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# Sex Trafficking Prevention Training for Higher Education Students

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SEX TRAFFICKING PREVENTION TRAINING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

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This dissertation, by Jessica Nicole Kennedy, has
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# ABSTRACT

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Higher education students are vulnerable to being sex trafficked (Campus Law Enforcement-DHS, n.d.). As a means of prevention, an online training was developed for higher education students. The purpose of this training was to provide awareness and education about sex trafficking and promote safety in terms of relationships, jobs, and the internet. The intention of this study was to research the effectiveness of this training in building an understanding of sex trafficking. A convergent mixed methods study was conducted using pre and post surveys to assess awareness around sex trafficking in higher education. The training was found to be effective in educating participants about "discerning legitimate and safe websites and apps." In addition, participants' questions and concerns about sex trafficking are included for future course development and awareness training. Ideas for future steps to help prevent sex trafficking are also included. This dissertation is available in open access at AURA (https://aura.antioch.edu) and OhioLINK ETD Center (https://etd.ohiolink.edu).

*Keywords*: human trafficking, sex trafficking, higher education, higher education students, safety, training, prevention, awareness

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**CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

Human trafficking is a social justice issue which is increasing in the 21st century. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2020) claimed that traffickers may be from a variety of hierarchical structures which can be divided into two groups: traffickers and organized criminal groups. According to A21 (n.d.), around 40.3 million people have been exploited, producing what is estimated to be $150 billion each year. Vulnerable people are placed into horrible sexual and abusive working conditions, which results in loss of identity, shame, and imprisoned environments (A21, n.d.). Trafficking cases can be hard to distinguish, as many have difficulty in understanding human trafficking, as well as who is considered a victim (Kendis, 2019).

**Statement of the Problem**

According to Polaris (n.d-a, n.d-b), there were 51,667 phone communications, including calls, text messages, webchats, e-message, or internet reports about sex trafficking throughout the United States in 2020. Statistics are simply based on the amount received. This does not include all of the unreported cases. In terms of reporting, many people have difficulty in believing that trafficking exists. Oftentimes individuals do not report a trafficking case that they have just witnessed because they do not think the situation is a significant issue. This means that cases are not often pursued (United Nations, 2021).

Human trafficking is a form of slavery (Polaris, n.d-a.). People are held against their will and used for sexual, labor, and monetary purposes. Sex trafficking of adults can be understood by looking at a structure which includes three components: acts, means, and purpose (United States Department of State, n.d.-b, 2022). All three need to be included in order to form a trafficking offense. Cases involving adolescents are dealt with differently. See Victims of

Trafficking and Protection Act of 2000 for more information (National Center for Homeless

Education, n.d.).

      According to the United States Department of State (n.d.-b), "acts," refers to a dealer who

drafts individuals, keeps and moves a victim to a new location, as well as supplies, holds,

purchases or sells the victim for sexual exploitation purposes. In sex trafficking, traffickers use

force, tricks, and harassment, which is the "means" component. Within nonviolent scams, much

difficulty can occur, such as major torment, cognitive distress, dishonor, aggressive statements

towards individuals, and monetary control. All cases of sex trafficking will include the

engagement of sex for money. This element is called "purpose." Sex trafficking occurs in many

areas, such as personal houses, spas, inns, brothels, as well as through social media (National

Human Trafficking Hotline, n.d.-b; Polaris, n.d.-b; United States Department of State, n.d.-b).

**My Personal Relationship with the Topic**

      I have been motivated by the concept of active listening. I have developed greater

compassion for individuals after hearing stories of people who have experienced the impacts of

exploitation. The importance of listening in storytelling has influenced me to make a difference

within the world through my work with anti-human trafficking. Having learned about survivor

experiences by speaking with girls who have been trafficked, I am compelled to change this form

of modern-day slavery.

      I believe that it is important for those working in the field of anti-trafficking to participate

in active listening, which allows for opportunities of change, where an individual can learn to

support and empathize with others (Cuncic, 2022). Active listening leads to empowerment of the

individual and to the whole person. It is necessary to be open to listening to others, researching

the history of trafficking, as well as note taking. It is imperative to read stories of survivors of

sex trafficking. Participating in the hard conversations and active listening will allow one to

better understand why trafficking is currently modern-day slavery. If people value something important to them, then they will be patient in understanding all aspects of the subject.

There are non-profit organizations already involved in anti-trafficking efforts, but there is room and need for so much more. I am continually learning new ways in which I can play a part in creating more resources to assist those who are vulnerable to being trafficked. I believe that I can approach anti-trafficking efforts through informative and preventative measures. Representation and education that create a societal awareness and dialogue can influence and engage everyday citizens in anti-trafficking efforts. I believe in my ability to contribute to an intentional conversation with broader reach. Therefore, I want to develop curriculum to share the stories of sex trafficking so that others can develop active listening and change their awareness and perceptions around sex trafficking.

## Research Question

Is the Sex Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Training for higher education students effective in building their awareness around sex trafficking?

## Purpose Statement

Higher education students are a population who without knowledge and awareness are vulnerable to sex trafficking (Blue Campaign, n.d.-a). Because of this I developed a training for higher education students that provides educational awareness and prevention of sex trafficking. The training also promotes safety in terms of relationships, jobs, and the internet. In addition, I created this training because there are no trainings directed specifically towards higher education students. The goal is to fill the gap in the literature and provide resources that pertain to preventing sex trafficking. The purpose of this study is to research the effectiveness of this training in building awareness in higher education students about sex trafficking.

**Potential Significance of the Study**

There is a gap in educational material for higher education students on sex trafficking awareness and prevention. It is my hope to strengthen higher education students' understanding of trafficking. Higher education programs are not using this educational prevention and awareness piece. Students need to be provided with resources to train and educate themselves. Those calling for a change in terms of looking at the demands, where an educational understanding and trainings can be put into place, which include both sex trafficking and labor trafficking (U.S. Department of State, 2021). I created a training on Udemy, which is a solution to help fill this gap. I was unable to find other trainings specifically geared towards vulnerable higher education students. Awareness and prevention trainings that I found were geared towards elementary or high school students. Therefore, I wanted to see how effective the training I created was.

**Limitations and Delimitations**

One of my delimitations was that I was only able to advertise the training through Udemy and by sending my flyers to universities via email.

I used the survey method and an online format of the training due to COVID-19. Surveys are beneficial because they allow for a larger data set in terms of students at different colleges (Wolf, 2016). *The SAGE Handbook of Survey Methodology* by Wolf (2016) revealed that those participating in surveys have personal freedoms in choosing to not provide a response, as well as to be given a review on the outcome of the answers provided by the respondent. When one participates in a survey, it must be accepted by proposing significant questions (Wolf, 2016). This means that surveys have risks which the participants must consider prior to taking the surveys. Potential risks are weighed out by the researcher prior to handing out the surveys. The

researcher believes that the benefits are greater than the risks. Privacy was ensured, especially regarding the survey that was carried out in this study.

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**Research Assumptions**

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Beginning this research, I had three primary assumptions:

1. Participants will be interested in this topic and want to take the training.

2. Students might become more informed on sex trafficking prevention through storytelling within my Udemy training.

3. Storytelling is an effective way of increasing awareness.

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**Definitions of Key Terms**

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*Human Trafficking*: Within human trafficking lies both commercial and labor trafficking. Human trafficking is being fought by the Department of State, which is the top source in guiding the United States in worldwide partnerships, where they assist with making changes through the United States government (U.S. Department of State, n.d.-b, 2022).

*Perpetrator*: A perpetrator is a trafficker who preys on individuals. They include citizens, relational partners, those one may associate with in the workplace, among family, or friends, or even an unknown person (Office for Victims of Crime, n.d.).

*Pimp*:  A pimp is often identified as a single person who uses individuals for the purpose of selling commercial sex (National Human Trafficking Hotline, n.d.-c). A Madam is a term used to identify a female pimp.

*Prostitute*: Prostitutes provide sexual acts and services for monetary gain. This can be seen as an individual on the street selling services. Prostitution can be a form of sex trafficking, as it is difficult to distinguish between one being at the location selling sexual services under their own will (Allen, 2021).

*Sex Buying*: A buyer is an individual looking to purchase sex for their own personal pleasure. According to (James, 2021), the average American buyers often are the age of 49 years, who are already in a married relationship. They are often educated, Caucasian males, who have a graduate degree. The ages of the average buyers vary from ages 18–80 years. Their economic status, gender, and race are all different (James, 2021).

*Sex Labor*:  Sex labor is another term for prostitution. It is when an individual chooses to sell themselves for monetary gain. Sex labor can involve one or many transactions with the same individual (ProCon.org, 2008).

*Sex Selling*: Traffickers sell and exploit their victims for the purpose of monetary gain. Sex selling can be used for the purpose of leading to large sums of money (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, n.d.-b).

*Sex Trafficking*: Sex trafficking is when an individual uses a person for the purposes of commercial sex (Shared Hope International, n.d.). This can include various locations and individuals can be independently trafficked, as well as in groups of people.

*Trafficker*: A trafficker is a person who purposefully uses an individual to exploit for sexual and monetary purposes. Many traffickers use their monetary status as a means to take authority over the victims. It is a form of privilege and oppression. Conversely, some traffickers do not have a lot of money and have the same financial status as their victims (Polaris, n.d.-d).

**Sex Trafficking Versus Prostitution**

Often it can be difficult to discern the difference between sex trafficking and prostitution. While sex trafficking is understood to be implemented against a person's will, prostitution is the selling of sexual favors for monetary purposes; operating from the presumed position of choice and self-representation. Nonetheless, prostitution is often seen as an abuse of natural rights, where at-risk females are often open to crisis and assault (Barry, 1995). Because

of the dangers inherent in prostitution, it can quickly change to an unvoluntary dynamic where prostitutes seek protection from entities that will exploit them and pressure them into situations against their will. This creates a gray area between voluntary prostitution and coerced sex trafficking. The power of exploitation lies in the confusion and manipulation of a person's will. Kreuser (2017) pointed out that the United States government as well as the state of California have laws against sex trafficking and prostitution. The Trafficking Persons Protected Act (TPPA) was created by the federal government as well as the United States Code Annotated, U.S.C.A. 2421 as it pertains to the transport across state lines of a person who provides sex for pay. In the California's Penal Code Section 236.1, sex trafficking is described and made illegal. Prostitution is made unlawful in California under Penal Code 647. Thereby, the Penal Codes set in California both pertain to laws that define the legalities of prostitution and sex trafficking (Kreuser, 2017).

**The Key Players in Sex Trafficking**

Sex Trafficking occurs around the world. There are several people involved in the many aspects of the sex trade. The key players include traffickers, pimps, victims of trafficking, prostitutes, perpetrators, abusers, buyers, and outsiders.

A trafficker may also be known as a pimp, madam, or a brothel owner. They partake in the global sex trade, where they recruit and trade their victims amongst traffickers (Chin & Finckenauer, 2012). A trafficker can be any age, despite the individual's identity (Roe-Sepowitz et al., n.d..). One will normally see the term, trafficking, as being utilized in sex trade work. Traffickers take part in coercion of victims in their local regions, the movement of individuals over federal boundaries, and overseeing the victims in their sex work, which includes the assistance and administration of such individuals. It is a transgression of law when underage persons have been purchased for sex. This can occur due to constraint, illegal transactions, or intolerable acts (U.S. Department of State, 2021).

Traffickers, also known as abusers, use a variety of strategies to convince vulnerable individuals, which can include stressful demands and threats in order to take authority and take advantage of the individual for their personal gain (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, n.d.). Victims of trafficking are individuals who have been lied to and pushed into abusive situations with a harmful individual. Victims are vulnerable individuals who fall prey to various traps of trafficking. Deliberately misleading jobs and relationships, including one's own family, can lead to trafficking cases (A21, n.d.). Statistically, "While boys and men are victims as well, most individuals identified as trafficked for both labor and commercial sex are women and girls. For every 10 victims detected globally, five are adult women and two are girls" (Novotney, 2023). While my Udemy training provides a general overview of sex trafficking prevention, this dissertation will be focusing primarily on trafficking women and girls.

A buyer can be any individual looking to satisfy their own needs (Demand Abolition, 2018). They go to different locations and utilize a variety of avenues to buy sex. Buyers often have the mindset that prostitutes are intentionally deciding for themselves to sell sexual services as a career (Demand Abolition, 2018). This often leads to the continuation of buyers thinking that they have consent for their purchase. Prostitutes sell themselves for sexual purposes. However, prostitution can mask sex trafficking. This means that an individual can be trafficked and placed on the street. The buyer therefore thinks they are purchasing sex from an individual who is willingly selling themselves.

**CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW**

Sex trafficking can be defined as when an individual is forced to partake in prostitution due to constraint, intimidation, trickery, oppression, as well as an adolescent forced to partake in such acts (U.S. Department of State, 2021). Traffickers participate in enlisting, hiding, transferring, performing, securing, promoting, holding, condescending, or selling an individual, which allows for prosecution on the federal level. The victim may have agreed to participate in the act, but the law still holds true (U.S. Department of State, 2021).

**Five Areas of the Sex Trade**

It is important to recognize the areas of the sex trade, in order to better understand the perspectives of all participants. There are five areas to the sex trade: (a) human trafficking, (b) sex selling, (c) sex buying, (d) pimping/pandering/procuring, and (e) brothel owning (Bender, 2020).

**Human Trafficking**

Human trafficking is a situation in which vulnerable people are placed into horrible sexual and working abuse, which results in loss of identity, shame, and imprisoned environments (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2019). It is a form of slavery. People are held against their will and used for three primary purposes: sex, labor, and monetary gain (U.S. Department of State, n.d.-b, 2022). Efforts have been made throughout the United States to stop human trafficking. The U.S. Department of State (n.d.-b) is a central force in America's participation in the fight against trafficking within the United States, as well as worldwide. National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month began in January of 2010 by President Obama (U.S. Department of State, n.d.-c). This provides sex trafficking awareness, worldwide fads and disagreements, as well as America's administrative prevention of trafficking efforts.

According to the UNODC (2020a), trafficking cases occur for different reasons with each case looking not like the next. Men were more likely to be used for labor purposes whereas the women had been forced to partake in sex trafficking. In general, women are more likely to be trafficked than men. The Office on Violence Against Women was created to take a national stand with federal workers in order to lessen crime with women (United Nations, 2021). Most people associate women with being trafficking victims.

According to UNODC (2021a), there has been more research on female trafficking victims than male. The UNODC noted that this may be due to a variety of reasons that include (a) more female victims are recognized, (b) pimps are more likely to coerce and traffic females, (c) the public could be uncomfortable with same sex (in this case male) relationships, (d) the public's potential notion that men are not trafficked, and (e) not typically looking at a male for signs of abuse. The numbers of males trafficked are likely very underrated because males may not report their victimization (UNODC, 2021a). Women, however, are more likely to be victims of trafficking crimes, where 90% are seen to become trafficked for the purpose of exploitation (Bahous, 2022). For some cultures in the world, females are often sought out for marriage, which is a form of trafficking (Zhao, 2003).

