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Am I My Sister's Keeper?

Human Trafficking Awareness in the African-American Evangelical Community of Columbia, South Carolina

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A Thesis in the Field of Legal Studies

for the Degree of Master of Liberal Arts in Extension Studies

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Abstract

This thesis explores the crime variously referred to as *modern-day slavery, forced labor*, or *human trafficking*. I define "human trafficking" as the coercion of one human being by another in order to extract labor and various forms of servitude, in criminal circumstances that result in profit to others. Human trafficking is a global challenge that impacts families, communities, businesses, and governments—in every case to the detriment of human beings.

The hypothesis is: Are the African-American Evangelical churches in Columbia, South Carolina, sufficiently aware of human trafficking that they can be regarded as "capable guardians"? Two theories relate to this topic, as described by Cohen and Felton's "Routine Activity Theory" and expanded by Ekblom and Tilley's "Situational Crime Prevention" theories; together they provide the foundation for this research.

A 22-question survey was developed to affirm or negate the validity of the hypothesis. The surveys were distributed (with each church pastor's prior approval) directly to members of five congregations. There were also opportunities to offer surveys to two church-sponsored conferences, a men's breakfast, community luncheons, and several other public venues. In total, 410 surveys were completed and analyzed. The survey questions covered five categories: (1) individual knowledge of human trafficking; (2) personal responsibility; (3) faith as a factor; (4) church involvement in human trafficking awareness; and (5) vulnerable populations within the respondent's community.

The thesis hypothesis—that the specified population was uninformed or misinformed—ultimately proved to be incorrect. Analysis of the survey responses demonstrated higher-than-average levels of knowledge among the respondents, which could be attributed to local awareness campaigns, discussions among peers and relatives, and coverage by media outlets.

Given the historical impact of the African-American Evangelical church's ability to disseminate information and impact social justice, I believe additional awareness and education would enable churches to be valued stakeholders in future awareness campaigns.

Dedication

First and foremost, this work is dedicated to God, who appointed me to an academic assignment that would increase human trafficking awareness, put hurting people on the radar of the church, and directed me to "Open thy mouth in the cause of all who are appointed to destruction" (Proverbs 31:8).

To my faithful husband Richard, who gave unselfishly of his time, our resources, and his technical expertise. Thank you for the strong foundation of your steadfast love and for believing in the importance of this work.

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Glossary of Acronyms

CRM	Civil Rights Movement
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
HTTF	Human Trafficking Task Force
ILO	International Labor Organization
IRB	Institutional Review Board (Harvard)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHTH	National Human Trafficking Hotline
SCHTH	South Carolina Human Trafficking Hotline
SCHTTF	South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force
TIP	Trafficking in Persons

Definitions of Terms Used

The following is a list of definitions of terms used in the thesis. Some terms have multiple definitions, but the definitions given here are as I used them in this text.

African-American Evangelical Christians: African-American Christians whose lifestyle, as well as their social, cultural, and political decisions, are greatly informed by their belief in the Bible and their adherence to scriptural standards. This definition includes core tenets shared by the National Association of Evangelicals[1] and the Barna Group's nine-point definition of Evangelicals. Barna's definition contains a caveat when defining Evangelicals that states: "Keep in mind that only God knows a person's heart. No scientific instrument is able to perfectly evaluate what a person believes, or how deeply they believe it."[2] Additionally, I appropriated the earlier and broader definition that does not limit the term "evangelical" to the scope of the congregant's political voting pattern or socioeconomic status, but rather the inclusion and application of Christian doctrine that influences the participant's worldview.[3]

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[1] National Association of Evangelicals, "What is an Evangelical: Defining Evangelicals in Research." https://www.nae.net/what-is-an-evangelical/. Accessed July 26, 2019.

[2] Barna Group, "Survey Explores Who Qualifies as an Evangelical: Research Details." See https://www.barna.com/research/survey-explores-who-qualifies-as-an-evangelical/. Accessed September 10, 2019.

[3] *Webster's American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828 (San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, August 2000).

Awareness: General information provided to a community or group that increases their knowledge or understanding of a subject, issue, or situation.[4] I discuss awareness as it relates specifically to this study. Utilizing the legal concept of "preponderance of evidence," awareness is further defined to mean that each survey participant knows and can answer more questions correctly, than not.

Capable Guardians: Originally used by Cohen and Felson in their Routine Activities Theory,[5] the term refers to individuals who have an awareness of the potential vulnerability of the community to crime. I adapted Cohen and Felson's definition to specifically suit this study within the crime of human trafficking.

Coercion: Threats of serious harm or physical restraint against a person; a scheme, plan, or pattern intended to persuade a person to believe that failure to perform an act would result in serious harm to or physical restraint against a person.[6]

Forced Labor: Individuals who are coerced to work under adverse circumstances.

Human Trafficking: The recruitment, transportation, transfer harboring, or receipt of persons by means of threat or the use of force or other forms of coercion, with the intention of abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power; creating a position of vulnerability, the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a subservient person with another person having control for the

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[4] Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States, 2013-2017. Available from: https://www.ovc.gov/pubs/FederalHumanTraffickingStrategicPlan.pdf, 26. Accessed July 3, 2019.

[5] Cohen and Felson, "Social Change and Crime Rate," 589.

[6] Federal Anti-Trafficking Law, 22 U.S. Code § 7102 (3) (A) (B). Available from: https://humantraffickinghotline.org/what-human-trafficking/federal-law. Accessed July 3, 2019.

purpose of exploitation. Exploitation includes, at a minimum, the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation; also forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, forced servitude, and the forced removal of organs without permission or agreement. Also stated in this thesis as "the coercion of one human being by another in order to extract labor and various forms of service, in criminal circumstances, resulting in profit to others."[7]

Likely Offenders: Used by Cohen and Felson in their Routine Activities Theory as one of three elements that predicts the convergence of factors leading to crime[8]; one who is motivated to commit a crime.

Modern-Day Slavery: Synonymous with the terms *human trafficking* and *forced labor*. It includes all forms of human trafficking.

Outreach: An extended effort toward members of a community who may or may not be a member of the organization offering assistance.

Routine Activities Theory: Theory by Cohen and Felson that includes three pillars: (1) likely offender, (2) suitable target, and (3) the absence of a capable guardian. Each can be found within the pattern of a crime, and each relies on "recurrent and prevalent activities which provide for basic population and individual needs . . .

[7] UN Trafficking in Persons (TIP), "Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons." Available from: https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html. Accessed July 3, 2019.

[8] Cohen and Felson, "Social Change and Crime Rate," 589.

and include formalized work, as well as the provision of standard food, shelter, sexual outlet, leisure, social interaction, learning, and child rearing."[9]

Suitable Target: The third pillar of Cohen and Felson's Routine Activities Theory, which establishes the idea that some members of a population are vulnerable to crime due to the lack of capable guardians.

[9] Cohen and Felson, "Social Change and Crime Rate," 593.

Chapter I

Introduction

Lack of awareness, when combined with silence, often creates a vacuum that evil can quickly fill. I explore the truth of this statement in the context of the crime variously referred to as *modern-day slavery, forced labor*, or *human trafficking*. For purposes of this thesis, I define human trafficking as the coercion of one human being by another in order to extract labor and various forms of servitude, in criminal circumstances that result in profit to others. Human trafficking is a global challenge that impacts families, communities, businesses, and governments. In every case, it is to the detriment of human beings.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) defines human trafficking as:

> The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of a threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.[10]

The ILO further defines human trafficking as a global crime with approximately 40.3 million victims.[11] In 2018, there were 11,096 cases prosecuted, 7,481 convictions, and

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[10] International Labor Organization (ILO), "What is forced labour, modern slavery, and human trafficking?" https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/definition/lang—en/index.htm. Accessed July 2, 2019.

[11] ILO, "Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, Forced Labour, and Forced Marriage," 2017. https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_575479/lang--en/index.htm. Accessed February 10, 2020.

85,613 victims identified worldwide.[12] In the United States, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 was established to help protect individuals deemed to be vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation, and to prosecute the people who exploit them (22 U.S. §7101). This crime has devastating effects on a global level.

The approximate number of victims enslaved worldwide compared with the number of victims identified is shocking and further amplifies the severe nature of this crime and the need for specific and extensive remedies. However, more often human trafficking is viewed simply as transporting victims across borders with the assumption that sexual trafficking is involved. This is a misconception. More than three-quarters of victims are from or live in the countries where they are trafficked—a statistic that calls for deeper exploration of the crime as well as gauging awareness at the community level.[13]

The South Carolina Office of the Attorney General specifically identifies human trafficking as "a complex insidious crime that infiltrates communities across South Carolina…. Traffickers continue to target the vulnerable as well as those in mainstream society."[14] This is not the case with all forms of human trafficking. The knowledge that victims are more frequently identified in their countries of origin places a weightier focus on national, regional, and local trafficking activity. Victims come from diverse backgrounds, and the relationship to their exploiters include employers, recruiters, intimate partners, and family members. In 77.5% of cases in South Carolina, the

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[12] Trafficking in Persons Report, 2019. https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/2019-Trafficking-in-Persons-Report.pdf, 38.

[13] Trafficking in Persons Report, 2019, 3.

[14] South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force, Annual Report, 2019, 2.

connection between exploiter and victim came through employment or as a result of pursuing employment, with some 71% of vulnerable victims.[15]

The destruction of human lives is not easily quantified since many effects remain hidden for years after victims have escaped. But when seeking answers to the question of the toll or human cost of this crime, one must examine the entire issue from the perspective that no age, gender, or cultural/socioeconomic group is immune from the impacts of trafficking. Taking that as a specific premise, I believe that the toll is far greater than we currently know.

The general public may sometimes observe the crime of human trafficking as it occurs, may see or interact (knowingly or unknowingly) with its victims, or observe instances when a person is being lured or coerced, without realizing what they are witnessing. According to a U.S. Department of State report:

> Human trafficking is often described as a crime that is "hidden in plain sight" because victims may interact with others in the community but are unlikely to self-identify for many reasons, including fear of harm to themselves or their family members. For example, victims may come into contact with the criminal justice system, seek medical care, attend school or faith services, work in local businesses or utilize public transportation. Any interaction with professionals or other individuals in these instances provides an opportunity for identification and assistance.[16]

The repeating dynamics of this crime, which preys upon vulnerable populations and creates thriving criminal enterprises, can be found worldwide. Government, judicial, and law enforcement agencies often lack comprehensive solutions. However, like many global challenges, insight into these crimes and challenges may come through local

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[15] Human Trafficking Task Force, 2019 Annual Report, 47, 48.

[16] U.S. Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report 2018. https://www.state.gov/reports/2018-trafficking-in-persons-report/, 9. Accessed July 2, 2019.

solutions. In this instance, increased awareness has the potential to provide additional support to government, law enforcement, and community groups that are actively pursuing solutions to this crime. As the recognition of human trafficking increases and more opportunities to provide assistance become available, there can be more interventions—even a decrease—in these criminal activities due in part to heightened levels of awareness.

Section 7101(b)(1) of the Federal Human Trafficking Code[17] addresses the need to build increased levels of awareness within communities. Such awareness begins with a clear understanding of the level of current awareness in specific sectors of the community. As an example, the African-American Evangelical Churches function in a sector of the community that spans all socioeconomic levels, so the churches provide a gauge of the level of awareness within the communities they serve. The value of NGOs is far-reaching, and their trustworthiness is unmatched when compared to some types of governmental assistance.[18] The two things that make faith-based organizations different from secular NGOs is that "they are motivated by their faith and they have a constituency which is broader than humanitarian concerns."[19]

In its efforts to address human trafficking, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) takes a multifaceted approach that involves a variety of stakeholders in

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[17] U.S. Code Title 22, Chapter 78. Available from https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/22/chapter-78. Accessed December 15, 2019.

[18] Elizabeth Ferris, "Faith Based and Secular Humanitarian Organizations," *International Review of the Red Cross,* 87, no. 858 (June 2005): 311. Accessed February 21, 2017.

[19] Ferris, "Faith Based and Secular Humanitarian Organizations," 316.

an organization called the Blue Campaign.[20] The Blue Campaign is a collaborative effort between DHS, tri-level governmental agencies, non-governmental agencies (including churches), and private organizations that work to bring protection and justice.[21] One aspect of this campaign is to encourage the participation of members in communities of faith. On the Blue Campaign website, the DHS advances the need for involvement by religious organizations: "As a faith leader, you are in a unique position to help stop human trafficking. As a moral authority and trusted messenger, your efforts to educate and engage your congregation and community will resonate."[22]

Molly Overholt's study on human trafficking awareness reflects this:

> Although spirituality is not related to trafficking knowledge, spirituality is related to willingness to intervene…. Spirituality may not be associated with greater trafficking knowledge, but spirituality's link to willingness to intervene may explain the religious-based (particularly Christian), anti-trafficking organizations.[23]

I believe that this type of collaboration among entities that have the potential to impact human trafficking affirms the importance of community involvement and the current and potential role that churches can provide in protecting and defending their respective communities.

Members of a local community often comprise the largest segment of "policers" of both legitimate and illegal activities. In South Carolina during 2017, the National

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[20] Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Blue Campaign. https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/about-blue-campaign. Accessed December 12, 2019.

[21] DHS, Blue Campaign.

[22] DHS, Blue Campaign.

[23] Molly Overholt, "Human Trafficking Awareness," Master's thesis, East Carolina University, 2013, 33. Available from: Search-proquest-com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/socialsciencepremium/pdfprintview. Accessed August 6, 2019.

Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH) received 161 calls from victims of trafficking, and 99 calls from community members calling to make a report—a significant number because it illustrates the role that members of the community can play by being the "eyes and ears" of a neighborhood, town, or community.[24] In 2017, the NHTH reported 120 trafficking cases in South Carolina. Of these cases, 81 were categorized as sex trafficking, 27 labor trafficking, 8 as sex and labor trafficking, and 4 cases where the type of trafficking was not identified. There were 198 victims identified, 77 traffickers identified, and 56 businesses identified. A total of 393 contacts were made to the hotline. Other forms of contact such as referrals, internet contacts, or texts were not included; hence the numbers of contacts compared to the numbers of caller types do not total the same in Table 1.

Table 1. Top Caller Types to the SC Human Trafficking Hotline

	2017	**2018***
Trafficking Victims	161	186
Community Members	99	110
Labor Exploitation Victims	24	18
Family Members	19	32
Other	17	4
Totals	320	350

* 2018 data through June 2018

Source: SC Human Trafficking Hotline.

[24] South Carolina Human Trafficking Hotline. https://humantraffickinghotline.org/state/south-carolina, 2. Accessed October 16, 2018, June 22, 2019.

In 2018, the NHTH was contacted 434 times about cases of trafficking in South Carolina. By June 30 of that year, it. had received 350 calls, and 156 cases were reported.[25] These numbers are just a minute portion of ongoing crime, but they also indicate the increasing trend of trafficking activities as well as responses by victims and community and family members.

On January 10, 2020, the Office of the South Carolina Attorney General released its 2019 Annual Report of the Human Trafficking Task Force (SCHTTF). Statistics from the report showed a total of 678 victims identified in 2019 compared to 188 identified in 2018. The report noted that this was a 360% increase.[26] During the press conference given by South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson, he credited the task force with improving its awareness efforts which was clearly reflected in the increased number of calls to the hotline. This was also locally reported by local Columbia television station WLTX on January 10, 2019.

The mere act of taking the initiative to call a hotline to report a victimization, observation, or concern results in documentation of that reporting person's interest in the health of the community, the value of awareness, and their willingness to become involved on a meaningful level. This type of involvement by the faith community is now being courted specifically by the South Carolina Attorney General's Office and the SCHTTF:

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[25] National Human Trafficking Hotline, 2017 Statistics. Available from: https://humantraffickinghotline.org/. Accessed July 2, 2019.

[26] Office of the Attorney General, State of South Carolina, "2019 Annual Report of the Human Trafficking Task Force." Available from: http://humantrafficking.scag.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/02184897.pdf, 45.

> Systems will be developed to successfully engage those in the faith community who wish to support and contribute to the anti-human trafficking movement. There will also be efforts to increase the state's focus on labor trafficking.[27]

The nexus between the faith community, crime, and the "guardianship" of vulnerable members of the community is longstanding. There is strong historical precedent among African-American churches to support grassroots involvement that created paths for change.[28] A study of the influence of the church found that 82.2% of African Americans viewed the church's influence in a positive manner because it supported multifaceted enrichment. However, only 5.3% thought this was true when asked about relating to "specific goals or achieving social purposes for blacks."[29] Robert Gaines writes about this in the context of education, and with an enlarged perspective the argument is easily made that its application can be equally effective when utilized within the context of human trafficking awareness. He writes: "[The fact] that the Black Church is regaining its socio-political power by invoking the philosophical worldview of the Civil Rights Movement has profound implications for the social and political agendas of the churches."[30]

Churches provide structure in a community and can influence the tenor of sustained and/or desirable activities and outcomes, thus becoming what Cohen and

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[27] Office of the Attorney General, State of South Carolina, "2019 Annual Report," 2.

[28] J. R. Aiken, E. D. Salmon, and P. J. Hanges, "The Origins and Legacy of the Civil Rights Act of 1964," *Journal of Business and Psychology,* 28, no. 4 (2013): 383–399. Available from: https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2013-39719-002. Accessed December 12, 2019.

[29] Robert Taylor, Michael Thornton, and Linda Chatters, "Black Americans' Perceptions of the Sociohistorical Role of the Church," *Journal of Black Studies* 18 (2014): 129, 132. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/249694908_Black_Americans'_Perceptions_of_the_Sociohistorical_Role_of_the_Church. Accessed December 15, 2019.

[30] Robert W. Gaines II, "Looking Back, Moving Forward: How the Civil Rights Era Church Can Guide the Modern Black Church in Improving Black Student Achievement," *Journal of Negro Education* 79, no.3 (Summer 2010): 372. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20798355. Accessed: January 5, 2017.

Felson call "guardians."[31] With that in mind, I explored the definitions of human trafficking, awareness levels of human trafficking, and people's understanding regarding the exercise of coercion and vulnerability.

