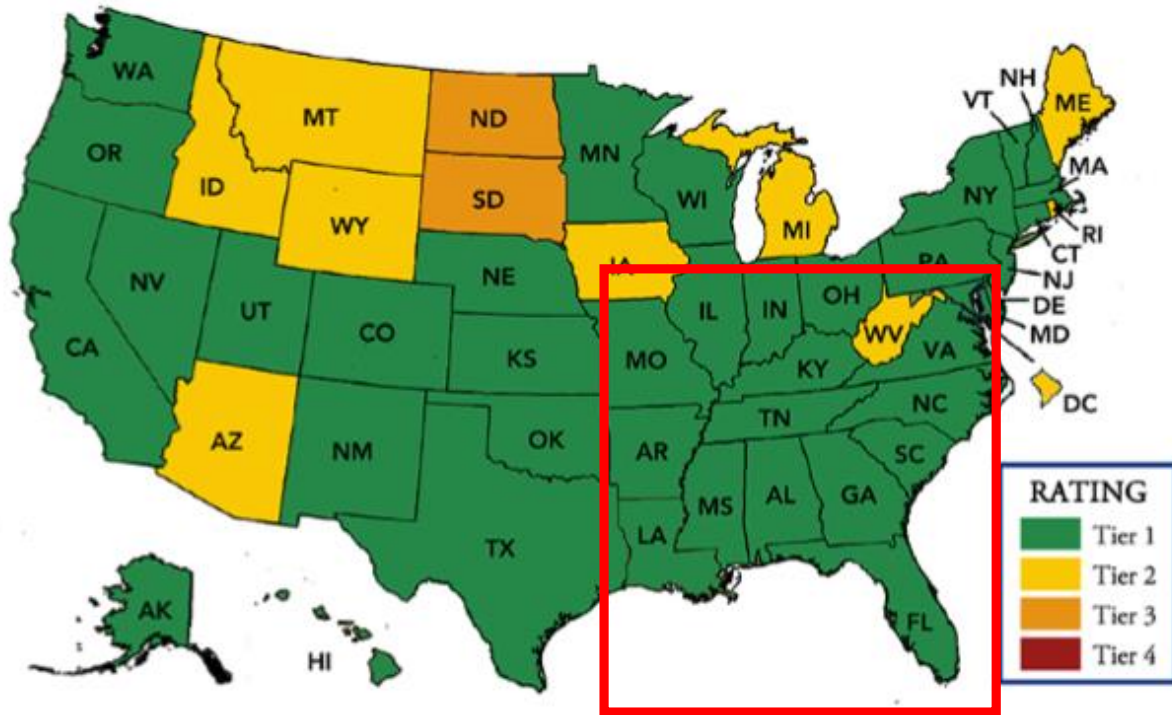


Figure 5: Polaris image highlighting effectiveness of state laws based on tiered system

By understanding the requirements and comparison of state laws, the legislation previously discussed from Kentucky can be absorbed and applied to a majority of the southeastern states.

**Law Enforcement by the Numbers**

The passing of the TVPA in 2000 began a new wave of legal policies regarding human trafficking. Serving as example, the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act (IRTPA) of 2004 was enacted to directly combat the trafficking of persons through a more effective use of U.S. intelligence and information in conjunction to foreign governments (Department of Homeland Security, 2015). Around the same time as the passing of the TVPA, the United States committed to an international effort organized though the United Nations to track and diminish human trafficking. McDonald (2014) offers a thorough analysis on the impact of U.S. federal laws, as well as the effect of the international laws and programs on the U.S. As the nation with

the largest role in anti-trafficking efforts, the United States requires a substantial amount of effort from nations, including itself. In the time following the U.S.'s increased involvement in international anti-trafficking efforts, Congress and the U.S. Department of Justice established the Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit. Through this establishment, approximately 42 "...human-trafficking task forces have been funded...and 50 states have enacted their own anti-trafficking laws" (McDonald, 2014, p. 126). Despite the outwards appearance of considerable anti-trafficking efforts, the U.S. has fallen short in its efforts to track, prosecute, and suppress human trafficking.

