

**Florida Department of Law Enforcement**



Human Trafficking and Florida Law Enforcement

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## Statement of Purpose

The FCJEI is committed to sharing the results of research studies with Florida's criminal justice executives. This has been accomplished by publishing **The Series on Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice** which includes monographs on particular topics by nationally known authorities; and the **Senior Leadership Program Graduates Papers** which are a compendium of all research papers written by participants in the Senior Leadership Program.

In 2007, the Executive Institute sought to further fulfill its purpose by piloting the **FCJEI Research Fellowship Program**. The first research fellow is a graduate student at Florida State University. The Executive Institute is pleased to publish the first research paper on a relevant issue facing the criminal justice community in Florida.

### **Abstract**

For many years now, the state of Florida has been concerned with the mass influx of illegal immigrants entering its borders on a daily basis. The Office of Immigration Statistics estimated that about 850,000 illegal immigrants reside in Florida, which is the third highest rate in the nation of illegal aliens (Hoefler, Rytina, & Campell, 2006). Through human smuggling, individuals enter the state in search of a new life for many reasons which are not limited to a search for economic advancement or political asylum. Human smuggling according to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is “the importation of people into a country via the deliberate evasion of immigration laws. This offense includes bringing illegal aliens into a country, as well as the unlawful transportation and harboring of aliens already in a country illegally.” A concept which is too often confused with human smuggling, human trafficking is “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery” (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2006). The major difference between the two crimes is the loss of freedom illegal aliens experience when they enter the United States.

The effect of human trafficking does not end with the bonded individual by the traffickers. Society is affected as well. Resources such as jobs for legal migrant workers and public clinics may be used by the illegals, thereby displacing resources for legal residents. The Florida criminal justice system is not excluded from the effects of human trafficking either. Human trafficking is causing Florida law enforcement to address trafficking of persons in a proactive way which includes community policing, networking with non-governmental organizations as well as requiring human trafficking training for all of its law enforcement

personnel. Through interviews with human trafficking experts; interviews and surveys of local law enforcers and non-governmental agencies, the author found that the combination of three elements including: 1) authentic community policing, 2) networking, and 3) human trafficking training for all officers works efficiently and effectively to combat human trafficking.

### **Introduction**

Human trafficking is one of the most pressing issues facing the United States Department of Justice today. It is “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of *force, fraud or coercion*, and resulting in involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery; or commercial sex act, through the use of *force, fraud or coercion*; or if the person is under 18 years of age, any commercial sex act, whether or not force, fraud or coercion is involved” (Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000).

The federal government believes that over 14,500-17,500 persons are trafficked each year into the United States. In FY 2002, approximately 19% of federally “certified” trafficking victims who received benefits and services from the U.S Department of Health and Human Services lived in Florida. (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004). Besides the direct crime of unconstitutional enslavement of persons, many other crimes are associated with human trafficking. In a statement for the Department of Justice in 2003, former Attorney General John Ashcroft stated, “Trafficking is fueled by other criminal activities such as document fraud, money laundering and migrant smuggling. Because trafficking cases are expansive in reach, they are among the most important matters - as well as the most labor and time-intensive matters - undertaken by the Department of Justice” (U.S. Department of Justice, 2006). Today, this

'business of human trafficking' has become very profitable. In fact, human trafficking is now the third most profitable criminal activity behind drug and arms trafficking. Globally, human trafficking is nearly a \$10 billion dollar industry (U.S. Department of Justice, 2006). This number will continue to increase as long as there is not a united effort of the nations to combat this crime (Gallagher, 2001).

The enslavement of trafficked persons occurs on many occasions because the victims are trying to escape poverty, political, and/or social inequalities. They believe that their traffickers will provide them with a better life, but instead they find themselves subjugated to a life of sexual exploitation and/or forced labor (U.S. Department of Justice, 2006). These three factors apparently make victims reluctant to report the crimes perpetrated upon them for fear of deportation. This makes it extremely difficult for law enforcement throughout our state and the country as well.

It must be noted however, that not all of these cases involve international trafficking. Human trafficking affects vulnerable groups. Though, immigrants make up the majority of trafficked victims, whether they were illegal or on special visas, vulnerable persons or groups in the U.S. are also targeted. For example, according to the United States Department of Justice, an estimated 200,000 American children are at risk for trafficking into the sex industry each year. The purpose of this paper is to address how this global problem of human trafficking is affecting Florida law enforcement.