My specific target of study was the population of the African-American Denominational and African-American Non-Denominational Evangelical churches in Columbia, South Carolina. These organizations have a rich history of community outreach and involvement in activities that speak to the importance of justice as it has an impact on its members and the broader community. Even parallel movements focused more on economics, which acknowledge that spending power brings influence in communities, are relevant when considering their potential influence on the awareness of human trafficking within communities.

In the 1960s, the civil rights movement articulated and demonstrated the efficacy of churches in local communities to transform social and legal standards. The church was an engine for the civil rights movement, propelling action and promoting of human respect. Author Supad Ghose wrote:

> While other organizations cropped up during the CRM [civil rights movement], the black church had been so central as well as ubiquitous in African American life that it played a preponderant role in securing community support for the equal rights for African American people in American society.[32]

Throughout the timeframe of the civil rights movement, churches wielded considerable influence when issues arose that could threaten the economic, cultural,

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[31] L. Cohen, and M. Felson, "Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach," *American Sociological Review* 44 (1979): 598.

[32] Supad K. Ghose, "The Role of the Black Church in the American Civil Rights Movement," *UITS Journal* 5 (2019): 62.

political, and educational advancement of the community. The churches in Columbia continue to do so. Rev. Dr. James Jamison, Assistant Pastor at Brookland Baptist Church, illustrated his commitment to social justice influence within the African-American church, when he said: "There is a need to educate the community based on accurate scriptural doctrine in order to make better appropriations and understanding for our people. . . . This can be done as a means of social transformation through preaching." In his doctoral studies, Jamison was challenged to take risks and ask question of others. In one of his sermons titled "When Silence is Not Golden," he asked: "What would you do? . . . Have you ever been in a situation where you should have spoken, and you knew it was the right thing to do but you chose not to? And do you (recognize) the damage that our silence causes?" Rev. Jamison believes that influence and education should start with church leaders because of the impetus their influence can carry. In large measure, churches act as barometers for what is deemed allowed or acceptable within the community.[33]

Not all segments of the Christian population in a community are aware of the potential of and access to trafficking activities. For example, the Lausanne Movement, founded by the late Rev. Billy Graham and the late Rev. John Stott, serves as a platform for evangelical awareness and social justice priorities. A 2018 article on human trafficking, available on the Lausanne website, does an excellent job of laying a scriptural foundation for the responsibility of churches to understand the issue and address what

[33] Rev. Dr. James Jamison, Assistant Pastor, Brookland Baptist Church. Personal interview with thesis author, December 23, 2019.

they must do.[34] I applaud the simplicity and sensitivity of the article. With great respect, however, I noted one point that reflects the global evangelical church's lack of awareness. The article asked this question:

> If a Christian were to find himself or herself in a position of power that could influence the issue of human trafficking, he or she would be responsible for following the clear commands of Scripture in executing justice. However, much of the church has little or no direct proximity to the issue. Do they still have a responsibility?[35]

I challenge the statement that the church "has little or no direct proximity" to the crime of human trafficking. The 2017 report by the NHTH showed that intimate partnerships and marriage propositions are frequently used tools for enticing victims into sex trafficking.[36] It is apparent that human trafficking relies on relationships; at the same time, church members and their families create and maintain such relationships within their church communities, homes, and in the larger local community. In every community where there is a church, it is likely that that church has direct proximity to vulnerable populations and human trafficking victims, and thus be in a position to influence the impact and effects of human trafficking. The idea that there are segments of society where there is no direct or indirect engagement in the factors that perpetuate human trafficking is naive at best and dangerous in the extreme. It is precisely that lack of awareness that traffickers rely on.

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[34] Lausanne Movement, "Human Trafficking and the Response of the Global Church." Available from: http://www.lausanne.org/content/lga/2014-01/human-trafficking-and-the-response -of-the-global-church." Accessed July 31, 2018.

[35] Lausanne Movement, "Human Trafficking," 3, 4.

[36] National Human Trafficking Hotline, 2017 Statistics.

Books about the insidiousness of human trafficking, such as *The Slave Next Door*[37] and *Human Trafficking Around the World; Hidden in Plain Sight*,[38] underscore this point.

My personal assessment is that what is occurring through the continued merchandising of humans and human labor is the progression of evil on an ascending scale of depravity. Unless someone or some organization intervenes, nothing restrains this evil from continuing to profit at the expense of human lives. Edmund Burke makes a similar statement: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men do nothing."[39] I agree with this statement, as a member of the clergy, as a member of the African-American Non-denominational Evangelical community, as someone who lives in Columbia, South Carolina, and as a member in an academic institution that gives me access to information that provides context for the subject of human trafficking.

Based on these premises, I began to explore what the African-American Evangelical churches of Columbia, South Carolina, might know, what they are doing—or not doing—to become aware of human trafficking, forced labor, and so-called "modern-day slavery." I wanted to know whether congregation members and church leaders recognized or understood that human trafficking is devastating human lives, sometimes shredding the fiber of the community, and predaciously siphoning off vulnerable and valuable community members. If the churches were aware of such activity, were they participating in activities to educate and heighten levels of awareness or prevention of

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[37] Kevin Bales, and Ron Soodalter, *The Slave Next Door: Human Trafficking and Slavery in America Today* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

[38] Stephanie Hepburn, and Rita Simon, *Human Trafficking around the World: Hidden in Plain Sight* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

[39] Edmund Burke, "Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents," Vol. 1, 82-83 (1770), in: *Select Works of Edmund Burke,* 4 volumes*,* foreword by Florence Canavan (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1999).

such activities? I wanted to understand the extent of church members' and leaders' levels of awareness. Was there any propensity to address the potential impact of this crime in their local communities? Furthermore, if there were a significant level of awareness, I wanted to understand if it was because of information provided through the church or church-related activities, through awareness campaigns advanced through the media, or was it the result of personal initiative or inquiry?

Statistics obtained through the NHTH revealed that as of June 2018, there were 56 incidents of sex trafficking reported in the State of South Carolina. The highest number of calls to the hotline were 42 contacts that came from community members.[40] This included all reported contacts made for all forms of human trafficking. This number is significant because among all the contacts made to the hotline, community members contacted the hotline more frequently than the trafficking victims themselves: during that same period, there were 35 self-reporting victims who contacted the hotline.[41]

The covert and illegal nature of coercing individuals into sex and other forms of trafficking generally makes it exceedingly difficult to gather crime statistics. Furthermore, victims may refrain from reporting such crimes due to the stigma associated with being a victim of human trafficking. Thus, it is sometimes difficult to identify and acquire the most comprehensive and current data regarding human trafficking in South Carolina. In 2018, the SCHTTF acknowledged this difficulty in an article titled

[40] National Human Trafficking Hotline, 2017 Statistics.

[41] National Human Trafficking Hotline, 2017 Statistics.

"Determining the Magnitude of Human Trafficking in South Carolina."[42] Their efforts to develop a system of data collection are ongoing. Kathryn Moorehead[43] emphasizes the need for data that is accurate and current, and is therefore important for training in local churches. Currently, there is a faith-based initiative occurring that will help ensure the proper education and training for church leadership who would like to be involved in anti-human trafficking efforts. Even given these challenges, South Carolina has been lauded for its efforts to identify victims, establish protocols, and address the evolving needs of victims and vulnerable populations.

Thesis Question

After identifying these collaborative efforts and being mindful of the continuing challenge to increase awareness and prevent human trafficking in local communities, the following question is posed: Do the African-American Denominational and the African-American Non-Denominational Evangelical churches in Columbia, South Carolina, have sufficient knowledge and awareness of human trafficking to impact the prevention of human trafficking in their local communities?

Thesis Hypothesis

I hypothesize that the average church congregant may have limited factual knowledge or awareness and may be uninformed about this subject. In prior casual

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[42] Office of the Attorney General, State of South Carolina, 2014 Annual Report, 20-22. Available from: http://2hsvz0l74ah31vgcm16peuy12tz.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Human-Trafficking-State-Plan.pdf. Accessed 20 January 2020.

[43] Kathryn Moorehead, Director of Violence Against Women's Act and Human Trafficking Programs, and Coordinator of the SC Human Task Force. Personal interview conducted by thesis author, September 9, 2019.

conversations on the topic of human trafficking with a number of African-American Evangelical Christians in Columbia, I found that most believed human trafficking was limited to sex trafficking. Many were amazed to learn that there were multiple types of human trafficking within the overall crime framework. Many readily acknowledged not knowing what to do if they encountered someone they suspected might be involved in or be a victim of human trafficking. For these reasons, I believe this study is warranted as a needed component in, and contribution to, the dialogue of prevention, education, and awareness of human trafficking in local and state communities.

I used Cohen and Felson's "Routine Activity Theory"[44] to examine the efficacy of the church and its potential for awareness and guardianship, and it is this theory that frames the scope of my review. Specifically, the theory proposes that within the routine mechanisms of crime there are likely to be offenders, suitable targets, and an absence of capable guardians, and an interruption of any of the three can be a suitable deterrent. As members of a congregation, who attend church regularly and are or become knowledgeable in human trafficking awareness, they become capable guardians and thereby equipped to influence levels of prevention in direct-contact predatory crime.[45]

These elements prop up the perpetuation of criminal activities and can be seen readily in the crime of human trafficking. The 2018 Trafficking In Persons Report affirms the presence of these elements, which support trafficking through the "regularity" of "routine transactions."[46] Paul Ekblom and Nick Tilley expanded upon the Routine

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[44] Cohen and Felson, "Social Change," 598.

[45] Cohen and Felson, "Social Change," 589.

[46] U.S. Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report, 10.

Activities Theory to include examination of environmental factors that would assist in the understanding of the efficacy of capable guardians and the suitability of their roles in crime prevention.[47]

This led to the question of whether members of a community are aware of circumstances in which human trafficking is or could occur. If one considers members of a church congregation as capable guardians, sufficiency must include appropriate knowledge of how and where solicitation of vulnerable targets occurs. The guardians' knowledge should be factual and based on current trends and data as shown in global, national, state, and local statistics. Are the African-American Denominational and African-American Non-Denominational Evangelical churches and their members in Columbia aware of this crime? Is the level of awareness sufficient to enable the churches to become capable or willing guardians? Do the church members in Columbia see themselves as having such a role or taking on that responsibility?

I sought answers to these questions by surveying the members of several of the most influential African-American Denominational and African-American Non-Denominational Evangelical church congregations and community leaders in Columbia. The survey questions were designed to elicit responses that demonstrated the respondent's level of knowledge regarding the definition of human trafficking, the potential locations for trafficking, how trafficking occurs, and who might be or become a victim of human trafficking. Inquiries also asked: (1) whether or not the respondent thinks the church should or should not be involved in any type of awareness or

[47] Paul Ekblom and Nick Tilley, "Going Equipped: Criminology, Situational Crime Prevention and the Resourceful Offender," *British Journal of Criminology* 40, no. 3 (Summer 2000): 376-398. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/40.3.376.

prevention activities that address human trafficking, and (2) whether the respondent would be interested in learning more about the problems of human trafficking.

Chapter II

The African-American Evangelical Church as a Capable Guardian

As a prelude to the discussion of the African-American Evangelical church as a capable guardian, it is helpful to define Evangelicals. The National Association of Evangelicals and LifeWay Research developed four metrics for defining an evangelical:

- The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe.
- It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their savior.
- Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin.
- Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation.[48]

These metrics define a born-again Evangelical, capturing the doctrinal tenets of man in a fallen state, the need for a savior, and the means whereby redemption is established.

Another entity, the Barna Group, uses different criteria to measure the social, political, religious, and behavioral characteristics of Evangelicals. The Barna Group poses nine questions relating to people's spiritual beliefs, including the importance of faith in daily life and the responsibility to share one's beliefs with others. Social and

[48] National Association of Evangelicals, "What is an Evangelical?"

political activism is one of the defining factors in the Group's definition of Evangelicals.[49]

It should be noted that I have rejected the narrower definition used recently by popular media to define political voting patterns. Instead, I use the original and (I believe) more accurate definition that emphasizes the dominant theme of adherence to foundational Christian doctrines, which by application and extension inform the political, cultural, and social ideology of both liberal and conservative Evangelical Christians.

One of the most important characteristics of an Evangelical, which comes into play when assessing their efficacy as capable guardians, is the quality of applying Evangelical outreach to sectors of the community that need such support. The literal application of the scriptural verse from Matthew 25:35-40 is the bedrock of Evangelical congregations, which view these scriptures as a mandate to assist and support members of the local community who are disadvantaged. These verses read as follows:

> For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

This position is evident in building hospitals, orphanages, educational institutions, soup kitchens, and shelters. These means of outreach to the community establish the presence of compassion and provide opportunities for solutions when government seems limited in its ability to take such steps. Such limitations are evident in federal, state, and local governments. In the U.S. Department of State's *Trafficking In Persons Report 2018,* the

[49] Barna Group, "Survey."

U.S. is listed as a Tier 1 country, meaning that the highest standards for combating trafficking are being implemented.[50] While that position is laudable, the U.S. government readily acknowledges that its efforts fall short of comprehensively addressing all forms of human trafficking in the U.S. and implementing preventive efforts. Such an acknowledgement highlights the importance of community awareness of the need to contribute to the advancement of human trafficking studies and the potential contribution of the African-American Evangelical community.

Three major factors support the theory that the African-American Evangelical church can be an effective capable guardian. These factors can be seen historically in the traditions, trends, and cultural norms of the African-American church. They are:

- a distinct identity crafted by its unique historical legacy,
- deference to spiritual authority within the administrative structure of the church, and
- the church as the architect of social, political, and cultural priorities within the African-American community.

Historical Influences

Early slave churches were places where Christian relationships were formed or affirmed among members of the slave community. Here the human and familial bonds could be maintained albeit in a sometimes-tenuous manner. These bonds provided the underpinnings of the identity of the African-American Christian community while also rejecting the dichotomous contrasts of Christian practice as articulated by Frederick

[50] U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report," 442.

Douglass.[51] The slaves' rejection of Christianity as practiced by slaveholders evolved into an independent cultural appropriation of Christianity more suited to the slaves themselves, who created a separate and distinct Christian identity and (by extension) a respect for and deference to their spiritual leaders who espoused the slaves' Christian doctrine. Therefore, it can be said that the distinct African-American Christian identity is largely and historically formulated by its leadership, and the relevance of protecting vulnerable members of the community has a historically solid spiritual basis. This stands as further definition of proactive efforts in heightening human trafficking awareness and protecting community members.

Deference to pastoral authority and church leadership is evident today in African-American churches, manifested in the significant ability of pastors to influence their congregations. Barna and Jackson's research on the successful elements of African-American mega-churches support this:

> Our studies have also consistently revealed that black people regard their church as a central element in their lives and that the pastor of that church is perhaps the single most important leader to whom they relate and from whom they are willing to take direction.[52]
>
> . . . Pastoral influence is somewhat akin to that of "tribal leaders," "father figures," and "marketplace gladiators" wielding an unparalleled level of influence not seen in their Caucasian counterparts.[53]

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[51] Frederick Douglass, *The Classic Slave Narratives* (New York: Penguin, 1987), 326-327.

[52] George Barna, and Harry R. Jackson, *High Impact African-American Churches* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), e-book location 277 of 3343.

[53] Barna and Jackson, *High Impact,* e-book location 516, 575, 506

Present-Day Church Influences

When assessing the means by which communities can be effectively proactive against human trafficking, one should consider which groups of people have sufficient influence to shape opinions, actions, and information. The African-American Evangelical church has had this influence for several generations, and its efficacy is especially evident when reviewing the influence of African-American churches in the context of the civil rights movement. Allison Calhoun-Brown writes: "Black religious culture provided such a strong collective action frame because the black church had been a 'free space' in the black community for centuries."[54] The ability to discuss ideas, advance influence, and provide support and encouragement are staples of the church. Elizabeth Goatley emphasizes the impact that local churches can have on human trafficking when they are generally aware of the socioeconomic factors that create vulnerability within communities.[55]

Similarly, the influence of clergy in church congregations is highlighted in a study of six denominations undertaken during the 2000 elections. Fifty-eight percent of the surveyed population thought that the clergy had the ability to influence its members.[56] In an essay on the clergy as political influencers, Ted Jelen makes the argument that it is an

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[54] Allison Calhoun-Brown, "Upon This Rock: The Black Church, Nonviolence, and the Civil Rights Movement," *Political Science and Politics* 33 (June 2000): 172.

[55] Elizabeth Goatley, "What Your Church Must Know to Combat Human Trafficking," part of a series on how local churches and nonprofit organizations are working to address human trafficking. Ethics Daily.com. https://www.ethicsdaily.com/what-your-church-must-know-to-combat-human-trafficking-cms-23835/. Accessed December 13, 2018.

[56] Corwin Smidt, Sue Crawford, Melissa Deckman, et al., "The Political Attitudes and Activities of Mainline Protestant Clergy in the Election of 2000: A Study of Six Denominations," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 44, no. 4 (December 2003): 515-532. Available from https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1468-5906.2003.00200.x. Accessed December 15, 2019.

"impressive challenge" to actually gauge the level of influence by clergy among congregants.[57]

The civil rights movement and the pro-life movement are two recognizable measures of the church's influence, as evidenced through the political, social, and cultural changes espoused by church leaders such as Martin Luther King or U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Ben Carson (whose public commitment to Christianity places him in a position of Christian leadership even if by default). Most church leaders have the ability to set agendas, use their sermons to address cultural issues and problems, and utilize broad-based media platforms. These may be viewed as forms of persuasion that place clergy in the role of opinion leaders while at the same time reinforcing common biblical values. Jelen found that among Catholics and mainline Protestants, that kind of influence is waning due to "the individualism of American culture," and the perception that their views are "opinions."[58] While this point is debatable, the ability to influence a local congregation remains intact when one recognizes that most regular congregants attend for the purpose of seeking guidance and being influenced by opinions espoused from their spiritual leaders and based upon scripture. Gaines suggests: "Educating the community should be to reconstitute itself as an educative space, not merely for spiritual matters, but also as it relates to pragmatic, or so-called real world matters."[59]

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[57] Ted G. Jelen, "Notes for a Theory of Clergy as Political Leaders," in: Sue E. S. Crawford and Laura R. Olsen, eds., *Christian Clergy in American Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001). https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/political_science_articles/98/. Accessed December 15, 2019.

[58] Jelen, "Notes," 22.

[59] Gaines, "Looking Back," 374.