Between the years 2001 and 2005, the years directly following the initial passing of the TVPA, a total of 555 suspects were investigated by federal authorities. Out of the 555 suspects, only 146 were prosecuted and 75 convicted (McDonald, 2014). Similarly, between the years of 2008 and 2010, 2,515 suspected occurrences of human trafficking were investigated by the federally-funded task forces. However, only 389 of the incidents were confirmed through the investigative process. The confirmed cases resulted in 488 convicted persons and 527 victims aided (McDonald, 2014). Though this is a substantial amount of convictions, it remains that less than one-fifth of the suspected cases were confirmed. When comparing convictions to the Attorney General's Congressional Report estimate that between 14,500 and 17,500 victims are newly trafficked into the United States each year, the amount of confirmed and convicted cases is merely a small fraction (General, 2010). From those numbers alone, the enforcement rate is less than half of one percent; when considering the total estimates, which are well into the hundreds of thousands, the percentage becomes obsolete.

As with most states, the Commonwealth of Kentucky has state laws that specify training expectations of law enforcement, the penalties for traffickers, and the protection available for

victims. The most recent notable law passed by Kentucky's General Assembly is House Bill 3, Human Trafficking Victims Right Act (HTVRA), which was passed in early 2013. The focus on anti-trafficking efforts in Kentucky was expedited by published research from a professor at the University of Kentucky, Dr. TK Logan. Logan's research revealed human trafficking statistics within the Commonwealth, including who the victims typically are, where a significant amount of trafficking occurs, and who the traffickers tend to be (Smith, 2015). This research, along with the legislation crafted from it, all support the overall effort and law enforcement actions to combat human trafficking.

### **Role of Law Enforcement**

Within the United States, law enforcement operates at every level of communities. The 17,784 full-time law enforcement departments are often the entities that first encounter victims of trafficking (De Baca, 2002). As such, their role in combating human trafficking has the utmost importance. Despite this reality, a majority of human trafficking research and literature does not assess the role of local law enforcement, their responses to the crime, or the efforts of the departments (Wilson & Kleuber, 2006). With such an integral role in responding to and identifying human trafficking cases, the need for anti-human trafficking research focused on law enforcement is becoming increasingly more evident.

The research on human trafficking within the realm of law enforcement has identified several key concepts that highlight the recent and current status of enforcement efforts. A 2016 case study in the state of Georgia addressed the perception of trafficking, within both the constructs of geographical perceptions and agency responsibility. The majority of responding agencies consistently indicated that, geographically, human trafficking was not an issue for their operating region (Grubb & Bennett, 2012). A similar study conducted across the entirety of the

United States questioned law enforcement departments regarding whether or not human trafficking was an issue for the department. The majority of responses again consistently indicated that human trafficking was not a concern in neither their region nor their state; however, interestingly, the only question with a positive majority of responses was in regard to whether trafficking efforts are best suited for federal agencies (Wilson & Kleuber, 2006). These same studies also examined the amount of training the agencies receive, and the results suggested a correlation between perception and amount of training.

When the same case study participants were asked about training, 75.5% of the Georgia law enforcement respondents stated they had not received training on human trafficking within the previous four years (Grubb & Bennett, 2012). Unsurprisingly, the research conducted across the United States received disturbingly similar results. Only 8% of participants expressed that their agency had received training on human trafficking; however, no timeframe of when the training could have occurred was clearly defined (Wilson & Kleuber, 2006). These startlingly results necessitate further research into law enforcement training and the enforcement efforts.

The identifying and targeting methods utilized by law enforcement incorporate another overlooked area of human trafficking research, but yet is one of the most important components. The utility of and need for cross-sector collaboration is a growing method being implemented in a number of countries and communities. The foundation of cross-sector collaboration is based on the need for information sharing. However, new efforts within cross-sector partnerships are working to expand collaborative efforts to include "...protocol agreements, standard operating procedures, and collaborative case consultation and management" arrangements (Kaye, Winterdyk, & Quarterman, 2014, p. 36). Perhaps the most common partnership across sectors when working against human trafficking is between social services and law enforcement. While

law enforcement agencies have the legal mandates and information capabilities, social services are typically more appropriate to both identify and work with trafficking cases and the victims (Kaye, Winterdyk, & Quarterman, 2014). Various other sectors can offer law enforcement the same advantageous qualities when combating human trafficking. Juvenile detention center case managers and health care workers often find themselves working with victims either prior to and after they have been trafficked. Collaboration between these professions could provide increased insight into trafficking.