### **Literature Review**

Very little research exists on the best way to effectively combat human trafficking because of its vast boundaries. One argument is the implementation of rigid transnational policies. Strict transnational policies ideally unify nations' stance on a crimes such as human

trafficking and adds fear to perpetrators (Gallagher 2001). According to the Florida State University's Center for Advancement of Human Rights [FSUCAHR] (2003), with weak laws traffickers have little to fear. By implementing strict laws, opportunity cost becomes higher for traffickers and in turn leads to an increase in arrests, and the eventual elimination of human trafficking. In 2000, a major step was taken in combating this issue. The United Nations General Assembly's intergovernmental ad-hoc committee drafted the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime which included an important protocol for human trafficking called the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (Gallagher, 2001). In the United States the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) was implemented that same year. Its aim is to "combat human trafficking by establishing measures to prevent trafficking, to protect and assist its victims, and to prosecute traffickers" (U.S. Department of Justice, 2006). In 2004, Attorney General John Ashcroft noted that a great increase in human trafficking prosecution occurred within the three years of the acts implementation. For example the Department of Justice "charged 111 traffickers—a three-fold increase over the previous three years. Of these, 79 included sex-trafficking allegations, the highest ever" (Usinfo.State.Gov., 2004). Yet a problem still exists in this lone approach of preventing human trafficking. Though illegal immigration crimes such as human trafficking are usually prosecuted federally these crimes are usually discovered on a local level by local law enforcement and non-governmental organizations. This means that all levels of law enforcement are needed to help contest this crime effectively (Florida State University Center for Advancement of Human Rights, 2003).

With the new initiative to end human trafficking, more trafficking cases in Florida were being discovered and perpetrators were being punished. Law enforcers and social service

providers began devoting resources to improving their methods of identifying crimes similar to trafficking, while others created task forces aimed solely at combating human trafficking, depending on the needs and pressures from their communities. According to the UN protocol, law enforcement is to be trained in methods which encourage the protection of victim rights as well as cooperation of law enforcement with non-governmental organizations (NGO). In 2004, in response to the widespread problem throughout the state, Florida adopted the Florida Statute 787.06 on human trafficking. Yet there was no indication of how to prevent this crime. Recognizing the statute's weakness, the Florida Legislature amended it in 2006 to include the role of local law enforcement, and mandatory training on human trafficking. According to the Florida Regional Community Policing Institute [FRCPI] (2007) Training on Human Trafficking and Executive Director of FSUCAHR, Terrence C. Coonan (personal communication March 19, 2007), the combination of community policing, networking between law enforcement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and training of officers on human trafficking are the most effective ways of combating human trafficking in Florida.

### **Community Policing**

Within the last decade, a movement toward community policing has spread throughout the nation, including most of Florida. The Florida Regional Community Policing Institute describes community policing as “a policing philosophy that promotes and supports organizational strategies to address the causes and reduce the fear of crime and social disorder through problem-solving tactics and police-community partnership.” Human trafficking is a crime which would benefit from this form of policing because of this proactive approach to preventing crime as opposed to the traditional form of policing (Stevens, 2005; Pearce & Tasson,

2000). The most important aspect is the enabling of communities and police working together to identify and solve problems (Cordner & Biebel, 2005; Pearce & Tasson, 2000).

Community policing according to Pearce and Tasson (2000) is done first at the “general level of the community”, then with groups such as agencies. This will help law enforcement learn the needs and wants of their community. In a study conducted by Hill (2003), it was found that an increase of knowledge of an officer’s jurisdiction and the citizens within it, increases effectiveness in the officer’s work.

With personal crimes such as human trafficking, a preventive aspect is needed to fight back. Community policing also requires relationships to be formed before officers are called to respond to problems (U.S. Department of Justice, 2006). Furthermore, informal relationships of law enforcement with the communities decrease fear of crime and/or increases confidence in law enforcement in the community. This in turn opens the door for trust within the neighborhood and with police officers (Ross & Jaug, 2000).

Since the nature of trafficking is covert, knowing the dynamics of the community becomes very important. By learning about its community’s needs and forming a relationship with its members, law enforcement is able to identify what seems irregular in the community, and in turn leaves little room for traffickers to settle in these very places.

## **Network**

Non-Government Organizations (NGO) and non-profit organizations are an integral part of our society. These organizations exist for many reasons. Normally their functions are to address social and political goals. These organizations depend on grants, fundraisers, and private

donations to fund their budgets and are not profit driven. NGOs and non-profits have played a vital role in uncovering cases of human trafficking, translating languages, and providing services for the victims, training law enforcement and victim advocates, and lobbying for policies which concern human trafficking. For instance, domestic violence shelters have served as temporary homes and counseling for trafficked victims until they are ready to leave.