The resulting scope of activism and the means by which influence occurs can be varied. Political activities and the influence of a social gospel can result from something as simple as a discussion group, a guest speaker, or a casual conversation among church members. Beyerlein and Chavez found that more than 40% of congregations in their survey had participated in some form of activity that had the potential to influence political issues. Their study also found that within the context of a worship service, information was disseminated that led to an increased level of activism, and that this occurred more that 25% of the time.[60] The aforementioned statistical data is crucial to the question of whether the African-American Evangelical community in Columbia has a level of awareness that is sufficient to influence or impact human trafficking prevention efforts in the community. It is crucial because it recognizes the clergy and the local congregation as a pivotal platform for disseminating information and the potential for its impact in human trafficking awareness, education and prevention.

Today considerable information is disseminated through internet platforms that are viewed by many, including those who might be attending a local congregation on Sunday. One of the few times I heard global modern-day slavery addressed in a local congregation was in 2016. A member spoke about her missionary efforts on behalf of sexually trafficked women in Thailand.[61] It created ongoing discussions among church members and, by extension, broadened the scope of conversation about human trafficking in general. Full disclosure: this particular lecture occurred at my local church, but it was not a common observation or topic of discussion at other churches I have attended.

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[60] Beyerlein and Chaves, "Political Activities," 235.

[61] Joybelle Barlow, "Night Lite Ministry in Thailand." Lecture at Ambassadors Christian Center, Columbia, SC, January 22, 2017. I am a member there.

Churches and church members have many educational opportunities in their interactions which then generate conversations that increase their levels of awareness. “Did you know…” can prompt a discussion about why the neighbors next door always seem to have a constant stream of young women or girls coming in and out at all hours, and why none of them speak for themselves or ever make direct eye contact. Other conversations can spark similar discussions: why the woman who is the most popular nail technician can never go to lunch alone; who is the boy that teenage daughter is so captivated with but will never allow her family or friends to meet? Under what circumstances are our food products grown and harvested; who are the restaurant, food service, and construction workers who seem to labor endless hours in our neighborhoods? Such conversations might lead to questions that unravel the hidden dynamics of human trafficking that all too often exist undetected in plain sight. These conversations are essential to discovering just how much factual information is known about the profile and structure of human trafficking, sometimes signaling factual routine transactions that are part of the dynamics and trends of human trafficking discussed by Cohen and Felson. Therefore, it is appropriate to conclude that the African-American Evangelical churches in Columbia, South Carolina, can be recognized as pillars in the community.

Non-Church Community Guardians

Numerous studies discuss the need for increased levels of awareness in communities within law enforcement agencies and medical and health care agencies.[62] At the state level, the Richland County (SC) Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force's 2019 agenda, and Finding Two of the Task Force's 2014 plan contained elements that focused specifically on preventing human trafficking in South Carolina: "Lack of awareness about human trafficking and ingrained societal perceptions aggravate the problem, resulting in lost opportunities to help victims and hold perpetrators accountable."[63] The idea of gauging and improving awareness levels is imperative, and whatever the levels might currently be, with expanded awareness each person in the community comes closer to being an agent of prevention.

The Task Force enumerated the factors of its mission, with one method being "increasing community awareness" to support its mission. This is not without challenge. Author Jim Martin lends his sage advice and caveats to church involvement and the potential for resistance in anti-human trafficking work:

> Many people outside the church are not accustomed to seeing the church involve itself in the important social issues affecting the community. You may encounter some residual resentment from professionals in the

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[62] For example: Deborah Grubb and Katherine Bennett, "The Readiness of Local Law Enforcement to Engage in US Anti-Trafficking Efforts: An Assessment of Human Trafficking Training and Awareness of Local, County, and State Law Enforcement Agencies in the State of Georgia," *Police Practice and Research,* 13 (2012): 1-15; R. Shrestha, P. Karki, A. Suwal, and M. Copenhaver, "Sex Trafficking Related Knowledge, Awareness, and Attitudes Among Adolescent Female Students in Nepal: A Cross-Sectional Study," *PLoS One*, 10 (7) 2015. Available from: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/ articles/ PMC4503642/. Accessed December 16, 2019; C. Powell, K. Dickins, and H. Stoklosa, "Training US Health Care Professionals on Human Trafficking: Where Do We Go from Here?" *Med Educ Online* 22(1) 2017. Available from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5328372/. Accessed December 16, 2019.

[63] Office of the Attorney General, "Richland County Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force, 2017 http://humantrafficking.scag.gov/richland-county-anti-human-trafficking-task-force/, 8, 55. Accessed January 20, 2020.

> community who have been fighting these battles for a long time. Many of them have long assumed that these issues *should* matter to the church and have been nonplussed at the church's seeming indifference. They have experienced the church as either utterly silent and completely absent from the places where these battles are being fought or bewilderingly obtuse when they did become involved.[64]

To date, there is no comprehensive tool for assessing levels of community awareness.[65] This research was undertaken to address this missing element and to provide a tool to help fill the need. I asked myself: Wouldn't a church want to participate in an activity that could increase awareness and potentially help someone who is unwillingly subservient to another person? If a church did want to participate, it would be necessary to establish baseline levels of awareness.

In general, people seem reticent to talk about human trafficking because it is an awkward and uncomfortable topic that sometimes dredges up memories of antebellum slavery in the United States. Sometimes such conversations are uncomfortable if someone is aware that they purchased services or goods that support some form of human trafficking. Even food items that contain chocolate and appear far removed from the taint of slave labor could potentially be part of a supply chain that utilizes exploited labor. These examples demonstrate that whether or not one is well versed in the scope of human trafficking, the topic is not one that can be easily engaged. If the purchaser has inaccurate knowledge or lacks an understanding of a possible trafficking connection to the nature of the product(s) or service(s), his or her willingness to engage in a conversation might be limited or avoided altogether. Furthermore, there may be times when a participant in a

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[64] Jim Martin, *The Just Church: Becoming a Risk-Taking, Justice-Seeking, Disciple-Making Congregation* (Tyndale, 2012), 169-170.

[65] Office of the Attorney General "Richland County," 55.

conversation has had personal experience as a victim, or personal knowledge of trafficking victims, and may choose to avoid such dialogue.

Chapter III

Research Methodology

A mixed-methods approach was utilized for this study. Several methods were needed in order to identify the information being sought, and then to produce a cogent analysis. These methods included survey, personal and telephone interviews, and opinion gathering, and a literature review.

The Survey

The primary element of the thesis research was a survey comprised of 22 questions (see Appendix A), which I developed. The questions were subsequently approved by Harvard University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The survey questions were formulated in such a way that the answers to the questions would reflect the survey participants' basic awareness of human trafficking.

Survey Assumptions

Table 2 provides the basic assumptions made as to the likely survey population in Columbia, South Carolina. Underlying the research methodology is the assumption that the proportion of Black and African-American Christians in Columbia, South Carolina, is the same as the proportion of Black and African-American Christians throughout the State of South Carolina. Table 3 provides statistical information about the survey distribution.

Table 2. South Carolina Population Assumptions

	Quantity	Source
Population of Columbia, SC	133,451 people	2018 U.S. Census
Population of Blacks or African-Americans in Columbia, SC	54,581 people 40.9%, Black or African-American (0.409 x 133,451 = 54,581 people)	2018 U.S. Census
Population of Blacks or African-Americans who are Historically Black Protestant Christians	8,187 people 15%, Black or African-American Historically Black Protestant Christians (0.15 x 54,581 = 8,187 people)	Pew Research Center, Religious Landscape Study (2019)
Population of African-Americans who are Evangelical Protestant Christians	3,270 people 7%, Black Evangelical Protestants, of the 35% of Columbia, SC population who identified as Evangelical Protestants (0.07 x .35 x 133,451 = 3,270 people) • 35% Evangelical Protestants • 7% Black Evangelical Protestants • 2.4% of Columbia population	Pew Research Center, Religious Landscape Study (2019)
Population of Black or African-American Baptist or Nondenominational Evangelical Christians	819 people 10%, Black or African-American Baptist or Nondenominational Evangelical Christians (0.10 x 8187 = 819 people) • 9% Baptist • 1% Nondenominational • 10% Total	Pew Research Center, Religious Landscape Study (2019)
Targeted African-American Evangelical Christian Population for Survey	4,089 people (3,270 + 819 = 4,089 people)	
Survey Sample Size	410 people	

Sources: as noted in column 3 of this table

Table 3. Survey Distribution Statistics

Survey Statistics		
Variable	number	%
Total Surveys Collected	451	100%
Total Surveys Counted	410	91%
No. of Churches (as identified by respondents, including the 5 surveyed churches)	129	100%
Within the 129 churches:		
Churches Counted (identified by respondents)	94	73%
Churches Excluded (did not fit criteria)	35	27%
Respondents did not identify their church, but verbally agreed with survey criteria	92	22%

Source: thesis author

Survey Participants: Church Members

The survey covered a population of Evangelical Christians that attends predominantly African-American Denominational churches and African-American Non-Denominational Evangelical churches located in the two counties that comprise the City of Columbia: Richland and Lexington Counties. These counties were chosen for three reasons: (1) their location within the City of Columbia proper, (2) Richland County had the highest number of trafficking cases reported in South Carolina in the 2017 NHTH report, and (3) because of the size of the combined population of the two counties.[66] It is

[66] SCHTTF, 2018 Annual Report, 37.

important to note that the number of trafficking cases was not comprehensive but indicated contacts as well as "signals and cases" for 2017.[67]

African-American Denominational and Non-Denominational Evangelical congregations were chosen for their high visibility in the community; their public positions on issues of social justice within their communities; and their wide-ranging historical, cultural, and religious influence. African-American Evangelical congregations also have a history of extending their work into community action and outreach projects. Often the health of a community is enhanced by the presence and promulgation of spiritual, political, and social-justice activities by the church.

This study was applied more narrowly to Christian adults who are part of the African-American Denominational and the Non-Denominational Evangelical Church community in Columbia. Survey participants attended churches within this profile. Some participants who took the survey were later determined to not meet this criterion, so their responses are not included in the survey results.

The consent form (see Appendix B) stated that the survey would take approximately 15 minutes. However, most participants averaged 7 to 10 minutes. When completed, the surveys were placed in a secure envelope so as to maintain the participants' anonymity.

Participants were not offered any incentive for their involvement in completing the survey. The criteria for participation (including attending a predominantly African-American Evangelical Church in Columbia), and the fact that participation was strictly voluntary, were clearly stated and confirmed when soliciting their participation.

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[67] SCHTTF, 2017 Annual Report, 35, 36, 37. "Signals" refer to other forms of contact such as texts, emails, and other non-telephone call contacts.

Survey Participants: Pastors and Congregations

Initially, invitations to participate in the survey were extended to pastors of congregations in Columbia via letters that introduced me, explained the purpose of my study, included a copy of the Harvard IRB-approved consent form, and a copy of the survey. Some invitations were extended online via email. Others were extended by personal telephone calls. This method of contacting potential participants through telephone calls and email was also used when there was no response from postal mail methods. Forty-six percent of the people who attend church are part of congregations with fewer than 100 members. These size estimates from a 2016 report by the Barna Group supported my research estimates of congregation sizes in Columbia.[68]

The response rate from the pastors and churches was surprisingly low. Of the approximately 310 churches contacted, five pastors permitted their congregations to participate. Three of these churches were African-American Baptist, and two were African-American Non-Denominational churches. All met my established criteria as Evangelicals.

As a result of the low response rate, and in the interest of maintaining the thesis timeline, a more rudimentary approach was taken. While that decision greatly increased my time and personal resources, over a two-month period I drove my car through numerous Columbia neighborhoods, recording the names and locations of churches that I might include in the survey participation invitation. After each drive, I returned to my home office to research these names and addresses online and screen for churches that

[68] Barna Group, "The State of the Church and Family Report 2016,".4. Available from: https://www.barna.com/research/state-church-2016/. Accessed October 25, 2018.

met the criterion of being predominantly African-American Denominational or African-American Non-Denominational congregations. I followed up with telephone calls to confirm that the profile was suitable; if it was not, the church was eliminated from consideration. Some of these initial contacts were favorable, especially when speaking with church administrators. However, while pursuing survey participation, there were several instances when I was told by the administrators that my project was not something the church was prepared to, or wanted to, be involved in at the time.[69]

One reason for this rudimentary approach was the fact that there is no comprehensive database that includes all African-American Denominational and Non-Denominational Evangelical churches in Columbia. This fact posed a challenge when seeking an acceptable number of church members and determining the sample size for the study. One possible explanation might be that people were less comfortable when asked to fill out the surveys in written form. In the African-American community, which passes down information through oral tradition, writing down such information is the antithesis of the African-American historical norm of maintaining history orally through memory, storytelling, and highly valued conversations among community members. Such traditions contrast with Caucasian communities where written documentation, filling out applications, and literary communication of opinions and ideas are more prevalent.

There could also be some residue of mistrust stemming from the challenges of voter rights and registration for African Americans and the act of filling out forms to restrict or nullify participation in voting activities. The trend of under-representation among African-American voters in the southern United States is reflected in lower voter

[69] Specific church names have been withheld but are documented through email and dates of telephone conversations.

turnout than among Caucasian voters and is identified as highest among states that historically had the highest lynching rates. South Carolina is included in this history.[70]

Survey Participants: Conference Attendees

In addition to surveying congregations after traditional church services, I requested and received permission from pastors to survey members who were attending two separate Christian Evangelical conferences in Columbia: one a Christian prayer conference, the second a Christian speakers' conference. In both cases, the survey participants met the established survey criteria.

The Christian prayer conference took place at a local Columbia church. I was provided with a table that was placed directly across from the entrance to the church sanctuary and adjacent to the foyer. An easel was set up with a laminated poster that identified the nature of the study, showed statistics on human trafficking cases in Richland County, and offered an invitation to take the survey. To make it easier to complete the surveys, clipboards were purchased for use by survey participants. Everyone who was invited to participate was given a verbal explanation of the purpose, criteria, and scope of the survey.

[70] Jhacova Williams, "Historical Lynchings and Contemporary Voting Behavior of Blacks," 2017. Available from: https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Historical-Lynchings-and-Contemporary-Voting-of-Williams/912806a059a69a252a92389d788cb4ab2e47e5cd. p. 24 Retrieved February 11, 2020.

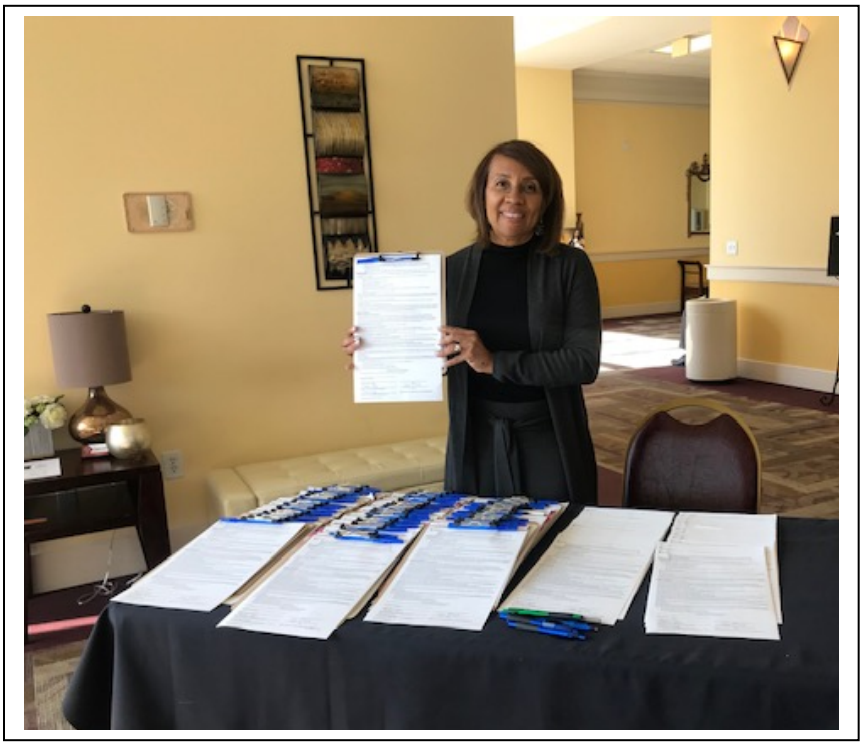


Photo 1: Surveys Available at the Christian Prayer Conference.

The three-day Christian Speakers Conference took place at the Metropolitan Convention Center in Columbia. The ministry that hosted the conference gave permission to approach their attendees and congregation members and invite them to participate in the survey. A room was secured adjacent to the hall where the conference was held, with two reception tables and an easel that held the laminated poster. The reception tables had clipboards, pens, surveys, and attached consent forms. This room was rented for the last two days of the three-day conference (the room was unavailable the opening day). However, permission was given to approach and survey conference attendees that first day. Four assistants helped hand out survey forms to potential participants, then directed them to me if further information regarding the survey and study was requested.

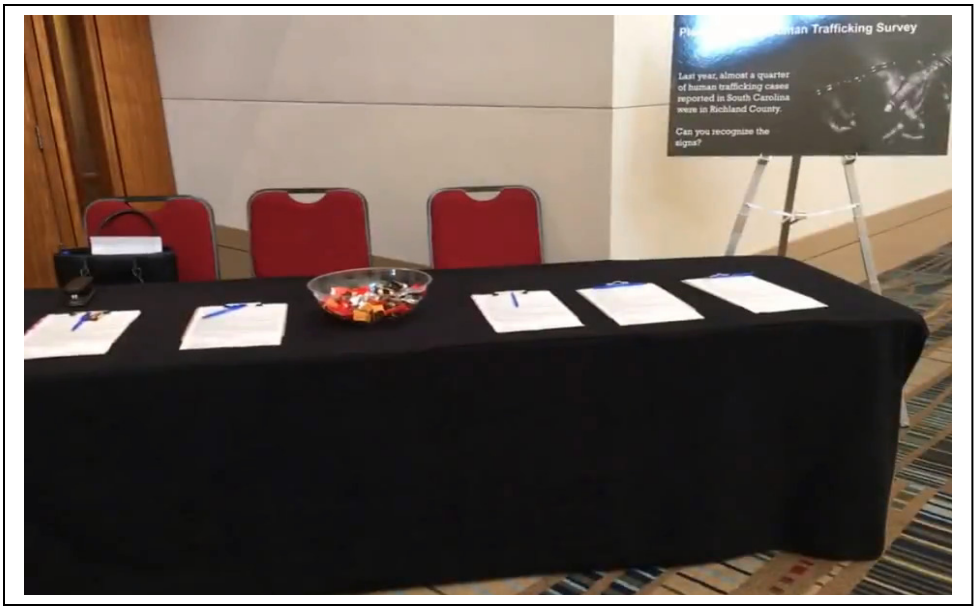


Photo 2. Table with Clipboards at the Speakers Conference.

