OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SERVICES FOR DOMESTIC ADULT FEMALE SEX TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IN GEORGIA

A thesis presented by

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DEDICATION

This doctoral thesis is dedicated to my children, Kayla, Karyssa, Kelsea, and Kaelin.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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to achieve high academic goals propelled me to go one step further to achieve this goal. You are my inspiration. To my sister and her husband, Antonevia and Julian Oddman: thank you for believing in me. Your constant mention of your pride in me foreshadowed the difficulties that came along the way. Thank you for your support.

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ABSTRACT

The crime of sex trafficking is a human rights and public health issue that presents a critical reason for the federal and state legislation to reevaluate laws and statutes to support services and assistance for adult female sex trafficking victims. The victims are susceptible to diseases and traumatic experiences. They are enslaved, brutalized, drugged, and robbed of their autonomy and human dignity. They deserve services and assistance to recover and lead independent lives. The purpose of this research is to identify disparities between available services for adult female sex trafficking victims, their service needs, and the barriers to receiving services in Georgia. This study is a needs assessment for services for human trafficking victims. To evaluate the problem, a mixed-method approach was adopted. The study collected data from survivors and nonprofit agency personnel who assist sex trafficking survivors, and deconstructed federal and Georgia statutes on human trafficking. The study focused on the met and unmet needs of adult female sex trafficking victims in Georgia, the barriers they face when seeking services, and the barriers nonprofit agencies experience in providing services. The study explored and qualitatively described the perceptions of nonprofit agency personnel, and the reality based on the opinions of adult female sex trafficking survivors who received assistance from nonprofit agencies in Georgia. The research explored the benefits of the existing services, ultimately determining that there is a need for additional services and policy provisions in the state of Georgia. This study recommends the state of Georgia implement changes to improve services for sex trafficking victims as well as several new or revised statutes including provisions to enforce and support collaboration of various groups, provisions for allocation of confiscated funds, provisions for allocation of additional convicted traffickers’ fines, and an expungement provision for victims of sex trafficking.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Continued Presence</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHS</td>
<td>United States Department of Homeland Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT</td>
<td>Human Trafficking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JVTA</td>
<td>Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIP</td>
<td>Trafficking in Persons</td>
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<td>TVPA</td>
<td>Victims of Trafficking and Violence Act of 2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>USDHHS</td>
<td>United States Department of Health and Human Services</td>
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<td>USDHS</td>
<td>United States Department of Homeland Security</td>
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Chapter 1
Introduction

“I think there’s great potential for autonomy, but we have to remember that we live in a world where people may have free will but have not invented their circumstances.” – Thomas Frank

Human trafficking is referred to as modern day slavery. Traffickers transport or solicit men, women, and children to participate in forced labor or sexual exploitation without compensation. Human trafficking, as defined by the United Nations in 2004, is the recruitment, transportation, or transfer of persons by means of threat, force, fraud, or coercion (U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID], n.d.). This is a criminal activity. Human beings are treated as possessions to be controlled and exploited for financial gain (USAID, n.d.).

Human trafficking is also a public health issue. Public health impacts include the transmission of communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, and skin infections (Foege, 2013). The trauma experienced by the victims cause them to be susceptible to mental illness. Thus, some victims suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and other mental health disorders. Human trafficking also causes other illnesses associated with malnutrition as well as dental problems (Foege, 2013).

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) 2015 statistics revealed that the human trafficking industry generates $32 billion in yearly profits. There are 2.7 million victims of human trafficking across the world and 1.2 million children are trafficked every year. Of the 2.7 million, 600,000 to 800,000 men, women, and children are trafficked across international borders every year. Between 14,500 to 17,500 foreign nationals are trafficked into the United States every year. Almost half (46%) of human trafficking in the United States involves sex trafficking. Many agencies are involved in a coordinated effort to train personnel to better enforce existing laws (USAID, n.d.).
Figure 1.1. Percentage of individuals involved in human trafficking in the world. Source: Urban Institute 2014 Report.

Figure 1.2. Types of human trafficking by percentage occurrence in the United States. Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Justice, Free the Slaves.
Table 1.1

Summary of Trafficking in the World and United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the World</th>
<th>In the United States</th>
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<tr>
<td>% Women in Human Trafficking</td>
<td>% Children in Human Trafficking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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</tbody>
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According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, an estimated 14,500–17,500 people are trafficked into the United States each year. Approximately 12% of trafficking victims in the world are children. However, about 50% of people trafficked into the United States each year are children. Approximately 800,000 people are trafficked worldwide each year. The East Asia/Pacific region is the largest source of people who are trafficked into the United States each year (Estes, n.d.). However, of relevance to this research are the statistics on human trafficking within the United States. They reveal that 83% of confirmed cases of human trafficking in the United States are American-born citizens. Although 61% of human trafficking victims in the world are women and 12% are children, on the measure of sex trafficking, 98% of sex trafficking victims are women and girls. In addition, 1 in 7 children receive online solicitation or approach. Sex trafficking is concentrated in specific locations: 80% of human trafficking cases occurred in the Bay Area, Los Angeles, and San Diego (Estes, n.d.).

Under federal law, the Trafficking Persons Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 provides a standard for states to enact statutes for public and private agencies to provide services and resources to victims. This includes funding, job training, medical and psychological assistance, housing, and legal assistance. The federal government provides funding based on the state’s level of compliance. One of the TVPA’s directives to help prevent trafficking involves the creation of
a Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report each year. The TIP report describes and ranks the efforts of countries and states to combat human trafficking based on 10 categories. It ranks the states from Tier 1 to Tier 4, with Tier 1 being the highest.

Georgia is ranked Tier 1, however its laws do not fully adhere to this federal law for victims’ assistance. The state of Georgia passed laws for eight of the 10 categories stipulated by the TVPA. The remaining two only partially meet the requirements for their category (Polaris Project, n.d.). According to Amahazion (2015), victims are likely to experience barriers to receiving services and resources due to the absence of these laws and policies. My study focuses on the availability of services for victims/survivors of sex trafficking that help them to recover and integrate back into society, specifically in the state of Georgia.

The goal of this research was to identify disparities between currently available victims’ service needs and their barriers to receiving services. This study provides a needs assessment for services for female survivors of human trafficking. I identify the met and unmet needs of human trafficking victims in the state of Georgia. The research explored the benefits of the existing services as well as whether there is a need for any additional services and funding in the state of Georgia. More specifically, my research questions were:

1. What services and resources are available for adult female domestic sex trafficking victims in Georgia?
2. What services and resources are needed to assist adult female domestic sex trafficking survivors in Georgia?
3. What are the barriers that prevent adult female domestic sex trafficking victims from receiving or seeking assistance in Georgia?
4. Are there existing gaps between the federal and Georgia state statutes in services for adult female domestic sex trafficking victims?

My study was premised on the idea that a policy shift away from tying services to survivors involved in the prosecution of their traffickers would help to increase victims’ willingness to seek assistance. The more victims who seek and receive assistance, the more likely they will participate in the prosecution of their traffickers (Peters, 2015). Effective services utilized by the victims will promote awareness of assistance. The availability of services, removing the threat of incarceration, and removing the requirement that victims be involved in the prosecution of traffickers to receive services will indirectly result in the reduction of human trafficking. My research addressed three primary areas of concern: available services, victims’ needs, and barriers to obtaining services. The study identified categories of needs, including met and unmet needs. I found gaps between currently available services and victims’ service needs in Georgia.

The focus of this study involved a specific population of human trafficking victims: domestic, adult, female sex trafficking survivors in Georgia. Enumerated here are the reasons for this focus. First, domestic victims were the focus of this study because this society (i.e., the American public) largely views sex trafficking as an international issue involving foreign victims as observed based on the content of the laws. Second, female victims were significant to this study because 98% of sex trafficking victims are female (Heatwatch, n.d.). Third, adult victims were considered because the federal and state statutes provide provisions for international victims and minors, however those same provisions are not available to adult victims. Lastly, Georgia is one of largest hubs for human trafficking in the United States, as discussed in Chapter 2. Further research is needed to determine specific victim issues specifically in Georgia.
This research adopted a qualitative, descriptive, case study approach. I conducted semistructured interviews, an online qualitative survey, document review, and comparative analysis of federal and Georgia state statutes on services for sex trafficking victims. To complete the interviews, I used a purposive sample of current service providers and victims’ response organizations that have direct contact with victims of human trafficking. I interviewed 12 agency personnel who were in direct contact with domestic adult sex trafficking victims, including management, employees, and support staff. I received 17 completed survey responses from survivors of sex trafficking detailing their needs, experiences, and barriers to obtaining services. Whenever possible, the interviews were recorded and transcribed. For the interviews where the participants did not agree to be recorded, the interview responses were hand written. All interview responses were uploaded and coded in Dedoose. Coded data were downloaded to Excel for further analysis. The document review involved deconstruction and comparison of federal and Georgia laws on services for human trafficking victims.

The findings of this research reveal that the nonprofit agencies have services and resources available to support the needs of the survivors. However, the services are limited due to funding and resource restrictions. The agencies are aware of all basic initial and subsequent needs of the survivors. Nevertheless, therapeutic services, legal assistance, long-term care, and follow-up services are still needed to assist domestic sex trafficking survivors. Funding and limited staff are the main barriers that prevent domestic sex trafficking victims from receiving assistance. Being unaware of available services is the primary barrier to survivors seeking assistance.

The state statutes (see Appendix G) mention rights for victims to receive assistance and stipulate interagency coordination and training for victims to receive services. However, the
nonprofit agencies involved with this research cited a need for additional collaboration. I recommend legislative changes to facilitate improvement of services for sex trafficking victims. Attention and action by prominent political figures and policymakers have the potential to further progress on providing improved services and assistance for sex trafficking victims, reduce the incidence of sex trafficking, and improve this human rights issue.
Chapter 2
Literature Review

The literature on human trafficking can be classified into five different focus areas: difficulty in identifying or correctly classifying victims of human trafficking, the role of culture in impeding anti-trafficking efforts, the economics of human trafficking, human trafficking victims’ service needs, and policy/legal implications in combatting human trafficking. The emphasis in most of the literature is on the identification of minor victims and understanding human trafficking as a crime (Reid, 2010). However, a limited number of studies address the plight of adult victims and their needs when attempting to exit human trafficking contexts and integrate into society (Komwitz, 2016).

Difficulty in the Identification of Victims of Sex Trafficking

It is difficult to distinguish between sex workers and unwilling trafficking victims (Hodge, 2014). It is also difficult to differentiate migrants who voluntarily participate in smuggling schemes and unwilling trafficking victims. Sex workers engage in sex acts or sexual contact for money. This is illegal in all U.S. states, except in Nevada where it is regulated in some counties (Farrell, Pfeffer, & Bright, 2015). Under federal law, human trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or commercial sex acts using force, fraud, or coercion (Farrell et al., 2015; Gibbs, Walters, Lutnick, Miller, & Kluckman, 2015).

It is considerably difficult to separate the victims from the offenders because sometimes the victims return to their traffickers and, at other times, they act on behalf of their traffickers. For example, some victims may act as helpers to assist new victims into the logistics of the sex
industry (Farrell et al., 2015). This dilemma in identification fuels the marginalization of human trafficking victims. The threat of deportation and criminal prosecution are some of the many barriers that prohibit victims from seeking assistance. Several authors have argued that traffickers would have less control over the victims if the threat of deportation was absent (Clawson, Cummings, & Cummings, 2005; Farrell et al., 2015; Finn, Muftić, & Marsh, 2015).

In addition, limited research has been conducted on how the police view human trafficking problems in their local communities, or how their perceptions of the problem influence investigation and response strategies (Finn et al., 2015). However, existing research findings suggest that law enforcement is slowly beginning to acknowledge the presence of human trafficking in their communities (Farrell et al., 2015). They appear to target human trafficking similar to the way they address sex work and view the victims as consenting adults (Farrell et al., 2015). This suggests that there is a need for a shift in perception. This shift has been challenging because there are few models in policing for prioritizing an individual’s victimization over any potential criminal involvement (Farrell et al., 2015). American women and girls who are controlled by pimps are victims of trafficking because of the force and coercion they experience, force that increases over time (Goździak, 2008). In addition, the young median age of entry into prostitution (12–14 years) classifies many girls as victims without needing to show fraud, force, or coercion (Goździak, 2008).

Foreign-born women and girls brought to the United States for the sex trade are viewed as innocent victims who may face language barriers, confiscation of their documents, and the fear of deportation or harm to their families (Ioannou & Oostinga, 2015). However, victims born in the United States are categorized as criminals (Menaker & Franklin, 2015). Perceptions of domestic female victims of violence reflect cultural and societal attitudes about gender, gender
relations, and sexuality. Historical sexist attitudes toward women reinforce negative perceptions of women involved in the sex industry as irresponsible and immoral (Roe-Sepowitz, Hickle, Dahlstedt, & Gallagher, 2014), leading to a lack of empathy toward domestic victims. Domestic victims attract less sympathy than international victims because they speak English and are assumed to have the freedom to escape their situation without the fear of being deported or harmed. These individuals subsequently receive greater levels of blame for their involvement in the sex trade. Therefore, they are viewed as culpable and deserving of punishment (Menaker & Franklin, 2015; Reid, 2010).

The TVPA provides automatic protections for domestic minors who are prostituted under the assumption that they are coerced into the sex trade. The law stipulates that the minors should be treated similar to internationally trafficked victims, and their pimps should be criminalized as traffickers (U.S. Department of Homeland Security [USDHS], 2015). However, when these minor victims become adult victims, they no longer have the same protections.

