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Public Awareness of Human Trafficking

Chelsea Annette Farrell
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Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Chelsea Annette Farrell

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Walden University
2018

Abstract

Public Awareness of Human Trafficking

by

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MA, Regent University, 2012

BA, University of Mary Washington, 2011

Dissertation Submitted in Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

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Abstract

Public awareness is crucial in the fight against human trafficking, but little academic research looks at the public policy implications of different types of messaging the public may be using in recognizing human trafficking. Using policy feedback theory as the theoretical lens, the purpose of this quantitative study was to compare mean awareness scores for both film and social media to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the scores and their degree of public awareness. Data were collected through an online survey, which included questions related to both film and social media, using a participant pool service. The survey measured awareness of human trafficking with a sample of 100 participants who included diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, races, genders, and ages. These data were analyzed using an independent-samples *t* test where the participants' awareness scores were compared for the 2 awareness strategies tested. The findings indicated that there is a statistically significant difference between film and social media at creating awareness of the phenomenon, with film being statistically higher. The implications for positive social change stemming from these results include recommendations for further research to be performed on human trafficking, specifically human trafficking awareness strategies. With improved anti-trafficking awareness strategies and a more informed public, the number of individuals affected by human trafficking will diminish and, eventually, the issue will cease to exist.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my impeccable husband, Steven. Steven, I will never be able to fully express my sincere gratitude to you for allowing me unlimited freedom to work on my dissertation and fulfill this monumental goal of mine. Your endless love and support has guided me and focused me during this gratifying academic odyssey. I would have never reached the finish line without you by my side constantly championing me and voicing your unyielding confidence in me. This degree is for the both of us and our future!

I dedicate this work to my awe-inspiring mother, Christine. Mom, your infinite encouragement, motivation and unwavering belief in me throughout the duration of my life has made me who I am today and is the underlying reason for my many accomplishments. You have vested in me a fiery desire to shatter glass ceilings, breakdown barriers, and make a positive, permanent difference in this complex world. Thank you for always bestowing upon me the self-confidence to take on daunting tasks fearlessly, no matter their complexity. I owe my perpetual drive, determination, ambition, and this distinguished degree to you.

I dedicate this work to my family and friends who wholeheartedly believe in me and my ability to reach for the stars and shatter any boundaries or limits.

I dedicate this work to human trafficking victims and survivors across the globe who have been subjected to the atrocities of this human rights issue. This work is just the beginning of my lifelong journey to create worldwide public awareness of the issue in hopes of its eventual eradication.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge my Chair, Dr. Paul Rutledge, my committee member, Dr. Deborah Lynn Laufersweiler-Dwyer, and my University Research Reviewer, Dr. Patricia Ripoll. Your expert guidance, knowledge, and direction have impacted every facet of this work, and I am forever grateful to you for being a part of my dissertation journey.

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Chapter 1

Introduction to Study

Right now, there is a man on a boat, casting the net with his bleeding hands, knowing he deserves a better life, a life of dignity, but doesn't know if anybody is paying attention. Right now, there's a woman, hunched over a sewing machine, glancing beyond the bars on the window, knowing if just given the chance, she might someday sell her own wares, but she doesn't think anybody is paying attention. Right now, there's a young boy, in a brick factory, covered in dust, hauling his heavy load under a blazing sun, thinking if he could just go to school, he might know a different future, but he doesn't think anybody is paying attention. Right now, there is a girl, somewhere trapped in a brothel, crying herself to sleep again, and maybe daring to imagine that someday, just maybe, she might be treated not like a piece of property, but as a human being. (President Obama, 2013, p. 1)

These horrendous depictions serve as the reality for 20.9 million people who fall victim to human trafficking globally (Polaris, 2015). *Human trafficking* is defined as follows:

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring 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. (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2015, "What is Human Trafficking," p. 1)

President Barack Obama stated in his speech at the Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting, which was held in New York on September 25, 2012,

Today, I want to discuss an issue that ought to concern every person, because it is a debasement of our common humanity. It ought to concern every community, because it tears at our social fabric. It ought to concern every business, because it distorts markets. It ought to concern every nation, because it endangers public health and fuels violence and organized crime. I'm talking about the injustice, the outrage, of human trafficking, which must be called by its true name—modern slavery. (President Obama, 2013, p. 1)

Human trafficking is an intensifying issue that is showing no signs of possible collapse. Unfortunately, the numbers reported by the National Human Trafficking Resource Center confirm that human trafficking cases exist in all 50 states in the United States, and that the number of cases increases every year (Polaris, 2015). Women and children make up 55% of those trafficked, and approximately 5.5 million children are victims of human trafficking (Polaris, 2015). Human traffickers target men and women as well as children (Polaris, 2015). Whether it is a man, a woman, or a child, all human trafficking victims share one very similar experience, which is a loss of all personal freedoms (Polaris, 2015). Traffickers instantly strip victims of their fundamental human rights and freedoms and do so for a sole purpose, which is to make a profit (Polaris, 2015).

The two dominant drivers for the spread of human trafficking are high profits and low risk (Polaris, 2015). Human trafficking is a market-driven, billion dollar criminal industry that is founded on the basic principles of supply and demand (Polaris, 2015).

Traffickers are able to generate billions of dollars in profits yearly by embezzling people, stripping them of their fundamental human rights and freedoms, and forcing them to perform in various types of ways, and, most of the time, without coming close to being discovered (Polaris, 2015). Because of the extreme prominence of this issue globally, the escalating number of innocent victims, the intentional disregard of the U.S. Constitution and what it stands for by human traffickers, and the fact that human trafficking is a criminal industry that constantly goes unnoticed, the necessity of research on human trafficking is critical to reducing the risk and the phenomenon.

In addition to the reasons described previously, human trafficking awareness strategies are rarely tested for effectiveness. Human trafficking awareness strategies can be defined as plans of action and/or policies that are implemented to achieve a specific goal, which is to ultimately reduce the number of people who fall victim to the phenomenon. There is an immense lack of research regarding human trafficking and awareness strategies, and without knowing the effectiveness of implemented awareness strategies, it is impossible to know what antitrafficking awareness strategies are successful or proving to be unsuccessful. If awareness strategies were tested for effectiveness, policy makers could see what strategies are effective, what strategies need to be revamped, and what strategies need to be dissolved. Because of the massive negative influence of human trafficking in the world today, it is reasonable to assume that some implemented awareness strategies must be ineffective and need to dissolve, whereas other new antitrafficking awareness strategies must be explored and introduced. Awareness is pivotal to reducing the drastic negative effects of human trafficking and those directly affected. Without effective antitrafficking awareness strategies

implemented, the likelihood of this issue disappearing is minuscule. This is an area in the literature that needs desperate attention.

Through the present study and the dissemination of the results, a better understanding of the effectiveness of two human trafficking awareness strategies (film and social media) will ensue. Furthermore, the dissemination of results and knowledge that the present study will bring to the research world will hopefully provoke future researchers to continue researching and testing human trafficking awareness strategies for effectiveness. More research conducted on the topic of human trafficking and awareness will assist in the antitrafficking campaign and help to reduce the number of victims exposed to the terrors human trafficking can bring.

Chapter 1 will include the background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses, the theoretical framework that will guide the present study, the nature of the study, important definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, the significance of the study, and a brief summary of everything discussed.

Background of the Study

Researchers who have studied the topic of human trafficking have focused on human trafficking in general, different reports released, lack of knowledge on the actual number of human trafficking cases in the United States and abroad, and current antitrafficking efforts and their successes and drawbacks. A significant trend in studies is that most researchers make a sincere request for further research on the topic of human trafficking. With regard to the present study, specifically, researchers have called for more research and studies to be conducted on public awareness. The explicit intent of the

present study was to scientifically establish the effectiveness of two existing human trafficking awareness strategies and their degree of public awareness. Public awareness is critically lacking in research on the topic of human trafficking. Before 2010, no studies existed that addressed public awareness of human trafficking, and few have been published since (Bishop, 2013, p. 131). An immense gap exists in the literature, which represents a lack in knowledge.

Policymakers, the government, and researchers are, for the most part, unaware of who is aware of the issue, who is not aware of the issue, and which awareness strategies are benefitting the public and which are not. Congressional records for the past 5 years suggest that bills have been introduced on the topic of human trafficking, with little to no resolution. For example, Senator Barbara Boxer introduced bill S. 121 to the Senate on January 23, 2013 (Library of Congress, 2013). This bill seeks to establish the United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking to review current federal government policy on human trafficking (Library of Congress, 2013). Since the introduction of this bill, it has been read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, but this is the extent of its development (Library of Congress, 2013). More than 3 years have passed since this bill was introduced, and there has been no progress. This bill in particular has the intention of examining current human trafficking awareness strategies and policies, but this bill has not become law yet. Two human trafficking bills have become law in the past 5 years. The first law focuses on preventing sex trafficking in foster care and strengthening families (H.R. 4980), and the second law focuses on justice for victims of human trafficking (S. 178); however, neither of these laws deals directly with public awareness of human trafficking (Library of Congress, 2013).

Through the Congressional records for the past 5 years, and the past literature on the topic, it is clear that all parties involved do not have the knowledge necessary on human trafficking awareness strategies. The present study and future studies on human trafficking awareness strategies and public awareness are obligatory to lessening the prominence of the issue. More and better awareness is significant to reducing human trafficking and its presence around the world. The present study seeks to fill a gap in the literature, a gap in knowledge, which is undoubtedly in line with past expectations for future research.

Problem Statement

While we would all like to say that slavery is a thing of the past, today, an unfortunate phenomenon exists that apprehends human beings against their will, strips them of their fundamental human rights and freedoms, and victimizes them (Polaris, 2015). This phenomenon is known as human trafficking. This dehumanizing issue is one of the central issues of the last decade at a national and international level and continues to escalate on a large scale year after year (Stoica, 2011, p. 121). President Barack Obama stated at his speech on human trafficking in 2012, that “Our fight against human trafficking is one of the great human rights causes of our time, and the United States will continue to lead it -- in partnership with you,” (President Obama, 2013, p. 1). So how can we fight this issue as a community? The answer: creating greater public awareness of human trafficking.

The existing literature on this topic discusses in-depth the issue of human trafficking, outlines reports released, mentions the inexact prevalence of human trafficking in foreign countries and here in the United States, details current

antitrafficking efforts and drawbacks, and references public awareness of human trafficking to some extent. Public awareness is discussed in a portion of the existing literature, but no researcher has conducted a study to find the effectiveness of film as an implemented awareness strategy. Some research does exist that discusses film as an awareness strategy such as Baker's (2014) study. However, this study did not seek to find the effectiveness of film as a public awareness strategy; it sought to inform only. The present study filled this gap and built upon the information that had already been gathered by Baker (2014) and other researchers. The existing literature and studies certainly play a substantial role in understanding human trafficking, but they do not seek to find whether an existing public awareness strategy is successfully working or not. That is where this specific study comes in.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to discover whether films that depict human trafficking and its severity positively affect the issue and create greater public awareness around the world or have no effect at all. This study compared film and social media outlets (specifically social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) as awareness strategies to determine whether film is more or less effective of a strategy to the public internationally. In a world where human trafficking is a widespread and intensifying issue, it is imperative that policy makers and the government are informed on what is working and what is not working so that changes and strides can be made. To know the answers to these two critical questions, it is crucial that the existing strategies to create public awareness of human trafficking are explored for effectiveness.

Research Questions

To discover the effectiveness of film (Independent Variable 1) as an awareness strategy of human trafficking, thus the relationship between film and public awareness, and to discover the effectiveness of social media outlets (Independent Variable 2) as an awareness strategy of human trafficking, thus the relationship between social media outlets and public awareness, I addressed three central research questions in this study:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between films that depict human trafficking and public awareness of the phenomenon?

H1: Film increases public awareness of human trafficking.

H0: Film has no influence on public awareness of human trafficking.

I performed an independent sample *t* test. The decision point was determined by the frequency of responses; for example, “yes” responses had to be greater than “no” responses for *H1* to be true.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between social media outlets and public awareness of the phenomenon?

H1: Social media outlets increase public awareness of human trafficking.

H0: Social media outlets have no influence on public awareness of human trafficking.

I performed an independent sample *t* test. The decision point was determined by the frequency of responses; for example, “yes” responses had to be greater than “no” responses for *H1* to be true.

Research Question 3: Which awareness strategy, film or social media outlets, is more effective at creating public awareness of human trafficking?

H1: Film is more effective than social media at creating public awareness of human trafficking.

H0: Neither strategy is effective at creating public awareness of human trafficking.

I performed a descriptive statistic test, specifically a mode test. The decision point was determined by the frequency of responses; for example, “yes” responses (with regard to film) had to be greater than “yes” responses (with regard to social media outlets) for *H1* to be true.

Theoretical Framework

Policy feedback theory served as the theoretical framework that guided this quantitative study. A brief overview of policy feedback theory is discussed in this section and a more detailed explanation is provided in Chapter 2.

Policy feedback theory has roots in historical institutionalism. Historical institutionalism is a branch of new institutionalism, which suggests that “institutional rules, constraints, and the responses to them over the long term guide the behaviour of political actors during the policy-making process” (Breuning, 2015, “Historical Institutionalism,” p. 1). Historical institutionalists use “decisions trees” and “path dependence” when forming policy because they are aware that policies and rules are slow to change. As a result of this, many factors are considered when conducting a future policy analysis, which leads to policy feedback theory and why established policies are so often never analyzed and/or changed (Breuning, 2015).

Policy feedback theory debuted in the late 1980s through the early 1990s in the works of various historical institutionalist scholars. Theda Skocpol, a historical

institutionalist scholar, coined *policy feedback theory* in a work titled *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States*. Later, Paul Pierson advanced the theory in his work titled *When Effect Becomes Cause* (Sabatier, 2014).

Policy feedback theory suggests that “policy commitments made in the past produce increasing returns and make it costly to choose a different path” (Sabatier, 2014, p. 378). This theory is said to (a) have increasing returns, (b) help structure current activity, (c) provide advantages to various groups, but not all, and (d) represent institutionalized beliefs (Sabatier, 2014). Although these characteristics seem favorable, it is known that societal norms change during the years, which may cause policies to become out of date and no longer relevant. Policies have striking influence on everyone and everything, and policies must be examined for effectiveness often and not simply when they first go into effect.

Policy feedback theory may explain why policymakers and governments do not examine current awareness strategies of human trafficking for effectiveness. Policymakers and the government must believe that the awareness policies set in motion have increasing returns, help structure current activity, provide advantages to various groups, and represent institutionalized beliefs (Sabatier, 2014). However, this is not necessarily the case, and individuals involved must become more flexible and determined to solve the issue of human trafficking despite the costs and timeliness of policy analysis.

Nature of the Study

I used a nonexperimental, quantitative, survey research design to answer the aforementioned research questions. A nonexperimental, quantitative research design is

used to explore an event and test relationships among variables. This type of design does not manipulate the independent variable, uses a theoretical or conceptual framework, is either descriptive or exploratory, is not intended to determine causation, data are collected through surveys and interviews, and small and/or large samples are utilized (Walden University, 2014). This was the most suitable choice for this study for many reasons to include: (a) this study sought to explore the phenomenon of human trafficking and implemented public awareness strategies, (b) this study strived to test and explore the relationship between human trafficking and two awareness strategies (film and social media outlets) to justify and assess film and social media outlets as public awareness strategies, (c) this study distributed a survey to a random sampling of individuals, and (d) this study surveyed a large sample so that a generalization could be made. As noted by John Creswell (2009), in a survey design, researchers are able to “generalize or make claims about the population” from the sample results (p.145).

Data were analyzed using SPSS software. SPSS is a quantitative software program that helps researchers to organize and analyze data. SPSS enabled me to conduct a multitude of analyses such as descriptive statistics analyses, specifically frequency, and mode, which is part of the measures of Central Tendency. I also conducted an independent sample *t* test. This analytical strategy is discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 3.

Definitions of Terms

Human Trafficking: The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC] defines human trafficking as the

Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring 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 labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2015, “What is Human Trafficking,” p. 1)

This definition of human trafficking is upheld by researchers such as Dyrud (2007), who also quoted UNODC’s definition of the term in his study.

Policy Feedback Theory: Paul Sabatier and Christopher Weible (2014) state that policy feedback theory is a theory that “suggests that policy commitments made in the past produce increasing returns and make it costly to choose a different path” (p. 378). This theory may be an indicator of why implemented policies do not normally change.

Sex Trafficking: The federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act defines sex trafficking as the

Recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age. (Polaris, n.d., “Federal Anti-trafficking Laws,” p. 3)

Antitrafficking: The Cambridge English Dictionary defines antitrafficking as “intended to prevent criminal trading, for example trading in drugs, people, or illegal weapons” (Cambridge University Press, 2015, “Anti-trafficking,” p. 1). There are many antitrafficking campaigns and strategies set in motion to reduce the number of those trafficked every year.