Involving community agencies in helping with combating crime is required to have effective community policing (Pearce & Tasson, 2000). Combating human trafficking is not an issue which can be solved by lone agencies because of its complex nature. This criminal activity calls for a network of agencies working in collaboration. This network is needed to: a) identify /discover trafficking, b) help build relationships with the victims, c) provide housing, physical, and mental health services, d) act as legal representation, e) develop relationships for trust, and f) aid in reuniting children with parents. Collaboration helps contribute to successful responses to human trafficking (IACP, 2006). Partnering with other public and non-profit organizations is an effective way to obtain the overall public goal of justice (Denhardt, Denhardt, & Aristigueta 2003, Greeley, 2006).

The crimes described under the TVPA are crimes prosecuted on a federal level. The Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have the duties of investigating and prosecuting traffickers (Department of Justice, 2006). Yet, since trafficking is usually uncovered by local law enforcement, local policing must (1) identify the crime, (2) stop the crime, (3) manage the victims of trafficking as witnesses (4) secure the evidence necessary for federal prosecutions and trials (FSUCAHR, 2003). The Florida Department of Children and Families and non-governmental social service providers offer a

variety of services for human trafficking victims. Between the transition of investigations with local law enforcement and a trial on a federal level, victims are in a vulnerable state. Services from basic needs and safety to providing legal service during and after the trials are necessary to make the victim comfortable.

Each entity is limited on resources, which in turn causes an inefficient process, but through the collaboration of resources the alliance is more powerful in combating human trafficking. In 2004, Assistant Attorney General Acosta said, “Increasing the capacity of local law enforcement to work jointly with community-based social service providers and federal law enforcement is essential to combating such human degradation.”

### **Training**

Cases of human trafficking have increased rapidly within the last decade. There are no categories in the Uniform Crime Reports or other statistical source books specifically for human trafficking to be recorded under. Past cases may have been recorded under other crimes which are end products of human trafficking such as committing fraud, counterfeiting, and running sweatshops and brothels (McDonald, 2001). Because of this mislabel, the trafficking of humans is not acknowledged as an urgent crime, nor is the penalty for this crime correctly administered. This misidentification of such a crime fosters a lack of fear of reprimand on the part of traffickers (FSUCAHR, 2003). Recognizing the gaps in the legal system, the U.S. Congress amended the TVPA. In 2003, the law included Section 107c 4. This addition requires that government personnel receive training in identifying victims of trafficking and making provisions of protection for them. In 2006, the Florida Human Trafficking Statute mandated in the basic skills course for initial certification of law enforcement officers to include training on human trafficking crime prevention and investigation effective January 1, 2007.

The TVPA requires that law enforcement personnel learn basic identification procedures. Robin Thompson, the program director for the Human Trafficking Project for the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence, identified reactive and proactive approaches to dealing with human trafficking. (Personal communication February 20, 2007). The reactive approach involves learning how to identify trafficking and learning how to have victim-centered investigations. Proactively, law enforcement personnel should learn the cultural norms in their jurisdiction as well as gain knowledge about the networks they can build.

Identifying human trafficking is one of the challenges for law enforcement (FSUCAHR, 2003; Gallagher, 2001). Many discoveries of human trafficking are done by police officers responding to calls addressing other concerns such as domestic violence, prostitution, and sweatshops. On the surface these seem like confrontations between lovers, or the ownership of brothels and sweatshops, yet if it is truly a human trafficking case trained officer will be more likely to identify it as such and the victims can be rescued. Also misidentification can be a result of not knowing the definition of human trafficking or even the failure to understand that the victim was forced, coerced, or participated in some sort of fraudulent activity.

A paradigm shift is needed to combat human trafficking. Researchers believe that a 'victim-centered' form of policing will remedy the uncertainties which exist in these contemporary times (Clark, 2005; FRCPI, 2006). With a history of focusing on detecting crime, detaining perpetrators, and maintaining order, at times, victims are secondary in policing (Pearce & Tasson, 2000). As a requirement of the TVPA, victim centered investigations should be conducted. Federal U.S. laws require that coercion, fraud or force be properly identified in order to be considered human trafficking. Because of this requirement, the participation of the victim

in the investigation is vital. “A victim can make or break your case,” stated the FRCPI (2006). According to the International Association of Chief of Police (2007), trust is built by “showing patience and a non-judgmental attitude” during the interview process of potential victims. Law enforcers and service providers who have handled trafficking cases have found that a victim based investigation helps build trust (FSUCAHR, 2003). [Trust] will aid the investigation and enable the victims to feel comfortable revealing details about their experience”. Disclosing details leads investigators closer to targeting traffickers (IACP, 2007).

### **Research Questions**

- a. Will the initiatives of counties who claim to implement community policing, be considered authentic and effective community policing according to Pearce and Tasson’s (2000) definition?
- b. Are non-governmental agency resources being used by their local law enforcement?
- c. Are local law enforcers trained in identifying and providing provisions for human trafficked victims?
- d. What percentages of Florida’s counties are prepared to combat trafficking?

