The Identification and Treatment of Human Trafficking Victims: Policy, Practice and Protection.

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Dedication

This PhD Thesis is dedicated to two inspirational people, who would be exceptionally proud of this achievement.

Susan Abel; my Nana taught me that strength and dedication create the most formidable of women.

Robert Lennox Wilson; my Grandad, whose guidance and tenacity shapes me every day.

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Abstract

This thesis explores practitioner insights into the problems of supporting the victims of human trafficking, within the first 24-48 hours of their initial identification by a first responder. It looks at victim experiences of trafficking, through a practitioner lens and the way in which organisations offer support and protection to victims. There is a lack of current research about the immediate time period after a victim is identified by the authorities. This thesis addresses this gap in research, as well as the associated lack of knowledge about how organisations use (or don't use) the guidance given to them to support the victims of human trafficking. These considerations led to the formation of the following research questions:

- Are the current Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) frameworks working to ensure victims of human trafficking are successfully identified and supported, as well as helping to reduce victims of human trafficking?
- What happens to victims of human trafficking within the first 24 to 48 hours following their identification, or self -referral?
- Do victim interactions with official organisations follow the MSHTU framework?

To successfully explore this, primary evidence was gathered in the form of an online questionnaire. This allowed any practitioner involved in identification and/or referral, to consider their own practices and identify whether they are in line with the MSHTU guidance. The responses gathered were explored qualitatively, they identified key weaknesses in the current system; both practically and within the government policy.

The research identified the following key issues; a lack of knowledge about correct identification and referral processes. A lack of confidence in the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). A lack of understanding: creating a safe environment for potential victims. A lack of clarity about how to treat potential victims. The concluding chapters suggest improvements to the current frameworks and future policy and practical recommendations. The aim of these improvements being to help progress the identification, referral and rehabilitation of human trafficking victims in the UK.

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List of Acronyms

BSA	British Sociological Society
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
DOH	Department of Health
DTN	Duty to Notify
FR	First Responder
GLA	Gangmasters Licensing Authority
GP	General Practitioner
GSI	Global Slavery Index
HMICFRS	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services
HTF	Human Trafficking Foundation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISVA	Individual Sexual Violence Advisors
MSHTU	Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit
NASS	National Asylum Support Service
NATMSN	National Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Network
NCA	National Crime Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHS	National Health Service
NHS	National Health Service
NNCF	National Network Coordinators' Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Forum
NPCC	National Police Chiefs Council
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NRM	National Referral Mechanism
PROTECT	Provider Responses, Treatment and Care for Trafficked People
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RI	Registered Intermediaries

SCA	Single Competent Authority
SOC	Serious Organised Crime Group
SOC	Serious Organised Crime
SRA	Social Research Association
UK	United Kingdom
UKHTC	UK Human Trafficking Centre
UKVI	UK Immigration and Visa
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
US	United States
WHO	World Health Organisation
WISE	Wilberforce Institute for the study of Slavery and Emancipation
WYATN	West Yorkshire Anti-Human Trafficking Network

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Chapter 1 Introducing Human Trafficking

1.1 Introduction

This thesis seeks to identify the way in which victims of human trafficking are initially identified and treated, when they come in to contact with support organisations in the United Kingdom (UK). The experiences of human trafficking victims, from initial identification through to referral, are crucial in recognising ways to improve policy and practice. Whilst there is considerable literature addressing the prevention of human trafficking and the prosecution of offenders, there is a lack of information considering the plight of trafficking victims and the support they are entitled to. Although there is government policy in place to identify, refer and support victims, literature suggests that there are significant short-comings to this. One such gap in policy is the lack of protection for victims, when they are initially identified. This finding led to the need to understand what happens to victims, in the first 24 to 48 hours following initial identification. Following on from this, it was considered that the limitations within the policy may have an effect on the people using it. Thus, it was important to consider the direct views of those involved in identifying, referring and supporting victims. Currently explorations of victim experience, in terms of the initial period of identification, are not addressed within the existing literature. The experiences of victims as well as the first-hand accounts of practitioners are important. They help to specifically identify flaws in the guidelines and frameworks; which are supposed to support and protect victims of human trafficking. Consulting with organisations on the front line provided data relating to the experiences of both victims and practitioners. This resulted in a stronger understanding of the strengths and limitations of the current policy.

It is acknowledged that there are systems in place to offer victims support within the UK. These have emerged over recent decades due to increased national and international efforts to tackle the growing trade in human beings. The key aim is often to protect victims and bring perpetrators to justice, both of which are currently top UK government priorities. The National Crime Agency (NCA) is a victim-focused non-ministerial British government department established to fight serious organised crime (SOC). The NCA considers itself as essential in protecting the public and bringing criminals to justice. They are concerned with serious threats which present a high risk to the UK. As such, the NCA created the Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) in response to the growing threat of modern slavery within the UK. This threat increases each year, due to increased awareness and a stark rise in demand for trafficked people. The MSHTU has frameworks in place to identify, refer and support victims of

human trafficking. They aim to prioritise '*identification, recovery, support and, when appropriate, repatriation of human trafficking victims*' (MSHTU, 2020). This is currently a high priority for the UK government, meaning it is supported both financially and in terms of increased departmental staffing and support. The MSHTU are responsible for supporting organisations in dealing with their modern slavery cases. They are the first point of contact for any agency which has come into contact with a potential victim, they provide advice and outline the process going forward, including referral in to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). The NRM was created in 2009 by the government Home Office directorate; it is an official framework to help identify victims of human trafficking and ensure that they receive necessary support. The NRM is also used to collect official statistics on human trafficking and its victims and helps the government and relevant organisations to keep track of trends in data and respond accordingly.

This thesis will establish whether or not the current MSHTU frameworks are working efficiently, ensuring agencies can apply them correctly and victims are adequately supported. The particular focus will be on the first 24 to 48 hours, as this is an area which is lacking in current literature. This led to the formation of the following research questions:

1. Are the current Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) frameworks working to ensure victims of human trafficking are successfully identified and supported, as well as helping to reduce victims of human trafficking?
2. What happens to victims of human trafficking within the first 24 to 48 hours following their identification, or self -referral?
3. Do victim interactions with official organisations follow the MSHTU framework?

Primary research will be conducted, to encourage practitioners involved in the identification and referral of human trafficking victims to consider their own practices. If the MSHTU framework is deemed inadequate, by the participant practitioners, weaknesses can be identified and improvements may then be suggested. By providing potential amendments these may then be considered by the MSHTU or individual organisations, helping to improve identification, referral and support.

This chapter will go on to introduce the research. It will set out the key themes as well as discuss the history of human trafficking, relevant definitions and the wider issues faced in this area. Within this chapter the definition of human trafficking is first identified, with emphasis on the United Nations (UN) Palermo Protocol 2000 and the Modern Slavery Act 2015. These definitions help to identify important aspects of the research, such as; the acts of recruitment,

transportation and harbouring. Widely accepted definitions also help to understand the impact of trafficking on a victim, by exploring types of exploitation and methods of recruitment. A brief overview of the history of human trafficking will be discussed, including the development of human trafficking and the broader link to traditional notions of modern slavery around the world. The chapter then goes on to look at the mechanisms in place to identify and refer victims, such as the aforementioned NCA, the MSHTU and the NRM.

Statistics and figures are a key starting point when exploring human trafficking and its impact. The extent of human trafficking around the world and more specifically in the UK is important – who does it affect, how can victims be identified and how are they supported. At present, over 90% of countries in the world have some type of policy or legislation in place to criminalise the act of trafficking in humans (Anti-slavery.org, 2020). Therefore, it is essential to consider why this phenomenon remains and the reasons for the reported annual increase in victimisation. The use of government information, statistics from Non-Government Organisations (NGO) and research centre publications all help to paint a picture of human trafficking in the UK, over the last ten years. These data sets are used alongside research from scholars who are at the forefront of research into human trafficking. Kevin Bales was a pioneer in the area of Modern Slavery, his work 'Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy' was published in 1999, with revised editions in 2005 and 2012. He considers a 'new slavery' and investigates the impact of the global economy on vulnerable people who become victims of human trafficking. Julia O'Connell Davidson's contributions to the field particularly revolve around terminology and the way in which modern slavery is viewed. Her 2016 book 'Modern Slavery: the Margins of Freedom' critically analyses the umbrella term 'modern slavery', looking at the need to distinguish forms of slavery, such as human trafficking. Another example, is the work of Louise Shelly; 'Human Trafficking: A Global Perspective, 2010' which looks at human trafficking globally, the operational context of the crime and the offenders involved.

Further consideration can be given to social theories which may be applicable to the research. Social theory can be applied to people involved in and the circumstances surrounding, human trafficking. Human trafficking isn't restricted to any gender or age; however, this thesis will focus predominantly on women and children. A theory to consider and the primary idea within this research is feminist social theory which looks to discover and highlight the differences within society between sex roles and gender inequalities (Garland & Sparks, 2000). As human sex trafficking victims are overwhelmingly female (International Labour Organisation (2016) suggests that 98% are women and girls), these figures can support feminist theories that explain the exploitation of females in the context of patriarchal systems of power and control.

These theories suggest that men hold a superior role within society, the needs of the traffickers against the vulnerabilities of the potential victims can generate a great power imbalance which creates a cycle of further abuse and coercion (McLaren, 2019; Beilharz, 2020). The vulnerability of a victim may be reduced through rehabilitation, by allowing the victim to support themselves and lead a better life after they have experienced victimisation. They will gain more control and a stronger outlook; according to the feminist theory, this aid would help to entirely re-adjust the power imbalance, subsequently making victims less likely to be re-victimised (Banakar & Travers, 2005). A further advantage of feminist social theory in this context is the consideration of the victim voice. This concept puts a victim at the forefront of the discussion, allowing their experiences to shape debates and influence change. This is a key area of exploration within this thesis, as it is considered that the idea of victim voice is an under-used tool. This has the potential to influence positive change in terms of shaping policy and guidance, to better support victims of human trafficking (Jagger, 2008; Fraser, 1997; Butler, 2011).

A further theory to consider is Merton's Strain Theory (1938), which suggests that certain social structures within different societies may create pressure on vulnerable people to commit crimes. Within this thesis, it is proposed that this theory may be applied to the victims of human trafficking who have been forced into the trafficking cycle. Research suggests that the majority of these victims want to be found, saved and helped (Finigan-Carr et al., 2019). However, it may be argued that without the correct care and rehabilitation structures in place, victims may be pressured to return to the trafficking circle, experiencing further abuse. This could be due to a lack of options available to them in terms of income, work or housing. Further, an absence of resources or opportunity; to enable them to repair and achieve their goals of freedom and survival. These restrictions are coupled with a familiarity to their previous life and surroundings (Newburn, 2007). This links with Durkheim's theory of anomie whereby individuals do not follow societal norms and are therefore not effectively matched to society's practices. As victims of human trafficking, the concept of victim voice and empowerment could aid recovery and reintegration into society, eventually assisting with the acceptance of social norms (Baily, 1994 and Newburn, 2007).

The information surrounding human trafficking is ever increasing, however the macro-focus still appears to be on offenders and how they are dealt with. Segrave, Milivojevic and Pickering (2017) explore the focus on prosecution of trafficking offenders by state and non-state organisations. They claim that the consistent need for justice and the consequent punishment of traffickers may be seen as a deterrent to other offenders. This highlights an overriding negligence in considering the victims needs and how they could be supported, to limit their

likelihood of returning into the trafficking circles they are familiar with. If this fear and anxiety could be reduced it may help to encourage more victims to come forward and seek help. By empowering victims and giving them a voice to express their experiences, physical and psychological, this would allow both offending and recidivism rates to decrease. The contribution to knowledge will hinge on the victim's experiences, considered through the views of practitioners. This means that the primary evidence and information will create unique and insightful data, surrounding the treatment of victims in human trafficking cases within the UK.

The critical review of relevant literature will position the research focus inside the field of human trafficking. Focus will be on the identification and referral of potential victims, then the subsequent protection and support offered by relevant organisations. The initial review establishes the setting and foundation for the study and helps to confirm the research questions. The literature studied within this project was that of prominent human trafficking academics, developed from the consideration of Kevin Bales as a primary authority on this subject. His work considers the 'new slavery' and looks at trafficking as part of a large, international movement whereby victims are subjected to extensive violence and abuse. This enslavement, Bales believes, enables exploitation for the purposes of debt bondage, forced labour and sexual exploitation.

1.2 Definitions and the Issue of Human Trafficking

The discourse of trafficking in human beings can be seen as a modern issue. This crime has been increasingly acknowledged over the past two decades, until recently it was fairly un-explored in comparison to other crimes, such as burglary, murder and theft (Kara, 2017). However, trafficking in different situations is ever increasing and it now attracts global attention from governments, businesses and charity organisations. Slavery, in various forms, has existed for thousands of years despite efforts to eradicate the practice all over the world (Lee, 2012). Is human trafficking a form of modern slavery? This is a question which many people have sought to answer, one which has caused great controversy within the academic community. Within this thesis, human trafficking is considered as a branch of modern slavery, a perspective favoured by Bales, Hesketh and Silverman (2015). It is known that trafficking and slavery share many of the same characteristics, such as a person being the property of another (legally or illegally), the work rate of enslaved victims and the way in which they are forced to live in conditions unfit for human beings. These issues create a strong link between traditional notions of slavery and human trafficking. Suggesting that forms of slavery have evolved and

instead of being eradicated, they have been forced to become more secretive; an underground crime. The growing issue of trafficking is finally becoming more prevalent; however, it is often still seen as a disgraceful, shameful offence for the country involved and one which has often been pushed to the back of national governmental and policing plans (Skinner, 2008).