Another profession that will continue to be of aid to law enforcement are technology specialists. Unfortunately, an increasing amount of trafficking occurs online, which in turn has made combating human trafficking exponentially more difficult. Some scholars have conducted research resulting in "...anecdotal evidence..." that indicates the "...majority of sex trafficking in the U.S. may now be advertised and arranged on the Internet" and there is no logic in thinking this trend will reverse at any time in the near future (Greiman & Bain, 2014, pp. 90-96). As the use of technology continues to expand within human trafficking, it provides traffickers with an unprecedented ability to exploit more victims at a higher rate with even less risk involved (Latonero, 2012). With traffickers continuing to employ technology to entice and recruit victims, advertise their victims, and finally sell them, the complexity of combating is rapidly increasing.

Along with internet technology support in the combative effort against human trafficking, an unusual profession to be included in cross-sector collaborations are Geographic Information System (GIS) specialists. The utilization of GIS has the ability to provide an assortment of intelligence data. A pilot study conducted in North Carolina was capable of pinpointing geographical locations of likely victims based off open-source data. The data was then transformed into a usable, informative map. The advantage of this software resides in that it



removes the necessity of relying solely on databases with only the known cases, and then is able to provide a visual understanding of where the crime is originating from (Barrick, Pitts, McMichael, Wheaton, & Evans, 2015). This specific pilot study merely highlights the capabilities of GIS and how it could be utilized within law enforcement for combating human trafficking.

An additional method beginning to be employed around the world and within the United States is the gender equality approach, otherwise known as focusing efforts on the John's. John's, being the men who purchase the exploitation of humans, serve as the demand component within the supply and demand cycle of human trafficking. In recent years a number of Nordic nations along with Australia and Canada have begun to implement approaches to target the John's. Sweden led the movement starting in 1999 when they criminalized not only the act of human trafficking, but the purchase of an individual being trafficked. This method has allowed for taskforces to combat trafficking through ending the demand (Bucken-Knapp, Schaffer, & Stromback, 2012). This model does not provide a fast solution, but rather works to develop a long-term resolution.

This action model works off the general understanding of a supply and demand economy. With the trafficking process, both traffickers and the John's operate financially like all rational economic agents. For traffickers, "...when a near risk-free opportunity to generate immense profits emerges, they will flock to it" and the same general understanding can be applied to the behavior of John's (Kara S. , 2011, p. 127). While there are economic factors to consider in this discussion, much of the feasibility resides in the "near risk-free" portion of the equation. With little risk in doing so, the act of purchasing and further exploiting individuals has nominal repercussions. Though currently minimal, this does not suggest an untouchable status. Rather,

some scholars predict that the demand-side of the trafficking process is “highly vulnerable to disruption” (Kara S. , 2011, pp. 123-147). By correctly introducing and effectively implementing techniques focused on the John’s, this method presents a potential solution to truly disrupt and dismantle the trafficking process.

## **Methods & Findings**

### **Application of Geographic Information Systems**

To better assess the occurrence of human trafficking in the Southeastern region of the United States, the online software tool, ArcGIS, was utilized within this research. The application specifically examined the 12 states encompassing the Southeastern region, and then employed statistical data to provide a visual display of human trafficking cases. The data points include trafficking ring convictions, the approximate number of victims per state, and the traffickers to victim’s ratio. In figure 6 below, these statistically important components are presented. One important characteristics to examine is the number of identified victims. In states such as Florida and North Carolina, the number of identified victims is within range of 1,000, but in states such as Kentucky and Tennessee the numbers are closer to the 50 to 100 range. The shading scale, indicating the traffickers to victim ratio, shows that in North Carolina there is approximately one trafficker for every ten victims and, adversely, in Tennessee there is approximately one trafficker for every one and half victims. This ratio scale provides insight into the density of traffickers to victims, and how constructs of trafficking can greatly differ between states within the same region.