### **Methodology**

The methodology of this research is comprised of several components. The first component defines the measures of the study. The second component sets forth how the data was collected. The third component delineates who the participants were and how they were selected. The final components included an analysis of the responses and research ethics.

#### **1. Measures**

The independent variables in this study are: a) community policing; b) partnerships with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs); and, c) training on human trafficking. The

dependent variable is preparedness of the Sheriff's Offices and police departments to handle human trafficking cases.

The measurements of the concepts to be used are:

- Community Policing

Conceptual use - a policing philosophy that promotes and supports organizational strategies to address the causes and reduces the fear of crime and social disorder through problem-solving tactics and police-community partnership (Florida Regional Community Policing Institute).

Operational use- Survey questions were developed to determine if the sheriff's office or police department believed they practiced community policing and if it was effective: i.e., "What type of policing is practiced in your bureau, traditional, community, etc?" "What is community policing?; How does your office exhibit it, if you exhibit any traits?; and "Do you feel that the bureau is achieving this effectively and efficiently?" The author uses Tasson and Pearson's (2000) definition of community policing to describe "authentic community policing".

Authentic community policing incorporates working in the community as well as working with community organizations. Survey questions were developed to assess this: "What is the relationship with the migrant/ immigrant population? Have there been initiatives to build trust?" "What is the bureau's relationship with community NGOs (non-government organizations)?

b. Can you name some?" (Appendix A)

- Partnerships

Conceptual use: Working relationship of law enforcement and non-governmental agencies.

Operational use: On the survey instrument for local law enforcement, two questions were developed to determine if a working relationship existed between law enforcement and non-governmental organizations: "What is the bureau's relationship with community NGOs (non-

government organizations)? b. Can you name some?” and, “Are the officers given information on the different NGOs? b. Are they informed by NGO officials?” On the survey for non-governmental organizations, similar questions were used to determine if a working relationship existed between non-governmental organizations and law enforcement: “How is your organization’s relationship with your local police department and/or sheriff’s office?”, “Has your organization been used as a resource by your local law enforcement? How?”, “Is your organization involved in police trainings? b. Are there classes conducted by your organization? c. Are pamphlets distributed to them?”

- Training on human trafficking-

Conceptual use: informal and formal training on what how to identify human trafficking and providing provisions to victims.

Operational use: Four questions were used to determine if the law enforcement agency was knowledgeable of how to handle human trafficking cases: “What is Human Trafficking in laymen’s terms?”; “Are you aware of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act?”; “Has your department dealt with Human Trafficking?”; and, “Are the officers trained to identify trafficking or scheduled to be trained?” Two questions were used in the survey for non-governmental organizations: “Has your organization dealt with any human trafficking cases? If yes, was law enforcement involved? How would you rate their effectiveness?” and “Has your organization service providers been trained in dealing with Human trafficking?”

- Preparedness for human trafficking cases-

Conceptual use: The characteristic traits of local law enforcement practicing proactive forms of policing, having working relationships with non-governmental organizations and being trained to handle human trafficking cases.

Operational use: By demonstrating the use of community policing, networking with non-governmental organizations and having training on human trafficking.

- Human Trafficking

Conceptual use: The, severe forms of trafficking in persons always includes the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for one of the three following purposes:

1. Labor or services, through the use of *force, fraud or coercion*, AND resulting in involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery; OR
2. Commercial sex acts, through the use of *force, fraud or coercion*; OR
3. If the person is under 18 years of age, any commercial sex act, whether or not force, fraud or coercion is involved.(Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000)

Operational use: The definition in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 was used for study purposes.

## 2. Method of Data Collection:

Qualitative research was conducted for this research. Data was collected through interviews, individual surveys and through a human trafficking training class. Human trafficking experts, public information officers from sheriff's offices, and directors from non-profit organizations were interviewed in person or over the phone. Two of the three interviews of the subject matter experts were formal in-person interviews. The third was informal.

Two formal in-person interviews with local law enforcement were made. Five phone interviews were made with non-profit organizations. Using a contact list of Florida Sheriff's Offices, public information officers were contacted to advise them that a questionnaire was being e-mailed to them as well as to verify their e-mail addresses. Electronic surveys were sent to 62

Florida sheriff's offices and one survey was faxed to a Sheriff Office. Two Sheriff's Offices never responded to the attempts of communication.

The author allotted four weeks for response. A reminder e-mail was sent after the second week of outstanding surveys. Phone call reminders were made after the third week and a combination of reminders (phone call and e-mail notifications) were used for last minute responders 2-3 days prior to the due date of the survey.