The rented room was set up in classroom style with seating for 35 survey participants. A poster was placed on the corkboard wall at the front of the classroom. It was a duplicate of the aforementioned laminated poster and provided an overview of the invitation to participate. Clipboards were available that had the consent form, the survey, and a pen. Those who participated chose to either the tables inside the classroom, or the tables in the lobby, or take their surveys into the convention hall, fill them out and return them upon exiting the meetings. Some participants chose to complete their surveys while having lunch and returned them on their way back to the conference. In both venues, there were numerous opportunities to approach potential survey participants: before meetings commenced, during several breaks that occurred during the day, during the break before lunch, during free time after lunch before the meeting reconvened, and at the end of each meeting.



Photo 3. “Classroom” Setup Where Participants Could Complete Surveys.

In addition, surveys were also handed out at a men’s prayer breakfast held at Trinity Baptist Church in Columbia, as well as to several church community luncheons. At the men’s prayer breakfast, I was profoundly touched by the fact that the participants, upon reading my poster “Please Take the Human Trafficking Survey,” offered to take the survey even before I was introduced. To me, this reflected a group of men who were not hesitant to engage the topic.

All surveys were handled in a manner that ensured strict confidentiality. Upon receiving each completed survey, it was removed from the clipboard and placed in an individual, secure envelope. At the end of the day, all the envelopes were brought back to my home office and placed in a secure location.

Survey Participants: Online Completion

On a few occasions, church members asked if they could participate in the survey by using an online link established for this research by Survey Monkey.[71] Each participant was required to sign a consent form, with the participant receiving the signed copy, and the duplicate was retained by the thesis author. The survey could then be completed online at the participant's convenience.

Interviews

The second method used was person-to-person and telephone interviews, as well as spontaneous conversations with people who wanted to share their thoughts about human trafficking in Columbia and the surrounding areas. These were members of the general public who felt that the subject should be explored in greater depth and that there was a need for further education and dialogue. These interviews included:

Reverend Dr. James Jemison, pastor and social justice advocate with Brookland Baptist Church in Columbia.

Kathryn A. Moorehead, Director of Violence Against Women Act and Human Trafficking Programs, located in the South Carolina Attorney General's Office;

Alexis Scurry, member of the Richland County Human Trafficking Task Force;

Jen Thompson, Director of Lighthouse for Life, one of the most prominent NGOs supporting victims of human trafficking;

Fruitful, encouraging, and insightful conversations were held with the five pastors who agreed to allow direct access to their congregations. They were:

[71] Survey Monkey is an online company that uses a suite of programs to create surveys, synthesize results, and provide relevant graphics.

Pastor Veronica Bailey, Samaritan Baptist Church

Pastor Thurmond Bowens, Trinity Baptist Church

Pastor A. L. Downing, Living Faith Christian Center

Rev. Dr. Charles B. Jackson Sr., Senior Pastor, Brookland Baptist Church

Pastor David Jenkins, Ambassadors Christian Center (my local church).

In addition, I spoke with people in the community who had some affiliation with the pastor or those who held administrative positions in local congregations who might have access to appropriate decision makers. This group included business owners, bankers, and community-service providers who were advocates of the study. During our conversations, it became apparent that they were surprised to learn of the low response rate from the community. I told them I was not surprised because the topic remains one that is not easily engaged within the community. Furthermore, while initial interest seemed favorable, the ultimate response levels remained lower than expected. This is discussed further in the Summary.

Literature Review

Numerous literature sources were reviewed. These included materials published by the U.S. Department of State, the National Human Trafficking Hotline conducted by Polaris, the South Carolina Human Trafficking Task Force, and U.S. Federal and State Statutes. Additionally, the review included information gathered from peer-reviewed articles, various ministry and contextual sources related to global, national, regional, and local human trafficking. Many of the footnotes cited herein lead the reader to these published articles, books, and lectures.

Professional Background

My professional background as a licensed minister gives me insight into how Evangelical congregations use their resources to impact communities and develop outreach programs that support vulnerable populations. I have personally worked with vulnerable populations that included incarcerated men and women, men and women in recovery, women in homeless shelters, and women utilizing the support of a sisterhood founded in local congregations. Because these experiences were often based within local church ministries or adjunct locations where I provided on-site ministry, they afforded me considerable insight that was helpful in working within the Evangelical community.

I also have extensive training and experience with assisting in the establishment of local churches, as well as coordinating outreach efforts, supervising and training ministry staff, and teaching members of congregations. I was co-pastor of a church in San Francisco for seven years. This helped me learn to navigate administrative protocol while seeking approval and access to participating congregations.

An internship with the San Francisco District Attorney's office in 2007 gave me insight into alternative methods for addressing the trafficking of women. One method, commonly referred to as the "john school," is an approach whereby the "purchaser" (i.e., the "john") of sex (after being arrested) is mandated to attend a class on the dangers and crime of soliciting sex with prostitutes. The goal is to place greater accountability on the buyer than on the victim.

Personal Security

I rented a private post office box to provide an additional level of personal security for myself and for respondents who chose to participate by mailing back their survey responses. I did this because I wanted to shield myself from any repercussions or risk. Further, I recognized that although responses would be kept absolutely confidential, I was in fact asking questions about a subject that participants might find uncomfortable to answer. In the end, however, none of the survey participants chose to utilize the postal option.

It bears repeating that at no time were participants asked to divulge specific knowledge of a crime. Furthermore, the rigorous vetting process that I underwent with the Harvard IRB ensured that protection would remain in place.

Chapter IV

Survey Questions and Administration

The survey questions were devised in a way that enabled me to determine each respondent's basic factual knowledge about the topic of human trafficking, and to understand and assess the levels of awareness needed to recognize and prevent potential vulnerability. If a respondent correctly answered five or more survey questions, it was interpreted that he or she was likely to be knowledgeable and factually aware.

Questions were developed based on my own understanding of the dynamics of human trafficking acquired through university lectures and government sources (national and state trafficking hotlines; data from federal, state and local statutes). The Lakia Scott study[72] also provided inspiration for my own study, specifically questions 2, 4, 7, and 8 of their survey instrument.[73]

Questions were crafted to gauge whether the respondent factually understood the scope of human trafficking. Five questions related specifically to the respondent's level of awareness. This is fundamental to their perception of human trafficking, especially given the variety and types of trafficking that are most prevalent.

My own work in ministerial leadership training and teaching gave me a conceptual framework for developing specific questions in the survey. Bishop Keith

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[72] Lakia M. Scott, Christina Crenshaw, and Elena M. Venegas, "Bodies Are Not Commodities: Examining A21 Curriculum's Impact on Students' Knowledge, Attitudes, and Advocacy About Anti-Human Trafficking Rights and Issues," *Journal of Human Trafficking* 5, no. 1 (2019): 25-42. Accessed December 16, 2019.

[73] Scott, "Bodies Are Not Commodities,"10, Table 2.

Butler, founding pastor of the nondenominational Word of Faith International Christian Center Church based in Southfield, Michigan, provided my foundational ministerial training and conceptual understanding of the necessity of church influence on social justice issues. In a conversation with him, Bishop Butler highlighted the gender and socioeconomic impacts of human trafficking globally, its deep entrenchment, and the negative economic values rooted in what is known among Evangelicals as "the Babylonian system," which refers to the intent to profit, no matter the human casualties or consequences. The phrase is commonly used in Evangelical Christian church culture when referring to behaviors that have their basis in exploitation, greed, and profit.[74]

Six survey questions were open-ended, seeking to capture the respondent's personal opinions or subjective responses. Some questions were crafted to gauge willingness to participate in actions that would assist potential victims, and if so, to what extent. Eleven questions provided demographic context. The questions included multiple choice and "Yes/No/I don't know" options. Some options were based on factual data regarding human trafficking knowledge. There were questions that required participants to fill in the blanks and offer their subjective opinions and descriptions.

Survey Numbers

The total population size was 4,089 and my sample size was 410. The confidence level is 95% with a 4.6% margin of error. More than 600 surveys and survey opportunities were offered and distributed. This number included postal mailings, email contacts, and personal contacts with survey participants. It also included surveys from

[74] Bishop Keith A. Butler, Founding Pastor of Word of Faith International Christian Center Church, Southfield, Michigan. Personal interview with thesis author, June 2014.

members of churches who were later excluded because they did not fit the criteria as a member of a predominantly African-American congregation, or they did not attend a church located within the City of Columbia proper. Of more than 600 surveys disseminated, 451 surveys were completed and returned along with the corresponding signed consent forms.

After receiving all completed surveys, the data from each one was entered into a Survey Monkey database, and then analyzed to determine general awareness levels, determine whether respondents recognized what might be an indicator of human trafficking, and where or in what forums the participant thought that human trafficking could take place. These three factors rely heavily on the respondent's recognition that symptoms and indicators of human trafficking are frequently a crime that is hidden in plain sight.

As noted earlier, direct approval to survey the congregations was given by five local pastors: Veronica Bailey, Thurmond Bowens, A. L. Downing, Charles Jackson, and David Jenkins. Three are African-American Denominational congregations, and two are African-American Non-Denominational congregations. All meet the criteria of being African-American Evangelicals. Additional survey participation came from congregation members that met the required criteria but participated in the survey process through the conferences described earlier, or direct contact in a public forum rather than direct surveying within their local church congregations.

Chapter V

Survey Findings and Analysis

The thesis hypothesis states that the average church member possesses limited factual knowledge about human trafficking. To prove or disprove the hypothesis, a survey containing 22 questions was administered to 410 church members.

The questions are divided into five categories:

1. Category A: *Perceived Knowledge of Human Trafficking* (includes questions 1–8, 20). This category relates to the participants' knowledge about human trafficking.
2. Category B: *Personal Responsibility* (includes questions 18, 21, 22). This category explored the respondents' ideas about their level of personal responsibility. It includes questions to gauge what the participant might do if he/she encountered a victim, whose responsibility is prevention, and whether the participant was interested in acquiring more knowledge about human trafficking.
3. Category C: *Faith as a Factor* (includes questions 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 22). These questions highlighted how Evangelical Christianity is a factor in participants' responses to the survey questions as well as their lifestyle and the potential to impact awareness levels and preventive measures.
4. Category D: *Church Involvement in Human Trafficking Awareness* (includes questions 12–15). These questions gauged the participants' knowledge of whether their respective churches have engaged in activities related to human trafficking awareness.

5. Category E: *Vulnerable Populations Within the Respondent's Community* (includes question 19). The question sought to identify what types of potentially vulnerably populations were located in the participant's community.

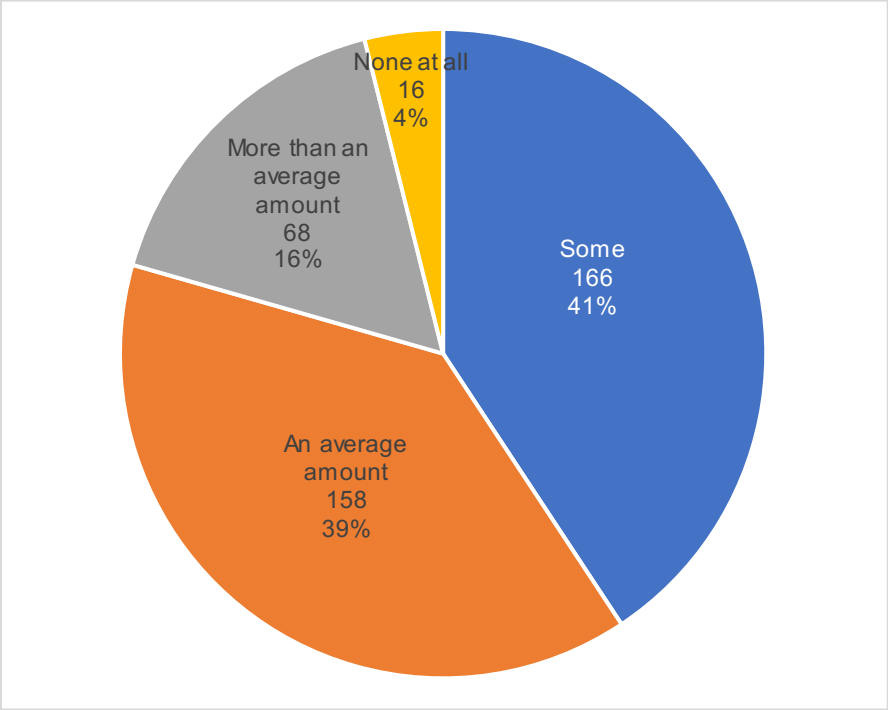
Category A: *Perceived Knowledge About Human Trafficking*

Questions and Responses (includes questions 1–8, 20)

The first question asked what level of knowledge the participant thought he or she possessed. This question was established to provide baseline data for gauging the accuracy of responses. Response options were (1) None at all, (2) Some, (3) An average amount, and (4) More than an average amount.

Forty-one percent of respondents thought they knew something about human trafficking. This response was chosen even more often than knowing "an average amount," which meant the participant thought he or she had an awareness level that as beyond the average information regarding human trafficking. An average amount was indicated by whether an individual could identify with accuracy who might be vulnerable, what "human trafficking" means to the respondent, where the trafficking occurs, and how it occurs. The data is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

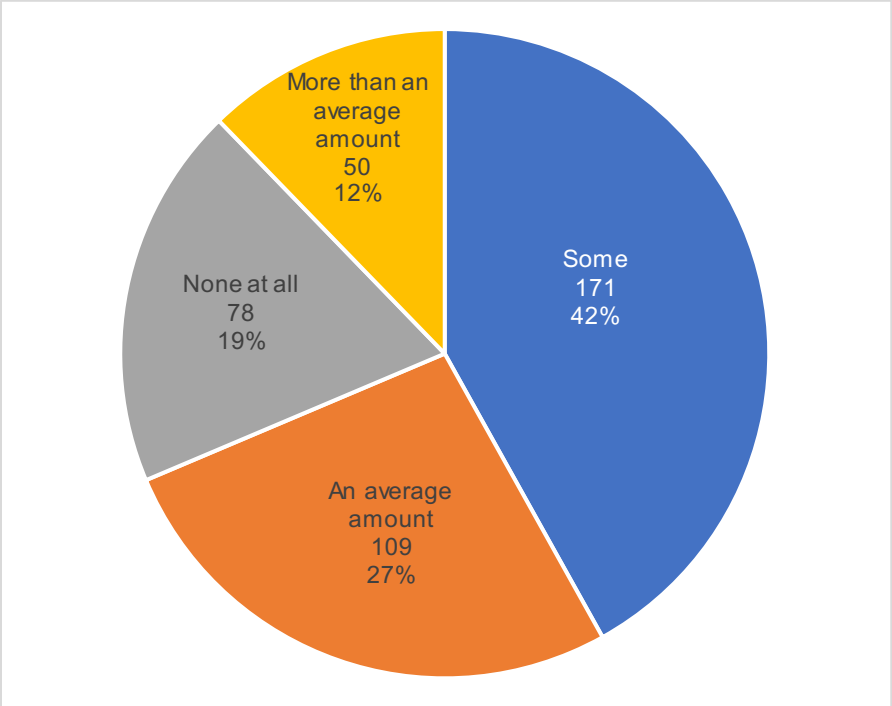
Question 1: How much do you believe you know about human trafficking?



Responses	n	%
Some	166	41
An average amount	158	39
More than an average amount	68	16
None at all	16	4
Total respondents = 408		

Figure 1. Responses: Most people thought they knew some, or an average amount, about human trafficking.

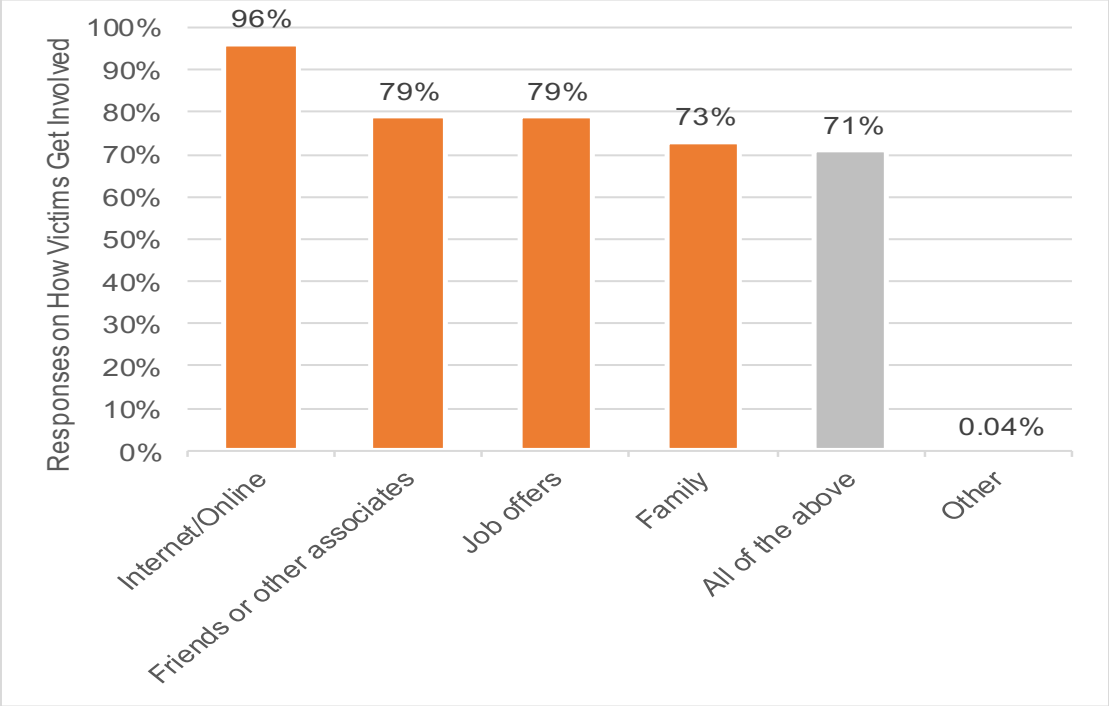
Question 2: How much do you believe you know about the victims of human trafficking?