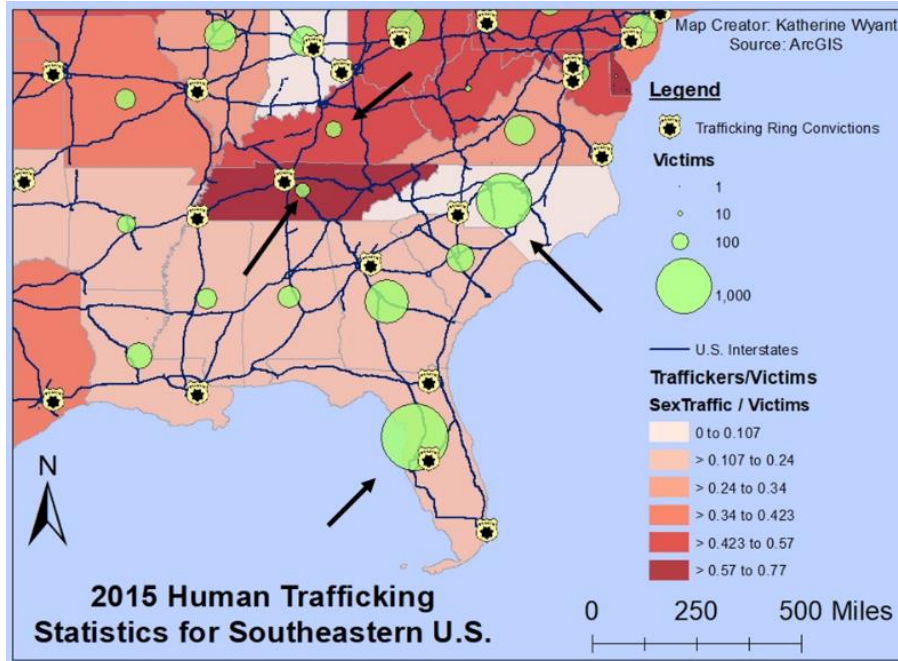


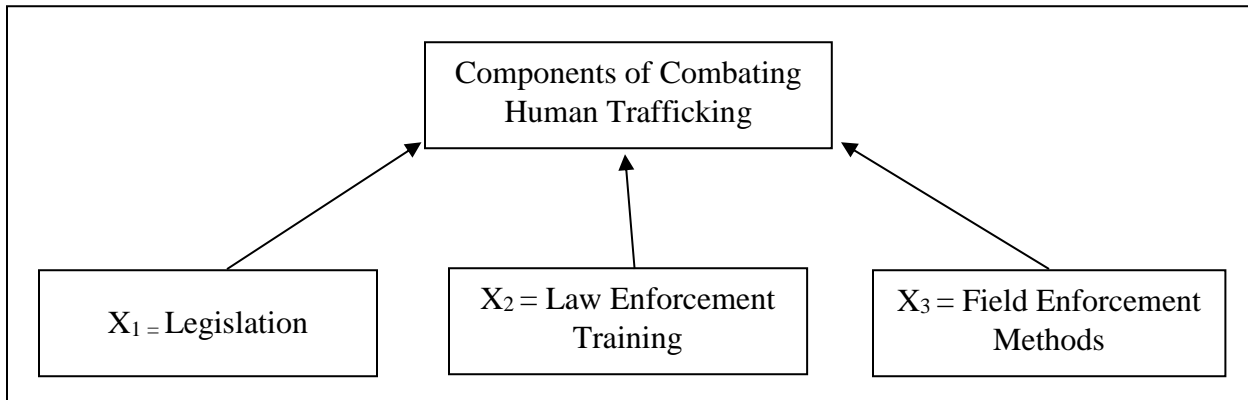
Figure 6: GIS Human Trafficking Statistics Map

The information contained within this graphic not only provides awareness into the occurrence of human trafficking, but could be used by law enforcement and non-profit organizations. This specific map is yet another example of the utility GIS could have within the fight against human trafficking.

## Background

The preliminary research conducted prior to the construction of the methods section served as a guiding tool when determining the research themes. These themes, in turn, served as the basis for the creation of the research question and hypotheses. Because on the level of influence legislation has in both law enforcement and victim-centered efforts, legislation was designated as the first component. When considering the role of combating human trafficking, the importance of law enforcement training could not be overlooked, and, thus, was deemed the second component. Building off law enforcement training, the third component became the

actual law enforcement methods used once targeting and approaching potential trafficking cases. The three primary components are displayed in figure 7 below. This figure clearly lays out the components that were used during the creation of hypotheses.



*Figure 7: Structural Causal Model portraying central research themes*

### **Research Questions & Hypotheses**

Similar to the construction of the research themes, the research question and hypotheses considered the preliminary research. The preliminary research provided insight into a variety of aspects that contribute to the cause of human trafficking and the fight against the crime. One notable observation from the research is that the quantity of research focused on law enforcement's impact on human trafficking is severely lacking. Rather, a majority of the available research tends to focus on either legislation – both how the current legislation is impacting efforts and what legislation is still needed – or the victim-centered services that are available through the government and/or non-profit organizations. This observation was critical when constructing the question: Are the laws & training methods in the southeastern region of the United States effective in combating human trafficking?

