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Abstract

The growing cases of human trafficking on the national and international level made it essential to give some comprehensive attention to this issue and propose some realistic solutions. The primary focus of this research work is to critically examine different aspects of human trafficking and sex work, mainly considering its prevalence in the San Francisco and Bay Rea Region. These geographical segmentations are selected because these regions are ranked as top areas affected by the increasing trend of human trafficking. It is crucial to establish that the phenomenon of human trafficking is mostly turned into a human rights violation in the form of prostitution. Examination of the actual scope of this issue is an essential step to determine the magnitude of this calamity and propose suitable measures accordingly. The increasing tendency of human trafficking in the United States encouraged law development and enforcing institutions to modified legal policies according to the changing spectrum of this issue. The active intervention of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) in this context can never be ignored, referring to ensure improved forms of protection for victims of human trafficking. The establishment of this entity eventually made it possible to recognize the difference between victims of human trafficking and sex offenders. This form of distinction is eventually assistive for police to deal with the scenario of human trafficking correctly. Furthermore, there is a need for more targeted practical actions to reduce the risk of human trafficking issues, particularly in the case of a vulnerable area of San Francisco. The target of controlling human trafficking can be achieved through the active involvement of all the stakeholders in the forms of law development institutions, police, and overall community.

Human Trafficking and Sex Work Primarily in the San Francisco & Bay Area Region

**Introduction**

Human trafficking is comprised of various forms of exploitation; however, exploitation of people for sexual purposes comprised of the largest group of victims. It is noteworthy to consider the fact that human trafficking receives the least attention by government administrations and organizations. A critical examination of human trafficking for labor and sexual exploitation demonstrates that it is a serious human rights issue. According to an estimation by experts, this is a billion dollars industry. It is difficult to understand the scope of trafficking due to the lack of consistent data about this issue (Baker). Furthermore, the hidden nature of trafficking makes it even more difficult to hold traffickers accountable. The United States of America is one of the most significant destinations for human trafficking victims. According to the statistics of the Department of Justice, nearly 18,000 individuals are trafficked in the US. These statistics by the US Department of Justice indicates the severity of this issue. It is important to consider the fact that the San Francisco Bay Area is one of the most prominent hubs for human trafficking. This region is a hot spot for the trafficking of children and women. According to the reports of the Federal Bureau of Intelligence (FBI), San Francisco Bay Area is among the 13 highest child trafficking areas in the US. Unfortunately, it is not categorized as a new crime due to its long prevalence in that region. Sadly, the victims of human trafficking or sex trafficking are unable to trust government organizations and law enforcement agencies. Manipulation by traffickers, different traditional and cultural attitudes, and previous experiences are major reasons for not trusting government and law enforcement agencies. Traffickers often exploit people who are engaged in commercial sexual practices, LGBT people, and people of color. They also exploit discrimination and social stigma against immigrants in the United States. The recruitment of victims in the underground market of the San Francisco Bay Area significantly affects its credibility. In the past few years, significant steps are taken by government officials to combat this serious issue. San Francisco has also increased efforts for recognition of traffickers, and their business to mitigate the severity of this issue systematically.

**Literature Review**

*Laws, Policies, and Response*

It is noteworthy to mention that sex trafficking has received a significant amount of attention in the US. In the past few years, number of laws were passed to overcome severity of human trafficking in the US. In 2000, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) was enacted in the US in order to address this issue (Baker). The protection of people is highly important to minimize the prevalence of human trafficking. In the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, TVPA was introduction along with its significance to control this issue (Hepburn, Stephanie, and Simon). During that session, the US signed the protocol to subdue and stop human trafficking. It is notable to consider that the United Nations was seriously concerned to overcome international organized crimes. The acceptance of this protocol by the US was the result of the efforts of the UN. This protocol is well known as the Palermo Protocol (Baker). In addition to this, Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (VTVPA) 2000 was passed by Congress that comprised the TVPA as well. President Clinton signed VTVPA on 28th October 2018. It was the first federal law that addresses the issue of trafficking in the US. The US is a market where humans are brought through trafficking. Therefore, the purpose of this act was to focus on various trafficking activities outside the US. Government and law enforcement agencies needed to control the sex trafficking of US citizens and minors. It is obvious that the enactment of this policy recognized human trafficking as a crime (Hepburn, Stephanie, and Simon). Furthermore, individuals who were exploited for sex trafficking were firstly considered as victims with the help of policy. Prior to the existence of the TVPA, these individuals were considered as criminals rather than victims.