Responses	n	%
Some	171	42
An average amount	109	27
None at all	78	19
More than an average amount	50	12
Total respondents = 408		

Figure 2. Responses: Most people thought they knew some, or an average amount, about the victims of human trafficking.

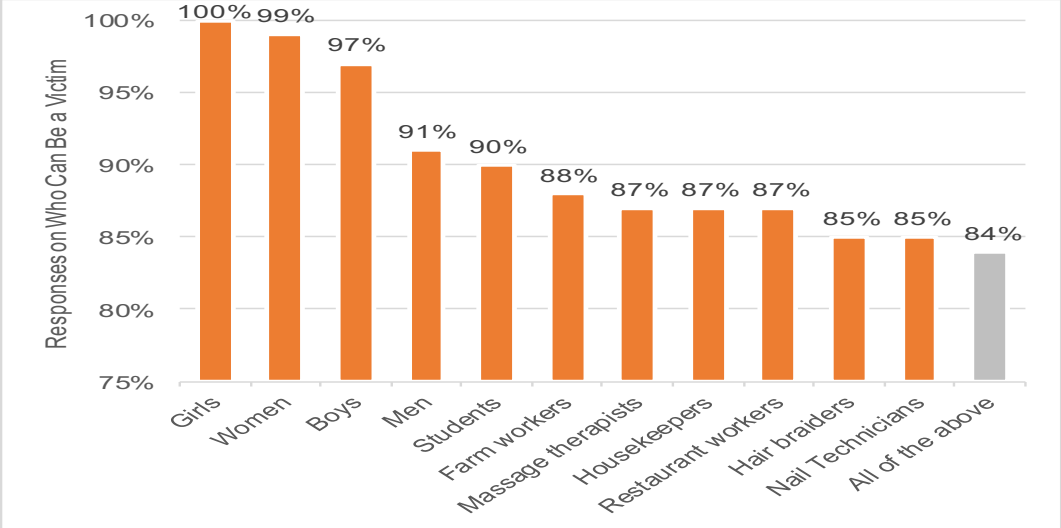
Question 3: How do you think victims get involved in human trafficking? (check all that apply)



Responses	n	%
Internet/Online	393	96%
Friends or other associates	324	79%
Job offers	324	79%
Family	300	73%
All of the above	292	71%
Other	17	0.04%
Kidnapping	10	
Poverty	3	
Abuse	1	
Coercion	1	
Low self esteem	1	
Don't know	1	
Total respondents = 410		

Figure 3. Responses: Most people thought there are multiple ways people can become involved in human trafficking. Almost all respondents (96%) thought the Internet was a primary area for initiating involvement in human trafficking.

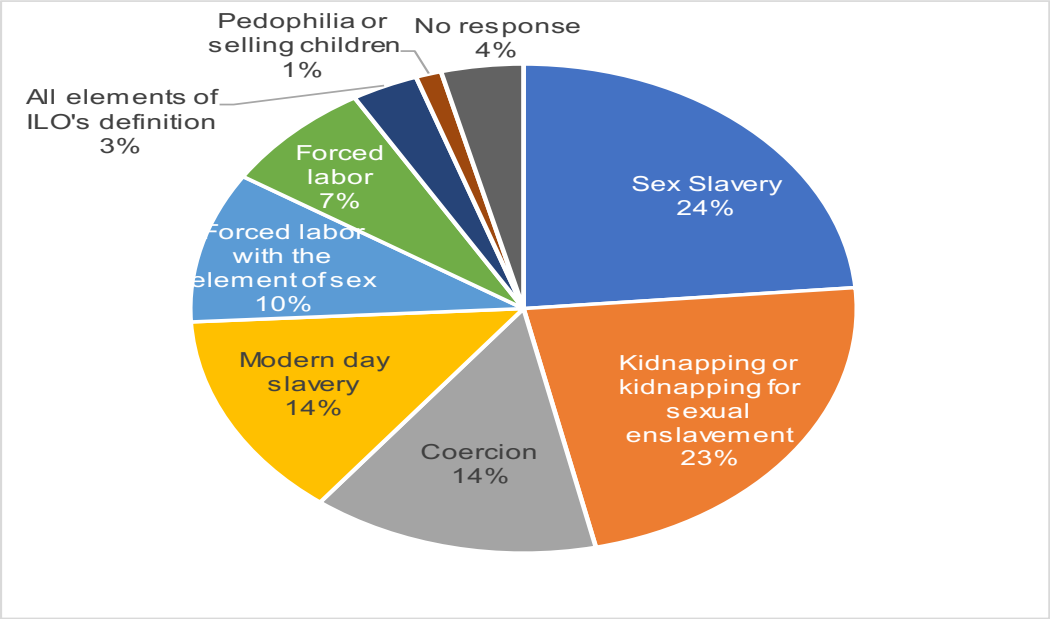
Question 4: Who do you think can be a victim of human trafficking? (check all that apply)



Responses	n	%
Girls	410	100%
Women	406	99%
Boys	400	97%
Men	374	91%
Students	372	90%
Farm workers	362	88%
Massage therapists	356	87%
Housekeepers	356	87%
Restaurant workers	356	87%
Hair braiders	351	85%
Nail technicians	351	85%
All of the above	343	84%
Total respondents = 410		

Figure 4. Responses: Most respondents thought that anyone could become a victim of human trafficking, but notably girls, women, and boys were identified as being most likely to be victims. Further, eight of ten people surveyed were aware that trafficking occurs in diverse employment sectors, which was surprising. During conversations with the general public (those not involved with this survey), a common assumption was that whenever the topic of human trafficking was being discussed, we were speaking narrowly about sex trafficking without reference to other forms of trafficking.

Question 5: What is your definition of human trafficking?

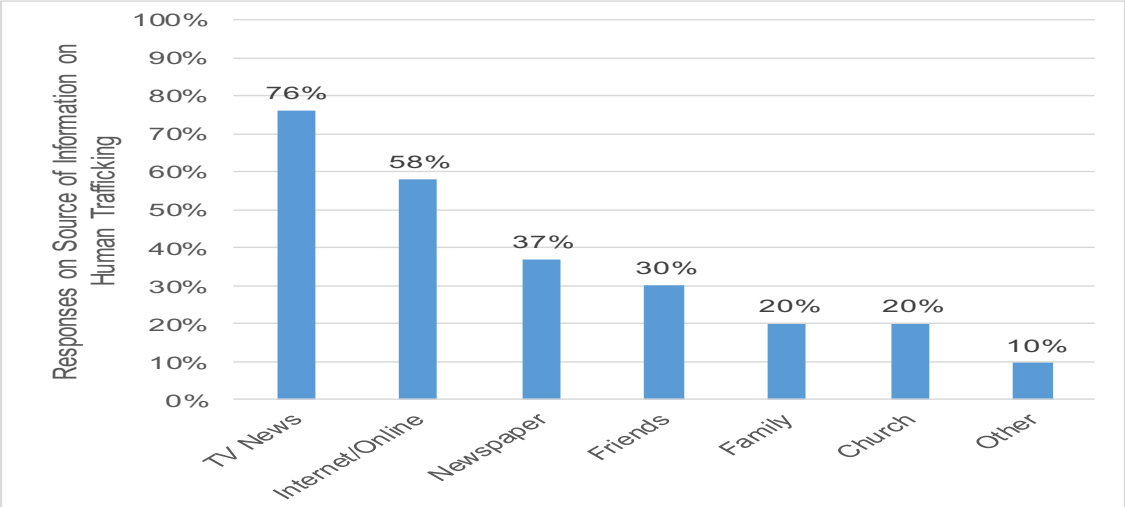


Responses	n	%
Sex Slavery	95	24%
Kidnapping or kidnapping for sexual enslavement	92	23%
Coercion	56	14%
Modern day slavery	55	14%
Forced labor with the element of sex	40	10%
Forced labor	30	7%
All elements of ILO's definition	13	3%
Pedophilia or selling of children	5	1%
No response	16	4%
Total respondents = 402		

Figure 5. Responses: Most respondents defined human trafficking as sex slavery (24%). This response was not surprising in that most people compartmentalize human trafficking to be mostly limited to sex trafficking. However, when asked, who can be a victim of trafficking (Q.4), the respondents overwhelmingly included sex as well as all other sectors of trafficking. This discrepancy will be discussed in the Conclusion.

The next-highest definition was kidnapping or kidnapping for the purpose of sexual enslavement (23%). It seems clear that there is less awareness when considering other means by which trafficking can occur. Other definitions reflect the same lack of awareness.

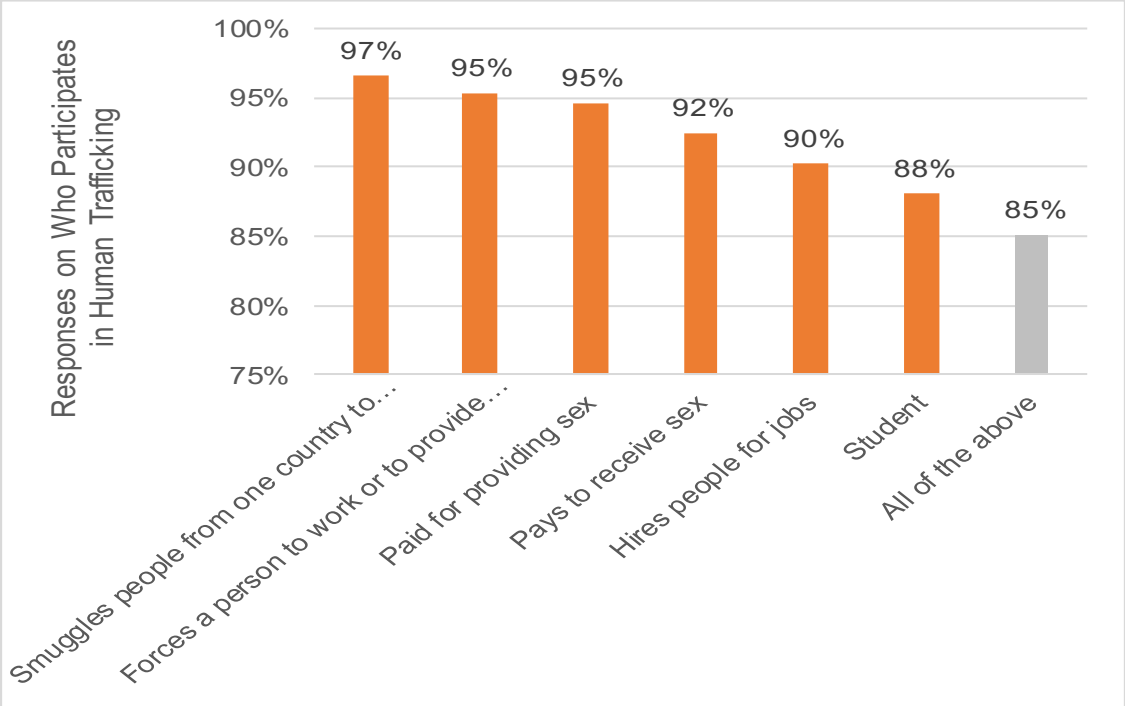
Question 6: Where do you get your information about human trafficking? (check all that apply)



Responses	n	%
TV News	311	76%
Internet/Online	239	58%
Newspaper	152	37%
Friends	121	30%
Family	83	20%
Church	80	20%
Other	42	10%
Work	13	
TV/Radio/Literature	10	
Agencies/Community Organizations	9	
Word of mouth	4	
Seminars/Conferences	3	
Research	1	
Billboard	1	
Prayer Group	1	
Total respondents = 410		

Figure 6. Responses: The primary source of information was TV news, followed by the Internet/online. Twenty percent of respondents indicated that their information came from church. This is of note as it may have some bearing on whether the local church is a beneficial source of awareness and prevention campaigns. Also of note is that 10% of the respondents who identified other sources of information mentioned TV/radio/ literature. These may be types of awareness campaigns, but it could be an area for further study.

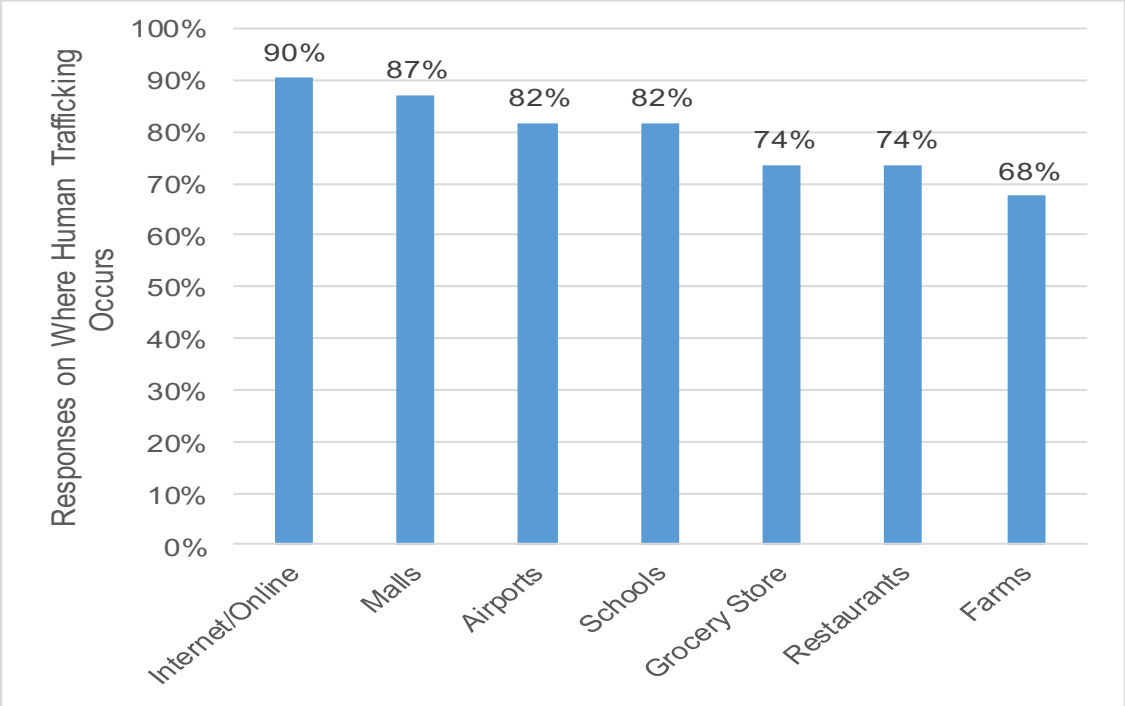
Question 7: What types of people participate in human trafficking? (check all that apply)



Responses	n	%
Smuggles people from one country to another	396	97%
Forces a person to work or to provide sex to another	391	95%
Paid for providing sex	388	95%
Pays to receive sex	379	92%
Hires people for jobs	370	90%
Students	361	88%
All of the above	349	85%
Total respondents = 410		

Figure 7. Responses: 85% of respondents identified a wide range of participants in human trafficking, including those who smuggle people, hire people for jobs, and students. While 97% chose smugglers as people who participate in human trafficking, not all human trafficking includes the element of smuggling. Most people recognized that human trafficking involves a range of different roles, but they have a misconception that human smuggling is involved in all cases of human trafficking; it is not.

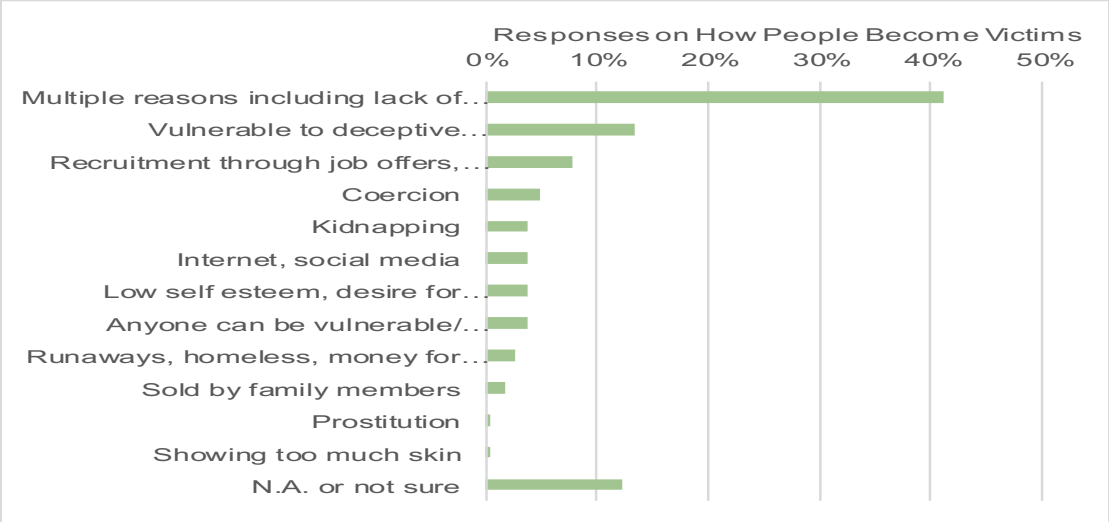
Question 8: Where do you think human trafficking occurs? (check all that apply)



Responses	n	%
Internet/Online	371	90%
Malls	357	87%
Airports	335	82%
Schools	335	82%
Grocery Store	302	74%
Restaurants	302	74%
Farms	277	68%
Total respondents = 410		

Figure 8. Responses: Most respondents thought human trafficking occurred most often on the Internet/online. A large number of respondents included farms, grocery stores, and restaurants as additional locations. This is correct—a surprising finding confirmed by my research that includes a lack of knowledge about human trafficking supporting agriculture/farms and food supply chains.

Question 20: In your opinion, how do people become victims or involved in human trafficking?