Awareness: According to the Cambridge English Dictionary, awareness is “knowledge that something exists, or understanding of a situation or subject at the present time based on information or experience” (Cambridge University Press, 2015, “Awareness,” p. 1). Policy makers have instituted various awareness strategies to make the public more aware of human trafficking and the risks. Awareness is a major part of the antitrafficking campaign; however, very little attention has been paid to researching the effectiveness of existing public awareness strategies.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made for the present study:

1. Policy feedback theory is the reason as to why policy makers and the government do not test implemented human trafficking awareness strategies for effectiveness.
2. Human trafficking is a social and human issue that is important to policy makers and the government.
3. Film and social media outlets are two human trafficking awareness strategies that need to be tested for effectiveness.
4. The survey created was appropriate for examining the relationship between human trafficking and two awareness strategies (film and social media outlets) to justify and assess film and social media outlets as public awareness strategies.

5. The survey accurately measured what it strived to measure.
6. The wording of the survey was understandable for participants so that no confusion arose.
7. Participants honestly answered the survey's questions.
8. The findings of this study were able to be generalized.
9. The findings of this study will lead to positive social change.
10. Coding was an effective analytical strategy to analyze the results of the survey.

These assumptions are necessary in the context of the study because while they are out of my control, each of them is likely true. Without these assumptions, this study would be irrelevant.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this quantitative study was vast and boundary-less. A survey was distributed through the Walden Participant Pool to a random sampling of individuals encompassing diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, races, genders, and ages in order to maximize differences of opinions and to ensure that no bias existed. The Walden Participant Pool is a “virtual bulletin board” that connects researchers to participants; all of which are affiliated with the University (Walden University, 2016). I gained access to the Walden Participant Pool by filling out an application and submitting it to the Walden Participant Pool's email address (Walden University, 2016). Once access was gained to the Walden Participant Pool, I was able to post the study and those interested were able to participate (Walden University, 2016).

The true intention of the present study was to discover the effectiveness of film and social media outlets as public awareness strategies of human trafficking. To discover

the effectiveness of film and social media outlets as public awareness strategies, it was important to embrace and incorporate diverse individuals from all over the world to increase the likelihood of finding multiple viewpoints and perspectives. The Walden Participant Pool made it possible to incorporate diverse individuals from all over the world because Walden University is an online university with students who reside in countries all over this world. This was a study on public awareness, so it was important to survey the public in its entirety. The present study attempted to survey as many participants as possible to generate a generalization as a result of the findings.

Limitations

This study was subject to four viable limitations: limited existing research, sample, bias, and collinearity of the independent variables. A diminutive amount of literature exists on public awareness of human trafficking. Human trafficking awareness strategies have been excluded from prior research and the effectiveness or non-effectiveness of these public awareness strategies is completely unknown. With that said, this study is the first, and with it being the first; there were possible limitations. Seeing as a survey within this realm did not exist prior to the present study, the present study had to create an entirely new survey to present to participants. It was uncertain whether or not the survey created would truly help me to attain answers to the research questions of this study. To address this potential limitation, it was imperative that the survey questions were reviewed multiple times before they were released to participants. The survey questions were carefully constructed to ensure that the research questions of the study were successfully answered. Member checking was utilized to ensure the research questions were useful.

The next potential limitation was the sample. It was unknown how many surveys would be returned, and because of that, it was unknown if a generalization could be made at the completion of the study. To address this limitation, I attempted to sample as many participants as possible and took extra time to conduct the study if it was deemed necessary. In addition, the individuals who made up the sample may not have seen human trafficking films such as Taken and/or the individuals who made up the sample may not utilize social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube. With that said, the participants may have had no opinion or experience with what was being measured. This was something that was out of my control completely but could have presented a limitation to the study.

Another potential limitation was bias. One of the main reasons as to why films on human trafficking were being measured in this study is because they have had a major impact on me personally. Because of the impact they have had, I could have potentially shown bias throughout the study through wording, survey questions, etc. Member checking was utilized to ensure that no bias on my behalf existed. Further, participants may have been bias to human trafficking films seen and/or what they have seen on social media outlets surrounding human trafficking. To control this aspect of the study, I reiterated the intention of the study, which was to determine the effectiveness of film and social media outlets as public awareness strategies of human trafficking. I was not looking for opinions on films or stories. I was testing human trafficking awareness strategies solely to find which strategy has made the public more aware of the phenomenon.

The next possible limitation was collinearity of the independent variables of the present study. This study had two independent variables, which were film and social media outlets. The present study attempted to compare the relationship between each independent variable and the degree to which each creates public awareness of human trafficking. Film and social media outlets were chosen as the independent variables to be tested because neither has been tested for effectiveness prior, and in our technologically advanced world, these two awareness strategies are extremely significant tools that have the potential to reach, inform, and educate millions of people. While these independent variables may be similar in some ways; therefore, collinear, both are vital and demand testing. To address this potential limitation, I included a differentiation statement of the independent variables to ensure that the variables were considered separate entities.

Significance

Human trafficking is a human rights issue that desperately requires great attention by researchers as well as the global community. As of when this specific study was performed, the literature on the topic did not seek to analyze implemented public awareness strategies for effectiveness. If this pattern continues, we may never find the solution to the issue. This specific study sought to go against the grain and fill a much needed gap in the literature with regard to public awareness.

It is my hope that this study prompts other researchers to also study the effectiveness of existing public awareness strategies so that the global community realizes what is working, what is not working, and what needs to be done to advance efforts. This research study will expectantly benefit other researchers and their future studies. As a community and with collaborated efforts, it is possible to discover ways to

lessen the risk of human trafficking and create positive social change in this country as well as throughout the world. Every human being in this world would benefit from advanced research on this topic and public awareness strategies specifically seeing as all human beings are at risk.

The findings of this study determined if two existing awareness strategies for human trafficking are successful in their objective to create public awareness or if they need revamping. To create real positive social change, studies such as this one must be conducted so that new policies can be implemented if need be. The only way to diminish this issue is to create public awareness, and if we, as a global community, are not analyzing implemented awareness strategies for effectiveness, we may never find the solution. Real positive social change begins here.

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative study was to discover whether or not films that depict human trafficking and its severity have a positive effect on the issue and create greater public awareness around the world or have no effect at all. This study assessed film as an awareness strategy by comparing it to social media outlets as an awareness strategy where the aim was to find which awareness strategy is more effective. Policy feedback theory served as the theoretical framework and underlying reason as to why policymakers and the government do not test implemented human trafficking awareness strategies for effectiveness. I devised a survey and distributed it to a random sampling of individuals on the Walden Participant Pool and Survey Monkey. Once the surveys were completed and returned, the results were coded, a conclusion was generated, and a generalization was made. This study is significant to the field in that it fills an extensive

gap in the literature with regard to human trafficking awareness strategies. In addition, this study added to the existing knowledge on the topic and will confidently help guide other researchers to continue the effort to find a solution to this dehumanizing issue.

Chapter 1 included the following: a description of the topic, background of the topic, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, the main research questions and hypotheses, theoretical framework, nature of the study, definitions of terms, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, significance of the study, and a summary. Chapter 2 includes the literature search strategy, theoretical foundation, a literature review related to key variables and concepts, and a summary. Chapter 3 includes the research design and rationale, methodology, threats to validity, and a summary. Chapter 4 includes data collection, treatment, results of the study, and a summary. Chapter 5, the final chapter, includes interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, implications, and a conclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Problem Statement

Although we would all like to say that slavery is a thing of the past, today, an unfortunate phenomenon exists that apprehends human beings against their will, strips them of their fundamental human rights and freedoms, and victimizes them (Polaris, 2015). This phenomenon is known as human trafficking. This dehumanizing issue is one of the central issues of the last decade at a national and international level and continues to escalate on a large scale year after year (Stoica, 2011, p. 121). President Barack Obama stated in his speech at the Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting, that “Our fight against human trafficking is one of the great human rights causes of our time, and the United States will continue to lead it -- in partnership with you” (President Obama, 2013, p. 1). So how can we fight this issue as a community? The answer is creating greater public awareness of human trafficking.

The existing literature on this topic discusses in-depth the issue of human trafficking, outlines reports released, mentions the inexact prevalence of human trafficking in foreign countries and in the United States, details current antitrafficking efforts and drawbacks, and references public awareness of human trafficking to some extent. Although public awareness is discussed in a portion of the existing literature, no researcher has conducted a study to find the effectiveness of film and social media outlets as implemented awareness strategies. The existing literature and studies certainly play a substantial role in understanding human trafficking, but they do not seek to find whether existing awareness strategies are successfully working. That is where this study comes in.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to discover whether films that depict human trafficking and its severity positively affect the issue and create greater public awareness around the world or have no effect at all. I compared film and social media outlets as awareness strategies to determine whether film is more or less effective of a public awareness strategy to the public internationally. In a world where human trafficking is a widespread and intensifying issue, it is imperative that policy makers are informed on what is working and what is not working so that changes and strides can be made. To know the answers to these two critical questions, it is crucial that the existing strategies to create public awareness of human trafficking are explored for effectiveness.

Synopsis of Current Literature

Hall (2014) stated, “The year 2013 marked the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, which outlawed slavery in the United States. Yet, tragically, most experts agree there are more people in slavery today than ever in human history” (p. 854). Dyrud (2007) noted that “every 10 minutes, there are anywhere from 15-76 victims trafficked worldwide” (p. 21). Hepburn (2010) stated “Yet, the reality is that wherever you live, regardless of city or nation, some form of human trafficking exists” (p. 2). These are the statements that exude through current literature on human trafficking. Human trafficking is an escalating issue that victimizes millions and occurs throughout the globe.

Another common statement found throughout current literature on the topic is the call for further research and further studies to be performed on human trafficking. Bishop (2013) noted how scarce research is on public awareness of human trafficking (p.

131). In addition, in the recommendation portion of current literature on human trafficking, many researchers call for the replication of findings of the few studies that do exist on the topic. Too many gaps are prevalent in the literature on the topic of human trafficking, and because this issue is one of the most pressing in the world today, it is imperative that strict attention be paid and research studies be conducted to find solutions and end this heinous form of modern-day slavery.

Preview of Major Sections

Chapter 2 is organized into various subsections. In the first section, I discuss the library databases and search engines that I used, key search terms, and the scope of the literature review. In the next section, I outline the theoretical foundation of the present study, which is policy feedback theory. In this section, the origin of the theory is discussed as well as assumptions surrounding the theory, how the theory has been applied previously, the rationale for utilizing the theory, and how the theory relates to the present study. The next sections include literature related to the constructs of interest and methodology, strengths and weaknesses of the approaches used in the literature, studies related to the variables of the present study, studies related to the research questions of the present study, the major themes in existing literature, what is known and not known about the variables, and the gap filled by the present study.

Research Strategies

I incorporated several databases and pertinent key words to uncover existing literature and studies related to human trafficking. I utilized the Walden University library website and used the following databases Political Science Complete, Academic Search Complete, ProQuest Central, and Lexis Nexis. Search Engines that I used

included Google and Google Scholar. Research studies, peer-reviewed journal articles, laws, books, and survivor stories are the main data sources that I compiled in the present study. Subject-based key words entered into the search engines in the various databases included *human trafficking and awareness*; *human trafficking and policy*; *antitrafficking law*; *sex trafficking in United States*; *human trafficking and film*; and *human trafficking*. Given that such a small number of research studies exist on human trafficking, especially in the realm of the present study, the scope of the literature review was broadened to include years 2005 through 2015. Because of the difficulty in finding studies related to the topic, the scope of the study was increased to include more years and any information found that related to the present study in some way was included.

Theoretical Foundation: Policy Feedback Theory

Policy feedback theory presented a beneficial framework for understanding why policymakers do not frequently examine and alter human trafficking awareness strategies that have already been implemented. This theory supported and guided the present study.

In the book *Theories of the Policy Process*, Sabatier and Weible (2014) stated that policy feedback theory “has its roots in historical institutionalism, which suggests that policy commitments made in the past produce increasing returns and make it costly to choose a different path” (p. 378). Sabatier and Weible (2014) noted, “when a policy becomes established and resources are devoted to programs, it helps structure current activity and provides advantages for some groups more than others” (p. 378). In addition to established policies having increasing returns, helping structure current activity, and providing advantages to some groups, these established policies also signify institutionalized beliefs and/or policy frames (Sabatier, 2014).

Despite these favorable characteristics of policy feedback theory, public opinion will most likely shift years after these policies have been instituted, which in turn will make these policies outdated (Sabatier, 2014). Public opinion, as well as societal norms, is constantly changing, which is why it is pertinent that policies are analyzed and change to coincide with the present time. Policies directly affect many facets of life, including meaning of citizenship, form of governance, power of groups, political agendas, and definition of policy problems (Sabatier, 2014). As a result of the vast influence policies have, policy makers must become more flexible and willing to analyze implemented policy seeing as policies affect everyone and everything. What was once effective may not be effective any longer, and changes must be made regardless of costliness and timeliness.

Theoretical Foundation: Origin

As noted in Chapter 1, policy feedback theory has its roots in historical institutionalism, which is a branch of new institutionalism that suggests that institutional rules, constraints, and the responses to them guide policy analysts in the policy-making process (Breuning, 2015). The articulation of policy feedback theory debuted in the late 1980s through the early 1990s in the works of many historical institutionalist scholars. One historical institutionalist scholar named Theda Skocpol coined the term in a work titled *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Sabatier, 2014).

In the book, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States*, Skocpol (1992) noted that the term *policy feedback* is “highlighted by a structured polity approach” (p.58). Skocpol went on to say, “too often

social scientists who study national systems of social provision forget that policies, once enacted, restructure subsequent political processes” (p. 58). In addition, policy analysts normally look only for “synchronic determinants” of policies—for instance, current social interests and/or existing political alliances (Skocpol, 1992, p. 58). Skocpol noted that social scientists and policy analysts must examine and analyze patterns that unfold through time, only just long-term macroscopic processes and polity reorganization (Skocpol, 1992). Skocpol emphatically stated that “we must make social policies the starting points as well as the end points of analysis: As politics creates policies, policies also remake politics” (p. 58).

Skocpol (1992) explained that once a policy is instituted, the policy will have feedback effects in two primary ways. First, policies “will transform or expand the capabilities of the state,” (Skocpol, 1992, p. 58). Second, “new policies affect the social identities, goals, and capabilities of groups that subsequently struggle or ally in politics,” (Skocpol, 1992, p. 58). In saying that, it is suggested that a policy can be deemed successful if it “enhances the kinds of state capabilities that can promote its future development, and especially if it stimulated groups and political appliances to defend the policy’s continuation and expansion” (Skocpol, 1992, p. 58). What is most important here, as Skocpol (1992) stated, is that “positive or negative policy feedbacks can also ‘spill over’ from one policy to influence the fate of another policy proposal that seems analogous in the eyes of relevant officials and groups” (p. 59). This preliminary articulation of policy feedback theory by Skocpol (1992) suggested that one must be observant of how policies shape politics because social policies feedback into processes that have already advanced within the polity-centered frame. Skocpol depicted the

overwhelming significance of policy and its inherent influence in politics and future policy.

Following Skocpol's inclusion of policy feedback theory in her work, Paul Pierson advanced the theory in his work titled "When Effect Becomes Cause." Pierson advanced the theory by introducing a conceptual framework, which could allow scholars to advance hypotheses in their studies. In his work, Pierson explained that "enacted policies have the ability to shape the political behaviors of government elites, organized interests, and mass publics through two primary pathways: interpretive effects, as policies serve as sources of information and meaning, thus affecting political learning and attitudes, and resource effects, providing means and incentives for political activity" (Sabatier, 2014, p. 153). These two ideas, interpretive effects and resource effects, motivated scholars to look for these effects in their research to determine what mechanisms are at work. Through these advancements of policy feedback theory, scholars have been able to investigate policy feedback effects among mass publics. Specifically, scholars have been able to "incorporate new ideas about policy feedback into well-developed approaches to understanding citizen engagement and participation and to test them empirically," (Sabatier, 2014, p. 154). The advancements Pierson made to policy feedback theory prompted these efforts and enabled scholars to see the mechanisms at work (Sabatier, 2014).

The strides made by Skocpol and Pierson to advance policy feedback theory cleared the way for additional developments to the term. Some further developments include: more broad in subject matter and methodological approach. For example, instead of scholars focusing on social welfare policies, they now are beginning to explore other

policy areas to include criminal justice. In addition, these advancements to the term have inclined scholars to explore “hidden” policies; policies that are supported through private organizations or the tax code. Additionally, these advancements have prompted scholars to analyze non-Western countries in addition to Western nations as well as utilize large datasets and experimental research instead of simply focusing on case studies. This theory has certainly evolved since its origin and for the better (Sabatier, 2014).