With the help of TVPA, the victims of sex trafficking are now considered as crime victims if they are entering the country through illegal means. Most importantly, rather than considering as undocumented individuals, this policy contains a significant distinction for these individuals as crime victims (Hernandez). If the victims of human trafficking are categorized as 'certified' by government agencies in the US, then they are entitled to receive special services under the TVPA. The label of 'certified' acknowledges that the victim of sex trafficking is collaborating with different government agencies in order to prosecute the defendant. However, it is also essential to understand the limitation of this act in order to get better insight. Undoubtedly, a recognized victim of trafficking can be the label of certified in order to get federal benefits (Hernandez). However, the recognition process of this labeling is extremely slow and difficult. One of the major reasons behind this difficulty is collaborating with multiple government agencies at the same time (Hernandez). There is a number of obstacles that are associated with this kind of coordination. A victim of human or sex trafficking has to cooperate with immigration agencies and law enforcement agencies. It is even possible that a victim may be reluctant to collaborate with government agencies regarding his/her exploitation by the trafficker. Due to this particular reason, it is possible that the victim may not be considered as 'certified.' If not 'certified,' it is unable for the victim to receive federal benefits such as food stamps and health care services (Medicaid).

Undoubtedly, a victim of human trafficking needs to qualify for certification. Once victims receive certification, it makes them eligible for permanent residency in the US. They can easily apply for T-Visa in order to pave the way for their residence in the US (Hepburn, Stephanie, and Simon). A victim of human trafficking must get eligible for T-Visa as it allows for potential family reunification. It will further make spouses, children, and parents of that victim eligible for T-Visa. A critical examination of this type of legislation is highly important to understand its effectiveness in order to protect the victims of human trafficking (Hernandez). These steps and legislations by the US government are identifying and suppressing human trafficking in the United States. In addition to the protection of victims internationally, another piece of legislation was formulated to address trafficking domestically. The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act passed in 2000 to combat the high prevalence of human and sex trafficking. The creation of this act was based on fighting the crime of sex trafficking. According to this act, it was made compulsory for all nations that are included in the UN to fight sex trafficking actively. In order to combat these serious issues, the VTVPA mandates to increase the number of law enforcement agencies. As per VTVPA mandates, sex trafficking can be effectively controlled if law enforcement agencies are provided with significant funds to cater to sex trafficking. Furthermore, VTVPA also encouraged nations to make valuable changes in policy in order to control sex trafficking. The existence of this act compelled nations to make proper policies and laws to identify and punish sex traffickers. It was made clear by VTVPA that nations must take serious actions against these sex traffickers; otherwise, political benefits would be severed from these nations. These political benefits include non-trade and non-humanitarian related aid by the United States.

*Victims of Sex Trafficking*

It is of utmost importance to examine the impact of the sex trade industry on victims. It is necessary to get an in-depth analysis of sex trade on crime victims. Victims of the sex trade are suffering from both physical and psychological issues. Men, women, and children are vulnerable to become a victim of the sex trade industry (Hernandez). A critical analysis of the victims of the sex trade industry provides an estimation of the most vulnerable population for human and sex trafficking. The coercive nature of participation is a serious issue regarding sex trafficking (Cockbain, Ella, and Bowers). These are involuntary participants who are forcefully compelled to work for the sex trade industry. Traffickers use force or coercion to get involuntary participants. It is essential to consider that the United States is actively identifying and addressing this problem in order to save the victims. A human trafficking victim is defined by three elements; the act, the means, and the purpose. The victims of trafficking are special children. Children who experience abusive upbringings and problem stricken homes are considered vulnerable to trafficking (Hernandez). There is a significant relationship between street prostitution and childhood sexual exploitation. Majority of victims of trafficking experience sexual exploitation as a juvenile (Cockbain, Ella, and Bowers). It is important to mention that this population is highly vulnerable to the sex trade. Tactics such as false promise, violence, threat, lies, and debt bondage make them vulnerable to stay in the sex trade. Innocent victims are forced to participate in sexual activities once forced into the sex industry. Researchers have found that the majority of these victims are found in locations such as massage parlors, online escort service, hostess clubs, residential brothels, and the street (Cockbain, Ella, and Bowers).