Pimps use violence and emotional attachment as well as a sense of indebtedness for gifts, clothing, money, or drugs as methods of coercion. Raphael, Reichert, and Powers (2010) revealed that violence is the initial method of control. Over time, the mechanism of control often changes to drug addiction, which causes the victims to be dependent on their pimps/traffickers for supply. In many instances, boyfriends, relatives, or foster parents coerce the victims. Many trafficked children do not think of their traffickers as perpetrators because, in some instances, they are their parents or close relatives (Roe-Sepowitz et al., 2014). Raphael et al. (2010) argued that domestic female victims who experience these methods of coercion should be treated as victims of human trafficking.
Research suggests that there is little difference between how the criminal justice system classifies and treats trafficked victims and sex workers (Reid, 2010). One study (Finn et al., 2015) reported that only one in 10 trafficked women who encounter the criminal justice system are referred to social services. About 25% of the women in the study reported that even with legal counsel, they were not informed of their legal rights. Of serious concern, a substantial number—approximately 21%—reported that police had paid for sex with them (Finn et al., 2015).

The difficulty in accurately identifying human trafficking victims creates barriers when law enforcement encounters human trafficking. Trafficking involves coercion. However, some victims of sex trafficking appear to start out voluntarily but are later forced to continue or experience abuse; some later becoming traffickers themselves as a survival mechanism (Finn et al., 2015). Some victims have been tricked into the industry without understanding fully how they will be exploited. In studying victim identification and victim services, the definition of human trafficking and its similarity (in appearance) to prostitution makes it difficult for law enforcement to identify victims (Finn et al., 2015). Studies have reported that there are no observable distinctive behaviors between trafficked women and sex workers (Chacón, 2010; Finn et al., 2015; Friman & Reich, 2007). Further complication of victim identification occurs due to the overlap between women who have presented to the criminal justice system as victims and as offenders. The criminal justice system often does not have the tools to address cases where women hold both roles. Indeed, research has found that trafficked victims are likely to be detained after arrests as sex workers. This reveals that law enforcement is failing to identify their victim status (Finn et al., 2015; Friman & Reich, 2007).
The Role of Immigration Law

One of the goals of immigration policy is to prevent individuals from staying in the United States illegally. Some anti-trafficking efforts provide support for victims so that they can receive a change in immigration status through a special visa similar to that for refugees (Chacón, 2010). Coupled with the challenge in accurate identification of victims (as opposed to willing participants), these conflicting goals create an additional challenge in assisting foreign individuals who are trafficked in the United States. Additionally, immigration laws shift anti-trafficking priorities. Anti-trafficking priorities focused on criminalizing victims and their perpetrators. These laws have not focused on the protection of human rights. Rather, they have been concerned with the prosecution of both traffickers and victims. Thus, anti-trafficking policy is framed within the discourse of migrant criminality (Chacón, 2010).

The TVPA has addressed some of these gaps by increasing protection of victims. In its reauthorizations in 2003 and 2005, the TVPA adopted a victim-centered approach, moving away from the prosecution-centered approach in the original 2000 version. This Act provides legal mechanisms such as T-visas and U-visas. The T-visa is specifically for undocumented human trafficking survivors to obtain eligibility for lawful status, employment authorization, and a potential path to permanent residency in the United States. This visa is based on the uniqueness of this population and their diverse and resource-intensive needs (U Visa/T Visa/VAWA, n.d.). The U-visa provides the opportunity for immigrant victims of certain crimes who have been helpful in a criminal investigation or prosecution to qualify for a visa that can lead to a green card (legal permanent residence in the United States) (U Visa/T Visa/VAWA, n.d.). However, the humanitarian areas of the TVPA are often hindered because of the competing goal of enforcing immigration laws (Chacón, 2010).
The Role of TVPA in Defining the Criteria by which People are Categorized as Victims

The TVPA provides the criteria by which victims of human trafficking are defined. By extension, these criteria define who is eligible for assistance. There are three parts to this definition. First, the TVPA requires that victims must assist in the prosecution of a trafficker to receive protection or services. Second, the Department of Health and Human Services may only certify a victim as being trafficked if they are willing to discuss their case with law enforcement or service providers so that they can apprehend the traffickers. Third, if the case is prosecuted under a different statute (e.g., prostitution, smuggling, or money laundering), the protections of the TVPA will not apply (USDHS, 2015). These criteria serve as barriers to accessing services for many victims of human trafficking. Since trafficking victims are usually leery of law enforcement, they may be reluctant to communicate with them. Individuals who are not recognized as victims of human trafficking are not treated as victims; instead, they are treated as illegal immigrants or criminals (Chacón, 2010; Hopper, 2004). These limitations suggest the need for the law to be refined to provide protection to all victims of trafficking (Farrell et al., 2015; Jordan, Patel & Rapp, 2013).

The Role of Human Service Agencies in Accurately Identifying and Serving Victims

Social workers can play a role in the identification and assistance of human trafficking victims. Hodge (2014) detailed the role of social workers in the areas of identifying victims and assisting them in exiting trafficking, and in their restoration process. Hodge (2014) asserted that social workers are not adequately trained to address human trafficking and that human services professionals (i.e., social workers and healthcare staff) need to be better equipped to identify and report possible victims using physical indicators, story indicators (i.e., the words and way the victims talk about their experiences), and individuals’ emotional demeanor. There are specific
identification strategies that should be employed. Researchers have argued that knowledge and
training for professionals could improve service delivery to victims and help support
reintegration. However, service providers have challenges of their own, such as limited
availability of resources and services (Alejano-Steele, 2013; Aron, Zweig, & Newmark, 2006;
Jordan et al., 2013; Hodge, 2014).

Farrell et al. (2015) described the challenges and concerns for improved identification of
human trafficking victims and provisions for linkages with available services. By estimation, less
than 1% of victims have been identified. For every one victim who receives assistance,
approximately 200 victims remain without services (Zhou, 2015). Farrell et al. (2015) further
argued that there is a need to improve awareness of the complex issues involved in the
underreporting of trafficking cases. Some organizations, however, are working to overcome
these challenges. Hopper (2004) described a victim identification program operated by a
nongovernmental organization in Washington, DC. This organization developed an alert system
that uses the media and personal connections to identify potential trafficking cases. More
specifically, the system uses three means to track and document cases based on confirmed cases
and proactive victims’ identification: human trafficking cases prosecuted in the United States,
services provided to trafficked victims, and the media and personal connections used (Hopper,
2004).

The Role of Culture in Impeding Anti-Trafficking Efforts in the World

Culture serves as a catalyst for the perpetuation of human trafficking. Additionally,
cultural beliefs impede victims from seeking assistance because some assume the behavior of
their traffickers is an acceptable norm (Rao & Presenti, 2012). The threat of harm to family
members, shame, humiliation, and psychological abuse further cause fear that controls the minds
of victims and prevents them from seeking assistance. They feel a sense of obligation to provide for their families and accept their plight because it is their cultural model (Rao & Presenti, 2012). Traffickers can exert emotional and psychological control over the victims because the culture of many societies creates a lack of concern or compassion for victims’ suffering (Hodge, 2014).

Social Conceptions of Childhood. The concepts of child and childhood vary socially, culturally, and historically. There is also substantial difficulty in using a middle-class, Western framework for assisting trafficked children. This framework assumes a universally applicable model of childhood development (Busch-Armedariz, Nsonwu, & Cook Heffron, 2011). Western society treats all individuals under the age of 18 as minors and they are in a protected class. They are required to attend school and are not expected to work or provide for their families. Western society further assumes that child victims have universal needs, such as rehabilitation (Busch-Armedariz et al., 2011; Hodge, 2014).

However, child victims have varying needs based on their experiences, perceptions, and adaptation to their exposure to human trafficking. Due to their cultural background and a history of working to support their families, many who are 16 and 17 years old consider themselves adults and not children (Goździak, 2008). These individuals have difficulty adjusting to programs that want to assist them in reclaiming their “lost childhood.” Many of the children who are trafficked worked in their countries of origin doing housework, on family farms, or as street vendors, though they seldom earned wages for their labor (Goździak, 2008). These children accept the opportunity to work for wages to help take care of their family. Similarly, many children from the United States who are from abusive backgrounds welcome the opportunity to obtain any form of wages (Gibbs et al., 2015). Some children with an underprivileged upbringing turn to sex work to provide this income. The perception of not being a victim is a further barrier
to seeking services. This belief stems from cultural expectations as well as underprivileged circumstances of children (Goździak, 2008; Jordan et al., 2013). Based on the literature, this perception occurs with children; however, significant to this project, it raises questions about whether this same barrier exists when assisting adult women who have been trafficked.

**The Culture of Law Enforcement in the United States.** The culture of law enforcement—unbeknownst to those tasked with combatting human trafficking—creates a limited ability to identify victims of human trafficking. Law enforcement is tasked with addressing a myriad of criminal issues that demand immediate attention to prevent harm and death. Therefore, combatting human trafficking may not receive the attention it requires. In addition, the clandestine nature of sex trafficking presents a dilemma for law enforcement. It is difficult for them to distinguish between sex workers and human trafficking. The traditional view that prostitution is a choice and a crime compounds the difficulty for law enforcement to recognize and understand the difference between sex workers and sex trafficking. Thus, this long-standing belief supports the culture of law enforcement, which is a barrier in the correct identification and classification of women who are victims of sex trafficking (Clawson, Caliber, & Caliber, 2005).

Beliefs and norms are hard to define and resistant to change. Thus, the identification of victims involves competing understandings of trafficking and the TVPA. This very complicated legal issue requires extensive training and paradigm shifts for law enforcement and prosecutors (Peters, 2015). Researchers note that policymakers can change law enforcement awareness through training to help address human trafficking as a crime (Farrell et al., 2015). Presently, law enforcement creates significant barriers to those seeking help, in that the punitive treatment they receive from the criminal justice system may further perpetuate the cycle of repeated
victimization by instilling fear in women and reducing the likelihood that they will ask for help (Perry, 2011; Reid, 2010).

Human trafficking exists due to a multiplicity of factors and circumstances. However, one contributing factor may be that law enforcement and the criminal justice system’s cultural underpinnings create a situation where traffickers can exploit victims through coercion and manipulation (Hodge, 2014). The United Nations’ and United States’ definitions of human trafficking place an emphasis on the process of acquisition, recruitment, and transportation of individuals and pay less attention to their ongoing exploitation (Perry, 2011). This inattentiveness permeates into the public discourse and law enforcement and criminal justice prioritization, which tend to conflate human trafficking with other forms of illegal sex work. This factor, coupled with severe bias against women, creates a highly vulnerable population, which turns into a beneficial economic opportunity for traffickers (Perry, 2011; Reid, 2010).

Currently, the culture of law enforcement is one barrier to sex trafficking victim identification and assistance. However, the culture of law enforcement can be changed. In recent years, law enforcement behavior and culture have shifted in ways that support victims of domestic violence (Roe-Sepowitz et al., 2014). Similarly, with training and understanding, a culture change to support victims of sex trafficking is possible. In fact, studies have noted that the culture of law enforcement and the criminal justice system can provide the opportunity to identify potential victims and intervene (e.g., refer to services) to prevent revictimization, similar to the ways in which the police currently support victims of domestic violence (Clawson, Dutch, & Cummings, 2006; Hodge, 2014; Reid, 2010). Ironically, arrests can be used to identify human trafficking victims. However, the findings that trafficked victims are as likely to be detained after arrest as sex workers reveal that law enforcement is failing to identify them as victims. Studies
have confirmed the need for a culture shift and enhanced law enforcement training on identification and treatment of trafficked victims (Clawson et al., 2006; Hodge, 2014; Roe-Sepowitz et al., 2014).

**The Economics of Human Trafficking**

Yen (2008) proposed a theory that a reduced demand for sex trafficking would inevitably reduce the number of individuals trafficked. The approach here presumes that sex trafficking is fundamentally an economic problem and that appropriate incentives can influence both the supply and the demand decisions. Niemi and Aaltonen (2016) similarly examined how the male demand for sexual services sustains the growth of the sex trafficking industry. The authors argued that it is both feasible and effective to fight sex trafficking through educational and legislative measures aimed at reducing male demand. This can be accomplished by educating the public on the effects of the crime and by criminalizing the buyers and enforcing exorbitant fines (Yen, 2008).

Yen (2008) stipulated that trafficking is a lucrative crime for international organized crime rings because of the low investment costs, quick returns, very high profit margins, low risk of arrest, and relatively light penalties. Therefore, sex trafficking has a very high profit-to-cost ratio among comparable criminal activities such as drug trafficking (Yen, 2008). Methods of reduction include enacting and enforcing legislation that criminalizes the purchase of sex, educating the men who are buyers, and changing misguided male attitudes toward commercial sexual services.

Jackson (2014) conducted empirical, ethnographic research and determined that although legalizing sex work is not without implications, it is “imaginable” and could minimize harms and empower workers. Jackson (2014) further stated that sex work is nuanced and does not only
adopt a monolithic experience because sex work is the occupation of choice for some. The study deemed that all workers do not have a negative experience. Jackson (2014) concluded that sex work can be organized in such a way that it is superior to blanket criminalization. If treated similar to other service occupations, sex work could be practiced with relative safety, security, freedom, hygiene, and personal control, and be void of all stereotypical negative attributes. However, critics have argued that legal prostitution commodifies women and reinforces their broader cultural objectification (Hodge, 2014; Jackson, 2014; Roe-Sepowitz et al., 2014).