Theoretical Foundation: Assumptions

The theoretical assumptions of policy feedback theory claim that policy feedback scholars utilize statistical techniques, experimental methods, and other advanced methodological techniques to reduce the risk of selection bias. However, critics of policy feedback theory and their work to date, which consists primarily of single-policy case studies, ascertain that “some of the work in the feedback domain fails to address problems of endogeneity, particularly those introduced by potential self-selection bias between recipients and nonrecipients of government programs” (Sabatier, 2014, p. 173). The concern lies in the fact that “some preexisting characteristics affect which individuals elect to utilize a particular program, and those same factors may determine later participatory or attitudinal differences between beneficiaries and nonbeneficiaries” (Sabatier, 2014, p. 173). Without the appropriate data and statistical tools to alleviate this risk, analysts cannot confidently cite interpretive effects and resource effects (Sabatier, 2014).

Nonetheless, scholars are aware of the possibility of selection bias when utilizing policy feedback theory and are making strides to reduce that risk. For example, Weaver and Lerman (2010) performed a study on the “effect of contact with the criminal

justice system on attitudes toward government and political engagement” (Sabatier, 2014, p. 173). Weaver and Lerman had the possibility of selection bias in their study because individuals who come into contact with the criminal justice system may be completely different than people who do not come into contact with the criminal justice system. To reduce the risk of selection bias, the scholars utilized panel data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health and panel data from Fragile Families. In addition, the scholars analyzed the data using standard control variables as well as controls for type of government contact and criminal predisposition. Further, Weaver and Lerman made use of “nonparametric estimation through the use of genetic matching to confirm their causal relationship” (Sabatier, 2014, p. 273). All of these statistical techniques helped lessen the risk of selection bias (Sabatier, 2014).

In additional to statistical techniques, some scholars have employed experimental methods to reduce the risk of selection bias in their study. For instance, Mettler and Guardino used a Web-based survey in their study, which tested “the effect of policy-related information on citizen attitudes toward government social welfare programs” (Sabatier, 2014, p. 174). Lerman (2013) utilized field and quasi-natural experiments in her work on citizen preferences for public and private service provision. Both of these studies employed random assignment in their experiments, which “allows for the direct comparison of average treatment effect between treatment and control groups, helping to account for endogeneity and establish causation” (Sabatier, 2014, p. 174).

The use of statistical and experimental methods to reduce the possibility of selection bias in a study is unquestionably a step in the right direction. Despite these

attempts and the utilization of these techniques, historic and/or under-explored cases face apparent data limitations, but the availability of panel data helps mitigate this issue (Sabatier, 2014). Also, scholars are beginning to implement their own panel surveys for data collection (Sabatier, 2014). The theoretical assumption that all policy feedback scholars utilize statistical techniques, experimental methods, and other advanced methodological techniques to reduce selection bias may not be entirely valid due to limited data in some situations; scholars are taking the necessary steps and are utilizing statistical and experimental techniques when applicable.

Theoretical Foundation: Past Theory Application

Through extensive research, I was not able to find an existing study on human trafficking that utilized policy feedback theory as its theoretical framework. This was not surprising; however, because a seldom number of studies have sought to discover the effectiveness of implemented human trafficking awareness strategies. Despite the lack of use of this theory in relation to human trafficking studies, policy feedback was utilized to support and guide the present study because it provided reason as to why existing human trafficking awareness strategies are not examined for effectiveness. Some of the studies that have utilized policy feedback theory in the past include Weaver and Lerman's (2010) study on individuals who come into contact with the criminal justice system; Michener's (2014) study on the effects of Medicaid on beneficiaries' political participation; Mettler and Welch's (2004) study on the impact of the GI Bill on political participation; Rose's (2012) study on how student aid policies affected future political participation; Mettler and Guardino's study on citizen attitudes toward government social welfare programs; Lerman's (2013) study on citizen preferences for public and private service provision;

and Morgan and Campbell's (2011) study on how programs created through the 2003 Medicare Modernization Act change the attitudes and behaviors of seniors (Sabatier, 2014). Most studies that utilize policy feedback theory focus on social welfare policies, but recently, there has been some progression surrounding the theory, and now some criminal justice studies also employ policy feedback theory as the theoretical framework in their study.

Theoretical Foundation: Rationale & Relation

Policy feedback theory was applicable to this research study because it suggested why policy makers do not frequently examine and test the effectiveness of human trafficking awareness strategies that are already set in motion. Through an exhaustive amount of research, it had become quite apparent that a pittance of literature and past studies have set out to find the effectiveness of implemented human trafficking awareness strategies, and policy feedback theory may serve as the reason why. This same literature has also recommended future studies to take on this demanding task of testing the effectiveness of human trafficking awareness policies that are implemented.

Policy feedback theory suggests that when policy makers set policies in motion, it is quite difficult and costly to change course, which without a doubt may be true (Sabatier, 2014). It is also true that existing policies, over time, represent institutionalized beliefs and dominant policy frames (Sabatier, 2014). However, while it may be difficult, costly, and the policies may become institutionalized beliefs, it is imperative that existing policies are examined to see if they are successfully working or need to be revamped. It is crucial that policy makers know what is working and what is not working so that changes can be made if need be. There is nothing more counterproductive than having a policy

enacted that is not benefitting anything or anyone. In addition, societal norms and public opinion are repeatedly changing, which ultimately suggests that policies must be updated to correspond with the present-day. A public awareness strategy made a few years ago may not be the best strategy for the present-day and because of this, tweaking and/or the dissolve of a policy may be necessary.

Literature Review Related to Constructs of Interest and Methodology

An extensive amount of literature exists focusing on the issue of human trafficking. Despite there being ample information on the topic of human trafficking, it was extremely difficult to find studies that were related to the constructs of interest and enacted the same methodology as the present study. The constructs of interest of the present study are human trafficking and public awareness. Human trafficking is a phenomenon that has been analyzed thoroughly throughout the past few years, but public awareness of human trafficking strategies has not been studied comprehensively; a gap certainly exists in this realm. With that said, I included the few studies found related to the constructs of interest whether or not they exhibit the same methodology or a different methodology.

This first article is related to the constructs of interest in the present study and utilized similar aspects in regards to methodology. In the article “Public Awareness of Human Trafficking in Europe: How Concerned Are European Citizens?” the researchers, Bishop, Morgan, and Erickson, “examined the relationship between a European Union citizens’ degrees of concern toward human trafficking and demographic characteristics, attitudes toward immigrants, and proximity variables (such as geographic region, the number of immigrants, and the percentage of immigrants within their country)” (Bishop,

2013, p. 113). This study sought to address the gaps in previous research concerning public awareness of human trafficking (Bishop, 2013, p. 114). The study also sought to identify what factors contribute to a citizens' degree of awareness and/or concern of the phenomenon (Bishop, 2013, p. 114). The researchers utilized the 2003 Eurobarometer survey, which is a cross-national and cross-sectional survey that poses questions about common agricultural policies, issues of immigration, rail transport, consumer protection, and information society (Bishop, 2013, p. 119). The participants were selected by a random-probability sample in the European Union (Bishop, 2013, p. 119). A citizens' address was selected at random, a single respondent in that household was interviewed, and the same questions were posed to all participants (Bishop, 2013, p. 119-120). The researchers utilized a regression analysis and concluded that age, gender, opinions, and location all play a major role in concern level (Bishop, 2013, p. 113).

The next article is related to the constructs of interest and utilized a similar methodology as the present study. In the article, "Where are all the Victims? Understanding the Determinants of Official Identification of Human Trafficking Incidents," the researchers, Farrell, McDevitt, and Fahy, conducted a study to find "how frequently police encounter human trafficking and how well prepared officers are to handle these cases" (Farrell, 2010, p. 201). The federal government has given local law enforcement the responsibility of recognizing, uncovering, and responding to human trafficking cases (Farrell, 2010, p. 205). This enormous task has been given to local law enforcement, but it is unknown whether or not local law enforcement is well suited to respond to this daunting mandate (Farrell, 2010, p. 205). To find out how prepared officers are to handle human trafficking cases, the researchers surveyed 3,189 U.S.

municipal, county, and state law-enforcement agencies (Farrell, 2010, p. 208). The researchers also conducted interviews with leadership of the police agencies to supplement the national survey (Farrell, 2010, p. 209). The findings of this study showed that between year 2000 and year 2006, less than 10% of police agencies were able to identify human trafficking cases (Farrell, 2010, p. 201). The findings of this study also depicted that larger agencies had a better likelihood of identifying these cases (Farrell, 2010, p. 201).

This next article is related to the constructs of interest of the present study but utilized a different methodology. In the article, “Sex Trafficking: An Exploratory Study Interviewing Traffickers,” Troshynski and Blank present their study, which aimed to understand the viewpoint of human traffickers themselves (Troshynski, 2007, p. 30). The researchers conducted a qualitative, semi-structured, and open-ended exploratory study where they “attempted to understand participant’s perceptions of the human trafficking experience including their opinions of the sex tourism industry and violence against women” (Troshynski, 2007, p. 32). The main research question that guided this study was, “How do human traffickers make sense of their positions in the illegal market of trafficking in women for prostitution” (Troshynski, 2007, p. 33). The researchers noted that the most difficult part of this study was gaining access to the human traffickers (Troshynski, 2007, p. 34). Eventually, the researchers found a “gatekeeper,” a person who accepted the purpose of their study and vouched for their presence in the field (Troshynski, 2007, p. 34). The researcher’s gatekeeper lived in London, England and worked for many clubs, bars, and restaurants (Troshynski, 2007, p. 34). He was very familiar with the area and people who also worked in the nightlife industry (Troshynski,

2007, p. 34). The gatekeeper was able to find 3 human traffickers who were willing to be interviewed and he set up all interviews in a public place (Troshynski, 2007, p. 37). The researchers were able to find innovative information through these interviews; all of which was previously unknown (Troshynski, 2007, p. 40).

Literature Review: Strengths and Weaknesses in Approach

All researchers approach the issue of human trafficking knowing that great complexities exist and that research on the topic is necessary because immense gaps do exist. Troshynski (2008) stated,

While there are conflicting definitions and inconsistent estimates of the nature and scope of human trafficking, a wide range of researchers and academics acknowledge that the illegal trafficking of human beings is a growing social phenomenon greatly in need of continued research. (p. 31)

More specifically, human trafficking has been a problem for years and years, but only recently has it been addressed as a global social problem (Troshynski, 2008, p. 31). In addition, the definition of human trafficking is widely contested, and the criminal nature of the issue causes difficulty in what activities are measured and how they are measured (Troshynski, 2008, p. 31).

With these thoughts in mind, the researchers of the first study listed (Bishop, Morgan, Erickson) used an exploratory approach for their study. The researchers took on this approach because of the lack of research on their specific topic, which was European Citizens' degree of concern and/or awareness of human trafficking (Bishop, 2013, p. 131). An exploratory approach can serve as strength and a weakness of a study. An exploratory approach can be a strength in that it offers some initial conclusions.

However, an exploratory approach can also be a weakness because there is nothing to go on; no previous research has been done and no conclusions have been found to test for effectiveness. The methodology of this specific study can also serve to be a strength and a weakness. The researchers utilized the 2003 Eurobarometer survey, which limited the data to only 2003 and policies and laws could have potentially changed since that year (Bishop, 2013, p. 130). The 2003 Eurobarometer survey also lacked measures of public education and possible media influences (Bishop, 2013, p. 131). Despite these weaknesses, surveys are quite useful because they can gather information quickly and at large volumes. The participants of this study were chosen at random, which is a strength because choosing participants at random ensures variety and reduces the risk of bias.

The researchers of the second study listed (Farrell, McDevitt, and Fahy) did not claim what approach they used for their study. But, as with the first study mentioned, the researchers of this study also utilized a survey as its methodology. In addition to a survey, the researchers conducted interviews with leadership of the police agencies. There is a possible fault or weakness in this approach. The survey enabled the researchers to gain a large amount of information in a short amount of time, but the data collected through the interviews with leadership may be problematic. Seeing as the researchers only interviewed the leadership of the police agencies, the results they obtained may not be completely accurate. Farrell (2010) stated, “to provide detailed information about the number and nature of human trafficking cases within their agency, police leaders had to be knowledgeable about any potential case of human trafficking identified by officers under their command” (p. 221). Farrell (2010) went on to say, “it is possible that agency leaders did not know that their officers identified and investigated cases of human

trafficking” (p. 221). Farrell (2010) noted that it is common that agency leaders do not know that their officers identify and investigate human trafficking cases in large agencies where leadership is unaware of day-to-day activities (p. 221). Because leadership may not have been aware of every human trafficking case in their agency, it may have been beneficial for the researchers to interview police officers who are out in the field and come into contact with these cases first hand. This strategy would have ensured more reliable information.

The researchers of the third study listed (Troshynski and Blank) used a qualitative, exploratory approach for their study (Troshynski, 2007, p. 30). At the time of this project (2003), there had been no previous research that focused on the human trafficker standpoint (Troshynski, 2007, p. 32). With that said, the researchers took on an exploratory approach in hopes of developing a theory (Troshynski, 2007, p. 33). As noted above, the exploratory approach can certainly be a strength to the study, but it can also serve as a weakness. This study was able to develop some new insights; however, was not able to test an existing theory for effectiveness. The researchers utilized face-to-face interviews as their methodology, which is unquestionably a strength to the study. Face-to-face interviews allow researchers to have a one-on-one experience, observe body language, and ask follow-up questions if necessary. The interview questions were open-ended and semi-structured, which enabled flexibility and gave “the researcher the opportunity to follow up on participant’s answers and to pose applicable questions not prepared in advance” (Troshynski, 2007, p. 33). Despite these advantages, the researchers were only able to interview three human traffickers. It is very difficult to develop a theory

or make a generalization when the number of those interviewed is so insignificant. The number of interviewees is a weakness of the study for this reason alone.

There will be potential limitations/weaknesses in every study, but it is certain that the studies listed above, as well as other studies on human trafficking, depict the severity of the issue, help readers understand the issue, increase public awareness, discover new insights, and substantiate the need for further research on the topic.

Literature Review: Justification of Variables

Human trafficking is a human rights issue that continues to escalate every year. Andrew Hall (2014) stated in his article “The Uniform Act on Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking,” that “estimates of the total number of slaves in the world today vary considerably, from 2.4 million to upwards of 29.8 million” (p. 855). These numbers will proceed to rise if one extremely vital component of the picture is not studied and analyzed. This extremely vital component of the picture is public awareness.

Bishop (2013) noted, “Kevin Bales, a leading researcher of human trafficking, stated that he knew of only one study that assessed public awareness of human trafficking, and it had not been published” (p. 131). This statement is so very telling and the reason as to why it was so troublesome to find studies performed on this topic. As of October 28, 2010, when Kevin Bales made this statement, no studies were published on public awareness of human trafficking (Bishop, 2013, p. 131). Very limited research exists on public awareness of human trafficking, and if this pattern continues, human trafficking will never vanish.

The two main variables of the present study include film and social media outlets as awareness strategies. In this study, film was the overarching awareness strategy

under review, and social media outlets were analyzed to provide a comparison between the two human trafficking awareness strategies. With that said, film was the main variable in this study. Baker (2014) stated in the article “An Intersectional Analysis of Sex Trafficking Films,” that “film is a powerful medium for framing social issues and raising awareness as well as funds to combat social problems” (p. 209). Because a global movement against human trafficking has festered over the last decade, many films have emerged showcasing the horrors of human trafficking (Baker, 2014, p. 209). These films and documentaries address human trafficking in countries across the globe to include the United States, Europe, Southeast Asia, Mexico, and Israel (Baker, 2014, p. 209). Some of the films surrounding the issue of human trafficking that have been released include *Trade*, *Taken*, *Holly*, *Children for Sale*, *Trading Women*, *Sacrifice*, and *Very Young Girls* (Baker, 2014, p. 210).

Dr. Susan Travis, PhD, noted in the article “Addressing Human Trafficking Through Film Making,” “the gift of film offers the chance to look and learn through a temporary journey into uncomfortable situations” (Travis, 2011, p. 1). Travis (2011) went on to say, “the journey is full of colors, sounds, and images, of an experience that seems vivid, but at the end of the day, each viewer will tuck contentedly and safely into a clean bed” (p. 1). Film serves as one of the most impressionable ways to reach a large audience and serves as a contemporary tool to spread the word about human trafficking. Films are able to ignite a passion within viewers and harness a response that prompts many to take action and join in on the fight against human trafficking.

Social media was the variable that was used for a comparison in the present study. President Barack Obama noted in his speech at the Clinton Global Initiative

Annual Meeting, that technology would be used to harness and target human traffickers (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). President Obama stated, “just as they are now using technology and the Internet to exploit their victims, we’re going to harness technology to stop them” (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). President Obama continued, “we’re encouraging tech companies and advocates and law enforcement-- and we’re also challenging college students-- to develop tools that our young people can use to stay safe online and on their smartphones” (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013 p. 1).