The hypotheses generated from this research question focused primarily on determining if the training and field methods are effective, rather than beginning the search for new techniques. A determination of the effectiveness was the primary concern because such results will indicate whether updated techniques are needed. However, one specific method was incorporated into the hypotheses due to it reoccurring in the preliminary research. The five hypotheses used in this research are outlined below.

Hypothesis 1: The current legislation against human trafficking is adequate in aiding law enforcement combative efforts.

Hypothesis 2: The quantity and quality of training for law enforcement on human trafficking is appropriate for the complexity of the crime.

Hypothesis 3: The field approach law enforcement is currently utilizing is sufficient for combating human trafficking.

Hypothesis 4: The prior methods used in both training and field enforcement have been satisfactory in fully combating human trafficking.

Hypothesis 5: The enforcement method of focusing on the “Johns” could be effective if implemented throughout law enforcement departments.

### **Research Measures & Design**

The research design was structured to include a combination of detailed responses and common experiences. To do so, interviews were conducted and a survey was disseminated throughout primarily the Southeastern region of the United States. Both the survey and interview questions were generated after the preliminary research was conducted in order to consider

current methods and research into the basis of the research. Due to certain restrictions from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), names and some organizations that were included in the research have been omitted.

The interviews were conducted with a number of professionals that work within some realm of anti-human trafficking. The interviews aimed to provide specific insight into the current efforts and experiences of these professionals. Interviews included professionals from a state attorney's office, non-profit organizations, and research academics. All interviews followed a similar format of questions in order to be consistent with the theme of questions, but still allow for an array of answers. For the location of the interviews, some were conducted over the phone while others were in-person.

The surveys were constructed and disseminated through the free, online website "SurveyMonkey". The decision to utilize the online survey website was based on financial considerations, and the likelihood that response rates would be higher online rather than through traditional collection methods. The survey was titled "Human Trafficking & Law Enforcement" and contained a total of ten questions; nine of which were multiple choice and one being an open-ended response. An example of the survey question format is: "Based off your experience, have previous enforcement methods been as successful as hoped for?" The nine multiple choice questions utilized an altered, four-point Likert scale. The alteration narrowed the responses to four options, being: strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree (Likert, 1932). Since all respondents had some interaction with human trafficking and/or law enforcement, removing the "neutral" and "I don't know" options were deemed appropriate for the survey audience.

## **Research Participants**

The identity of some of the participants is unknown due to survey collection method of “SurveyMonkey”. However, some known participants are allowing for the organization they are associated with to be disclosed within this research. The following list highlights a few of the interviewed and/or surveyed entities.

- Local & State Police
- KY Attorney General’s Office
- KY Fusion Center
- KY & National non-profit organizations
- Research academics

## **Data Collection**

The process of collecting data for this research was fairly straight-forward, since the two types of research methods were interviews and surveys. To initiate interviews, a variety of potential participants were emailed. The emails explained the nature and intention of the research, along with how their knowledge would supplement the research. During interviews, regardless of whether it was over the telephone or in person, notes were taken as the participants responded. The notes taken and information gathered were later used when compiling and analyzing the results.

Because the distribution of surveys was much larger, an Excel word sheet was used over the course of several months to gather the names, organizations, and email addresses of potential participants. This method allowed for an organized approach to disseminate the survey once the link became active. As participants began to respond, the online software automatically collected

and sorted the responses. By utilizing this survey website, the process of analyzing the data was significantly faster.

For the interviews, a total of ten interviews were conducted. Once the interviews began, it quickly became apparent that the complexity of human trafficking would make interviews a difficult method to utilize on a larger scale. In other words, many professionals within the field of anti-human trafficking focus on a specific area or concept of combating the crime. While these insights that were gathered were useful, they were not aiding to achieve the overall goal. Because of this realization, it was determined best to cease the interviews and focus the remaining time and energy on the survey responses.

In total, the surveys were sent to 76 professionals within either law enforcement or a non-profit organization that works against human trafficking and has interacted with law enforcement. Out of the 76 survey links circulated, exactly 30 responses were received which resulted in a 39% response rate. After the survey link was officially closed, the response data was transferred from “SurveyMonkey” onto an Excel sheet. The Excel format allowed for the data to be worked with more effectively and displayed in the most appropriate arrangement.