In 2000, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) created the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Protocol), which included the supplementary Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children. The Trafficking Protocol was created with the intent for it to be used as an instrument of law enforcement. This form of legislation requires party states to ensure that they meet set obligations to reduce trafficking instances within their own countries. The Protocol specifically addressed the need for domestic legislation to provide protection and temporary residence to victims and punish the act of trafficking, as well as the offenders themselves. The treaty entered into force in 2003 and developed into the primary international legislature on human trafficking. The Protocol includes the much needed, universally accepted definition of human trafficking, in Article 3:

> "*Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the 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. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.*

The international agreement, signed by 117 signatories, aided the UK's efforts to create their own legislative procedures. Subsequently, on 31st July 2015 the UK Modern Slavery Act came into force, which combined the existing human trafficking offences within the *Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004 and the Sexual Offences Act 2003.* This new act criminalises human trafficking and its many associated forms, as well as the acts of transportation and detainment. The Act also aims to incorporate the treatment of victims into the legislation, creating some broad provisions to help identify and support victims of human trafficking. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) of England and Wales acknowledges the above definition as the '*first internationally recognised definition of human trafficking'* (CPS, 2016) and it is used as a baseline for the Modern Slavery Act 2015. In this situation, acknowledgment and acceptance of the definition from top legal bodies is important. This

allows the state to create a unique adaptation from the original international definition, which works specifically for the needs of the country. Tailoring the definition and the suggested combatting techniques allows the new classification and policy to work more effectively for the state government, non-government organisations (NGO) the authorities and the public (Craig, 2015; Parkes, 2015). It is evident that there are three constitutional foundations to the trafficking process, within the above definition, which have been protected by the Modern Slavery Act 2015. These elements are; the Act, which looks at what has happened in the trafficking context, the Means, which considers how the possible offence has occurred and the Purpose, or the reason behind the act. These three areas are key to aiding the detection of trafficking cases and assisting the police and authorities in identifying victims of trafficking (Gallagher, 2010; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2016).

The classification provided by the UN and utilised by the Modern Slavery Act 2015, will be the accepted definition within this paper. The international recognition, alongside the succinct nature of the definition means that it is easy to understand, interpret and use (Haynes, 2016; Parkes, 2015). It is also important to further acknowledge that the Modern Slavery Act 2015 supplements this by specifically confirming state requirements surrounding the travel of the trafficker or their victims. It states that the arrangement, travel details or facilitation of trafficking is irrelevant; a UK national can commit a trafficking offence within the UK, under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Furthermore, if a person is not a UK national, they commit a crime under the Act if the facilitation or arrangement takes place within the UK, or if the victim and/or offender arrives, departs, travels within or passes through the UK (the Modern Slavery Act, 2015).

Following on from the wider definition, the CPS 2015 Victims Code defines a victim as being; '*A natural person who has suffered harm, including physical, mental or emotional harm or economic loss which was directly caused by a criminal offence'* (CPS, 2016). This is then supplemented by the Modern Slavery Act 2015, which further clarifies the definition of a victim of sexual exploitation, as a result of human trafficking, as;

> *Something is done to or in respect of the person— (a) which involves the commission of an offence under— (i) section 1(1)(a) of the Protection of Children Act 1978 (indecent photographs of children), or (ii) Part 1 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (sexual offences), as it has effect in England and Wales, or (b) which would involve the commission of such an offence if it were done in England and Wales.*

By attempting to ensure all authorities within the UK are aware of the definitions and work to the same documentation, the statistics and figures gained become more reliable and valid. However, it can be seen that many organisations, especially private companies, are unaware of these definitions and protocols, as trafficking continues to rise within the UK (Home Office, 2020). Definitions also act as a basic guide to services and authorities, as well as a legislative document. It has been highlighted that there are three constitutional elements to the trafficking process, the Act, the Means and the Purpose. These three elements within the recognised definition can lead relevant bodies in the right direction, helping them to identify more trafficking cases (Gallagher, 2010; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2016). The legislation evidently criminalises trafficking and also provides the basis for domestic legislation to be required in all participating countries. This has been a recent key improvement for trafficking policy. There are, however, issues with the definitions of human trafficking. A key problem often comes from the confusion surrounding this offence and smuggling or illegal immigration. There is a great difference between these offences - with smuggling or illegal immigration people are free to make their own choices, they are not held against their will or enslaved upon arrival at the destination. Smuggling is a dangerous process whereby people are transported for a fee, often through or between different countries (Newburn, 2007; Kara, 2009).

More generally when looking at defining terms, ‘trafficking’ is a deal or trade in something illegal, including the conveyance of goods. To link this simple description with the term ‘human’ creates a terrifying reality to emerge, one in which humans are literally transported and sold as a commodity (Lee, 2012; Cameron & Newman, 2008). The word ‘slavery’ conjures real images of the 17th and 18th Century Slave Trades, of violence and torture within the minds of the community. 183 year later it is becoming more and more apparent that slavery persists. Perhaps not in the traditional sense as it takes many new forms, but all are appalling and involve severe abuses of human rights. Human trafficking, especially of women and children, for purposes of sexual exploitation is arguably one of the most shielded and fastest growing forms of modern slavery (Lee, 2012; Quirk, 2010).

There are a number of different types of trafficking in humans, although throughout these differing forms there are common themes of abuse, betrayal and inhumanity. Firstly, forced labour trafficking is one of the most common forms (ILO, 2020). Victims come from all over the world, but predominantly from developing countries. This form of trafficking is generic, it effects men, women and children. Victims are held in slavery-like conditions and forced to work a variety of jobs in labour-intensive fields, such as; agriculture, textiles, fisheries and

domestic servitude. Organ trafficking is also becoming more common and more recognised, it is an underground crime most prevalent in Asian and African countries where demand is high. Ageing populations and increased medical conditions have heightened demand, official organ donation lists are long and subsequently criminals have exploited the desperation of patients. Victim's lives are put at risk in this illegal procedure - some victims willingly give organs, in the hope of receiving financial rewards or favours from criminal groups. Whereas other victims are held against their will and forced to undergo clandestine operations, again endangering their health and lives (UNODC, 2020).

Trafficking for sexual exploitation is another common form of modern slavery, which greatly affects every country in the world, either as a source or a destination for victims and their exploitation. The NCA (2016) describes sexual exploitation as '*sexual exploitation involves any non-consensual or abusive sexual acts performed without a victim's permission. This includes prostitution, escort work and pornography. Women, men and children of both sexes can be victims.*' This is one of the more harrowing forms of exploitation victims of trafficking may encounter. It is often specific, but not exclusive, to women and children, as there is a greater demand for them within destination countries. Demand is a key reason for the trafficking of victims. If the demands for prostitutes or sex workers were reduced it can be predicted that people would not be trafficked from different countries in such high volumes, to meet these high-level needs (Scarpa, 2008). The demand for sex workers is something governments have aimed to address in the past; however, this has not yet been sufficiently dealt with. Therefore, the demand for sexual exploitation is continuing to rise and, as a direct result, so is the number of trafficking victims (Lee, 2012).

Generally, the countries with the biggest pull factors (aspects which attract traffickers and potential victims), are those which are considered wealthy, politically stable and free from oppression, such as Western European countries (the UK, France, Germany etc.). These countries are attractive to people from developing countries, or vulnerable parts of society within developed countries. This means that these places are more likely to be affected by human trafficking crimes (Lee, 2012; Newburn, 2007). The victim journey is often brought about due to a poor quality of life and the desire to increase their income or provide for their families. These are known as push factors (which forcibly drive people to other places), they often indicate that the conditions in countries of origin were poor and unsustainable. The victims are driven away and they feel they will be better off if they travel to a new place in search of a better life (Beeks and Amir, 2006). Although some victims may choose to travel and then be falsely entrapped by traffickers, many victims can be tricked from the outset. They

may be coerced or forced into the trafficking arena, provided with false documentation and the promise of a better life. These victims are often so desperate that they are able to trust the strangers offering them a chance to change their lives, this desperation leads to vulnerability and makes it easier for the traffickers to manipulate their victims (Bernat, 2013). It is important to acknowledge that there are often a combination of push and pull factors at work, as they overlap in many situations. After being tricked or forced into the net of the traffickers, victims are then illegally transported across countries or within a single country and can eventually be sold on. Generally, victims are sold to the highest bidder, or the trafficking ring leaders in wealthy countries such as the United Kingdom (Obi and Dilip, 2007).

Beeks and Amir (2006) suggest that the overriding view of trafficking within the UK, is that it is a predominantly foreign offence. It is thought that some organisations and members of the public have a disconnected outlook, believing trafficking doesn't occur in the UK, to the extent it actually does. As a result of this view, media reporting of human trafficking within this country is quite rare, particularly in comparison to other extreme crimes such as murder, terrorism and rape (BBC, 2020). Any offences which are covered generally lack any real conviction, they are ill-documented and are often linked with smuggling or illegal immigration. However, outlets that run stories continue to place focus on who is to blame for the crime of human trafficking, rather than the understanding the crime in itself. Better engagement and an improvement in highlighting the processes and types of trafficking from the media would enable the phenomenon to be better understood. Subsequently, the crime could be better monitored and dealt with, through increased awareness and consequential anticipation (Un.Gift.Hub, 2014).

It appears that the lack of public understanding of the offence is somewhat reflected in policy and practice, with legislation having only recently improved to reflect the severity of human trafficking. In general, it can be acknowledged that prosecution and claim rates for victims of trafficking are also significantly lower than expected; they do not accurately reflect the severity or commonality of the offence in the UK. Although it is clear that human trafficking is illegal, in both national and International law, it cannot be denied that the trading of people still firmly exists and appears to be growing each year (Tsachi, 2013).

Consideration of other possible definitions of human trafficking is needed, as there are many variations, due to this rather complicated phenomenon been largely disputed over the years (Shelly, 2010; OVCTTAC, 2012). Human trafficking may also be referred to as 'modern slavery', a term which has caused a great deal of debate between scholars such as Kevin Bales and Julia O'Connell Davidson, due to the link with historical slavery (Gupta, 2016). Due to the nature of

human trafficking being a universally recognised criminal activity which is apparent across borders, international laws were created to help combat the issue. These laws are essential in aiding the ability to reduce trafficking across the world, but also to allow state governments the facility to create their own protocols and legislative procedures, to aid attempts to control trafficking within their own country (King, 2015). One issue with the definition of trafficking has arisen in recent years from the confusion surrounding the specific offence and crimes which are similar or within the same band. The comparison to people smuggling or illegal immigration has already been mentioned, another linked area is that of prostitution. These misperceptions have been somewhat addressed through the use of improved definitions and laws, which stipulate the specific forms trafficking can take (Kara, 2009). On the whole, there have been countless attempts to address the rise in modern slavery throughout the years, as well as other crimes associated with the offence. These efforts date back to traditional methods of slavery abolition, such as the Slavery Convention (1926), as well as some more contemporary trafficking considerations within legislation such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). These past attempts to limit slavery have each included their own variations of definitions, considering different aspects of the trafficking process. Although all of these responses created the foundation for a current agreement, none offered a comprehensive classification. This meant that that universal recognition was limited, as was the ability to substantively aid the adaptations of individual state laws (Ollus, 2015; Cyrus N, & Vogel, D, 2015).

The current literature on modern slavery, human trafficking and the response to it is extensive and continuously growing. However, the focus still appears to be on offenders and how they are dealt with. The consideration of victims' needs has been under-researched. There is a lack of academic work considering how victims may be effectively supported, to reintegrate them into society and to limit their likelihood of returning into the trafficking circles they are familiar with. It can be suggested that if the fear and anxiety victims experience could be reduced, to encourage more victims to come forward and seek help, this would allow both offending and recidivism rates to decrease. There are a number of key academics who help to summarise the current state of the field and provide a reliable overview. Kevin Bales (1999, 2005, 2009) believes violence, population growth, poverty and government failings have led to the current trafficking 'epidemic'. The academic and legal practitioner Anne Gallagher's (2010) work focuses on trials and convictions of traffickers. Her recent piece 'The Problems and Prospects of Trafficking Prosecutions: Ending impunity and securing justice' (2016) suggests that prosecution of offenders is growing, but not necessarily accurately and that quality should be measured over quality. Gallagher (2015) also highlights the issues surrounding accurate

documentation of modern slavery and lack of research surrounding the assessment of the quality of governmental responses to victims of trafficking. Maggy Lee (2005, 2007) looks at trafficking on a global scale surrounding transnational organised crime. Her work 'Trafficking and Global Crime Control' (2010) ties together theories of sex and labour trafficking with the responses created by international and national organisations. She also considers trafficking as being inextricably linked to strains, divisions and inequalities related to globalisation and a differential freedom of movement. Human trafficking as a topic can be positioned within the fields of historical, legal, criminological and sociological academic research.

