

Cases of human trafficking in Texas during 1992 to 2006: A content analysis

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes whether Texas newspaper coverage focuses more on sex trafficking, labor trafficking, or incidents involving both. Secondly, it compares and contrasts the characteristics of traffickers and trafficking victims, as well as levels of trafficker cooperation. This study employs the statistical method of the content analysis with the process of human coder to analyze newspaper reports on human trafficking incidents occurring between January 1992 and December 2006 in the *LexisNexis Academic* database. The results indicate that Texas newspaper coverage is highly likely to report sex trafficking, as compared to labor trafficking, and that both males and females have an equal chance of becoming victims of human trafficking. Specifically, while females are likely to be trafficked for sex, males tend to be trafficked for labor. In terms of nationality, U.S. citizens tend to engage in sex trafficking while international citizens are likely to be involved in labor trafficking acts. Moreover, males who are 36 years old and older are the major group of both sex and labor traffickers. Also, sex trafficking is more likely to engage only one trafficker, while labor trafficking tends to be committed by traffickers who were identified as agents in smuggling/trafficking organizations.

Keywords: human trafficking, content analysis, LexisNexis, Texas, trafficking in persons, transnational crime

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INTRODUCTION

Other than terrorism, human trafficking, which has often been compared to modern slavery, is a vital problem that currently impacts societies across the globe. To be more specific, it has been estimated that 99 countries are engaged in the sex trafficking business, and of the total countries involved, 21 destination sites are in the West (Farr, 2004). Human trafficking produces between \$13 and \$20 billion per year (Bales, 2000b). The profits to traffickers range between 5 and 20 times the original purchase price while the victims receive no money (Schauer & Wheaton, 2006). The U.S. is the second largest market for human trafficking after Germany (Klueber, 2003; Mizus, Moody, Privado, & Douglas, 2003). It has been estimated that between 50,000 and 100,000 women are trafficked into the U.S every year (Hughes, 2001). Nevertheless, it is important to note that the number of trafficking victims is still ambiguous because these estimations have not been based on any empirical research (Lebov, 2010).

The study of human trafficking is essential since it has a significant impact on the global community. Human trafficking has been linked to a variety of societal ills, including forced prostitution and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV/AIDS. The epidemic of venereal diseases has led to inestimable human suffering as well as enormous economic cost (Hananberg & Rojanapithayakorn, 1998). Human trafficking has also impacted the dignity of all human beings. According to Schauer & Wheaton (2006), sex trafficking has had a substantial effect on “the dignity of the entire human family, and the fragile cultural structures of third-world and newly independent countries” (p. 155). Specifically, “sex trafficking separates family units and takes advantages of the vulnerabilities created by poverty, unemployment, war, and a lack of opportunity in society” (Schauer & Wheaton, 2006, p. 161). For these reasons, human trafficking has become a global concern in recent decades.

This study will make several contributions to the research on human trafficking. First, to date there is only a small amount of research examining human trafficking from a state and local perspective (e.g., Caye, 1995), while there is an abundance of research analyzing the human trafficking issue from an international perspective (e.g., Bales, 2005; Logan, Walker, & Hunt, 2009; Denton, 2010; Cirineo & Studnicka, 2010). In addition, even though there is no doubt that many offenders brought trafficking victims into the U.S. across the Mexico/U.S. border in Texas, only little research has been specifically conducted to examine the cases of human trafficking in the state of Texas.

Second, due to many obstacles (e.g., the incapability of law enforcement officials to collect data), reliable and accurate data regarding human trafficking is extremely difficult to collect and remains unavailable (U.S. Department of State, 2010; Office of the General Attorney, 2008). The 2010 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report indicated that although the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 required uniform data collection among federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, the successful data collection still did not occur (U.S. Department of State, 2010). Only Texas and five other states (Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, and Florida) mandate collecting data in a single database, but these six state governments failed to collect the fully official data regarding human trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2010). In the state of Texas, the only human-trafficking data, which is collected through the Human Trafficking Reporting System (HTRS), is unavailable prior to January 1st, 2007. Therefore, this study would provide valuable information about the nature of human trafficking since no official data was available prior to January, 2007.

Third, since human trafficking is an underreported crime lacking uniform data collection, the mass media can influence human trafficking policy and public attitudes toward this crime (Laczko & Gramegna, 2003; Denton, 2010). That is, the way law enforcement officials prevent and suppress human trafficking activities might be influenced by crime reports in the mass media, especially newspaper coverage (Vandenberg, 2007 as cited in Denton, 2010). This study has implications for both law enforcement agencies and the impact of the mass media on crime policy in Texas.

Similar to other studies (e.g., Busza, 2004; Petros, 2005; Vocks & Nijboer, 2000; Denton, 2010), this research employs a qualitative approach (content analysis) with the process of human coder to understand the nature of human trafficking in Texas. The first purpose of this study is to understand whether newspaper coverage in the state of Texas focuses more on sex trafficking, labor trafficking, or incidents involving both since there is little doubt that media could affect crime policies and law enforcement practices against human trafficking. The second purpose of this study is to analyze the characteristics of traffickers and human trafficking victims that appeared in Texas newspaper coverage. This study indicated that even though the 2010 TIP Report asserted that human trafficking in the U.S. primarily occurs for the purpose of labor, Texas newspaper coverage tends to report sex trafficking and related crimes more often. Therefore, law enforcement officers should be aware of the media's influences and balance the enforcement practices against both sex and labor trafficking.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions

It is first essential to clarify the definition of *human trafficking* because the reliability and the value of the content analysis depend on the definition of the content categories (see Singleton & Straits, 2010). Unfortunately, there is currently no global agreement on the definition of *human trafficking*. As Denton (2010) noted, some countries disagree with the term *human trafficking* which is defined by the United Nations in Trafficking in Persons Protocol. Also, many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have joined the debate over the term *human trafficking* as defined by the United Nations Protocol because they employ different definitions well-matched to the purpose of their approach to human trafficking (see Bales, 2000c; Schauer & Wheaton, 2006; Chuang, 1998). For instance, there is some disagreement about the definition of *sex trafficking*. Some scholars argued that women join the sex industry freely while others believed that prostitution is related to certain kinds of force (See Denton, 2010). In addition, regarding an argument about the term *force*, Schauer & Wheaton (2006) noted that the legal definition of *force* must be defined with extreme care. They explain that the over-inclusive definition of the term *force* will result in "mass exportations of women, whereas exploitation and traffickers will be ignored" (p. 150). On the contrary, the under-inclusive definition of the term *force* will lead to only a few victims receiving recovery services (Schauer & Wheaton, 2006).

Although there is still an ongoing debate over the definition of *human trafficking*, the regularly used definition of *human trafficking* is the one provided by the United Nations in Trafficking in Persons Protocol. Goodey (2008) noted that the U.N. definition is the international reference for understanding the global phenomenon of human trafficking. The United Nations Protocol (2000) defines *human trafficking* as follows:

Article 3 (a): “Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs” (p. 3).

Furthermore, the Office of Violence against Women (OVAW) (2000) specifically pointed out the terms of sex trafficking as follows:

The term *sex trafficking* means the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person, for the purpose of a commercial sex act, and that commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age (OVAW , 2000, p. 5).

In addition, the 2010 TIP report indicated people are highly likely to confuse some types of crimes with human trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2010). First, the 2010 TIP report pointed out that child pornography is not a form of sex trafficking unless children are induced to be involved in the sex business with the goal of producing child pornography (U.S. Department of State, 2010). Prostitution, moreover, is not sex trafficking if sex workers are willingly participating in the sex industry (U.S. Department of State, 2010). Also, kidnapping children for the purpose of illegal adoption is not a type of human trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2010).