### **Data Analysis**

Upon completing all data collection, the analysis portion of the research promptly began. Due to the interviews not being as elaborate as initially intended, a concept analysis was conducted for the interviews. Question number ten from the surveys was also included in the concept analysis since the question was open-ended and allowed for an array of answers and topics. To begin the process of performing the concept analysis, each set of notes from the interviews were closely analyzed and reoccurring concepts were recorded in the form of tally



marks. After scrutinizing each set of notes, the reoccurring concepts were grouped together to indicate which aspects of anti-human trafficking are most needed in future efforts and/or research. The same process was used for question number ten of the surveys. The answers were sifted through, the reoccurring concepts recorded, and then compiled. The full results of the concept analysis are portrayed in figure 8 below. The image following it, figure 9, provides a graphical visual of specifically which concepts were most prominent.

Full Content Analysis			
Interviews		Survey	
Content	Quantity	Content	Quantity
Training	4	Training	11
Resources	4	Resources	5
Victim Centered	3	Victim Centered	6
Labor Trafficking Focused	1	Labor Trafficking Focused	1
Admission of Issue	0	Admission of Issue	1
Public Education	1	Public Education	2
Law Enforcement Ethics Training	0	Law Enforcement Ethics Training	1
Cross-Sector	3	Cross-Sector	4
Legislation	0	Legislation	1
Technology	0	Technology	1
Increased Consequences	1	Increased Consequences	0
Children Focused	3	Children Focused	0
Demand Focus	3	Demand Focus	0

*Figure 8: Complete Anti-Human Trafficking Interview and Survey Concept Analysis*

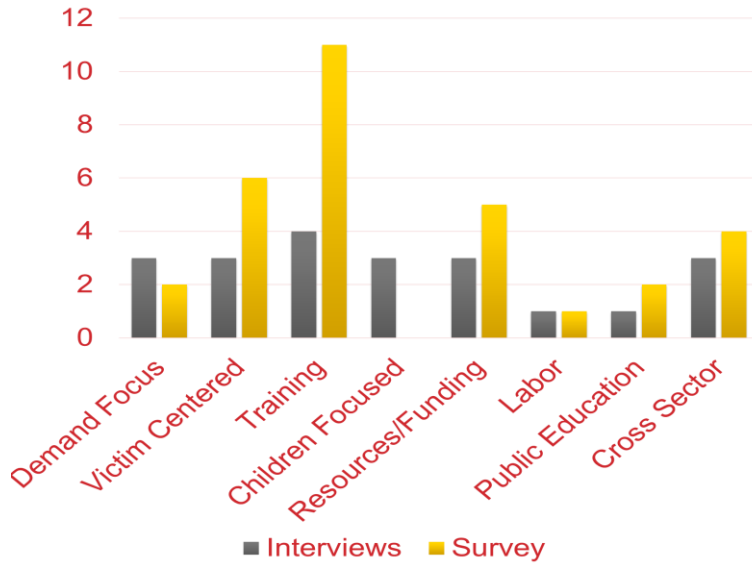


Figure 9: Visual of Condensed Interview and Survey Concept Analysis

After analyzing the concept analyses, several anti-human trafficking concepts and actions were identified through both the interviews and survey question. From the interviews, which are displayed by the grey bars in figure 9, the most prevalently mentioned concept was training. The next most prominently mentioned concepts were: demand focus, victim-centered, children focused, resources, and cross-sector collaboration. These five concepts all received the same amount of comments from professionals, thus resulting in six prominent topics indicated through the interviews. However, the victim-centered approaches and children-focused efforts were not within the realm of law enforcement specific tactics, and therefore were not considered in the final analysis.

For the survey question (#10) measured by the concept analysis, the leading concept was the need for training. The next most commonly mentioned concepts were victim-centered approaches, resources, and, lastly, cross-sector collaboration. Though mentioned a significant number of times, the concept of victim-centered approaches was not further considered after this analysis due to it not being directly tied to the initial law enforcement training methods and

actions. With that in consideration, the three notions taken from the survey question concept analysis were: training, resources, and cross-sector collaboration.

The analysis of the survey portion of the research was a simple process because of the utilization of “SurveyMonkey”. As stated prior in the text, once the link officially closed, the response data was transferred from “SurveyMonkey” onto an Excel sheet. To better visualize and understand the data, the most prominent data points were transformed into charts. Out of the nine multiple choice questions, six were informational and the remaining three questions were primarily asking about demographics. Of the 30 survey participants, 53% indicated they were responding on behalf of law enforcement, and the remaining 47% were non-profit or third-party organizations. The primary six questions regarding law enforcement efforts against human trafficking are displayed in figure 10 below. In the following image, figure 11, the responses and percentages can be compared to the questions. For the complete list of survey questions, reference the appendix.