Prominent human trafficking literature developed from the consideration of various key academics such as Kevin Bales who can be considered as a primary authority on this subject. His work considers the 'new slavery' and looks at trafficking as part of a large, international movement whereby victims are subjected to great violence and abuse in order to enslave them for the purposes of debt bondage, forced labour and sexual exploitation. His extensive work on modern slavery has resulted in published books, most prominently 'Disposable People' (2012) which links the evolution of the new slavery to the global economy. This work focuses on different countries as case studies. It highlights three essential factors which contribute to the increase in trafficking; the increase in population, rapid economic change and the revolution of economic globalisation. Although this work considers the need to reduce trafficking cases and attempts to understand the motive behind trafficking, there is little acknowledgement of the victims needs and how they could be helped following their ordeal. Bales even goes so far as to suggest that liberation is almost futile, due to the situation the victims will be left in, without protection or money.

From this work, Silvia Scarpa became noticeable, as another academic working in the field of human rights, international law and human trafficking. Her views surround the lack of reliable data, as well as the reluctance to focus on victims of trafficking. Scarpa also begins to consider the issue of support and compensation, however this is not covered in great detail, more so it is discussed like a common part of the criminal process. She highlights legislation and policies that are in place around the world. However, data trends are less acknowledged, thus measurements of legislative successes are lacking. Maggy Lee is another important figure, as an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Hong Kong, she has published widely on migration and human trafficking. Lee proposes that trafficking is inextricably linked to the strains, partitions and discriminations associated with globalisation and a varied freedom of movement. Lee also looks at the evolving nature of trafficking and considers how policy is kept up to date, through looking at the effects on control and regulation within high-risk countries of origin and destination.

Within the literature surrounding victims, there is an expanding amount of information on identifying and protecting victims, particularly in Asian and African countries. Maggy Lee (2014) considers trafficking substantively in Asia and looks at housing options for victims as well as any gender influences surrounding victimisation. Overviews of this area can also be seen in Julia O'Connell Davidson's (2013, 2015) work which links victims of trafficking with the prostitution trade and migration. Identifying victims of human sex trafficking has been less documented in general, the majority of available material is factual or instructional, provided by groups or charity organisations. This information is often aimed as individuals or practitioners – with guidance on spotting the signs of human trafficking, which may help to identify a potential victim (Anti-Slavery.org, 2019). The limited current literature surrounding supporting victims of human trafficking mainly explores the health care profession and their responses to victim support. Further, there is a small amount of literature considering identification of victims within the health care setting. Jordan Greenbaum (2015, 2017) in particular has researched this area within the United States (US), he considers the needs of victims when they are identified in medical settings. This focus is mainly on children, exploring the arguable failings of the health care setting in relation to this. However, it can be seen that there is a lack of literature delving into the exploration of all organisations associated with victims of sex trafficking within the UK, particularly looking into the ways in which victims may be identified and then supported. The above research outline highlights the lack of focus on victim rehabilitation and protection, in relation to identifying and referring individuals who may be potential victims.

There is also a lack of material considering the experiences and views of practitioners, in relation to the treatment and support of victims. Thus, one matter that receives relatively little attention in the existing research literature as a whole is the treatment of victims. Particularly, what is happening to them between the initial identification or self-referral and the referral on to a support organisation. Farrell and Kane (2020) have explored the current responses to the crime of human trafficking, from the macro perspective within the United States. Their work particularly focuses on a lack of victim centred approach and the need for a shift in focus. Although the MSHTU Best Practice Guide provides some information on the process of victim identification, referral and support - little is known about how this process actually operates in practice. Further, there is a lack of guidance surrounding whether, or to what extent, it actually does help to ensure that victims of human trafficking are identified. Identification, referral and support are three essential considerations in understanding the victims experience and the effectiveness of the MSHTU Best Practice Guide. If these three areas were better understood, as well as the way in which organisations practically deal with victims whether following the

framework or not, this would lead to the proposal of more effective ways of identifying and helping victims of human trafficking.

This lack of information leads to a series of questions which, if answered, may be able to improve the current frameworks and subsequently provide victims with increased support. Firstly, it is considered that gaining feedback from the practitioners who are involved in identifying, referring and supporting victims will ensure that practical knowledge and application is taken into account. These are the people who use the guidance on a regular basis, they know how the current policy works in practice and how it might be improved to better serve them as a tool to aid victims. If practitioners are consulted, not only will this give a voice to those working on the front-line, it will also serve to better inform the research, ensuring primary perspectives are at the forefront of any recommendations made. Next, it can be seen that the victim experience must be the primary concern for all practitioners involved. By interacting with people who work with victims, on a regular basis, this will provide a better understanding of the victims' needs. Subsequently, it will provide information on how best to support them moving forward. Finally, there is an opportunity to bridge the gap between policy and practice within Modern Slavery guidance and legislation. Taking new knowledge form theory to practice will be a consideration throughout this research. Primary data offers measurable information which can provide value from research, as well as shape practices. Collecting valuable, accurate data starts at the institutional level particularly focusing on key organisations; thus, policy and practice can be influenced by the research. Such research can improve the evidence base on modern slavery and effectively be used to inform future policy relating to identifying victims, referring them through the NRM and supporting them.

The most important questions to arise from the study are;

1. Are the current MSHTU frameworks working to ensure victims of human trafficking are successfully identified and supported, as well as helping to reduce victims of human trafficking?
2. What happens to victims of human trafficking within the first 24 hours following their identification, or self -referral?
3. Do victim interactions with official organisations follow the MSHTU framework?

In order to fill the gap in knowledge identified above, data will be gathered from individuals who have the responsibility of identifying and referring victims of human sex trafficking. These front-line practitioners will include; charity workers, volunteers and victims from organisations such as; the police force, the health care sector, border control, Bernardo's and the Salvation

Army. Survey research will be used to gather the data, extracting the following information from those who complete it:

As an introductory overview, the review of literature and theories led to the formation of some key questions;

1. How are the victims of human trafficking identified by first responder organisations?
2. Does the method of identifying victims always follow the MSHTU framework?
3. Does the type of first responder agency effect who gets identified as a victim of human sex trafficking?
4. Do the personal characteristics of the victim effect whether they are identified as a victim of human sex trafficking?
5. What provisions do victims initially receive, within the first 24 hours following identification? (i.e. accommodation, medical services, food, clothing, support)
6. Does the MSHTU framework need to be improved to ensure victims received the best chance of being identified, referred and subsequently supported?

The data collection survey will aim to find out what happens during identification and initial referral for the purposes of improving support for the victims of human trafficking. By looking at how respondents answer questions, depending on their background and employment information, as well as age, gender and ethnicity, this will identify strengths and weaknesses of the current system and how policy and guidelines are being applied. This will also indicate if there is a lack knowledge surrounding the identification and treatment of victims, as well as any inadequacy in communication between relevant organisations.

1.3 A Transitory History of Human Trafficking

In order to discuss Modern Slavery and the form it takes today; the Transatlantic Slave Trade, which existed from the 16th to the 19th Century, is an important starting point. The evolution of slavery is particularly significant in considering the discourse used within modern and historic forms of slavery (Bravo 2007; 2010). During the 16th Century the emergence of the European Slave Trade saw people transported unwillingly as a commodity, to be sold on as slaves, from Africa to Portugal. The United Kingdom first entered the global slave market on a large scale in 1562, when they began trading in African slaves (Quirk, 2010). The slave-trade grew in the UK; by the 18th Century a significant number of African people were residing in London, both enslaved and freed. Throughout this period, slavery was the main economic power in many

port cities, such as Liverpool and Bristol. However, people raised concerns surrounding the treatment of slaves and fears for their safety. This motion of eradication gathered momentum towards the end of the 18th Century, with abolition campaigns rising across the UK. On 25th March 1807, the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act 1807 was passed, making it illegal to engage in the trading of slaves (Richardson, 2019; Mathieson, 2019).

Although the British slave trade was abolished in 1807, it continued in the form of black-market trade and slavery in the British Caribbean was not legally abolished until 1833. Slavery has been an international issue for centuries, a number of bills and laws have been passed in an attempt to control slavery and human trafficking (Carico, 2020). The International Agreement for the suppression of the White Slave Traffic in 1904, signified one of the largest changes to the state of slavery in the world. The agreement emphasised laws which attempted to protect victims of slavery, it prohibited both trafficking and sexual utilisation of white girls and women. The League of Nations revised the agreement in 1927, it was extended to remove the racial protection over potential victims. It then included all women and children regardless of their race, as well as removing gender bias for children, young boys were also encompassed (Scarpa, 2008). Statistics began to increase as well as research surrounding human trafficking, this period became known for its exploration into prostitution as well as other crimes. Inevitably links were established with forced prostitution; the situation of those victims being trafficked and the consequent high demand for trade (Carico, 2020).

Slavery and human trafficking are difficult crimes to control, this has been made evident in numerous accounts of governments and countries omitting to sign treaties or actively still engaging in forms of slavery. A more recent and extreme example occurred in 1938 when the Japanese government created outrage, as they forced children and women into sex trafficking, during the time of the Second World War. Victims were trafficked from across Asia into Japan, they were made to become sex slaves and were kept in horrendous conditions. Bales (2004) states that throughout the Second World War rape cases rose significantly, to the extent where government officials had to step in and create 'comfort stations'. These were effectively brothels made to house the large number of trafficked prostitutes. Creating this environment for women to be prostituted, as a form of controlled crime, had an effect on data. The scenario seemed to decrease statistics surrounding rape and sexual health problems, due to the then controlled nature of the offences. This regulated crime situation is a common government response and has been used previously in instances such as drug housing (Beeks & Amir, 2006; Williams, 2004). As a direct answer to this crisis, India's Immoral Traffic Prevention Act 1956 was created, it is now seen as an example of the inadequacies of human trafficking control and prevention. The Act did not look to recognise the victims of trafficking or punish those

responsible, instead it was designed to aid the persecution of those running and profiting from brothels, as well as any third parties involved in trafficking (Bharti, 2008). It became clear that a reformation was needed when the Act started to create further problems for the victims of trafficking. They were forced out of the 'comfort stations' or brothels with no support or protection and were subsequently made to live in worse conditions. Furthermore, the victims had no financial income or incentives to stay away from crime and prostitution, which served to highlight the huge inadequacies within The Act.

Over the last two decades, there have been a number of significant legislative changes within the field of human trafficking and modern slavery.

Some of the most notable milestones are:

The United Nations passes the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons as part of the Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, 2002

A landmark treaty, offering the first globally recognised definition of human trafficking.

The United Nations appoints a Special Rapporteur on Human Trafficking, 2004

This was a leading move, indicating the need to tackle slavery at a global level.

The International Labour Organization's (ILO) first Global Report on Forced Labour, 2005

This provided the first estimate of enslaved people, across the world.

The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, 2008

This was the first piece in international law, offering a guarantee to protect victims at a minimum level. It also defined trafficking as a violation of human rights.

The California Transparency in Supply Chains Act, 2011

A revolutionary step for labour exploitation and trafficking, requiring retail and manufacturing firms to provide an overview of how they tackle forced labour within their supply chains.

The first Global Slavery Index released by the Walk Free Foundation, 2013

This provided a global estimate of 45.8 million enslaved people, in 2016.

The ILO Forced Labour Protocol, 2014

This brought the 1930 Convention on Forced Labour up to date, encompassing the practice of human trafficking.

Modern Slavery Act, 2015 (Britain)

This was a pioneering piece of legislation, encompassing many aspects of human trafficking and modern slavery. It includes; forms of trafficking, victim support, offender management and organisational responsibilities.

Modern Slavery Act, 2018 (Australia)

Australia passed their own Modern Slavery Bill in 2018, with a major focus on supply chains and forced labour.

Overall, these advances in policy represent great strides forward in tackling modern slavery at both an international and national level. However, the success of more recent legislation is difficult to measure, as we do not yet know whether these reforms are working to support victims (Zweynert & Whiting, 2016).

1.4 Current Policy, Guidelines and Frameworks

Looking at the systems currently in place to support victims of human trafficking is of high importance. Once these systems have been fully identified and analysed it will be easier to suggest improvements or reformations following the collection of primary data. The effectiveness of such systems will create a platform for developments. For example, if the system in place is already at peak effectiveness, it would be likely that little will be needed to improve the situation. However, we are aware that human trafficking continues to increase within the UK, therefore it can be assumed that the method in which victims are dealt with is not as useful or successful as it possibly could be.

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) was created in 2009 by the UK government; its primary aims are to identify victims of human trafficking and ensure that they receive support. The NRM is also used to collect official statistics on human trafficking and its victims, this can help the government and relevant organisations to keep track of trends in data and respond effectively. A key feature of referral is that anyone has the ability to informally ‘recognise’ a victim of human trafficking, however only some organisations (known as first responder) are

able to officially identify a victim and progress their case. In November 2015, the MSHTU also introduced the 'Duty to Notify' branch of the NRM. This meant that anyone within a first responder organisation has a responsibility to ensure that potential victims are referred through the system.