One neglected aspect of globalization is the direct human rights implications of increased trafficking of human beings. Contrary to Jackson’s (2014) conclusion, an empirical analysis of a cross-section of 150 countries (including developed countries such as the United States and other countries such as China and some Arab countries) determined that on average, countries where prostitution is legal experience larger reported human trafficking inflows (Cho, Dreher, & Neumayer, n.d.). Evidence seems to show that legalized sex industries result in trafficking to meet the demand for women to be used in the legal sex industries (Cho et al., n.d.). Legalizing sex work therefore almost invariably increases demand, leading to an increase in sex trafficking to support the sex industry (Cho et al., n.d.).

Niemi and Aaltonen (2016) argued that male buyers should be held accountable and responsible for their central role in perpetuating the sex slave trade. The identification of human trafficking could be improved if the TVPA criminalized the patrons of prostitution and human trafficking. This would help to reduce demand and the economic benefits of human trafficking for both the patrons and the traffickers. Reducing demand could effectively help to end human trafficking (Niemi & Aaltonen, 2016). Many buyers are rational (i.e., they weigh the risks before making the determination to participate in any illegal act); they purchase commercial sex only if
the physical and psychological benefits outweigh the financial costs, legal costs, and social stigma (Heil & Nichols, 2014; Miller, 2016; Yen, 2008).

In Europe, the Palermo Protocol discourages demand for sex by legislative, educational, cultural, and social measures (Niemi & Aaltonen, 2016). Since the Palermo Protocol, the European Trafficking Convention in 2005 included legal recommendations for states to tackle the demand for services from trafficked individuals. Sweden, Norway, and Iceland implemented a total ban on sex work; that is, any purchase of sex (trafficked or other sex worker) is a criminal offense (Niemi & Aaltonen, 2016). These countries have seen a sharp decline in the sex industry, since upon inception, almost all buyers were prosecuted and convicted. On the other hand, Finland implemented a law that stipulates a minor offense only to buyers of sex from a person who has been trafficked or procured (Niemi & Aaltonen, 2016). The statistics in 2013 show 379 investigations, 198 prosecutor’s decisions, 73 prosecutions, and 34 convictions (Niemi & Aaltonen, 2016). The buyers were investigated but the offenses were difficult to prove. The overall assessment of the Finnish sex purchase ban is not very positive because of the difficulty in its implementation. Niemi and Aaltonen (2016) proposed that a total ban on the purchase of sex would be more effective.

Sex trafficking has a high economic benefit to traffickers. Statistics from convicted traffickers/pimps reveal that the financial benefit to them exceeds the cost of fines. With prices such as $1000 for 60 minutes, traffickers have an incentive to disregard the minor consequences (e.g., small fines if apprehended; Urban Institute, 2014). According to the Urban Institute’s 2014 report, the economics for illicit sex in metro areas exceeds the economics for drugs and guns. The benefits to the traffickers outweigh the costs, therefore criminalizing both the patron and the trafficker would help to decrease the benefit and reduce the incidence of human trafficking.
The economics of human trafficking include a demand for low cost, vulnerable people in settings where the rule of law is felt only faintly and traffickers have near total control over the subject (Miller, 2016). The demand for sex slaves is encouraged by cultural insensitivity to this issue. Historical bias against women and prejudice toward sex workers permits an indifferent attitude that facilitates the demand (Perry, 2011). Miller (2016) referred to sex trafficking as the “dark forces of demand,” that is, the demand for sex trafficking perpetuates this crime, benefits the income of pimps, and continues to injure the human rights of the victims. The Urban Institute (2014) reported that the average weekly income for pimps in Atlanta between 2004 and 2011 was more than $32,000, when looking at the hourly pimp pricing (see Figure 2.1) and the income per week for pimps (see Figure 2.2). Figure 2.3 further emphasizes that the industry for illicit sex supersedes other negatively situated industries such as drug and gun economies.

![Figure 2.1. Pricing by time increment in different states. Source: Urban Institute (2014).](image)
**Figure 2.2.** Cash income for pimps between 2005 and 2011. Source: Urban Institute (2014).

**Figure 2.3.** Size of illicit sex, drug, and gun economics by metro area 2007. Source: Urban Institute (2014).
Human Trafficking Victims’ Service Needs

There are several studies describing the barriers and challenges that survivors experience when trying to reintegrate into society (Aron et al., 2006; Busch-Armendariz et al., 2011; Gibbs et al., 2015). Survivors strive to reintegrate, to exit their trafficked plight, and to be restored to a position where they can become productive within their communities and society. To reintegrate, human trafficking survivors need access to social services, so that they can acquire the means to find jobs and to gain financial independence. They also need protection from their traffickers, as well as access to mental and health services (Amahazion, 2015; Hodge, 2014). Studies have provided an understanding of the struggles of survivors and the services that are evolving to assist them. They detail the effectiveness and nature of services currently provided for human trafficking survivors (e.g., Hodge, 2014; Komwitz, 2016; Reid, 2010).

There is a myriad of social service needs for human trafficking victims (e.g., mental, financial, psychological, healthcare, personal), specifically because many are trafficked from a young age before they acquire work skills. The complexity of sex trafficking victims’ needs involves interactions with an array of services and must consider cultural background and level of trauma (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [USDHHS], n.d.). Victims need food, shelter clothing and goods, medical care, legal assistance, job training, education services, transportation, and other assistance such as, child care, substance abuse and mental health services (USDHHS, n.d.).

certified to receive federal benefits (USDHHS, n.d.). According to the TVPA, there are three requirements for certification for adult victims of human trafficking. An individual must have been subjected to a severe form of trafficking in persons, as defined by the TVPA; a victim must be willing to assist in every reasonable way in the investigation and prosecution of the trafficking case or is unable to cooperate with such a request due to physical or psychological trauma; and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security must grant Continued Presence (CP) to the victim or notify the victim that his/her T-visa application is bona fide or approved (USDHHS, n.d.). Precertified victims can receive community resources, state-funded assistance, and limited federal assistance from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services grants, the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, and the office for Victims of Crime (USDHHS, n.d.).

The primary need for victims is safe houses. Victims need shelter to get away from the trafficking situation. Residential facilities serve an important function for domestic sex trafficking victims, however a 2013 survey identified only 33 residential programs in 16 states that offered specialized services to trafficking victims (Gibbs et al., 2015). The lack of residential facilities and women’s shelters targeted toward domestic sex trafficking victims limits the ability of law enforcement and service providers to divert prostituted women and girls from jails and juvenile detention centers (Gibbs et al., 2015).

In other research, Busch-Armendariz et al. (2011) examined the factors that either promote or hinder self-sufficiency. The authors explored the determination of social service needs, and proposed policy and practice recommendations to strengthen survivors and their immigrant children. This research added a new facet of victims’ needs: the needs of the immigrant children after reunification. Due to the U.S. policy of treating victims of human trafficking similar to refugees, they are eligible for all services, including reunification with their
minor children (Busch-Armendariz et al., 2011). However, new and better practices and policies to address the safety and well-being needs of human trafficking survivors are needed. Specifically, Busch-Armendariz et al. (2011) proposed that policies should consider long-term support for victims of human trafficking and assistance with the difficult transition when the children of human trafficking victims are reunited with their parent(s) in the United States. Victims of human trafficking would benefit from thorough preparation and long-term follow up with a case manager (Busch-Armendariz et al., 2011).

**Effectiveness of Services**

Determining the effectiveness of any program for assisting human trafficking victims is an ongoing challenge. One study, the Colorado Project, aimed to assess the effectiveness of these programs. This study was based on data from 2011–2012 and is being replicated in other states (Alejano-Steele, 2013). The Colorado Project’s study of services for human trafficking victims addresses my concerns about effective services for victims, whether programs provide the benefits and services needed, and whether ineffective programs have been improved or eliminated (Alejano-Steele, 2013). The researchers for the Colorado Project designed a survey to address the “4Ps,” prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnerships. The authors aimed to identify what was happening and they identified that a comprehensive approach addressing the 4Ps would be most effective (Alejano-Steele, 2013). Currently, the authors are in the process of completing further research because to provide a basis for a nationwide process to gauge the number of anti-trafficking efforts in the United States. This research is needed because the success of prevention and support programs is unknown. Using a variation of the Colorado Project model, my research sought to investigate whether a more comprehensive initiative would be more effective.
Policy and Legal Implications in Combating Human Trafficking

Research has underscored the importance of legislation in combating human trafficking. Clawson et al. (2005) identified the need for policy changes to protect domestic women of sex trafficking in the United States. The early age of entry into prostitution for girls and women in their sample demonstrated that many qualified as victims without the need to show force, fraud, or coercion under the TVPA. Data also indicated the extent to which most girls and women experience force and coercion when recruited into prostitution, and showed that force and coercion increased over time. For this reason, these women and girls should be considered victims and not prosecuted as criminal offenders under state prostitution laws (Menaker & Franklin, 2015; Raphael et al., 2010).

According to Heil and Nichols (2014), local law enforcement officials need training on the provisions of the TVPA. They need to reorient their classification of girls and women in prostitution from offenders to victims controlled by pimps who are traffickers (Jordan et al., 2013). Rather than prosecution, these girls and women should be provided needed services, including safe shelter. In addition, law enforcement officials need training on the identification, investigation, and prosecution of pimps under the provisions in the federal law, which provides more severe penalties than most current state laws (Reid, 2010).

Chacón (2010) highlighted the importance of migrant criminality discourse in anti-trafficking policy. The TVPA resulted in an increase in investigations, convicted traffickers, and assistance to victims (Yen, 2008). However, it has not served as an adequate deterrent. The TVPA needs to specify the possible different ways for identification of victims and provide a detailed but expandable list of further protections for victims of human trafficking (Nam, 2007). The TVPA acknowledges the difficulties of identifying victims, however improvements to the
federal and state laws are needed for further refinement to provide protections for all victims of trafficking. Enacting statutes and policies to provide increased or better services for survivors has multiple benefits (Farrell et al., 2015; Nam, 2007). Addressing the human rights of trafficked individuals provides them with dignity, and affords them the resources to integrate into society to lead empowered, productive lives. Komwitz (2016) maintained that severe penalties alone have had no effect on the prevalence of human trafficking. In fact, it does not result in an increase or decrease of arrests and prosecutions (Komwitz, 2016).

Congress created a civil right of action for human trafficking victims. Codified under 18 U.S.C. § 1595 (hereinafter “Section 1595”), this legislation allows victims to seek civil relief against their traffickers in a U.S. District Court for damages and reasonable attorney fees. However, in comparison to the thousands of victims who are trafficked into and within the United States each year, empirical studies have shown victims’ underutilization of this provision (Hopper, 2004; Larche, 2014; Nam, 2007). Nam (2007) cited that the underutilization of Section 1595 is mainly due to the “challenge in locating and identifying victims” (p. 1678). Scholars’ assertions contain the consistent theme that there is a need to improve the ability to identify victims (Larche 2014; Nam, 2007). Trafficking victims rarely seek help or self-identify mainly because they are afraid of their traffickers because they are unaware of their rights. In addition, victims fear for their lives or are concerned that their cases will not be believable (Nam, 2007).

The recommended improvements for the TVPA include mechanisms for empowering trafficking victims, funding for civil rights lawyers working on behalf of trafficking victims, expansion of the compensation awarded to victims in both civil and criminal proceedings, and further definition of “damages” (Nam, 2007). According to the report, no court has yet rendered an opinion on the merits of a Section 1595 claim because it is unclear how broadly or narrowly
courts should interpret the term “damages” (Nam, 2007). In addition, because sex trafficking leads to prostitution, which is noncompensable in many states, the term “damages” needs to be defined to include emotional losses and punitive damages (Nam, 2007).

Research shows that historically, policymakers have overlooked the domestic sex trafficking of women due to the focus on international sex trafficking (Gibbs et al., 2015). As such, policy reform is needed to protect domestic victims of sex trafficking (Gibbs et al., 2015). Successful escape from traffickers and community reintegration depends largely on the availability of shelter and services to address the severity of survivors’ needs adequately (Zhou, 2015). According to Polaris Project (2014), studies have indicated that traditional domestic violence and homeless shelters are not fully equipped to attend to the extensive needs of domestic sex trafficking victims due to their severe and comorbid psychiatric symptoms, lack of understanding of the criminal justice system, lack of resources, and greater security needs in comparison to other victims. The early age of entry into prostitution for girls and women qualify many as victims without the need to show force, fraud, or coercion under the TVPA. For this reason, these women and girls should be considered victims and not prosecuted as criminal offenders under state prostitution laws (Menaker & Franklin, 2015; Raphael et al., 2010).

**Summary of Literature and Existing Gaps**

A common problem cited in the literature is the lack of inclusion of survivor experiences or understanding of survivor experiences from those closely associated with assisting them (Alejano-Steele, 2013). Currently, few studies have collected data on the experiences of victims. Further research is needed to determine specific victim issues. Many articles have been published in scholarly journals, but few have been based on primary data collection. Where this is explored, researchers have found that survivors reported similar needs regardless of the type of
trafficking they experienced (i.e., labor trafficking, sex trafficking, or domestic servitude), their age, how the client came into the service network, or their country of origin (Alejano-Steele, 2013). Importantly, the studies have detected changing needs over time for each survivor (Alejano-Steele, 2013). The existing literature shows that the failure to receive assistance and reintegrate leads to problems of retrafficking (Hopper, 2004). Providing services for human trafficking victims would reduce the incidence of human trafficking because the victims would be empowered to reintegrate and assist with prosecuting their traffickers (Komwitz, 2016).