The research instruments were questionnaires consisting of open-ended questions formed by the researcher. The questionnaire for local law enforcement was designed to assess the preparedness of the Sheriff Office or police department, for dealing with human trafficking cases. The questions referred to the type of policing practiced, the use of community policing, relationship with their community, partnerships with non-governmental organizations, and human trafficking knowledge and history human trafficking training. For non-governmental organizations, an assessment of whether the NGO felt there was a working relationship between their organization and the local law enforcement. The questionnaire consisted of a definition of community policing and whether their agency felt as if it were being practiced in their area; questions of background characteristics; and questions of their involvement with local law enforcement; whether they were readily available to be used by law enforcement; and their history and knowledge of human trafficking.

### 3. Sample

Three (3) experts were found in Tallahassee, Florida and were the only subject matter experts used. A convenience sample was conducted of the local law enforcement Sheriff offices. Seventeen (17) Offices responded. Surveys were either answered by the PIO or by other responsible party in the agency (i.e. the Sheriff, specialized agents, and agents appointed the

assignment by the sheriff). Four (4) police departments were surveyed through snowball sampling (they were referred by sheriff offices as knowing more about the matter of human trafficking) because of their unique relationship within their county. Stratified random sampling was drawn for the sample population of non-governmental agencies. All non-government organizations were surveyed if they were a domestic violence shelter, had history with working on human trafficking cases and currently, have a history of or are potential providers of immediate services for human trafficking victims. This survey group of 14 agencies included human trafficking coalitions, immigrant services, victim shelters and faith-based organizations.

#### 4. Unit of Analysis

The units of analysis for this project were experts of human trafficking, local law enforcement, and non-government organizations

#### 5. Research Ethics

All respondents were informed of the nature of the research and consented to participating by verbally consenting during interviews or by returning the survey via email.

### **Results**

#### Community policing

- Of the 16 local law enforcement agencies (including agencies which claimed both traditional and community) which claimed community policing, 10 actually practiced authentic community policing. Two of the four agencies which claimed traditional policing also practiced proactive policing tactics which can be classified as authentic community policing.

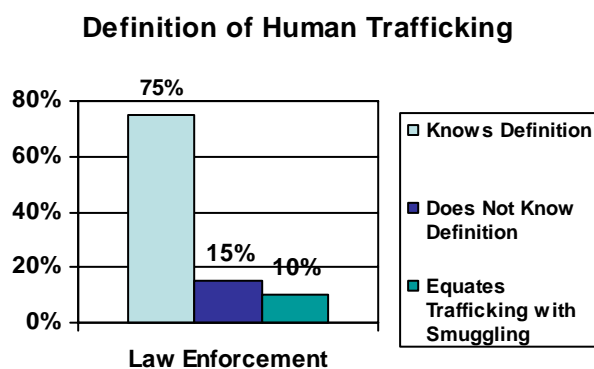
- 19% of the respondents did not believe that their agency was providing efficient and effective community. This number excludes agencies without community policing initiatives.
- 81% respondents who believed their agency to be effective and efficient explained that relationships were being built with groups of citizens in their community. For example, Glades County Sheriff's Office has Citizens on Patrol groups in all of their communities; Collier County Sheriff's Office holds informational presentations at the local churches to address their Spanish speaking community. St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office has appeared on Spanish language radio shows and reaches out to Spanish-language news publications in their area to reach their Spanish speaking population.
- 28.57% of the local law enforcement agencies practicing community policing do not have a relationship with their migrant/ immigrant community.

#### Networking

- 65%, (13 out of 20), local law enforcement respondents said that they had a working relationship with their local non-government agencies. Non-governmental responders agreed at 78.57%, (or 11 out of 14), that a working relationship existed between their agency and local law enforcement.
- 70% of the NGOs responding that are non-battered victim services reported that better relationships are needed between their agency and law enforcement and felt that their services were ready to be used and should be used by law enforcement.
- The amount of information each law enforcement agency exposes their officers to varies by agency. Some provide pamphlets for their officers while others have NGOs as a part of their Task forces.

## Training

- 45% of respondents have been trained informally or formally about human trafficking or have knowledge of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act
- Almost 29% of law enforcement respondents reported that human trafficking is not given high priority because it is not a major problem in their jurisdiction.