Regarding labor trafficking, the 2010 TIP report noted that it consists of four major types including: “(1) bonded labor, (2) debt bondage among migrant laborers, involuntary, (3) domestic servitude, and (4) forced child labor” (US Department of State, 2010, p. 9). Many workers, especially in third world countries, are likely to be trafficked in a form of debt bondage as a result of the temptation of higher salaries (US Department of State, 2010). For involuntary domestic servitude, the 2010 TIP report specifically noted that “it is a unique form of forced labor, whose workplace is informal, connected to their off-duty living quarters, and not often shared with other workers” (U.S. Department of State, 2010, p. 9). In many cases, forced laborers were sexually abused and their illnesses were ignored by the employers (U.S. Department of State, 2010). In addition, they are not only victims of deceptive employment but also encounter a huge amount of debt associated with the promised employment in the U.S. (U.S. Department of State, 2010).

EXPLORING HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE UNITED STATES

A Brief Review of Human Trafficking in the U.S.

The U.S. is the source, transit, and destination country for human trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2010). Thailand, Philippines, India, Mexico, and Russia are the source

countries for women and children trafficked into the U.S. (Schauer & Wheaton, 2006; U.S. Department of State, 2010). Brussa (1998) similarly wrote that migrants from third world and Eastern European countries comprise the majority of women in the illegal sex industry in the U.S. The U.S. is the world's second largest destination country for human trafficking (Klueber, 2003; Schauer & Wheaton, 2006; Mizus et al., 2003), and the most common type of human trafficking in the U.S. is labor trafficking, including "domestic servitude, agriculture, manufacturing, janitorial services, hotel services, construction, health, and elder care, hair and nail salons, and strip club dancing" (U.S. Department of State, 2010, p. 338).

Regarding the number of trafficked persons in the U.S., Goodey (2008) asserts that the precise number of victims is unclear because the number of victims is based solely on the number of migrants. Similarly, Logan et al. (2009) noted that the number of U.S. trafficking victims is difficult to approximate, so the official estimate could fail to represent the nature of the problem. It is, nevertheless, estimated that about 50,000 to 100,000 women are trafficked into the U.S. yearly (Hughes 2001; U.S. Department of State, 2010; Richard, 2000). Flowers (2001), moreover, reports that between 100,000 to 300,000 children are annually exploited in the U.S. According to the 2010 TIP report, it is estimated that approximately 82 percent of foreign adult victims and 56 percent of foreign child victims are trafficked into the U.S. for labor trafficking (U.S. Department of Justice, 2010). In many cases, foreign victims tend to encounter a huge amount of debt associated with promised employment in the U.S. (U.S. Department of Justice, 2010).

It is also important to note that both U.S. and non-U.S. citizens can be victims of human trafficking. Unlike non-U.S. citizens, U.S. citizens tend to be trafficked for sex trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2010). According to the Office of the Attorney General (2011), the HTRS database indicated that, of the total sex trafficking victims in Texas, 189 were non-U.S. citizens, while 220 victims were U.S. citizens trafficked domestically. In addition, those who have high education levels could also be trafficking victims (Richard, 2000).

Procedures of Trafficking in the U.S.

Foreign victims are frequently trafficked into the U.S. in one of three ways: (1) the illegal use of legal documents; (2) the use of fake documents; and (3) without inspection (Schauer & Wheaton, 2006). Many foreign victims often enter the U.S. under tourist or student visas (U.S. Department of State, 2010). Traffickers use many tactics to control victims including, "threats, physical and sexual assault, taking away legitimate travel and immigration documents, and threats against family members back in the source country" (Schauer & Wheaton, 2006, p. 157). Klueber (2003) furthermore mentioned that workers become trafficking victims by responding to fraudulent advertisements, and seeking the help of smugglers to enter the developed countries for the purpose of economic opportunity.

Prosecution and Prevention of Human Trafficking

The 2010 TIP report showed that the U.S. government has made a great progress in prosecuting and preventing human trafficking problems (U.S. Department of State, 2010). The U.S. government supports and encourages a victim-centered approach in order to identify trafficking victims (U.S. Department of State, 2010). Moreover, many law enforcement officials were trained with this approach. Nevertheless, the 2010 TIP report indicated that the prevention

of human trafficking in the U.S. is still impeded by poor coordination between federal, state and local governments (U.S. Department of State, 2010).

According to the U.S. Department of State (2010), the 2010 TIP report indicated that 42 states enacted their own specific human-trafficking legislation and employed diverse definitions regarding the term human trafficking. These definition variations could obstruct the process of prosecuting traffickers and preventing human trafficking. To be more specific, if each state has their own definition of human trafficking in their legislation, which is unrelated to other states, it would be extremely difficult to build an effective collaboration between states. It should be pointed out that human trafficking is likely to be a networking crime and occurs in multiple states simultaneously rather than in one place. Schauer & Wheaton (2006), however, noted that the U.S. federal government has a good intention for advocating each state to pass its own trafficking laws since they expect this legislation would encourage local law enforcement officials to use it as a tool to detect, investigate, and prosecute traffickers.

Human Trafficking Cases in the State of Texas

The Office of the Attorney General (2008) reported that Texas is a main hub for human trafficking in the U.S. The government report indicated that one out of every five victims were trafficked into the U.S. through Texas along Interstate 10. It is also estimated that approximately 20 percent of the human trafficking victims who were identified nationally have been trafficked through Texas (Office of the Attorney, 2008). Similarly, the DOJ Report of Activities to Combat Human Trafficking in Fiscal Years 2001-2005 also indicated that Houston and Dallas are the most intense trafficking areas in the U.S. (Office of the Attorney, 2008). However, despite the clear evidence showing that Texas is central in human trafficking, it is extremely difficult to gather an accurate number of human trafficking cases (Office of the Attorney, 2008; Denton, 2010). In addition, Office of the Attorney General (2008) noted that the Texas State Government, like other states, fails to collect the comprehensive data and does not have their own statewide database.

One of the important factors that make the human trafficking cases difficult to track is because “traffickers may be charged with other violations, like kidnapping or sexual assault, in lieu of a human trafficking charge, or may accept plea bargains with lesser penalties” (Office of the Attorney, 2008, p. 10). Fortunately, despite the difficulty in collecting the comprehensive and accurate human trafficking data, local, state, and federal governments, as well as other non-government organizations (NGOs), have worked cooperatively to try to track the number of human trafficking cases. Consequently, the HTRS database was created and began collecting human trafficking data for the state of Texas as of January 1, 2007 (Office of the Attorney General, 2008).

The national HTRS database is overseen by Northeastern University and the Urban Institute and has the main goal of keeping track of human-trafficking incidents in the U.S. (Office of the Attorney General, 2011). The database collects human-trafficking information including “investigations, prosecutions, perpetrators, and victims” (Office of the Attorney General, 2011, p. 1). However, the Office of the Attorney General (2011) indicated that not all regions of Texas were reporting human-trafficking cases to the HTRS. In Texas, HTRS reports that there are 554 human trafficking investigations and the arrests of 132 suspects in four regions of Texas during January 1, 2007 to January 13, 2011 (Office of the Attorney General, 2011). Of the total arrests of the suspects:

“22 suspects were charged with violation of the federal law and 72 suspects were charged with violation of the state law...Of the 72 suspects who violate state law, 15 were charged with human trafficking, 24 were charged with prostitution-related charges, 15 were charged with rape, 7 were charged with kidnapping, 8 were charged with assault, and the remaining 3 were charged with pandering...In total, 29 suspects were convicted of a human trafficking-related crime” (Office of the Attorney General, 2011, p. 2). In addition, regarding information provided by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice

(TDCJ), the majority of offenders who served sentences for sex trafficking and related crimes was charged with forced prostitution (Office of the Attorney General, 2011). Specifically, there were 56 prisoners who served sentences for compelling prostitution-related offenses (Office of the Attorney General, 2011). Similarly, the HTRS and data provided by the Innocence Lost task forces indicated that 369 children were identified as trafficking victims from January 1st, 2007 to January 13th, 2011. Of the 369 trafficking victims, 248 children were trafficked for the purpose of sex (188 domestically, 26 internationally, and 34 of unknown origins) while 3 children were trafficked for the purpose of labor (2 internationally and 1 domestically), and 9 children were trafficked for both sex and labor (Office of the Attorney General, 2011).