The UK has one Single Competent Authority (SCA), which any victim must go through to be referred to the NRM. The initial referral must always made by an authorised agency (first responder). These are:

Police forces	Migrant Help
Areas of the Home Office:	Medaille Trust
UK Visas and Immigration	Kalayaan
Border Force	Barnardo's
Immigration Enforcement	Unseen
National Crime Agency	Tara Project (Scotland)
Local Authorities	NSPCC (CTAC)
Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA)	BAWSO
Health and Social Care Trusts (Northern Ireland)	New Pathways
Salvation Army	Refugee Council

(gov.uk, 2020)

Referral to the SCA is completely voluntary, so an adult victim must consent. The SCA receives all completed referrals and they decide if the case will be progressed. The process used in the UK fronted by the NCA, essentially ensures that the SCA works to a 'Best Practice Guide'. The NRM structure can be seen in figure 3 below. A number of considerations must be measured in order to ensure that victims are dealt with sensitively and efficiently:

1. The first consideration is the initial contact between a victim of human sex trafficking and a front-line practitioner.
2. Then victim strategy, whereby the characteristics such as race and dialect of the victim are considered and taken into account.
3. Finally interviewing victims in accordance with the national Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) strategy.

Figure 1 - The NRM Referral Process

Potential victim of human sex trafficking brought to the attention of authorised agency (police, NCA, Border Force etc.)

– known as **First Responder (FR)**

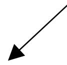
Assess the case and complete a referral **National Referral Mechanism (NRM)** form to pass on to the **Single Competent Authority (SCA)**

(referral to the SCA is voluntary – can only happen if the victim gives permission)

NRM form is assessed by the SCA – evidence is then gathered and case preparation begins

The SCA makes reasonable ground decision and then (if positive) a conclusive grounds decision on all cases, national or international

Reasonable



The SCA has 5 working days to decide if a referral has reasonable grounds to suggest that an individual is a potential victim of human trafficking.

The SCA may require additional information to make a decision.

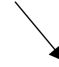
The threshold is: "I suspect but cannot prove" that the individual is a potential victim of trafficking.

If a positive decision is reached, the victim should:

- Be given a government funded safe house / accommodation venue (if needed)
- Have a 45-calendar day reflection period granted. This is to allow the victim time to reflect on their decisions going forward, and to provide them space to begin the recovery stage.

The first responder, support organisation, legal representatives and victim receive notification of decision via letter.

Conclusive



The 45-day reflection period allows the SCA to gather any relevant information for the case.

Any additional information can be used to make a conclusive ground decision regarding the status of the individual as a victim of human trafficking.

The decision should be made as soon as possible after day 45 of the recovery period. Any timescale for making a decision will be based on the individual case and its circumstances.

The threshold is: On the balance of probability "it is more likely than not" that the individual is a victim of human trafficking or modern slavery.

The first responder, support organisation, legal representatives and victim receive notification of decision via letter.

There are key obstacles faced by practitioners when using the NRM system to identify and offer support to victims of human sex trafficking. These will be addressed by the research data, throughout this thesis. Some of these issues are highlighted by the SCA and MSHTU; language and communication barriers are a main problem. This can be easily dealt with by organisations, with the available resources. The NRM guidelines suggest the use of translators and interpreters, stressing the need to keep a potential victim at ease. However, an obvious concern is the lack of availability for less common languages or a lack of funds available to smaller organisations. Another issue is the victim's physical and emotional health; this issue may involve consulting health care practitioners, where available. The MSHTU and SCA suggest these medical needs are met for all victims in a 'timely manner', however a specific timeframe is not indicated. Only some victims may be identified as needing immediate medical care; as such, the decision is unlikely to rest with a healthcare professional.

The practical process of identifying victims is a difficult task in itself. Many police forces in the UK are being pressured to make trafficking identification and victim care a higher priority (National Crime Agency, 2015). It is suggested that, as with the public, the police may not be fully aware of the extent of the problem of human trafficking. This creates inaccurate figures, exaggerated further by the dark figure of crime which is a growing issue in this area of criminal activity (Bernat, 2013). The NCA's UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) utilise data and reports form the NRM, working to build a picture of the scale of human trafficking in the UK. Since the implementation of the Modern Slavery Act in 2015, the NRM has extended its reach to encompass all types of modern slavery. It aims to support the identification and referral of potential victims of human trafficking or vulnerable people who may be targeted (National Crime Agency, 2016). A key limitation of the NRM process is the required consent and cooperation of victims, if over the age of 18, as they must sign and accept the NRM referral. Without this collaboration the agency is unable to act and therefore the victims cannot be effectively helped, often regardless of the situation (Anti-Slavery UK, 2016; National Crime Agency, 2016).

It must be considered that the Modern Slavery Act 2015 is a key piece of legislation within the UK. It is the first of its kind in Europe, merging both trafficking and slavery offences to ensure that both are subject to full criminal penalties and sentence rulings. The Act created a number of new ideas, in a bid to led the world in modern slavery legislation. The UK Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner was a role created by the Modern Slavery Act 2015, it allows the Commissioner and team to oversee and coordinate forces; the prosecution of offenders and the protection of victims. The Act also introduced limited references to victim protection and care. The key point relating to supporting victims within The Act includes; the ability of the

Secretary of State to facilitate the process of supporting and identifying victims of human trafficking and presenting innovative reparation orders. These would aim to encourage courts to provide compensation and support to victims. However, the focus within The Act does still remain on the offenders, with little thought surrounding the victim's needs (Modern Slavery Act, 2015).

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) are another organisation constantly working to provide toolkits to identify and refer victims. They are the only United Nations body which focuses on crimes from a criminal justice perspective. The United Nations Convention on Transnational Organised Crime 2000 supports the UNODC's effort to fight human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants, through the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children (Palermo Protocol). This ground breaking piece of legislation has been authorised by 169 countries/parties and is the first trafficking document which has been internationally agreed upon. As previously mentioned, it also contains the internationally recognised definition of human trafficking and is a worldwide legally binding tool. The definition makes the identification and examination of potential offenders universally acknowledged, as a cross-border crime this is essential, to ensure all countries involved are subject to the same classifications. Subsequently this aids international cooperation/relations and the overall effectiveness of identification, detention and prosecution in trafficking cases (Wylie and McRedmond, 2010).

Various charity organisations also provide other systems of support and help for victims, many are set up to ensure victims can gain help from 'unofficial' authorities. This means that victims may feel more compelled and at ease to come forward and share their stories, or seek the help needed to obtain the freedom and care required (Lee, 2012). These centres and groups can be of significant importance to victims, because they are often private, anonymous and confidential. Therefore, victims are likely to be less concerned about the information they are disclosing and what may happen to them once they enter the justice system. A number of national NGOs such as Unseen (2020), the Salvation Army (2020) and Anti-Slavery.org (2020) are at the forefront, across the world, of providing training and assistance to help combat human trafficking. They aim to help and ultimately reduce victims within the UK and on a global scale.

The systems currently in place to support victims of human trafficking are arguably not as effective as they could be. A critical issue for victims is the fact that they often do not receive enough support within the destination country, to enable them to come forward and seek help – even though there are some guidelines in place to try to ensure this is not the case (Scarpa,

2008). This restriction means that although schemes are available, such as the NRM, they are rarely utilised efficiently. This may be because victims do not pursue the support needed, for fear of prosecution, rejection, or further violence from their captors if they were discovered to be seeking help (Wylie and McRedmond, 2010). Furthermore, victims who do come forward and have made it through the justice system rarely receive the aid required to help them heal and rebuild their lives effectively. They may be incorrectly subjected to internal laws regarding illegal immigration or prostitution, due to either a lack of information or their dread of further violence and exploitation. It has been suggested that the police force may spend too much time working to ascertain information surrounding the unlawful activities presented by the victims, instead of working to catch and detain the criminals. This may be due to a number of reasons, such as an increase in data figures for the police. For example, if potential human trafficking victims are arrested for sex work offences, the police are working to reduce these cases, but they are not finding the root problems or helping the victims of trafficking (Obi and Dilip, 2007; Scarpa, 2008).

Many victims also believe that they cannot escape their captors, so protection for them is essential. This is to ensure traffickers, who typically exert very tight mental and physical control over their victims, are unable to reach them after they have come forward or being found. It is also vital to reassure victims of their safety, to try to guarantee they do not attempt to escape or return to the trafficking situation, which they may believe is their only option. This is also characteristic of victims who are saved and return to their home country; figures suggest that they are likely to return to the sex trade, due to a familiarity with the work and a lack of alternative opportunities (Bernat, 2013). It is also a very difficult task to gain correct information and statistics about victims of human trafficking, as many are too afraid to speak out. Furthermore, a key part of the trafficking process is for victims to have their identification papers (such as passports) and documents taken from them, both to ensure full control is possible and to depreciate the victims. Some trafficking circles have also been known to replace these documents with false papers and passports, to ensure that if a police raid is conducted, the victims have false identification to provide the authorities. These deception tactics are becoming more popular and far easier to achieve due to an increase in technological advances and a growing confidence in trafficking circles (Dalla, Baker, Defrain & Williamson, 2011).

As human trafficking continues to grow, it is necessary for government frameworks to adapt. The key factors attributing to the modern enslavement of victims have been identified as; poverty, dehumanisation of victims and substance dependency. These vulnerable people are targeted and subjected to abuse, they require significant support and the opportunity to

engage in rehabilitation. This much needed support may be improved, by considering the reasons for trafficking in the first instance, as well as increasing research in to the experiences of those on the front line – providing quality data.

Chapter 2 Victim Treatment and Experience

This chapter explores the treatment of human trafficking victims in the UK. It also considers their experiences and the effect their journey has on the chances of re-victimisation and/or rehabilitation. Chronology is considered first, looking at when the victim's journey truly begins. This can range from childhood experiences in an origin country, right through to identification and referral. This is then developed to consider the different types of experience and the key influences on these. This section explores victim case studies and external information, which then allows the research to naturally split in to two main areas:

1. Physical experiences, such as sexual or physical abuse, pregnancy or illness.
2. Psychological experiences, which effect the victim's mental state and wellbeing, such as stress, psychological torture and manipulation.

These two areas are not necessarily independent of one another, they can be linked - this chapter shows that there is a significant crossover for many victims, within their personal experiences. The journey includes a number of substantial milestones, such as; initial contact with a trafficker, arrival in the UK or destination city and exploitation. In the latter stages of their journey, victims will come into contact with the UK authorities or charity services. How are they treated? As a victim or as an offender? Do they receive help initially? Is there immediate support available to them? These considerations are directly linked to the MSHTU and SCA frameworks, which are in place to offer support to victims and to aid practitioners. This should provide an indication of the victim's on-going treatment and the way that the authorities can improve the victim experience, in turn helping their recovery and rehabilitation. This chapter brings together these considerations and identifies the key research questions, considered throughout the rest of the thesis:

1. Are the current Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) frameworks working to ensure victims of human trafficking are successfully identified and supported, as well as helping to reduce victims of human trafficking?
2. What happens to victims of human trafficking within the first 24 to 48 hours following their identification, or self -referral?
3. Do victim interactions with official organisations follow the MSHTU framework?

Victims can be trapped within the trafficking system for many years, suffering to grave extents - many may never make it to freedom. If they do survive, the damage is often severe. As a result, it is essential to provide these victims with as much help as is required to support them

in the aftermath of violence and exploitation. This could enable victims to eventually be reintegrated, into their previous society, or indeed to start a new life in the UK or a new city (Scarpa, 2008). A key issue is that human trafficking victims are entirely disposable to trafficking offenders. They can be described as ghosts in foreign communities, who are invisible to the authorities. Often, they arrived illegally, therefore no record of their entry into the country or city is visible. Due to the slavery-like conditions they are held in, many victims are confided to single living and working areas, being unable to travel around or move without being monitored (Bales, 2016). Consequently, victims are subjected to differing forms of exploitation and abuse – as a result, they suffer severe moral and material injuries and losses. These issues can trap victims in their pasts and restrict their futures, making it exceptionally hard for them to move on if they have been saved (Scarpa, 2008).

If must also be acknowledged that human trafficking victims may suffer permanent psychological or physical damage, as a result of their loss of freedom and sustained abuse. The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2012) highlight expected mental and physical injuries to victims of trafficking. It is suggested that the psychological impact of human trafficking will be significantly worse than the physical impact, as they are likely to suffer mental trauma as a result of their exploitation. Some of the more common symptoms presented by human trafficking victims include: depression, suicidal thoughts, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, drug/substance abuse and panic disorder. As well as these psychological disorders, victims may experience physiological or physical manipulation from their traffickers, or from people who are purchasing their services. This may include prostitutes who have clients or victims forced to cultivate cannabis, for drug gangs. Injuries often include; bruising, scarring, burns and broken bones, sexually exploited victims may also experience gynaecological issues such as sexually transmitted diseases, unplanned pregnancies and miscarriages. Physical harm can also contribute to the psychological damage already experienced, as abuse can exacerbate vulnerabilities (Bales, 2016). Physical harm is often a product of the trafficker's desire to abuse the victims, however the mental control asserted over the victims is the most prominent issue. This is the factor which mostly ensures victims do not attempt to escape or find freedom, due to the high level of control and manipulation. This psychological authority is a key strategy in the dominance of human trafficking victims, particularly women and children – it often leads to the complete submission of the victim (Bernat, 2013; Beeks and Amir, 2006).