Zhao (2003) pointed out that China has seen an increase in human trafficking cases due to their family values, ideas permitting sex intolerance, the likelihood of women being targeted due to a high level of at-risk individuals, and the change in economic and social factors. There may be occasions when these cultural factors spill over into the Chinese immigrant population in the United States. Cultural factors from other immigrant races, ethnicities, and religious groups in the United States may also result in the use of trafficked women and young girls as wives (Grossbard & Vernon, 2020; UNODC, 2021a).

If females are to be safe from being trafficked there must be a fight against their captivity, the abuse of familial power, as well as the acceptance of male superiority and control. This can be illustrated through arranged marriages within the United States. There have been recent changes within the United States in terms of marriage laws. Every state in the United States enforces differences in the ruling of child marriage laws. Several states have a lower age of marriage. For example, the State of Alaska will consider honoring marriages with teenagers who are as young as 14. A judge will be particularly lenient about approving this if a girl is pregnant. Legislation introduced in 2022 seeks to raise this age. A similar bill was also introduced in 2017 to raise the age in New York from 14.

Underage child marriage victims have much difficulty in understanding their rights as well as going to court, especially if their family or spouse on whom they are dependent is pressuring or influencing them. There needs to be better support for victims of child marriage, as well as creating a system where the marriage age is harmonized between all states (United Nations Population Fund & United Nations Children's Fund, 2020).

These laws reveal that judges are more lenient about marrying younger people if they are pregnant because otherwise, they are considered by some as a burden on society. In a 1998 article addressing the implementation of welfare reform, a study claimed that "the growth of single parent families can account for virtually all of the increase in child poverty since 1970" (Sawhill, 1998, para. 6). If there is a man that is going to marry a pregnant teen, then that can be considered preferable to being dependent on the welfare system and other public services.

A trafficker may impregnate a girl so he could hopefully marry and control her. Young pregnant girls are vulnerable for so many reasons. As it stands,

> Young mothers are more likely than others to report a number of adverse social and economic challenges. Adolescent childbearing is a critical contributor to high-school dropout among girls and leads to high rates of poverty, stigma, and social isolation. Among adolescent mothers in the U.S., only about half receive a high school diploma by age 22, compared to 90% of girls who do not give birth during adolescence. (Reed et al., 2022, p. 102)

The United States has the capacity to perpetuate these trafficking situations with its girls by leaving these laws unchanged.

Arranged marriages are not just a problem in the United States. China has also had a history of family pressure and influence on girls. However, attempts to rectify this injustice in Chinese culture has adopted some principles towards empowering its vulnerable citizens. These include (a) lifting the courage of the female, (b) changing and reshaping the laws regarding female matters, (c) changing the economy in which females are protected from being trafficked, (d) empowering females in their education, (e) monitoring the pictures set forth by porn, and (f) creating new avenues where both males and females can associate with the lack of male superiority or control (Zhao, 2003). Society and structural norms play a large role in influencing people in their understanding (or lack thereof), of the sex trade. The United States could well serve girls by adopting some of these principles and perspectives in regions where laws still need to be changed.

Human trafficking exploits those who are most vulnerable to gain control, power, and dominance over them. Women are often coerced into prostitution with the promise of monetary gain or enter through a trusting relationship. Human trafficking is inhumane and can compromise an individual's dignity. When one makes the choice to steal another's dignity, it is a disfiguration of humanity (Freire, 2017).

**Selling**

Chin and Finckenauer (2012) mentioned that a trafficker is one who solicits and transfers people, as well as one who identifies as a pimp, and/or runs a business incorporating sexual favors for monetary gain. Sex selling also includes individuals who use sex work in global transactions (Chin & Finckenauer, 2012). Thus, the word "trafficker" is normally used in the sex trafficking literature to refer to those who participate in soliciting women locally and nationally, as well as the participation and control of females in their sex work avenues. Traffickers have many ways that lure their victims into thinking they are in a safe environment. They will deceive the victims as well as play mind games with them to build trust (Chin & Finckenauer, 2012).

Traffickers use abuse, especially in the form of words, as a means of stripping humanity from a victim (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2020). The role of the trafficker is to mask and hide the abuse from the general public. Traffickers will try to build a relationship with their victims and administer a grooming process (Polaris, 2021). Grooming refers to the manipulation of victims through expectation, coercion, and a system of punishment and reward for the purpose of instilling certain habits, traits, and mannerisms. The goal of the trafficker is to gain control and change the victim's perspective on abuse. Oftentimes, the trafficker wants the victim to feel as though they are stuck, even positioning them in such a way that they choose to stay, or even come back if they escape (National Human Trafficking Hotline, n.d-a.; Reid et al., 2013). The idea of feeling stuck comes from the premise that those in bondage emotionally connect with their trafficker (United States Department of State, 2020). This psychological phenomenon has also been documented in Stockholm Syndrome, a proposed psychological condition defining the relationship between kidnappers and their victims inspired by 1973 hostage events in Stockholm, Sweden (Hunt, 2019). Captives become dependent on their trafficker when deception comes into

play, and they are unable to associate themselves as separate individuals. This connection prevents victims from realizing that they are being trafficked, as their assumptions regarding themselves and their human dignity is limited, due to the connection made with their trafficker (Freire, 2017).

Selling may take place over social media or in person (Polaris, n.d.-b; UNODC, 2021b). Traffickers may also use their victims to participate in the trafficking of others. Victims are often used to contact future victims (Child Sex Trafficking Round Table, 2019). This can appear as an individual befriending another. An example of this can be seen in the recent case of Epstein-Maxwell. Rosenbaum et al. (2021) which remarked that Epstein and Maxwell paid underage schoolgirls to convince their friends to go to Epstein's house where they were pressured into sexual relationships with Epstein and his friends, often members of the social elite and intimidating to incriminate.

**Buying**

Buying is when people pay for services, whether it is for sex and/or labor. Buyers use strategies in order to lure victims, which includes constraint, trickery, and oppression (Department of Homeland Security, n.d.). Buyers vary in terms of their purchase history. According to Demand Abolition (2018), individuals, most often beginning as young adults, who make sex purchases on a regular basis are known as "high-frequency" buyers, which makes up for nearly 75% of the market purchases. Twenty-five percent of active buyers make purchases each week or on a monthly basis. They are known for buying at a rate that takes up much of the illegal sex trade. Connections are often made by buyers through online communities (Demand Abolition, 2018).

Society has made purchasing sex normal, where it is assumed that prostitutes willingly enter the sex trade (Demand Abolition, 2018). For example, purchasing sex is viewed as a form of damaging behavior, based on thoughts and perspectives on the purchase of sex, societal views on sexuality, transformative paths of life, the idea that one may get imprisoned or taken into custody, as well as personal elements like self-discipline. The purchasing of sex can be a societal sensation, which gives concerned people the ability to notice and incorporate plans of action to take on the issues head on (Demand Abolition, 2018).

**Pimping/Pandering/Procuring**

Pimps, panderers, and procurers are also known as "facilitators" (Andriano, 2015, p. 2). They foster prostitution and sex labor. They are responsible for engaging with the sex workers, creating an atmosphere of abuse and trauma. Marcus et al. (2014) noted that traffickers use tricks to hide the truth from their victims and the general public. Thereby, this allows traffickers the opportunity to continue brainwashing and masking the truth behind prostitution and sex labor. According to Marcus et al. (2014), there need to be laws set in place where pimps would be arrested more often.

Penal Code 266i declares that individuals "guilty of pandering," a felony, "shall be punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for three, four, or six years" (California Legislative Information, 2011, p. 2). The disciplinary emphasis and reform efforts need to focus on the perpetrators of exploitation rather than prioritizing the punishment of victims engaging in prostitution. Women engaged in the act of prostitution can be put in jail and fined, which can have devastating consequences, especially if they are in vulnerable and dependent situations. Penal Code 647(b) PC demands up to 6 months imprisonment and a fine for engaging in prostitution (California Legislative Information, n.d.). This can cause greater

emotional and psychological damage: a feeling of dependency and a greater sense of being unable to control their own environment which perpetuates the themes already inherent in the lives of sex trafficking victims.

**Brothel Owning**

Brothel owning involves people who own a place for sex labor purposes. There are legal brothels which are a hot spot for trafficking victims (National Human Trafficking Hotline, n.d.-b). Traffickers can easily get away by sending their victims to brothels. These victims are often even more abused and punished. Typically, brothels are located in Red Light districts, vicinities within a town or city that are dedicated to sex-oriented businesses. Travelers who make their way through these districts can take pictures of prostitutes displayed in windows of the buildings where they are soliciting for sex work. Since the late 20th century, 80% of the women found in brothels are from Eastern Europe. Policy makers have noticed this, recognizing sex trafficking at a higher level within those regions (Nugent, 2019).

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**Sex Trafficking Through the Internet**

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Traffickers can use the internet to approach victims who can be lured through social media and other online platforms. Traffickers not only use technology for baiting, but they also use technology in a variety of ways to keep their victims trapped (Polaris, n.d.-b; UNODC, 2021a, 2021b). The Internet has played a key role in allowing perpetrators to not only lure vulnerable people but also to network with other traffickers, grow their enterprise, and connect with clients (Polaris, n.d.-b). However, online resources have been instrumental in efforts to prevent sex trafficking through education and recovery. There is an urgent need for legislation to regulate the misuse of online platforms.

New technologies have resulted in cyberspace tools that are being used for human trafficking (California Cybersecurity Institute, n.d.; UNODC, 2021b). The UNODC (2021a)

published a report, "Global Report on Trafficking in Persons," that revealed that traffickers

utilized technology throughout their trafficking cases. Online and social media platforms have

been utilized by predators to easily access vulnerable individuals, especially children and women

(G. Smith et al., 2021; UNODC, 2021a). Social media is playing an integral part in sex

trafficking. Traffickers use platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Pages, Messenger, and

WhatsApp, as a gateway to reach their victims so that they can use the information for

commercial sex purposes.

Traffickers use the internet to control their victims at every level. For example,

perpetrators will encourage victims to allow them access to their social media, phones, and

accounts (Polaris, 2022b). Traffickers then assume the victims' identity and exploit them.

Traffickers can also use online platforms to sell commercial sex (United States Government

Accountability Office, 2021). Traffickers use technology to cover up their schemes and prevent

law enforcement from discovering their efforts (Polaris, n.d.-b; UNODC, 2021a, 2021b).

Traffickers have not only used technology to gain access to victims, they utilize cyber tools to

connect with other traffickers (Polaris, n.d.-b).

Unfortunately, these crimes are perpetuated through social media corporations who fail to

regulate their services.

> Online marketing and communication platforms can enable sex trafficking—the
> commercial sexual exploitation of adults through force, fraud or coercion, or children
> under the age of 18 (with or without force, fraud, or coercion)—by making it easier for
> traffickers to exploit victims and connect with buyers. (GAO, 2021, p. 2)

For example, Facebook is a common platform with which traffickers gain access to victims.

Unfortunately, Facebook turns a blind eye which allows for victims to be drafted, promoted, and

oppressed (Duffy, 2021; G. Smith et al., 2021). Between the hands-off approach of social media

platforms and the ever-evolving technology of the Internet, traffickers are presented with multiple unchecked opportunities to prey upon victims.

## Recruitment Strategies: Victim Baiting

As social media has become widespread, at-risk individuals are more easily targeted, baited, and trapped (Borrelli & Caltagirone, 2020). Online traffickers specifically look for those who can be easily persuaded (Namey et al., 2022). Money can be used for bait to lure people into trafficking traps. People who are in difficult financial situations are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and prostitution in exchange for the promise of financial stability (Namey et al., 2022). Some examples of vulnerable individuals include children, students, mothers, runaways, immigrants, and members of marginalized communities.

Traffickers have different recruitment strategies. There are two types of online manipulation that perpetrators employ: hunting and fishing (UNODC, 2021a). Hunting strategies occur when traffickers contact victims on the Internet. Fishing strategies occur when traffickers lure victims to contact them via their advertisements (UNODC, 2021a).

Hunting can look like traffickers reaching out via social media, utilizing information that has been placed by individuals on the Internet, and targeting vulnerable people (Polaris, n.d.-b). Many men and women are promised jobs, especially people from different countries hoping to move to better circumstances (Tirman, 2013). For example, a recent case revealed that a trafficker baited his victims by stating that he would help them to expand their modeling business (United States Attorney's Office, 2021). Predators may use web cams or other equipment to converse with their potential victims, establishing trust and familiarity (UNODC, 2021a). It is not unusual for a trafficker to coerce victims into sexual relationships. Even having a one-night stand can result in coercion and intimidation, and victims can become entrapped and trafficked.

Fishing strategies involve traffickers attempting to lure their victims. Traffickers will pretend to be desiring a relationship or posting a job to deceive their victims into prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation (Polaris, 2021). For example, a potential victim can view the amount of money that can be made through the predators' false services, which are listed on social media platforms. Traffickers then persuade vulnerable individuals to connect with them for business purposes which can result in entrapment (U.S. Department of Justice, n.d.). The perpetrator will then utilize technology to sell their victims for profit (Polaris, n.d.-b; UNODC, 2021a, 2021b).

Trafficker entrapment often takes on the manipulative guise of a relationship. Relationships are often a gateway for traffickers to gain access to victims (Nath, 2021). Traffickers can groom vulnerable individuals while gaining their trust (Polaris, 2021). The process of establishing relationships involves traffickers representing themselves as someone that victims can believe such as a potential romantic partner or the facilitator of a job opportunity. This enables traffickers to prey upon their victims' vulnerability with less resistance (Nath, 2021). Ultimately, traffickers take and retain control through money (Polaris, 2021). They also maintain control through intimidation, manipulation, and coercion.

Traffickers manipulate and control their victims in order to persuade them into circumstances that ultimately result in slavery. A vulnerable person may not immediately recognize the signifiers of abuse or trauma with a partner (Polaris, 2021). The warning signs are masked and manipulated by perpetrators, who may originally have been seen as safe individuals. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC; n.d.), 66% of victims have been trafficked by someone that they know, including relatives, partners, a friend, or an

acquaintance. Today, technology is a primary recruitment source for these relationships (UNODC, 2021a).

Traffickers use the Internet through a variety of channels in order to communicate with other traffickers and buyers (Duffy, 2021). The Internet offers an unregulated and ever-developing network for exploiting human beings. A 2020 report states that "traffickers are increasingly using social media to connect with each other and share information, including about potential victims and law enforcement activities" (United States Government Accountability Office, 2021, p. 1). The National Human Trafficking Hotline (n.d.) states that, "human trafficking is facilitated by the ease of communication" of social media "which allows traffickers to recruit, advertise, and sell their victims." Not only does the Internet connect traffickers for the purposes of sales, it establishes a networking system to educate and inform. "Online forums and social media are now commonly used by traffickers to exchange tips on how to exploit women and children for sex and forced labour" (BBC, 2015).

It is crucial to recognize how social media affects all sides of trafficking including providing help to victims. The use of platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram also provide victim-need assistance and access to police hoping to collaborate with other stakeholders and partnerships (Polaris, n.d.-b). The connection between the two sides of these platforms reveals the need to work on ceasing the operations on the trafficking end and acquiring more on the helping end (Polaris, n.d.-b).