LEGISLATION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT PRACTICES RESPONDING TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human Trafficking Legislation at the Federal Level

The U.S. Congress fights human trafficking through the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA). The major purpose of the 2000 TVPA is to suppress human trafficking, to protect trafficking victims, and to prosecute traffickers with harsh penalties (Office of the Attorney General, 2008). In addition, the 2000 TVPA advocates that states pass their own human trafficking laws based on a victim-centered approach. As the U.S. Department of Justice (2004) pointed out, the U.S. government developed a Model State Anti-Trafficking Criminal Statute to encourage states to pass standardized anti-trafficking legislation that fosters trafficking victim identification and criminal prosecution at the state level. The Office of the Attorney General (2008) noted that any efforts to prevent human trafficking are unlikely to be successful without adequate protection for victims.

Regarding this model, Schauer & Wheaton (2006) argue that police officers currently respond to human trafficking with the practice of a prostitution paradigm. Hence, they often misidentify human trafficking victims as offenders. Schauer & Wheaton (2006) argued that not all prostitutes voluntarily work in the sex industry; however, police generally view people who sell sexual favors as criminals. As a result, this perception makes human trafficking victims hesitant to report human-trafficking incidents because “they fear law enforcement and potential deportation” (Office of the Attorney General, 2008, p. 25). By contrast, with a trafficking paradigm (victim-centered approach), the same people are seen as victims.

Thus, under the 2000 TVPA, the federal and state government should focus more on victims in ways that work proactively to identify human trafficking victims, provide them good care, and encourage them to cooperate with the law enforcement officials to combat human trafficking (Office of the Attorney General, 2008). Consequently, after the enactment of the 2000

TVPA, 42 U.S. task forces were established to fight against human trafficking (Office of Attorney General, 2008). According to the Office of Attorney General (2008), the Department of Justice and its U.S. Attorney's Offices play important roles in handling the prosecution and investigation human trafficking at the federal level.

Texas Human Trafficking Legislation

It should first be noted that even though the U.S. Congress encourages states to pass their own laws, the state law was not intended to replace the federal law. In fact, it aims to facilitate state and local police officers to prosecute traffickers as well as to identify and protect human trafficking victims (Office of Attorney General, 2008). The U.S. Congress argues that local and state law enforcement officers are more likely than federal law enforcement officers to discover this type of crime. As of 2008, there were 39 states that passed human trafficking legislation. Texas and Washington were the first two states that enacted human trafficking laws, with the Texas human-trafficking law being passed in 2003 (Office of Attorney General, 2008).

To enhance the ability to fight against human trafficking, "Texas state government also added new laws requiring some businesses to post informational notices where human trafficking victims might see them" (Office of Attorney General, 2008, p. 9). In addition, the law also requires "the national human trafficking hotline number to be posted in overnight lodging establishments where crime has been prevalent" (Office of Attorney General, 2008, p. 9). Also, the law "allows a judge to issue an order authorizing the inception of wire, oral or electronic communications (wiretap) if the prosecutor can show probable cause that interception will provide evidence of human trafficking" (Office of Attorney General, 2008, p. 9). Therefore, it is clear that the Texas state government is making strides toward combating human trafficking.

Texas Law Enforcement Practices

Even though Texas law enforcement officials are adequately equipped to combat human trafficking by legislation, their practices are still stymied by many factors (Office of the attorney General, 2008, 2011; U.S. Department of State, 2010). The first factor is perception of law enforcement officials toward human trafficking. Northeastern University in collaboration with Arizona State University and Sam Houston State University conducted the survey of 42 Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) task forces including five task forces located in Houston. The survey reported that law enforcement officials perceive human trafficking as non-existent in their local communities (Office of the Attorney General, 2008). As a result, they are rarely prepared to investigate human trafficking cases (Office of the Attorney General, 2008). In addition, "when law enforcement agencies investigate human trafficking, it tends to be law enforcement participation in federally-funded human trafficking task forces, as compared to non-task force agencies" (Office of the Attorney General, 2008, p. 16). Texas relies greatly on federal resources to discover, investigate, as well as prosecute human trafficking because human-trafficking cases are complicated and require more resources (e.g., time and person) (Office of the Attorney General, 2008). The Office of the Attorney General (2008) similarly noted that the state human-trafficking legislation is rarely used to prosecute to human-trafficking offenders. At the state level, human-trafficking crimes are likely to be discovered by state and local law enforcement officers unexpectedly (Office of the Attorney General, 2008). In other words, law enforcement

officers tend to discover human trafficking while investigating other crimes (Office of the Attorney General, 2008).

One interview conducted with a number of Texas prosecutors indicated that they are unwilling to place human trafficking cases under the rubric of state legislation because “the burden of proof for the requirement of force is too great, or because they are unfamiliar with the statute” (Office of the Attorney General, 2008, p. 33). Consequently, prosecutors in the state of Texas often charge the human trafficking offenders with another crime, and, unfortunately, they tend to be charged with lesser penalties than those dictated by state human-trafficking legislation (Office of the Attorney General, 2008).

The second factor that obstructs Texas law enforcement attempts to combat human trafficking is lack of training in identifying victims, and investigating, as well as prosecuting traffickers (Office of the Attorney General, 2008). This deficiency makes law enforcement officials ineffective in suppressing human trafficking. As a result of a lack of adequate training, law enforcement officers are often confused by human smuggling, and victims are often treated as criminals (Office of the Attorney General, 2008). In addition, it was also reported that many law enforcement officers are frequently perplexed about the differences between sex trafficking and prostitution; as a result, victims are unlikely to be identified (Office of the Attorney General, 2008). Another factor is the lack of information regarding the nature of human trafficking crime. The Office of the Attorney General (2008) specifically pointed out that “without sufficient information on the numbers of victims or potential victims, the coordination of statewide resources and human trafficking strategies may be hampered” (Officer of the Attorney General, 2008, p. 25).

METHODOLOGY

As stated above, the study of human trafficking was largely limited by the lack of official data. Thus, most of the human-trafficking studies build their own informative databases with qualitative research techniques in order to collect human trafficking data (e.g., Busza, 2004; Petros, 2005; Vock & Nijboer, 2000; Denton, 2010), and the most convenient way to access human-trafficking data is to analyze information from the mass media (Denton, 2010; Dottridge, 2002). Hence, content analysis was employed for this study. Singleton & Straits (2010) pointed out that “content analysis involves the systematic description of either verbal or nonverbal materials” (p. 420). With content analysis, the researchers can create a sampling, define recording units, and construct content categories for analysis (Pedhazur & Schemlkin, 1991 as cited in Boots & Heide, 2006). Therefore, this study analyzes crime news in Texas newspaper coverage between 1992 and 2006 through the statistical method of the content analysis with the process of human coder. The time period between 1992 and 2006 was selected in the current study since no official data on human trafficking in Texas was available before January, 2007.

Regarding the reliability and value of the content analysis, Singleton & Straits (2010) noted that whether researchers use a human coder or computer, “the reliability and the overall value of the content analysis depend on the clear formulation of content categories and of definitions or rules for assigning units to categories” (p. 421). To increase the reliability of the research method, this study employs the universal definition of human trafficking and the content categories of human trafficking provided by the United Nations in Trafficking in Persons Protocol. After the clear construction of coding categories and definition for assigning units, the

material (Texas newspaper coverage) was coded in the study according to the coding categories and system of enumeration (appearance and frequency measures) (see Singleton & Straits, 2010).

However, it is crucial to point out that the amount of human trafficking news which is available in the electronic database is the limitation of the use of content analysis in the current study (LexisNexis) (see also Denton, 2010). Human trafficking news first appeared in 1992; therefore, the time period of this study was limited to dates from 1992 or later. Another limitation of the content analysis in this study is that the materials (newspaper online articles) were not written with the intention for the frame of analysis of the current study (Denton, 2010). Thus, to reduce the impact of this limitation, the researcher assesses only specific characteristics defined in collected newspaper articles (Denton, 2010). In other words, the researcher did not interpret information but coded only information which is directly available in Texas newspaper articles because smaller recoding units tend to be more reliably than larger recoding units (see Denton, 2010; Singleton et al., 2010).