Responses	n	%
Multiple reasons including lack of awareness and lack of knowledge	168	41%
Vulnerable to deceptive relationships, too trusting	55	14%
Recruitment through job offers, better opportunities, education, poverty	32	8%
Coercion	20	5%
Kidnapping	15	4%
Internet, social media	15	4%
Low self esteem, desire for acceptance and affirmation	15	4%
Anyone can be vulnerable/no fault of their own	15	4%
Runaways, homeless, money for drugs	11	3%
Sold by family members	7	2%
Prostitution	2	0.5%
Showing too much skin	2	0.5%
N.A. or not sure	50	12%
Total respondents = 407		

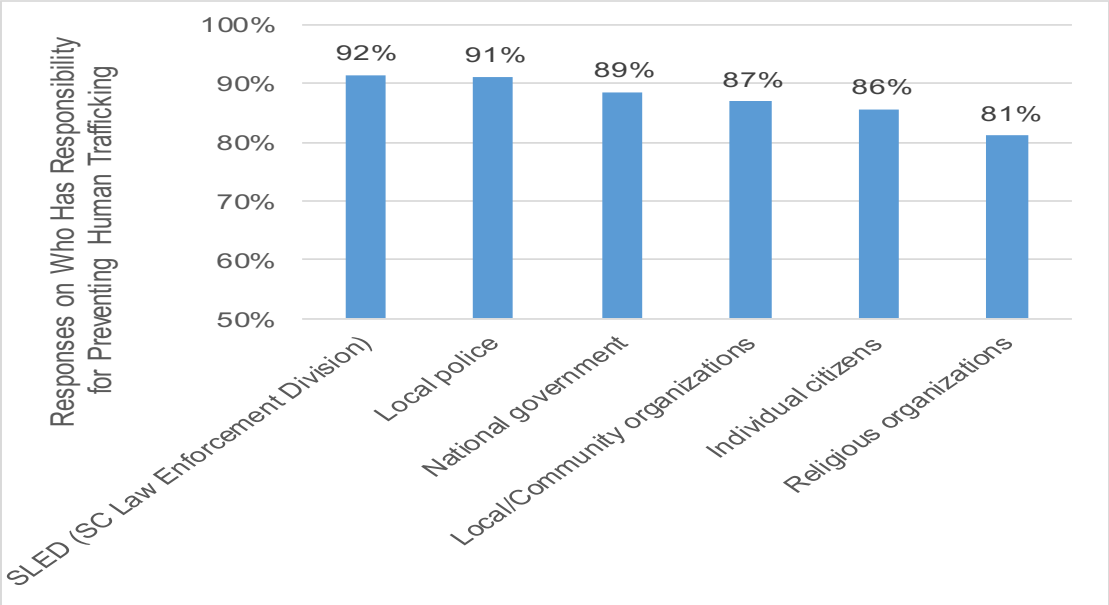
Figure 20. Responses: 41% of respondents believed that people become victims or involved in human trafficking for multiple reasons, including kidnapping, lack of awareness of their surroundings, trusting others too much, false promises, lack of education about human trafficking, romancing for the purpose of deception, inattentive custodians or parents, coercive means, and social media.

Category B: *Personal Responsibility*

Questions and Responses (includes questions 18, 21, 22)

This category groups questions that explored the respondents' ideas about their level of personal responsibility. Questions in this category gauge thoughts about what the participant might do if he/she encountered a victim, who is responsible for prevention, and whether the participant is interested in acquiring more knowledge about human trafficking.

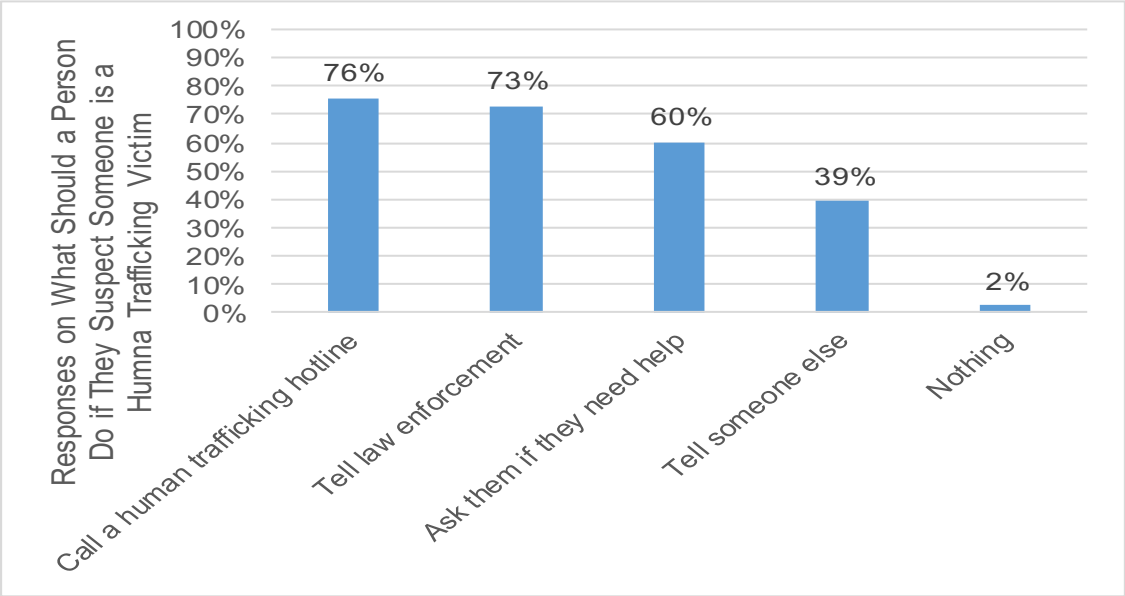
Question 18: Who do you think has responsibility for preventing human trafficking?



Responses	n	%
SLED (SC Law Enforcement Division)	283	92%
Local police	282	91%
National government	274	89%
Local/Community organizations	269	87%
Individual citizens	265	86%
Religious organizations	251	81%
Total respondents = 309		

Figure 18. Responses: Respondents thought SLED (92%) and local police (91%) were most responsible. Of particular interest was the fact that 81% of respondents thought religious organizations had a significant role to play in preventing human trafficking. This opinion dramatically illustrates the potential for further engagement and participation by not only local African-American Denominational and Non-Denominational Evangelical churches, but by all churches that have a focus on outreach within their respective communities.

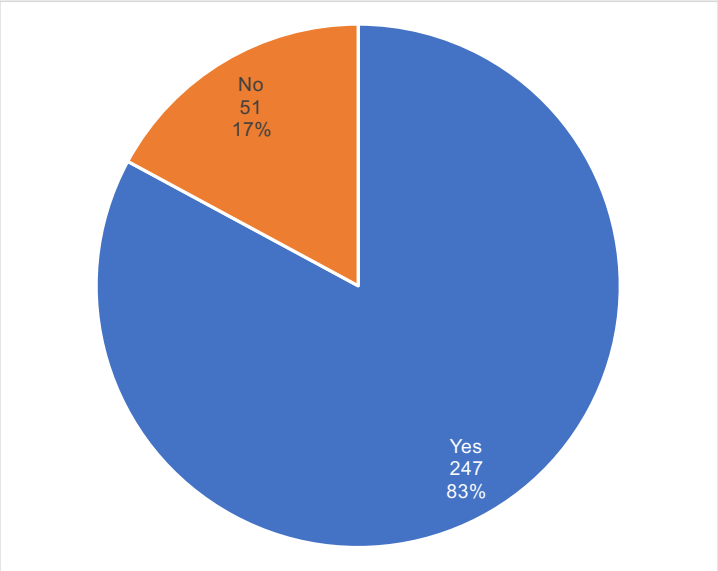
Question 21: If someone suspected a person was a victim of human trafficking, what should that person do?



Responses	n	%
Call a human trafficking hotline	234	76%
Tell law enforcement	226	73%
Ask the victim if they need help	186	60%
Tell someone else	121	39%
Nothing	7	2%
Total respondents = 309		

Figure 21. Responses: When asked what steps should be taken if a respondent suspected that a person was a victim of human trafficking, 76% stated that their first preference was to contact a human trafficking hotline, while 73% would tell law enforcement. Only 2% indicated they would do nothing. Perhaps the idea of an awareness campaign in churches that provides the Polaris Human Trafficking Hotline number (1-888-373-7888) would provide an additional resource with only a nominal risk of involvement.

Question 22: Are you interested in learning more about human trafficking?



Responses	n	%
Yes	247	83%
No	51	17%
Total respondents = 298		

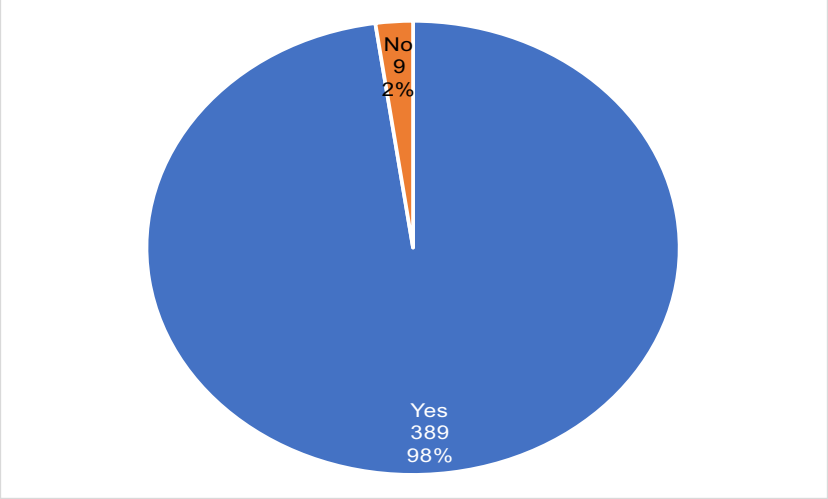
Figure 22. Responses: 83% of survey participants indicated they were interested in learning more about human trafficking. This highlights two areas of importance: (1) there is a marked recognition that this issue merits a need for more knowledge by church members, and (2) a willingness to learn more. That said, 17% were uninterested in learning more on the subject.

Category C: *Faith as a Factor*

Questions and Responses (includes questions 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 22)

Question 9: Do you identify yourself as a Christian?

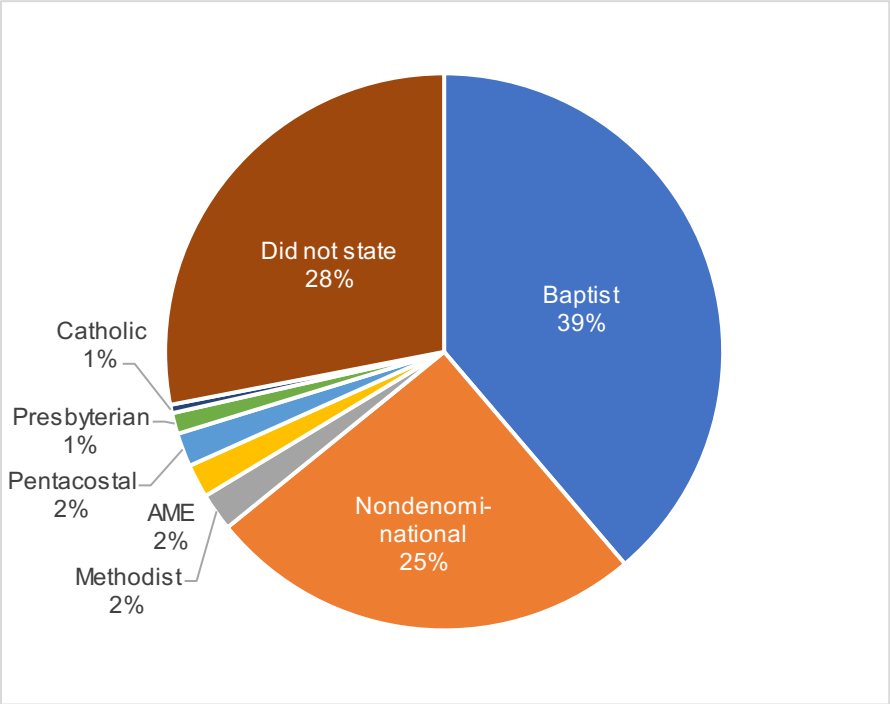
(responses in two parts)



Responses	n	%
Yes	389	98%
No	9	2%
Total respondents = 410		

Figure 9a. Responses. Of the 410 respondents in this survey, 98% identified themselves as Christians.

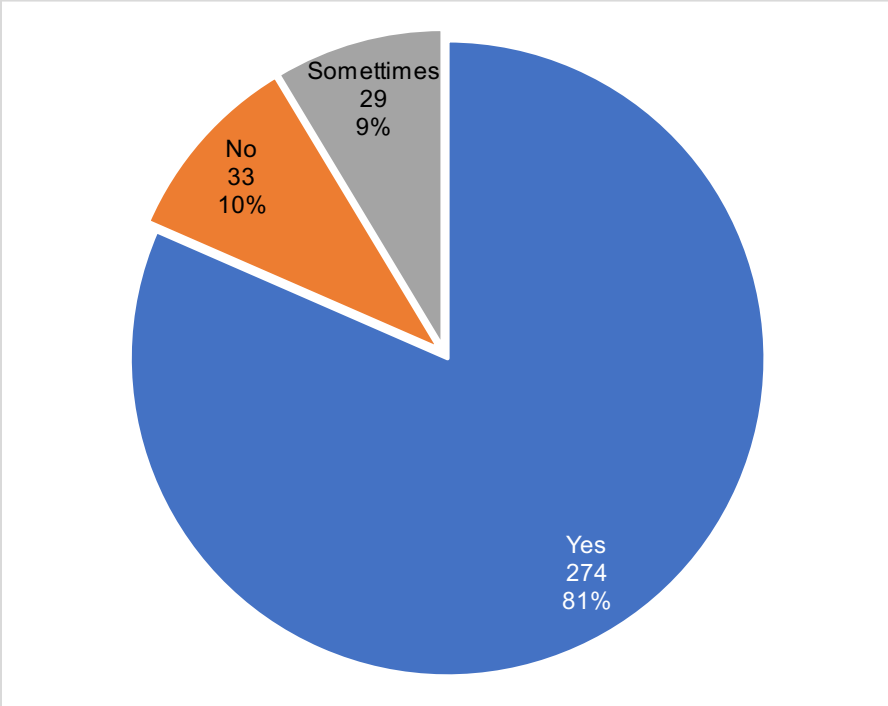
Figure 9b. Respondents by specific denomination.



Denomination	n	%
Baptist	159	39%
Nondenominational	104	25%
Methodist	9	2%
AME	8	2%
Pentecostal	8	2%
Presbyterian	5	1%
Catholic	2	0.5%
Did not state	115	28%
Total	*410*	

Figure 9. Responses: The largest number of respondents were Baptist. The second-largest number declined to state what segment of the African-American Evangelical population they belonged to. Non Denominational Evangelicals were third.

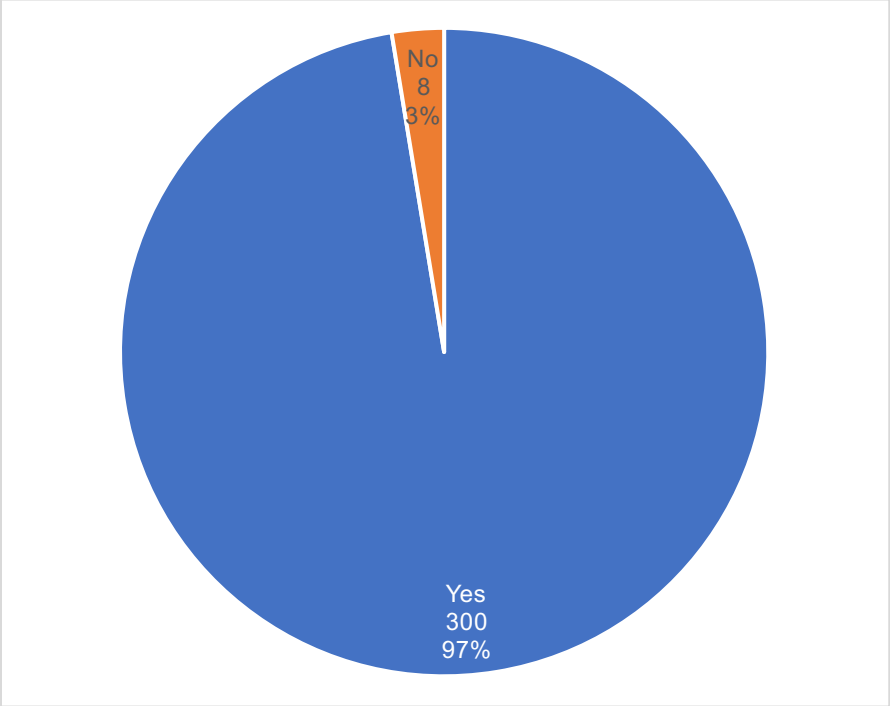
Question 10: Do you attend a local church?



Responses	n	%
Yes	274	81%
No	33	10%
Sometimes	29	9%
Total respondents = 410		

Figure 10. Responses: 81% of surveyed participants said they attend a local church. 10% said they did not, but acknowledged belonging to the local African-American Evangelical community.

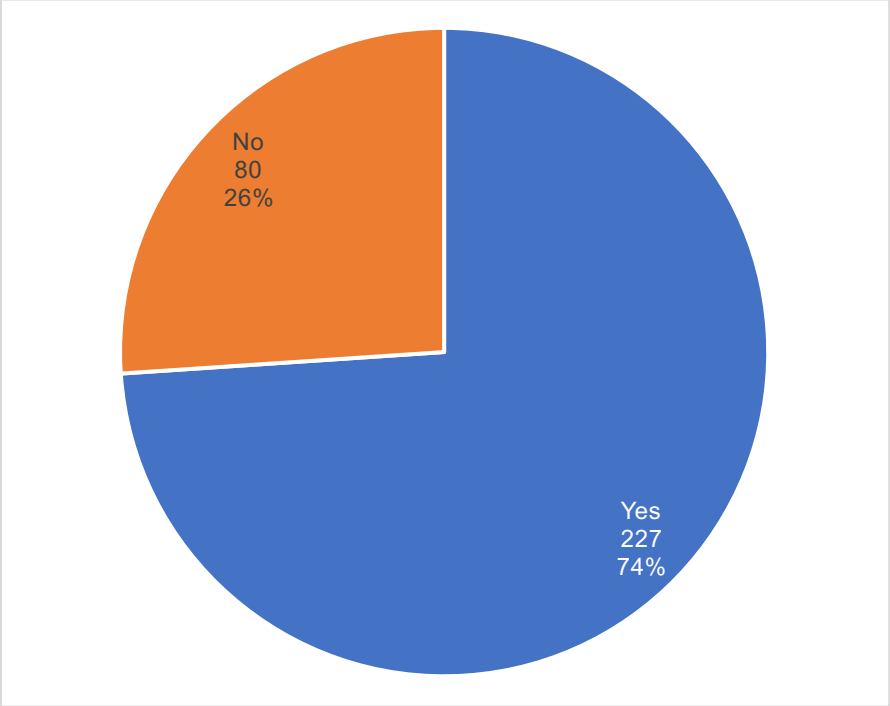
Question 11. Does your experience as a Christian play a part in your day-to-day decision making?