The victims of sex trafficking are mostly recruited by criminal networks or organized business. These organized businesses include mafias, biker gangs, escort services, clubs, brothels, and bars. Traffickers often take advantage of the poor economic condition of these individuals. Researchers have found that economically disadvantaged individuals are more easily targeted by these organized businesses. Human trafficking is often done with the false promise of money due to the monetary disadvantages of victims (Hernandez). It is observed that the recruitment of minors is usually done in public or behind the scenes. In this advanced world, recruitment is also done through online chat rooms and classified ads. According to Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking reports, traffickers also recruit individuals by meeting them in public places such as in child care centers, near school grounds, and shopping malls. False promises are made with individuals such as no detection in order to recruit them for sex traffickers. Upon selection, these individuals have transported far away from home in order to limit their opportunity to return home. High sexual tourist demands are catered by transporting these victims into the cities, bars, and massage parlors in order to commence business (Hernandez). According to a report by the Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking, there is a high demand for this individual during the annual National Football League Super Bowl. It is essential to mention that this league attracts various tourists, which makes it a place of high demand.

**Discussion**

Human trafficking is recognized as one adverse form of human rights abuse that immensely affects the number of people around the globe. It is estimated by the International Labor Organization that there are approximate there are almost 24.9 million individuals who were characterized as the sufferers of forced labor for the year 2016. Undoubtedly, this kind of statistic is alarming that requires the necessary attention immediately to offer suitable preventive measures of this issue. It is also noteworthy to mention that on the global level, the domain of trafficking represents a $150 billion of the market every year that reflects the intensity of this issue. Moreover, the issue of human trafficking also greatly influencing the country of the United States in various forms that require instant attention. The entity of the National Human Trafficking Hotline established this fact that in 2016, there are 7,621 cases witnessed under the domain of human trafficking. These cases are one part of the total number of individuals who trafficked in recent times. It is essential to understand the intensity of the issue of human trafficking is more complex and intense as compared to the reported figures (Cockbain, Ella, and Bowers). Due to various loopholes and complications in this scenario, it is difficult to estimate the actual figures of how many people are suffering from human violations in the form of human trafficking. The hidden nature of this problem made it complex to include every detail in the report in the correct manner because there are many uncovered aspects concerning this issue. The complications of this issue further increased because, in many cases, victims of human trafficking are afraid to report this human right violation. Due to all these complications of this issue, there is no single reliable way to estimate the magnitude of human trafficking as a social problem and offer suitable forms of protection. The complexity of the problem of human trafficking requires to assess various aspects of this concern deeply and tries to apprehend the root causes at the early stages. This form of consideration is important to provide suitable assistance at the point where it is most needed. This objective of offering better intervention can only be achieved by enhancing the awareness level of people with the inclusion of proper policy establishment.

It is significant to limit extensive research on this issue only to the state of California to propose the most appropriate policy solutions according to the requirements of the region. The statistical information shared by the National Human Trafficking Hotline explicitly indicates that the region of California is recognized as one main area of the country where trafficking is one major issue at the community level. There are some prominent aspects concerning this issue in California, and these elements are identified as prominent proximity in case of international borders, vigorous public, and commercial shipment. The growing number of immigrants in the country. These domains can be established as crucial factors referring to the problem of human trafficking. These factors can be established as the main stimulators that increase the potential risk of human trafficking in the country. the problem of human trafficking defined by California law as, “a form of crime that makes it compelling or coercing for a person to involve into forceful labor or services, or involve them into sex acts without their consent.” These aspects are critical in the form of human trafficking that requires proper intervention at both state and national levels. A report published by FBI in 2009, ranked areas of Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco in the top ten regions where the problem of child sex trafficking is immense.

  The research on the problem of human trafficking further limited to the area of San Francisco to comprehensively investigate the implications and adversity of this issue. The entity of the San Francisco Mayor's Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking focuses on the consideration of collaborative and detailed data-driven prospects to successfully direct all the stakeholders to offer better and well-aligned long-term measures for the growing issue of human trafficking. It is important to establish that this problem is wide-ranging that requires some detailed form of consideration and intervention to offer suitable practical measures. The primary aim of the Task Force is to adopt the approach of immediate responsive action in case of a person's individual experience. This perspective is mainly formed to consider one's approach of self-determination and to ensure the protection of victims from further traumatization or criminalization. The institute of the Task Force committed to ensuring successful and active association with all the other stakeholders such as government, business, and different community-based organizations considering the domain of relevant policies to successfully address the problem of human trafficking (Walker-Rodriguez, Amanda, and Hill). It is one of the central responsibilities of Task Force to develop suitable policy recommendations to successfully improve the life experiences of those individuals who are trafficked. It is also significant to mention that the authority of the Task Force also greatly supports the domain of San Francisco as a sanctuary city and actively focuses on providing the necessary support to all immigrants and refugees without considering their immigration status.