Data Collection

The LexisNexis Academic search engine was used as the data collection tool to compile cases of human trafficking offenses which occurred in Texas from January, 1992 to December, 2006. There are two advantages of utilizing the LexisNexis Academic search engine. First, LexisNexis Academic database of newspaper is often utilized in the criminal justice field when lacking systematical data of crime in order to understand the nature of specific crimes since it provides comprehensive newspaper articles over several decades (e.g., Prutt, 2008; Levin, Rabrenovic, Ferraro, Doran, & Methe, 2007). Second, the LexisNexis Academic database of newspapers provides Texas news sources which allows researchers to collect data from a state perspective. Texas news sources includes daily and weekly newspapers, as well as news services in the Texas area (Pruitt, 2008). Specifically, it includes:

“1) one wire service: Associated Press Wire Service; 2) six daily newspapers: Austin American Statesman, Corpus Christi Caller-Times, Dallas Morning News, Fort Worth Star Telegram, Houston Chronicle, and San Antonio Express News; and 3) two weekly newspapers: Dallas Observer, and Houston Press” (Pruitt, 2008, p. 90).

With the advantages of the LexisNexis Academic database, researchers can analyze the nature of human trafficking despite the lack of the systematical data collection on human trafficking in Texas.

Regarding the procedures of data collection, there are three steps in collecting human trafficking data for this study: 1) initial search, 2) advance search, and 3) attribute coding by case (see Denton, 2010). Before starting the first step, the search criteria were considered in order to amass newspaper articles pertaining to human trafficking. The following search criteria were used in order to maximize the capture of newspaper articles that were related to human trafficking, and they were based on the definition of human trafficking provided by the United Nations in Trafficking in Persons Protocol, including the following terms: 1) brothel, 2) immigrant, 3) labor, 4) massage, 5) pimp, 6) pornography, 7) prostitute, 8) prostitution, 9) rape, 10) sex, 11) slave, 12) sweatshop, 13) trafficking, 14) underage, 15) undercover.

Then, the first step is begun by searching for human trafficking articles with these fifteen keywords. In the next step, the results from initial searches were eliminated in order to get

articles pertaining solely to human trafficking. For the third step, PDF versions of all remaining newspaper articles related to human trafficking were downloaded into the coding database of this study. Then, each case was assessed for the characteristics of traffickers, victims, as well as the level of trafficker cooperation with others, so as to better understand the nature of human trafficking in Texas.

FINDINGS

In the first step of data collection (initial search), after searching for human trafficking cases by using these fifteen keywords, Texas newspaper coverage of human trafficking crime in LexisNexis Academic database begins with 573 newspapers in 1992. The results of the newspaper articles at the initial stage of data collection during January 1992 to December 2006 are presented in Figure 1 (Appendix). The results demonstrated that there were 11,617 newspaper articles containing search keywords between 1992 and 2006. The analysis of the data between 1992 and 2006 indicated that five newspapers (Houston Chronicle, Dallas Morning News, Austin-American Statesman, San Antonio Express News, and Forth Worth Star Telegram) provided the majority of human trafficking cases over this time period. Nevertheless, there are several newspaper articles that did not relate to human trafficking offenses in these results. Most of the articles related to drug trafficking, commercial sex work, kidnapping, rape, and child pornography are not types of human trafficking. The 2010 TIP Report noted that child sexual images that are produced by drawing and computer generating as well as distribution and possession of child pornography are not types of sex trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2010). In addition, kidnapping and unlawful buying of a child for the purpose of offering that child for adoption are not considered acts of human trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2010).

In the second step of data collection (advance search), all newspaper articles which did not relate to human trafficking are eliminated. As stated in Table 1 (Appendix), the results of human trafficking cases that appeared in Texas newspaper coverage during 1992 to 2006. The results indicated that there were 380 human-trafficking newspaper reports between 1992 and 2006. Of the total human-trafficking articles, 86.05 percent ($n = 327$) are related to sex trafficking while 12.37 percent ($n = 47$) are related to labor trafficking. In addition, 1.58 percent ($n = 6$) are newspaper articles that reported both sex and labor trafficking.

As stated in Figure 2 (Appendix), the major type of sex trafficking is compelling prostitution or luring a victim for commercial sex (57.19 percent; $n = 187$), followed by child pornography (20.18 percent; $n = 66$), other offenses (15.29 percent; $n = 50$), and kidnapping for sexual purpose (7.34 percent; $n = 24$), respectively. Regarding the category of other offenses, it includes offenses which are acts of sex trafficking besides the other three forms listed above. An example of a sex-trafficking offense which is in the category of other offenses is a case occurring in September 8th, 2001, in which a Pasadena couple was arrested because the woman offered money to a teenage girl to have a baby for them, while the man was accused of sexually assaulting the girl. Another example of a case in the category of other offenses is a case, in which two 14-year-old runaways were lured into a party by a man for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

As indicated in Figure 3 (Appendix), for newspaper articles related to labor trafficking, forced labor (80.85 percent; $n = 38$) is the main form of labor trafficking, followed by involuntary domestic servitude (12.765 percent; $n = 6$), bonded labor (4.255 percent; $n = 2$), and other offenses (2.13 percent; $n = 1$), respectively. Bonded labor is related to the unlawful use of a

bond or debt as part of the terms of employment (U.S. Department of State, 2010). There are two cases of bonded labors in the analysis of the data between 1992 and 2006 and both cases occurred in 2002. Regarding the category of other offenses, one case occurred in March, 1999, in which two Honduran sisters from Houston rented their babies to undocumented immigrants who were trying to bypass procedures along the Texas/Mexico border.

In the third step of data collection (attribute coding by case), all human-trafficking articles were downloaded into the coding database of this study in the form of PDF files. Researchers then analyze each case and conduct attribute coding by case (see also Denton, 2010). Each article was assessed for relevance to the study topic of specific traits of traffickers, trafficking victims, as well as the level of trafficker cooperation with others, and then was classified into three types of human trafficking: 1) sex trafficking, 2) labor trafficking, and 3) involving sex and labor trafficking.

Characteristics of traffickers are presented in Table 2 (Appendix). It focuses on the following characteristics: gender, age, and nationality. Gender is divided into male and female. The results demonstrated that men (84.68 percent; $n = 420$) tend to commit human-trafficking crime more, as compared to women (15.32 percent; $n = 76$). Specifically, regarding sex trafficking, males (87.65 percent; $n = 355$) are more likely to commit sex-trafficking crimes, as compared to females (12.35 percent; $n = 50$). Similarly, males (73.97 percent; $n = 54$) also tend to commit labor-trafficking offenses more often, as compared to females (26.03 percent; $n = 19$). In addition, men (61.11 percent; $n = 11$) are more likely to engage in crime related to both sex and labor trafficking, as compared to women (38.89 percent; $n = 7$).

Age is divided into five categories: 1) unassigned; 2) under 18; 3) 18-25; 4) 26-35; and 5) 36 and older. Males aged 36 and older (41.98 percent; $n = 170$) are the major group who commit sex-trafficking crimes, followed by males aged between 26-35 (23.21 percent; $n = 94$), and males aged between 18-25 (14.07 percent; $n = 57$), respectively. Similarly, for labor-trafficking offenses, males aged 36 and older (34.25 percent; $n = 25$) tend to commit this type of crime more often, as compared to other groups. For crime involving both sex and labor trafficking, males aged between 26-35 (27.78 percent; $n = 5$) and female aged 36 and older (27.78 percent; $n = 5$) equally commit this form of crime.