Responses	n	%
Yes	300	97%
No	8	3%
Total respondents = 308		

Figure 11. Responses: 97% affirmed that their faith plays a determining factor in their daily decisions.

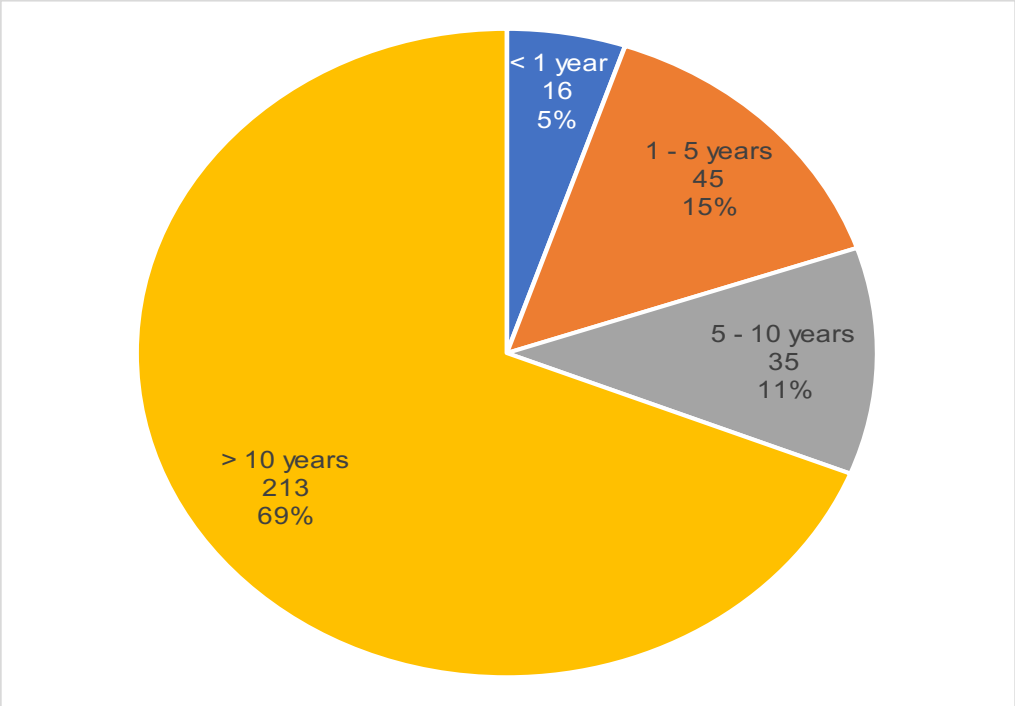
Question 16: Have you ever talked about the topic of human trafficking with friends, relatives, church members, law enforcement, or any others?



Responses	n	%
Yes	227	74%
No	80	26%
Total respondents = 307		

Figure 16. Responses: 74% indicated they had conversations about human trafficking with friends, relatives, church members, and others.

Question 17: How long have you attended your church?



Responses	n	%
< 1 year	16	5%
1 - 5 years	45	15%
5 - 10 years	35	11%
> 10 years	213	69%
Total respondents = 309		

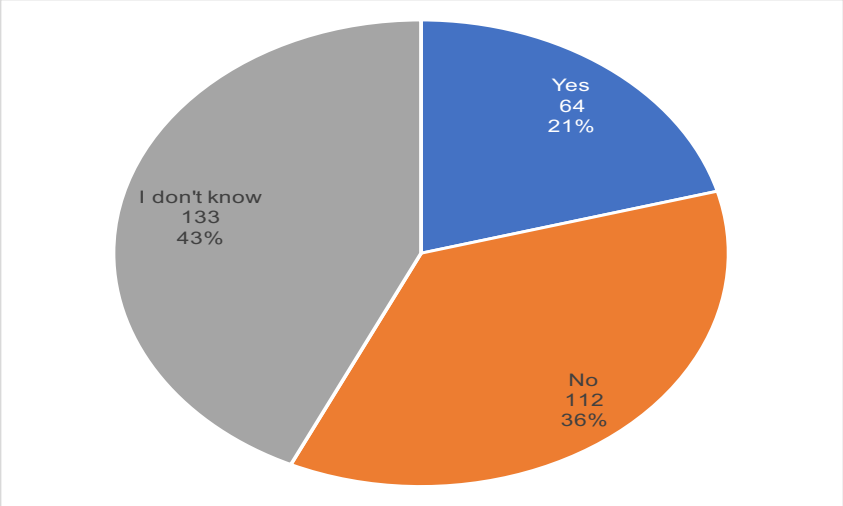
Figure 17. Responses: 69% have attended their local church for more than 10 years. Such questions reflect the potential for influence in disseminating and facilitating awareness and factual information regarding human trafficking while abating myths and false or inaccurate information on the topic. The question also indicates a high level of interest by members.

Category D: *Church Involvement in Human Trafficking Awareness*

Questions and Responses (includes questions 12–15)

These questions sought to gauge the participants' knowledge of whether their respective churches have engaged in activities related to human trafficking awareness.

Question 12: Has your church ever been involved in educational or prevention activities regarding human trafficking?



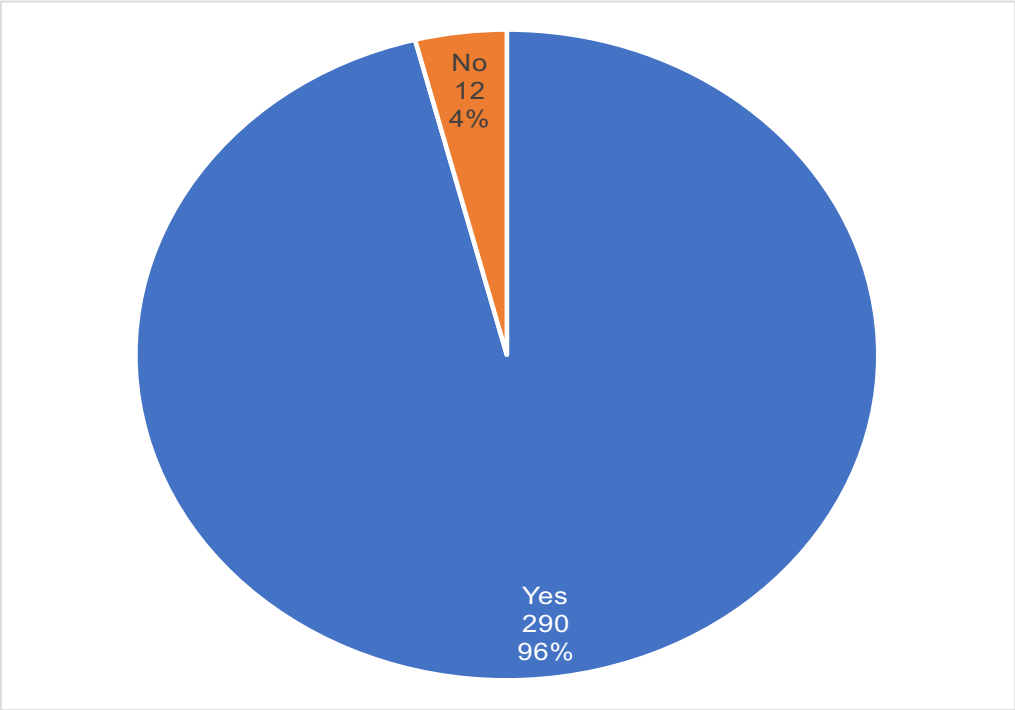
Responses	N	%
Yes	64	21%
No	112	36%
I don't know	133	43%
Total respondents = 309		

Figure 12. Responses: 43% did not know whether their church had ever been involved in any educational or preventive activities; 36% indicated that their church had never been involved in any type of human trafficking-related activity; and 21% indicated that their church had been involved in such activities. Much of the information came through activities such as parenting classes, other classes, sermons conducted by guest speakers about women's vulnerability, speakers involved in women's rescue mission projects, youth group speakers, pastors' sermons, and local law enforcement speakers.

Figure 12. Selected extended responses, provided in writing:

Yes, Why? 30 (10%) provided a reason why
Child abuse classes
Young women of excellence
Classes on domestic violence and child violence.
All known
They give classes on child abuse
Flyers and guest speakers
Videos, brochures
At work
Basic education
Earlier this year
Information to youth
Through Knights of Peter Claver
By giving information
Discussed in UMW meetings
RCSD came and talked to the church
I don’t know, But now you are here Mrs. Frankie!! Yes
Education awareness/fundraising for outside mission.
We have had small communication about it
Visual Aid
Special meeting to inform men of sex trade
Somewhat
Invited a speaker to discuss

Question 13: Do you think the Christian church should play a role in preventing human trafficking?



Responses	n	%
Yes	290	96%
No	12	4%
Total respondents = 312		

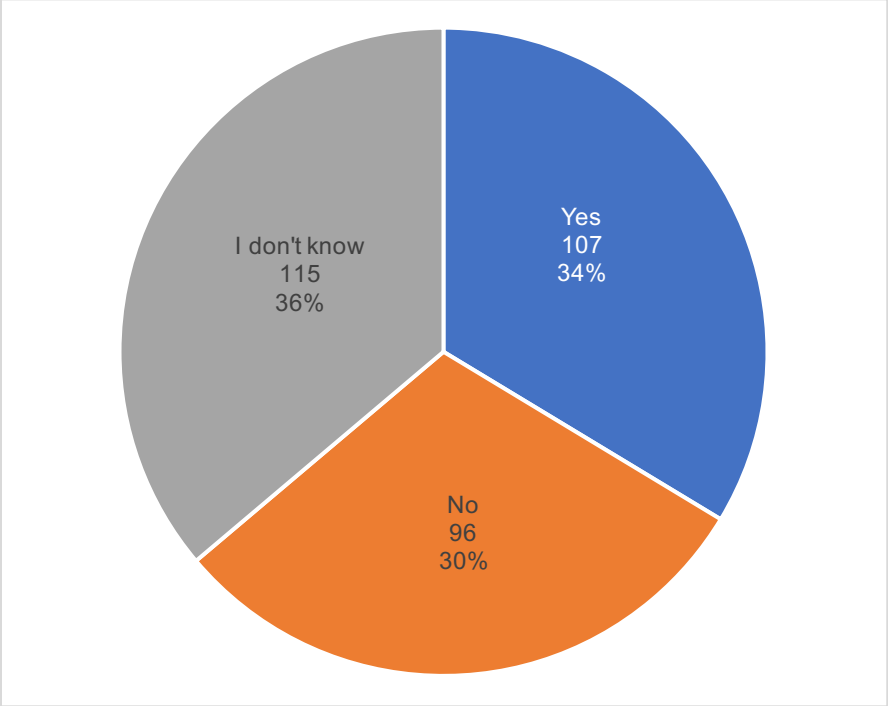
Figure 13. Responses: 96% of congregants surveyed thought the church should play a role in preventing human trafficking; 37% provided a reason why they thought such involvement was important. Participants cited the churches' influence in the community, and their potential as a repository for information and informing. Many stated that the churches' doctrine required providing help to disenfranchised and vulnerable populations. Many stated that the church was or should be a place of refuge, that it had a moral obligation to address the issue, and that it should provide protection through education and awareness and a voice for issues related to social justice.

Figure 13: Selected extended responses to Question 13:

If Yes, Why? 113 (37%) provided a reason why
They can
Everyone should be educated
Educate young people and students
Everyone should
Because it is wrong
Empower and reinforce the spirit of Christ
So people can be aware
Inform church/children
Awareness
Because it is wrong
Everyone
Education of the members
To give support
To make people aware
To help reduce trafficking
In protecting our community and future
Because of its importance
educate people on it’s prevalence
To help with awareness
The right thing to do
Talking to people.
Outreach to give people a place to go
A warning
To provide knowledge
Because it effects everyone greatly.
Education, shelter
Educate youth
To provide knowledge
Because we all should set an example
All who can help should

If Yes, Why? 113 (37%) provided a reason why
Sometimes its the church that is doing it
Everyone should be concerned
Bring people to Christ
As a preventive measure
It is (should be) part of their dogma.
Because all places need to help
We need to have compassion
Right thing to do
We should educate individuals
Prayer changes lives
We are to reach the communities
To increase awareness and prevention
To protect folks
To help set every captive free
It is the Christian and human thing to do
It is our reasonable service
Speak about prevention
To educate and make aware
To teach people and to pray for them
The church is here to serve
We should hear anyone that needs it
Need to inform people
We have homeless ministries
It’s a moral obligation

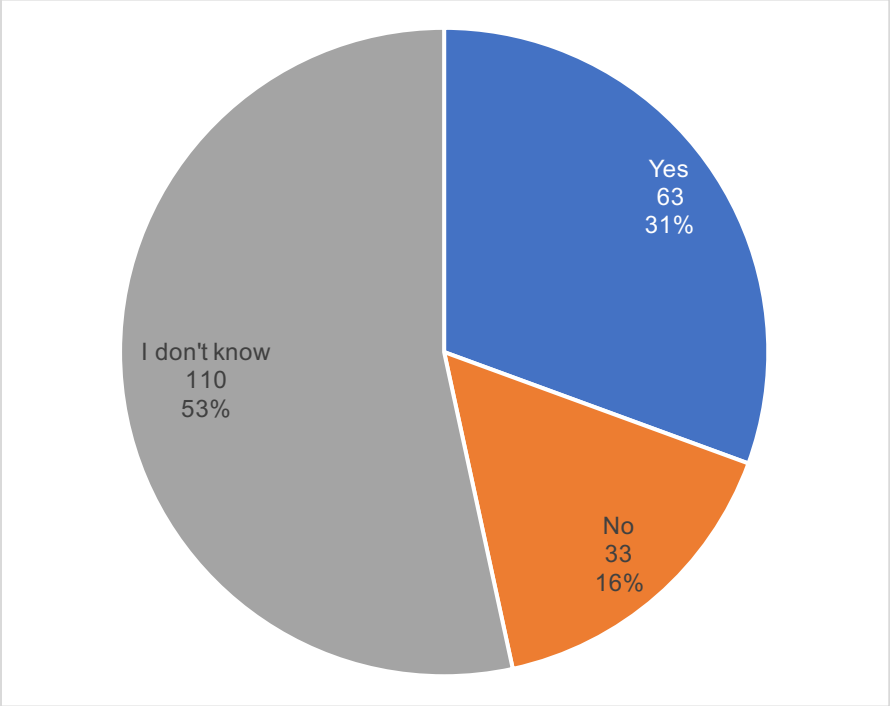
Question 14: Has the topic of human trafficking ever been discussed among church members in your congregation?



Responses	n	%
Yes	107	34%
No	96	30%
I don’t know	115	35%
Total respondents = 318		

Figure 14. Responses: When asked whether the topic of human trafficking had been discussed among church members in their respective churches, on average one-third equally said yes, no, or did not know.

Question 15: Has human trafficking ever been the topic of a sermon, message, or class in your church?



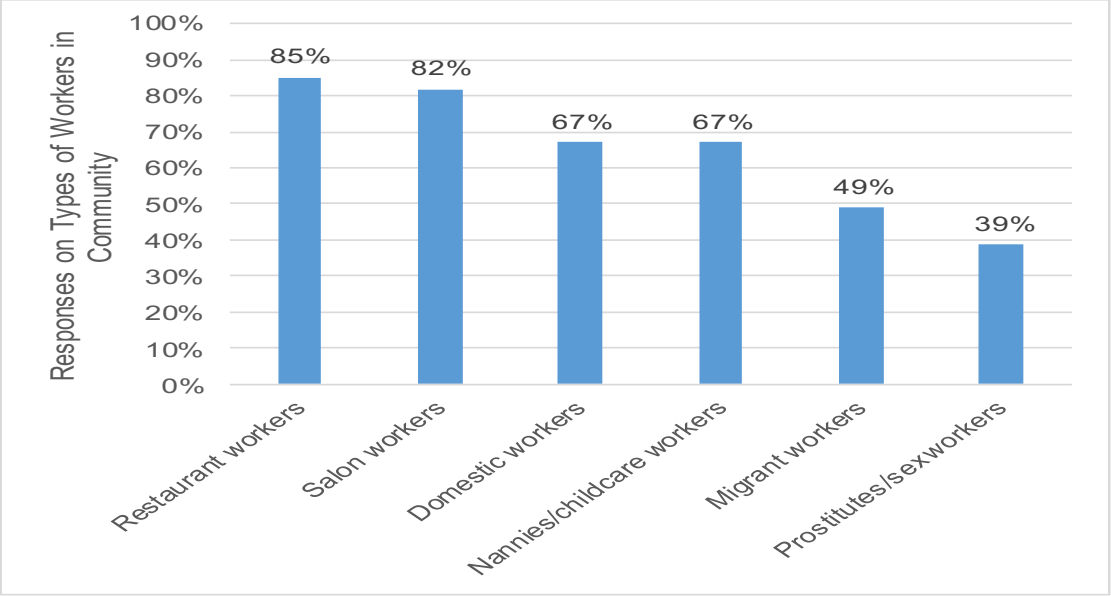
Responses	n	%
Yes	107	34%
No	96	30%
I don’t know	115	35%
Total respondents = 318		

Figure 15. Responses: More than half of the respondents did not know whether human trafficking had ever been the topic of a sermon, message, or class in their church. However, the high number of members indicating a desire to learn more about the subject indicates strong interest in the potential for an educational platform.