The Colorado Project is one of the few studies conducted to understand the needs of human trafficking victims (Alejano-Steele, 2013). However, the research focused on victims’ needs in states with adequate laws and effective task forces for combating human trafficking (Alejano-Steele, 2013). Many articles have been published in scholarly journals, however few are based on data collection involving survivors. Survivors’ perspectives are thus largely absent from the peer-reviewed literature (Komwitz, 2016).

Additionally, most studies have focused on the needs of those trafficked into foreign countries. The focus on international sex trafficking overshadows the concern for victims of domestic sex trafficking. Girls and women born in the United States who are subject to force, fraud, or coercion by pimps or traffickers are typically not considered by law enforcement to be victims of trafficking, even though they meet the federal definition. Instead, domestic girls and women continue to be treated as criminals, subject to laws criminalizing prostitution (Clawson et al., 2005). Despite well-documented psychological manipulation, victims of domestic sex trafficking are viewed as willing participants in prostitution, blamed for their victimization, overlooked by social service agencies, and denied legal protection against their pimps/traffickers (Menaker & Franklin, 2015).
Chapter 3
Research Methods

Research Goal and Questions

This study adopted a mixed-methods case study approach using interviews from nonprofit agency personnel to gather in-depth information, surveys from sex trafficking survivors, and document review of the federal and Georgia statutes on services for sex trafficking victims. My research questions were:

1. What services and resources are available for domestic sex trafficking victims in Georgia?
2. What services and resources are needed to assist domestic sex trafficking survivors?
3. What are the barriers that prevent domestic sex trafficking victims from receiving or seeking assistance?
4. Are there existing gaps between the federal and Georgia state statutes in services for adult female domestic sex trafficking victims?

This research utilized descriptive and exploratory approaches. I used a descriptive approach to capture typical service needs of human trafficking victims, typical available services, and typical barriers to accessing services. This research helped to construct a portrait of the most prevalent areas of concern. The exploratory aspect helped to delve deeper and provide a more detailed understanding of the discrepancies between victims’ needs and available services. I collected data based on the premise that existing barriers and limited services prevent human trafficking victims from receiving adequate assistance. Data collection spanned just over 3 months, from October 21, 2016 through February 2, 2017.
Research Design

**Sampling and Data Collection.** The data collection process included a trifold approach to understanding survivors’ needs, available services, barriers to survivors seeking and receiving services, and barriers to nonprofit agencies providing services to adult female sex trafficking victims. Phase 1 of this study included interviews with nonprofit agency personnel. For Phase 2, survivors responded to an online survey regarding services provided by nonprofit agencies. To understand the intersection between the services provided and the legal provisions, Phase 3 involved document review, where I reviewed and analyzed federal and Georgia state trafficking laws.

**Phase 1: Interviews.** Phase 1 utilized a phenomenological approach to understand the lived experiences, perceptions, and beliefs of the experts in their encounters with and attempts to support human trafficking survivors. The objective was to unearth the complexity of the survivors’ experiences when seeking assistance and the intricacies of providing services to them. I identified existing services by obtaining data through interviews that included the possible different types of victims’ services (i.e., food, shelter clothing and goods, medical care, legal assistance, job training, education services, transportation, and other assistance such as child care, and substance abuse and mental health services).

To conduct interviews directly with nonprofit agency personnel, I developed partnerships with three nonprofit agencies in Atlanta, GA that provide services to sex trafficking victims. The search for partnerships involved six nonprofit agencies, however only three nonprofit victims services agencies were willing to participate in this study. In addition, these agencies were resident-based. As these organizations housed the victims, I could interview personnel and survey survivors from the same agencies. The goal was to conduct a descriptive analysis of
agency personnel and survivor perspectives. The type of nonprofit agencies in this study allowed for the comparative analysis of the agency personnel and survivors’ responses on similar questions.

First, I provided the interview questions and recruitment material to the designated agency contact person. To ensure that individuals did not feel compelled to participate in the research, the designated agency contact person forwarded the employee interview recruitment email to staff identified as relevant for the research. For this study, the agency contact identified only those in direct contact with human trafficking survivors. From those identified, anyone willing to participate contacted me via email to schedule a face-to-face or telephone interview. I conducted semistructured interviews with the agency personnel (i.e., management, employees, and support staff; see Appendix E for questions asked).

I provided the agency personnel with an unsigned consent form. The use of an unsigned consent was needed to maintain anonymity of employees and organizations (see Appendix B). Prior to the start of the interview, the agency personnel verbally affirmed their consent to participate. The interviews were audio recorded (taped). In three instances, the interviews were handwritten (when a participant declined to be recorded). I completed 12 interviews; the average length was 25 minutes. Of the 12 interviews, nine participants agreed to be recorded. The interview recordings were sent to rev.com to be transcribed (all identifiable information e.g., agency or individual names inadvertently mentioned was redacted from the transcriptions prior to analysis). Data from the interviews addressed the research questions concerning existing victims’ services, victims’ needs, and barriers to services in Georgia.
**Phase 2: Surveys.** To explore the needs, gaps, and barriers to receiving services as well as the experiences of victims, I used a qualitative questionnaire (survey). An online survey was provided for survivors via Qualtrics. To simulate an interview, the survey adopted a qualitative format. Most of the questions were open-ended. For the questions with predefined responses, an “other” option was provided for free-form responses. The goal of this survey was to understand the victims’ needs and the barriers they face when seeking services. In-person interviews were not conducted due to the sensitive nature of this population and the desire to preserve their anonymity. This data collection method allowed me to protect participants by minimizing discomfort and potential negative impacts of verbally recalling potentially traumatic events with an unknown interviewer.

The nonprofit agencies interviewed for Phase 1 of this research (described above), assisted with recruitment of survey participants. Survey participants comprised of domestic, adult female victims of sex trafficking. Agency contacts coordinated with agency personnel and a licensed therapist on staff provided clearance for survivors to complete the survey. Survivors who were willing to participate completed the online survey. I provided the agency contact with the survey link, and the agency contact gave participants the link to the survey in Qualtrics. The agency contact designated a case manager or therapist to be available while the survivors were completing the survey if anyone experienced any psychological anxiety. This was a possible risk to participants since the survivors were recollecting and discussing the barriers they faced when seeking assistance. The first page of the survey was an unsigned consent form. Participants needed to click “Yes” to indicate their consent to participate and to be sent to the start of the survey questions.
**Phase 3: Document Review.** The goal of the document review was to address possible gaps in laws/statutes. The document review process involved deconstruction of Georgia’s laws concerning services for human trafficking victims. According to the most recent report of state ratings on trafficking laws, Georgia’s laws partially meet requirements for training and/or human trafficking task force and vacating convictions for sex trafficking victims (Polaris Project, 2014). I reviewed the specific section of the Georgia statute H.B. 200, 145th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2011) concerning services for sex trafficking victims. I obtained the Justice for Victims Trafficking Act (JVTA) and other federal statutes pertaining to assistance for sex trafficking victims to compare with the text of the Georgia statute H.B. 200, 145th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2011) and other Georgia statutes. Using the website www.usa.gov, I then searched for the most recent federal statute on assistance/services for victims of human trafficking. Using the Georgia General Assembly website, I reviewed the most recent Georgia statute on assistance/services for victims of human trafficking (see Table 3.1 for a complete list of the documents included in this review).
Table 3.1

**Federal and Georgia State Laws on Services and Assistance for Human Trafficking Victims**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statute/ Law</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>The sex trafficking mandatory restitution section, 18 U.S.C.1593, applies to the victims of §1591 offenses, both children and adults, as well as to the victims of other trafficking offenses (Federal)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43597.pdf">https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43597.pdf</a></td>
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</table>
Methods of Analysis

Survey and Interview Data Analysis. I imported the interview transcripts and summaries as well as the qualitative survey into Dedoose, a qualitative data management application, to code the data. The goal of this analysis was to identify patterns, themes, and key characteristics of victim and employee experiences concerning service needs and barriers to obtaining services. I entered the codes from the codebook into Dedoose to code the responses. I imported the Word documents of the transcripts. I also imported the survey responses from Qualtrics into Dedoose and coded the open-ended questions. The closed-ended survey responses were used to evaluate patterns in the data. I conducted a qualitative descriptive content analysis to look for patterns and themes. From Dedoose, I exported each code to Excel, printed each spreadsheet, and analyzed it for patterns. For specific questions, I compared the responses from the survey responses and interview responses regarding needs and barriers. After coding in Dedoose, the survey data were exported to an Excel spreadsheet to calculate descriptive statistics of the closed-ended responses. Using Excel, I produced graphs and charts to provide a visual display of the quantitative data (i.e., all questions that involved “check all that apply” responses).

Document Review Analysis. I conducted a comparative analysis of Georgia’s Safe Harbor Law and the TVPA. By comparing the details and text of the Georgia statute and the TVPA, I identified specific deficiencies in the state law to make recommendations on how to improve service provision. The data collection involved document review of secondary data. This included an examination of Georgia House Bill 244 Part III, Section 3-1 Article 11, which I retrieved from the Georgia General Assembly website. The data collection focused on two measures: the existence or nonexistence of text concerning the provisions for human trafficking victims’ services and resources, and the existence or nonexistence of text concerning the efforts
(collaborative or partnerships) and initiatives for providing these services and resources. I used content and comparative analysis methods to evaluate the data. The comparison identified the similarities and differences between the texts in these laws.

**Scope and Limitations**

This research focused on existing victims’ services and their needs, and the impact of the existing state laws on the availability of services for victims of sex trafficking. It did not include data collection on the successful integration of human trafficking survivors into society, as this would have required a longitudinal case study approach best suited for future research. This study did not include reduction of human trafficking in the community as this would have required in-depth research to determine if available services help to reduce human trafficking in the community. I did not investigate the causes, recruitment, transportation, or exploitation of victims, since this would have been a different study to garner data on how to prevent sex trafficking. My research goal was to offer recommendations to protect sex trafficking victims.

To minimize any possibility of harm to the survivors, I conducted an online survey instead of interviews. The survey approach was unable to provide the nonverbal and tone aspects of an interview; however, the open-ended questions served to maximize the content of the responses. Due to the limited legal focus and research on this specific population, the sample of survey participants only included domestic, adult female victims of sex trafficking. It did not include minor sex trafficking survivors, and other types of human trafficking survivors were excluded from this study (e.g., labor trafficking, male sex trafficking, or organ trafficking). Therefore, the results exclude the perspectives and experiences of these groups. Additionally, the research only involved participants from nonprofit organizations. State and public agencies were not included in the data collection process because these agencies were outside the scope of this
research. State and public agencies will be included in future research. The inclusion of these other populations may have provided more comprehensive findings about human trafficking victims and the needs and barriers that different types of human trafficking survivors experience when seeking assistance. These findings would have provided the opportunity to compare the similarities and differences in the needs and barriers of different types of human trafficking survivors.

**Ethical Considerations**

The only names stored were the names of the contact resource for each agency/organization. The interviews did not record the name of the organization; it did not ask the names of the employees, their addresses, or any identifiable information in order to maintain confidentiality. Before the interview, I advised the agency personnel participants that they could choose not to participate, to not answer any specific question, and that they could stop the interview at any point if they did not wish to continue.

Participation in this research was voluntary. Names and all identifiable information inadvertently provided by employees and survivors were redacted from the research data. All data collected were completely confidential and anonymous. I did not ask for any personally identifiable information. To avoid traceability and maintain anonymity, the option in Qualtrics to prevent collection of any identifiable metadata on survey participants (e.g., IP address) was selected. All data collected were stored on a password-protected laptop. When I completed the analysis, the original audio files were destroyed to protect the participants. The Northeastern University Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and approved this study (see Appendix A).
Chapter 4

Results

The results of this study are based upon: (a) 12 interviews with nonprofit agency personnel who work directly to aid survivors of sex trafficking; (b) 17 survey responses of adult female sex trafficking survivors residing in Georgia; and (c) a review of federal and state statutes. Of the 23 survivors who attempted to take the survey, eight opted not to complete the survey. Therefore, the results reported here are based on the 74% who completed the survey. This is a relatively small sample; however, the findings are still valuable as it gives insight into a population that is typically hard to access, and provides a description of the experiences of survivors and agency personnel concerning services.

The findings of this study have seven different focal points that address the research questions. The first six involve survey and interview responses, and the seventh concerns the document review of federal and Georgia state statutes (to help understand if there are adequate or appropriate statutes to support sex trafficking victims). These first two focal points are: (a) the needs of the victims and (b) available services and resources. These help to garner data on the unmet needs of victims to identify the gap (if any) between what is available and what is needed. The remaining focal points are: (c) the barriers to victims seeking or receiving services, (d) the barriers to the nonprofit agencies providing services to the victims, (e) the status of collaborations between agencies/organizations on the provision of services to victims, and (f) recommendations from survivors on how to improve the process of seeking and receiving services, and (g) the federal and Georgia state statutes.
Services and Resources Needed by Domestic Sex Trafficking Victims in Georgia

**Survey Responses.** Survey respondents had different individual needs depending on their situations. When the survivors were asked about their primary needs when they initially sought help, the most frequently mentioned need was safety (i.e., a safe place to stay), followed by substance abuse therapy and counseling. As a follow-up question, the survivors were asked about their other needs. According to 100% of the survivors, shelter/housing and food were most needed. Other prevalent needs were healthcare (93%), emotional support (87%), and transportation (80%). Over half of the respondents mentioned that they had other needs such as life skills, spiritual matters, jobs, referral services, self-help groups, drug/alcohol help, school, and protection.