Role of Pimps

A detailed consideration of the active role of pimps in the entire scenario of human trafficking is also a necessary consideration to determine the potential intensity of this specific concern. There is a number of ways adopted by traffickers to ensure the successful hiring of their victims. The most common strategy adopted by traffickers to pretend romancing association with victims and get their confidence to manipulate them for different sexual activities as the business. This form of trafficking stunts named "Romeo pimps," and it is one of the most common forms of human trafficking.

  Kidnapping is another complex form of human trafficking in which victims are kidnaped and beat by traffickers to perform different forceful activities. This type of compelling trafficking is recognized under the prospect of "Gorilla pimps," Another form of trafficking appears in the situation where victims are a trap by traffickers through false promises regarding some form of job. All these forms of trafficking clearly indicate the existence of complex networking that involves consideration of various shareholders. It is important to deliver some financial statistics in the context of traffickers to establish better inferences in case of the magnitude of the issue of human trafficking. It is estimated that a trafficker can usually make $150,000-$200,000 per child each year, and this ratio is alarming. Additionally, a trafficker has a chance to immense violate an average of 4-6 girls per year. It is roughly estimated that traffickers situated in one city usually earned an average of $32,822 per week, and these numbers are, without any doubt, are shocking.

  Various practical strategies adopted by traffickers is to control the movement of their victims and use them for the objective of forced working or service. Traffickers greatly influenced the functioning of victims by controlling them psychologically, physically, and emotionally. Insincere affection, manipulation, use of substance, violence, and emotional abuse are the prominent tactics used by traffickers to control the lives of victims and encourage them to pursue their plans (Fong, Rowena, and Cardoso). The extensive consideration of these aspects eventually made victims the trauma-bonded to the traffickers and made it difficult for them to get escape from the trap of human trafficking. It is one unfortunate fact that traffickers utilized various techniques to control their victims and keep them imprisoned in a tragic manner. The phenomenon of captivity eventually made it almost impossible for victims to successfully interact with the public and find some suitable way of releasing from imprisonment. The phenomenon of proper and strict monitoring is adopted by traffickers to control the social movement of their victims and create the prospect of isolation for them. Different important documents of victims, such as their passports, are also controlled by the traffickers to forcefully control their movement (Fong, Rowena, and Cardoso). Different forms of threat or use of violence is another critical strategy adopted by traffickers to victimize individuals and force them according to their plan of action. Furthermore, financial obligations are another prominent approach considering the overall practical domain of human trafficking. It is obvious that money earned by victims controlled by traffickers to maintain their prospect of imprisonment.

The Exploitation of People for Their Labor as Sex Workers

It is observed that there is an existence of 220 licensed massage in San Francisco, and these developments are tragically linked with the growing issue of human trafficking. The institute of Polaris shared a factual report that clearly indicated that the domains of labor and sex trafficking are growing in the case of various forms of business advertising, such as the prospect of massage developments in the country (Hepburn, Stephanie, and Simon). This form of assessment further established this fact that the region of San Francisco is characterized as the hub city of these activities that require necessary fixation. There are many visible indicators in this area that clearly indicate the existence of the issue of human trafficking, and this practice is growing with time (Fong, Rowena, and Cardoso). There is a wide range of practices specified in the form of massage establishment, and this issue is chiefly associated with the problematic features of prostitution and human trafficking. It is reported that massage businesses established in the region providing illegal sex services to the clients by forcing their workers. Under the immense pressure of forced employment, it becomes necessary for workers to involve in sexual activities against their will. Many Chinese massage business employers are more likely to be a part of human trafficking in order to get Asian people to work in the massage parlors (Hepburn, Stephanie, and Simon). Rather than classifying as employees, they classify their workers as independent contractors. Consequently, they force them to work with them in exchange for a handful amount of money (Fong, Rowena, and Cardoso). They do not provide them with paid sick leaves, overtime, and worker’s compensation. It is observed that the pressure of employers compelled their workers no to sue them. These workers are usually afraid of losing their jobs. The area of San Francisco is comprised of many hotels, bars, and brothels that provide sex services. Victims of human trafficking are forced to work in these massage parlors and bars to earn money. The provision of illegal business by these massage parlors are making much more money. It is notable to consider that traffickers use threat violence to convince these victims to work as a sex worker. Furthermore, they also terrify these victims with the threat of shaming them and their families (Jones). Consequently, these victims face hardships under the supervision of traffickers or pimps. Moreover, it is also crucial to mention that workers working in message centers chronically faced the stigma of sex workers due to the growing trend of sexual activities offered by these centers for their clients.