Social media can be categorized as an unsafe method of instant communication between people all over the world. Traffickers have been known to “lure many victims from their homes with promises of well-paying jobs, then force or coerce them into prostitution, domestic servitude, farm or factory work, or other types of exploitative labor” (Dyrud, 2007, p. 23). Traffickers lure their victims through social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace. However, on a positive note, as President Obama noted, there are strides being made by his administration to stop this luring through technology and social media sites and for good reason because social media can provide a means for antitrafficking efforts as well. Dyrud, Malik, and Sunna (2007) stated in the article “Addressing the Human Trafficking Crisis through Social Entrepreneurship,” that “creating and building extended social networks can help radically improve the effectiveness and efficiency of antitrafficking efforts” (p. 21). Like film, social media outlets have the ability to reach extensive audiences rapidly. Information can spread like wild-fire on social media outlets, and vast amounts of individuals can become aware of antitrafficking efforts on these sites. Social media outlets can generate public interest and

increase public awareness of the issue at astronomical rates. All it takes is one person “sharing” an article on their Facebook page, which then leads to that person’s friends reading the article and sharing it to their personal Facebook pages. In a matter of minutes, hundreds of thousands of people can be introduced to or learn more about a topic. Just as with film, social media outlets have the ability to teach, inform, and leave an impression on hundreds of thousands of millions of people all over the world and at astronomical speeds. Because social media outlets and their alleged impact, social media outlets served as a comparable variable in the present study.

Literature Related to Variables and Research Question

As expressed prior, it was very troublesome to find studies related to the constructs of interest and methodology. In saying that, it was even more troublesome to find studies related to the variables (film and social media outlets) and the research questions used in the present study. Very few studies have been performed to analyze the effectiveness of existing human trafficking awareness strategies including film and social media outlets. As a result of the lack of studies on these specific topics, the variables selected, and the research questions, I was forced to increase the scope of the research to include studies performed in the last ten years instead of solely the last five years. With that said, I included the one study that I located that is related to the variables of the present study.

In the article “Addressing the Human Trafficking Crisis Through Social Entrepreneurship,” the researchers, Dyrud, Mali, and Sunnanon, discuss their study, which sought to answer the following research question, “why are organizations ineffective in combating trafficking and what can be done to improve efforts via social

entrepreneurship” (Dyrud, 2007, p. 24). To find an answer to this research question, the researchers delved through an abundance of research, performed interviews with vital individuals such as the UNICEF special adviser on trafficking, Andrea Rossi, and created an online survey, which was distributed to important stakeholders to include national government agencies, UN agencies, research organizations, advocacy organizations, and the media (Dyrud, 2007, p. 25). The survey was anonymous and grouped questions into four categories: “factual information, resource flow, incentives for cooperation, and assessing governments and networks” (Dyrud, 2007, p. 25). Through this study, the researchers found that (a) there is an evident lack of consensus on the geographical scope of trafficking, (b) organizations lack the appropriate funds to meet antitrafficking goals, (c) coordination and communication are key, and (d) the United States, Thailand and China are three major countries with which the respondents must coordinate with (Dyrud, 2007, p. 26). The researchers concluded by recommending progress in the aforementioned areas and called on the media and the public to get involved (Dyrud, 2007, p. 29). The researchers noted that the “media determines which issues are on the political table and can generate public interest through stories about trafficking victims” (Dyrud, 2007, p. 29). In turn, concerned individuals will push their representatives in Congress to make this issue a priority on their agenda (Dyrud, 2007, p. 29).

Since this is the only study found that discusses one of the variables of the present study (social media outlets), I was also forced to look beyond studies and include articles with information on the variables and research questions of the present study. Baker (2014) discussed in her journal article the representation of human trafficking in films and documentaries (p. 208). Baker (2014) noted the over-whelming display of a

“rescue narrative” in existing films (p. 208). Baker (2014) stated that most of these films and documentaries showcase the following story: “an innocent and naive young woman or girl is tricked or abducted by a villainous trafficker, who imprisons her and controls her with brutal violence until a heroic rescuer overcomes tremendous adversity in order to save her” (p. 208). Baker (2014) also noted that race and nationality play a role in these films and documentaries where the rescuers are usually white, Western men and the traffickers are of color and normally from Eastern Europe (p. 208). These statements may be true, but it is also certain that film is a useful way to spread awareness of the phenomenon and Baker stressed the importance of film as an awareness strategy. Baker (2014) concluded her article by requesting more films on human trafficking, but recommended that these future films display the issue in its real and complex form so that viewers can understand the reality of the issue (p. 224).

In addition to Baker, Small (2012) also analyzed the representation of human trafficking in three different films: *Lilja 4-Ever*, *Born into Brothels: Calcuttas Red Light Kids*, and *Human Trafficking* (p. 417). While *Lilja 4-Ever* was a fictional film, which emerged from the writer’s imagination, it was used as an educational tool and was successful at providing awareness (Small, 2012, p. 416). Small (2012) discussed representations of youth, innocence, sexuality, and victimhood in the three films as well as the similar narrative found in the three films (p. 421). As did Baker, Small (2012) recommended that future films be based on reliable empirical evidence (p. 440).

While it is unquestionable that it would be more beneficial to release films that depict the reality of human trafficking so that people could really understand the phenomenon, releasing films that depict human trafficking in general is a step in the right

direction because public awareness is advanced regardless. Films as well as documentaries are a great way to reach people. In the documentary, *A Path Appears*, the reporters, Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, document human trafficking in Nashville, TN (Documentary brings awareness to human trafficking, 2015, p. 1). Blake Lively, Malin Akerman, and Ashley Judd are some of the celebrities that appear in the documentary and help highlight the issue and potential solutions to the problem (Documentary brings awareness to human trafficking, 2015, p. 1). Many people forget that individuals are trafficked in the United States (Documentary brings awareness to human trafficking, 2015, p. 1). Most people think that human trafficking is an international problem, but that is far from the truth (Documentary brings awareness to human trafficking, 2015, p. 1). Human trafficking happens in our own backyards and because of the prominence of the issue; it is essential that people are aware of the risk and proceed with caution at all times (Documentary brings awareness to human trafficking, 2015, p. 1).

In reference to the variables of the present study (film and social media outlets), little is known and an overwhelming amount is unknown. The extreme lack of studies performed on these variables make it very complicated to know if film and social media outlets are effective strategies and should continue to be utilized in the fight against human trafficking. In the study performed by Dyrud, Mali, and Sunnanon, it was found that communication and coordination are key in the fight against human trafficking (Dyrud, 2007, p. 26). Through the media and social media outlets, communication of the issue is sure to advance and more individuals will undoubtedly become aware. The question still lies though: to what extent do social media outlets increase public awareness? It was also stated by Baker (2014) and Small (2012) that film is an

extraordinary way to increase public awareness. However, the question still lies in this statement: to what extent does film increase public awareness? To what extent does film and social media outlets increase public awareness? It is known that both variables do increase public awareness, but do they increase public awareness enough to be considered “effective” awareness strategies? Do other human trafficking awareness strategies exist that are more effective at creating public awareness? What human trafficking awareness strategies should be the focus in the fight? These are the questions that need to be answered. These are the type of studies that must be conducted. It is vital that human trafficking awareness strategies are studied for effectiveness so that policy makers can be knowledgeable about what is working and what is not working so that strides can be made in the correct direction. The present study aimed to fill some of these detrimental gaps.

Themes: Monumental Drawbacks That Hinder Antitrafficking Efforts

The first overarching theme evident in the literature is the monumental drawbacks surrounding the issue, which ultimately hinder antitrafficking efforts. An astonishing amount of the literature on human trafficking acknowledges the immense problems surrounding the issue, which suggests why human trafficking is a rampant issue today with limited resolution.

Kanics, Reiter, and Uhl noted in the article “Trafficking in human beings-- a threat under control? Taking stock four years after international efforts started,” that “while efforts to combat trafficking in human beings were placed high on the political agendas of individual states and international organizations, one of the most evident challenges remains the role of the victim as well as the expectations and demands from

state and society towards the victim upon his/her identification is a crucial issue in the entire trafficking debate” (Kanics, 2005, p. 53). The process of identifying a human trafficking victim is imperative to reducing those trafficked, and the criterion for doing so is lacking significantly (Kanics, 2005, p. 53). In addition to there being difficulty with identifying victims, it has also been said that law enforcement turns a “blind eye towards potential trafficking cases so that they would not have to deal with trafficked persons but rather with irregular migrants” (Kanics, 2005, p. 53). Allegedly, law enforcement applies well-known immigration laws to potential human trafficking cases so that they do not have to get involved in securing protection measures for potential victims (Kanics, 2005, p. 53).

Farrell, McDevitt, and Fahy (2010) also discussed the difficulty in identifying human trafficking victims (p. 203). Farrell (2010) noted there have been various claims as to why it is difficult to identify human trafficking victims and some of these claims include (a) the estimates of those trafficked are unreliable, (b) government officials are not enforcing and/or providing adequate resources for antitrafficking efforts, (c) there is insufficient coordination among agencies supporting antitrafficking efforts, and (d) the numbers of those trafficked were never as high as politicians claimed (p. 203). In addition to these claims, Farrell (2010) questioned the readiness of public officials to identify and respond to human trafficking (p. 204). The findings of Farrell’s (2010) study, which were outlined earlier in Chapter 2, presume that public officials are without a doubt not well-equipped to identify and respond to potential human trafficking cases, which is indisputably a major issue in fighting this phenomenon (p. 222).

Along the same realm, in the article “Trafficking in Human Beings: Training and Services among US Law Enforcement Agencies,” Wilson, Walsh, and Kleuber, sought to assess the nature and extent of local law enforcement response to human trafficking (Wilson, 2006, p. 149). The researchers performed a survey and conducted phone interviews with 83 municipal and county police departments in the United States (Wilson, 2006, p. 152). Through the survey, which included open-ended and closed-ended questions, and phone interviews, the researchers came to find that local law enforcement is ill-prepared to deal with human trafficking crimes (Wilson, 2006, p. 158). The findings of this study indicate the following (a) local police agencies view human trafficking as an issue “elsewhere,” (b) local police agencies feel as though human trafficking is not a local law enforcement problem, (c) local police agencies believe that human trafficking would be best addressed by federal law enforcement, and (d) local police agencies do not receive the proper training to address the issue (Wilson, 2006, p. 158).

Another drawback lies in state laws themselves. In the article “The State of State Human-Trafficking Laws,” Heinrich and Sreeharsha, discussed challenges in addressing human trafficking in regards to state laws (Heinrich, 2013, p. 1). Heinrich and Sreeharsha(2013) noted that every state, with the exception of Wyoming, has a human trafficking law or a related criminal statute (p. 1). However, every state law is different from the next state law and the definitions of and the elements differ greatly (Heinrich, 2013, p. 1). For example, some states only include sex trafficking in their law and exclude labor trafficking, and some states only address sex trafficking of minors (Heinrich, 2013, p. 1). In addition, most laws do not include “victim assistance, a private

right of action, or protection from arrest based on offenses committed as a result of being victimized” (Heinrich, 2013, p. 1). These reasons alone suggest that many enacted state laws are narrow in scope, not comprehensive in their response, and cause under-identification of cases (Heinrich, 2013, p. 1). The state laws that exist make it very complicated to identify victims, respond accordingly, and bring cases to court (Heinrich, 2013, p. 1).

Dyrud, Malik, and Sunnanon (2007) discussed another major drawback with antitrafficking efforts. The researchers stated that “funding is among the most pressing concerns, leading to substantial inefficiency in anti-trafficking operations” (Dyrud, 2007, p. 25). They noted that the scarcity of donor funds for most organizations, who promote antitrafficking efforts such as national departments and NGOs, causes more competition than cooperation (Dyrud, 2007, p. 25). In an interview, Andrea Rossi stated,

There are implications in donor giving because this creates competition in a free market, which is good for private companies who compete for a share of the funds, but competition does not equate to cooperation-- in fact it disables all chances for it in the global arena, especially when it comes to combating trafficking in persons. (Dyrud, 2007, p. 25)

Donating funds may cause unwanted competition rather than cooperation among organizations, but it is also noted that no organization or government has been mandated to take the lead in these antitrafficking efforts (Dyrud, 2007, p. 25). Rossi went on to say, “everyone wants cooperation, but no one wants to give cooperation” (Dyrud, 2007, p. 25). These truths play a role in the minimized progress.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act “TVPA,” which was the very first contemporary piece of legislation passed by Congress in 2000, and the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Acts “TVPRAs,” which advanced the efforts of the first TVPA and were passed in 2003, 2005, 2008, and 2013, have all withstood major criticisms as well (Hall, 2014, p. 861). Critics have said that the TVPA and the TVPRAs “overly focus on sex trafficking-- especially domestic minor sex trafficking-- while paying less attention and devoting fewer resources to labor trafficking” (Hall, 2014, p. 861). These focus area failures “may be the result of racist, sexist, and classist images of a “perfect” or “ideal” victim, i.e. a 13-year-old white American female sex trafficking victim abducted and chained to a bed, even though most trafficking victims do not fit such a mold” (Hall, 2014, p. 861). Many also say that the TVPA and the TVPRAs are driven to prosecute traffickers rather than protect victims (Hall, 2014, p. 861). It is said that the system within the Acts “assist only those immigrants who have been “exploited enough”” (Hall, 2014, p. 862). In addition, it has been said that the Act’s “conceptual paradigm of trafficking as a human rights issue has failed to deliver results; instead, trafficking should be conceived of as a labor issue” (Hall, 2014, p. 862).

As portrayed, there is an exhaustive list of drawbacks and issues surrounding the phenomenon of human trafficking, which all serve as reasons why human trafficking seems to be on the rise rather than the demise. All of these unfortunate drawbacks (difficulty in identifying victims, law enforcement turning a blind eye to presumed victims, unreliable estimates, lack of enforcement of antitrafficking measures, lack of resources, insufficient coordination among agencies devoted to antitrafficking efforts, lack of readiness of public officials to identify and respond to human trafficking, lack of

knowledge, lack of training, narrow nature of state human trafficking laws, faults of the TVPA and TVPRAs, etc.) need special attention so that antitrafficking efforts can advance and steps can be taken to reduce the risk and lessen the number of victims in the United States and all over the world.

Themes: Recent Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking

The second overarching theme evident in the literature is current and/or recent antitrafficking efforts. A vast amount of the literature discusses efforts made by former Presidents including Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, and now former President, Barack Obama. Below, the recent efforts made by the Obama Administration will be discussed. In addition to the efforts made by President Barack Obama, private industries have made efforts to combat human trafficking as well as individual states; all of which will be discussed below.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act was signed by President Clinton in 2000 and sparked a global movement (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). President Bush carried on the efforts of the Act and then President Obama advanced efforts to fight human trafficking during his time in office (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). President Obama stated in his speech at the Clinton Global Initiative in 2013,

Now, as president, I've made it clear that the United States will continue to be a leader in this global movement. We've got a comprehensive strategy. We're shining a spotlight on the dark corners where it persists. Under [Secretary of State] Hillary [Clinton's] leadership, we're doing more than ever -- with our annual trafficking report, with new outreach and partnerships -- to give countries

incentives to meet their responsibilities and calling them out when they don't.

(President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1)

In this same speech, President Obama outlined various efforts that had been made by his administration to depict his commitment to the issue. One of the efforts made by President Obama was the renewal of sanctions with North Korea and Eritrea, which are two of the worst abusers of human trafficking (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). The United States partnered with groups that strive to assist women and children in escaping from their abusers (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). The Obama Administration worked to help other countries set up their own antitrafficking laws as well (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1).

In addition to helping other countries set up and manage antitrafficking laws, the United States also advanced efforts right here at home during President Obama's time in office (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). The annual trafficking report now includes the United States, and the United States' interagency task force has been expanded to include federal partners including the FBI (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). The intelligence community is allocating more resources to identify trafficking networks, and the United States has made sure that foreign-born workers know their human rights and freedoms (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1).

The Obama Administration also focused heavily on the human traffickers themselves (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). The new antitrafficking teams worked to break down the human traffickers' networks, and in

2012, a record-breaking number of human traffickers were charged with human trafficking and put behind bars (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1).

President Obama advanced antitrafficking efforts further by announcing a series of steps to be taken following his speech (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). President Obama stated, “First, we’re going to do more to spot it and stop it” (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). President Obama went on to say, “we’ll prepare a new assessment of human trafficking in the United States so we better understand the scope and scale of the problem” (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). President Obama noted that training would be strengthened so that investigators and law enforcement would be better equipped to take action (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). Further, the Obama Administration vowed to work with Amtrak, bus and truck inspectors, teachers, educators, etc., so that many eyes are on the lookout for human traffickers and victims (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1).

Second, President Obama stated, “we’re turning the table on the traffickers” (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). President Obama went on to say, “just as they are now using technology and the Internet to exploit their victims, we’re going to harness technology to stop them” (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). The Obama Administration challenged technology companies, advocates, law enforcement, and college students, to develop tools to make young people safer when they are online and on smartphones (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1).