Nationality was divided into U.S. and non-U.S. citizens. U.S. citizens (75.20 percent; $n = 373$) are more likely to commit human trafficking, as compared to non-U.S. citizens (20.36 percent; $n = 101$). There were 22 cases (4.44 percent) for which articles did not identify the nationality of trafficker(s). Specifically, U.S. citizens (81.73 percent; $n = 331$) tend to engage in sex-trafficking crimes. Similarly, U.S. citizens (83.33 percent; $n = 15$) also are the major group who commit crimes involving both sex and labor trafficking. In contrast, non-U.S. citizens (63.01 percent; $n = 46$) are more likely to commit labor-trafficking crimes, as compared to U.S. citizens.

Table 3 (Appendix) presents level of trafficker cooperation with others. Regarding the sex trafficking cases that could be determined, 80.92 percent ($n = 263$) involves only one trafficker while 7.08 percent ($n = 23$) involves two or more individuals. Of the total cases, 5.54 percent ($n = 18$) were trafficking incidents where the trafficker committed the crime with family member(s), 3.38 percent ($n = 11$) of the total incidents involved traffickers acted in an organized crime ring, and 3.08 percent ($n = 10$) included traffickers who were identified as participatory agents in smuggling/trafficking organizations.

For labor trafficking, of those 47 cases that could be determined, 63.83 percent ($n = 30$) of trafficking incidents involved traffickers identified as agents in smuggling/trafficking

organizations while 8.51 percent (n = 4) were incidents involving only one trafficker. Traffickers acting with family member(s) comprised 12.765 percent (n = 6) of the trafficking incidents. Equally, 12.765 percent (n = 6) were incidents where traffickers acted in organized crime ring. Two or more traffickers were involved with 2.13 percent (n = 1) of the total incidents.

For crime involving sex and labor trafficking, of those 6 case that could be determined, 33.33 percent (n = 2) of the trafficking incidents involved two or more individuals, 33.33 percent (n = 2) involved traffickers who acted in an organized crime ring, and 33.33 percent (n = 2) were trafficking incidents where the organizational level involved traffickers identified as agents in smuggling/trafficking organizations.

Table 4 (Appendix) presents the estimated characteristics of trafficking victims in Texas during 1992 to 2006. Gender, age, and nationality was assessed and coded by case into three categories of human trafficking forms: 1) sex trafficking, 2) labor trafficking and 3) both sex and labor trafficking. Regarding gender, during this time period, females (57.84 percent; n = 413) are more likely to be human trafficking victims, as compared to males (42.16 percent; n = 301). Specifically, for sex trafficking, females (72.30 percent; n = 261) tend to be trafficking victims more often, as compared to males (27.70 percent; n = 100). For labor trafficking, males (59.64 percent; n = 201) are more likely to be trafficked, as compared to females (40.36 percent; n = 136). For offenses involving both sex and labor trafficking, of the total cases that could be determined, females (100 percent; n = 16) tend to be victims for crime involving sex and labor trafficking for the majority of cases.

Victims' age was divided into seven categories: 1) under 10, 2) between 10-14, 3) between 15-17, 4) between 18-25, 5) between 18-25, 6) between 26-35, and 7) unknown. For sex trafficking and related crimes, females aged 10-14 (19.94 percent; n = 72) are the most likely to be trafficked for the purpose of sex, followed by females aged 15-17 (15.79 percent; n = 57), males aged 10-14 (11.08 percent; n = 40), and males aged 15-17 (10.53 percent; n = 38), respectively. By comparison, only 1.94 percent (n = 7) of sex-trafficking cases involved victims who are aged 36 and older. However, of those that could be determined, there were 66 trafficked women whose age was not identified by the newspaper articles.

Each labor-trafficking case that appeared in the newspaper articles usually involved multiple victims; consequently, the articles are less likely to report the age of each trafficking victim. Of the total cases that could be determined, the age of 191 male victims (56.68 percent) and 121 female victims (35.91 percent) are not identified in the newspaper articles. For male victims, there are five victims aged below 14 (1.48 percent). Equally, five victims are aged 26 and older (1.48 percent). For female victims, six were aged between 10-25 (1.78 percent) while nine were aged 26 and older (2.67 percent). For crimes involving both sex and labor trafficking, women aged 15-17 (62.5 percent; n = 10) comprise the major groups who tend to be trafficked in this form of crime. Two cases (12.5 percent) involved females aged 26-35. Nevertheless, of the total cases related to both sex and labor trafficking that could be determined, four females (25 percent) were identified as victims, but the newspaper articles did not report their ages.

In terms of the nationality of the trafficking victims, international citizens (58.54 percent; n = 418) tend to be victims of human trafficking more often, as compared to U.S. citizens (35.57 percent; n = 254). However, for sex-trafficking, U.S. citizens (68.14 percent; n = 246) are more likely to be victims of sex trafficking, as compared to non-U.S. citizens (22.165 percent; n = 80). There were 35 cases (9.695 percent) for which newspaper reports did not identify the nationality of the sex-trafficking victims. In contrast, for labor-trafficking, U.S. citizens (0.89 percent; n = 3) are less likely to be trafficked for labor, as compared to non-U.S. citizens (97.03 percent; n =

327). In addition, of the total labor-trafficking incidents that could be determined, there were seven cases (2.08 percent) for which the nationality of the trafficking victims is not identified. Similarly, for crime involving labor and sex trafficking, international citizens (68.75 percent; n = 11 cases) are more likely to be victims of this type of crime, as compared to U.S. citizens (31.25 percent; n = 5 cases).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study has two purposes. The first purpose is to analyze the types of human trafficking covered most by Texas newspapers coverage from 1992 to 2006. The second purpose is to compare and contrast the characteristics of traffickers, trafficking victims, as well as the level of trafficker cooperation, so as to better understand the nature of human-trafficking crimes in Texas.

Regarding the first purpose, it is essential to point out that understanding the relationship between the media (newspaper coverage) and crime is valuable to both policy makers and law enforcement officials since an abundance of previous research posited the significant impacts of mass media on crime perception and crime policy (e.g., Pfeiffer et al., 2005; Dowler, 2003; Garofalo, 1981; Surette, 1990, 1998; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1980). Dowler (2003) noted that the construction of the criminal justice system and criminality are largely influenced by the mass media. In addition, mass media plays an important role in shaping the public perception of crime (Dowler, 2003). Unfortunately, the perception of crime is likely to be misrepresented by the mass media (Dowler, 2003). Pfeiffer et al. (2005) also affirm Dowler's argument since they studied the impact of media on crime perception and crime policy in Germany, and the results indicated that even though the official police records showed that crime rates have decreased, respondents tend to think crime is increasing due to the overrepresentation of crime on the media.

For human trafficking, there is little doubt about the impact of mass media (especially in local newspapers) on this type of crime since it is an underreported crime, and there is currently no uniform data collection (Laczko et al., 2003; Denton, 2010). Like other states, Texas has no statewide database on human trafficking. Even though the national HTRS database is now gathering information about human trafficking in the state of Texas, this system was recently established and has only collected the data in Texas since January, 2007. Consequently, there is no doubt that Texas crime policies to prevent, protect, and prosecute criminals tend to rely on public pressure, which is likely to be shaped and influenced by the regional mass media.

Even though the 2010 TIP Report asserted that, in the U.S., human trafficking primarily occurs for the purpose of labor and "most commonly in domestic servitude, agriculture, manufacturing, janitorial services, hotel services, construction, health and elder care, hair and nail salons, and strip club dancing," this study contradicts these findings (U.S. Department of State, 2010, p. 338). The results of this study demonstrated that Texas newspaper coverage tends to report sex trafficking and related crime (e.g., compelling prostitution, luring a victim for commercial sex, kidnapping for sexual purpose, and child pornography) (86.05 percent; n = 327) rather than labor trafficking (e.g., bonded labor, involuntary domestic servitude, and force labor) (12.37 percent; n = 47).