Cyber security is used as a way of fighting human trafficking (California Cybersecurity Institute, n.d.). For example, Cal Poly currently has a Trafficking Investigations Hub (California Cybersecurity Institute, n.d.). This hub includes an operation based on utilizing technology and intellectual development to eliminate human trafficking. Relationships are created in which the

public and private sectors collaborate to come up with ideas to eradicate human trafficking. They use scholars to bring forth ideas and conduct studies. This collaboration brings about teamwork and research (Cal Poly, 2022).

Cal Poly (California Cybersecurity Institute, n.d.; Parch, n.d.) teams created an app as a solution for exposing sex trafficking and hopefully eliminating this social justice issue. An online forensics app was formed to provide local California police with assistance in criminal investigations. The app was mostly made by students (Borrelli & Caltagirone, n.d.). According to Parch (n.d.), the California State University system is working to provide the app for free to police nationwide. This effort reveals the power of stakeholders uniting, where educators are creating a tool that law enforcement can also use for protection and prevention purposes (Parch, n.d.). Building stakeholder relationships is important, as agencies and organizations can work together in collaboration.

Legislators must take a stance and address this issue or traffickers will keep using the variety of technological business entities in order to recognize and coerce youth and adolescents or other vulnerable individuals (National Center on Sexual Exploitation, 2021; G. Smith et al., 2021). Therefore, it is necessary for legal action to take place. According to Dr. Eleanor Gaetan (as cited in National Center on Sexual Exploitation, 2021), Haugen, a whistleblower from Facebook, revealed newfound studies and reported that senators have already been made known about the necessity for children to be better safeguarded through online platforms (National Center on Sexual Exploitation, 2021).

Congress is currently talking about regulating social media. However, in 2022, efforts to safeguard children from social media failed to pass. Senator Amy Klobuchar states that many efforts to regulate social media corporations have strong bipartisan support but can "fall apart

within twenty-four hours" when confronted with tech lobbyists. "We are lagging behind,"
Klobuchar said. "It is time, for 2023, let it be our resolution, that we finally pass one of these
bills" (Capoot, 2023, para. 12).

On an individual level, people can protect themselves and their loved ones from sex
trafficking by understanding the warnings signs and educating themselves on how social media
and the Internet contribute to this crime. Individuals can take courses on sex trafficking
prevention. Prevention courses and education are imperative to understanding warning signs.
One course example can be the Udemy training that I created titled, "Sex Trafficking Awareness
and Prevention."

It is important to keep an eye out for red flags and signs of relationships that can lead to
trafficking. There are resources, such as National Center on Safe Supportive Learning
Environments, which provides information on risk factors for those most likely to become a
victim of sex trafficking. It is crucial to note that traffickers may look at anyone as a target.
However, an individual who has been a past runaway, lacks agency, or comes from a difficult
homelife is at a significantly higher risk for being targeted as a vulnerable individual (U.S.
Department of State, n.d.-c). Those who have experienced abuse in the past have a higher chance
of being involved with exploitation (Kaestle, 2012; Martin et al., 2010; Reid & Piquero, 2014).

There are ways that technology can assist people on an individual level when confronting
the challenges of sex trafficking. The implementation of cyberspace tools can impact
anti-trafficking efforts, and industries can work together to assist victims and survivors
(UNODC, 2021b; U.S. Department of State, 2021). For example, technology can be used to
support those leaving exploitative situations by providing a means of reaching out to family,
services, and assistance. This is important for navigating the healing process (Anthony, 2018).

Technology allows people access to local and regional resources active in sex trafficking prevention and solutions. For example, in Santa Barbara County, Interfaith Collaborative Against Human Trafficking, provides action strategies to the local community (Interfaith Collaborative Against Human Trafficking, 2019). Individuals emerging from these abusive situations need empathy and support. Online resources can help connect them to these much-needed resources.

The Internet and social media can be misused for the purpose of baiting, trapping, and exploiting vulnerable people. The Internet allows traffickers access not only to victims but also to clients and other trafficking networks. However, the Internet does provide resources, support, and educational tools for those impacted by trafficking. It also allows access for law enforcement and other involved agencies. Social media corporations and online platforms need to be regulated, and the United States government needs to get involved.

## Causes of Sex Trafficking

The existence of sex trafficking is due to many different reasons, including monetary gain, power and control, cultural elements, and the demand for sex.

### Monetary Gain

Money plays a large factor in the realm of human trafficking. According to International Labor Organization (2014), in 2012 the worldwide trafficking industry brought in about $150 billion and exacted a high price from the victims for what they lost (Farrell & Bright et al., 2020; UNOCD, n.d.-b, 2011). Perpetrators often use trafficking as a source of income. There is a high demand for sexual acts, which make buyers willing to pay higher prices (International Labor Organization, 2014). Forced sexual exploitation makes the most profit, and it does not cost traffickers a large sum to traffic their victims (International Labor Organization, 2014).

**Power and Control**

Traffickers thrive on gaining positions of power, authority, control, and manipulation. According to Polaris (n.d.-c, n.d.-e), there are many means in which one can traffic an individual. Traffickers have many ways that lure their victims into thinking they are in a safe environment. They will deceive the victims as well as play mind games to build trust. Traffickers use power and control through many different avenues that include coercion and threats, intimidation, emotional abuse, isolation, denying, blaming, minimizing, sexual abuse, physical abuse, using privilege, and economic abuse (Polaris, n.d.-c, n.d.-e; U.S. Department of State, n.d.-a). Traffickers use the same types of tactics with both sex and labor trafficking. It ultimately comes down to power and control (Polaris, n.d.-c, n.d.-e, 2021; U.S. Department of State, n.d.-a).

**Cultural Element**

In every culture, there is a certain type of trafficking that is more prevalent (Bryant-Davis & Tummala-Narra, 2017). For example, Chung (2009) wrote that there were some children from Asia who felt the need to assist their families and were thereby trafficked. Although they did not care for the task set before them, they endured hardship and abuse for the sake of respect for their parents, where money would alleviate their families of financial hardship. Unfortunately, girls often will wait to return home until they have received a good amount of money in order to avoid humiliation and lack of respect for not providing a proper amount of money for their family (Chung, 2009). Certain cultural expectations allow individuals to be placed in positions of oppression. Ethnic brutality can be seen through racism and ethnic bias. This can allow opportunities for at-risk individuals to become more likely to be trafficked (Bryant-Davis & Tummala-Narra, 2017).

**The Demand for Sex**

There is a strong demand for sex, which causes sex trafficking to flourish (Polaris, n.d.-a, n.d.-c; UNODC, 2021a; U.S. Department of State, n.d.-a). The demand is greater than the supply. Sex traffickers put forth the supply (Aronowitz & Koning, 2014). Pimps and those in charge of prostitution rings use various methods of employment, means of conveyance, harboring, monetary deals, as well acts of force, fraud, and coercion as ways to traffic their victims (National Human Trafficking Hotline, n.d.-c). Sex traffickers are often known as pimps, despite the age of the victim (Human Trafficking Hotline, n.d.-c).

If people had a greater understanding of these networks, perpetrators, and clients the student population would be less vulnerable to trafficking. The demand for sexual services endangers vulnerable populations (L. Smith & Vardaman, 2010) who are unaware of such threats and injustice. For example, society contains many situations that affect at-risk individuals. Situations which influence the global trauma of trafficking including destitution, political unrest, and the continual presence of underrepresented groups along with recurring need for inexpensive labor and commercial sex (Blue Campaign, n.d.-c). Therefore, we need to educate people, so they are not ignorant to the lurers or the tricks of sex traffickers.

## Existence of Supply

Sex trafficking exists due to the supply (A21, n.d.). The supply builds through perpetrators who prey on the most vulnerable, as those involved in the industry are often prostitutes who are likely to become trafficking victims. For example, prostitutes may assume that they are working for brothels or escort companies (Azzaro, 2015; National Human Trafficking Hotline, n.d.-b). Unfortunately, due to their vulnerability, 80% of female survivors go back into the sex trade (DoCarmo et al., 2021; Rethreaded, n.d.). The return routes can include prostitution or entry into an unhealthy relationship. Reasons for the victims' decisions

may include desperation for finances, housing, or other basic necessities, and be attributed to

lack of education, dependence on substances, poverty, lacking shelter or jobs, and desolation

(DoCarmo et al., 2021). Unfortunately, the law does not recognize this complexity of experience,

but there are survivor specialists available to help with resources (Federal Bureau of

Investigation, 2022). Trauma-informed care can be utilized to aid survivors of sex trafficking

(Administration for Children and Families, n.d.). These situations can lessen the ability of those

who are vulnerable to stand on their own and make them more likely to become exploited or

trafficked (A21, n.d.).

**Trauma Bonding and Learned Helplessness**

The idea of bonding through trauma is one way that victims use to get through their

abuse. This is a way for survivors to avoid the traffickers abuse, which includes the victim

becoming alone and without help. Oftentimes it also helps the victim to engage in positive

conversations in order to survive such abuse (Reid et al., 2013). The victim often experiences a

connection with the trafficker, where the victim uses forms of connections to survive. Thereby,

victims gain a sense of connection with their perpetrator, even though they are experiencing

trauma, coercion, and harm (Casassa et al., 2021; Reid et al., 2013; United States Department of

State, 2020). This bond often causes victims to not report or ask for help if given the opportunity.

**Re-Victimization**

As mentioned earlier, many people often go back to sex work because they are

vulnerable, do not have proper care, housing, assistance, etc. This is especially the case regarding

female youth (Gerassi & Nichols, 2018). A survivor of trafficking endures such trauma and

becomes exploited again (DoCarmo et al., 2021). This is known as a trafficking cycle (A21,

n.d.). The trafficking cycle occurs when victims do not receive proper assistance, they need to

avoid being caught up in the reentry (A21, n.d.). Cycles of trauma, learned helplessness, and vulnerability are three central reasons why re-victimization occurs. It is necessary to get to the roots of these reasons in order to understand what originally caused the survivor to become an at-risk individual (CDC, 2021; U.S. Department of State, n.d.-a, 2022). There is also a trafficking period, where victims are transported, arrive at their destination, and held in confinement (Gezie et al., 2019).

**Active Buyer**

Supply and demand go hand-in-hand in the sex industry (Demand Abolition, 2018). Buyers often have the perspective that prostitutes are choosing to sell themselves (Farley et al., 2017). This idea allows the buyers to tell themselves that these are harmless acts. When asked, buyers will often note that commercial sex does not cause harm and do not often mention that it is a criminal act where the victim is hurt (Farley et al. 2017). They are also more likely to say that prostituted persons are satisfied with their experiences in the sex industry and decide to participate in it as a career (Demand Abolition, 2018; Farley et al., 2017). The truth needs to be exposed, that prostitution is not simply a harmless choice. Oftentimes, those who are in prostitution entered knowingly into prostitution and then become trafficked (Gerassi & Nichols, 2018). Trafficking is common and prostitution masks the victim's bondage (Allen, 2021). Activists may have difficulty in determining the difference between free and forced prostitution, as it is hard to know who agreed to the sexual acts (Cyrus, 2015). Either way, the individual becomes susceptible to abuse and trauma.

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**Prevention of Sex Trafficking**

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Sex trafficking prevention is necessary in order to educate those who may be vulnerable (CDC, 2022). People often do not understand how trafficking cases can occur (Department of Homeland Security, n.d.). For this reason, people may easily bypass a victim on the street or

become a victim themselves. Meshelemiah and Lynch (2019) mentioned that by looking at theories and formal theoretical models, one can better understand how trafficking works, as well as how to assist victims. One example is conflict theory, which illustrates the occurrences of social injustices, power disparities, and systematic subjugation in society. There are two primary areas that help lead to human trafficking prevention: a legal approach and education.

**Legal Responses**

Worldwide, cases of trafficking have tripled since 2003 (UNODC, 2020a). The U.N. Trafficking in Persons Protocol was created and used by more than 90% of the countries to help ban trafficking. The protocol is called Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (UNODC, n.d.-a) and was implemented for the judicial system and to expand the trafficking response.

Those engaged in sex work are engaging in illegal acts (Cornell Law School, 2020). Law enforcement often uses attitudes towards prostitutes, that include pestering, brutality, and force (Farrell, McDevitt, & Fahy, 2008). Another form of legality is criminalization. Criminalization is when one's actions align with illegal activity (Aaronson & Schaffer, 2021). However, with sex labor, this can be a bit tricky. Oftentimes, those who are criminalized for sex labor are victims (Vanwesenbeek, 2017). This is due to problems with the laws. Another issue is that it can be difficult to identify a victim from one who is choosing to enter prostitution to make money (Allen, 2021).

According to Love (2018), collaborators, such as programs, clinics, and centers in the judicial system encounter opposition in acknowledging, recognizing, and reacting to cases of trafficking. There has been evidence that those working in different stakeholder positions have misunderstandings in terms of trafficking. For example, those who have come out of trafficking

may be undocumented individuals and that becomes the focus instead of recognizing that they had been victimized (Office for Victims of Crime, 2015). Traffickers use the threat of deportation as a method to keep victims trapped (Wood, 2019). This allows for false assumptions about individuals who have come out of the sex trade (Love, 2018).

Making prostitution illegal can create difficulty with assisting those who are enslaved (Gorenberg, 2016). Some traffickers threaten their victims by reciting legal ordinances and codes to frighten them and maintain authority over them. Victims are then persuaded to stay away from law enforcement and any assistance they might obtain from them (Gorenberg, 2016).

There are several proposed and implemented solutions to the aforementioned considerations. Many different countries and some states have enacted different legal systems with regards to the regulation and identification of sex work. How these different legal systems impact trafficking can vary. Legal response models include both full criminalization and legalization. However, more moderate and specific models include full decriminalization, partial decriminalization, and the Equality Model (The Advocates for Human Rights, 2015).

*Full Decriminalization Model*: Full decriminalization allows prostitution and their buyers to legally engage (American Civil Liberties Union, 2020). This means the buyers and sellers will not be criminalized (American Civil Liberties Union, 2022). For example, in New York, there was a bill being brought about that would legalize prostitution with those providing permission—essentially reducing the ban on purchasing, selling, and advertising—although the laws of trafficking will remain intact, especially with the oppressive and threatening behavior used against adolescents (Ortiz, 2019).

According to Novotney (2023), victims, often adult females and young males and females, are likely to be trafficked. They are aided by decriminalization. Prostitution

establishments are unlikely to participate with law enforcement to recognize individuals who have been trafficked or to provide assistance in any way. Many survivors will argue that most people are unaware of the options and differences between full and partial decriminalization (Nembhard et al., 2021).

*Partial Decriminalization Model*: This is when those who are in prostitution are legally protected (Bruder, 2022). They are seen as victims, not criminals. Traffickers are criminalized, not those who are simply participating in forced coercion or prostitution. Deciphering if one chose to participate in sex labor, or if they were forced can be difficult. Either way, those working in sex labor are abused and mistreated daily (Farley & Barkhan, 1998). Most trafficked individuals are trapped and have a difficult time escaping. The victims are brainwashed, attacked if caught escaping, and often have nowhere to escape. Thereby, there need to be laws set in place for better protection.