Category E: *Vulnerable Populations Within the Respondent's Community*

Questions and Responses (includes question 19)

Question 19: Are there any of the following workers in your community? (check all that apply)



Responses	n	%
Restaurant workers	263	85%
Salon workers	253	82%
Domestic workers	207	67%
Nannies/childcare workers	207	67%
Migrant workers	151	49%
Prostitutes/sex workers	120	39%
Total respondents = 309		

Figure 19. Responses: This question was asked to identify potentially vulnerable populations that were located in the participant's community. The largest groups were restaurants, salons, domestic workers, and childcare workers. Almost half indicated migrant workers, and 39% indicated prostitutes and sex workers. All of these workers comprise potentially vulnerable populations.

Chapter VI

Summary

In this chapter, the information obtained from each of the five categories of questions is summarized. The same format is followed as in the previous chapter.

Category A: *Perceived Knowledge of Human Trafficking*

(includes questions 1–8, 20)

- Most survey participants thought they had a sufficient level of knowledge about human trafficking to conclude that their self-perceptions, awareness, and understandings about the dynamics of human trafficking are more correct than not. This was reflected in the accuracy of their correct and factual responses to questions that asked about victimization.
- Given the preponderance of knowledgeable responses throughout the survey, I conclude that not only were the participants' perceptions more accurate than not, they also reflected a more-than-average interest in the topic. This became particularly apparent through numerous conversations that took place among a broad range of peer groups.
- The participants' understanding that human trafficking occurs in various job and activity sectors is notable. Most of the conversations with the general public (i.e., not the survey participants) revealed their surprise at the idea that human trafficking occurs in sectors like construction, agriculture, and nail salons. This was not the norm

among the survey responses. That said, the choice "All of the above" could have been simply a convenient response, and different results might be elicited if the question were eliminated.

- The original thesis hypothesis posited that the Columbia African-American Evangelical community is misinformed or under-informed about human trafficking. However, the respondents' answers to Category A questions disproves this hypothesis. Rather, the results reflect high levels of awareness that support the fact that the Columbia African-American Evangelical Churches have a sufficient level of awareness to deem them capable guardians as described by Cohen and Felson.

Category B: *Personal Responsibility*

(includes questions 18, 21, 22).

This category explored the respondents' ideas about their level of personal responsibility. It included questions to gauge what the participant might do if he or she encountered a victim, who is responsible for prevention, and whether the participant was interested in acquiring more knowledge about human trafficking.

- If respondents encountered someone they believed was a trafficking victim, 76% of respondents said they would contact a human trafficking hotline, and 73% would tell law enforcement. Only 2% indicated they would do nothing. Calling a hotline could provide an additional resource with little risk of involvement.
- Regarding the question of responsibility, the high response rate indicates that respondents believe responsibility rests with religious organizations and individual

citizens. This spotlights opportunities for collaborative and religious community initiatives to support increased awareness projects.

- Most survey respondents (83%) wanted to learn more about human trafficking, indicating there is considerable interest among church members who want additional knowledge and are willing to learn more.

Category C: *Faith as a Factor*

(includes questions 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 22)

These questions highlighted how the respondent's membership in an African-American Evangelical church is a factor in his or her responses to the survey questions. This category also illustrated how Christian beliefs were a factor in the participants' responses.

- The diversity of both African-American Denominational and African-American Non-Denominational participation in the survey is laudable and reflects the idea that human trafficking is of interest to a broad religious spectrum.
- A respondent's Christian beliefs had a potential impact on levels of awareness and the need for preventive measures. A study by Molly Overholt[75] suggested that if subjects are more spiritual, they are more likely to be actors in preventative measures.
- This is another affirming metric for the idea of the African-American Evangelical church as a capable guardian, particularly because 97% of respondents acknowledged that their daily decisions are influenced by their faith.

[75] Overholt, "Human Trafficking Awareness," 33.

- When scriptural support is a factor in increased awareness, a broader impact also can be made within anti-trafficking and awareness efforts.
- The fact that 26% of respondents had never had a conversation with others about human trafficking speaks to societal or cultural influences that tend toward silence on the subject.
- 80% of survey participants attended church for at least five years, reflecting stability and their investment as a valued stakeholder in the Columbia community.

Category D: *Church Involvement in Human Trafficking Awareness*

(includes questions 12–15).

These questions gauged the participants' knowledge of whether their respective churches have engaged in activities related to human trafficking awareness.

- The highest percentage of church attendees did not know if human trafficking had ever been the subject of information shared by the church.
- This demonstrates another opportunity for providing information that would support awareness, prevention and educational efforts.

Category E: *Vulnerable Populations Within the Respondent's Community*

(includes question 19).

The question sought to identify types of potentially vulnerable populations located in the participant's community.

- The answers reflect the premise that as awareness levels increase, stakeholders of the community become more invested in those who can be identified as vulnerable to human trafficking.
- All of the survey respondents had multiple members of potentially vulnerable populations living and/or working in their respective communities.

Research and Survey Limitations

- As noted earlier, I encountered some difficulty obtaining data about the size of congregations, as well as the number of members of African-American Denominational and Non-Denominational Evangelical churches. A comprehensive list of all churches in the Columbia area would improve the research sample if future projects are contemplated. For this research, the sample size was deduced from U.S. Census numbers.
- While comprised of only a single sheet front and back, containing 22 questions, the length of the survey may have dampened the enthusiasm of some respondents. It might also help explain some of the blank responses, especially those on the back side of the surveys that were returned. Ten survey questions might be a more ideal length to engage participation, although well short of a number that could provide more meaningful information.
- Any time a signature is required on consent forms that address socially sensitive issues, participation levels may decrease.
- The ability to gain optimal access to survey populations was often difficult. In instances where approval was received, it was because of a preexisting relationship

with someone in the survey population, such as a gatekeeper of the congregation, members, and/or church-related events. When interviewing Jen Thompson, Director of Lighthouse For Life, she mentioned that most of the participation and partnership relationships that support the work of her organization came through already-established relationships.[76]

- Some people may have been hesitant to become involved with an outsider whose work was associated with an outside academic institution. During the course of verbally explaining my research, many seemed pleased by the fact that I was a local resident as well as a minister.
- I intentionally never inquired into reasons why people did not want to participate, desiring to respect their voluntary choice. But it is a point worth noting, especially since Alexis Scurry of the Richland County Human Trafficking Taskforce said that she finds most church organizations eager to participate in human trafficking education.[77]

Low Response Rate

The low response rate for participation in this study and other such studies is of concern to me, particularly when making recommendations for further study and research. In one instance (not related to my study), the response rate was only 17% among local, county, and state law enforcement agencies that were asked to participate in

[76] Jen Thompson, Director of Lighthouse for Life, personal interview with thesis author, July 16, 2019.

[77] Alexis Scurry, Coordinator, Human Trafficking Taskforce in Richland County, SC. Personal interview conducted by thesis author, September 10, 2019.

surveys to gauge training levels and awareness. Said another way, 83% chose not to respond.[78]

The low participation rate may also be due to the fact that signatures were required on the consent forms. Although every necessary step was taken to provide anonymity, the signature still became a way of acknowledging personhood to the topic. Furthermore, one question asked what church the respondent attended, which also connected the person to his or her survey. This also could be viewed as an additional indicator of respondents' reticence to be linked to an issue that is uncomfortable to discuss, involves criminal elements, and can be difficult for some who may feel vulnerable or helpless when discussing victims, potential victims, thoughts about motivations for such a crime, and possible solutions.

Incentives

No incentives were offered to participate in the survey. This could be viewed as both a limitation and a benefit. People certainly enjoy receiving something for participating in a survey. Recently, Harvard offered a $25 Amazon e-gift card for participation in an online focus group.[79] Xcel Energy, a large utility company, offered a chance to win a $100 Amazon gift card to all who completed their marketing survey.[80] Participation in this survey provided an opportunity to put human trafficking awareness "on the radar" of anyone who participated by reading and thinking about the survey

[78] Grubb and Bennett, "The Readiness of Local Law Enforcement," 493.

[79] Harvard Extension School, "New Opportunity to Share Your Thoughts with Us," emailed December 6, 2019.

[80] Xcel Energy, "You've Been Handpicked for an Xcel Energy Survey: Your Voice Matters," emailed December 1, 2019.

questions. Even those who chose not to participate were made aware that this is a subject worthy of some form of inquiry or interest. As evidence of validation, several people mentioned, in almost every location, that the questions posed made them aware of the necessity to question what was occurring in their community, and to ask what was being done about "the missing girls or children around here."

The willingness to participate in a survey without an incentive speaks to the strong historical precedent of activism within the African-American Evangelical church community of Columbia, South Carolina. I experienced a sense of pride with this thought and with the acceptance of the invitation to participate.

Opposition

Some survey participants spoke of their experience when approaching others with whom they had more than a casual relationship, only to be surprised at times by a resolute opposition to involvement. They asked why this might occur, especially when the need for awareness and community understanding seemed so relevant. I have two theories:

- Pastors are expected to provide a level of shelter for their congregation members. Pastors cannot risk exposing their congregations to someone whose intent might be for personal or unscrupulous gain. While this did not apply to me, I am nevertheless still relatively new to the Columbia community. Perhaps I had not earned the level of trust required for someone to access their congregation, no matter how important the issue being addressed.

- The subject of human trafficking is one that is still awkward for many to discuss. While human trafficking has a broad scope of activity with which many are familiar, others immediately assume one is referring strictly to sex trafficking. The issue of sex, especially outside of culturally sanctioned settings, can be fraught with barriers to discussion, and/or conflated with notions of pornography. The consumption of pornographic material is a societal problem that is not limited to the secular environment, and most people are reluctant to discuss or answer questions that they believe border on or cross into these issues. The same idea holds for conversations that involve criminal activities.
- People may have been reluctant to engage in the survey because they recognize that the issue merits discussion but they may feel they are not knowledgeable enough to provide any valuable input. That is certainly not my belief, since the exercise of gauging awareness only required one to acknowledge what was or was not known so as to provide a baseline for further studies and research. However, I understand and respect the decision to decline to participate unless one feels well versed on the topic.

Chapter VII

Conclusion

This topic is a compelling one that requires more light because it is a crime that is hidden in nature, both globally and locally. The African-American Evangelical church community, with its demonstrated commitment to action, can position itself to be an even stronger organization for creating awareness. One of the most moving moments in my encounters with research participants occurred when a 90-year-old woman approached me for a survey. She simply said, “I want to take your survey. I have problems with my eyes, but I can get my daughter to help me fill it out.” As I fought back tears, I wondered if she had been one of the participants in the civil rights movement. I was especially moved by her desire to effect change in her 90th year.

The survey results show that the African-American Evangelical Churches have the potential to be capable guardians and influential stakeholders. This is reflected in heightened levels of awareness that demonstrate progress in the work of anti-human trafficking among diverse agencies. However, more research is needed to provide ongoing and accurate data that will ensure increased levels of awareness and provide adequate resources to victims and potentially vulnerable populations.

The survey results answer the query of whether the African-American Evangelical Church in Columbia has a suitable level of awareness about this crime. The answer is yes, and it reflects that they are indeed capable guardians whose awareness has the

potential to disrupt the predatory actions of likely offenders against potentially suitable targets. They are acknowledged as being “My Sister’s Keeper.”

Appendix A

Sample Survey Questionnaire

Survey Questions for Thesis Research
Researcher: Frankie Hing

1. How much do you believe you know about human trafficking?
   ___None at all ___Some ___An average amount ___More than an average amount

2. How much do you believe you know about the victims of human trafficking?
   ___None at all ___Some ___An average amount ___More than an average amount

3. How do you think victims get involved in human trafficking?
   ___Friends or other associates ___Internet/Online ___Family ___Job Offers
   ___All of the above
   ___Other (please specify) _____

4. Who do you think can be a victim of human trafficking? (Check all that apply)
   ___Men ___Women ___Boys ___Girls ___Farm Workers ___Hair Braiders
   ___Nail Techs ___Massage Therapists ___Housekeepers ___Restaurant Workers
   ___Students ___All of the above

5. What is your definition of human trafficking? (Please fill in the blank below).

   _____

6. Where do you get your information about human trafficking? (Check all that apply)
   ___Family ____TV news ____Internet/online ___Newspaper ___Friends ___Church
   ___Other _____

7. What types of people participate in human trafficking? (Check all that apply)
   ____Someone who hires people for jobs
   ____Someone who gets paid for providing sex
   ____Someone who pays to receive sex
   ____Someone who forces a person to work or to provide sex to another
   ____Someone who smuggles people from one country to another
   ____Someone who is a student
   ____All of the above

8. Where do you think human trafficking occurs? (Check all that apply)
   ___Grocery Store ____Airports ___Malls ___Schools ___Farms ___Restaurants
   ___Internet/Online

9. Do you identify yourself as a Christian?
   ____Yes ____No

10. Do you attend a local church?
    ____Yes ____No ____Sometimes
    If "Yes," please list the name and location of your church.
    _____

11. Does your experience as a Christian play a part in your day-to-day decision making?
    _____Yes _____No

12. Has your church ever been involved in educational or prevention activities regarding human trafficking?
    ____Yes ____No ____I don't know
    If "Yes," please describe what the activity was.
    _____

13. Do you think the Christian church should play a role in preventing human trafficking?
    ____Yes ____No
    Why or why not? _____

14. Has the topic of human trafficking ever been discussed among church members in your congregation?
    ____Yes ____No ____I don't know

15. Has human trafficking ever been the topic of a sermon, message, or class in your church?
    ____Yes ____No ____I don't know

16. Have you ever talked about the topic of human trafficking with friends, relatives, church members, law enforcement, or any others?
    ____Yes ____No

17. How long have you attended your church?
    ___Less than 1 year ___1-5 years ___5-10 years ___more than 10 years

18. Who do you think has responsibility for preventing human trafficking? (Check all that apply)
    ___Local police ___National government ___Individual citizens
    ___ Local/Community organizations ____Religious organizations
    ___SLED (South Carolina Law Enforcement Division)

19. Are there any of the following workers in your community? (Check all that apply)
    ____Salon workers ____Restaurant workers ____Migrant workers
    ____Prostitutes/sex workers ____Domestic workers ____Nannies/Childcare workers

20. In your opinion, how do people become victims or involved in human trafficking?
    _____

21. If someone suspected a person was a victim of human trafficking, what should they do? ____Nothing ____Ask the person if she/he needed help ____Tell law enforcement
    ____Tell someone else ____Call a human trafficking hotline

22. Are you interested in learning more about human trafficking?
    ____Yes ____No

Appendix B. Sample Consent Form

HARVARD Human Research Protection Program

CONSENT FORM

Protocol #: IRB19-0345 Harvard University-Area IRB

Study Title: Am I My Sister's Keeper? Human Trafficking Awareness Within the Context of the Columbia, South Carolina Evangelical Church.
Researcher: Frankie Hing
Faculty Advisor: Professor Ruth Okediji

Key Information

The following is a short summary of this study to help you decide whether or not to be a part of this study. More detailed information is listed later on in this form.

We invite you to take part in a research study because you are an adult Christian who lives in the state of South Carolina.

- Someone will explain this research study to you.
- Whether or not you take part is up to you.
- Your participation is completely voluntary.
- You can choose not to take part.
- You can agree to take part and later change your mind.
- Your decision will not be held against you.
- Your refusal to participate will not result in any consequences or any loss of benefits that you are otherwise entitled to receive.
- You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.

Why is this research being done?

Human trafficking is a significant problem in the United States. Many solutions are being explored to prevent the problem. Your responses will provide insight into how much is known or understood about human trafficking within the evangelical community of Columbia, South Carolina.

We expect that you will be in this research study for 15 minutes.

You will be asked to provide answers to a survey about your understanding of human trafficking and who should be responsible for providing solutions.

Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me?

Sometimes questions about human trafficking can evoke feelings of sadness about victims. Such a response indicates a level of compassion for victims and can help with an understanding of how to be support and better serve them. Additionally, we cannot promise any benefits to you or others as a result of taking part in this research however, possible benefits could include a greater level of awareness regarding human trafficking as a local problem or an awareness of potential opportunities to explore solutions.

Detailed Information

What is the purpose of this research?

Human trafficking is a problem that impacts the United States and has been identified in many sectors of local communities. The Department of Justice, Homeland Security, Labor, local law enforcement and Non-governmental agencies have been involved in a cooperative effort toward prevention, awareness, protection and prosecution of activities related to human trafficking. The evangelical church in South Carolina has been identified as an NGO with the potential to impact its local communities. As such, research regarding current levels of understanding what constitutes human trafficking will provide measures for potential impact.

How long will I take part in this research?

The research will include one survey that will be approximately 15 minutes in length.

What can I expect if I take part in this research?

A survey will be provided to you. You will be asked to complete the survey and return it in the specified manner.

You will be communicating with Frankie Hing the principal researcher, who is a graduate student at the Harvard Extension School.

The research will take place on local church sites, and public locations.

The research will be done over a 3 month period that extends from July 2019 through October 2019.

What happens if I say yes, but I change my mind later?

You can leave the research at any time, and it will not be held against you. Your survey will be destroyed and removed from the database.

Is there any way being in this study could be bad for me? (Detailed Risks)

There are some risks you might experience from being in this study. On occasion, when discussing or thinking about people who are vulnerable to human trafficking feelings of sadness may be experienced. If this occurs, you are encouraged to share those feelings with a trusted individual such as a friend, relative, spiritual advisor or local agency that provides support.

If I take part in this research, how will my privacy be protected? What happens to the information you collect?

Efforts will be made to limit the use and disclosure of your personal information to people who have a need to review this information. We cannot promise complete secrecy. Organizations that may inspect your information include the IRB and other representatives of this organization.

If there is a disclosure that an illegal activity has occurred, the researcher is required to report such activity to the appropriate authorities. Your information collected as part of this research will not be used or distributed for future research studies, even if all of your identifiers are removed.

Who can I talk to?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, talk to the research team at ***fmh646@g.harvard.edu.***

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Harvard University Area Institutional Review Board ("IRB"). You may talk to them at (617) 496-2847 or cuhs@harvard.edu if:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research subject.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Signature Block for Adult Subject

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research.

Signature of Subject

Printed Name of Subject: Frankie Hing

Date: July 10, 2019

Signature of person Obtaining Consent

Date

Frankie Hing

Printed name of person obtaining consent

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HingChurchA

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