In terms of victim acknowledgement, self-identification is an interesting perception. Victims may initially restrain from identifying themselves as 'victims of human trafficking' in the early stages of their incarceration. This can be due to self-blame, seeing themselves a contributing factor to their situation. Victims may feel that they are in some way responsible, not only for

exploitation they are facing, but also for the harm and destruction brought to their families as a result. Feeling responsible for the pain and suffering of family members is often much more distressing for the victims (Dalla, Baker, Defrain & Williamson, 2011). This blame may stem from a general lack of self-appreciation, negative influences in their lives or the prior subjection to physical and mental abuse. It is important to also acknowledge that a history of violence pre-trafficking can also make victims increasingly susceptible to manipulation. These victims also have their human rights entirely violated when they involuntarily enter the trafficking ring. These violations include; the right not to be held in slavery or involuntary servitude, the right to be free from violence, the right to dignity and security of person, the right to liberty, the right to health and the right to be free from cruel and inhumane treatment (Lee, 2012; Bales, 2004).

2.1 Who are the Victims of Human Trafficking?

Victims of human trafficking can be considered as victims of a wider economic demand to provide cheap domestic, sexual and workforce labour. Anti-Slavery.org (2020) states that almost 79% of human trafficking victims are women and children, many of whom are predominantly exploited in the sex industry. In 2018, the NCA identified almost 7000 potential victims of human trafficking within the UK. It is clear from the figures that the demand for women and children is the highest, as these groups are often targeted (Lipscombe and Beard, 2014; Bales, 2005). This is further supported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2016) which highlights that 72% of people trafficked into the sex industry are adult women. However, these figures do vary depending on the form of trafficking, for example the percentage of male victims greatly increases if considering forced labour. The total number of adult victims exploited for labour purposes during the last 2019 quarter was 983, with 888 (almost 90%) of these victims being male, which is an interesting contrast to the sexual exploitation statistics (NRM Statistics, 2019). Victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation come from all over the world and can be trafficked to, or within, any country. The UNODC (2019) splits the world into regions in order to identify victims, these are; Western and Southern Europe, Central and South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, North and Central America and the Caribbean, South America, Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and the Middle East. For the purpose of this section, Europe and Central Asia will be the main focus, due to the thesis focus being on the UK and the European link with the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015 (Hernandez and Rudolph, 2015; NRM Statistics, 2016; Bakowski, 2014). Flows of victims can be split in to two categories;

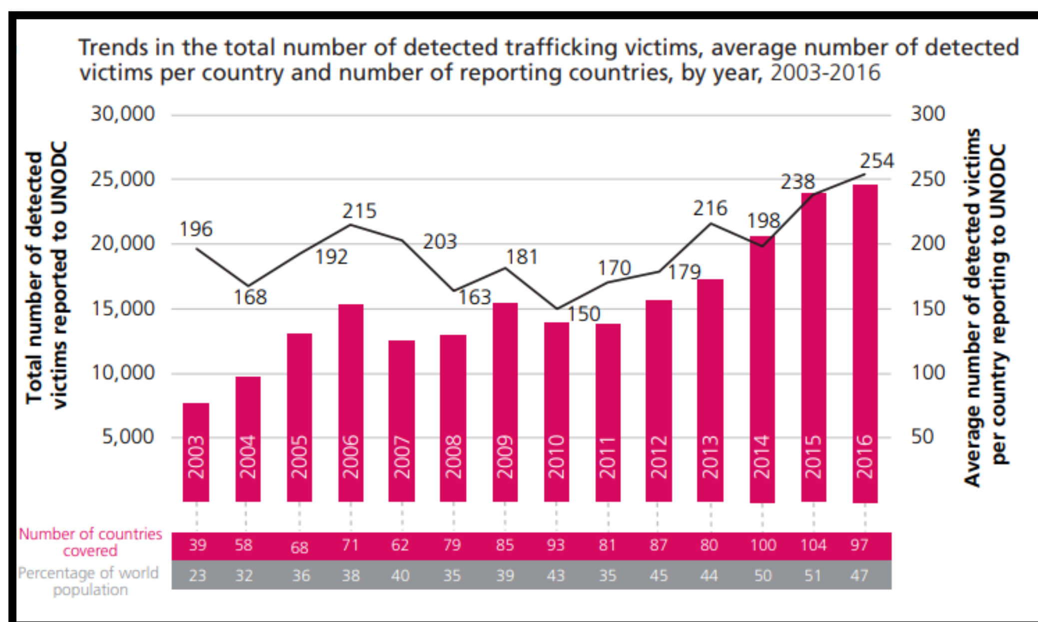
transregional, meaning they are effectively moved between continents and intraregional, meaning the origin and destination state are within the same larger region (Hernandez and Rudolph, 2015). These figures, ideas and definitions help to create a larger picture of human trafficking, which can be dissected by individual states to create their own map of trafficking and sexual exploitation.

As previously stated, the current methods of defining victims, human trafficking and sexual exploitation are becoming more precise and consistent. However, there is still a great difficulty in identifying and quantifying victims of human trafficking as a whole, as there are varying statistics surrounding the phenomenon. Each type of trafficking, such as debt bondage, forced labour and sexual exploitation, has its own body of figures. Each state, government, charity and NGO also has differing statistics, which contribute to the overall figures. This may be due to differences in collection techniques, varying timescales or diverse geographical nets (Bales, Hesketh & Silverman, 2015; Gallagher, 2010; OVCTTAC, 2012). One of the overriding issues with human trafficking data collection is the strong evidence pointing towards the criminological phenomenon of the 'dark figure' of crime. This term highlights the unreported and undiscovered instances of human trafficking. The crime itself is extremely well hidden, working as an underground system in each country, meaning the authorities often struggle to identify both victims and offenders (Silverman and FAcSS, 2014; Lipscombe and Beard, 2014). Each year specific commissions are set up to provide an overview of human trafficking within various countries. These initiatives attempt to enumerate the victims and the offences - to enable people to understand the crime better, to comprehend the rate at which it is growing and to aid increased support to tackle the crime. Although these directives suggest that trafficking is a growing concern, they are exacerbated by the lack of reliable data, due in part to the dark figure of crime (Shelley, 2010; Lee, 2013). Sexually exploited victims of human trafficking, as well as the phenomenon as a whole, will be considered within this section. It is evident that sexual exploitation of women and children is one of the most prevalent forms of human trafficking. Other areas of trafficking, such as labour and criminal exploitation, are equally as difficult to gain accurate statistics on. These are varyingly documented within each state and by the international bodies involved.

Due to the introduction of the Modern Slavery Act in 2015, the figures in the UK are likely to differ over the period of time when the Act was being instated. The validity of statistics gained after 2015 then increases due to the link with the new Act and the subsequent effect it had on international policy. However, previous figures are important in discovering the extend of the problem, as well as aiding the prediction of growth in the future. The variation in figures also points towards the confusion in definitions prior to the Act and the impact this had on

identification and consequent prevention (Geddes, 2005). The UNODC Global Report on Trafficking on Persons 2018 is the most up-to-date, publicly accessible, internationally recognised document available. The report highlights the total victim count for the period 2007 to 2016, detailing statistics from 142 different countries – 94% of the world population. In 2016 there reached a peak of around 24,000 detected victims; over 97 different countries. The report goes on to further highlight the difficulty of gathering reliable figures of entire victim populations, due to the underground nature and lack of reporting surrounding the crime of human trafficking (OVCTTAC, 2012; Silverman and FAcSS, 2014).

Table 1 - UNODC: Detected Victims Statistics



Methodologically, gaining a dependable figure is a problematic task, which requires considerable thought and planning. Only 26 countries in 2009 had an institution which scientifically collected and investigated data on trafficking, however this number rose to 65 by 2018. The UNODC mean to tackle this important objective though the use of smaller field tests which will increase validity in reduced areas, therefore meaning the results can be more accurately generalised. Another objective is to re-consider the geographical boundaries within countries, ensuring that they are strict and easily identifiable (UNODC, 2016).

Within the UK more specifically the NCA provide the most current figures, with an end of year summary for 2018 gained via the NRM. The NRM encompasses all referred and identifiable victims of modern slavery from 2015 onwards, due in-part to the implementation of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. This created a benchmark for the protection and identification of victims within the UK. It also places a greater amount of pressure on authorities to act more

effectively and much faster, to both reduce cases of trafficking and to help current victims as quickly and efficiently as possible (Silverman and FAcSS, 2014).

In 2018, the NRM received 6993 referrals of potential victims of human trafficking inside the UK, an increase of 36% from 2017. Of these victims, 2728 were female and 3137 were minors, revealing a 48% increase in exploitation of minors from the previous year. This data is substantial, it indicates a yearly increase in instances of human trafficking, with significant percentages. This may be due to an increase in reporting and awareness or the on-going development of organisational priorities and experiences. The figures for adult labour exploitation, in particular, comprise the majority of cases with a total of 1993, with minor labour exploitation not far behind - 1987. The next highest form was sexual exploitation of adults, with 1289 recorded cases in total in 2018. From 2017, almost every form of exploitation rose, the exceptions being domestic servitude and organ harvesting. However, it is also considered that these are two of the least common forms of exploitation. This is considered to be due to the concealed aspects of these offences; being in private residences and underground premises - thus figures remain low year on year. Between 2017 and 2018, sexual exploitation demonstrated a 10.6% total increase, whilst labour exploitation remained the most significant with a 67.6% combined increase. There has also been a surge in minors as victims, a terrifying reality which is fuelled by the demand for sex and cheap labour.

These statistics were gathered by the NRM, with data coming from government departments, such as UK Immigration and Visa (UKVI), alongside the Police and NGO charities. The largest number of referrals came from UKVI, with 2795 in total. The police recorded 2084 total referrals, making them the second biggest contributor, after the government. The Salvation Army referred 358 victims and Migrant Help also contributed noticeably with 192 referrals. Interestingly, the lowest total number of group referrals came from NGOs, with only 779 altogether. The greatest difference between minors and adult came from the local authorities, with 113 adult referrals and 1222 minor referrals (NCA, 2016). These referral figures display an unsatisfactory sum from the NGOs, compared to the single organisations of the governmental bodies, local authorises and the police. It may have been predicted that the referral total for NGOs would be significantly higher, due to their contact with victims and their connections with the police and social services (Davis, 2019). In contrast, the referral figures by the police are significant and highlight the improvements being made within local forces, in identifying and referring victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. A further consideration is the overwhelming number of referrals made by UKVI. It is considered that this may be due to the contact officers have with vulnerable victims, who are seeking asylum alongside their modern slavery claims (Murphy, 2020; Jobe, 2020; Torre, Romer & Zoeteweij, 2020).

The NCA (2018) also considers the victim's country of origin, as well as the destination country (being the UK). The figures suggest that Albania is currently one of the key source countries, with 947 referral case victims originating there. The UK, however, is the highest with internal trafficking accounting for 1625 total cases - a colossal 98% increase on the previous year. The most shocking statistic is that the majority of child cases are due to internal trafficking, accounting for 1421 of the overall occurrences, a 110% increase from 2017. This increase in UK national minors being trafficked within the country is likely due to demand within the sex and labour industry (House of Commons: Home Affairs Committee, 2009). It is also considered that there has been a stark rise in county lines drugs operations, the NCA report acknowledged the occurrence of this, but does not directly account for it within their statistics. This is a limitation of the report, as there are no official statistics to examine from this period. Surtees (2008) suggests that the high number of victims being trafficked from Albania and South-East Europe are likely to be due to economic crisis, war-torn backgrounds or the desire for social solutions. This links to the next section and discussions surrounding who the victims of human trafficking are and how they come to be in that situation.

On an international level, human trafficking is a complex crime which isn't limited to one state. This type of crime means that relatively few quantitative or qualitative studies have been conducted on human trafficking and its victims. The vast majority of statistics are based on estimations, sample studies or broad government valuations. It is predicted that the majority of these studies grossly underestimate the true extent of global human trafficking. Furthermore, the origin of global figures generally reduces validity and restricts comparability. Regardless of these issues, the studies are still crucial to providing a large-scale view of trafficking and its current state, as they are the only available representative data (Hernandez and Rudolph, 2015). Although many of these figures are estimates, international and state bodies have attempted to quantify victims of sex trafficking. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) (ILO, 2020) estimate 40.30 million people are trapped in human trafficking around the world. An obvious explanation of this figure is the lucrative nature of human trafficking. The industry has an estimated $150 billion turn over annually. This makes it potentially the second largest illegal money-maker, behind drug and weapon trafficking or cyber hacking - which has recently emerged as one of the most profitable illicit businesses (dosomething.org, 2020; Hernandez and Rudolph, 2015; Bales, 2005; Shelley and Bain, 2015).