1. Is human trafficking currently an issue for local police departments?
2. Based off your experience, do federal and state laws ensure law enforcement departments can effectively combat human trafficking?
3. Based off your experience, would more training on human trafficking be useful for law enforcement?
4. Based off your experience, would a different approach to combating human trafficking be useful for law enforcement?
5. Based off your experience, have previous enforcement methods, such as focusing on the traffickers, been as successful as hoped for?
6. Based off your experience, have state and local law enforcement departments used methods to focus on the “Johns” (i.e. purchasers in the trafficking exchange)?

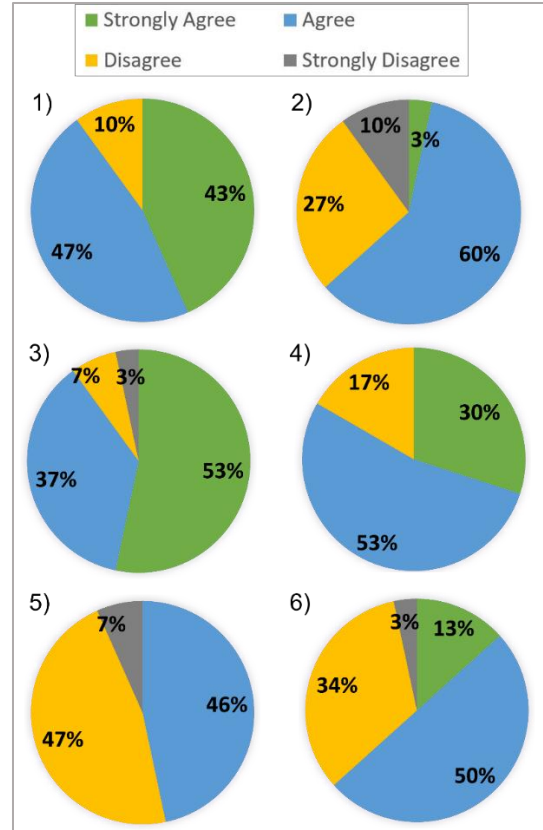


Figure 10: Primary Survey Questions

Figure 11: Survey Question Responses

Each of the six questions focused on least one of the research hypotheses, with a select few of the questions approaching the same hypothesis but from different perspectives. This technique of survey questioning allowed for the research to determine potential discrepancies in responses, and therefore pinpoint concepts to be further researched. Some of the questions received an overwhelming majority of responses in one way or another, while other questions were split closer in the middle. These questions will be discussed further in the coming sections.

Out of the six questions above, there are several key notions that should be discussed. The initial one being in question #1, with 90% of responses indicated they did perceive human trafficking to be an issue that concerns local law enforcement. Due to previous perceptions within law enforcement that human trafficking is a federal issue, this high of a percentage

indicates that the understanding of human trafficking, at least at the ground level, is beginning to shift. The responses from question #2 indicate that the emphasis for human trafficking legislation over the past 20 years has been somewhat effective. However, with 37% responding that federal and state legislation is not effective enough, the possibility of continuing to improve legislation is not necessarily disregarded. The responses from question #3 could, perhaps, be the most informative of all the questions. With 90% of respondents stating that more training would be helpful in combating human trafficking, this component pleads to be researched further. For questions #4 and #5, the same concept is questioned but with modifications to the wording.

With this approach, question #4 asked if a different approach to combating human trafficking would be effective for law enforcement with 87% of respondents indicating a different approach would be effective. Question #5, however, asked if the previous methods had been as effective as desired. Because this question is similar in nature to the previous question, it would be assumed the majority would have responded that previous approaches had not been satisfactory. However, only 53% responded that the previous methods were not as pleasing as desired. These results suggest one of two things, both of which could be considered and researched further. Either a new approach while incorporating prior methods could be efficient, or, due to the wording of question #5, respondents felt more obligated to defend previous methods and thus the discrepancy occurred. There is a clear indication that new methods could be both welcome and useful, so future research could assess what role previous methods would have in restructured approaches.