In interpreting these findings, it is essential to note that crime involving violence and sex is a popular topic in both news and entertainment and is disproportionately represented in the mass media, especially in local newspapers and television news, since it attracts public attention

and boosts advertising rates (see Garofalo, 1981; Pfeiffer et al., 2005). For news consumers, crime stories, especially those containing violence and sexual content, provide not only information but excitement as well (Schulze, 1992 as cited in Pfeiffer et al., 2005). Thus, it is not surprising that sex trafficking and related crimes are highly likely to be represented, as compared to labor-trafficking crimes, since articles containing sex and violence content could be utilized as a part of marketing strategy in order to compete with other newspapers.

According to the second purpose, this study attempts to understand the nature of human trafficking acts (e.g., characteristics of traffickers, trafficking victims, as well as human trafficking events) because, to date, the knowledge base regarding human trafficking in the academic and law enforcement communities is still limited (Denton, 2010; U.S. Department of State, 2010; Office of the Attorney General, 2011). Very little research analyzes the nature of this crime from the state perspective largely due to lack of accessible data (Denton, 2010). Consequently, this study provides valuable information since it compared and contrasted the trafficking behaviors of both sex trafficking and labor trafficking through examining Texas newspapers' reports. Understanding specific traits of traffickers and victims as well as the level of trafficker cooperation can shed light on the root cause of human trafficking; hence, law enforcement officials could provide protection, prevention, and education to the right targeted groups. Moreover, an abundance of research found very close agreement between police statistical data and newspaper reports with regard to characteristics of offenders (e.g., gender and race) (e.g., Graber, 1980; Garofalo, 1981; Dussuyer, 1979; Cumberbatch & Beardsworth, 1976).

Regarding the sex trafficking acts, the results indicated that females (72.30 percent; $n = 261$) tend to be trafficked for sex, as compared to males (27.70 percent; $n = 100$). In terms of age, both males (27.42 percent; $n = 99$) and females (44.60 percent; $n = 161$) who are aged below 18 years old are highly likely to be victims of sex trafficking and related crime, as compared to other groups. In terms of nationality, U.S. citizens (68.14 percent; $n = 246$) tend to be trafficked domestically for the purpose of sex, as compared to international citizens (22.16 percent; $n = 80$). For the specific traits of sex traffickers, there is no doubt that the major group of sex traffickers are males who are 36 years old and older (41.98 percent; $n = 170$), as compared to other groups. In addition, U.S. citizens (83.33 percent; $n = 331$) tend to engage in sex trafficking and related crime, as compared to non-U.S. citizens (12.84 percent; $n = 52$). Also, sex-trafficking events are likely to involve only one trafficker (80.92 percent; $n = 263$).

For labor-trafficking incidents, males (59.64 percent; $n = 201$) are more likely to be trafficked, as compared to females (40.36 percent; $n = 136$). In terms of the age of labor-trafficking victims, most of the newspaper reports rarely indicate the age of trafficking victims. This is because this type of crime is likely to occur with many victims for each case. There were 191 male victims (56.68 percent) and 121 female victims (35.91 percent) whose ages were not identified in Texas newspaper reports. Regarding the nationality of labor-trafficking victims, U.S. citizens (0.89 percent; $n = 3$) are less likely to be involved, as compared to international citizens (97.03 percent; $n = 327$). In terms of characteristics of labor traffickers, males who are 36 years old and older (34.25 percent; $n = 25$) are more likely to be involved in labor-trafficking crimes, as compared to other groups. In terms of the nationality of labor traffickers, U.S. citizens (36.99 percent; $n = 27$) are less likely to engage in labor trafficking, as compared to international citizens (63.01 percent; $n = 46$). Moreover, regarding the level of trafficker cooperation with others, labor trafficking events tend to involve traffickers identified as agents in smuggling/trafficking organizations (63.83 percent; $n = 30$).

To advocate for a greater understanding of the nature of human trafficking, it is important to note the similarities and differences between sex and labor trafficking. According to these findings, females are likely to be trafficked for sex while males tend to be trafficked for labor. In addition, U.S. citizens tend to be trafficked for sex; however, they are less likely to be trafficked for labor. Regarding traffickers, males who are 36 years old and older are the major group who tends to engage in both sex and labor trafficking incidents. For sex trafficking, compelling prostitution is the major form of sex trafficking. Moreover, while U.S. citizens are more likely to be involved in sex trafficking, non-U.S. citizens tend to engage in labor trafficking. In addition, while sex trafficking events likely engage only one trafficker, labor trafficking events tend to be committed by traffickers who were identified as agents in smuggling/trafficking organizations.

It should be pointed out that these results are consistent with previous research. Richard (2000) noted that not only women but men have an opportunity to be victims of human trafficking as well. Moreover, according to the U.S. department of State (2010), the 2010 TIP Report posited that, in the U.S., human trafficking are more likely to be labor trafficking. That is, foreign victims tend to be trafficked into the U.S. for the purpose of illegal labor. Specifically, 82 percent of foreign adult victims and 56 percent of foreign child victims are victims of labor trafficking in the U.S. (U.S. Department of State, 2010). Also, the HTRS database reported that for sex trafficking acts in Texas, U.S. citizens are more likely to be sex-trafficking victims, as compared to non-U.S. citizens (Office of the Attorney General, 2011). Regarding the characteristics of traffickers, there is no surprise in these findings, reporting that adult males tend to be traffickers for both sex and labor. Moreover, similar to the results, Office of the Attorney General (2011) reported that the majority of offenders who served sentences for sex trafficking and related crimes were charged with compelling prostitution.

Suggestions and Policy Implications

This research asserts that policy makers as well as law enforcement officers should be aware of the influences of mass media (local newspaper coverage) on the perception of human trafficking. Without the human-trafficking statewide database, there is little doubt that in Texas, crime policy aiming to fight this crime might sometimes be created by public pressure whose crime perceptions are largely shaped and influenced by mass media. Despite the fact that labor trafficking primarily occurs in the U.S., policy makers might come under heavy pressure to focus their attentions mainly on sex trafficking as a result of the overrepresentation of that crime in the media. In other words, the presentation of crime news in the mass media is the important factor for the increase in public pressure for more effective policing and harsher punishment (Garofalo, 1981; Surette, 1998; Dowler, 2003).

Another policy implication is that law enforcement officials should balance enforcement practices against sex and labor trafficking. As Denton (2010) noted, previous studies reported that the policy that attempted to prevent human trafficking by only addressing sex trafficking (e.g., criminalization of prostitution) is ineffective since it does not address the core cause of trafficking, which is for the purpose of labor. Law enforcement officers and policy makers should also raise awareness of the association between the impact of mass media and crime perceptions (see Pfeiffer et al., 2005). Due to public pressure on sex trafficking related to the impact of the media, police officers are highly likely to address sex trafficking and related crime, as compared to labor trafficking. The U.S. Department of State (2010) pointed out that the important reason that state law enforcement agencies tend to investigate and prosecute sex

trafficking is because “law enforcement relies on its pre-existing vice units devoted to prostitution enforcement, whereas there were no comparable pre-existing structures for involuntary servitude in labor sectors” (p. 340). Nevertheless, according to the findings of this study, it is crucial to point out that the cost of labor trafficking might sometimes outweigh that of sex trafficking since, in each case, the number of trafficking victims for labor is likely to be higher than for sex. For instance, on May 16, 2002, Fort Worth Star Telegram (Texas) reported that law enforcement officials raided six bars and seven homes and found that more than 30 young Honduran women were trafficked into Fort Worth, Texas, and were forced to work as barmaids in nightclubs in order to pay off smuggling fees up to \$8,500 per person and additional debts for housing, food, clothing, and transportation. Consequently, for these reasons, balancing the division of law-enforcement resources between sex and labor trafficking is an important factor for addressing human trafficking crime on the right track.