There were some unexpected survey responses. Since this population of survivors was domestic, it was not expected that they would have similar needs to that of international victims. However, 27% of the survivors responded that they needed certification, a letter for noncitizens obtained from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services stating that they are victims of human trafficking, so that they can qualify for federal assistance. In addition, 7% said they needed a visa (possibly they were noncitizens who were not transported from a foreign country into trafficking). Figure 4.1 shows the overall picture of survivor needs from the survey.
Interview Responses. Over half of the agency personnel stated the most common need was counseling or therapeutic assistance for past trauma (83%). The next common need was medical care (75%), then substance abuse assistance (58%). A few of the personnel stated that shelter (33%) and career services (25%) were common needs. The following are some of their responses:

- “Trafficking survivors have addictions and they need more counseling for lifelong abuse and trauma.” (Agency Staff A)
- “I guess more therapy because I’ve been hearing that one. Well they’re getting a lot of therapy now but . . . I mean, you can never have too much therapy I guess. Especially when you go through a lot of traumatic things.” (Agency Staff B)
- “They need counseling for sure, and sometimes more than once a week, so at least twice a week.” (Agency Staff C)
- “They need help with substance abuse and a lot of mental health.” (Agency Staff D)
- “The most common needs are for drug and alcohol abuse and for housing.” (Agency Staff E)
- “They need a lot of therapeutic services revolving around thoughts and behaviors.” (Agency Staff F)

**Comparison of Survey and Interview Responses.** The needs reported by the survivors were similar to those reported by agency staff, but were prioritized differently. Agency staff felt that therapy was the most needed service, while only 87% of survivors stated that they needed emotional support. On the other hand, 100% of survivors stated that their initial needs when they sought assistance were shelter/housing and food. Therefore, the agency personnel viewed counseling as the most common need. However, based on the survivors’ responses, shelter/housing and food were the most common needs.

**Available Services and Resources for Domestic Sex Trafficking Victims in Georgia**

**Survey Responses.** Analysis from the survey (qualitative questionnaire) showed that although all the survivors who enter the agencies receive services, there are some needs that are unmet. Thirteen of the 17 survivors (76%) had unmet needs. Seven (41%) said that their unmet need was shelter/housing. Transportation was also a major unmet need (41%). From the survivor responses, 35% stated that food, spiritual matters, emotional support, referral services, life skills, self-help group, and healthcare were unmet needs. Only 29% responded that drug/alcohol help was an unmet need. Long-term follow-up care was mentioned as a service that was not available to the survivors.
All the survivors mentioned that therapy was available. Of the 87% of survivors who mentioned that they needed counseling, psychiatric care, or a place to talk about the past, 35% reported that sometimes they had to wait until a therapist was available. In many instances, the therapy was inadequate and, in some cases, the survivors had to go somewhere outside of the agency for counseling. In other words, services were available but insufficient to help survivors work and integrate back into society.

Figure 4.2. Unmet needs based on survivors responses.

**Interview Responses.** All agency staff interviewed stated that the agencies try to meet the needs of the survivors. When presented with a list of possible services, they all stated that all services were available to some extent or through collaboration with other agencies. However, they also mentioned that the survivors need around-the-clock access to therapy and, although the agencies provide every survivor with the services that they need, the assistance is at times inadequate and does not completely meet the need. The following are direct responses from
participants. Survivor A stated: “I need staff available to talk to 24 hours a day.” An agency personnel stated:

> We do offer therapy here, but that’s one of the main things. I think from their point of view, if they wake up in the middle of the night and they have like a flashback or something, they want to be able to talk to someone and usually the therapist here are only here for week hours; day hours. So, if there was just one thing I probably would say maybe someone here around the clock to help get through their situations. . . . Like, again, if someone wakes up from a bad nightmare. (Agency Staff G)

Another participant stated:

> So for the most part, we’ve got most things covered. We just probably need more of each resource. So more pro bono psychiatrists. More pro bono dentists, or lawyers. Lawyers is really low, for us, but we've got one, but we could use more. (Agency Staff H)

**Barriers to Receiving or Seeking Assistance**

**Interview and Survey Responses.** Both the survivors and agency staff stated that survivors’ lack of awareness of available services was the primary barrier to receiving or seeking help. From the interview, seven of the 12 agency staff (58%) stated that being unaware of available services was the main barrier when seeking services and 76% of survivors stated that lack of knowledge of available services was the primary barrier to victims seeking assistance. Several survey respondents also stated that program restrictions were another barrier to seeking services. Survivor B stated: “Some programs have waiting lists.” Another participants stated:

> Sometimes programs make individuals quit smoking within their first 30 days of being there and for a lot of traffic victims this is hard because they are drug addicts who are already stressed and having to stop a serious addiction. (Survivor C)

Although lack of knowledge of available services was the primary barrier to survivors seeking services, there are other barriers such as shame (64%) and stigma (64%). In addition,
some survivors responded that they were addicted to the fast life, or had emotional attachment to their pimp or trafficker. They also mentioned that some victims are either afraid to leave because they have been threatened or fear for their lives and their families’ lives. Like the unexpected responses for needs, one unexpected barrier to seeking services for this domestic population was fear of deportation (possibly domestic but noncitizens). Based on the survey responses, another major barrier was that victims did not view themselves as victims, particularly when they had been involved in trafficking for a long time:

I would say that shame and admitting that they’ve been in a tough situation is a challenge. They are also kind of addicted to this fast life and a lot of them get mentally and emotionally attached to their quote/unquote trafficker or their pimp or however the terminology you want to use. A lot of them get attached to him and they have fear of leaving him because oftentimes they’ll threaten the family members of the clients and they just kind of brainwash them so they’re not ready to leave. (Agency Staff I)

I didn’t see myself or identify with who they saw me as . . . they saw me as someone who needed help to do things differently but I didn’t know any other way . . . they were trying to help I guess but it hurt that they had grouped me in a category with so many other “victims” without first letting me identify with that . . . it takes time to realize that what is going on with you and when I had everyone telling me what was happening it made me want to deny it even more. (Survivor D)

The following histogram provides a picture of the barriers to seeking services from the survivors’ perspective (Figure 4.3).
Barriers to Agencies Providing Services

**Funding.** One consistent theme based on the responses from the agency personnel was that funding is a major barrier to agencies providing services to survivors. Though originally considered as a stand-alone theme, every interviewee identified funding or resources to be key factors that hinder agencies from providing services. Not one agency staff mentioned the need for more of any service without bringing up funding. The same could be said of resources, as these also depend on funding. Resources involve the staff: administrative, case managers, counselors, trainers (job and life skills), and therapists (psychiatrists). Agency personnel also mentioned that some survivors’ needs are unmet due to insufficient funding. The agency staff stated that their limited funding results in inadequate staff and insufficient services for survivors. Funding is not only the baseline budget for an agency to carry out daily assistance to survivors, funding is also needed for the extensive services required to help victims recover and integrate into society.
**Other Barriers.** The agency personnel mentioned other less prevalent barriers to their provision of services. Their inability to identify jobs that are willing to hire survivors due to their criminal record is another barrier to providing services. Many of the survivors have criminal histories due to arrests, where they were treated as sex workers, or drug offenses related to their involvement in sex trafficking. Another barrier is limited trained personnel, both for everyday assistance as well as the need for a trained psychiatrist on staff. According to the agency personnel responses, due to limited availability of full-time staff, some of the staff are volunteers and are not trained to assist in multiple capacities.

**Collaboration on the Provision of Services**

**Interview and Survey Responses.** Responses from the survivors and agency staff also provided data concerning collaboration among various agencies and organizations. Among the survivors who reported that the agencies collaborated to provide them with services, 60% collaborated with shelters and more than half collaborated with either housing or victims’ services. Less than half collaborated with nonprofit legal organizations and very few collaborated with law enforcement (13%) or prosecutors (6%; see Figure 4.4).

![Figure 4.4](image)

*Figure 4.4. Agencies/organizations that collaborated based on survivor responses.*
Survivor and Agency Personnel Recommendations

Interview and Survey Responses on Improving Services. The data collected from the survivors and agency personnel included recommendations for improving services for sex trafficking survivors in Georgia. The victims recommended personalized programs because every victim has different needs and experiences. Out of the 17 respondents, four stated that survivors should share their stories so that the agencies know the successes and failures of the programs. Five stated that posters and television commercials, billboards, flyers, and other marketing are needed so that victims become aware of services. The agency personnel had several recommendations in the following order: better legal services, clearer standards of care, more funding, better interagency collaboration, more qualified staff to work with survivors, greater public awareness of this issue, and greater awareness of available services. One of the survivors’ responses and one of the agency staff responses, respectively, clearly support these recommendations. Survivor E stated: “It would be helpful for service providers to be more accessible and knowledgeable about different services and programs around the state.” An agency staff member stated:

I think the biggest thing is just identifying more resources for them to get the services they need. Identifying more partners, having more collaboration throughout the city and the state, more involvement with the local police and federal agencies to protect these ladies. We need to raise more awareness because too often people are turning their head to the issue of trafficking because they don’t want to admit that it’s there. More awareness and education surrounding it would help our ladies tremendously.  
(Agency Staff D)

Federal and Georgia State Statutes on Services for Sex Trafficking Victims

The document review involved deconstruction of federal and Georgia laws on services for human trafficking victims. It focused on eight categories where provisions would help to
improve assistance for sex trafficking victims. The analysis identified where there were gaps between the federal and Georgia state laws and helped to provide recommendations where there is a need for changes or new provisions in both the federal and Georgia state statutes. The eight categories include: (a) asset forfeiture of property derived from or used for trafficking, (b) training on human trafficking for law enforcement, (c) human trafficking commissions or task forces, (d) posting of human trafficking hotline, (e) safe harbor (i.e., protecting sexually exploited minors), (f) victim assistance, (g) access to civil damages, and (h) vacating convictions for sex trafficking victims.

**Asset Forfeiture of Property Derived from or Used in Trafficking.** The federal law states that asset forfeiture is required for property derived or used in trafficking. Georgia’s Safe Harbor Law (Rachel’s Law) stipulates forfeiture for assets used during the crime or acquired with proceeds from the crime of human trafficking. However, neither the federal nor Georgia statute stipulates that the assets should be allocated for services for sex trafficking victims.

**Training on Human Trafficking for Law Enforcement.** The Safe Harbor Law (Rachel’s Law) intends to raise awareness and recognize minors who are survivors of human trafficking as victims and not criminals. It also stipulates that law enforcement should be trained to recognize signs of trafficking.

**Human Trafficking Commission or Task Force.** On the issue of the existence or nonexistence of text concerning efforts (collaborations or partnerships) and initiatives for providing services and resources to sex trafficking victims, the federal law contained stipulations for collaborative initiatives for aiding sex trafficking victims. Georgia did not provide a statute or provision for a human trafficking task force.
**Posting of Human Trafficking Hotline.** The federal law as well as Georgia’s H.B. 141, 145th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2013) requires businesses, hotels, adult entertainment, bars, and airports to display National Human Trafficking Center Hotline information that should be written in both English and Spanish.

**Safe Harbor – Protecting Sexually Exploited Minors.** The federal law (JVTA) and Georgia’s Safe Harbor Law (Rachel’s Law) allows protection for minor victims rather than for adult victims. It specifies a penalty of minimum fines for certain sexual crimes. It stipulates an annual fee from certain businesses (such as adult establishments) and severe penalties for perpetrators. It mandates that annual fees and penalties should be used for safe houses, and should be allocated for rehabilitative and social services for minor victims.

On the other hand, the federal and Georgia state statutes do not provide safe harbor provisions for adult victims of sex trafficking. Both the federal and Georgia Safe Harbor Act apply only to children under the age of 18. The implication of this is even if someone entered sex trafficking as a child, as adults the same protections are not available under this law. In other words, upon arrest, a trafficked adult will be criminalized and will not receive protection from prosecution. According to the responses of the survivors and agency personnel, a criminal record is a barrier to securing employment.

Access to Civil Damages. A comparison of the Georgia state statutes and the federal law concerning services for sex trafficking victims found that the federal law mentions access for sex trafficking victims to receive civil damages. However, Georgia does not have a statute that provides victims of human trafficking the ability to seek civil damages from their trafficker.