Third, President Obama noted, “we’ll do even more to help victims recover and rebuild their lives” (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). The Obama Administration pledged to (a) develop a plan to improve coordination across the federal government, (b) increase access to services to help survivors of human trafficking become self-sufficient in their lives, and (c) simplify visa procedures for “T” visas so that survivors from other countries can stay in the United States legally to help prosecute their traffickers (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1).

In addition to everything listed, President Obama shifted the focus of his Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships to the fight against human trafficking, and he partnered with Humanity United, which is a leader in antitrafficking (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). Further, the Obama Administration took steps to ensure that contractors do not engage in forced labor (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). President Obama signed an executive order that is specific about prohibitions, protects workers, ensures stronger compliance, and noted that “American tax dollars must never, ever be used to support the trafficking of human beings” (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1). It was noted that there will be zero tolerance for anyone who goes against this new order (President Obama's Speech on Human Trafficking, 2013, p. 1).

In 2013, the White House held a Forum to Combat Human Trafficking “to highlight the significant progress this Administration has made to combat human trafficking, including developments since President Obama delivered his seminal speech on the fight to end trafficking persons at the Clinton Global Initiative in September 2012” (The Obama administration's record on human trafficking issues, 2013, p. 1). This Forum

introduced more key efforts made by President Obama and his administration. The next key effort made is in regard to technology. At the Forum to Combat Human trafficking, President Obama presented a public-private partnership that provides new technology tools that will enable law enforcement to bring traffickers to justice and new online applications to connect victims with the services they may need (The Obama administration's record on human trafficking issues, 2013, p. 1). In addition, a new private sector partnership was presented to help support law enforcement's efforts to combat child sex trafficking as well as advanced research and tools to help law enforcement identify children who have been sold online (The Obama administration's record on human trafficking issues, 2013, p. 1).

A subsequent key effort made by President Obama is he released the very first 5-year federal strategic action plan to coordinate and strengthen services for human trafficking victims (The Obama administration's record on human trafficking issues, 2013, p. 1). A further key effort includes a partnership between the Department of State and New Perimeter, a non-profit organization designed to increase the availability of pro bono legal services to combat human trafficking (The Obama administration's record on human trafficking issues, 2013, p. 1). This partnership focuses on prosecuting traffickers, protecting survivors, and preventing victimization (The Obama administration's record on human trafficking issues, 2013, p. 1).

Another key effort made by President Obama and his administration includes better data and allocation of resources with domestic human trafficking (The Obama administration's record on human trafficking issues, 2013, p. 1). The Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center, which is an "interagency clearinghouse" for human trafficking

information, collects data from several federal agencies to develop a domestic human trafficking assessment (The Obama administration's record on human trafficking issues, 2013, p. 1). This is the very first interagency human trafficking assessment that assists the Federal Government in allocating law enforcement and resources by identifying hotspots and revealing trends and patterns for trafficking activity (The Obama administration's record on human trafficking issues, 2013, p. 1).

President Obama signed into law the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2013, which was said to “increase support to the State Department’s diplomatic engagement, bolster protections for vulnerable children and domestic workers, and enable effective partnerships to bring services to survivors and prosecute traffickers” (The Obama administration's record on human trafficking issues, 2013, p. 1). The Department of Homeland Security published an interim final rule to amend “T” nonimmigrant visa regulations, which allows victims to stay in the United States to help prosecute their traffickers (The Obama administration's record on human trafficking issues, 2013, p. 1). Further, USAID released a Counter-Trafficking in Persons Field Guide that (a) provides guidance to develop, administer and evaluate investments, (b) helps educate USAID mission personnel and partners about human trafficking, (c) provides recommendations for integrating counter-trafficking activities, (d) provides tools for designing antitrafficking efforts alone, and (e) provides instruction on reporting suspected trafficking violations (The Obama administration's record on human trafficking issues, 2013, p. 1). All of these efforts depict the commitment and dedication that President Obama and his administration had to continue and advance this unwavering fight against human trafficking.

Former Presidents have made great strides in the fight against human trafficking, but private industries have also joined in in the fight. In the article “Human Trafficking and the Internet,” the author, Dixon, discussed some of the efforts private industries have made to combat human trafficking (Dixon, 2013, p. 1). For example, in December 2011, Google made numerous grants totaling \$11.5 million to various antitrafficking organizations (Dixon, 2013, p. 1). These grants were made to support new antitrafficking initiatives utilizing technology (Dixon, 2013, p. 1). Some of the technologically-focused initiatives include projects with the following: the Polaris Project, Slavery Footprint, and the International Justice Mission (Dixon, 2013, p. 1).

Microsoft Digital Crimes Unit and Microsoft Research also joined in in the fight against human trafficking. In June 2012, they collaborated “to support researchers who had creative ideas for researching the role of technology in facilitating the commercial sexual exploitation of children” (Dixon, 2013, p. 1). Both groups collectively awarded \$185,000 to six different research teams who were studying issues related to interfering with technology-facilitated sex trafficking and improving services to victims (Dixon, 2013, p. 1).

LexisNexis is another private industry that has made efforts to combat human trafficking. LexisNexis has

Been instrumental in promoting and introducing an array of technology-driven tools to assist in detecting, monitoring, and researching human trafficking, including a national database of social service providers; an online resource center for attorneys who work with human trafficking victims; a training institute established with the American Bar Association on civil remedies for victims; and

a Human Trafficking index to track trafficking news articles produced by 6,000 news sources in more than 120 countries. (Dixon, 2013, p. 1)

The next private industry who has joined in to combat human trafficking is JP Morgan Chase. JP Morgan Chase has created different “tools for applying anti-money laundering protocols to human-trafficking networks” (Dixon, 2013, p. 1). Technologies for detecting money laundering are significant because both money laundering and human trafficking tend to entail hidden financial transactions (Dixon, 2013, p. 1). These technologies proved successful in one case where “several credit card transactions at a nail salon during nonbusiness hours uncovered a human-trafficking operation” (Dixon, 2013, p. 1). Technologies for detecting money laundering will assist in discovering more cases such as this one, and in turn, more human trafficking cases will be exposed.

In addition, the software company Palantir Technologies partnered with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) “to improve NCMEC’s ability to process and make sense of all the data at its disposal as a result of numerous initiatives studying human trafficking” (Dixon, 2013, p. 1). Researchers who use this data will be able to perform tasks such as “diagramming complex relationships between persons, businesses, and online sites that may involve human trafficking” (Dixon, 2013, p. 1). This data can be valuable to law enforcement and others involved in the fight against human trafficking (Dixon, 2013, p. 1).

As depicted above, the federal government is involved in the fight against human trafficking, and was especially during President Obama’s administration. In addition to what was noted above, the federal government also became involved decades ago when the U.S. Constitution was signed. Hogan (2008) noted that on the federal level,

the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution outlaws slavery (p. 653). While this Thirteenth Amendment outlaws slavery, slavery unfortunately still exists on a large scale in the form of human trafficking. With that said, the federal government took a necessary second step and established the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, which “supplements existing laws that apply to human trafficking including those passed to enforce the Thirteenth Amendment” (Hogan, 2008, p. 653). The Act “strengthens criminal enforcement, prosecution, and penalties against traffickers” (Hogan, 2008, p. 653). The Act also “provides new protections to victims, and enables victims of severe forms of trafficking to seek benefits and services that will help them rebuild their lives” (Hogan, 2008, p. 653). The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Acts build upon the first Act and strengthen and advance the initiatives within (Hogan, 2008, p. 653).

At the state level, various legislatures have responded to the human trafficking crisis and have created additional laws in addition to the federal laws that already exist (Hogan, 2008, p. 654). Hogan noted, “even though legislation exists on the federal level to combat trafficking, it is imperative that states, especially those like New York who are known as “hubs” of trafficking, promulgate antitrafficking legislation for several reasons” (Hogan, 2008, p. 654). The first reason is because human trafficking is considered by some to be a local issue and criminal prosecutions are generally a state responsibility (Hogan, 2008, p. 655). Another reason why states should have their own antitrafficking legislation is because federal authorities are not always able or willing to prosecute cases that involve a small number of people (Hogan, 2008, p. 655).

Washington State has been considered the “head of the state antitrafficking legislation initiative” (Hogan, 2008, p. 654). Washington State was the very first state to pass antitrafficking legislation and it has served as a model for other states (Hogan, 2008, p. 654). Washington State has created a state task force “to identify and focus on particular social services for trafficking victims” (Hogan, 2008, p. 662). Through this statute, “the Washington legislature recognized that victims would be better served if there is an established, coordinated system of service delivery agencies and staff, and timely and appropriate delivery of services” (Hogan, 2008, p. 662). This task force was created to provide the following services to victims: health care, housing, education, legal assistance, job training, interpreting services, and language services to teach English as a second language (Hogan, 2008, p. 662).

In addition to establishing a task force, other states should also take measures to protect trafficking victims, provide a safe haven for witnesses, provide mental rehabilitation for victims, provide education and training for local law enforcement, consider a civil cause of action for victims, make traffickers responsible for their actions, run public awareness campaigns, amongst many other vital measures (Hogan, 2008, p. 663-669). If states enact legislation that includes the aforementioned, it will be very difficult for traffickers to engage in human trafficking, which is undoubtedly the sole purpose of the antitrafficking measures explained (Hogan, 2008, p. 672).

Themes: Awareness Strategies

The third overarching theme evident in the literature is public awareness. There has been a wide-variety of awareness strategies set into motion to try and raise public

awareness of human trafficking to reduce the number of trafficking victims. Some of the significant human trafficking awareness strategies will be outlined below.

In the article, “Chapter 515: Combating Human Trafficking by Enhancing Awareness Through Public Postings,” Dyle discussed Chapter 515 of the California law (Dyle, 2013). Chapter 515 of the California law requires “specified businesses and establishments to post a human trafficking notice in a conspicuous place near the public entrance or a location clearly visible to the public and employees” (Dyle, 2013, p. 585). This human trafficking notice must be “at least eight and one-half inches by 11 inches in size, written in a 16-point font and contain information relating to human trafficking, including phone numbers of and general information concerning hotlines run by anti-human trafficking non-profit organizations” (Dyle, 2013, p. 585). In addition, the notice must be in English, Spanish, and other languages if they are widely spoken in the area (Dyle, 2013, p. 585). If a specified business or establishment fails to comply with Chapter 515, they will have to pay a \$500 fine for the first offense and \$1,000 for every offense after the first (Dyle, 2013, p. 586). The purpose of Chapter 515 is to increase the amount of human trafficking reports made by promoting community awareness (Dyle, 2013, p. 586).

Film and documentary are utilized to create public awareness of human trafficking as well. Small (2012) discussed some films that have been released to create awareness of the phenomenon. In 2005, the Swedish Government distributed five hundred copies of the film *Lilja 4-Ever* (2002), to non-governmental organizations in the former Soviet Union and southeastern Europe (Small, 2012, p. 415). *Lilja 4-Ever* is a film on sex trafficking that was intended to educate vulnerable girls and women about the

immoral strategies of human traffickers (Small, 2012, p. 415). This film was distributed in the former Soviet Union and southeastern Europe because both locations emerged as “hotbeds of potential prostitutes after the fall of Communism in 1989” (Small, 2012, p. 415). A sixteen-year-old named Albanian Veronica responded to a question posed by a British journalist saying, “We all cried when we saw it. We talked about it, and wondered, “What would we do”” (Small, 2012, p. 415). This film shaped the understanding of these young girls and women (Small, 2012, p. 415). This film had quite the impact and served as an educational tool on human rights violations (Small, 2012, p. 415). Small (2012) noted, “films about sexual trafficking struck a cultural chord at the turn of the millennium” (p. 416). Small (2012) went on to say, “after two decades of virtual silence, film-makers crafted at least fifty-five films from 1996 to 2008 that addressed sexual trafficking” (p. 416). Films such as *Lilja 4-Ever* inform and educate, which creates significant awareness (Small, 2012, p. 438). Travis (2011) stated, “media and television programming increasingly brings human trafficking to the public and opening hearts to action” (p. 1). Not only does film create public awareness, but it also ignites a response in individuals to take action.

Technology is another vital awareness strategy in the fight against human trafficking. In July 2013, a discussion named “Conversations with America” transpired between top State Department officials and NGO leaders at the U.S. Department of State (Technology as a tool, 2013, p. 1). Cheryl Benton, Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Public Affairs, served as the moderator in this discussion surrounding the role of technology in the fight against human trafficking (Technology as a tool, 2013, p. 1). Some of the leaders present at this meeting include Luis CdeBaca, Ambassador-at-Large

to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons; Todd Park, U.S. Chief Technology Officer at the White House; and Claire Schmidt, the Director of Programs at Thorn (Technology as a tool, 2013, p. 1). In this discussion, Todd Park stated,

Technology can be a very useful aid, right, in the hands of victims, in the hands of victims services, activist organizations, law enforcement, to help fight trafficking. But it's very important to think of technology as a tool and not as a solution, right. (Technology as a tool, 2013, p. 1)

Mr. Park went on to say that people care and will care about human trafficking as soon as they are aware of the issue (Technology as a tool, 2013, p. 1). Mr. Park stated,

One of the things we're really interested in amplifying is the use of technology to help get the word out about this evil because I think that will directly result in exponentially more people mobilizing in all kinds of ways to fight and end the evil. (Technology as a tool, 2013, p. 1)

With that said, Mr. Park noted that he was going to work with people who can get the word out about human trafficking (Technology as a tool, 2013, p. 1). Technology can serve as an extremely useful tool to spread awareness to numerous numbers of people instantaneously.

Another awareness attempt has been led by the Puerto Rican superstar, Ricky Martin. Ricky Martin created a foundation called the "Ricky Martin Foundation," which campaigns to end child trafficking (Suarez, 2006, p. 35). In 2004, the Ricky Martin Foundation established "People for Children," "which is a global anti-child trafficking initiative to raise public awareness and influence public policy" (Suarez, 2006, p. 35). The Foundation and the US Department of Health and Human Services have worked

together to run this awareness campaign (Suarez, 2006, p. 35). “People for Children” runs in Spanish and English and promotes a free phone service for human trafficking victims in the United States and Puerto Rico (Suarez, 2006, p. 35). The free phone service provides support for victims and also serves as a way to get information about traffickers (Suarez, 2006, p. 35). In 2006, a new campaign was launched titled “Don’t Let Anyone Shatter Your Dreams” (Suarez, 2006, p. 35). The Foundation partnered up with the International Organization for Migration Colombia and Colombia’s Inter-Institutional Committee against Trafficking in Persons for this new campaign (Suarez, 2006, p. 35). The new campaign provides advice hotlines and encourages the media to raise public awareness of human trafficking (Suarez, 2006, p. 35). The Foundation is also partnering with Microsoft on a campaign to increase child internet safety (Suarez, 2006, p. 35).

In addition to Chapter 515, film and documentary, technology, and the efforts made by the Ricky Martin Foundation, a plethora of other human trafficking awareness strategies have been implemented as noted above. Some of these, as discussed above, include social entrepreneurship, social media, and the annual trafficking in persons report. Awareness efforts and strategies are necessary in the antitrafficking campaign. The more people aware and educated on the topic, the less trafficking victims we will have in this world. Public awareness is critical in this fight.

What Is Known and Not Known?

There is entirely too much not known about human trafficking in general, and even less known about film and social media outlets as awareness strategies. With that said; however, how is it possible to know a lot about human trafficking when questions lie surrounding its prevalence? Farrell (2010) stated, “because human trafficking is a

largely clandestine phenomenon, it has proven particularly difficult to measure its prevalence- a critical step to justifying antitrafficking expenditures and to evaluating the success of programs aimed at combating the problem” (p. 206). As noted, it is very difficult to evaluate antitrafficking measures and implemented awareness strategies when the prevalence of the problem is not even known. This could serve as a reason as to why this topic has been studied so sparsely. Farrell (2010) explained, “official estimates suggest between 600,000 and 800,000 persons are trafficked internationally, with 14,500 to 17,500 people trafficked annually into the United States” (p. 203). Farrell (2010) went on to say, “however, these estimates have been criticized sharply for methodological weaknesses, gaps in the data and numerical discrepancies that cast doubt on the reliability of these measures” (p. 204).

In regard to film as a public awareness strategy, it is known, as established above, that film can serve as an effective mean for framing human trafficking, spreading a message, increasing public awareness, and generating funds. Nonetheless, it is not known “how” effective film is as a public awareness strategy. As noted above, Kevin Bales stated in an interview in 2010 that he only knew of one study that assessed public awareness of human trafficking (Bishop, 2013, p. 131). Such limited research has been conducted on public awareness of human trafficking within the United States, Russia, and Israel, specifically (Bishop, 2013, p. 131). There are so many gaps present in the existing literature on human trafficking, and the present study sought to fill a void.