*The Equality Model or Nordic Model*: The Equality Model has been implemented by several countries in Europe, North America, and Western Asia and has been proposed for adoption by the United States. It allows human trafficking to remain criminalized. It would decriminalize the selling, which would have sex trafficking victims decriminalized (Cirruzzo, 2021). It makes survivors safe to come forward. Amnesty International (2015) chose for sex labor to be universally decriminalized. For example, one argument is that those choosing to work in the sex trade can assist the demand of the sex market (Cirruzzo, 2021).

**Education as Advocacy**

Advocating for broad-reaching education is a preventative measure that can stop trafficking through public awareness. By providing individuals with prevention training, they are given more opportunity to avoid being kept out of exploitation (U.S. Department of State,

n.d.-d). Education can empower young individuals and will be able to give them opportunities. Education can serve as a vehicle for individual empowerment and personal development.

### *Training as a Prevention*

My work with human trafficking victims has allowed me to better understand the signs of mistreatment, abuse, and trauma. Obtaining this experience has educated me so I can now easily discern the signs that I could not before. I am thankful for being able to work and gain experience in this area. I became more aware of the effects and behaviors that can easily identify a case of abuse. It is through my heart for social justice that I want to be a change agent.

Part of my goal for creating a trafficking awareness training is to prevent men from making wrong choices (i.e., choosing to abuse, groom, and traffic an individual). This goal includes training men, who may simply be going to massage parlors or "average businesses," to be aware that the business may be where trafficking takes place. For example, I met someone a few years ago who said he was going to get a massage at a local spot. I asked him where, and when he told me, I warned him that trafficking is common there. He was shocked and completely unaware that it could happen "in our town." This made me realize that creating a training that could be aimed at all students—especially males—could help shift choices and decisions that lead to harm. The training could increase public awareness overall of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

### *Importance of Online Training*

Understanding how to best protect oneself from harm by the internet is crucial. Traffickers come after those who are most vulnerable, which includes individuals who lack knowledge about the use of technology. Traffickers have a variety of ways to connect with their victims. Recently, the LA Sheriff's Department exposed traffickers on social media who were planning to traffic victims (Staff, 2022). Online criminal investigators have pretended to be

at-risk individuals and have communicated with presumed traffickers on social networking platforms. Because of their efforts, the schemes of the traffickers were thwarted (Staff, 2022). This case reveals the importance of education for protection purposes.

## In Conclusion

By providing education to those vulnerable to exploitation, I hope to reduce the cases of trafficking. This education can be accomplished by creating training for higher education students that promotes safety in terms of relationships, jobs, and the internet. Understanding the realities of sex trafficking, and the way that it functions in society, after this training higher education students will:

- Be able to discern a legitimate job offer.

- Be able to discern legitimate and safe websites and apps.

- Be able to know about effective assistance and support through local resources.

- Be able to identify red flags in relationships.

In looking over the literature, sex trafficking is one form of human trafficking. The five areas of the sex trade reveal the various ways in which a participant may partake in the sex trade. The trends, such as cybersecurity and social media, allow one to recognize some of the ways in which traffickers connect with their victims. Sex trafficking exists due to money, power, authority, cultural expectations and the demand for sex. In terms of recruitment strategies, traffickers are likely to use technology, jobs and relationships to connect with their victims. Thereby, sex trafficking prevention is crucial for educational purposes. It has become evident that there is a gap in sex trafficking prevention courses for higher education students. I will further discuss my method and the way in which this gap will be filled in the following chapter.

# CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The focus of this dissertation was on evaluating the effectiveness of the Sex Trafficking Awareness and Prevention training program that I created. I conducted a convergent mixed methods study. I used a pre and post survey to assess awareness around sex trafficking in higher education students. Higher education refers to post-secondary students, including college and university pupils.

I selected this demographic because not only is there a gap in the literature, but students are also particularly vulnerable to being targeted by predators for a variety of reasons. Often students are on their own for the first time. They are easily targeted due to inexperience. Frequently they are young, naïve, and unaware of warning signs. They are often overwhelmed with schedule demands and expenses as well as limited in funds and work options.

Although quizzes were created, the results of the quizzes are unable to be viewed. The intent was to measure a participant's understanding of training material. I have evaluated other prevention trainings, in order to see an array of sex trafficking prevention measures. Looking at the effectiveness of the different content that is offered and creating program assessments, allowed me to recognize the important change that can happen as a result of people reading the content. Examples of storytelling and active listening can be seen in the Udemy training, where a resource was shared regarding stories from sex trafficking survivors. The intention of the videos is to inform people about the social injustice issue. Sex trafficking prevention programs can utilize data to recognize the changes that have been made in people's awareness of sex trafficking (Community Psychology, n.d.). Change can occur on a vast number of levels, which include individuals at the local level, institutions, and other collaborators (McDavid et al., 2019).

Pre and post surveys were used to capture both qualitative and quantitative data from participants. I closed my training and surveys on February 9, 2023. The same questions were present on both surveys to see if there was a significant difference in reported knowledge. Participants should report a significantly higher rating on the post survey than the pre survey on each of the five questions. To be significant, the rating must have a p value of less than .05. Using a two-sample t-test, the pre and post surveys were compared on each of the five questions to determine if the rating level registered as significant.

Due to mechanical errors, the presurvey only included the first two questions—age and student status. Thereby, I added the missing set of questions and re-opened the surveys and Udemy training on February 24, 2023. The training and surveys were closed on March 10, 2023.

**Mixed Methods Research Design**

Mixed methods are the process of combining both quantitative and qualitative data for the purpose of data collection. This approach allows for a more collaborative approach to the data being used than individual uses of qualitative or qualitative data approached (Wisdom & Creswell, 2013).

Between the late 1980s and today, definitions and descriptions of mixed methods research have shifted and morphed, and they continue to do so. While having a singular definition is desirable for many researchers, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) have instead offered a definition of core characteristics of mixed methods research. They suggest that their core characteristics provide a broader definition of mixed methods research, since they combine methods, philosophies, and a research design orientation. These characteristics also highlight the key components that should be considered when designing and conducting a mixed methods study. These six core characteristics focus on activities of the mixed methods researcher and include the following actions:

1. Collecting and analyzing persuasively and rigorously both qualitative and quantitative data, based on research questions

2. Mixing—or integrating or linking—the two forms of data either concurrently by combining or merging them, sequentially by having one build on the other, or embedding one within the other

3. Giving priority to one or to both forms of data, again based on the research questions and the emphasis of the research

4. Using these procedures in a single research study or in multiple phases of a program of research

5. Framing these procedures within philosophical worldviews and theoretical lenses

6. Combining the procedures into specific research designs that direct the plan for conducting the study

## Rationale for Convergent Mixed Methods Approach

I conducted a convergent mixed methods approach, where both quantitative and qualitative data was gathered and examined. The analysis of quantitative and qualitative data from participants was then analyzed. This was necessary to see if the data approves or disapproves of one another (Fetters et al., 2013). For this convergent mixed methods study, I used surveys, which captured both qualitative and quantitative data from higher education students. Surveys were the best option due to costs and the ability to solicit both open-ended and qualitative responses and quantitative data from Likert scaled questions.

## Use of Surveys

Surveys are a way to gather a greater understanding of a topic. Groves et al. (2004) stated, "A survey is a systematic method for gathering information from (a sample of) entities for the purpose of constructing quantitative descriptors of the attributes of the large population of

which the entities are members" (p. 2). Surveys can vary in terms of respondents that are able to meet the requirements. Creating surveys relies on the accessible assets within the community. Three essential conditions must remain: a comprehensive way to connect with respondents, approachable and attainable to selected coordinates, and the willingness for respondents to be involved (Durand, 2016). This means that it is necessary for the researcher to find a wide range of subjects willing to participate in. Survey designs are formulas within quantitative research where surveys are provided to "a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population" (Creswell, 2005, p. 376).

There are advantages and disadvantages to using surveys. Surveys can be a cost-effective way of reaching a large audience and collecting a lot of information in a short duration of time. Surveys allow for anonymity and can be carried out in an online format which allows respondents to answer at their convenience, at a time and location where they are comfortable. Surveys also easily and efficiently lend themselves to statistical analysis.

Some of the limitations of surveys include the possibility of a low response rate. Respondents may not be fully honest or might not feel unrepresented by the survey verbiage. Respondents may not feel comfortable with the content. With regards to my survey on sex trafficking, respondents may not demonstrate a measurable difference between the pre and post-test due to participants' previous knowledge of sex trafficking or participants might not complete the training. Therefore, they may not complete the post-survey.

For this study, I used short surveys to see if there were any changes in people's reported awareness about sex trafficking. The questions in the survey were guided by my research question: How effective is the Sex Trafficking Awareness and Prevention training with higher education students in building their awareness around sex trafficking?

**Participants and Recruitment**

The first step was reaching out to administrators in colleges and universities to see if they were interested in offering the training in their schools. In terms of recruitment, I used emails and posters. I contacted universities to help me recruit their students, or for permission to recruit at the university (see letter in Appendix A).

**Collecting Data**

Before collecting data, my participants needed to sign my informed consent form via Survey Monkey in Appendix B. I conducted a presurvey (Appendix C) and a postsurvey (Appendix D) in the form of a quiz for data collection. These quizzes were anonymous. Demographic information was collected in the presurvey.

**My Program**

I created a training on Udemy, which is an online platform that allows people the opportunity to create trainings. With 54 million students, Udemy allows individuals the opportunity to create online content. There are over 213,000 trainings made available on Udemy (Udemy, n.d.-a). The Udemy training I created consists of nine sections: (a) Introduction, (b) Trafficking Exists, (c) Traffickers' Tactics, (d) The Power of Storytelling and Local Statistics, (e) Warning Signs and Preventative Measures, (f) Trafficking and Relationships, (g) Trafficking and Social Media, (h) Trafficking and Job Offers, and (i) Effective Assistance/Local Resources. The total video time is approximately 32 minutes with 41 mini lectures within the nine sections.

**Competency Statements**

I created five competency statements for higher education students. This provided a way for students to reflect on their knowledge of the course, based on five statements. The statements include:

1. Students will be properly trained in understanding the realities of sex trafficking and the way that it functions in society.

2. Students will be able to discern a legitimate job offer.

3. Students will be able to discern legitimate and safe websites and apps.

4. Students will know about effective assistance and support through local resources.

5. Students will know how to be able to identify red flags in relationships.

**Outline of the Training**

After taking the training students could measure their growth by using the following statements:

1. Students will understand the who, what, where, and how of sex trafficking.

2. Students will know the different stages of trafficking.

3. Students will be able to implement prevention strategies toward the most common ways of recruiting, including legitimate job/internships offers and relationships.

4. Students will understand critical media literacy as a means to use the internet safely—including internet protocols.

5. Students will know effective assistance and support through local resources.

These statements were necessary for assessment purposes. The following list consists of an outline of the training. These topics allowed for students to educate students on the topic of sex trafficking, preventative measures, and resources. Anyone can become a victim of trafficking, and it is important for higher education students to recognize that it is a current social justice issue, where anyone can fall prey.

1. Introduction: This section contains the course objectives and overview. Includes Consent to Participate.

2. Trafficking Exists: This section contains information regarding how human trafficking sustains. It explains the difference between sex work and sexual exploitation and details the importance of survivors' stories to understanding the complexities of this crime. Contains subsections Quiz 1: Recap Quiz.

3. Warning Signs and Preventative Measures: This section explores causes that contribute to sex trafficking. It also discusses motivations such as monetary gain, power and control, and cultural influences. This section reviews contributing factors such as demand and recruitment strategies. It identifies warning signs of trafficking and how to report, as well as preventative measures and risk factors.

4. Trafficking and Relationships: This section identifies red flags and types of romantic relationships that result in trafficking vulnerable individuals. It includes the signifiers of grooming young people and discusses strategies for recognizing and preventing trafficking in romantic relationships. Contains Quiz 2: Grooming Quiz.

5. Trafficking, Social Media, and Job Offers: This section introduces the faces of human trafficking. It discusses the impacts of social media and details online recruitment strategies. Includes online safety tips. Contains Quiz 3: The Faces of Human Trafficking.

6. Effective Assistance and Local Resources: This section reveals effective help and assistance that is available for victims of human trafficking and details how they can find it. Includes local resources and statistics for Santa Barbara County. Contains Quiz 4: Effective Assistance and Local Resource Quiz.

7. Post Survey: This section contains the post survey.

This training serves to fill the gap for higher education students. Prevention and advocacy are important ways in which one can learn about trafficking and the ways in which to avoid being exploited.

**Power of Storytelling Element**

I believe that storytelling is a key component of my *Theory of Change*, because hearing another person share their experience is a powerful testimony which often inspires others to personally make changes. Due to my active listening to the stories of others, I was compelled to make changes within the sex trade. It is crucial to place oneself within their narratives, comparing and connecting with the relational parts of one's own self-concept (San Pedro & Kinloch, 2017). The human need for relationships allows one to feel receptive to connections through storytelling. This can propel someone to make changes that positively impact not only themselves, but society. For example, a community can utilize and promote ethnic and community-based education using past experiences to construe their stance within the world at large (San Pedro & Kinloch, 2017). The art of storytelling humanizes individuals. According to San Pedro and Kinloch (2017), the focal point for the basic understanding of relational sustainability is to notice how to improve relationships and look at the narratives shared within an environment.

**Art as a Movement of Change**

Art can be used as a form of storytelling, where art can inform and reveal social justice issues as movements of change. For example, art or cultural institutions play a significant role in advocacy and in bringing truth and justice to situations (Raja & Peterhans, 2020). They can lead others to better understand and relate to concepts through creativity and different ways of

thinking. The idea of museums bringing change, for example, has been around for quite some time.

According to Bunch (1992), there have been alterations in terms of museum workers, the exhibition preferences with their subject matter, as well as the clear ethnic establishments. A higher level of judgments, arguments, and proper cultural connotations have come to the museums and public shows, which started during Reagan's presidential term (Bunch, 1992). It has often been thought that museums need to have a greater level of unity and agreement during hard seasons. Another thought by many is the idea of museums taking a stance as advocates for transformation and boosting ideas of change. Lastly, many have the idea that establishments should not partake in arguments. Thus, the central focal question remains as to how establishments, especially museums, need to react with ethnic and governmental influence (Bunch, 1992).

Art is one specific way for social justice movements to cause changes to occur in society. I chose to add stories of survivors in my Udemy training, in order to reveal the power of storytelling. Hearing testimonies of trauma, strength, and resilience from survivors allowed students to deepen their understanding of trafficking.

**Why I Picked Udemy**

Udemy is an online platform where the goal is to provide an education of excellence available to everyone (Udemy, n.d.). Udemy allows students the opportunity to teach trainings on various subjects. Udemy does not have any trainings available on the topic of sex trafficking or exploitation. There is a great need for trainings on these topics to educate Udemy users. According to Nembhard et al. (2021), many advocates, survivors and legislators choose to focus on the decriminalization aspect of sex labor (Urban Institute, 2018). Thereby, there are often educational materials based on the legal aspects, but not as often on the prevention side.

**Analyzing Data**

I did a pre and post test to see if there was a change in their awareness of sex trafficking.