Vacating Convictions for Sex Trafficking Victims. On the issue of the existence or nonexistence of text concerning vacating convictions for sex trafficking victims, the federal law contains stipulations for vacating convictions for sex trafficking victims. Georgia does not provide a statute or provision for vacating convictions for sex trafficking victims. When compared to the federal law, Georgia’s law partially satisfies the requirements for this category; that is, the Georgia law only benefits children and adults who are deemed victims of a “severe” form of human trafficking. To substantiate these findings, a recent report of state ratings on trafficking laws shows that Georgia’s laws partially meet requirements for training and/or human trafficking task force and vacating convictions for sex trafficking victims (Polaris Project, 2014). See Table 4.1 below for a summary of a comparison of the federal and Georgia laws that address services and assistance for sex trafficking victims. Note: This table shows the comparison between the existing federal law and Georgia state statutes. It does not account for any statutes that are not currently part of the federal law. The comments column mentions some of the disparities between the existing federal and Georgia state laws and the need for additional laws/provisions for adult victims of sex trafficking.
Table 4.1

Comparison Between Federal and Georgia State Laws

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Laws/Statutes</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asset forfeiture of property</td>
<td>The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA, S. 178/P.L. 114-22). The JVTA amends the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). (Federal)</td>
<td>![Balances]</td>
<td>![Balances]</td>
<td>Although the federal and Georgia statutes mention asset forfeiture, they do not stipulate that the assets should be allocated for services for sex trafficking victims.</td>
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<td>derived from or used in</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human trafficking commission</td>
<td>The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA, S. 178/P.L. 114-22). The JVTA amends the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) (Federal)</td>
<td>![Balances]</td>
<td>![Balances]</td>
<td>Georgia state law does not have a statute to encourage a dedicated task force or commission.</td>
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<td>or task force</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<th>Comments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to civil damages</td>
<td>The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA, S. 178/P.L. 114-22). The JVTA amends the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) (Federal).</td>
<td>![Balance]</td>
<td>![Balance]</td>
<td>Georgia does not have a statute that provides victims of human trafficking with the ability to seek civil damages from their trafficker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacating convictions for sex trafficking</td>
<td>The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA, S. 178/P.L. 114-22). The JVTA amends the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) (Federal).</td>
<td>![Balance]</td>
<td>![Balance]</td>
<td>Georgia has a law that partially satisfies the requirements for this category. The law only benefits children and adults who are deemed victims of a “severe” form of human trafficking. The statute is vague.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Chapter 5

Recommendations and Conclusions

Summary and Analysis of Findings

When seeking services, per agency staff, all the survivors who enter the agencies receive services; however, there are some needs that are unmet. Shelter/housing was the most needed service and it was also the most unmet need. Long-term follow-up care was mentioned as a service that was not available to the survivors. Therapy is available but sometimes the survivors have to wait until a therapist is available. Similarly, the agency staff stated that the agencies try to meet the needs of the survivors without outside collaboration. In some instances, they are unable to meet the needs internally and then they collaborate with outside agencies. Both survivors and agency staff cited the need for around-the-clock access to therapy, as well as an increase in services to assist survivors with reintegration back into society.

The primary need of survivors when they initially sought help was safety (i.e., a safe place to stay). Substance abuse recovery was the next most mentioned need and therapy was the third most mentioned need. On the other hand, the agency personnel stated that survivors’ most common need was counseling or therapeutic assistance for past trauma. Although counseling was a consistent need, the agency personnel felt it was more important than the survivors.

The agency personnel and survivors mentioned several barriers to sex trafficking victims receiving or seeking assistance. Both the survivors and agency personnel stated that the main barrier that prevented domestic sex trafficking victims from receiving or seeking assistance is that they are unaware of available services. Program restrictions are another major barrier to seeking services. Funding is the main barrier to agencies providing services. Inability to identify jobs due to the survivors’ criminal record is another prevalent barrier to providing services.
Another barrier to victims receiving services is limited training for personnel, both for everyday assistance as well as the need for a trained psychiatrist on staff. Collaboration among various agencies and organizations exist, however more collaboration is needed. A collaboration task force needs to identify and partner with organizations that can be used as resources for victims’ service needs. This task force needs to compile a resource list and make it available to all agencies providing services to sex trafficking victims.

Adult domestic victims of sex trafficking should have similar protections as child victims and foreign victims. Many adult victims become victims as young as 14 years old. Therefore, some do not have any life skills, as this is the only life that they have known. In addition, they do not seek services because they are ashamed and many programs have restrictions (e.g., they must be drug and alcohol free, be willing to join a religious organization, or be willing to help prosecute their trafficker). The state statutes mention that sex trafficking victims are eligible for services and assistance, however the provisions specify that these services are for minors and those who are considered certified victims of sex trafficking. To receive federal funding, foreign victims must receive a certification letter from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services stating that they are victims of human trafficking. This certificate must be applied for and it requires victims to agree to participate in the prosecution of their traffickers. Programs and initiatives are available to support the Georgia statutes for minors and foreign victims of sex trafficking, but the statutes do not provide specific provisions for assistance and services for domestic adult victims of sex trafficking.

The responses of the survivors and agency personnel echo the literature (Goździak, 2008), as the victims did not view themselves as victims. This perspective hinders both international and domestic child victims from seeking assistance. For some international
children, working by any means to help their families is accepted as a way of life. Many children who are abused or poor may seek any avenue for income to survive (Goździak, 2008; Jordan et al., 2013). However, the current study provided similar findings that this perception is also a barrier for adult domestic sex trafficking victims (e.g., several survivors stated that they did not originally view themselves as victims). This perception exists even among adult victims possibly because they started as child victims or because they chose to enter the sex trafficking industry. For many of them, they only know this way of life and they did not initially view themselves as victims. Nevertheless, an individual is considered trafficked at any time after they are forced into participating in acts or coerced into giving their money to the traffickers, or when they are not allowed to leave (Goździak, 2008).

Trafficked women may not understand that although they may have entered willingly with a need, if they were under 18 years, they were minors and under TVPA cannot be held responsible for making that decision. They are therefore considered “victims.” Many survivors do not view themselves as victims needing assistance. These same survivors responded that shame and stigma were the barriers that prevented them from seeking services because they felt they brought this situation on themselves. Such perceptions possibly occur because they do not understand that they were coerced or because they entered willingly due to a need (some of them as early as Age 14). They may not understand that at any point when they are coerced, forced, or exploited, they become victims.

**Recommendations**

The recommendations are based on observations from existing research and the findings from this study. There are gaps between the needs of the victims and the available services. In addition, some legal state provisions are required to help enforce the implementation of the
existing laws regarding services for victims, and to reduce the barriers to receiving and providing services. Recommendations include training to acquire more experienced staff, initiatives to raise awareness of available services, job training for survivors to become staff, and several state law changes or provisions.

**Increased Training for Current and Volunteer Staff.** Every agency personnel mentioned mental healthcare as a major need. Many of the interviewees mentioned that the services were available but that care was sometimes controlled because of limited personnel. In addition, the survivors received minimal therapy because all of the nonprofit organizations interviewed did not have a licensed therapist or psychiatrist on staff. Similarly, some of the survivors stated in their survey responses that they needed 24-hour access to a therapist. The survivors also reported needing different kinds of counseling support such as spiritual, self-help, and emotional support. Increased emphasis should be placed on staff training so that more and better services will be available to assist victims. Volunteer staff should be trained to provide low-level, low-cost or no-cost services to survivors when the primary paid therapists are unavailable.

Based on the literature and this research, I recommend the creation of staff training so that staff who currently reside in the safe houses can be trained to assist the survivors when a licensed therapist is not available after hours. Service providers have limited resources and service availability. Therefore, training of staff would help to increase resources and improve service availability, which would be the most effective way to remove the barriers to services for sex trafficking victims (Alejano-Steele, 2013; Aron et al., 2006; Hodge, 2014).
Increased Training for More Staff. In addition to training for current staff, the agencies need more staff to help with basic needs such as shelter, food, job training, life skills, and drug and alcohol assistance. There are several barriers that prevent agencies from providing these services, in keeping with the literature, which states that service providers have limited resources (Alejano-Steele, 2013; Aron et al., 2006; Hodge, 2014). The findings of this research support this notion. According to the agency personnel, they need more trained staff. Based on the responses from survivors, they are receiving services but the services are limited and sometimes they must wait for services. Therefore, increasing resources and service availability through training and employment of more staff would be the most effective way to remove the barriers to services for sex trafficking victims.

Increase Awareness of Available Services. According to survivors and agency staff, lack of awareness about available services is the main barrier to seeking services. Flyers and cards with contact numbers should be placed in areas where prostitution activity is identified (as human trafficking is often disguised as prostitution). They should also be placed near hotels and motels (specifically in low-income neighborhoods). This would help bring awareness to the victims as well as provide a tool for public awareness. Survey questions were incorporated in this study to garner recommendations from agency personnel and survivors. The survivors know the methods that would be the most effective when they seek assistance and services. They know the best avenue for advertisement. Therefore, I will take the recommendation of one of the survivors from her survey response: “Leaving flyers and cards everywhere, coffee shops, grocery stores, community boards, gas stations, etc.” (Survivor F).
**Job Training for Survivors to Become Staff.** I recommend funding for survivors to be trained to become counselors for incoming survivors. Survivors are more understanding of other survivors. They can bridge the gap when survivors have trust issues or when they do not identify as victims. The survey response showed that survivors thought that their peers would be better equipped to help them. Therefore, the opportunity to be trained would benefit both present and future survivors.

There are a lot of girls in the life that want out so I think it would be helpful if there were more girls and women who went through similar situations that were willing to go back and help show people that there is another way. (Survivors G)

In conjunction with the issue where current service providers are overburdened, survivors are unable to obtain jobs due to their criminal record. Per the nonprofit agency personnel, service providers are overburdened because nonprofit agencies provide services to numerous survivors annually. According to the interview responses, two agency personnel who worked for the agency for 3 years stated that they encountered more than 400 survivors. Another agency personnel estimated working with 250 survivors in a single year. One solution would be training for survivors to become staff. Since survivors are unable to find jobs due to their criminal record, this recommendation would help to provide jobs for them. As such, this would address the need while providing a path to self-sufficiency for survivors.

**Policy Implications**

**Protocols for Identifying Sex Trafficking Victims and Responding to Trafficking Cases.** Protocols should be developed to help law enforcement and service organizations (e.g., hospitals) to identify and respond to the needs of sex trafficking victims efficiently. Law enforcement should have protocols that help them to detect a sex trafficking situation by recognizing red flags. They should have a process for investigations and for coordination with
other law enforcement agencies when they make observations that sense sex trafficking. They should be involved in the collaboration with victim service providers and have protocols on how to identify and treat victims of sex trafficking. The protocols should provide an in-depth direction and understanding on how to deal with human trafficking issues. They should discuss how to identify victims (e.g., specific types of tattoos, avoids eye contact, lacks healthcare, etc.), how to be sensitive to the victims, how to report the crime, and how and where to direct the victims for assistance.

**Increased Funding Stipulation.** One primary theme throughout the findings of this research is the need to increase funding to support services for sex trafficking victims. I recommend policy reform mandating provision of services to domestic sex trafficking victims, and allocating federal and state funds to these programs (Polaris Project, 2014). Legislation should include the provision of services to domestic sex trafficking victims, including counseling, housing, educational and vocational training, and medical and legal assistance. This is imperative, as it is the optimal method for ensuring the widespread availability of services, funding for services, high standards of practice, and coordinated delivery (Polaris Project, 2014).

Based on the research findings, services and resources are available for sex trafficking victims in Georgia. However, these services are inadequate and provided in order of priority due to limited funding. I recommend a provision that allocates increased funding to allow agencies to provide needed services and increase therapeutic assistance for survivors. The following sections discuss other recommendations for acquisition of funding through increased fines for prosecuted traffickers and reallocation of funds confiscated from traffickers.

**Allocation of Confiscated Funds Provision.** When traffickers are apprehended and prosecuted, their funds are confiscated. Therefore, Georgia statute should stipulate for the
confiscated funds to be allocated to nonprofit sex trafficking agency providers so that they can provide improved services to the victims. Both federal law and the Georgia statutes do not have provisions for confiscated funds to be used for victims’ services.

**Provision for Allocation of Additional Fines.** Niemi and Aaltonen (2016) stated that sex trafficking is a lucrative crime because of the low investment costs, quick returns, very high profit margins, low risk of arrest, and relatively light penalties. Therefore, sex trafficking has a very high profit-to-cost ratio among comparable criminal activities such as drug trafficking (Yen, 2008). According to Miller (2016) and Yen (2008), sex trafficking has a high economic benefit to traffickers. Statistics from convicted traffickers or pimps reveal that the financial benefit to them exceeds the cost of fines. Therefore, traffickers have an incentive to disregard the minor consequences (e.g., small fines if apprehended; Urban Institute, 2014). Based on the findings of this study, there should be legislation to criminalize any person or entity convicted of aiding, abetting, or conspiracy to support trafficking. Therefore, enacting laws that criminalize both the patron and the trafficker and enforce exorbitant fines would help to decrease the benefit and reduce the incidence of human trafficking. The fines collected should then be allocated to assist with services for victims.

**Expungement Provision.** According to the findings in this research, one significant barrier to providing services is the inability for the survivors to get jobs due to their criminal records. Therefore, similar to the current expungement for child victims, Georgia statutes need to stipulate a special provision to expunge the record of adult victims of sex trafficking so they may secure employment. This expungement provision should allow the availability of a legal proceeding for any prior criminal history (related to their experiences while trafficked) to be sealed so that it is unavailable in the state and federal databases. If expunged, this would prevent
employers from accessing these convictions when they run background checks for employment. The Safe Harbor Act has stipulations to prevent criminalization of minor sex trafficking victims; adult victims should have similar protections since some minor sex trafficking victims become adults before they can escape from their traffickers. In addition, a victim should be viewed as a victim whether they are a minor or an adult.