2.2 Recruitment of Victims

Victims of human trafficking are recruited, sought out to undertake a particular job. Victims are subjected to exploitation, abuse and mistreatment, thus the experiences they endure are often debilitating and life changing (Azad, 2019). It is important to attempt to understand these experiences, in order to recognise how the victims may feel during and following their trafficking journey. This consideration will also have a significant effect on their requirements for support. The term 'experience' can be used to describe a lasting feeling or impact on a person (Roberts & Manikis, 2013). Contemplating both the psychological and physiological impact of trafficking will give an insight in to the overall experience of the victim. By investigating the experiences of trafficking victims alongside the extent of their suffering during their journey, specific types of experiences can be explored. Victims are likely to encounter manipulation, control and physical abuse. There is also an experience unique to victims of sexual exploitation, in particular women and children, which will be explored further (Cecchet & Thoburn, 2014). This research hopes to build on secondary source exploration, to create a solid foundation to help improve the victim experience, after they have been removed from the trafficking arena.

Often the cycle of trafficking begins in a similar way for each victim and the treatment they receive throughout the cycle is familiar in each case (Kara, 2009). The victim's story starts in their home country, were often they have a lack of money and resources. They may also live in a poor area with limited jobs and educational opportunities. The victim is likely to have a family; they may be a young child with brothers, sisters and parents. Or they may be a mother and a wife (Bales, 2012; Lee, 2013). In any case, the victims are often deceived in the first instance by traffickers, as they repeatedly require the same things – security and a better life for their families. This desperation is a key factor in the initial process of trafficking, as offenders are keen to exploit the weaknesses of these individuals. Victims are desperate to believe that they can have a better life or that they can provide more support for their families, for their children (Harroff-Tavel, 2013). At first, traffickers represent themselves as saviours; they come into underprivileged towns and offer the chance of a better life, with more money and improved opportunities. Vulnerable people are easily persuaded, what could be worse than their current situation? The victims are led, initially with consent, by the promise of improvement to a rich western country - in many cases, to the UK (Beeks and Amir, 2016).

Bales and Allain (2020) consider contemporary slavery as a form of possession and control over another human being. They suggest that a number of important factors contribute to the

victimisation of trafficked persons. Socio-economic factors are one of the key issues; as with many crimes, poverty is one of the main reasons for victimisation, as human trafficking victims are usually trafficked from poorer countries to wealthy ones (Barner, Okech & Camp, 2014). For many potential victims the promise of a better life is enough to convince them to travel or be taken to a more affluent country. This arguably makes the trafficking process simpler for an offender, who knows where to locate desperate, poverty-stricken families. This level of offender-power is of fundamental importance, as it creates the basis for a human being to become enslaved (Bales, 2005).

Poverty, vulnerability and violence are all important factors in the trafficking process, as these traits create the ideal susceptible victim. Substance abuse also plays another central part in the enslavement of victims, particularly when victims have a family. Traffickers can often manipulate the medical needs of young people, who may already have addiction problems. Through the promise of improved living conditions and enhanced medical supervisions, many families are easily manipulated and are convinced by the information provided (Shelley, 2010; Urada, Halterman, Raj, Tsuyuki, Pimentel-Simbulan, & Silverman, 2016). It is suggested by Gould (2016) that expectations of women and children need to be addressed within high-risk countries, so that they are aware of the increased risk of trafficking. A lack of alternative measures for drug and alcohol rehabilitation are also arguably to blame, resulting in a lack of alternative options for young people who are at risk of being trafficked (Greenbaum et al. 2018).

2.3 The Changing Experience: Psychological Control and Debt

There is a high level of control exercised over victims of human trafficking in many forms. When the act of recruitment has been finalised, traffickers are often amiable and tolerable to begin with. They may provide limited support and food, as well as the means for the victim's transportation. Acts like this help to build trust which is essential in maintaining control, it also ensures that the victims believe what they are being told. While it is often the case that victims find the experience acceptable at the start, when the environment and relationships begin to change, they are often already too invested or controlled to leave (Bales, 2003). For the majority of victims who rely heavily on the perceived generosity of traffickers and facilitators, they find themselves severely indebted to them. They often owe money for forms of transportation, food and water, false documents and general upkeep (Feingold, 2005). The traffickers are able to use this leverage to their advantage, demanding money from the victims. Left indebted in a foreign place, victims have little to offer the traffickers to repay the

incurred debt. Furthermore, it is common for traffickers to add monetary interest on to the debt, as well as other obligations such as sex work or domestic labour. In turn, this raises the repayments and the money due, so that the victim needs to work harder and more frequently to attempt to repay the money owed (Shelley, 2010). Most victims are initially promised a share of the money they earn, for those who are forced in to the sex trade or labour exploitation they are told they can keep a share of the profit. This share often equates to less than five pounds per week. Traffickers also demand payment expenses, such as accommodation, food and drink, as well as the initial debt repayment. This spiral is known as debt bondage; work is traded for a (usually monetary) debt which can never realistically be re-paid (Berliner, 2019). Many victims therefore end their excruciatingly long working week in more debt than they started with. This process continues, with little hope of escape for the victim (Bales, 2005; Weitzer, 2015).

Although physical control is an essential part of the process, it is the mental and psychological control which is arguably the most important. This form of manipulation doesn't leave any marks, nor does it bruise or wound the victim's skin. It cuts far deeper, generally making the victim feel worthless and fragmented. It is this psychological damage which often creates the most problems for victims, especially after their ordeal - if they are found and saved. The mental hurt experienced is difficult for outsiders, even those who are highly trained, to comprehend. It is this torture which makes the recovery of human trafficking victims so very difficult to achieve (Contreras, Kallivayalil and Herman, 2017; Hemmings et al. 2016; Ross et al. 2015). This is a key area for additional investigation as this literature indicates that interactions between practitioners and victims can be very difficult. Intense trauma or stress effects people differently, each victim requires a unique support pathway to help them to recover as efficiently as possible. The primary research within this thesis will explore this further, seeking evidence of organisation – victim interactions and the potential barriers faced.

Shelley (2010) further identifies the de-humanisation of the victim as one of the crucial reasons for the success of global trafficking markets. Intimidation, violence and humiliation contribute to the overall compliance of a victim and their family. This can make them a susceptible target, being easily manipulated and coerced. By making the victim feel as though they are no longer human or worthy of being treated as such, the trafficker can ensure that they are compliant from the first stage of the trafficking process right through to the last. Issues can arise for offenders if the victim is not susceptible or submissive, if they fail to de-humanise the victim sufficiently (Chapman, 2018). Traffickers must choose their victims carefully, ensuring they are vulnerable enough to need help and trust outsiders. A failed attempt may lead to detection from relevant authorities. Individuals who have been

unsuccessfully targeted are far more likely to raise concerns to the police or to charities. This highlights the importance of ensuring the traffickers target a precise type of person to recruit as a victim If an individual is targeted who is confident and of strong character, they are less likely to be manipulated and coerced to becoming a victim (Preble, 2019; Brotherton & Manirakiza, 2019).

To gain increased control over victims the traffickers have a number of tactics, which they employ with great precision. Taking the victims documents and passports is often the first step, the traffickers convince the victims that these are needed for the transportation stage. Once the passport and personal documents are handed over it is likely that the victim will never see them again. The trafficker will keep possession and use these as leverage, as a means of gaining greater control over the victim (Webb and Garciandia, 2019). Without passports and identification documents the victim’s options when they reach the destination country are limited. It becomes difficult for them to escape as they will have nowhere to go, they cannot leave the country or travel without the necessary papers (Lee, 2013; Shelley, 2010). Another issue for the victims, if they do manage to escape, is that reaching out to local establishments without identification often leads to problematic situations. The authorities may be unwilling to help victims or to believe their trafficking stories. Many victims are far too afraid to even come forward and tell the truth. A key reason for this is that authorities such as the police generally require evidence or corroboration, when accounts of trafficking are presented to them. Therefore, without the necessary trust between police and victim – many potentially trafficked individuals have been mistakenly subjected to immigration or criminal laws. Another issue with a lack of identification is that it stops local police form being able to conduct identity checks on the individual; nationality, character or background. This lack of identification means that generally the police only have information from one person, who could be deemed un-credible in the eyes of the law. This makes any immediate form of positive action on behalf of the victim or criminal action against the trafficking gang, very difficult for the police (Elliott, 2015; Harvey, Hornsby and Sattar, 2015; Kempadoo, Sanghera and Pattanaik, 2015).

2.4 The Changing Experience: Physical Control and Abuse

Physically mistreating the victims is another key method of gaining control. Asserting physical control over someone is a way of emphasising dominance, whilst creating a power imbalance within any relationship. Violence between trafficker and victim is often minimal to begin with; the traffickers may shove a victim into line or grab their clothing to move them along. This is

enough to plant authority, which is unlikely to alert or scare the victim in the early stages of the trafficking process. This minimal violence may then escalate to a hard push or a punch in the stomach. Eventually the violence escalates significantly becoming more aggressive and more controlling (Beeks and Amir, 2006; Kara, 2009). Traffickers have little regard for the victim's safety or wellbeing, they assert dominance in any way possible to ensure fear and control is instilled.

Allam, Finlay and Plastow (2020) consider the physical abuse victims sustain. Not only as on-going exploitation, but also as a potential sign of trafficking in itself. It is important to consider that mental abuse does not leave physical marks, thus it cannot be seen or identified. However, physical marks are observable and can be used to identify a potential victim. This is particularly notable when the police or medical practices are able to meet with a potential victim. Scarring, bruising and lacerations are all signs of manipulation, which can be investigated further. This further links back to the consideration of victims as a commodity, more specifically of females as property. The power imbalance here is clear, particularly when traffickers are aware of the possibility of physical exploitation being spotted.

Furthermore, rape is not uncommon within trafficking circles. Sexual assaults on women, children and occasionally men, are another way of creating physical dominance. Unlike many physical assaults, rape also helps the trafficker to gain psychological control over the victims. They are likely to experience shame, fear and a lack of control leading to frequent flashbacks, which further ensures that they remain scared of the dominant trafficking figures (Molchanova, 2019). Whilst victims recount their experiences and recollect the trauma they sustained – many are diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This is a particular commonality with victims who have been sexually assaulted throughout their captivity. The National Health Service (NHS) 2020 defines PTSD as: '*an anxiety disorder caused by very stressful, frightening or distressing events.'* This definition is attributable to many victims of trafficking, as such it is one of the most serious mental health problems experienced by human trafficking survivors (Such, Jaipaul and Salway, 2020).

This leads to the consideration of sexually exploited victims of human trafficking victims who, as identified, are overwhelmingly female or minors. Children are especially affected by the experiences associated with trafficking and physical abuse, as they are taken and sold at a young and impressionable age. This means that children often require a special form of rehabilitation to allow them to lead anything like a normal life after they have been saved (Stanley et al. 2016). Women and children are sold for varying amounts, either to private bidders or to individual clients if they are housed together in brothels and ran by a pimp or

gang leader. Realisation merged with physical exploitation creates enormous mental distress for the victims. Children are especially lucrative, as well as being easy to physically control. The demand for children is high across the world, therefore the price can be raised accordingly. Different prices are influenced by different characteristics; blonde, brunette, dark or light skinned, blue or brown eyes… each of these physical attributes bring a different amount of money. One of the highest profiting features however is if a young girl is still a virgin, this means that the trafficker can attach a huge price to her. Often traffickers take bids to sell a prostitute's virginity for the highest price, with no concern for the child's physical or mental welfare (Bales, 2012; Contreras, Kallivayalil & Herman, 2017).

For victims of sexual assault and abuse their experiences are arguably worse than that of other victims of trafficking. These victims are not only subjected to the above abuse, they are often also made to complete domestic work for the traffickers. Sexually exploited victims are made to work in brothels, as prostitutes and sex workers. These victims are predominantly women and children - they are forced to work as soon as they reach their destination, generally without warning or explanation (Bales, Hesketh & Silverman, 2015). Victims are often forced to work for over sixteen hours a day and they can have in excess of sixty clients a week. They live in squalid conditions, generally in a small house; a two or three-bedroom terrace, alongside many other sex workers who have also been trafficked. One survivor recalls living in a house with twelve other women, being forced to share two bedrooms and one bathroom (Unseen, 2016). These conditions generally become worse as more victims move through the accommodation. They have a lack of money and little in the way of aid - they struggle to keep clean, to feed themselves and to provide adequate living or sleeping areas (Kara, 2009; Shelley, 2010). These detailed methods of control often become more severe as the exploitation goes on. Victims can develop coping strategies or become desensitised, meaning they can then be subjected to increased exploitation.

Physically assaulting victims to ensure they remain scared of their captures is commonplace. This is prevalent in one-to-one situations and within large groups of victims, as it is often one trafficker looking after a number of individuals. In these instances, tactics are implemented by the traffickers. The gang leader may target physically stronger members of the group in order to make an example out of them, as can be seen in the case study below (Cunningham and Cromer, 2016; Kempadoo, Sanghera & Pattanaik, 2015).