How the Present Study Fills a Gap

The literature that exists on this horrendous topic discusses in-depth the issue of human trafficking, outlines reports released, mentions the inexact prevalence of human

trafficking in foreign countries and here in the United States, details current antitrafficking efforts and drawbacks, and references public awareness of human trafficking to some extent. Some researchers have performed studies on public awareness of human trafficking; however, very few have taken on this undertaking. One study sought to find how public framing of human trafficking has changed over the course of time (Bishop, 2013, p. 115). Another study sought to find the public opinion of human trafficking in specific countries (Bishop, 2013, p. 115). Further, another study sought to evaluate public perception of the seriousness of human trafficking (Bishop, 2013, p. 115). The next study sought to find the concern and attitudes of European Union citizens towards human trafficking (Bishop, 2013, p. 115).

All of the existing literature and the studies mentioned are significant and necessary; however, substantial gaps exist and must be filled in order for there ever to be a resolution or decrease in victims of human trafficking. There are legitimate reasons as to why gaps exist in the literature, (seeing as human trafficking is such a complicated issue) but prior to this study; there were no existing studies where a researcher sought to find the effectiveness of an implemented awareness strategy. Through intensive research, I found that no other researcher, past or present, has conducted a study to find the effectiveness of film or social media outlets as awareness strategies in combating human trafficking. The lack of previous research addressing public awareness strategies of human trafficking and the effectiveness of these awareness strategies is quite shocking. Studies, such as the present study, must be conducted to fill gaps, become more knowledgeable on the topic, find answers and solutions, and influence future policy decisions and programs targeted toward antitrafficking measures. In saying that, the

present study sought to fill an apparent gap in the literature, which was to determine the effectiveness of implemented awareness strategies (film and social media outlets) at creating public awareness. In the next chapter, the present study is outlined, including the research design and research questions, which were performed with the intention of filling a gap in the literature in regards to implemented human trafficking awareness strategies and their effectiveness at creating public awareness.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to discover whether films that depict human trafficking and its severity positively affect the issue and create greater public awareness around the world or have no effect at all. I compared film and social media outlets as awareness strategies to determine whether film is more or less effective of a strategy to the public internationally. I developed a survey, distributed the survey to a random sampling of individuals, analyzed the findings, reported results, and stated a generalization. Chapter 3 includes the research design and rationale, methodology, threats to validity, and a summary.

Research Design and Rationale

To discover the effectiveness of film (Independent Variable 1) as an awareness strategy of human trafficking thus the relationship between film and public awareness (dependent variable), and to discover the effectiveness of social media outlets (Independent Variable 2) as an awareness strategy of human trafficking thus the relationship between social media outlets and public awareness, I addressed three central research questions:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between films that depict human trafficking and public awareness of the phenomenon?

H1: Film increases public awareness of human trafficking.

H0: Film has no influence on public awareness of human trafficking.

I performed an independent sample t test. The decision point was determined by the frequency of responses; for example, “yes” responses had to be greater than “no” responses for $H1$ to be true.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between social media outlets and public awareness of the phenomenon?

$H1$: Social media outlets increase public awareness of human trafficking.

$H0$: Social media outlets have no influence on public awareness of human trafficking.

I performed an independent sample t test. The decision point was determined by the frequency of responses; for example, “yes” responses had to be greater than “no” responses for $H1$ to be true.

Research Question 3: Which awareness strategy, film or social media outlets, is more effective at creating public awareness of human trafficking?

$H1$: Film is more effective than social media at creating public awareness of human trafficking.

$H0$: Neither strategy is effective at creating public awareness of human trafficking.

I performed a descriptive statistic test, specifically a mode test. The decision point was determined by the frequency of responses; for example, “yes” responses (with regard to film) had to be greater than “yes” responses (with regard to social media outlets) for $H1$ to be true.

To find an answer to the aforementioned research questions, I used a nonexperimental, quantitative, survey research design. A nonexperimental design is

“used to construct a picture of the phenomenon under investigation” (Walden University, 2014, “Non-Experimental Designs,” p. 1). This type of design is “frequently used to explore events, people, or situations and to test relationships and differences among variables at one point or over time” (Walden University, 2014, “Non-Experimental Designs,” p. 1). I conducted the present study to explore implemented human trafficking awareness strategies and to test the relationship between two human trafficking awareness strategies (film and social media outlets) and public awareness of the phenomenon. This study only tested the relationships at one point in time, which was when I conducted the study. One of the sole purposes of a nonexperimental design is “to collect detailed descriptions of existing variables or to use the data to justify and assess current conditions or practices” (Walden University, 2014, “Non-Experimental Designs,” p. 1). The main purpose of this study was to collect survey responses to assess two current practices to discover their effectiveness internationally. In a nonexperimental design, the independent variable is not manipulated, and in this study, there was no manipulation of any variables (dependent and independent).

A survey design is “used when the research goal is to relate one variable to another or to assess differences between variables” (Walden University, 2014, “Survey Research Design,” p.1). I sought to accomplish both aspects of a survey design. I strived to find the correlational relationship between variables (film and public awareness; social media outlets and public awareness) to determine the degree of the relationship. The variables will either be positively correlated, negatively correlated, or will have no correlation to each other. I also strived to assess the difference in effectiveness between two human trafficking awareness strategies (film and social media outlets). I assessed the

differences between two variables (film and social media outlets) to find which human trafficking awareness strategy is more effective at creating public awareness throughout the world. A survey design typically collects data through surveys, which was the data collection method that I used (Walden University, 2014). In addition, a survey design draws a small or large sample, and in the present study, a large sample was my aim. This design allows the researcher to collect a large amount of data and at a relatively inexpensive cost, which is significant. Seeing as the survey research design collects data through surveys, a large amount of data can be collected quickly, efficiently, and inexpensively. There were no real time or resource constraints for this study because of the data collection method associated with this design. For all of these reasons noted, a nonexperimental, quantitative, survey research design was the adequate blueprint to guide this study and assist in obtaining valid answers to the research questions stated.

In this discipline, researchers of existing literature on this topic have used research designs similar to the one that I used in the present study. As outlined in Chapter 2, researchers of this topic typically use an exploratory design and conduct a survey as their data collection method. This design is most popular among human trafficking researchers because there is little existing research on the topic. Because my study was one of the first testing the effectiveness of a human trafficking awareness strategy, the present is “exploratory” and I conducted a survey to collect data. Exploratory studies are used frequently to advance knowledge when little to no knowledge is currently in existence.

Methodology: Population

Population refers to a comprehensive set of pertinent units of analysis or data (Frankfort-Nachmias, 2008). The present study's target population did not have any exclusion. Because this study was a study on public awareness, it was important to include all and exclude none in order to acquire a comprehensive understanding and reduce the risk of bias. Any and all individuals on the Walden Participant Pool and Survey Monkey were included and could participate in this study; that is if they wanted to be a part of the study. This study sought to survey as many individuals as possible in a matter of a few weeks, and have a sample of well over 100 participants.

Methodology: Sampling and Sampling Procedure

A sampling strategy can either strengthen or weaken a quantitative research study. The most vital requirement of any sample is that it is as representative of the population as possible. Frankfort-Nachmias (2008) noted that a sample can reflect and be representative of the population if the analyses made using the sampling unit yield results that are similar to the results that would be obtained had the entire population been examined.

This study utilized a simple random sampling strategy. Frankfort-Nachmias (2008) stated that utilizing a random selection procedure helps to ensure that all sampling units of the population have an equal and known probability of being included in the sample. A random sampling strategy enabled me to collect a sample that was representative of the population because no exclusions existed. The sampling frame included all individuals in the Walden Participant Pool and Survey Monkey and all individuals were treated equally and were invited to participate if desired. A random

sampling strategy enabled the sample to be representative of the population and it provided me with a true depiction of how aware or unaware the individuals of the world are as it relates to human trafficking and two specific awareness strategies (film and social media outlets).

The survey for this study was created through Survey Monkey and was sent to the Walden Participant Pool. When a large number of completed surveys had been received back, within the allotted timeframe defined, each survey received was assigned a number, and 100 survey numbers were chosen at random. The 100 random surveys selected served as the sample for the study. The 100 surveys that are randomly chosen were analyzed, coded, and a conclusion and generalization permeated.

The sample size was calculated using a power analysis calculator (Magnusson). Statistical power was set at .80, significance (α) was set to .05, and effect was set at .3. With these numbers set, the power analysis calculator revealed that for discovering the relationship between films that depict human trafficking and public awareness of the phenomenon as well as the relationship between social media outlets and public awareness of the phenomenon, a medium effect size was necessary that constituted at least 68.7 participants for the sample. As noted prior; however, this study had a sample of 100 participants in the Walden Participant Pool and Survey Monkey, which is well beyond the number revealed and suggested by the power analysis calculator.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

After the survey was constructed and finalized on Survey Monkey, it was sent to the Walden Participant Pool. Survey Monkey is a website that allows any individual to create a survey and reach mass audiences by sending it out via mobile device, the web,

and/or social media outlets (Survey Monkey, 2015). I sent the survey to the Walden Participant Pool in hopes that Walden students and faculty would participate and there would be an immense volume of surveys received back. Survey Monkey is a completely safe industry and website to utilize (Survey Monkey, 2015).

The present study allowed the Walden Participant Pool site to do the recruiting. Once the survey was posted on the Walden Participant Pool site, the Walden community (those who have registered to be a part of the Walden Participant Pool) was able to view it and had the ability to participate if they chose they wanted to be a part of the study. I was not looking to reach one particular audience; instead, I sought to survey everyone and anyone that was willing to participate. This was a public awareness study, and I strived to poll the public in all its diversity.

At the very top of the survey, there were a few questions and explanations made that each participant had to respond to before moving forward. For instance, the survey asked all participants to include their age and location. This type of information was requested simply to understand what areas of the world are more aware than others as well as what age group is more aware of human trafficking. Information such as this was gathered to help antitrafficking campaigns target specific areas and age groups that desperately need more information on human trafficking. In addition to these two questions, the participants were required to agree to an informed consent statement. The participants read a statement that detailed the intent of the survey and the study and reiterated how participation was completely voluntary. The participants were not able to advance in the survey if they did not agree to the aforementioned informed consent statement.

After the participant had answered the initial three questions about age and location and had agreed to the informed consent statement, the participant was able to move forward and answer the main questions of the study. The questions were “yes” or “no” questions, and after the participant had answered all questions, the participant had the option to submit the survey by clicking “done.” After the participant had submitted the survey, a “thank you for participating” message appeared and the survey results were sent directly to me.

The survey was created entirely by me. As explained prior, a study such as this one had not been conducted previously by any researcher. This study was the first to take on this undertaking, and because to that, I had to create a new survey altogether to use to survey participants. To ensure reliability of the survey, I utilized an alternate-form. The survey had two forms; however, both forms had the exact same wording for the questions. The only difference between the two forms was the order of the questions. The sequence of questions was different in the two forms so that variation existed. Some participants took one form while other participants took the second form. I utilized an alternate-form to produce two items that were similar but not identical. These methods allowed me to see if the results remained the same or were different depending on the order of the questions. The alternate-form method helped to ensure the reliability of the survey by providing stability when a measurement was repeated under identical conditions.

To ensure validity or how well a survey measures what it strives to measure, I instituted content validity. Prior to the survey being posted on the Walden Participant Pool site and Survey Monkey, I presented the survey to a set of reviewers who had some

knowledge of human trafficking and the awareness strategies the study sets out to test. I requested that each reviewer thoroughly examined the content of the survey to make sure that the survey included everything that was pertinent to finding a conclusion to the research questions of the study. Content validity established the sufficiency of the survey to answer the research questions of the study. I requested that each reviewer examine the content of the survey to ensure that the survey did not include anything that it should not have included. Content validity helped keep the survey subjective, which ensured the validity of the survey.

Operationalization of the Variables

For this quantitative study, there were two independent variables. This study was a comparison study between two independent variables to see which independent variable is more effective. This study strived to see which independent variable caused more of a change in the dependent variable.

The first Independent Variable was films that depict human trafficking. Film is another word for movie. A movie can be defined as “a film shown in a cinema or on television and often telling a story” (Cambridge University Press, 2015, “Movie,” p. 1). Films (movies) that tell the story of human trafficking served as one Independent Variable. This Independent Variable was not manipulated in any way so that the participants’ answers were not distorted and I was able to see the true impact of the awareness strategy. This study sought to find the effectiveness of films that depict human trafficking at the time the study was conducted. I wanted to find the effect of the films without tampering with or controlling or altering the thoughts and opinions of the participants. This variable was measured by analyzing the results of the survey. I

prompted participants with questions regarding their familiarity with films on human trafficking and if they felt human trafficking films aided in their awareness of the phenomenon or if the films failed to do so. It is important to keep in mind that some participants may not have seen any human trafficking films, which may have lead way to the responses given.

The second Independent Variable of this study was social media outlets. Social media can be defined as “websites and computer programs that allow people to communicate and share information on the Internet using a computer or mobile phone” (Cambridge University, 2015, “Social Media,” p. 1). This second Independent Variable was not be manipulated in any way. This study sought to find the effect of films in comparison to the effect of social media outlets at the time the study was conducted. This variable was measured by analyzing the results from the survey and comparing them to the film results. I asked participants questions regarding their awareness of the phenomenon through websites and computers programs such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. It is also important to note here that some participants may not use social media outlets in their life, which may have dictated their responses as well.

The Dependent Variable of this quantitative study was public awareness. Awareness is “knowledge that something exists, or understanding of a situation or subject at the present time based on information or experience” (Cambridge University Press, 2015, “Awareness,” p. 1). This study sought to find if participants were more aware of human trafficking because of human trafficking films and social media outlets or if these two awareness strategies have not impacted the participants’ degree of awareness of the phenomenon at all. The present study did not manipulate awareness; however, this study

sought to find if the independent variables caused a change in the dependent variable in general. This study strived to find if film and social media outlets have caused a change in public awareness at the time the study was performed. Public awareness was measured by the responses given by the participants who completed the survey. The responses given by the participants informed me of the degree of public awareness the participants have with both awareness strategies.

Data Analysis

The data gathered from the surveys was entered into SPSS for analysis to find answers to the research questions of the study. SPSS allows researchers to conduct different kinds of tests and analyses to understand data and find conclusions. SPSS also enables researchers to keep their data clean and organized. This section will be organized into two subsections to include research questions and hypotheses, and the data analysis plan.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

To discover the effectiveness of film as an awareness strategy of human trafficking thus the relationship between film and public awareness, and, to discover the effectiveness of social media outlets as an awareness strategy of human trafficking thus the relationship between social media outlets and public awareness, this quantitative study addressed three central research questions:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between films that depict human trafficking and public awareness of the phenomenon?

H1: Film increases public awareness of human trafficking.

H0: Film has no influence on public awareness of human trafficking.

I performed an independent sample t test. The decision point was determined by the frequency of responses; for example, “yes” responses had to be greater than “no” responses for $H1$ to be true.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between social media outlets and public awareness of the phenomenon?

$H1$: Social media outlets increase public awareness of human trafficking.

$H0$: Social media outlets have no influence on public awareness of human trafficking.

I performed an independent sample t test. The decision point was determined by the frequency of responses; for example, “yes” responses had to be greater than “no” responses for $H1$ to be true.

Research Question 3: Which awareness strategy, film or social media outlets, is more effective at creating public awareness of human trafficking?

$H1$: Film is more effective than social media at creating public awareness of human trafficking.

$H0$: Neither strategy is effective at creating public awareness of human trafficking.

I performed a descriptive statistic test, specifically a mode test. The decision point was determined by the frequency of responses; for example, “yes” responses (with regard to film) had to be greater than “yes” responses (with regard to social media outlets) for $H1$ to be true.

Data Analysis Plan

At the beginning of the survey, I asked the participants to answer a few descriptive questions regarding their age and location. I posed these questions so that more knowledge could be gained through this study. It is significant that antitrafficking campaigns are educated on which age groups and locations are more aware and less aware of human trafficking so that they can target the age groups and locations that are less aware of the phenomenon. In saying that, a descriptive statistic test, specifically a frequency test, was conducted to find the rate of occurrence of age and location of the participants. A descriptive statistic test, specifically a mode test, was also conducted to find the rate of occurrence of “yes” answers and “no” answers pertaining to a certain question on the survey. A mode test was conducted for every question on the survey to find which answer was used most often. The frequency of responses helped me to determine whether or not film and social media outlets provide public awareness.

An independent sample t test was conducted for both Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable. An independent sample t test is used to compare “the means between two unrelated groups on the same continuous, dependent variable” (Lund Research Ltd, 2013, “Introduction,” p. 1). With that said, an independent sample t test was conducted to find if public awareness (Dependent Variable) is greater due to human trafficking films (Independent Variable 1) or social media outlets (Independent Variable 2). This study ensured not to violate the assumptions associated with an independent sample t test to include (a) “your dependent variable should be measured on a continuous scale,” (b) “your independent variable should consist of two categorical, independent groups,” (c) “you should have independence of observations,” (d) “there should be no

significant outliers,” (e) “your dependent variable should be approximately normally distributed for each group of the independent variable,” and (f) “there needs to be homogeneity of variances” (Lund Research Ltd, 2013, “Assumptions,” p. 3).