**Provision that Victims Do Not Have to Assist in Traffickers’ Prosecution to Receive Services.** Victims are usually afraid of their traffickers. From the existing literature, law enforcement and federal service providers require that victims agree to assist in the prosecution of their traffickers to be considered victims and receive assistance. This requirement is understandable because the goal of law enforcement is to help to combat crime. If victims participate in assisting with the prosecution of their traffickers, it helps to reduce the incidence of sex trafficking. Peters (2015) mentioned that a federal victim witness coordinator stated that successful prosecution is not possible without a willing and stable victim. However, victims will not be willing and stable unless they have support and feel that they are protected. Therefore, a victim-centered approach is needed to combat human trafficking.

The negative aspect of this requirement is that victims are usually afraid of their traffickers or they are not mentally and emotionally strong enough to assist in the prosecution of their traffickers. Thus, they do not receive the services they need; therefore, the traffickers are not prosecuted, and the victims continue to be victimized. In some instances, the victims will never be willing to help with the prosecution of the trafficker even after receiving services. However, from a humanitarian perspective, the victim will have received assistance to recover. Many survivors, after receiving assistance to cope with their trauma, will be more willing to participate in the prosecution of their trafficker (Peters, 2015). The Georgia statute should
stipulate that an individual seeking assistance from trafficking should be provided services without the requirement of having to assist in the prosecution of the traffickers.

**Policy on the Role of Law Enforcement.** The existing literature revealed that law enforcement needs to be more equipped to address human trafficking as a crime. Therefore, the state statutes need to stipulate that law enforcement should be involved in proactive victim identification initiatives. Law enforcement should be trained on victim identification as well as on the processes that should be adopted to assist victims in a way that could lead to future prosecution of the traffickers. Law enforcement should adopt standardized protocols in collaboration with other service agencies to identify and assist victims. The protocols should also provide clear direction to law enforcement about their role in combatting sex trafficking. Law enforcement should be trained on how to identify victims of sex trafficking (e.g., they should receive a guide on the identifiable behaviors of victims of sex trafficking such as unwillingness to make eye contact, nervousness when asked about their pimps, possible mention of fear for their lives, etc.). They should be trained on how to treat victims when they are apprehended. This would require training to develop the skills needed when questioning victims of sex trafficking. They also need to be aware of where to direct victims to receive services.

**Policy to Enforce and Support Collaboration.** Based on the survey and interview responses, some sex trafficking survivors received their service needs through interagency collaboration, as well as collaboration with external organizations. Agencies and organizations proving shelter and housing collaborate the most frequently with service providers. Only a few survivors reported that nonprofit legal agencies, FBI, local law enforcement, or prosecutors collaborated with the nonprofit agencies. Therefore, additional collaboration is needed among these groups to provide more comprehensive care for survivors.
Based on the findings from this research, the Georgia statute should include provisions for a dedicated coalition to combat sex trafficking through victims’ service initiatives. Similar to a coalition formed in Colorado, this coalition should be spearheaded by an organized state-based group, possibly referred to as the Georgia Network to End Human Trafficking. The coalition should include public and private agencies, victims’ service agencies, hospitals, law enforcement, and prosecutors.

Once a victim of sex trafficking is identified, prosecutors should be involved in directing victims who are inadvertently placed in jails or prisons to receive services. State agencies such as the Department of Human Services (social services) and federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Homeland Security should play a role in focusing on the prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership aspects required to help end human trafficking (Alejano-Steele, 2013). In addition, these groups should form a network with the service providers. This coalition should encourage public and state/private agencies to collaborate and be part of the resource list for victims of sex trafficking. All entities need to gather a firm understanding of each other’s priorities to prevent power struggles and to facilitate a united coalition to assist the victims. As a network, they should share their protocols and identify their roles to provide a streamlined, clear process void of confusion.

**Future Research**

The findings of the current study provided a description of victims’ services in some nonprofit agencies in Georgia. However, due to the small sample, more research is needed to generalize the results to other populations of adult sex trafficking victims. Future research should:
- Involve larger nonprofit agencies, religious organizations, and state and federal agencies. The involvement of other agencies and organizations would provide feedback from more individuals, which would create a clearer description of the experiences of victims and service providers. An increased number of those involved in a study would help to provide substantial data, which would increase the possibility that the results would be generalizable. In addition, this would allow for a more comprehensive study and identify consistencies or inconsistencies among the experiences of victims and service providers.

- Broaden the scope of research to include different metropolitan areas in Georgia. This would allow for a comparison between the findings of this research to determine if the results are generalizable to all similarly situated sex trafficking victims in Georgia.

- Conduct more streamlined and focused research on the available services by specifically identifying the services most used to determine the areas where more victims’ services are needed. This research would focus solely on services used by sex trafficking victims. Researchers would need to collaborate with nonprofit, state, and federal victim service agencies to identify what services sex trafficking victims use. This would allow for an informed decision for the service providers to know how and where to utilize funding most effectively.

- Explore the needs and barriers to receiving and providing services to sex trafficking survivors on a larger scale, including within federal and state agencies. This would increase the scope to include the experiences of victims who seek help from agencies that are not nonprofit. It would also help to determine if victims
seeking help from state and federal agencies experience similar or different barriers. The findings may help to determine what is generalizable to all victims of sex trafficking seeking assistance from any type of agency.

- Conduct research that considers the changes in survivors’ needs at different stages of recovery. That is, the research would adopt a longitudinal, case study approach to follow victims throughout their recovery process.

Conclusions

The survivors and agency personnel both reported similar survivor needs and barriers to seeking and receiving services. Counseling was a consistent need, however the agency personnel felt it was more important possibly because they were unaware that the survivors were initially looking for safety. Services are available but are sometimes inadequate to support survivors in successfully and effectively integrating into society. Consistency with victims’ needs and services provided occurs, with shelter being the most provided and most needed service. The respondents identified that lack of knowledge of available services and previous bad experiences with service providers (i.e., programs with restrictions) are the major issues preventing victims from seeking assistance. The major issues that hindered the agency from providing services are funding, lack of qualified professionals and professional services, lack of sustainable housing, and lack of jobs willing to employ victims.

The findings from this study are consistent with the findings from the Urban Institute’s (2006) report on sex trafficking victims’ service needs. A safe place to stay is the initial need, after which other primary needs included food, clothing, and medical care. Both the Urban Institute’s research as well as the current study identified the most prevalent subsequent need is mental health counseling. The Urban Institute study as well as the current study also identified
that the criminal history of the survivors was a major barrier to survivors’ ability to live self-sufficiently. The survivors in this study stated that they were unable to find jobs due to their criminal history. Thus, the need exists for an expungement provision as well as funding for training for survivors to become support staff for incoming survivors.

In summary of the findings, being unaware of available services is the primary barrier to survivors seeking assistance. Funding and resources are the main barriers that prevent domestic sex trafficking victims from receiving assistance. The state statutes address these barriers by providing rights for victims to receive assistance, and stipulating interagency coordination and training for victims to receive services. In addition, the nonprofit agencies involved with this research stated that they collaborated with outside agencies to provide services to the survivors, but cited a need for additional collaboration. However, without changes in federal and state statutes to allow additional provisions including funding, the crime of sex trafficking will continue to be a serious human rights issue that is inadequately addressed. According to Mishra (2015), to combat sex trafficking, a convergence approach must be adopted; that is, attention must focus on both an offender-centered approach (legal issues) and a victim-centered approach (human rights issues).

Despite evidence that many women and girls in the United States have been forced into the sex trade by traffickers or pimps, these women continue to be criminalized under solicitation or prostitution statutes, and the disciplines of criminal justice and criminology have yet to explore domestic sex trafficking fully as it intersects with other forms of gendered violence (Peters, 2015). Therefore, a feminist framework is relevant to the study of gendered violence as it accounts for social and political structures that contribute to gender inequity and traditional gender role ideologies associated with violence against women (Peters, 2015). This highlights
the need for understanding and education on domestic sex trafficking. It reveals the implications for laws in terms of whether domestic victims receive a punitive or rehabilitative response from the criminal justice system. Blame attribution, stigmatization, and negative social responses to victims further hinder domestic victims from seeking assistance (Menaker & Franklin, 2015).

Sex trafficking is not only a human rights issue; it is also a public health issue. Victims of sex trafficking are prone to the transmission of communicable diseases, sexually transmitted diseases, and skin infections, and the trauma they experience causes them to be susceptible to mental illness (USAID, n.d.). Therefore, improved assistance is required for sex trafficking victims to empower and support them in ways that facilitate their independence and strengthen their resolve to assist in the prosecution of their traffickers. In turn, current and potential traffickers will become aware that victims can overcome the fears to testify against them. Then, when prosecuted, traffickers will face hefty fines and long prison sentences. Empowering the victims by providing them with adequate services could inevitably lead to a weakened stance for the traffickers and, consequently, the end of sex trafficking.
References


Appendix A: IRB Related Documents
Appendix B: Unsigned Informed Consent For Interview for Agency Staff

UNSIGNED INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEWS FOR AGENCY STAFF

Northeastern University. Department of College of Professional Studies, Doctor of Law and Policy Program

Name of Investigator(s): Principal Investigator, Dr. Neenah Estrella Luna; Student Researcher, Solange Harriott

Title of Project: Overcoming Barriers to Services for Human Trafficking Survivors in Georgia

Request to Participate in Research
I would like to invite you to take part in a research project. The purpose of this research is to help improve services for trafficking survivors in Georgia. This information could help determine how the services help survivors and how services can be improved. Your input could help people develop and provide effective programs to meet the needs of trafficking survivors.

You must be at least 18 years old to be in this research project.

The study will take place at the agency where you work or over the phone. It will take about 45–60 minutes and there will only be one session.

If you decide to take part in this study, I will ask you some questions about your experience with human trafficking survivors.

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in the study. However, your answers may help us to learn more about the met and unmet needs of human trafficking survivors in Georgia.

Your part in this study will be handled in a confidential manner. Only the researchers will know that you participated in this study. Any reports or publications based on this research will use only group data and will not identify you or any individual as being of this project.

The decision to participate in this research project is up to you. You do not have to participate and you can refuse to answer any question. Even if you begin the study, you may withdraw at any time.

You will not be paid for your participation in this study.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Solange Harriott at Harriott.s@husky.neu.edu, the person mainly responsible for the research. You can also contact Dr. N. Estrella-Luna, the Principal Investigator at 617-373-6472 or n.estrellaluna@northeastern.edu.
If you have any questions about your rights in this research, you may contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, 490 Renaissance Park, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115. Tel: 617-373-4588, Email: n.regina@neu.edu. You may call anonymously if you wish.

You may keep this form for yourself.

Thank you.

Solange Harriott
IRB# CPS16-09-04
Appendix C: Unsigned Informed Consent for Survivors

UNSIGNED INFORMED CONSENT FOR SURVIVORS

Northeastern University, Department of College of Professional Studies, Doctor of Law and Policy Program

Name of Investigator(s): Principal Investigator, Dr. Neenah Estrella-Luna; Student Researcher, Solange Harriott

Title of Project: Overcoming Barriers to Services for Survivors in Georgia

Request to Participate in Research

We would like to invite you to participate in a web-based online survey. The survey is part of a research study whose purpose is to help improve services for survivors in Georgia. Without this information, no one can be sure if the services help individuals and how they can be changed for the better. Your input can help people develop and provide effective programs to meet the needs of survivors. This survey should take about 25 minutes to complete.

We are asking you to participate in this study because you have a unique experience of the process of seeking assistance. **You must be at least 18 years old to take this survey.**

The decision to participate in this research project is voluntary. You do not have to participate and you can refuse to answer any question. Even if you begin the web-based online survey, you can stop at any time. Being a part of this study will not affect the services you receive from agencies, your legal status, any criminal case, your T-visa status, or your eligibility for any type of assistance. Your responses will not affect the agency that is helping you or the money it receives to provide services.

The possible risks or discomforts of the study are minimal. You may feel a little uncomfortable answering personal survey questions. A therapist or case manager will be available if needed.

There are no direct benefits to you from participating in this study. However, your responses may help us learn more about the met and unmet needs of survivors in Georgia.

You will not be paid for your participation in this study.

Your part in this study will be anonymous. Any reports or publications based on this research will use only group data and will not identify you or any individual as being affiliated with this project.

If you have any questions regarding electronic privacy, please feel free to contact Mark Nardone, NU’s Director of Information Security via phone at 617-373-7901, or via email at privacy@neu.edu.
If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Solange Harriott at harriott.s@husky.neu.edu, the person mainly responsible for the research. You can also contact Dr. Neenah. Estrella-Luna, the Principal Investigator at 617-373-6472 or n.estrellaluna@northeastern.edu.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, 490 Renaissance Park, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115. Tel: 617-373-4588, Email: n.regina@neu.edu. You may call anonymously if you wish.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Northeastern University Institutional Review Board (#CPS16-09-04).

By clicking on the survey link below you are indicating that you consent to participate in this study. Please print out a copy of this consent form for your records.
http://______________________________

Thank you for your time.