Figure 2 - Case Study One

In Dewsbury, Yorkshire, a group of thirty to forty trafficked victims were held in a two-bedroom house, in cramped and dirty conditions. Due to a discrepancy between victims the gang leader picked out the largest male victim in the group, who was considerably bigger than himself. The trafficker gathered the group around to witness a horrific assault, the male was tied to a ceiling light, with a cord around his neck and hanged in front of the rest of the victims. The male was not killed but sustained severe injuries which were not treated properly.

This level of violence and psychological tactic was executed to scare the other victims in the group into compliance, ensuring that they do not step out of line or create problems for the traffickers. This amount of physical control is essential for the traffickers to maintain order within the trafficking circle.

(CPS, 2016)

2.5 The Experience of Dislocation

As the majority of victims who have been trafficked in to the UK are transported from foreign countries, this fundamentally means that they have been separated from their home nation. Furthermore, they have been disconnected from their families and their cultures. Not only have they been exploited and abused in some way, they are also very alone in a foreign place (Meshelemiah and Lynch, 2019). This is a traumatic experience for the trafficked victim - the loneliness and fear of being so far away from their home and their family. This isolation can often manifest as guilt, with the victim blaming themselves for what has happened. They often feel like they could have avoided the situation or that they were wrong to have trusted the traffickers. This can be exaggerated by the captors who are likely to reinforce this message, telling the victims that they are to blame and that their family are suffering because of them. This is a tactic which, over time, completely wears the victim down so that they believe they are worthless and unsalvageable (Bales, 2005; Shelley, 2010). The pain of thinking that they will never see their children or their parents again is often too much for the victims to tolerate, they find themselves in a downward spiral whereby they become less focused on survival and escape and instead they become trapped in their terrifying reality. At first, the captors may allow the victims to send very small amounts of money home for their families, however over time, as the debt grows, the victims will be unable to send anything. The victims will often not receive any of the money ‘earnt’ themselves and so it would be impossible for them to send anything to their home country. This also builds a deep sense of failure, the victim’s sole

reason for travelling and relying on the traffickers, would often have been to provide for their families. When victims are unable to carry out this objective their belief and their spirits are shattered further (Kandel, 2016; Kara, 2009).

Craig et al. (2007) consider the dislocation of human trafficking victims and the impact this has on them. This is particularly relevant when victims come from countries with a low socio-economic status; suffering from poverty, a lack of educational opportunities, poor consideration of basic human rights and conflict. Unicef (United Nations Children's Fund) is responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide, they are a UN agency. Unicef (2020) have conducted research on the dislocation of migrant children, moving away from war-torn countries. Although their work does not solely focus on modern slavery, there are significant links to this - the studies they have conducted are related to the same dislocation issues experienced by human trafficking victims. In 2012, Unicef conducted a study in to Nordic responses to child trafficking, with particular focus on assisting victims within the destination country. The paper considered the practical issues faced by child victims travelling thousands of miles to a new country and a new culture. Unicef suggests ways in which the experience might be improved for young victims, such as providing budgets, setting up institutions and creating action plans. It acknowledged that the progress made across the UN, in aiding victims and ensuring they are not left unprotected, has been slow. This can be attributed to a lack of cooperative working between involved organisations. This research led to further investigation into the experiences of human trafficking victims upon arriving in the UK from their home countries and being identified by organisations.

Shame and embarrassment are other issues faced by victims. Particularly if a victim comes from a very traditional or religious country, such as Albania, the 'shame' brought to their families would often be unbearable. This is applicable to any victim, male or female and often varies depending on the type of exploitation faced (Siddharth, 2017). Many female victims claim that they cannot return to their families or home city, when they have been trafficked for sexual exploitation, because it is believed that they have brought great shame to their families and their towns. Women state that they would not be accepted back into the community and many even claim that they would be killed if they were to return. This causes problems for the organisations dealing with such victims, when they have been identified. Reluctance to go home, along with the fear of both their traffickers and their families, creates huge barriers to understanding the victim's narrative and helping them to be reintegrated in to society. This will be considered further, throughout the thesis.

2.6 Victim Health and Wellbeing

Sexual diseases are wide-spread among victims of sexual assault trafficking and the reported figures are continually rising, however there is a lack of academic research surrounding this issue (Oram et al. 2012). With little in the way of education surrounding sexual disease, as many victims come from poor countries, they are misinformed or generally unaware of how diseases spread and how dangerous they can be. Many victims are also unable to keep themselves clean due to their living conditions and they are often not provided with forms of contraception such as condoms. In circumstances were condoms are given to victims they are rarely used, as clients may refuse the use contraception, for a higher price. Victims are aware that the more money they can bring in for the traffickers, the more likely they are to receive better treatment, avoiding physical abuse or punishments. Furthermore, if victims are provided with effective contraception such as the pill, this is often purely to avoid unwanted pregnancies. Pregnancy would greatly damage the selling value of the victims and the traffickers would therefore make less money (Stanley et al. 2016). This experience can be one of the most detrimental to the victim. Becoming pregnant or gaining a serious disease can be life threatening for them, due to a lack of medical help or personal knowledge of sexual health, therefore the mental impact of this is significant. Even if a victim survives and is liberated, they may vividly recall their horror and fear of pregnancy, including birth, miscarriage or abortion of a child. They are also likely to remember the ramifications of sexual disease during and after the period of captivity (Beeks and Amir, 2006; Greenbaum et al. 2015).

Human trafficking victims suffer from severe mental health problems during and after their trafficking journey. They go through varying psychological phases throughout their captivity and those who are saved and freed are usually able to recount their mental struggle (Zimmerman, Hossain & Watts, 2011). Many victims endure this pain for decades and the majority live with it for the rest of their lives. These phases often begin when the realisation of the victim’s situation sets it. They may experience fear, trauma, guilt, helplessness and confusion, amongst other emotions. The emotions fester and develop into substantial mental illnesses, they may also experience repression of memories, anxiety, flash backs or depression. In other cases, the experience may manifest in a physical form, through symptoms like sickness, insomnia or anorexia (Stevens et al. 2019; Lugris, Burke & Flaherty, 2019). The end results for these victims are often cases of severe depression and suicidal thoughts or attempts. If the victim is saved, they then often suffer with PTSD or other illnesses (Andreatta, 2015; Stanley et al. 2016). People are available within many organisations to help deal with these effects, from the NHS and Police to charities. All of these groups may encounter victims who are in one of these phases or who may have attempted suicide previously. The ability to

help victims immediately is essential, as they are often so fragile and scared. One false move or incorrect comment may cause the victim to experience increased fear, meaning they are less likely to agree to further help. Many victims often escape from the help of services, due to this uncontrollable terror and overwhelming lack of trust (Contreras, Kallivayalil & Herman, 2017; Ross et al. 2015). The following case study serves to demonstrate the extreme exploitation that victims face. This survivor recounts the abuse she encountered and the effect it had on her feelings of self-worth.

Figure 3 - Case Study Two

The case of a woman trafficking within the United Kingdom highlights the terrifying ordeals faced by victims. She describes countless instances of torture, which became more violent over time. The victim recounts many rapes and gang rapes, by the traffickers, who convinced her that she had a large debt to repay. One of the more harrowing accounts details the way in which the gang leaders would stab her and drug her, then throw petrol on the victim and throw her out of moving vehicles. The victim believes that 'after a while you feel like you are not human anymore. You just feel like a machine that has to have sex with people.'

(ITV, 2014)

2.7 'Disposable Victims' and the Lost Victim Voice

Sexually exploited victims of human trafficking are often described as being disposable, a term first coined by Bales in 1999. The sheer volume of people living without basic human rights who are essentially available to be trafficked means that if a working victim contracts a known disease, becomes pregnant or if they are particularly difficult to control, they can be disposed of easily. This ability to injure, murder or 'throw away' the victim is often facilitated by the lack of individual identification. As far as the destination country is aware, the victims may not exist so deaths are particularly difficult to identify. Further, it is understood that many victims come from poor economic backgrounds, thus it may not be deemed in the public interest to identify victims. This phenomenon is less common in the UK due to police presence and stricter laws surrounding areas that fall in to modern slavery, such as forced labour, prostitution and sex work. However, in parts of Eastern Europe and Asia the murdering of trafficking victims is fairly commonplace (Bales, 2012; Shelley, 2010). This disposable nature of victims creates another way of helping to control them, victims will be aware when an individual has been removed from a house or a place of work and will likely know what has

happened to them. This scenario makes the victim increasingly scared for their own lives and increasingly likely to comply with traffickers, to avoid the same fate as their co-victim (Lee, 2013).

The very nature of this means that victims ‘lose their voice’ – this being a process from the moment they are trafficked, to their eventual release (if applicable). When an individual is ‘disposable’ Lee (2013) states that it is difficult for them to identify as human, the further down the process they go. This is particularly interesting when looking at the ways in which victims interact with organisations in the UK, when they have been saved. The identification process relies on a level of cooperation from a victim, without which they cannot progress through the system. A disposable victim, with a lost voice, would be hard to manage. In order to aid the management of such individuals, restorative principles can be explored.

Chapter 3 Identifying and supporting Victims in the UK

Following the consideration of the victim experience, this chapter looks at a crucial part of the victim pathway – the organisations responsible for identifying and supporting individual victims of human trafficking in the UK. The research shows that the training received by relevant organisations differs greatly between locations and companies. Education and training, in relation to identifying and supporting victims has undoubtedly improved over the last decade. However, this research shows there are still significant improvements to be made. Many counties and organisations have their own initiatives; ways in which they specifically work with victims of trafficking. These methods vary and there is a clear difference in training levels throughout, even though they all refer to the MSHTU, SCA and NRM as a baseline guidance framework (Rogerson et al. 2020; Van Dyke, 2017).

Within this thesis, the consideration of individual organisations can be split into three main sections; Non-Government Organisations (NGO) (Charities – Local and National), Government Authorities (Police, Local Councils) and Other (NHS, GPs). Each of these organisational groups has a key part to play in the victim care pathway. This chapter goes on to consider how organisations are expected to work with victims (in line with government frameworks), compared with how victims are actually identified and supported, as well as what changes may be suggested moving forwards. Overall, it considers that the methods of victim identification and referral differ between organisations, thus there is a distinct lack of uniformity across the country. This creates a number of problems, such as the difficulty in sharing information between organisations. As well as the problems with attempting to supervise victims in different locations, which can be a barrier to receiving adequate care and support. Case studies are used throughout to support this research, paying attention to two leading national charities; Survivors and Unseen. The use of case studies highlights potential problems within organisations, as highlighted above. This, alongside the previous chapter on victim experience, helps to identify overriding problems with the MSHTU guidance and subsequently the NRM systems. Going forward, this information helps to structure the research strategy – significantly informing the research questions and the aims of the primary investigation.

There are various government and non-government organisations that are attempting to help victims of human trafficking, assessing their experiences whilst supporting needs and recovery. However, research suggests that many are not focusing on the specific requirements of human trafficking victims. Instead help is focused towards general victims of crime (Vasquez et al. 2017). Human trafficking victims have very distinctive needs, due to their extensive exploitation. It can be seen that human trafficking victims experience truly horrific

circumstances, which are often unique in each instance. However, as with many crimes, there may be similarities between some experiences. These links can often lead to generalisations in the support and treatment of trafficking victims, from support providers. Although this may be beneficial to an extent as, treatment may be successful for some, generalisations must be treated with caution and could be detrimental to the victim in the long-term (Wedlock & Tapley, 2016). Those who have been sexually exploited are particularly vulnerable and they often require a great deal of extra rehabilitation and additional health considerations (Henderson, 2018). These crimes will affect each victim differently, many of the psychological effects they experience may not become apparent for a number of years. There are varying organisations, such as the police force, the National Health Service (NHS) and charities, who play a large role in the life of a victim over a prolonged period. This role is pivotal in ensuring a victim can move towards recovery and go on to live a relatively comfortable and normal life. Without the help of these organisations, many victims would not be identified, referred or supported, those who are would have limited provisions when they are recognised. Nevertheless, are these organisations working as effectively as they could be? And do victims have positive, life changing experiences from these organisations?

This chapter will explore the government initially, considering the role it plays in human trafficking victim support. It will then look at the police service alongside the NHS, as official organisations who come into contact with and help to identify victims of modern slavery. The research will also consider NGOs, such as charities, who also work on the front-line in the fight against human trafficking. This consideration will be broken down. Firstly, the chapter will study the extensive work charities do and the role they have in this field. National and local charities will then be considered separately; exploring the differing ways they care for human trafficking victims. The Salvation Army will be a key focus, as they currently hold the contract as the official government nominated support provider. Particular consideration will be on the information they provide online, their policies and the way they essentially work with victims of human trafficking (Munro, 2020). The chapter will then conclude by summarising the information gained and suggesting further research and next steps to be taken.