The descriptive statistics tests performed, frequency, and mode, which is a measure of Central Tendency, and the independent sample *t* test that was performed enabled me to answer the research questions above as well as approve or disprove the hypotheses. This study instituted a confidence interval of 95% on all tests and analyses conducted, which suggested that there was a 95% probability that the results employ the true value of the parameter. Frankfort-Nachmias (2008) stated that with a 95% confidence interval, there is a 5 percent chance that the results are wrong, and a 5 percent chance that the population does not fall within the interval. Because of the confidence interval chosen, when interpreting the results, there was a 5% chance that the present study’s results are incorrect with 95% confidence that the results are correct. These odds are significant and will ensure validity in the conclusion and generalization.

Threats to Validity

The validity of a study is dependent upon the following question: does the study measure what it intends to measure? More specifically, in this specific study, does the survey measure the effectiveness of film and social media outlets as awareness strategies of human trafficking? There are two types of validity to consider in a study; external validity and internal validity. To ensure the external validity, internal validity, in other words, quality, trustworthiness, and credibility of a study, it is imperative that researchers understand possible threats to validity and take necessary precautions.

External validity refers to the generalizability of a study's results (Frankfort-Nachmias, 2008). Frankfort-Nachmias (2008) stated that a research study must test a sample that accurately represents the population in order for the results of a research study to be generalizable. When a study does not accurately represent the population, the external validity of that study is threatened. The external validity of a study can be threatened by testing reactivity, interaction effects of selection and experimental variables, specificity of variables, reactive effects of experimental arrangements, and multiple-treatment inferences. However, these potential threats directly affect experimental designs, and the present study utilized a survey research design. In the present study, the sampling method was the most pressing external factor. To ensure that the results of the present study were able to be generalized, I instituted a random sampling strategy. This study strived to survey as many participants as possible in the Walden Participant Pool and Survey Monkey and there were no exclusions to who could participate. The present study sought to explore public awareness of human trafficking, and because of that, all individuals on the Walden Participant Pool and Survey Monkey were welcomed and encouraged to participate. The sample was not limited or controlled in any way; which ensured the external validity of the study.

Construct validity is established when a researcher is able to relate the research study's measuring instrument to a general theoretical framework (Frankfort-Nachmias, 2008). Researchers establish construct validity by connecting a measuring instrument to the general theoretical framework of the research study, and in doing so, the researcher is able to determine whether the measuring instrument is logically and empirically tied to the concepts and theoretical assumptions they are employing (Frankfort-Nachmias,

2008). As noted prior, a study such as this one had not been performed prior, and because of that, the measuring instrument and theoretical framework applied to the present study was not synonymous with other past studies. To determine if the instrument (survey) was logically and empirically tied to the concepts and theoretical assumptions, a peer reviewer was called upon. A peer reviewer “keeps the researcher honest; asks hard questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations; and provides the researcher with the opportunity for catharsis by sympathetically listening to the researcher’s feelings” (Creswell, 2013, p. 251). A peer reviewer was asked to determine if the survey created was logically and empirically tied to the concepts and theoretical assumptions. I made corrections to the survey when necessary to ensure the measuring instrument related to the theoretical framework of the study. This method ensured construct validity of the study.

There were no concerns to the internal validity of the present study such as history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, statistical regression, experimental mortality, and selection-maturation interaction.

Ethical Procedures

This study was conducted in accordance with the guidelines established by Walden University’s IRB, which ensured the protection of all participants. The present study was not conducted and no data was collected prior to IRB approval. To ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of all participants, no names or identifying characteristics were asked, recorded, or disclosed. The survey was entirely anonymous and to the discretion of each individual participant. The survey was posted on the Walden Participant Pool’s site and Survey Monkey and the participation of each participant was

completely voluntary. If an individual did decide to fill out the survey, the participant had to “agree” to the informed consent statement prior to moving forward and viewing the main questions of the survey.

There were no ethical concerns related to the recruitment of participants because participation was voluntary and no pressure to take the survey existed. There were also no ethical concerns related to data collection and/or intervention activities. If a participant did not want to be a part of this project, they simply did not have to take the survey. In addition, if a participant wanted to withdraw from the study and/or quit the survey prior to completing, they had the freedom to do so. This study strived to survey the general public in all its diversity, but it also did not force any individual to become or stay involved if they wished otherwise.

All data will continue to remain anonymous. There is no important and/or confidential information on any of the surveys returned back to me in an effort to ensure confidentiality. This type of information was not requested at any point in time. Seeing as the data does not hold any confidential information, the protection of data is quite minimal. The data is organized on the analytical database SPSS. No surveys were printed and no surveys will be kept for a long period of time. All surveys will be kept for 5 years as required by law. After that 5 year period, all surveys will be deleted.

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative study was to discover whether or not films that depict human trafficking and its severity have a positive effect on the issue and create greater public awareness around the world or have no effect at all. This study compared film and social media outlets as awareness strategies to discover if film is more or less

effective of an awareness strategy to the public internationally. To do this, a non-experimental survey research design was utilized. I utilized a random sampling strategy, strived to survey 100 plus participants in the Walden Participant Pool and Survey Monkey, and the data was entered into SPSS for analysis. The participants' identities were never requested or disclosed, participation was completely voluntary, and all participants provided informed consent prior to completing the survey. I did and will continue to do what is necessary to secure the validity of the study and all things will be done in accordance with Walden University's IRB guidelines.

Chapter 3 included an introduction, research design and rationale, population, sampling and sampling procedure, procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection, operationalization of the variables, data analysis, threats to validity, ethical procedures, and a summary. Chapter 4 includes an introduction, data collection, treatment, results, and a summary.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Results

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to discover whether films that depict human trafficking and its severity positively affect the issue and create greater public awareness around the world or have no effect at all. I compared film and social media outlets as awareness strategies to discover whether film is more or less effective of an awareness strategy to the public internationally. To find a conclusion to the aforementioned purpose, I addressed the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between films that depict human trafficking and public awareness of the phenomenon?

H1: Film increases public awareness of human trafficking.

H0: Film has no influence on public awareness of human trafficking.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between social media outlets and public awareness of the phenomenon?

H1: Social media outlets increase public awareness of human trafficking.

H0: Social media outlets have no influence on public awareness of human trafficking.

Research Question 3: Which awareness strategy, film or social media outlets, is more effective at creating public awareness of human trafficking?

H1: Film is more effective than social media at creating public awareness of human trafficking.

H0: Neither strategy is effective at creating public awareness of human trafficking.

In the first three chapters, I provided a background into the issue of human trafficking, established the pertinent reasons and explanations as to why public awareness of human trafficking requires attention, and set forth the plan for how this research was to be conducted. Chapter 4 includes a brief introduction of the study and discusses data collection procedures to include: time frame for data collection, any discrepancies in data collection, and information regarding the sample of the study. In addition, Chapter 4 outlines the results that derived from analysis.

Data Collection

On August 10, 2017, the two surveys that I created for this particular study were posted and visible on the Walden Participant Pool website. On the Walden Participant Pool website, the students and faculty of Walden University are able to scroll through and view the different surveys that are posted by researchers, but that is the extent of the recruitment procedures for this particular site. A member of the Walden Participant Pool has to log on to the website and voluntarily decide to submit a survey response if a study deems interesting to the member. There were no e-mails or invitations sent out to create awareness of the existence of the survey. The two surveys posted for this study were the exact same as far as the wording of the questions; however, the order of the questions varied to ensure reliability of the survey.

During the first week, after the two surveys were posted and visible on the Walden Participant Pool website, responses came in steadily, approximately two to three survey responses a day. Unfortunately, that rapid response time quickly dissipated and soon, responses fizzled completely. In the duration of approximately 2 months, from August 10 to October 9, a total of 15 responses were gathered from the Walden

Participant Pool site, and because 100 plus responses was the goal, the data collection situation had to be reassessed. Although my intention was to only collect responses through the Walden Participant Pool website, the time frame for data collection was exceeding the timeframe that I sought. Time was rapidly passing, and no further responses were being collected. Because of this, another outlet was necessary.

On October 9, 2017, the exact same two surveys posted on the Walden Participant Pool website were sent out to participants found through and by Survey Monkey. Survey Monkey does the recruitment for a researcher, but with the tradeoff of monetary funds. Funds were given to Survey Monkey, and within a matter of a few hours, Survey Monkey had recruited participants and collected 115 survey responses. The number of survey responses gathered in total superseded the initial goal of 100 responses and no further responses were needed or collected. A total of 130 responses were gathered through the Walden Participant Pool and Survey Monkey. Each survey response was assigned a number and 100 survey responses were chosen at random. This random sampling strategy was utilized to ensure that the sample was representative of the population.

This study's sample consisted of Walden Participant Pool participants as well as Survey Monkey participants. There were no specific descriptive and/or demographic characteristics used to target a specific population seeing as this study was a study conducted to specifically measure the degree of public awareness of human trafficking. The public in its entirety was surveyed and no exclusions existed. During the survey, I asked the participants a few identifying questions such as their location. The participants' location ranged from Pakistan to Jakarta to Colorado to Alabama and others. In addition, during the survey, I asked the participants to state their age, which exhibited a wide range

of participants aged from 18 to 75 years and older. This survey is truly representative of the population, which is evident through the inclusion of the general public in its entirety as well as the various locations and ages of the individuals who participated. The locations and ages of the participants were wide-ranging and all-inclusive.

Results: Frequency Test

I conducted two descriptive statistic tests following collection of all survey responses. The first descriptive statistic test that I conducted was the frequency test. The frequency test allowed me to find the rate of occurrence of location and age of the participants of the study. I asked the participants to indicate their location and age group at the very beginning of the study. Table 1 shows the locations defined by the participants as well as the frequency of participants in the locations listed. Some participants neglected to indicate their location or included a location unrecognizable; however, of the 100 responses, 94 participants did include their location defined by their state or country, if overseas, which can be found in Table 1. The states with the highest frequency include: California with 10 participants, Florida with 7 participants, North Carolina with 7 participants, and Illinois with 6 participants.

Table 1

Frequency of Participant Locations

Location	Frequency
Alabama	1
Arizona	3
Arkansas	2
California	10
Canada	1
Colorado	3
Connecticut	1
Delaware	1

Florida	7
Georgia	1
Illinois	6
India	1
Indonesia	1
Maryland	2
Massachusetts	2
Michigan	3
Minnesota	2
Missouri	2
New Jersey	3
New Mexico	2
New York	3
North Carolina	7
Ohio	1
Oklahoma	3
Pakistan	1
Pennsylvania	4
South Carolina	4
Tennessee	3
Tennessee	1
Texas	4
Virginia	3
Washington	2
Washington, DC	1
Wisconsin	3

I utilized the frequency test to find the rate of occurrence of the specific age groups of the participants of the study. In Table 2, I define the age groups of the participants and show the frequency of each age group. As indicated by Table 2, the highest frequency of individuals in a particular age group is 24, which can be found in the 45 to 54 age group. The second highest frequency of individuals in a particular age group is 20, which can be found in the 25 to 34 age group. As a reminder, there were 100 participants in total included in the present study.

Table 2

Frequency of Participant Age

Age	Frequency
18-24 years	16
25-34 years	20
35-44 years	17
45-54 years	24
55-64 years	15
65-74 years	6
75+ years	2

Results: Mode Test

I conducted a descriptive statistic test, specifically a mode test, on SPSS to find the rate of occurrence of “yes” responses and “no” responses pertaining to all questions on the survey in order to find which response was used most often. The frequency of “yes” and “no” responses helped me to answer the aforementioned research questions of this study and determine whether the hypotheses were correct or incorrect. On all statistic tests conducted, a confidence interval of 95% was instituted, which suggests that there is a 95% probability that the results employ the true value of the parameter and are representative of the population.

All survey questions will be sectioned and addressed below. The first section details the general questions of the study, the second section details the questions used to answer the first research question of the study, the third section details the questions used to answer the second research question of the study, and the fourth section details the questions used to answer the third research question of the study.

The General Questions

At the beginning of the survey, after the participants agreed to the informed consent statement and answered the questions about location and age, they were queried about human trafficking in general. I posed these general questions to the participants

specifically to get an idea of how informed or uninformed the participants were about the phenomenon of human trafficking in general prior to delving into the main questions of the survey. These general questions and responses were not used in analysis when determining the answers to the research questions or to find if the hypotheses of the study were correct or incorrect. These questions were posed simply to gain an understanding for me as well as the participants. Table 3 outlines the general questions of the survey as well as the rate of occurrence of “yes” answers and “no” answers.

Table 3

General Question Mode Test

Question	Yes	No
Are you aware of the human rights issue known as human trafficking?	92	8
Do you think that there has been an increase in public awareness strategies of human trafficking in the past 5 years?	73	27
Do you believe that human trafficking is an issue that receives a lot of attention?	18	82
Do you feel our policy makers do everything in their power to eradicate human trafficking?	13	87
Do you perceive human trafficking to be one of the greatest human rights issues of today?	92	8
Do you think there are more people in the world aware of human trafficking rather than unaware?	16	84
Do you find yourself cautious of the risk of human trafficking affecting you personally in your everyday life?	37	63
Did you know that human trafficking is an international issue that affects people in all 50 U.S. states?	87	13

I utilized the mode test to find the highest frequency among responses to these general questions. After entering the 100 responses per question into SPSS for analysis,

the frequency of “yes” and “no” responses ensued. With regard to Question 1, “are you aware of the human rights issue known as human trafficking?” I determined that there was a higher frequency of “yes” responses than “no” responses. With that said, most people seem to be aware of the issue of human trafficking.

With regard to Question 2, “do you think that there has been an increase in public awareness strategies of human trafficking within the past 5 years?” I determined that there was a higher frequency of “yes” responses than “no” responses. Most people are under the impression that there has been an increase in public awareness strategies of human trafficking over the past 5 years.

With regard to Question 3, “do you believe that human trafficking is an issue that receives a lot of attention?” I determined that there was a higher frequency of “no” responses than “yes” responses. With an overwhelming variation in “no” and “yes” responses as indicated in the table above, many people feel as though human trafficking does not receive the attention it deserves.

With regard to Question 4, “do you feel our policy makers do everything in their power to eradicate human trafficking?” I determined that there was a higher frequency of “no” responses than “yes” responses. With that said, most people believe that our policy makers need to do more to eradicate human trafficking.

With regard to Question 5, “do you perceive human trafficking to be one of the greatest human rights issues of today?” I determined that there was a higher frequency of “yes” responses than “no” responses. Most people view human trafficking to be one of the greatest human rights issues facing the world today.

With regard to Question 6, “do you think there are more people in the world aware of human trafficking rather than unaware?” I determined that there was a higher frequency of “no” responses than “yes” responses. Unfortunately, most people feel that the world as a whole is not aware of human trafficking and the risk it poses.

With regard to Question 7, “do you find yourself cautious of the risk of human trafficking affecting you personally in your everyday life?” I determined that there was a higher frequency of “no” responses than “yes” responses. Most people do not find themselves cautious of the risk of human trafficking affecting them in their everyday life.

With regard to Question 8, “did you know that human trafficking is an international issue that affects people in all 50 U.S. states?” I determined that there was a higher frequency of “yes” responses than “no” responses. People do not find themselves cautious of the risk of human trafficking, but they do understand that it occurs in all 50 U.S. states.

Research Question 1

To find an answer to the first research question of the study, “what is the relationship between films that depict human trafficking and public awareness of the phenomenon?” I posed 6 survey questions to the participants. Table 4 below outlines the survey questions and the results of the mode test that was conducted to find the rate of occurrence of “yes” responses and “no” responses for each survey question.

Table 4

Film Survey Questions and Frequency of Responses

Question	Yes	No
Have you seen the highly acclaimed motion picture titled “Taken?”	66	34
Has the depiction of human trafficking in the film “Taken” shaped your	42	58

perception of the issue?		
Has the film “Taken” or another film depicting human trafficking heightened your knowledge of the phenomenon?	58	42
Have you seen more than 5 films on human trafficking?	15	85
Do you often see previews for films or documentaries on human trafficking?	15	85
Would you say that film has increased your awareness of human trafficking?	58	42
TOTAL	254	346

Question 1 stated, “Have you seen the highly acclaimed motion picture titled “Taken?” Of the 100 responses entered into SPSS for analysis, 66 participants responded “yes,” to having seen “Taken” while 34 participants responded “no” to having seen “Taken.” More than half of the participants noted that they had seen the film.

Question 2 stated, “Has the depiction of human trafficking in the film “Taken” shaped your perception of the issue?” Of the 100 responses entered into SPSS for analysis, 58 participants responded “no” while 42 participants responded “yes.” Although the difference in “yes” and “no” responses is quite minimal, more participants do not feel as though the film “Taken” shaped their perception of human trafficking.