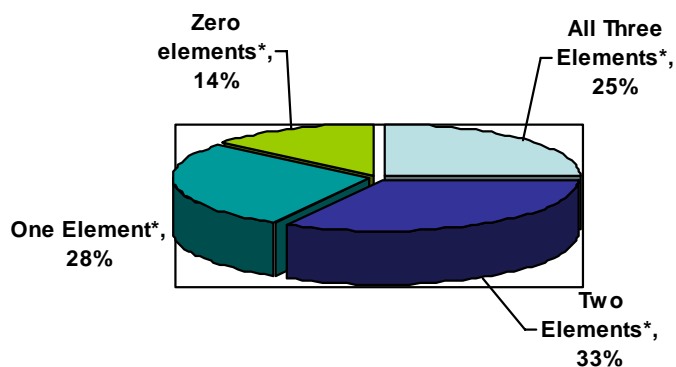
**Figure 1**

Figure 1 shows that 75% of respondents know the definition of human trafficking. About 25% (combination of last two percentages) or, 5 out of 20, law enforcement respondents were not able to define human trafficking. 10% of them defined human trafficking as human smuggling.

## Preparedness for human trafficking

Figure 2 shows that only 25 % of the respondents incorporate all three elements of preparedness including: community policing, networking and training of human trafficking.

**Preparedness for Human Trafficking:  
Elements Present in Florida Local Law Enforcement  
Departments**



\*The elements are community policing, networking, and training in human trafficking

**Figure 2**

Also, 33% of the respondents incorporated at least two of the elements. The combinations of community policing and networking were more frequent than any combination with training.

## Discussion

### Community Policing

Will the initiatives of counties who claim to implement community policing be considered authentic and effective according to Pearce and Tasson's (2000) definition? 62.5% of the local law enforcement agencies practiced authentic community policing. In the sample population of community policing, the law enforcement agencies which mixed policing styles were included as agencies practicing community policing. Half of the "traditional policing" agencies were found to practice some form of authentic community policing. This demonstrates the necessity of proactive policing. For example, Pasco County Sheriff's Office practices

traditional policing, but their relationship with their NGOs and human trafficking taskforce as well as their “Officer Friendly” program (an initiative which works with vulnerable groups), shows that they are moving closer towards community policing. However, they have indicated that a lack of human resources has prevented them from implementing authentic community policing.

According to Tasson and Pearson (2000), the best way for police officers to learn about the needs of their community is to be a part of that very community. For example, one of Palm Beach County’s Spanish-speaking deputies frequently contacts and visits Palm Beach County’s local migrant community, enabling their office to maintain a good working relationship with their Spanish-speaking immigrant population.

Without a relationship with each community, effective authentic community policing cannot be achieved. In fact, the 28.57% of respondents without a relationship with the migrant/immigrant community in their jurisdiction cannot be considered a type of agency that practices authentic community policing. The goal of community policing regarding vulnerable and untrusting groups, such as migrant/immigrant population, is to decrease the fear and resigned attitude felt by the population towards law enforcement. This is important for human trafficking because not establishing a relationship with this group can be detrimental to obtaining vital information at any stage of investigations. Collier County Sheriff’s Office (CCSO) serves as a good example of this. With an extended history of working with human trafficking, CCSO has responded to it by housing an anti-trafficking unit in their Sheriff’s Office. This unit has made great strides in building relationships with their most vulnerable populations, in particular their migrant population in Immokalee.

## Networking

Are non-governmental agency resources being used by their local law enforcement? 65% of the local law enforcement offices sampled showed networks exist between local law enforcement and NGOs. 78.57% of non-governmental organization respondents agreed to have a working relationship. Yet they believed the relationships could be better with law enforcement. Recognizing the lack of communication between the sectors in North Florida, Thompson (personal communication, February 20, 2007), a human trafficking expert, has formed an organization called the North Florida Alliance Combating Trafficking (NFACT). The group consists of representatives from different non-profits and law enforcement agencies networking together in order to be more proactive. Similar groups found in Southwest and South Florida are: the Freedom Partnership and the Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking.

Local law enforcement is urged to form networks as well. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (2006) reported that networks formed before a human trafficking case makes the department proactive as well as efficient. Besides providing provisions after discovering human trafficking cases, NGOs have many resources which can be beneficial to law enforcement. An example of this partnership was seen through an alliance between the federal law enforcement and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. The partners were able to solve five cases within six years in Florida, thus freeing over one thousand trafficking victims from labor enslavement (<http://www.ciw-online.org/slavery.html>, Tajitsu, 2003).

Furthermore, it is important to note that these networks should be made before a law enforcement agency faces a human trafficking case. It is helpful to know who to call or where to go without wasting time researching during time of investigation. A brief sheet on who should be included in the agencies network is included in Appendix D. Law enforcement agencies that

built networks showed stronger relationships with their community. Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, for example, has set up networks with different organizations which are beneficial to their residents. They also facilitate continuing education classes, and have included a new one for their growing Hispanic population.

### Training

Are local law enforcers trained in identifying and providing provisions for human trafficked victims? Only 45 % of respondents had human trafficking training. An observation made during the researcher's attendance at a human trafficking training was that only liaisons attended the off-grounds trainings. Further research is needed on the number of liaisons who return to their office and share the information with the other personnel at their agency.