Solange Harriott
Appendix D: Survey for Sex Trafficking Survivors

Research Questions:
1. What services and resources are available for human trafficking victims in Georgia?
2. What services and resources are needed to assist human trafficking survivors?
3. What are the barriers that prevent survivors from receiving or seeking assistance?
4. Are there existing gaps between the Federal and Georgia state statutes in services for adult female domestic sex trafficking victims?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
<th>RQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>When you first got out of the trafficking situation, what was your #1 need?</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Did you get help for this #1 need?</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>When you first got out of the trafficking situation, what was your #2 need?</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Did you get help for this #2 need?</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>When you first got out of the trafficking situation, what was your #3 need?</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Did you get help for this #3 need?</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>How helpful were the services you received?</td>
<td>Helpful, very helpful, a little helpful, not helpful</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Did you need any of the following services? Check all that apply.</td>
<td>• Shelter/housing?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Food?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Money?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Healthcare from a doctor or hospital, including dental care?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Certification of victim status?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Visa papers?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• School?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Job?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Childcare?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Spiritual matters?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Emotional support/stress? (or help with things like feeling lonely,</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sad, scared, worried, fearful, hopeless, self-conscious, troubling</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>dreams/memories, or difficulty sleeping, etc.?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Transportation?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Information and referral for outside services?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Life skills?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-help group with other survivors?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Help related to use of drugs or alcohol?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Protection from the traffickers?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Do you feel that you got the services you needed or only the services you asked for? Please explain.</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Did the agencies offer additional or other services that you were not aware of? Please explain.</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>What need(s) did you not get assistance for?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Shelter/housing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Food?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Money?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Healthcare from a doctor or hospital, including dental care?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Certification of victim status?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Visa papers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- School?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Job?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Childcare?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Spiritual matters?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Emotional support/stress? (or help with things like feeling lonely, sad, scared, worried, fearful, hopeless, self-conscious, troubling dreams/memories, or difficulty sleeping, etc.?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Transportation?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Information and referral for outside services?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Life skills?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Self-help group with other survivors?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Help related to use of drugs or alcohol?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Protection from the traffickers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Other?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>For the needs you had but did not ask for help with, can you tell me why you did not ask for help?</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Was there a service agency that you knew about but chose not to go to?</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>If so, why did you not seek help from that agency?</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>What do you think prevents survivors from seeking or receiving assistance?</td>
<td>Stigma, shame, fear of prison, unaware of available services, programs with restrictions, poor job skills, lack of funding, lack of resources, fear of deportation, fear of violence against self or family, unaware of rights, programs, initiatives unavailable, Other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Did the people from different agencies appear to be working together to help you?</td>
<td>Yes/ No</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Options</td>
<td></td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 17 | Who seemed to be working together in a way that helped you? Check all that apply.                                                           | a. shelter  
b. housing services  
c. victim services  
d. nonprofit legal organization  
e. local law enforcement  
f. FBI  
g. prosecutor  
h. Other | 4 |
| 18 | In what ways were the people/agencies working together? What did they do? How did they work together?                                        | Open                                                                  | 4 |
| 19 | Are there ways that you would suggest that agencies could get the word out better, so people like you can know what services are available? | Open                                                                  | 3, 4 |
| 20 | In what ways can agencies improve services for trafficking survivors?                                                                      | Open                                                                  | 3, 4 |
| 21 | Is there anything else that I forgot to ask that you think is important for me to know?                                                    | Open                                                                  | Open |

Note. RQ = Research Question.

Interview questions adapted from Colorado Project Research (Alejano-Steele, 2013).
## Appendix E: Interview Guide for Agency Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>RQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I’d like to begin the discussion by asking about your background in social services and case management, and the types of clients/organizations you have worked with in the past (and for how long).</td>
<td>Demographics for statistics summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>What types of survivors and agencies do you work with now?</td>
<td>Demographics for statistics summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>How long have you worked at these agencies?</td>
<td>Demographics for statistics summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>What share of your agency’s clients are survivors of trafficking?</td>
<td>Demographics for statistics summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>What share of your clients are survivors of trafficking?</td>
<td>Demographics for statistics summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>How long have you worked with trafficking survivors?</td>
<td>Demographics for statistics summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>How many trafficking survivors have you worked with?</td>
<td>Demographics for statistics summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>How do the needs of trafficking survivors compare to the needs of other survivors you work (have worked) with?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Other clients you work (have worked) with?</td>
<td>Removed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Which needs are the same and which are different? Please explain…</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Are you able to meet all the needs of trafficking survivors or identify other people/agencies who can help meet these needs?</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>What needs are among the most pressing, most common, the most unusual/unexpected, the most challenging?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Are there any needs that are going completely unmet? Why?</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>What is the impact of this?</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Other than clients’ specific needs, are there other aspects of what you do that are different for trafficking survivors compared to other survivors/clients?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>What are some of these differences?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>How do you handle them? Probes: caseload size, approach, …</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>In retrospect, how prepared were you when you first starting helping survivors of trafficking?</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>What types of information, training, or other resources did you need?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Were you able to get them?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>How and from whom?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Did you make any mistakes/missteps when you first started helping survivors of trafficking?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>What were they?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>How did you know they were mistakes/missteps?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>How did you resolve them?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>If survivors are involved in receiving services from (or needing to interface with) multiple agencies in the community, how are interagency communications, coordination, or collaboration handled?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Is there one primary case manager who oversees all of the services? How do trafficking survivors “navigate” the system?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>As far as you now, is there anything that can or should be done to improve the system from the survivor’s point of view?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>In your opinion, what prevents your agency from providing services/resources to human trafficking survivors? Possible responses: Lack of funding, Lack of knowledge about the services human trafficking survivors need, Lack of policy or procedures for addressing the needs of human trafficking survivors, Lack of training about human trafficking survivors, Language barriers, Immigration status of survivors, Don’t know, Other (please specify).</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>In your opinion, what prevents human trafficking survivors from seeking services? Possible responses: Check all that apply: Fear of deportation, Fear of violence against self or family, Shame, No knowledge of available services, No knowledge of rights. Language barriers, are programs and initiatives in place, Don’t know, Other (please specify).</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>From the perspective of the “frontline” what are the greatest needs for improving services for trafficking survivors? Please be as specific as possible. Probes: greater awareness/understanding generally; better policies/protocols for serving survivors; better interagency coordination; more funding for direct services (which ones?).</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>What guidance would you give your counterparts in another community who are just getting started in serving survivors of trafficking?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. RQ = Research Question.*
Appendix F: Codebook

**Descriptive Codes** – Source of data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Data</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Victims/Survivors</td>
<td>Someone who was a victim of human trafficking and is now on the way to recovery receiving services from one of the nonprofit agencies in this research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agency Personnel</td>
<td>Employee providing services to the victims/survivors (counseling, intake worker, training, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thematic Codes** – Understanding the experiences of human trafficking victims and the opinions of those who work to assist them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
<th>Examples of Participants Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear (emotion)</td>
<td>Descriptions of feelings of inability to control what was happening; Concerned about being hurt or killed.</td>
<td>Scared, afraid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectation (causation)</td>
<td>Descriptions of feeling that they were going to get a better life.</td>
<td>Money, freedom, happiness, better life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need (causation)</td>
<td>Descriptions of living conditions that caused someone to seek a better life; Feelings of lack of means to survive.</td>
<td>Poverty, family, alone, abandoned, hurt, hard life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impediments to seeking assistance (in vivo)</td>
<td>Reasons victims do not seek help; Barriers to assimilation into society.</td>
<td>Stigma, shame, fear of prison, unaware of available services, programs with restrictions, poor job skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of assistance programs</td>
<td>Reasons nonprofit organizations are unable to provide assistance to victims.</td>
<td>Funding, resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences of human trafficking</td>
<td>Behavior of victim due to experiences of trafficking.</td>
<td>Drug or alcohol addiction, mental illness, suicidal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional consequences of human trafficking (emotion)</td>
<td>Emotion: Aversion, disgust, hatred, dislike, indifference; Lack of self-confidence or self-worth.</td>
<td>Angry, mad, sad, unworthy, self-hate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity</td>
<td>References to the availability of alternatives, options to get help to live an independent life; Could include mention of any knowledge of help for victims.</td>
<td>Get help, get out, leave, work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequality</td>
<td>Descriptions of being put down due to gender; Any reference to feelings of unequal treatment due to gender.</td>
<td>Roles, expectations, inferiority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix G: Summary of Text Used in Document Review of the Federal and Georgia Statutes

### Statutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statute/ Law</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
<th>Summary of Text Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act (JVTA, S. 178/P.L. 114-22). The JVTA amends the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). (Federal)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Victims’ services and benefits, (Adequate Services). The JVTA clarifies that DOJ grants for trafficking victims’ services could be used to provide housing. It also requires, beginning in FY2017, that the Secretary of HHS make grants for a national communications system to help victims of severe forms of trafficking communicate with service providers. In addition, the law provides additional rights for victims of federal crime. Victims of human trafficking often suffer injuries that can affect them for the rest of their lives. Medical care, psychological treatment, job training, and more may be necessary to assist victims in recovering. Preexisting law allowed a victim of peonage, slavery, or trafficking in persons to bring a civil action against his/her perpetrator and obtain civil remedies. The JVTA requires the Attorney General to collect and tabulate data on mandatory restitution orders (the TVPA requires the court to order restitution—paid by the defendant to the victim—for any crime of peonage, slavery, or trafficking in persons); these data should include demographic information on the perpetrators. In addition, it requires the Attorney General to use the proceeds generated by trafficking-related forfeitures to satisfy unfulfilled restitution orders entered for the benefit of trafficking victims. It also requires DOJ to provide training for certain court officers to assist victims in seeking restitution.” (<a href="http://www.everycrsreport.com">http://www.everycrsreport.com</a>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| The Sex Trafficking Mandatory Restitution Section, 18 U.S.C. 1593, applies to the victims of §1591 offenses, both children and adults, as well as to the victims of other trafficking offenses (Federal) | X       |         | “Whoever knowingly in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce, or within the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States, recruits, entices, harbors, transports, provides, obtains, advertises, maintains, patronizes, or solicits by any means a person; knowing, or in reckless disregard of the fact, that means of force, threats of force, fraud, coercion . . . or any combination of such means will be used to cause the person to engage in a commercial sex act, or that the person has not attained the age of 18 years and will be caused to engage in a commercial sex act,” shall be imprisoned not less than 15 years (not
less than 10 years, if the victim is 14 years of age or older and the offender is less than 18 years of age).”

“Victims are entitled to restitution to the extent of the “full amount” of their losses. Section 1593 mentions two categories of losses included within the term “full amount.” First, it includes the greater of the income from their services as sex workers or of minimum wage and overtime compensation due under federal.”

(https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43597.pdf)

| Federal Safe Harbor Legislation S. 1733/ H.R. 3619 (Federal) | X | “Safe Harbor excludes prostituted children from the definition of “delinquent child” to ensure they can not be held criminally accountable for engaging in prostitution. At the same time, Safe Harbor created a framework for a victim-centered, trauma-informed, culturally appropriate approach to meeting the needs of each individual child. Federal legislation seeks to promote state laws that treat trafficked youth as crime victims, not perpetrators, by:
- Encouraging states to adopt legislation that treats minors who engage in or attempt to engage in a commercial sex act as a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons; discourages charging or prosecution of victims based on engaging or attempting to engage in a commercial sex act; and encourages the diversion of victims to child protection services.
- Increasing the civil remedies equal that victims may seek from their perpetrators to treble damages.
- Requiring data collection, analysis, and reporting relating to issuance and enforcement of mandatory restitution orders.
- Ensuring funding for the National Human Trafficking Hotline.
- Making trafficking victims eligible for Jobs Corps programs.
- Establishing a national law enforcement strategy to combat human trafficking and enhances law enforcement coordination.
- Elevating registration of persons convicted of sex trafficking offenses to Tier III sex offenders, up from Tier II.”

(https://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/federal_safe_harbor_legislation_2)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H.B. 200, 145th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2011)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>“A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Titles 16, 17, and 35 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to crimes and offenses, criminal procedure, and law enforcement, respectively, so as to discourage trafficking of persons for labor or sexual servitude and provide greater protections to persons subject to such crimes; to change provisions relating to compensation from the Georgia Crime Victims Compensation Board; to provide for notification of federal assistance for certain persons under the Crime Victims’ Bill of Rights; to provide for training for law enforcement investigating crimes involving trafficking persons for labor or sexual servitude; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.” (<a href="http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/display/20112012/HB/200">http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/display/20112012/HB/200</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.B. 141, 145th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2013)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>“A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Article 3 of Chapter 5 of Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to kidnapping, false imprisonment, and related offenses, so as to require certain businesses and establishments post a model notice so as to enable persons who are the subject of human trafficking to obtain help and services; to provide for the Department of Public Safety to develop and post the model notice on its website; to provide for penalties; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.” (<a href="http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/display/20132014/HB/141">http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/display/20132014/HB/141</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trafficking of Persons for Labor or Sexual Servitude O.C.G.A. 16-5-46 (2010) 16-5-46.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>“All real and personal property of every kind used or intended for use in the course of, derived from, or realized through a violation of this Code section shall be subject to forfeiture to the state. Forfeiture shall be had by the same procedure set forth in Code Section 16-14-7. Prosecuting attorneys and the Attorney General may commence forfeiture proceedings under this Code section.” (<a href="http://ga.elaws.us/law/section16-5-46">http://ga.elaws.us/law/section16-5-46</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Harbor/Rachel’s Law Act H.B. 244, 145th Gen. Assemb., Reg. Sess. (Ga. 2016)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>“Arresting, prosecuting, and incarcerating victimized children serves to retraumatize children and increases their feelings of low self-esteem. The purpose of this Act is to protect a child from further victimization after he or she is discovered to be a sexually exploited child by ensuring that a child protective response is in place in this.” (<a href="http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/display/20152016/HB/244">http://www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/display/20152016/HB/244</a>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>