Question 3 stated, “Has the film “Taken” or another film depicting human trafficking heightened your knowledge of the phenomenon?” Of the 100 responses entered into SPSS for analysis, 58 participants responded “yes” while 42 participants responded “no.” With that said, more participants feel as though films that depict human trafficking heighten their knowledge of the issue.

Question 4 stated, “Have you seen more than 5 films on human trafficking?” Of the 100 responses that were entered into SPSS for analysis, an overwhelming 85 participants responded “no” while 15 participants responded “yes.” This is quite the

variation in the frequency of “yes” and “no” responses. Through the results, it is evident that most participants have not seen more than 5 films on human trafficking.

Question 5 stated, “Do you often see previews for films or documentaries on human trafficking?” Of the 100 responses that were entered into SPSS for analysis, 85 participants responded “no” while 15 participants responded “yes.” Once again, this is quite the variation in the frequency of “yes” and “no” responses. The majority of participants do not see previews for films or documentaries on human trafficking.

Question 6 stated, “Would you say that film has increased your awareness of human trafficking?” Of the 100 responses that were entered into SPSS for analysis, 58 participants responded “yes” while 42 participants responded “no.” Although not by much, more people say they find that film increases awareness of human trafficking.

After I conducted a mode test for all survey questions listed in Table 4, an independent sample t test was performed to determine whether $H1$ is true or false. The decision point was determined by the frequency of responses, for instance, “yes” responses had to be greater than “no” responses for $H1$ to be true. As indicated in Table 4, 254 is the total number of “yes” responses and 346 is the total number of “no” responses. “Yes” responses had to be greater than “no” responses for $H1$ to be true; however, the total number of “yes” responses is not greater than the total number of “no” responses. In saying that, $H1$ is not true. Through analysis, I found that film does not increase public awareness of human trafficking rather film does not have any influence on public awareness of human trafficking.

Research Question 2

To find an answer to the second research question of the study, “What is the relationship between social media outlets and public awareness of the phenomenon?” I posed 6 questions to the participants of the study. Table 5 below outlines the survey questions and the results of the mode test that was conducted to find the rate of occurrence of “yes” responses and “no” responses for each survey question.

Table 5

Social Media Survey Questions & Frequency of Responses

Question	Yes	No
Have you seen documentaries about human trafficking on YouTube?	15	85
Do you “follow” different human trafficking organizations on social media outlets such as Facebook or Twitter?	9	91
Do you often see articles about human trafficking on social media outlets such as Facebook or Twitter?	17	83
Do you “share” different articles you see about human trafficking on your personal page on Facebook or Twitter?	10	90
Has the advancement in social media over the past few years increased your awareness of human trafficking?	35	65
Would you say that Facebook, YouTube or Twitter has increased your awareness of human trafficking?	29	71
TOTAL	115	485

Question 1 stated, “Have you seen documentaries about human trafficking on YouTube?” Of the 100 responses that were entered into SPSS for analysis, 85 participants responded “no” while 15 participants responded “yes.” The vast majority of participants have not seen documentaries about human trafficking on social media sites such as YouTube.

Question 2 stated, “Do you “follow” different human trafficking organizations on social media outlets such as Facebook or Twitter?” Of the 100 responses that were

entered into SPSS for analysis, 91 participants responded “no” while 9 participants responded “yes.” Most participants do not follow human trafficking organizations on social media outlets.

Question 3 stated, “Do you often see articles about human trafficking on social media outlets such as Facebook or Twitter?” Of the 100 responses that were entered into SPSS, 83 participants responded “no” while 17 participants responded “yes.” These numbers suggest that most participants do not see articles referring to human trafficking on social media outlets.

Question 4 stated, “Do you “share” different articles you see about human trafficking on your personal page on Facebook or Twitter?” Of the 100 responses that were entered into SPSS, 90 participants responded “no” while 10 participants responded “yes.” Most participants do not see human trafficking articles on social media outlets, which ultimately is reason why most participants do not share different articles they see about human trafficking on their personal social media pages.

Question 5 stated, “Has the advancement in social media over the past few years increased your awareness of human trafficking?” Of the 100 responses that were entered into SPSS, 65 participants responded “no” while 35 participants responded “yes.” Most participants do not believe that the advancement in social media has helped to increase awareness of human trafficking.

Question 6 stated, “Would you say that Facebook, YouTube or Twitter has increased your awareness of human trafficking?” Of the 100 responses that were entered into SPSS, 71 participants responded “no” while 29 participants responded “yes.” The

majority of participants do not believe that Facebook, YouTube or Twitter has increased awareness of human trafficking.

After conducting a mode test for all survey questions listed in Table 5, an independent sample t test was performed to determine whether $H1$ was true or false. As noted above, for $H1$ to be true, the total number of “yes” responses must be greater than the total number of “no” responses. As seen in Table 5, the total number of “yes” responses is 115 while the total number of “no” responses is 485. Unmistakably, the total number of “yes” responses does not even come close to the total number of “no” responses. In saying that, $H1$ is not true. Through analysis, it can be concluded that social media outlets do not increase public awareness of human trafficking rather it does not have any influence on public awareness of human trafficking.

Research Question 3

The third research question of the study is “which awareness strategy, film or social media outlets, is more effective at creating public awareness of human trafficking?” To find an answer to this question, I conducted a mode test. The total number of “yes” responses shown in Table 4 was assessed in relation to the total number of “yes” responses shown in Table 5. The decision point is determined by the frequency of responses, for example, “yes” responses in regards to film (Table 4) must be greater than “yes” responses in regards to social media outlets (Table 5) for $H1$ to be true. The total number of “yes” responses in Table 4 is 254 while the total number of “yes” responses in Table 5 is 115. The total number of “yes” responses in Table 4 is greater than the total number of “yes” responses in Table 5, which suggests that $H1$ is true. Film

is more effective than social media outlets at creating public awareness of human trafficking.

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative study was to discover whether or not films that depict human trafficking and its severity have a positive effect on the issue and create greater public awareness around the world or have no effect at all. This study compared film and social media outlets as awareness strategies to discover if film is more or less effective of an awareness strategy to the public internationally. In regards to research Question 1, “what is the relationship between films that depict human trafficking and public awareness of the phenomenon,” *H1* was found to be false. Through an independent sample *t* test, it was found that film does not necessarily increase public awareness of human trafficking. In regards to research Question 2, “what is the relationship between social media outlets and public awareness of the phenomenon,” *H1* was also found to be false. Through an independent sample *t* test, it was found that social media outlets do not necessarily increase public awareness of human trafficking. Lastly, in regards to research Question 3, “which awareness strategy, film or social media outlets, is more effective at creating public awareness of human trafficking,” *H1* was found to be true. Through a mode test, it was found that out of the two public awareness strategies being tested, film is more effective than social media outlets at creating public awareness of human trafficking.

Chapter 4 included an introduction, data collection procedures, the results of the study, and a brief summary. Chapter 5 includes an introduction, interpretation of the

findings, the limitations of the study, recommendations for further research, implications of the study, and a final conclusion.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, Recommendations

Introduction

In a world where human trafficking is on the rise, with approximately 20.9 million individuals falling victim to human trafficking globally, the necessity for research on this modern-day form of slavery is vital. I conducted this study to fill an enormous gap in the literature with regard to public awareness of human trafficking. This study is the first of its kind. It is the first research study that has sought to determine the effectiveness of existing human trafficking public awareness strategies. Because this issue is showing no signs of possible collapse, it is imperative to find which awareness strategies are working and which awareness strategies are not working so that new strategies can be implemented and others diminished. Human trafficking will not cease to exist until the public is more aware of the phenomenon.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to discover whether films that depict human trafficking and its severity have a positive effect on the issue and create greater public awareness around the world or have no effect at all. I compared film and social media outlets as awareness strategies to assess whether film is more or less effective of an awareness strategy to the public internationally. I used a nonexperimental, quantitative, survey research design to answer the aforementioned research questions. I created a survey, posted the survey to the Walden Participant Pool website and the Survey Monkey website, and results ensued. Through analysis, I found that film does not necessarily increase public awareness of human trafficking; social media outlets do not necessarily increase public awareness of human trafficking; and of the two public

awareness strategies being tested, film is more effective than social media outlets at creating public awareness of human trafficking.

Interpretation of the Findings

As noted in Chapter 2, the presence of studies on human trafficking, specifically studies on human trafficking awareness strategies, is scarce in the research world. It was exceptionally difficult to locate previous literature and studies that were related to the constructs of interest, enacted the same methodology, and included the same variables. Research studies such as the present study are nonexistent. However, the findings of the present study do confirm the existing knowledge in the field. The existing literature and studies on the topic of human trafficking have one inclusive statement in common that can be found throughout, which is the call for further research and further studies to be performed on human trafficking. The present study ultimately defends this statement entirely.

The results of the present study unequivocally confirm the statement that further research and further studies need to be performed on human trafficking. In the present study, I posed a few general questions to the participants, and the results were alarming. For instance, at the beginning of the survey, I asked the participants some general questions to include, “Do you believe that human trafficking is an issue that receives a lot of attention?” Of the 100 participant responses, only 18 participants responded “yes,” whereas 82 participants responded “no.” It is unfortunate that most participants acknowledge and believe that human trafficking does not receive a lot of attention. Because human trafficking is one of the largest human rights issues of today, it should inherently be a priority and an issue that receives an immense amount of attention.

Another question that was posed to the participants was, “Do you feel our policy makers do everything in their power to eradicate human trafficking?” Of the 100 participant responses, only 13 participants responded “yes,” whereas 87 participants responded “no.” This result is also troubling. An issue such as this, one of devastating magnitude and strips human beings of their fundamental human rights and freedoms, should be of utmost concern to our policymakers. However, most participants believe the absolute opposite, which suggests that policymakers need to restructure their priorities and focus on the issues that matter most and affect many.

In addition, the participants were asked, “Do you think there are more people in the world aware of human trafficking rather than unaware?” Of the 100 participant responses, only 16 participants responded “yes,” whereas 84 participants responded “no.” Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery that has the potential of affecting anyone and at any time. An issue with such devastating effects must have more awareness. All individuals need to be aware of the risk because it is certain that the risk is real.

Another question that was posed to the participants was, “Do you find yourself cautious of the risk of human trafficking affecting you personally in your everyday life?” Of the 100 participant responses, only 37 participants responded “yes,” whereas 63 participants responded “no.” Human trafficking is an issue that spans all countries and all demographics. Human trafficking is everywhere and at any time, someone could fall victim. Everyone should be cautious everywhere and always.

These results certainly confirm what has been expressed in existing literature and studies. There is an immense lack of knowledge about public awareness surrounding the

issue of human trafficking. Further research and further studies are necessary on this issue to possibly see the slightest shift in the number of those who fall victim.

Interpretation of the Findings: Theoretical Framework

Policy feedback theory is the theoretical framework that guided this study. Policy feedback theory suggests why policymakers do not frequently examine and test the effectiveness of human trafficking awareness strategies that are already set in motion. Policy feedback theory notes that when policy makers set policies in motion, it is difficult and costly to change course (Sabatier, 2014). In addition, policy feedback theory notes that over time, the policies that are set in motion represent institutionalized beliefs and dominant policy frames (Sabatier, 2014). This study was guided by these statements. This study was conducted based on the belief that policymakers rarely test the effectiveness of policies because doing so tends to be costly, timely, and difficult, and the policy becomes an institutionalized belief once enacted. Despite these factors; however, it is imperative that existing policies are examined to see if they are successfully working or need to be revamped or dissolved. It is counterproductive to have a policy set in motion when it is not benefiting anyone or anything.

When policies are not examined, their degree of effectiveness is completely unknown, which is unfortunately the case in regards to human trafficking awareness strategies. Through preparation for this study and the literature review, it was found that little to no research studies exist on human trafficking awareness strategies. In addition, through this study, findings emerged that are disconcerting and suggest the urgent need for further research studies testing human trafficking awareness strategies for effectiveness. Through analysis of the survey responses, it was found that both film and

social media outlets do not necessarily increase public awareness of human trafficking. Out of these two awareness strategies, film seems to be more effective at creating public awareness, but that is certainly not nearly enough in efforts to eradicate the issue. This research study sought to test two specific human trafficking awareness strategies for effectiveness; however, there are so many more human trafficking awareness strategies that need to be tested for effectiveness as well. Policy feedback theory may very well be the reason as to why policy makers do not seek to test human trafficking awareness strategies for effectiveness; nevertheless, that is not effective and is counterproductive.

Limitations of the Study

In Chapter 1, the potential limitations of the present study were established. The potential limitations of this study included limited existing research, sample, bias, and collinearity of the independent variables. The first potential limitation outlined, limited existing research, did not deem to be a limitation of the study. A very small amount of literature exists on public awareness of human trafficking, but I did not allow this to be a setback. I created a completely new survey and instituted member checking to ensure the usefulness of the questions. The survey questions were carefully crafted by me, tested through member checking, and presented to the participants. The survey created was a valuable instrument to find the answers to the research questions of the study.

The second potential limitation outlined, sample, also did not present a limitation to the study. While it was initially unknown how many surveys would be returned, I ensured that enough responses were collected in order to make a generalization. When the Walden Participant Pool did not generate enough responses, I quickly assessed the situation; incorporated Survey Monkey into data collection, and

enough responses resulted. I initially sought to collect 100 responses, and this number was met and surpassed once Survey Monkey was incorporated into data collection.

The third potential limitation outlined, bias, did not apparently serve to be a limitation of the study; however, that is not for certain and can never truly be known. I was extremely concerned about showing any sort of personal bias through the survey questions. To ensure that no bias existed on my behalf, I instituted member checking of the survey questions to ensure that they were written very straight forward and without showing any inkling of bias. In addition, to ensure the participants did not enter the study with an opinion regarding “Taken” or any other human trafficking film or documentaries seen, I emphasized the intention of the study in the informed consent statement. It is true that I cannot eliminate any opinions of the participants, but the intention of the study was vehemently stated and it is my hope that the participants did not answer the survey questions with pre-determined thoughts and answers. Because of the uncertainty here, it is not known whether or not bias played a role in the study.

The fourth potential limitation outlined, collinearity of the independent variables, also did not appear to inhibit the study as a limitation; however, like bias, this will never truly be known. A differentiation statement was provided at the beginning of the survey to inform the participants about the two Independent Variables being tested. Film and social media (the Independent Variables of the study) are rather similar variables yet both require testing in our technologically advanced world. The variables are collinear, but that did not seem to confuse the participants and prevent them from differentiating the two entities; nonetheless, this cannot be for certain.

Recommendations and Implications

As conveyed in Chapter 2 in the literature review and through the purpose of this study, the lack of literature on human trafficking and public awareness of human trafficking is quite startling. In 2013, Kevin Bales, a leading researcher in human trafficking, stated that “he knew of only one study that assessed public awareness of human trafficking, and it had not been published” (Bishop, 2013, p. 131). Throughout the literature review for this study, this statement dauntingly held true. In a world where human trafficking is such an abhorrent and escalating issue, it was found that absolutely no study exists on public awareness of human trafficking seeking to test the effectiveness of human trafficking awareness strategies. This study is the first in this undertaking, but optimistically not the last.

As many human trafficking researchers recommended, I certainly continue this recommendation for further research on human trafficking, specifically studies that seek to test the effectiveness of human trafficking awareness strategies. It is my thought that with greater public awareness, the issue of human trafficking will diminish, but to get to that point, the public in its entirety must be aware of the issue and aware of the risk it poses every day. If our public awareness strategies of human trafficking are not successfully illustrating the true depiction of the phenomenon and the risk it poses to all individuals, these awareness strategies are not doing what they intend to do and must be revised and/or diminished.

To project real positive social change in this world in regards to human trafficking, public awareness strategies must be assessed. This study sought to begin this journey; a journey that will create real positive social change overtime at the individual

level, family level, organizational level, and societal level. It is true that one study cannot impact on a grand scale, but it is my hope that this study's impact is enough to motivate other researchers to make strides towards that goal collectively.

Final Conclusion

This research study evaluated two human trafficking awareness strategies, film and social media, for effectiveness and found that neither necessarily influences public awareness of the phenomenon of human trafficking. Out of the two human trafficking awareness strategies that were tested, it was gathered that film is more effective than social media at creating public awareness of the issue; however, not necessarily enough to have great impact in our world.

In this tech-savvy world, it was my innate thought that these two public awareness strategies would have had much more of an effect on the public. Through the results of this research study, unfortunately, this is seemingly not the case. With this realization in mind, it is imperious that other researchers try to replicate the findings of this study as well as perform research studies to test the effectiveness of other human trafficking awareness strategies. When more research studies are conducted, and more findings emerge on the effectiveness of human trafficking awareness strategies, policy makers will become more aware as to what is working and what is not working so that changes and strides can be made to help increase public awareness of the issue. When researchers, policy makers, and citizens are working collaboratively and feverishly to make real positive social change in this world in regards to human trafficking, it is my optimistic thought that public awareness will increase, the impact of human trafficking will weaken, and eventually, the phenomenon will cease to exist.

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