Human trafficking is an issue that all personnel should be aware of, - at least the Protection Act. Some respondents said their communities did not find human trafficking to be a threat so resources are not used towards preventive initiatives in their agencies. About 29% of law enforcement respondents reported that human trafficking is not given high priority because it is not a major problem in their jurisdiction. However, according to Graciela Marquina, MSW, of the Tallahassee, Florida Domestic Violence Shelter, Refuge House, Inc., human trafficking has affected every county in Florida in one way or another. Marquina was talking about the roads used, public rest stops and roads to our very own neighborhoods. (Personal communication, March 19, 2007) Included in the appendices is a brief introduction to learning about trafficking and how to identify it. (Appendix C)

### Preparedness for Human Trafficking

What percentages of Florida's counties are prepared to combat trafficking? According to the survey responses only 25% of the law enforcement community is equipped with the three

elements this researcher has identified as important when dealing with human trafficking. The element most frequently missing from law enforcement agencies is Human Trafficking training. For example, if, the 33% of respondents who had at least two elements also offered training in this area, then, the combined percentages of agencies responding to the question about preparedness would have been over 50%.

### **Conclusion**

Human Trafficking is a global problem which affects many countries including the United States. Thousands of human trafficking victims enter the U.S. borders regardless of intentions and are exploited. In an attempt to eliminate this crime different ideals exist. Implementing strict policies has shown some progress in the United States. Yet, it can be argued that it takes action as well to discover and prosecute the perpetrators. Traffickers travel throughout the U.S. on public roads with mostly illegal aliens whom they exploit in U.S. communities. To effectively eliminate this criminal activity local law enforcement and non-governmental organizations are needed since they are usually the first responders to trafficking cases. The nature of human trafficking is covert. It can be an underlying factor in the commission of other reported crimes. According to researchers, three elements are needed to help combat human trafficking: proactive policing (or community policing), networking with NGOs and training in human trafficking. By surveying local law enforcement offices and non-governmental organizations, it was found that Florida local law enforcement agencies are in need of human trafficking training. Without training, Florida law enforcement not be prepared to act on human trafficking cases.

### **Limitation of Research**

Only a third of the Sheriff's Offices responded to the survey. The author would extend the deadline as well as explore other ways to obtain this data such as more personal interviews. More response could possibly change the findings.

If the author were to ask law enforcement about the specific networks made with NGOs again, the author would include a second question for the organizations to explore the specific value to the law enforcement agency.

For sampling non-government organizations, a disproportionate stratified sampling would have probably helped even out the battered women shelter respondents' biases.

### **Suggestion for further research**

Further research on how trafficking affects law enforcement is very important because this crime trend is growing and will be changing how Florida handles this criminal activity. A researcher may want to attempt to find the affects of trafficking on law enforcement quantitatively. Also surveying police departments throughout the state may change the results found.

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## APPENDIX A

**Law Enforcement Questionnaire**

Agency Name:

Greetings. My name is Sonide Simon and I am a research intern at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. I have been assigned a research project on Human Trafficking and its affect on Florida law enforcement. Thank you once again for agreeing to help me. This should take about 10-15 minutes of your time. When you are complete fill send it back to me via email. My email address is sonidesimon@fdle.state.fl.us

1. What is your Office's mission statement? It's vision statement?
2. What type of policing is practiced in your office, traditional, community, or etc?
3. What is community policing? How does your office exhibit it, if you exhibit any traits?
4. Do you feel as if the office is achieving this effectively and efficiently?
5. During training, are the officers trained to work with diverse groups? How about learning non-English phrases?
6. What is the relationship with the migrant/ immigrant population? Have there been initiatives to build trust?
7. What is the bureau's relationship with community NGOs (non-government organizations)?
  - b. Can you name some?
- 8 Are the officers given information on the different NGOs?
  - b. Are they informed by NGO officials?

9. How do local organizations receive information on seminars or trainings occurring in the community?
10. What is Human Trafficking in laymen term?
11. Are you aware of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act?
12. Is the community aware of Human Trafficking?
13. Has your office dealt with Human Trafficking before?
14. Are the officers trained to identify trafficking or scheduled to be trained in the near future?

## APPENDIX B

## NGO Questionnaire

Greetings. My name is Sonide Simon and I am a research intern at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. I have been assigned a research project on Human Trafficking and its affect on Florida law enforcement. I would like to learn more about your organization and it relationship with law enforcement as well as human trafficking. Thank you once again for agreeing to help me. This should take about 10-15 minutes of your time. When you are complete fill send it back to me via email. My email address is sonidesimon@fdle.state.fl.us

Please answer completely.