I was prepared to see if there was a change between the two. The same questions were present on

both surveys in order to see if there was a significance difference in reported knowledge. I used

descriptive statistics and statistical measures to analyze pre and post survey questions.

My hypothesis was that there would be a significant increase $p < .05$ change between the mean

score reported for awareness on each of the five topics: realities of sex trafficking and the way

that it functions in society, discerning a legitimate job offer, knowing to discern legitimate and

safe websites and apps, be able to identify red flags in relationships, and be able to know about

effective assistance and support through local resources. A content analysis was conducted to

understand the themes of what they thought was most important.

**Ethical Protections**

No URLs (Uniform Resource Locators) or EPMs (Enterprise Performance Management)

were collected during this study. Udemy holds all of this information. I got the survey data from

Survey Monkey. Please refer to Appendix E. It remained anonymous. No identifiers were

collected by the researcher. No demographic information was kept unless it was provided by the

survey.

**Role of Researcher**

I developed a Udemy training and offered it to higher education students. I wanted to

implement educational training tools which would be used as a preventative and safety measure

for those who are most vulnerable to sex trafficking. The first step was to create a training where

higher education students could learn more about trafficking, avoiding job scams, abusive

relationships, and how victims can be best protected. My role was to design a training. Then, I

conducted an anonymous survey to collect reported awareness around five topics as well as to

collect qualitative data around what was most informative about the training, the best resources,

and what I wanted to learn more about.

## CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS OR RESULTS OF THE STUDY

This chapter reveals the results and findings of the pre and post survey results and the statistics provided by Udemy for the training created titled, "Sex Trafficking Awareness and Prevention."

As detailed in the Methods section, pre and post surveys were used to capture both qualitative and quantitative data from participants. In determining the effectiveness of my Udemy training, participants would report a significantly higher rating on the post survey than the pre survey on each of the five questions. To be significant, the rating must have a p value of less than .05. Using a two-sample t-test, the pre and post surveys were compared on each of the five questions to determine if the rating level registered as significant. The same questions were on both surveys to see if there was a significant difference in reported knowledge.

### Response Rate to Training and Surveys

Five hundred nine participants enrolled in the training and four people completed the entire course. Twenty-eight participants completed the Introduction to the Training.

The pre and post surveys were delivered via Survey Monkey. Sixteen respondents completed the post survey, while 64 respondents completed the presurvey, "Consent to Participate." The percentage of participants who took the surveys reveals the response rate. The pre survey Consent to Participate (Appendix A) had a response rate of 12.57%. The postsurvey (Appendix B) had a response rating of 3.14%.

The completion rate is the number of surveys answered and compares to how many surveys began by those same participants. The completion rate for the survey was lower than expected. The consent to participate had a completion rate of 73.44% for survey completion. The postsurvey had a completion rating of 75%. The average response rate for surveys is "a 10-question survey has an 89% completion rate on average" (Survey Monkey, n.d., para. 6).

**Demographics of Population**

Demographics were gathered from both pre surveys and Udemy. There were 509 total enrollments in the Udemy training, with 103 active students. Udemy defines active students as the participants who have started a lecture over the selected time period (Udemy, n.d.-d)

In this study, the population included students from 73 countries with 22.6% (115) of the participants originating from India and 22.0% (112) of the population originating from the United States of America. Understanding the comprehensive distribution of participants' origins provides a greater measure of validity and overall analysis of the results section. The participants are from the continents as follows: Asia (42%), North America (25%), South America (5%), Europe (10%), Africa (18%). Participants spoke 21 languages. Nearly 82% (417) spoke English and 18.1% (92) spoke other languages.

*Age*

As obtained via the presurvey (Consent to Participate, see Appendix 3), the largest age bracket was for those over age 44. The Student Status table below (Table 1) describes the reported age of participants that filled out the survey.

**Table 1**

*Participants' Reported Ages*

| Reported Age of Participants (n = 64) | |
| --- | --- |
| 18–24 years old | 16% |
| 25–34 years old | 19% |
| 35–44 years old | 3% |
| 44+ | 62% |

As obtained via the presurvey (Consent to Participate, see Appendix A), the student status most identified was currently not a student. The Student Status table below (Table 2) describes the student status of the 64 participants that filled out the survey.

**Table 2**

*Student Status*

| Student Status (n = 64) | |
|---|---|
| Not currently a student | 76% |
| 1st and 2nd Year of college | 5% |
| 3rd or 4th Year of college | 5% |
| Graduate school | 6% |
| Other | 8% |

## Rating of Knowledge

In the presurvey and post-survey participants rated their knowledge of five different areas of sex trafficking. For each question, the instructions were "using a scale of 1–5 rate your knowledge of the following (1—No knowledge, 5—Expert)".

**Realities of Sex Trafficking**

The Results of Realities of Sex Trafficking Question table below (Table 3) describes the results of the 64 participants that filled out the survey responding to the question, "The realities of sex trafficking and the way it functions in society."

**Table 3**

*The Results of Realities of Sex Trafficking Question Table*

|  | Pre-Test (n = 44) | Post-Test (n = 14) |
|---|---|---|
| 1—No Knowledge | 5% | 0% |
| 2 | 34% | 19% |
| 3 | 36% | 25% |
| 4 | 11% | 25% |
| 5—Expert | 14% | 31% |

**Job Offer**

The Results of Job Offer Question table below (Table 4) describes the results of the 64 participants that filled out the survey responding to the question, "Discerning a legitimate job offer."

**Table 4**

*Results of Job Offer Question*

|  | Pre-Test (n = 44) | Post-Test (n = 14) |
|---|---|---|
| 1—No Knowledge | 11% | 0% |
| 2 | 7% | 0% |
| 3 | 23% | 13% |
| 4 | 36% | 69% |
| 5—Expert | 23% | 19% |

**Safe Websites and Apps**

The Results of Safe Websites and Apps table below describes the results of the 64 participants that filled out the survey responding to the question, "Knowing to discern legitimate and safe websites and apps."

**Table 5**

*Results of Safe Websites and Apps*

|  | Pre-Test (n = 44) | Post-Test (n = 14) |
|---|---|---|
| 1—No Knowledge | 9% | 0% |
| 2 | 23% | 6% |
| 3 | 16% | 18% |
| 4 | 32% | 38% |
| 5—Expert | 20% | 38% |

**Red Flags**

The Results of Effective Assistance Question table below (Table 6) describes the results of the 64 participants that filled out the survey responding to the question, "Be able to identify red flags in relationships."

**Table 6**

*Results of Red Flags Question*

|  | Pre-Test (n = 44) | Post-Test (n = 14) |
|---|---|---|
| 1—No Knowledge | 2% | 0% |
| 2 | 5% | 0% |
| 3 | 20% | 19% |
| 4 | 41% | 25% |
| 5—Expert | 32% | 56% |

**Effective Assistance**

The table below describes the results of the 64 participants that filled out the survey responding to the question, "Be able to know about effective assistance and support through local resources."

**Table 7**

*Results of Effective Assistance Question*

|  | Pre-Test (n = 44) | Post-Test (n = 14) |
|---|---|---|
| 1—No Knowledge | 11% | 6% |
| 2 | 25% | 0% |
| 3 | 30% | 44% |
| 4 | 7% | 25% |
| 5—Expert | 27% | 25% |

## Testing of Hypotheses

The research question can be evaluated by creating a set of hypotheses which tests the changes in participants' pre and post survey scores (Table 8). Significance is defined as a p-value less than .05 between the mean scores of the pre and post-test through using a t-test.

**Table 8**

*Hypothesis Test Results*

| | Pre-Test Mean (n = 44) | Post-Test Mean (n = 14) | P-value |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Hypothesis 1**: The training will significantly increase reported awareness on the "realities of sex trafficking and the way that it functions in society." | 2.95 | 3.56 | 0.06 |
| **Hypothesis 2**: The training will significantly increase reported awareness on "discerning a legitimate job offer." | 3.52 | 4.06 | 0.10 |
| **Hypothesis 3**: The training will significantly increase reported awareness on "knowing to discern legitimate and safe websites and apps." | 3.32 | 4.06 | 0.04 |
| **Hypothesis 4**: The training will significantly increase reported awareness on "be(ing) able to identify red flags in relationships." | 3.95 | 4.38 | 0.13 |
| **Hypothesis 5**: The training will significantly increase reported awareness on "be(ing) able to know about effective assistance and support through local resources." | 3.14 | 3.63 | 0.21 |

## Additional Post-Survey Questions

There were four additional questions in the post survey (Appendix B). The questions were:

- What was most informative about the training

- What was the best resource that I shared?

- What do you want to learn more about?

- After attending this training, how likely are you to attend another training to learn more about human trafficking in your community?

**Most Informative**

Prioritizing and developing a deeper understanding of participants' insight and knowledge on the training contribute to building a stronger learning experience for future participants. It was essential to ask participants, "What was most informative about the training?" in order to provide feedback for future trainings. Participants provided a variety of examples:

N = 12, Skipped = 4

- The main locations of sex trafficking and the reasons behind it (1)

- Statistics (1)

- Learning red flags (2)

- Dating and websites (1)

- The realities of trafficking in our society (1)

- Understanding how to safely navigate online and at job interviews (1)

- Grooming tactics (1)

- Cyber security and social media (1)

- Awareness (1)

- Sex trafficking in regards to Santa Barbara (1)

- Children being trafficked (1)

**Best Resources**

Several resources were used to provide a greater understanding of the training material. Thereby, participants were asked, "What was the best resource that I shared?" in order to recognize individual resource preference.

N = 11, Skipped = 5 (One person added two separate answers)

- Love146 (prevention website resource) (1)

- Dating websites/apps (2)

- Local resources, news (2)

- How to offer effective assistance (1)

- Victim Advocates Guide (1)

- Recognizing the signs (2)

- How different cultures do not regulate sex trafficking (1)

- Data/numbers (1)

- Internet red flags (1)

**Want to Learn**

It is necessary to gain input from participants to view participants' perspectives and better understand what they desire to learn. Participants were asked, "What do you want to learn more about?" in order to recognize what content could be useful in creating future trainings.

N = 11, Skipped = 5

"What do you want to learn more about?"

- Local resources (4)

- Anti-trafficking measures/efforts/ prevention (3)

- Awareness for teen parents (1)

- Sex trafficking laws (1)

- Global level statistics/information on the different and most prominent forms of recruitment (1)

- Cyber trafficking (1)

- Grooming (1)

**Attending Another Training**

In order to create future content, it is essential to ask participants, "After attending this training, how likely are you to attend another training to learn more about human trafficking in your community?" Asking participants for their feedback provides further knowledge in how to improve a future training. Sixteen participants completed the survey with 62.50% stating it was likely, 0.00% stated it was unlikely, and 37.50% reported that it was very likely.

**Themes**

Themes reveal a connection of results where patterns appear from the data. Participants mentioned in the post survey question "What do you want to learn more about?" that they appreciated understanding more of:

- Laws (1)

- Global statistics (1)

- Grooming (2)

- Prevention/awareness (3)

- Local resources, news (4)

## Participants' Progression of Training

The following statistics were obtained from Udemy.

**Traffic and Conversion**

The conversion rate calculated by UDemy was 76%. Udemy calculates conversion rates by utilizing a selected time period to divide the amount of participants registered for the training by the number of participants who visit your training page (UDemy, n.d). The conversion rate is 76% with 540 landing page visitors and four participants who completed the training.

**Reviews**

Reviews are accessed in Udemy when participants leave their feedback on the training. Five people provided Udemy training ratings. However, only four participants completed the entire training. The training received a training rating of 4.52 out of 5 points.

**Most Dropped Lectures**

We had 509 participants start the course and only four participants completed it. Below is a chart of where the student dropped or as Udemy defined it "failed to complete watching the video within the first fifteen seconds" (Udemy, n.d.).

This section means participants did not complete the training and chose not to continue. The following reveals each lecture's average percentage.

- Introduction to the Course—33% did not continue
- Local Stats of Santa Barbara and Local Resources—33% did not continue
- Grooming Young People—25% did not continue
- Power and Control—17% did not continue
- The Demand and Recruitment—14% did not continue
- Causes- Monetary Gain, Power and Control—8% did not continue

**Quiz Data**

  The results of the quizzes are unable to be viewed. It was assumed that the quiz results would be made available, but they were not. The intent was to measure a participant's understanding of training material. The lectures' average percentages could be influenced by participants not completing the entire training. More participants may have taken the surveys if provided with an incentive. Participants may have had difficulty navigating and finding the surveys due to the way that Udemy is structured. Participants may have forgotten to complete the surveys or did not recognize the time frame in which the surveys would close. Also, 18.1% of the participants spoke a language different than that of the Udemy course.

**CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION**

**Overview of Why and How the Study was Completed**

The Udemy training was created to understand the research question: How effective is the Sex Trafficking Awareness and Prevention training for higher education students in building their awareness of sex trafficking? The study was completed because higher education students are vulnerable to being trafficked particularly with regards to relationships, jobs, and the internet (Blue Campaign, n.d.-a). Through looking at sex trafficking prevention and advocacy trainings, it was apparent that trainings are geared towards primary and high school ages, but for those in higher education. Thus, I decided to create an educational awareness training that would fill the gap. The training focuses on participants learning about safety in terms of relationships, jobs, and the internet. I chose to use education as a form of prevention.

**Methods Approach**

I conducted a convergent mixed methods approach, where I created a free online training through Udemy. I used Survey Monkey to conduct the pre and post surveys and created qualitative and quantitative questions. Statistical analysis and content analysis were used.

The analysis of quantitative and qualitative data was then analyzed. For this convergent mixed methods study, I used surveys, which captured both qualitative and quantitative data. Surveys were the best option due to costs and the ability to solicit both open-ended and qualitative responses and quantitative data from Likert scaled questions. For this study, I used short pre and post surveys via Survey Monkey to see if there were any changes in people's perceived awareness about sex trafficking. The questions in the survey were guided by my research question: How effective is the Sex Trafficking Awareness and Prevention training with higher education students in building their awareness around sex trafficking? I gathered qualitative data on my post survey, such as when I asked about what they found most

informative, what was the best resource shared, what would they like to know more about. In addition, participants were asked if they would attend another training to learn more about human trafficking within their own community.

**Response Rate to Training and Surveys**

As previously recorded, the Quiz Data reports that 64 participants completed the presurvey and all presurvey questions, 16 participants completed the post survey. Response rates vary, however, they "*can be* as high as twenty to thirty percent" (Survey Monkey, n.d., para. 1). The completion rate was low, as there is normally an 89% completion rate with 10 questions (Survey Monkey, n.d.).

The lectures' average percentages could be influenced by participants not completing the entire training. More participants may have taken the surveys if provided with an incentive. Participants may have had difficulty navigating and finding the surveys due to the way that Udemy is structured. Participants may have forgotten to complete the surveys or did not recognize the time frame in which the surveys would close. 18.1% of the participants spoke a language different than that of the Udemy course.

In observation 4, not all participants completed the pre and post survey questions. This could result from the surveys being too long, the participants not locating the link, the participants feeling unmotivated to participate, and the participants not responding to the open-ended questions.