*Policing Prostitution in the US*

One of the most tragic aspects associated with the growing concern of human trafficking in the country is that there is immensely limited control of law enforcement institutions to control the rampant of human trafficking. The active consideration of this concern is closely associated with past developments (Farrell, Amy, and Cronin). It is observed that the practice of prostitution was not categorized as criminalized activity in the country until 1910 the Congress passed a comprehensive form of legal documentation considering women’s rights. States of the country also passed different laws to control the phenomenon of the sale of sex in the form of prostitution. The central objectives of these legal measures are the protection of human rights, control the risk of sexually transmitted diseases, and ensure proper protection to women (Kotrla). It is noticeable to establish that local laws in case of anti-prostitution diversely followed in different states that eventually influence the spectrum of policing against illegal sexual activities in the area (Farrell, Amy, and Cronin). Order-maintenance policing efforts by Police Department are recognized as necessary domains to provide legal protection to women and reduce the chances of prostitution in the area. The development of legal actions in the form of targeted regional areas eventually increased the perspective of scrutiny of these illegal activities by local law enforcement agencies. The statistics of the country indicate that the domain of prostitution enforcement in different cities of the United States of America had begun to fall during the period of the 1980s and 1990s (Farrell, Amy, and Cronin). It is established that arrests adopted the little form of practical action to reduce the risk for the people who engaged in different activities of selling sex.

Human Trafficking Laws Shift Focus

The unsuccessful domain of arresting to control the calamity of prostitution made it essential to offer some better legal measures to address the insufficiency of law in this context. The growing public concerns in the form of victimization of women and children mainly under the domain of prostitution made it essential to offer more aligned legal measures. During the period of the 1990s, the issue of prostitution was greatly reframed due to the rise of prostitution as a major social and legal concern (Wheaton et al.). There is the development of organized advocacy groups to ensure the successful survival of sex trafficking victims under the shed of the country’s law. The legal domain of Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act is developed in 2000 in the country (Farrell, Amy, and Cronin). The focal area of consideration for this entity is to explicitly define a new federal legal form against the crime of sex trafficking, considering the factors of force, fraud, or coercion. The range of penalties is also enhanced by TVPA in the existing form of offenses such as domains of slavery, peonage, and unintentional form of servitude. The establishment of various legal domains by TVPA made it critical for criminal justice officials to follow the prospect of reauthorization considering the aspects of indicting traffickers and provide necessary protection to victims. The year of 2014 was also important in this context when all states of the country passed laws considering the paradigm of criminalizing human trafficking by introducing diverse levels of penalties against the approach of human trafficking (Farrell, Amy, and Cronin). The intervention of TVPA also expended by changing social perception regarding the issue of human trafficking and victims of this calamity. This form of consideration also made it essential for police to make a clear distinction between trafficking victims and criminal offenders in case of the approach of prostitution enforcement.

*Efforts to Stop Human Trafficking*

The issue of human and sex trafficking is prevailing in the society. San Francisco is a highly vulnerable place for human trafficking. In order to combat the issue of human trafficking, the San Francisco District Attorney’s office (SFDA) should need to make proper policies, rules, and regulations for various government agencies in order to overcome this serious issue (Farrell, Amy, and Cronin). The SFDA Bureau of Investigations is poorly organized regarding the issue of human and sex trafficking. This organization is under-resourced and under-staffed. In the past few years, the Investigation Division of SFDA is working to combat low-level quality-of-life crimes. There was no immediate step taken to address the issue of human trafficking. Freshly elected San Francisco District Attorney Chesa Boudin is much concerned to stop the issue of sex trafficking from the San Francisco Bay Area. Boudin prepared a plan after holding the office in January to combat human and sex trafficking from the area. According to his plan, he wanted to expand the DA Investigation Division. The major reason for this expansion is to investigate corruption and crime. For that particular purpose, there is a need to investigate corporate boardrooms. Currently, DA does not have much staff and time to address the cases. As District Attorney, Chesa Boudin is motivated to expand the office in terms of staff and resources to put an end to white-collar corporate criminals. Furthermore, Boudin refocuses prosecutorial resources for sex trafficking in order to stop traffickers and their co-conspirator service-providers.

**Conclusion**

To conclude the above discussion, the San Francisco Area is well known to be a hub for human trafficking. Government administrations and organizations provide the least attention to human trafficking. Furthermore, the identification of traffickers is difficult due to the hidden nature of this industry. Therefore, these traffickers are difficult to hold traffickers accountable. Least attention by government agencies is one of the major reasons that the victims of human trafficking or sex trafficking do not trust them. Traffickers manipulate these individuals for the sex trade industry, which is highly critical. The district attorney of San Francisco has refocused all attention to stop traffickers in order to overcome this serious issue.

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