The final question, #6, differed from the previous questions but was built off the previous two questions regarding methods. Because of the reoccurring method of focusing on the “Johns” within the preliminary research and its consideration within the hypotheses, the final question

focused specifically on this technique. From the respondents, 63% indicated their law enforcement department or a department they have worked with has utilized this method. Considering that the majority of research on this approach is stationed abroad, the results proved to be surprising. If further research is to be conducted regarding law enforcement and/or the John’s approach, analyzing where the model has been implemented and its effectiveness would provide a valuable layer of understanding to the overall concept.

**Results**

When considering the culmination of this research, the survey responses, interviews, and preliminary research were all taken into consideration to determine the final results. To assess each hypothesis, a mix-method cross examination was conducted and, therefore, each hypothesis required a two-thirds validation. Validation from each method varied depending on the measurement performed. Survey validation was based purely on the responses from each question regarding the coordinating hypothesis. The interviews were measured through the concept analysis, which in turn either provided or restricted validation. The preliminary research, the most qualitative method used in this research, was analyzed based on quantity of current research and the results of those studies. The following chart, figure 11, displays the completed mix-method cross examination for this research.

Hypotheses	Laws	Training	Approach	Prior Methods	Johns
Survey	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Research	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓
Interviews	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
Final Determination	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓

*Figure 12: Human Trafficking & Law Enforcement Hypotheses Mix-Method Cross Examination*

The final results provide confirmation for future research and improvements to the training methods, enforcement approach, and the implementation of the John's enforcement model. Because this research examined what is and what could be, these results do not provide concrete validation that these improvements could be part of the solution to fighting human trafficking. Rather, they provide a starting point for future research to examine and implement into more fixated studies.

### **Limitations**

Several limitations were encountered throughout this research process. As mentioned as a critical factor that generated this research, the lack of research regarding both human trafficking and law enforcement did not provide a true foundation from which to work. However, the research that does currently exist was exceptionally conducted with insightful results. The interviews transformed into somewhat of limitations because of the precise information garnered from the interviews. If this research is expanded on with specific cross-sector focuses, interviews would be a tremendous research application due to the nature of many professionals' work. For both the interviews and surveys, a significant amount of limitations resulted from communication issues and barriers. The ability to contact and receive responses from law enforcement and non-profit organizations is not promising. To mitigate this limitation in future research, collecting contact information over a longer period of time could provide more results.

A final limitation that would ideally be expanded in future research is the overall focus region in comparison to the actual geographical location of responses. For this research, the Commonwealth of Kentucky was utilized as the main location within the southeastern region. As such, the majority of interview and survey responses were generated from within the

Commonwealth. Though this focal region served its intention, expanding the geographical location of research participants would provide a better breadth of experiences and information.

### **Discussion**

The implications from this research suggest that the legislation passed within the past two decades is currently adequate and does not necessarily need to be the emphasis point of future anti-human trafficking efforts. That, however, is stated with the understanding the changes to training or methods could require further legislation. Instead, the results from this research implicate the amount and quality of training law enforcement receives on human trafficking, which then necessitates renewed and enhanced enforcement efforts. The suggestions that inspire these results include the need for increased cross-sector collaboration and, perhaps, further implementation of the John's approach. Both suggestions would alter the training and enforcement methods.

Future research could explore in-depth implications of specific cross-sector collaborative effects to determine exactly how each sector could contribute and the extent of its effectiveness. For further steps in this research, the goal would be to solely engage law enforcement with a wider range of participants to better assess the current efforts and analyze how training methods have changed within the past ten years due to recent legislation. With these considerations in mind for future research, it is recommended that the training process is closely analyzed and research on specific enforcement techniques, such as cross-collaboration, is conducted.



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## Appendices

### Survey Questions

1. Is human trafficking currently an issue for local police departments?
2. If you work for or represent a law enforcement department, have you received training on human trafficking within the past four years?
3. If you work for or represent a non-law enforcement, human trafficking focused organization, have you worked with a law enforcement department within the past four years?
4. Based off your experience, do federal and state laws ensure law enforcement departments can effectively combat human trafficking?
5. Based off your experience, do state and local law enforcement departments receive training on human trafficking?
6. Based off your experience, would more training on human trafficking be useful for law enforcement?
7. Based off your experience, would a different approach to combating human trafficking be useful for law enforcement?
8. Based off your experience, have previous enforcement methods, such as focusing on the traffickers, been as successful as hoped for?
9. Based off your experience, have state and local law enforcement departments used methods to focus on the "Johns" (i.e. purchasers in the trafficking exchange)?
10. Are there any resources or methods that could help better prepare local law enforcement departments regarding human trafficking?

### Appendix A: Complete Survey Questions