It is essential to note that this study provides crucial information regarding the characteristics of trafficking victims and traffickers. Despite the issue of generalizing the findings, this study could still be used as a guideline for the suppression of human trafficking. Specifically, law enforcement officials should provide further protection and education to both males and females less than 18 years of age in order to reduce their vulnerability to becoming victims of human trafficking. Regarding sex traffickers, Texas law enforcement agencies should be trained and prepared to investigate sex trafficking and related crime independently since the Office of the Attorney General (2008) reported that Texas law enforcement agencies tend to combat human trafficking (both sex and labor trafficking) with the cooperation with federally-funded human trafficking task forces. This is because the findings of this study demonstrated that sex trafficking incidents in Texas are more likely to be individual crimes (engaging only one trafficker), and both traffickers and trafficking victims are likely to be U.S. citizens. In contrast to the nature of sex trafficking, Texas law enforcement agencies should simultaneously have better cooperation with federal human-trafficking task forces in order to investigate and prosecute labor trafficking and related crimes since labor trafficking incidents tend to engage smuggling/and or trafficking organizations, and both traffickers and trafficking victims are likely to be non-U.S. citizens. Consequently, with only effort of the Texas State Government, it would be extremely hard to address labor-trafficking crimes.

Limitations

Due to the nature of human trafficking, even though this study, like other research in the human-trafficking field, attempts to address limitations that prior studies mentioned, some limitations still occur. First, this study is based on the LexisNexis Academic database, and it does not cover all forms of the mass media (i.e., television, internet, magazines, and some newspapers). In addition, the amount of news reports on human trafficking, which is available in the LexisNexis Academic database, is another limitation. Because of the limited amount of crime news on human trafficking, the time period of this study was restricted to begin only in 1992. The third limitation is that newspaper online reports were not written with the purpose for the frame of analysis of this study; as a result, there are some missing data (e.g., the age of trafficking victims for labor). In addition, as Denton (2010) pointed out “the validity of the information contained within the newspaper articles regarding each individual trafficking event was not corroborated in all cases” (p. 22). Another limitation in studying human trafficking is the lack of global agreement on the definition of human trafficking (see Denton, 2010; Schauer &

Wheaton, 2006; Chuang, 1998). Even though the definition of human trafficking which is provided by the United Nations in Trafficking in Persons Protocol is widely accepted among many nations, there is still some debate regarding this term.

According to Denton (2010), “regarding unreported human trafficking crimes, it is expected that many cases of human trafficking remain unreported to the government, police, or media; this is true of all crime” (p. 22). Furthermore, as stated earlier, previous research found very close agreement between police statistical data and newspaper reports with regard to characteristics of offenders (e.g., Graber, 1980; Garofalo, 1981; Dussuyer, 1979; Cumberbatch & Beardsworth, 1976). Consequently, although all human-trafficking cases might not be representative in this study, the collected data regarding human trafficking incidents in the current study represent a portion of cases that occur (see Denton, 2010).

Future Research

Further research is required in order to analyze whether the findings of this study are representative of the overall phenomenon of human trafficking in Texas. News databases on other media technologies that contain information about human trafficking cases (e.g., television news) and other news online databases (e.g., Google News Archives [GNA] on-line search engine) should be employed in order to cultivate a greater understanding of human trafficking acts in Texas. Moreover, the time period should be extended from the current time period in order to analyze whether there is any difference in the nature of human-trafficking crimes. In addition, other content categories, such as human trafficking arrests and prosecution, are recommended for further research. Finally, examining the content of news media presentation regarding human trafficking in both state and international perspective is also suggested in order to compare and contrast the characteristics of traffickers, trafficking victims, and trafficking events. In conclusion, according to Denton (2010), it should be noted that “although some may take issue with the use of media as a resource for data collection, such issues should not dissuade individuals from the notion that media and current academic descriptions of human trafficking are likely inaccurate and one-sided” (p. 23).

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APPENDIX

Figure 1: The number of newspaper articles containing search keywords between 1992 and 2006.

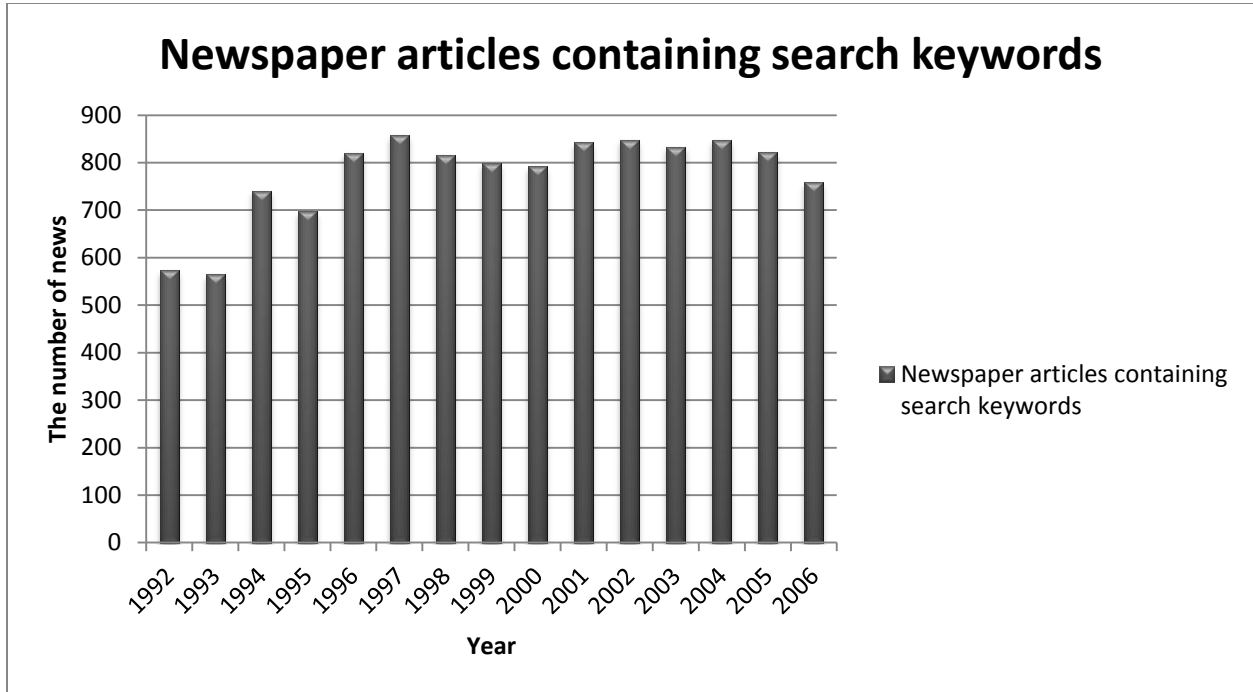


Figure 2: Forms of sex trafficking that occur in Texas during 1992 to 2006.

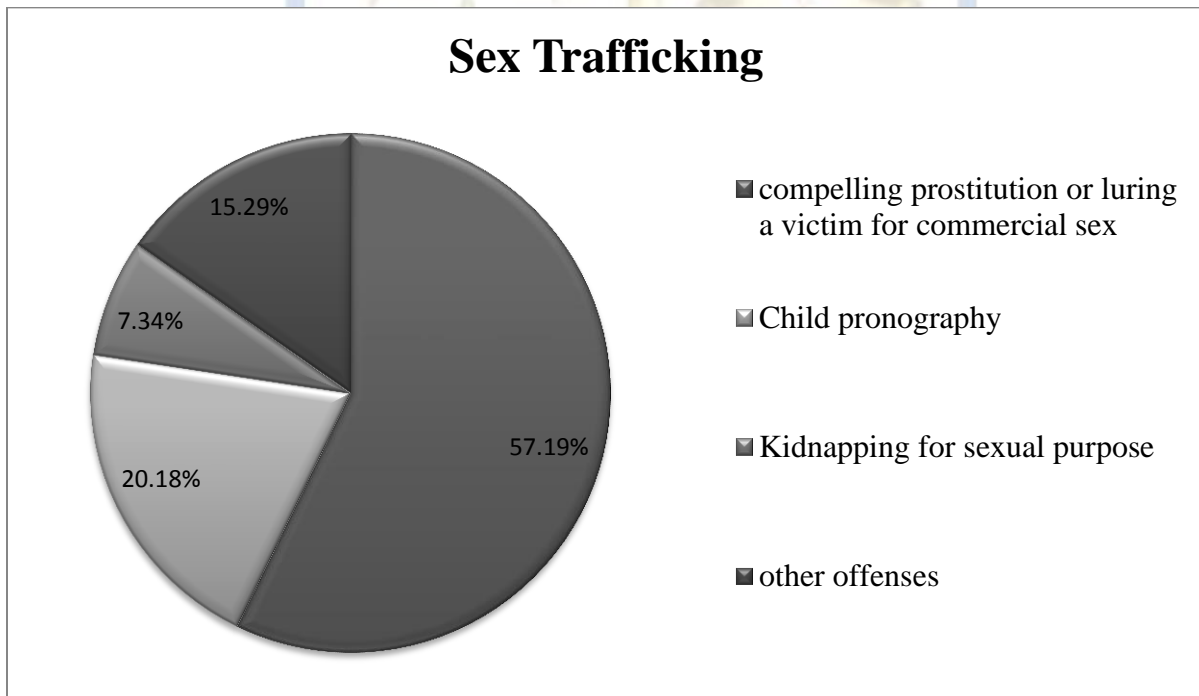


Figure 3: Forms of labor trafficking that occur in Texas during 1992 to 2006.