**Organization's Name:**

How is your organization's relationship with your local police department and/or sheriff's office?

Do you know what Community policing means? Please read below.

*Community policing focuses on crime and social disorder through the delivery of police services that includes aspects of traditional law enforcement, as well as prevention, problem-solving, community engagement, and partnerships. The community policing model balances reactive responses to calls for service with proactive problem-solving centered on the causes of crime and disorder. Community policing requires police and citizens to join together as partners in the course of both identifying and effectively addressing these issues.*

Do you feel that this is happening?

Do you feel law enforcement should use your services for its victims? Why?

Has your organization been used as a resource by your local law enforcement? How?

Is your organization involved in police trainings? Are classes conducted by your organization?

Are pamphlets distributed?

Has your organization made it self ready available to be used by law enforcement?

Does your organization have a relationship with law enforcement?

If yes, Explain one or two important aspect(s) of your relationship?

If no, what has your organization done in the past to make to establish a relationship?

How would you rate the effectiveness of law enforcement utilizing the services provided by your organization?

Has your organization dealt with any human trafficking cases? If yes, was law enforcement involved? How would you rate their effectiveness?

Has your organization service providers been trained in dealing with Human trafficking?

## APPENDIX C

### The Five W's To Human Trafficking

The nature of modern day slavery is covert and complex. Identifying this type of crime requires individuals to have a keen sense of awareness of their surroundings. The author has identified important points necessary to address human trafficking, and has categorized them in the five Ws (who, what, why, when, and where):

- **What is it?**

- It is the exploitation of humans for the profit
- 500,000 to 2 million people are trafficked worldwide
- Human trafficking comes in different forms: Involuntary servitude, debt bondage, slavery and sex trade.
- In the U.S. Human trafficking is considered trafficking if it is done by the means of fraud, force or coercion.
- Many victims do not consider their selves victims or recognize that they have rights in the U.S.. (FRCPI, 2006)
- Cases may involve one or many; numbering anywhere from one individual to groups of a hundred victims or more (FSUCAHR, 2003).

The following are examples of modern-day slavery in America:

A) In 2003, a Guatemalan 14 year old girl was sold by her family for money at the age of eleven, was a victim of physical abuse and sexual slavery in Cape Coral, Florida. The girl

had been living there for nearly four years as a servant and sex slave before being discovered by her neighbor (Cull, 2005).

B) In 2002, a federal court judge in the U.S. found a family operation guilty for forcing agricultural workers into “involuntary servitude, harboring undocumented workers, interfering with interstate commerce by extortion and using firearms during the course of a violent felony (FSUCAHR, 2003).

- **Who is involved?**

- Human trafficking involves men, women, and children usually from a vulnerable population. Trafficking may include legal immigrants on work or student visas, including United States citizens. (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2006)
- Victims may have been forced in into criminal activity, and should be regarded as victims.
- According to Florida Freedom Partners, traffickers can be members of organized criminal networks, freelancers, relatives, neighbors, friends, village chiefs, community leaders, shop owners, employers, diplomats, or agricultural business operatives. (<http://www.floridafreedom.org/Pages/FAQ.htm>)

For example, in November 2006, FBI agents arrested a fugitive in Florida for forcing two 16 year olds into prostitution after flying them out from Ohio under false assumptions (Guevara, 2006).

**When and Where can we find trafficking?**

- Discoveries of human trafficking have shown that this crime has not limits or boundaries without notice.
- Victims can be found anywhere at any time. Some places include hotels, nail salons, agricultural fields, brothels, amusement parks, bars etc. Any where a vulnerable population can be exploited (T. Coonan, personal communication, 19 March 2007).

During a call reported as a domestic violence case, a keen social worker was able to notice a cowering girl in the home of a Guatemalan couple. The girl had been kidnapped and forced to be the kidnapper's sex slave as well as the couple's domestic servant (FSUCAHR, 2003).

**• Why does it happen?**

- According to the FSUCAHR (2003), Florida is a great destination for traffickers because of its economic forces of low skilled workers in its agriculture and tourism industry as well as military bases.
- The victims are "reusable property" for the traffickers to use and sell.
- It is a lucrative criminal activity bringing as much as \$7-\$10 billion.

## APPENDIX D

## Making a Working Network

Networks need to include:

- Federal agents such as the local FBI and ICE agents,
- State agents such as Department of Children and Families and the State Attorney.
- Non- governmental organizations including but not limited to immigrant legal services faith-based organizations, interpreters, and child services.
- And local community services such as refugee task forces, labor rights advocates and health departments.

(These examples are excerpts from the (monograph) *Florida Responds to Human Trafficking* produced from the Florida State University: Center for the Advancement of Human Rights, where many more examples can be found.)