Out of the 509 participants, 493 students did not complete the post-survey. This could be due to participants not completing the course and therefore not having the knowledge to answer. The questions may have been too difficult to answer and respondent might have felt overwhelmed by the questions. Respondents might have felt the questions were irrelevant or

uninteresting. It is also possible that participants forgot to take the post-survey or had difficulty finding the link.

## Conversion Rate

The conversion rate was necessary to better understand improvements which could be made to the Udemy training. The landing page was moderately high, with 540 participants. This could be due to participants being interested in the topic, the mobile friendly design, and engaging videos.

## Demographics

Higher education students did not really participate in the surveys. There were several countries and languages participating in the study, which revealed its global reach.

## Ratings of Knowledge

Results from question 1 suggest that 18.75% of participants rated their knowledge of the realities of sex trafficking and the way that it functions in society as a 2 out of 5 (where 1 means no knowledge and 5 means expert.) Therefore, future educational projects and trainings could be geared towards the societal functions of trafficking and the way it affects victims.

Question 2 results suggest that 100% of participants scored a 3 or higher out of 5, thus showing that participants believe they can discern a legitimate job offer.

In terms of social change, it is apparent through this research that education geared toward a person's specific location is preferred. Results from questions 3 and 5 in the postsurvey reveal that 93.75% of participants rated a 3, 4, or 5 in believing that they know how to discern legitimate and safe websites and apps. This suggests that most participants have a general knowledge of resources and safety with the internet. Only 6.25% of participants felt they had no knowledge of discerning legitimate and safe websites and apps.

Findings from question 4 suggest that 100% of participants are somewhat likely to be able to identify red flags in relationships. These results demonstrate that participants have a basic level of understanding of red flags. However, it does not reveal the level of discernment when it comes to an actual case happening before them.

## Hypothesis Discussion

The hypothesis for this study was that there will be a significant difference revealing a p-value less than .05 change on the mean score of the following five topics in comparing pre and posttest survey scores:

- The realities of sex trafficking and the way that it functions in society.

- Discerning a legit job offer.

- Knowing to discern legit and safe websites and apps.

- Be able to identify red flags in relationships.

Be able to know about effective assistance and support through local resources.

Only one of the five hypotheses was confirmed. "Knowing to discern legit and safe websites and apps" had a p-value of .04, which confirmed the hypothesis. Thus, demonstrating that the training was effective in increasing reported awareness around discerning legitimate and safe websites and apps. The other hypotheses around the other questions were untrue, and there was no significant difference between the pre and post-test scores (Table 9).

**Table 9**

*Results of Hypotheses*

| | |
|---|---|
| Hypothesis 1: The training will significantly increase reported awareness on the "realities of sex trafficking and the way that it functions in society." | P-value = 0.06 |
| Hypothesis 2: The training will significantly increase reported awareness on "discerning a legitimate job offer." | P-value = 0.10 |
| Hypothesis 3: The training will significantly increase reported awareness on "knowing to discern legitimate and safe websites and apps." | P-value = 0.04 |
| Hypothesis 4: The training will significantly increase reported awareness on "be able to identify red flags in relationships." | P-value = 0.13 |
| Hypothesis 5: The training will significantly increase reported awareness on "be able to know about effective assistance and support through local resources." | P-value = 0.21 |

## Additional Post-Survey Questions

Questions 6 through 8 allowed participants to respond to open-ended questions. As stated by participants, question 6 results suggest that awareness, red flags, cyber security, social media, dating/grooming tactics, online safety/navigation, and the realities of trafficking were most informative about the training. Results from question 7 reveal that participants believed that the best resources shared within the Udemy training were: identifying signs and who could be a trafficker, local resources, effective assistance, differences in cultures and how they regulate sex trafficking, as well as red flags in dating and websites. Question 8 suggests that participants wanted to learn more about community involvement within the anti-trafficking movement, grooming process, trafficking laws, measures, awareness, prevention, global level statistics, cyber trafficking, and local contacts.

From question 9 in the post-survey, results demonstrate that those who are not active students have a desire to learn more regarding trafficking, as 62.50% said they were likely to attend another training to learn more about human trafficking in their communities.

This study suggests that those who are not currently students took more surveys and participated in the course more than those who are students. This data shows the value of educating not just students, but communities as well. There appears to be a community need and investment in establishing a more far-reaching conversation and wider readership.

**Participants' Progression of Training**

1. Five hundred nine participants enrolled in the training and 4 people completed the entire training. Twenty-eight participants completed the Introduction to the Training. One hundred sixty-eight dropouts occurred in lecture 1, titled, "Consent to Participate, "which included the presurvey.

2. The number of students that watched part of the course:

   Section 1: Introduction—28 participants, 5.5%

   Section 2: Trafficking Exists—8 participants, 1.57%

   Section 3: Causes, Warning Signs, Preventative Measures—24 participants, 4.72%

   Section 4: Trafficking and Relationships—12 participants, 2.36%

   Section 5: Trafficking, Social Media and Job Offers—3 participants, 0.59%

   Section 6: Effective Assistance and Local Resources—11 participants, 2.16%

   Section 7: Post Survey—6 participants, 1.18%

3. Five participants rated the training, and the course received a training rating of 4.52 out of 5 points.

4. With reference to observation 1, 509 participants registered for the training and 28 participants completed the Introduction to the Training. This suggests that there is a demand for accessibility of online trainings. This topic was of interest to participants. Some participants may have had no intention of ever taking the training. It is possible that some numbers are due to robot enrollment.

5. In terms of observation 2, very few participants completed the training. This could be due to the presurvey process that might have caused people to feel that they were not ready to take this training. It is also possible that participants did not want to partake in this study. People may not have had the energy to delve into this subject matter. Almost 20% of the participants spoke a language other than English and may have felt that the information was not available.

6. Observation 3 suggests that few people watched the different sections of the training. This may be due to the information in the videos not being what participants were expecting. The videos may have been too long, and the participants may have been distracted.

7. From looking at observation 5, there were not many people who completed the training. However, the training still received a training rating of 4.52 out of 5 points from five participants. Inferences on why this rating may have resulted could be due to participants enjoying the training and wanting to provide a rating. Participants might have wanted to provide feedback as they might know me. Participants might have wanted to provide feedback as they might want to help out.

My overall findings from those trainings completed were that 100% of participants were interested in taking future trainings on human trafficking. Participants noted that they appreciated

gaining knowledge, and their responses suggest a desire to participate in sex trafficking prevention in their local communities. This is a desirable outcome.

The Udemy training was a pilot course which was designed to be improved upon. The flow of my training could be improved by looking at stop outs, conversion rate, and low completion rate. Assessment of these factors would contribute to future ideas on how to increase student engagement and retention.

## Conclusion and Implications

The course could be improved by enhancing the first lecture, as several participants dropped out during this module. This could be due to the fact that lecture one included the Consent to Participate. Participants might not have been interested in participating in the research. It is possible that a training that is not designed with this research component would retain more participants. Also, the availability of this course in different languages may render it more available to a broader audience.

Udemy is a platform that was useful for gaining participants because of its established reputation and global reach. However, there were not a lot of participants that took the lectures in my training. It could be possible that the structural design of the Udemy platform itself was difficult for participants to navigate. In a trial run that I performed from a participant's perspective, there were a few points of confusion within the platform that could have deterred involvement.

Several participants were interested in Section 3, suggesting that participants were highly interested in learning about causes, warning signs, and preventative measures. The implication would be that expanding upon these topics would be useful for creating future trainings. Participants identified "The realities of sex trafficking and the way that it functions in society" as important. Thereby, it would be essential to provide additional resources, i.e., the website Free

the Slaves (n.d.), which provides a vast amount of videos, books and reports pertaining to modern day slavery.

On a broader scale, asynchronous online lectures can be improved by: shortening lectures and material, boosting student communication, increasing lecture-based learning, expressing anticipations or assumptions, and giving adequate responses (Office of Distance Learning, n.d.). This will allow for better engagement.

Subsequently, if I were to re-design this training, I would shorten the training and re-record lectures using a different type of software. I would improve organization for active learning and re-make quizzes on Survey Monkey. I would improve the alignment of assessments with student learning objectives by changing quizzes and assignments. In addition, it would be important to expand support by providing students with individualized assistance. Based on registration, it would be advisable to re-create the course in multiple languages for them to be available for a broader readership. Training improvements may allow for students to have a better learning experience. Learning standards, targets, and approaches need to be oriented for the effectiveness of learned instruction to occur (DataLab, n.d.).

The syllabus plays an essential part of training design, where training creators can look back at their syllabus to further improve their training (Chicago Center for Teaching and Learning, n.d.). Training design is crucial in making sure that a training can be accurately and effectively delivered to participants. It is especially important to evaluate training content to understand what could be improved for future trainings. Enhancing technology and resources would be essential to improving the training content.

The content I created for knowing how to discern legitimate and safe websites and apps was effective in helping raise awareness around sex trafficking, as there was a change in the results of students' pre and posttests.

**Conclusion**

My advocacy and passion for the prevention of sex trafficking has motivated me towards better understanding the history of trafficking as well as the signs of mistreatment, abuse, and trauma that result from trafficking cases. Creating educational materials and implementing educational projects are effective preventative safety measures. Education and awareness allow for the community, especially students, to gain a transformative learning experience that better prepares them to respond as aware and conscientious citizens. Active listening and storytelling can both play powerful roles in raising awareness. This can create stronger and more supportive communities.

**Implication for Future Research**

Prevention in terms of educational and preventative measures including future trainings could potentially inform, strengthen, and protect communities. One hundred percent of participants in the post-survey said that they were likely or highly likely to take another training in the future.

It was a surprising finding for me to see the number of students in India who signed up for the Udemy training. In the future, it would be beneficial to create a curriculum set on human trafficking prevention geared towards India. It is interesting that the Consent to Participate seems to span mostly over age 44. Those participants in the 44 and older age group were roughly double those in either the 18–24 age range and 25–34 age range. Those participants in the over age 44 group numbered roughly the combined total of these two younger age groups. On the

other hand, the 35–44 age group represented only 3% of participants. I think it would be purposeful to understand the participants over age 44 and their motivations regarding this training. Some theories are that this age group represents parents of higher education students leaving home for the first time. Another postulated idea is that this age group is in a position to be actively involved in community change. I would also be very interested in understanding why this topic has such a low enrollment from the 35–44 age group.

**Non-Profit**

I would like to start a non-profit where I can create and distribute training materials for communities, including universities, colleges, law enforcement offices, social service centers, areas of congregation, and social settings. I am passionate about educating stakeholders and finding ways for them to work together to create better partnerships in eradicating this crime.

It is my desire to promote social justice and reformation through abolishing human trafficking both domestically and throughout the world. I want to see higher education students properly trained, as well as see communities come together to stop sex trafficking. I am hopeful that I can make an impact through education, revealing to others the importance of recognizing and understanding the warning signs of human trafficking. It is my intention to inform regarding preventative measures, hotline resources, and ways in which one may contribute to the solutions for sex trafficking. Every person truly deserves to be free. By providing education to those most vulnerable to exploitation, I hope to create sustainable systems that will allow for economic independence and social uplift, especially for students and their families.

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https://doi.org/10.1177/1466802503003001457

# APPENDIX A: LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION TO UNIVERSITIES

Dear _____,

I am a student in the EdD program at Antioch University, and my research is on the global issue of sex trafficking. Since higher education students are often targeted for recruitment. I developed a free online asynchronous course for higher education students to educate and help prevent sex trafficking.

For my dissertation research, I am investigating if the course is effective and how it can be improved. Variations of this course will be offered not only at colleges but also for employees who work at other high sex trafficking recruitment businesses like bars, tattoo and massage parlors, and for law enforcement training.

The course provides an educational awareness and prevention of sex trafficking that promotes safety in terms of relationships, jobs, and the internet.

Would you be willing to offer/promote this free course to your students?

If you are willing, I can send promotional material for you to send to your students via email, posters to hang on campus, or anything else you think could help get the word out about this resource.

Let's work together to end sex trafficking.

Best,

Jessica Kennedy, MA

xxxxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx


"From the swipe-right craze of Tinder to the crowded sporting events that typify a student's experience, college presents a world of opportunities that can easily be manipulated by traffickers" (Dressember, 2021b).

**APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT RELEASE**

Investigator:

My name is Jessica Kennedy, and I am a Doctor of Education graduate student at Antioch University. I am inviting you to participate in a research study about the global issue of sex trafficking. Involvement in the study is voluntary, so you may choose to participate or not. You will be asked to complete a survey *(state what the participant will be asked to do.)* This will take approximately 4-5 minutes of your time. All information will be kept *anonymous and confidential*. Anonymous means that your name will not appear anywhere and no one except Udemy will have the records. I will be using the site Udemy (https://www.udemy.com). See privacy policy at https://www.udemy.com/terms/privacy/.

The benefit of this research is that you will be helping us to raise awareness around sex trafficking. There are no anticipated risks for participating in this research.

**Participant:** All of my questions and concerns about this study have been addressed.  I choose, voluntarily, to participate in this research project.  I certify that I am at least 18 years of age. If you choose not to fill out the survey and quizzes, there will be no penalty. It is appreciated if you answer as many questions as possible.


      If you have any questions about the study, contact Jessica Kennedy, via email at xxxxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx.


**If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Dr. Jonathan Eskridge, Chair of the Antioch University Online IRB, xxx-xxx-xxxx.**

## APPENDIX C: PRESURVEY QUESTIONS

### What is your age?

18-24 years old          25-34 years old          35-44 years old          44+ years old

### What is your current level of education?

First year or second year college                    Third or fourth year college


Graduate                                                        Other

Not currently a student


**On a scale of 1-5 rate your knowledge of the following (1- No knowledge 5 - Expert)**

1. The realities of sex trafficking and the way that it functions in society.

    1     2     3     4     5

2. Discerning a legit job offer.

    1     2     3     4     5

3. Knowing to discern legit and safe websites and apps.

    1     2     3     4     5

4. Be able to identify red flags in relationships.

    1     2     3     4     5

5. Be able to know about effective assistance and support through local resources.

    1     2     3     4     5

## APPENDIX D: POST-SURVEY QUESTIONS

On a scale of 1-5 rate your knowledge of the following (1- No knowledge 5 - Expert)

1.  The realities of sex trafficking and the way that it functions in society.
     <center>1     2     3     4     5</center>

2.  Discerning a legit job offer.
     <center>1     2     3     4     5</center>

3.  Knowing to discern legit and safe websites and apps.
     <center>1     2     3     4     5</center>

4.  Be able to identify red flags in relationships.
1        2        3        4        5

5.  Be able to know about effective assistance and support through local resources.
     <center>1     2     3     4     5</center>

6.  What was most informative about the course?

7.  What was the best resource that I shared?

8.  What do you want to learn more about?

9.  After attending this course, how likely are you to attend another course to learn more about human trafficking in your community?

     Unlikely        Likely        Very Likely

**APPENDIX E: UDEMY PRIVACY POLICY**

The following is the Udemy Privacy Policy. Udemy is the online teaching platform that was

suggested in this dissertation. The use or suggestion of use of the Udemy learning platform by

this author is not an indication of any endorsement or sponsorship by Udemy.  This privacy

policy can also be viewed on the Udemy website.