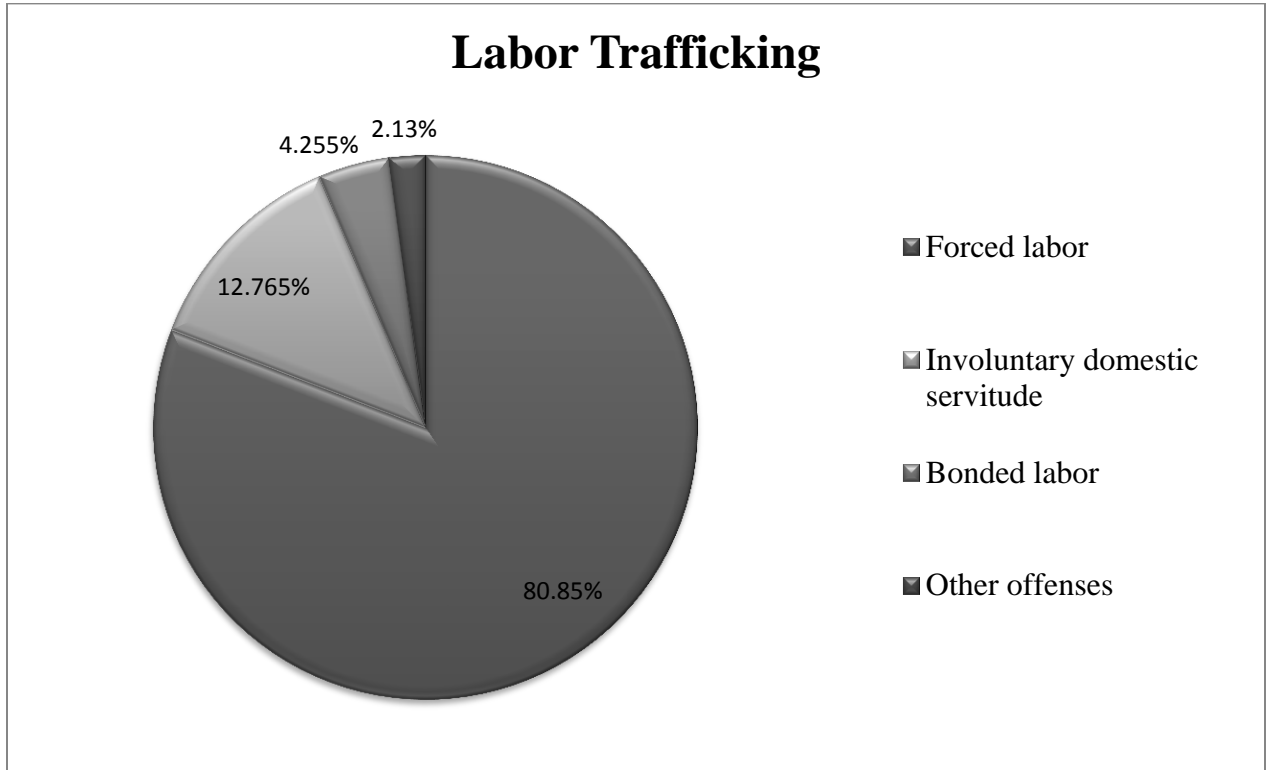


Table 1: Human trafficking incidents that appeared in the newspaper articles in Texas between 1992 and 2006.

Year	Sex Trafficking				Labor Trafficking				labor and sex
	Compelling Prostitution or Luring a Victim for a Commercial Sex	Kidnapping for sexual purpose	Child Pornography	Other Offense	Bonded Labor	Involuntary Domestic Servitude	Force Labor	Other offense	
1992	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	-	1
1993	-	1	4	-	-	-	1	-	-
1994	7	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
1995	8	1	3	1	-	1	-	-	-
1996	7	2	8	-	-	-	-	-	-
1997	7	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
1998	12	3	6	5	-	2	-	-	-
1999	6	3	7	2	-	-	1	1	-
2000	10	1	5	6	-	-	2	-	-
2001	10	2	7	7	-	1	5	-	-
2002	22	2	14	9	2	-	7	-	-
2003	22	1	6	4	-	1	5	-	3
2004	31	-	1	6	-	-	5	-	2
2005	19	1	-	3	-	-	3	-	-
2006	25	1	-	5	-	-	8	-	-
TOTAL	187	24	66	50	2	6	38	1	6

Table 2: The estimated characteristics of human traffickers in Texas during 1992 to 2006.

Gender and Age	Sex Trafficking			Labor Trafficking			Involving Sex and Labor Trafficking		
	Nationality			Nationality			Nationality		
	U.S.	Non-U.S.	Unknown	U.S.	Non-U.S.	Unknown	U.S.	Non-U.S.	Unknown
Male (Unassigned)	1	6	22	3	13	-	3	-	-
Male (Under 18)	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Male (18-25)	47	10	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Male (26-35)	85	9	-	5	6	-	3	2	-
Male (36 and older)	156	14	-	11	14	-	3	-	-
Female (Unassigned)	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Female (Under 18)	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Female (18-25)	9	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Female (26-35)	16	3	-	4	5	-	2	-	-
Female (36 and older)	11	7	-	3	5	-	4	1	-
TOTAL	331	52	22	27	46	-	15	3	-

Table 3: Level of Trafficker cooperation with other individuals during 1992 to 2006

Level of Trafficker cooperation with others	Sex Trafficking	Labor Trafficking	Involving Sex and Labor Trafficking
Trafficker acted as individual	263	4	-
Trafficker acted with family member(s)	18	6	-
Trafficker act with other individuals	23	1	2
Trafficker acted in organized crime ring	11	6	2
Trafficker involved in smuggling/trafficking ring	10	30	2
TOTAL	325	47	6

Table 4: The estimated characteristics of human trafficking victims in Texas during 1992 to 2006.

Gender and Age	Sex Trafficking			Labor Trafficking			Involving Sex and Labor Trafficking		
	Nationality			Nationality			Nationality		
	U.S.	Non-U.S.	Unknown	U.S.	Non-U.S.	Unknown	U.S.	Non-U.S.	Unknown
Male (under 10)	21	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Male (10-14)	38	1	1	-	4	-	-	-	-
Male (15-17)	25	11	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Male (18-25)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Male (26-35)	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Male (36 and older)	1	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-
Male (Unknown)	-	-	-	-	184	7	-	-	-
Female (under 10)	30	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Female (10-14)	66	2	4	-	5	-	-	-	-
Female (15-17)	44	7	6	-	-	-	5	5	-
Female (18-25)	8	8	5	-	1	-	-	-	-
Female (26-35)	7	-	-	-	4	-	-	2	-
Female (36 and older)	5	1	-	3	2	-	-	-	-
Female (Unknown)	1	48	17	-	121	-	-	4	-
TOTAL	246	80	35	3	327	7	5	11	-