Udemy. (March 23, 2023). *Privacy Policy.* https://www.udemy.com/terms/privacy/

This Privacy Policy was last updated on July 14, 2022.
Thank you for joining Udemy. We at Udemy (**"Udemy"**, **"we"**, **"us"**) respect your privacy and
want you to understand how we collect, use, and share data about you. This Privacy Policy
covers our data collection practices and describes your rights regarding your personal data.
Unless we link to a different policy or state otherwise, this Privacy Policy applies when you visit
or use the Udemy and CorpU websites, mobile applications, APIs, or related services
(the **"Services"**). It also applies to prospective customers of our business and enterprise
products.
**By using the Services, you agree to the terms of this Privacy Policy.** You shouldn't use the
Services if you don't agree with this Privacy Policy or any other agreement that governs your use
of the Services.
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1. What Data We Get
We collect certain data from you directly, like information you enter yourself, data about your
consumption of content, and data from third-party platforms you connect with Udemy. We also
collect some data automatically, like information about your device and what parts of our
Services you interact with or spend time using. All data listed in this section is subject to the
following processing activities: collecting, recording, structuring, storing, altering, retrieving,
encrypting, pseudonymizing, erasing, combining, and transmitting.
1.1 Data You Provide to Us
We may collect different data from or about you depending on how you use the Services. Below
are some examples to help you better understand the data we collect.
When you create an account and use the Services, including through a third-party platform, we
collect any data you provide directly, including:

| Category of Personal Data | Description | Legal Basis for Processing |
|---|---|---|
| Account Data | In order to use certain features (like accessing content), you need to create a user account, which requires us to collect and store your email address, password, and account settings. To create an instructor account, we collect and store your name, email address, password, and account settings. As you use certain features on the site, you may be prompted to submit additional information including occupation, government ID information, verification photo, date of birth, race/ethnicity, skill interests, and phone number. Upon account creation, we assign you a unique identifying number. | Performance of contract Legitimate interests (service provisioning, identity verification, fraud prevention and security, communication) |
| Profile Data | You can also choose to provide profile information like a photo, headline, biography, language, website link, social media profiles, country, or other data. Your Profile Data will be publicly viewable by others. | Performance of contract Legitimate interests (enhanced platform functionality, convey content source information) |
| Shared Content | Parts of the Services let you interact with other users or share content publicly, including by uploading courses and other educational content, posting reviews about content, asking or answering questions, sending messages to students or instructors, or posting photos or other work you upload. Such shared content may be publicly | Performance of contract Legitimate interests (service provisioning, enhanced platform functionality) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | viewable by others depending on where it is posted. | |
| Learning Data | When you access content, we collect certain data including which courses, assignments, labs, workspaces, and quizzes you've started and completed; content and subscription purchases and credits; subscriptions; completion certificates; your exchanges with instructors, teaching assistants, and other students; and essays, answers to questions, and other items submitted to satisfy course and related content requirements. | Performance of contract Legitimate interests (service provisioning, enhanced platform functionality) |
| Student Payment Data | If you make purchases, we collect certain data about your purchase (such as your name, billing address, and ZIP code) as necessary to process your order and which may optionally be saved to process future orders. You must provide certain payment and billing data directly to our payment service providers, including your name, credit card information, billing address, and ZIP code. We may also receive limited information, like the fact that you have a new card and the last four digits of that card, from payment service providers to facilitate payments. For security, Udemy does not collect or store sensitive cardholder data, such as full credit card numbers or card authentication data. | Performance of contract Legal obligation Legitimate interests (payment facilitation, fraud prevention and security, compliance) |
| Instructor Payment Data | If you are an instructor, you can link your PayPal, Payoneer, or other payment account to the | Performance of contract Legal obligation |

| | Services to receive payments. When you link a payment account, we collect and use certain information, including your payment account email address, account ID, physical address, or other data necessary for us to send payments to your account. In some instances, we may collect ACH or wire information to send payments to your account. In order to comply with applicable laws, we also work with trusted third parties who collect tax information as legally required. This tax information may include residency information, tax identification numbers, biographical information, and other personal information necessary for taxation purposes. For security, Udemy does not collect or store sensitive bank account information. The collection, use, and disclosure of your payment, billing, and taxation data is subject to the privacy policy and other terms of your payment account provider. | Legitimate interests (service provisioning, payment facilitation, fraud prevention and security, compliance) |
|---|---|---|
| Data About Your Accounts on Other Services | We may obtain certain information through your social media or other online accounts if they are connected to your Udemy account. If you log in to Udemy via Facebook or another third-party platform or service, we ask for your permission to access certain information about that other account. For example, depending on the platform or service we may collect your name, profile picture, account ID number, login email address, | Legitimate interests (identity verification, user experience improvement) |

| | location, physical location of your access devices, gender, birthday, and list of friends or contacts.<br>Those platforms and services make information available to us through their APIs. The information we receive depends on what information you (via your privacy settings) or the platform or service decide to give us.<br>If you access or use our Services through a third-party platform or service, or click on any third-party links, the collection, use, and sharing of your data will also be subject to the privacy policies and other agreements of that third party. | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sweepstakes, Promotions, and Surveys | We may invite you to complete a survey or participate in a promotion (like a contest, sweepstakes, or challenge), either through the Services or a third-party platform. If you participate, we will collect and store the data you provide as part of participating, such as your name, email address, postal address, date of birth, or phone number. That data is subject to this Privacy Policy unless otherwise stated in the official rules of the promotion or in another privacy policy. The data collected will be used to administer the promotion or survey, including for notifying winners and distributing rewards. To receive a reward, you may be required to allow us to post some of your information publicly (like on a winner's page). Where | Performance of contract<br>Legitimate interests (promotions administration, prize delivery, compliance) |

| | we use a third-party platform to administer a survey or promotion, the third party's privacy policy will apply. | |
|---|---|---|
| Communications and Support | If you contact us for support or to report a problem or concern (regardless of whether you have created an account), we collect and store your contact information, messages, and other data about you like your name, email address, messages, location, Udemy user ID, refund transaction IDs, and any other data you provide or that we collect through automated means (which we cover below). We use this data to respond to you and research your question or concern, in accordance with this Privacy Policy. | Legitimate interests (customer and technical support) |

The data listed above is stored by us and associated with your account.

1.2 Data We Collect through Automated Means

When you access the Services (including browsing content), we collect certain data by automated means, including:

| Category of Personal Data | Description | Legal Basis for Processing |
|---|---|---|
| System Data | Technical data about your computer or device, like your IP address, device type, operating system type and version, unique device identifiers, browser, browser language, domain and other systems data, and platform types. | Performance of contract Legitimate interests (service provisioning, customer and technical support, fraud prevention and security, communication, product improvement) |
| Usage Data | Usage statistics about your interactions with the Services, including content accessed, time spent on | Legitimate interests (service provisioning, user experience improvement, product improvement) |

| | pages or the Service, pages visited, features used, your search queries, click data, date and time, referrer, and other data regarding your use of the Services. | |
|---|---|---|
| Approximate Geographic Data | An approximate geographic location, including information like country, city, and geographic coordinates, calculated based on your IP address. | Legitimate interests (user experience improvement, fraud prevention and security, compliance) |

The data listed above is collected through the use of server log files and tracking technologies, as detailed in the "Cookies and Data Collection Tools" section below. It is stored by us and associated with your account.

1.3 Data From Third Parties

If you are a Udemy Business enterprise or corporate prospect, in addition to information you submit to us, we may collect certain business contact information from third-party commercial sources.

2. How We Get Data About You

We use tools like cookies, web beacons, and similar tracking technologies to gather the data listed above. Some of these tools offer you the ability to opt out of data collection.

2.1 Cookies and Data Collection Tools

We use cookies, which are small text files stored by your browser, to collect, store, and share data about your activities across websites, including on Udemy. They allow us to remember things about your visits to Udemy, like your preferred language, and to make the site easier to use. To learn more about cookies, visit https://cookiepedia.co.uk/all-about-cookies. We may also use clear pixels in emails to track deliverability and open rates.

Udemy and service providers acting on our behalf (like Google Analytics and third-party advertisers) use server log files and automated data collection tools like cookies, tags, scripts, customized links, device or browser fingerprints, and web beacons (together, **"Data Collection Tools"**) when you access and use the Services. These Data Collection Tools automatically track and collect certain System Data and Usage Data (as detailed in Section 1) when you use the Services. In some cases, we tie data gathered through those Data Collection Tools to other data that we collect as described in this Privacy Policy.

2.2 Why We Use Data Collection Tools

Udemy uses the following types of Data Collection Tools for the purposes described:

Strictly Necessary: These Data Collection Tools enable you to access the site, provide basic functionality (like logging in or accessing content), secure the site, protect against fraudulent logins, and detect and prevent abuse or unauthorized use of your account. These are required for the Services to work properly, so if you disable them, parts of the site will break or be unavailable.

Functional: These Data Collection Tools remember data about your browser and your preferences, provide additional site functionality, customize content to be more relevant to you,

and remember settings affecting the appearance and behavior of the Services (like your preferred language or volume level for video playback).

Performance: These Data Collection Tools help measure and improve the Services by providing usage and performance data, visit counts, traffic sources, or where an application was downloaded from. These tools can help us test different versions of Udemy to see which features or content users prefer and determine which email messages are opened.

Advertising: These Data Collection Tools are used to deliver relevant ads (on the site and/or other sites) based on things we know about you like your Usage and System Data (as detailed in Section 1), and things that the ad service providers know about you based on their tracking data. The ads can be based on your recent activity or activity over time and across other sites and services. To help deliver tailored advertising, we may provide these service providers with a hashed, anonymized version of your email address (in a non-human-readable form) and content that you share publicly on the Services.

Social Media: These Data Collection Tools enable social media functionality, like sharing content with friends and networks. These cookies may track a user or device across other sites and build a profile of user interests for targeted advertising purposes.

You can set your web browser to alert you about attempts to place cookies on your computer, limit the types of cookies you allow, or refuse cookies altogether. If you do, you may not be able to use some or all features of the Services, and your experience may be different or less functional. To learn more about managing Data Collection Tools, refer to Section 6.1 (Your Choices About the Use of Your Data) below.

3. What We Use Your Data For

We use your data to do things like provide our Services, communicate with you, troubleshoot issues, secure against fraud and abuse, improve and update our Services, analyze how people use our Services, serve personalized advertising, and as required by law or necessary for safety and integrity. We retain your data for as long as it is needed to serve the purposes for which it was collected.

We use the data we collect through your use of the Services to:

Provide and administer the Services, including to facilitate participation in educational content, issue completion certificates, display customized content, and facilitate communication with other users (Account Data; Shared Content; Learning Data; System Data; Usage Data; Approximate Geographic Data);

Process payments to instructors and other third parties (Student Payment Data; Instructor Payment Data);

Process your requests and orders for educational content, products, specific services, information, or features (Account Data; Learning Data; Student Payment Data; System Data; Communications and Support);

Communicate with you about your account by (Account Data; Shared Content; Learning Data; Sweepstakes, Promotions, and Surveys; System Data; Communications and Support):

Responding to your questions and concerns;

Sending you administrative messages and information, including messages from instructors, students, and teaching assistants; notifications about changes to our Service; and updates to our agreements;

Sending you information, such as by email or text messages, about your progress in courses and related content, rewards programs, new services, new features, promotions, newsletters, and other available instructor-created content (which you can opt out of at any time);

Sending push notifications to your wireless device to provide updates and other relevant messages (which you can manage from the "options" or "settings" page of the mobile app);

Manage your account and account preferences and personalize your experience (Account Data; Learning Data; Student Payment Data; Instructor Payment Data; System Data, Usage Data, Cookie Data);

Facilitate the Services' technical functioning, including troubleshooting and resolving issues, securing the Services, and preventing fraud and abuse (Account Data; Student Payment Data; Instructor Payment Data; Communications and Support; System Data; Approximate Geographic Location);

Verify the identity of instructors (Account Data; Instructor Payment Data);

Solicit feedback from users (Account Data; Communications and Support);

Market products, services, surveys, and promotions (Account Data; Learning Data; Sweepstakes, Promotions, and Surveys; Usage Data; Cookie Data);

Market Subscription Plans to prospective customers (Account Data; Learning Data; Cookie Data);

Learn more about you by linking your data with additional data through third-party data providers and/or analyzing the data with the help of analytics service providers (Account Data; Data About Your Accounts on Other Services; Usage Data; Cookie Data);

Identify unique users across devices (Account Data; System Data; Cookie Data);

Tailor advertisements across devices (Cookie Data);

Improve our Services and develop new products, services, and features (all data categories);

Analyze trends and traffic, track purchases, and track usage data (Account Data; Learning Data; Student Payment Data; Communications and Support; System Data; Usage Data; Approximate Geographic Data; Cookie Data);

Advertise the Services on third-party websites and applications (Account Data; Cookie Data);

As required or permitted by law (all data categories); or

As we, in our sole discretion, otherwise determine to be necessary to ensure the safety or integrity of our users, employees, third parties, the public, or our Services (all data categories).

4. Who We Share Your Data With

We share certain data about you with instructors, other students, companies performing services for us, Udemy affiliates, our business partners, analytics and data enrichment providers, your social media providers, companies helping us run promotions and surveys, and advertising companies who help us promote our Services. We may also share your data as needed for security, legal compliance, or as part of a corporate restructuring. Lastly, we can share data in other ways if it is aggregated or de-identified or if we get your consent.

We may share your data with third parties under the following circumstances or as otherwise described in this Privacy Policy:

With Your Instructors: We share data that we have about you (except your email address) with instructors or teaching assistants for educational content you access or request information about, so they can improve their content for you and other students. This data may include things like your country, browser language, operating system, device settings, the site that brought you to Udemy, and certain activities on Udemy, like enrolled courses and course review. We will not share your email address with instructors or teaching assistants. (Account Data; System Data; Usage Data; Approximate Geographic Data)

With Other Students and Instructors: Depending on your settings, your shared content and profile data may be publicly viewable, including to other students and instructors. If you ask a question

to an instructor or teaching assistant, your information (including your name) may also be publicly viewable. Note that within CorpU Open, all chat rooms, message boards, news groups, or other public forums available to participants are publicly visible to other participants, so you shouldn't post any confidential or proprietary information through those features. (Account Data; Profile Data; Shared Content)

With Service Providers, Contractors, and Agents: We share your data with third-party companies who perform services on our behalf, like payment processing, fraud and abuse prevention, data analysis, marketing and advertising services (including retargeted advertising), email and hosting services, and customer services and support. These service providers may access your personal data and are required to use it solely as we direct, to provide our requested service. (All data categories)

With Udemy Affiliates: We may share your data within our corporate family of companies that are related by common ownership or control to enable or support us in providing the Services. (All data categories)

With Business Partners: We have agreements with other websites and platforms to distribute our Services and drive traffic to Udemy. Depending on your location, we may share your data with these trusted partners. (Account Data; Learning Data; Communications and Support; System Data)

With Credit-Granting Organizations for Continuing Education: If you take a course to fulfill a continuing professional education requirement, we may share that information upon request of the organization granting the continuing education credit. (Account Data; Learning Data)

With Analytics and Data Enrichment Services: As part of our use of third-party analytics tools like Google Analytics and data enrichment services like ZoomInfo, we share certain contact information or de-identified data. De-identified data means data where we've removed things like your name and email address and replaced it with a token ID. This allows these providers to provide analytics services or match your data with publicly-available database information (including contact and social information from other sources). We do this to communicate with you in a more effective and customized manner. (Account Data; System Data; Usage Data; Cookie Data)

To Power Social Media Features: The social media features in the Services (like the Facebook Like button) may allow the third-party social media provider to collect things like your IP address and which page of the Services you're visiting, and to set a cookie to enable the feature. Your interactions with these features are governed by the third-party company's privacy policy. (System Data; Usage Data; Cookie Data)

To Administer Promotions and Surveys: We may share your data as necessary to administer, market, or sponsor promotions and surveys you choose to participate in, as required by applicable law (like to provide a winners list or make required filings), or in accordance with the rules of the promotion or survey. (Account Data; Sweepstakes, Promotions, and Surveys)

For Advertising: If we decide to use an advertising-supported revenue model in the future, we may use and share certain System Data and Usage Data with third-party advertisers and networks to show general demographic and preference information among our users. We may also allow advertisers to collect System Data through Data Collection Tools (as detailed in Section 2.1), to use this data to offer you targeted ad delivery to personalize your user experience (through behavioral advertising) and to undertake web analytics. Advertisers may also share with us the data they collect about you. To learn more or opt out from participating ad networks' behavioral

advertising, see Section 6.1 (Your Choices About the Use of Your Data) below. Note that if you opt out, you'll continue to be served generic ads. (System Data)

For Security and Legal Compliance: We may disclose your data (all data categories) to third parties if we (in our sole discretion) have a good faith belief that the disclosure is:

Requested as part of a judicial, governmental, or legal inquiry, order, or proceeding;

Reasonably necessary as part of a valid subpoena, warrant, or other legally-valid request;

Reasonably necessary to enforce our Terms of Use, Privacy Policy, and other legal agreements;

Required to detect, prevent, or address fraud, abuse, misuse, potential violations of law (or rule or regulation), or security or technical issues;

Reasonably necessary in our discretion to protect against imminent harm to the rights, property, or safety of Udemy, our users, employees, members of the public, or our Services;

We may also disclose data about you to our auditors and legal advisors in order to assess our disclosure obligations and rights under this Privacy Policy; or

Required or permitted by law.

During a Change in Control: If Udemy undergoes a business transaction like a merger, acquisition, corporate divestiture, or dissolution (including bankruptcy), or a sale of all or some of its assets, we may share, disclose, or transfer all of your data to the successor organization during such transition or in contemplation of a transition (including during due diligence). (All data categories)

After Aggregation/De-identification: We may disclose or use aggregated or de-identified data for any purpose.

With Your Permission: With your consent, we may share data to third parties outside the scope of this Privacy Policy. (All data categories)

5. Security

We use appropriate security based on the type and sensitivity of data being stored. As with any internet-enabled system, there is always a risk of unauthorized access, so it's important to protect your password and to contact us if you suspect any unauthorized access to your account.

Udemy takes appropriate security measures to protect against unauthorized access, alteration, disclosure, or destruction of your personal data that we collect and store. These measures vary based on the type and sensitivity of the data. Unfortunately, however, no system can be 100% secured, so we cannot guarantee that communications between you and Udemy, the Services, or any information provided to us in connection with the data we collect through the Services will be free from unauthorized access by third parties. Your password is an important part of our security system, and it is your responsibility to protect it. You should not share your password with any third party, and if you believe your password or account has been compromised, you should change it immediately and contact our Support Team with any concerns.

6. Your Rights

You have certain rights around the use of your data, including the ability to opt out of promotional emails, cookies, and collection of your data by certain third parties. You can update or terminate your account from within our Services, and can also contact us for individual rights requests about your personal data. Parents who believe we've unintentionally collected personal data about their underage child should contact us for help deleting that information.

6.1 Your Choices About the Use of Your Data

You can choose not to provide certain data to us, but you may not be able to use certain features of the Services.

To stop receiving promotional communications from us, you can opt out by using the unsubscribe mechanism in the promotional communication you receive or by changing the email preferences in your account. Note that regardless of your email preference settings, we will send you transactional and relationship messages regarding the Services, including administrative confirmations, order confirmations, important updates about the Services, and notices about our policies.

If you're located in the European Economic Area, you may opt out of certain Data Collection Tools by clicking the "Cookie settings" link at the bottom of any page.

The browser or device you use may allow you to control cookies and other types of local data storage. To learn more about managing cookies, visit https://cookiepedia.co.uk/how-to-manage-cookies. Your wireless device may also allow you to control whether location or other data is collected and shared.

To get information and control cookies used for tailored advertising from participating companies, see the consumer opt-out pages for the Network Advertising Initiative and Digital Advertising Alliance, or if you're located in the European Economic Area, visit the Your Online Choices site. If you're located in Japan, visit the Digital Advertising Consortium. To opt out of Google's display advertising or customize Google Display Network ads, visit the Google Ads Settings page. To opt out of Taboola's targeted ads, see the Opt-out Link in their Cookie Policy. To opt out of allowing Google Analytics, Mixpanel, ZoomInfo, or Clearbit to use your data for analytics or enrichment, see the Google Analytics Opt-out Browser Add-on, Mixpanel Opt-Out Cookie, ZoomInfo's policy, and Clearbit data claiming mechanism.

Apple iOS, Android OS, and Microsoft Windows each provide their own instructions on how to control in-app tailored advertising. For other devices and operating systems, you should review your privacy settings on that platform.

If you have any questions about your data, our use of it, or your rights, contact us at privacy@udemy.com.

6.2 Accessing, Updating, and Deleting Your Personal Data

You can access and update your personal data that Udemy collects and maintains as follows:

To update data you provide directly, log into your account and update your account at any time.

To terminate your account:

If you are a student, visit your profile settings page and follow the steps detailed here.

If you are an instructor, follow the steps detailed here.

If you have any issues terminating your account, please contact our Support Team.

Please note: even after your account is terminated, some or all of your data may still be visible to others, including without limitation any data that has been (a) copied, stored, or disseminated by other users (including comments on content); (b) shared or disseminated by you or others (including in your shared content); or (c) posted to a third-party platform. Even after your account is terminated, we retain your data for as long as we have a legitimate purpose to do so (and in accordance with applicable law), including to assist with legal obligations, resolve disputes, and enforce our agreements. We may retain and disclose such data pursuant to this Privacy Policy after your account has been terminated.

To request to access, correct, or delete your personal data, please use our online form here. You can also submit these requests by emailing privacy@udemy.com or writing to us at Udemy, Attn: Privacy/Legal Team, 600 Harrison Street, 3rd floor, San Francisco CA 94107. Please allow up to 30 days for a response. For your protection, we may require that the request be sent through the email address associated with your account, and we may need to verify your identity before

implementing your request. Please note that we retain certain data where we have a lawful basis to do so, including for mandatory record-keeping and to complete transactions.

6.3 Our Policy Concerning Children

We recognize the privacy interests of children and encourage parents and guardians to take an active role in their children's online activities and interests. Individuals younger than 18 years of age, but of the required age for consent to use online services where they live (for example, 13 in the US or 16 in Ireland), may not set up an account, but may have a parent or guardian open an account and help them access appropriate content. Individuals younger than the required age for consent to use online services may not use the Services. If we learn that we've collected personal data from a child under those ages, we will take reasonable steps to delete it.

Parents who believe that Udemy may have collected personal data from a child under those ages can submit a request that it be removed to privacy@udemy.com.

7. Jurisdiction-Specific Rules

If you live in California, you have certain rights related to accessing and deleting your data, as well as learning who we share your data with. If you live in Australia, you have the right to make a formal complaint with the appropriate government agency. Users outside of the United States should note that we transfer data to the US and other areas outside of the European Economic Area.

7.1 Users in California

Users who are California residents have certain rights under the California Consumer Privacy Act, ("CCPA"). If you are an eligible California user, included in these rights are:

**"Right to Know"** — You have the right to request to know more about the categories and specific pieces of personal information that we have collected about you and access a copy of your personal information.

**"Right to Correction"** — You have the right to have inaccurate personal information about you corrected.

**"Right to Deletion"** — You have the right to request deletion of personal information that we have collected about you.

**"Right to Non-Discrimination"** — If you choose to exercise any of your rights under CCPA, Udemy will treat you like all other users. In other words, there is no penalty for exercising your rights under CCPA.

**"Right to Opt-Out"** - You have the right to opt out of the sale of your personal information. CCPA has a specific definition of a "sale" and while Udemy does not, in the traditional sense, sell your personal information or the personal information of any of our users, we do use cookies that make non-personally identifiable information available to select third-parties. To opt out of such a "sale," click on the "Do Not Sell My Personal Information" link at the bottom of this page.

To exercise any of these rights under CCPA, please email privacy@udemy.com or write to us at Udemy, Attn: Privacy/Legal Team, 600 Harrison Street, 3rd floor, San Francisco CA 94107. CCPA allows you to designate an authorized agent to make these requests on your behalf. For your protection, we may require that the request be sent through the email address associated with your account, and we may need to verify you and/or your agent's identity before fulfilling your request.

Additionally, for more information about the personal information we collect and how we collect it, please see the sections above entitled "What Data We Get" and "How We Get Data About You."

To learn about the business and commercial purposes for which your personal information is collected and the categories of service providers who have access to your personal information, please see the sections above entitled "What We Use Your Data For" and "Who We Share Your Data With."

As a California resident, you also have the right to request certain details about what personal information we share with third parties for those third parties' direct marketing purposes. To submit your request, send an email to privacy@udemy.com with the phrase "California Shine the Light" and include your mailing address, state of residence, and email address.

Since there is no widely accepted standard for the browser-initiated Do Not Track signal, we do not currently recognize or respond to Do Not Track signals.

7.2 Users in Nevada

**Udemy does not sell its users' personal information or personal data.** Nonetheless, Nevada residents have the right to submit a request that we do not sell your covered personal information, which you can do by emailing privacy@udemy.com or writing to us at Udemy, Attn: Privacy/Legal Team, 600 Harrison Street, 3rd floor, San Francisco CA 94107.

7.3 Users in Australia

If you are an Australia resident and you have a complaint, you may refer it to the office of the Australian Information Commissioner ("OAIC"). You can contact OAIC by visiting www.oaic.gov.au; forwarding an email to enquiries@oaic.gov.au; telephoning 1300 363 992; or writing to OAIC at GPO Box 5218, Sydney NSW 2001. You may contact our privacy team at privacy@udemy.com to make a complaint about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles which will be responded to within 30 days.

7.4 Users in the European Economic Area ("EEA") and United Kingdom ("UK")

If you are located in the EEA or UK, you have the right to request access to your data in a portable format and to request the rectification, erasure, restriction of processing, or objection to processing of your personal data. You also have the right to obtain a free copy of the Standard Contractual Clauses referenced in Section 7.5. You may use the information in Section 6.2 to submit your request. Additionally, if you are located in the EEA, UK, or Switzerland, you also have the right to lodge a complaint with your supervisory authority.

Personal data is also processed outside of the UK, Switzerland, and the EEA by our Udemy group companies, or our service providers, including to process transactions, facilitate payments, and provide support services as described in Section 4. We use the Controller-to-Processor Standard Contractual Clauses adopted by the European Commission to facilitate transfers of personal data from the EEA to third countries and have entered into data processing agreements with our service providers and Udemy group companies to restrict and regulate their processing of your data. By submitting your data or using our Services, you consent to this transfer, storage, and processing by Udemy and its processors.

7.5 Users Outside of the U.S.

**In order to provide the Services to you, we must transfer your data to the United States and process it there.** If you are using the Services from outside the United States, you consent to the transfer, storage, and processing of your data in and to the United States or other countries.

8. Updates & Contact Info

When we make a material change to this policy, we'll notify users via email, in-product notice, or another mechanism required by law. Changes become effective the day they're posted. Please contact us via email or postal mail with any questions, concerns, or disputes.

8.1 Modifications to This Privacy Policy

From time to time, we may update this Privacy Policy. If we make any material change to it, we will notify you via email, through a notification posted on the Services, or as required by applicable law. We will also include a summary of the key changes. Unless stated otherwise, modifications will become effective on the day they are posted.

As permitted by applicable law, if you continue to use the Services after the effective date of any change, then your access and/or use will be deemed an acceptance of (and agreement to follow and be bound by) the revised Privacy Policy. The revised Privacy Policy supersedes all previous Privacy Policies.

8.2 Interpretation

Any capitalized terms not defined in this policy are defined as specified in Udemy's Terms of Use. Any version of this Privacy Policy in a language other than English is provided for convenience. If there is any conflict with a non-English version, you agree that the English language version will control.

8.3 Questions

If you have any questions, concerns, or disputes regarding our Privacy Policy, please feel free to contact our privacy team (including our Data Protection Officer) at privacy@udemy.com. You can also send postal mail to us at Udemy, Attn: Legal, 600 Harrison Street, 3rd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94107.

**APPENDIX F: UDEMY COURSE OUTLINE**

**Intended Learners:**

- Understanding the realities of sex trafficking and the way that it functions in society.

- Be able to discern a legitimate job offer.

- Be able to discern legitimate and safe websites and apps.

- Be able to know about effective assistance and support through local resources.

- Be able to identify red flags in relationships.

**What are the requirements or prerequisites for taking your course?**

No required learning necessary.

**Who is this course for?**

By providing education to those most vulnerable to exploitation, I hope to provide an educational awareness and prevention of sex trafficking by creating a training for higher education students that promotes safety in terms of relationships, jobs, and the internet.

**Udemy Course Headings**:

- Introduction

- Trafficking Exists

- Causes, Warning Signs and Preventative Measures

- Trafficking and Relationships

- Trafficking, Social Media, and Job Offers

- Effective Assistance and Local Resources

- Post Survey

**Course Title**: Sex Trafficking Awareness and Prevention

**Course Subtitle**: A Solution to Injustice

**Course description**:

Sex trafficking is a social justice issue, where higher education students are a vulnerable population. My key goal is: What support is given to higher education students and the community so that they are not in danger of being sex trafficked? I discovered that my overall awareness in creating training for higher education students was that I want to create a curriculum that could be a solution to injustice. This course that I developed for higher education students was created to provide an educational awareness and prevention of sex trafficking that promotes safety in terms of relationships, jobs, and the internet. Creating a curriculum that is aimed at students could help shift choices and decisions that lead to harm. I personally feel led to train and empower individuals on this topic, where students may also choose to take a stand on this social justice issue, as well.

To understand human trafficking, it is necessary to recognize that sex labor is not just a commodity. Sex labor exposes a person to abuse and trauma. Although many enter the sex industry for monetary gain, the consequences are not worth the cost of the traumatic experiences.

I am hopeful that this course can make an impact in terms of education, revealing to others the importance of recognizing and understanding the signs, preventative measures, hotline resources, and ways in which one may partake in the solutions to sex trafficking.