3.1 The Government's Aims and Responsibilities

The government has 23 ministerial departments and a number of other agencies, which are essentially responsible for putting government policy in to practice. The Home Office is one of these ministerial departments, its overriding aim is the keep the country secure. One of the main priorities of the Home Office, in 2020, is to cut serious organised crime (SOC). The SOC

Group is a sub-department of the Home Office. Their mission statement is: '*Responsible for developing, directing and implementing the government's strategic approach to reducing the risk to the UK from serious and organised crime. SOCG provides advice on many of the highest harm crimes affecting the UK including child sexual exploitation and abuse, human trafficking*' (gov.uk, 2020). Thus, the Single Competent Authority (SCA) and the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) fall within this area; responsible for the running of policy and legislative initiatives, as well as referral systems. The SOC focus on policy, supply chains, referral procedures and child trafficking advocates - their aim is to '*end Modern Slavery*'. A further commitment of the government was to provide the Modern Slavery Act 2015 – Statutory Guidance for England and Wales. This is a supplementary report which provides guidance to organisations, relating to the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

It has been identified that there has been a rise in all cases of human trafficking across the world over the last decade. The Home Office released their 2019 UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery (HM Government, 2019), which stated that '*The most robust estimate to date of the scale of modern slavery in the UK was produced by the Home Office in 2014, which suggested that there were between 10,000 and 13,000 potential victims of modern slavery in 2013*'. The NCA are also responsible for building an intelligence picture of human trafficking, to enable practitioners to work effectively. They state that this figure continues to grow annually, however the exact data surrounding human trafficking has always been hard to assess. The nature of trafficking, as an underground criminal activity, means that there is a significant dark figure of crime. This distorts the bigger picture and decreases reliability of data, as well as having a large effect on the flow and direction of crime. It is predicted that most human trafficking offences are unreported and thus go largely unnoticed (Bales, 2004). In terms of specific types of human trafficking, the government indicate that there has been a significant increase in cases of sexual exploitation to date, which will be explored in subsequent chapters. The increase may be attributed to a number of reasons, including changes in legal policy and a growth in demand for victims.

The NRM has been discussed briefly in previous chapters; it is a base for protection and investigation of human trafficking victims. The identification of victims of human trafficking has been made easier since this organisation was created, as a result limited support has been provided for the victims. The collection of data and statistics has subsequently improved since the NRM was introduced. This has created a platform to improve the way victims are treated and supported, as well as an attempt to progress legislation and policy (NCA, 2009). Prior to 2009 there was a distinct lack of data, this may have been due to limited knowledge and awareness of human trafficking alongside a gap in public understanding. Therefore, the

majority of statistics have been collated within the last seven years, since the introduction of the NRM. The statistics collected since 2009 have become increasingly reliable, as public awareness has increased. Instances of trafficking are now rising significantly on a yearly basis, the reasons for this will be explored further.

As demonstrated, the current figures suggest that children and young women are often the main victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation globally and nationally within the UK (Lee, 2012; Newburn, 2007; Skinner, 2008). Demand can be considered as one of the biggest reasons for this victim focus; this ranges from low end demand, such as criminals and drug addicts, to high end requests from wealthy businessmen or clients. The statistics support the notion that the majority of people who exploit these trafficked victims for sexual purposes, are unaware of the origin of the victim or how they have come to be in the situation they are in (Sanders, 2005). This may again contribute to the inaccuracy of data, as it is difficult to accurately establish a specific offender, due in part to the complexity of the trafficking chain (Newburn, 2007). The government have made attempts to increase reliability of data, working in partnership with the UNODC, which produces the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons. The UNODC surveys different governments, researching victims identified in various countries – a questionnaire is used, with generic indicators. The last global report conducted was in 2018. The UNODC also collates police reports, information from NGO's and some governmental organisations. This wide range of data enables them to paint a picture of the state of human trafficking around the world (UNODC, 2020). In a further effort to remain transparent in their attempts to combat modern slavery and remain at the forefront of the global fight, the UK Independent-Anti Slavery Commissioner (2019) released a set of Strategic Objectives for the 2019-2021 period. The report sets out four key priorities:

1. Improving victim care and support
2. Supporting law enforcement and prosecution
3. Focusing on prevention
4. Getting value from research and innovation

The report highlights the desire to focus on victim protection and offender prosecution. This links to previous discussions surrounding the focus of trafficking prevention measures. Although the inclusion of victim protection is a step in the right direction for government objectives, it is evident that focus also remains on offenders and prosecuting traffickers. Of the four priorities seen above, only one concentrates on victims – further stressing the imbalance in victim against offender focus.

3.2 Public Organisations: Police Force and NHS

3.2.1 The Police Force

The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) connects police forces in the UK and enables them to work together on new initiatives, with a focus on reforming and improving operational delivery (npcc.police.uk, 2020). In 2017, the NPCC introduced the Modern Slavery Police Transformation Programme. The following year, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) independently assessed the effectiveness of the police Modern Slavery response and provided recommendations to improve the service – in the public interest. The NPCC released figures in February 2020, which showed that around 1,810 modern slavery operations were live – which was a 20% increase from 2019. A quarter of these were investigations into the trafficking of children and young people. The NPCC also released information relating to training and preparation of police officers. It stated that over 4,000 members of the police service have received modern slavery training and are now being encouraged to deliver in-house training themselves. Furthermore, around 1,500 investigators now have specialist modern slavery investigation skills. Training and development are essential in the battle against modern slavery, however this information led to key questions relating to the consistency of training across borders. Alongside this, the common theme relates to offender identification and prosecution, with a lack of research focusing of victim management and support (Chowdhary, 2019).

A key example of a leading police force is West Yorkshire Constabulary which led the way with numerous modern slavery focused initiatives; they have been consistently prominent in the fight against human trafficking. The West Yorkshire Police website has a designated section for the public to access information and help regarding human trafficking and its many forms (Andreatta, 2015). The force also established a designated modern slavery team, the West Yorkshire Anti-Trafficking Network (WYATN), which was created in 2014 by Hope for Justice, a designated human trafficking charity (West Yorkshire Anti-Trafficking Network, 2016). In 2016, the National Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Network (NATMSN) was launched by West Yorkshire Police's Police and Crime Commissioner; Mark Burns-Williamson. It was created to provide a tactical national support centre, aiming to raise awareness of tackling human trafficking in all forms. In 2014, the force recorded the highest number of identified victims nationally and subsequently advocated a new multi-agency approach to identifying and supporting victims.

Since West Yorkshire Police lead the way, many forces across the country have vastly improved the way in which they deal with cases of human trafficking over recent years. This is supported

by the phenomenon of modern slavery becoming increasingly recognised and documented across the world. This can be seen from the rise in detected human trafficking crimes by the police, within the National Crime Statistics (Laczko and Gramegna, 2003). However, this increase in detection is often attributed to the identification of offenders. This, therefore, does not always positively correlate with identifying victims - ensuring they are not re-victimised or left without adequate support and assisted rehabilitation (Dando, Walsh and Brierley, 2016). An important aspect of this is that although the police are improving, their focus appears to remain on the offenders. Thus, reduction and prevention of human trafficking is often attributed to raiding brothels, disrupting county lines operations or targeting gangs. The increase in dedicated human trafficking teams, within police forces, is beneficial and has the potential to be used to identify victims successfully. However, this traditional offender focused outlook is still prominent and therefore an important consideration is; to what extent are the human trafficking teams focusing on victim engagement and support? If the focus is on apprehending offenders and disrupting modern slavery rings; to what extent are the victims prioritised when they are encountered? This concentration is of great importance and its relevance in the fight against modern slavery cannot be denied. In the short term, however, this does little to help the victims or to ensure more victims aren't re-targeted and enslaved in the future.

A key issue with the police, one which is central to the experience of the victim, is the authoritative nature of the organisation and the fear that this instils in many victims. Victims fear for their lives and are often scared that if they approach the police or other official organisations, they may be detained and prosecuted (Alderden & Long, 2016). This is particularly true in relation to foreign victims of trafficking, who have been transported to the UK. Becerra et al. (2017) considers the difficulties faced when policing immigrants, particularly in relation to their increased fear of deportation. This is a significant barrier to the police, as a large number of foreign nationals have a negative perception of law enforcement - causing strained relationships from the outset. In relation to direct victim contact, there is also a great concern amongst practitioners and academics for victim safety. It is considered that if victims are released following their encounter with the police they may be in danger. If their trafficker is aware that they have been to the authorities or have been in contact with official organisations, they may be subjected to further abuse and mental anguish, as a punishment for their actions (Beeks and Amir, 2006; Bales, 2012).

It seems that this is a growing issue for victims of human trafficking, especially those used for sexual exploitation, as they are often found in brothels, during police raids. Victims have a predicament; their options are often limited and none of them are ideal. The first option may

be to stay with the trafficker and continue to endure a life in slavery. With the hope of behaving well and earning small rewards and less abuse, victims may hope to eventually be 'promoted' up the gang hierarchy. Alternatively, they may seek freedom and risk being caught and severely punished, or even killed by the trafficker (Bales, 2005). The latter possibility is presented when a victim comes into contact with the police or another organisation. As mentioned earlier, particular experiences with the police can be influenced by victims hearing stories or having pre-judgements about the police and what they may do to them, when they are identified. This may include further abuse, detention in cells or death (Vocks and Nijboer, 2000). Many victims who have been held for a long time by their traffickers are conditioned to fear the outside world, especially the police, forced to believe that they themselves are to blame for their situation. This can make it difficult for organisations to help, when the victims aren't initially open to receiving aid. A further fear, if the police do identify them, is that they will bring shame on their families in their home country or community. Many victims are from religious, cultural backgrounds or countries were sexual abuse or rape can be seen as the victim's fault. This burden would have a great effect on their view of the situation and it may restrict their ability to return home and therefore they would be likely to resist being identified (Matos & Pinto-Gouveia, 2010).

Figure 4 - Case Study Three

A Romanian victim trafficked into Manchester, England in 2011, recalls her horror at being identified in a police raid. She was initially arrested for prostitution offences, as is often the case and was kept behind bars. The victim did not know or understand any of the country's laws, however she was initially quite relieved to be in a prison, where she was safe from her traffickers. Her first full day in custody was the first day she had not been raped since her arrival in England. She was forced to have sex up to fifty times a week in the brothel she was trafficked in to, with violent and drunken men.

The fear of being released from prison was huge for the victim, she was convinced that the gang would murder her when they found her. Eventually the police uncovered the truth behind her story and the victim is one of the few who has survived to tell her story and help other victims of modern slavery and sexual exploitation.

(Townsend, 2011)

The above example serves to highlight a typical victim experience of the police in the UK. The fear of being found was initially overwhelming for the victim, with the result of the identification being to keep the individual locked in a police cell. This only serves to cement the

fear and reinforce the mistrust, which is a fundamental problem within the policing system. This problem will be explored in the primary research within this thesis.

3.2.2 The National Health Service (NHS)

Employees of the NHS regularly come into contact with a variety of people. As an organisation it is increasingly pushed and stretched to its limits, both financially and politically. This has a bearing on the amount of training the organisation receives, the number of employees in the organisation and crucially, the workforce's ability to identify criminal behaviours or victims. In recent years, more research has been conducted on the way in which health care practitioners come into contact with victims of human trafficking. Dr Sarah Steele is a leading academic in the field of global health responses to human trafficking. Currently based in the UK, she has focused much of her recent work on the NHS; human trafficking responses and training. Steele (2019) acknowledges the large part the NHS plays in fighting modern slavery. Reponses in the NHS have improved over the last decade, with the introduction of e-learning modules and basic training courses. It is identified that front-line workers in the NHS are increasingly likely to come across victims of human trafficking, particularly in accident and emergency wards. The 2017 review of the learning packages offered across different NHS Trusts, carried out by Steele, Thompson, Mahay and Stuckler, shed light on the practical results of such educational resources. The study found that around 25% of NHS Trusts lacked training on the key elements of human trafficking. The need for further reviews and ongoing monitoring was highlighted, with a view to improving the educational services offered by the health care sector.

As identified above, recently the NHS has started to provide specific training and call centre helplines to aid workers in identifying and dealing with victims of human trafficking, who may enter hospitals or medical centres. This is particularly prevalent in emergency wards, where it is estimated that some individuals who seek treatment may be victims of criminal activity (Stoklosa et al. 2016). In 2016, the Department of Health (DOH) recognised that there was a need to increase awareness and training within the NHS, to help tackle modern slavery. In support of this aim, the DOH enlisted a training provider, Provider Responses, Treatment and Care for Trafficked People (PROTECT), a leading organisation set up to directly assist the NHS with their aim of detecting trafficking victims. PROTECT created online learning packages and support tools, to be used by the health sector. However, the learning resources are intended as a guide and point to The Salvation Army for further support if needed. PROTECT research shows that one in eight people working within the NHS reports that they believe they have come into contact with a potential victim of trafficking within the workplace (Munn, 2016;

NHS, 2015). However, this does not mean that the victim is efficiently identified or helped; this may be due to a lack of certainty, the presence of an offender or due to resistance from the victim, who is likely fearful. The introduction of workplace training may effectively enable both the police and the health service to work together, to ideally aid in the successful identification of victims of human trafficking (Ross et al. 2015).

One issue with the guidance is the way in which hospitals implement the training. Many practitioners have become increasingly concerned with identifying victims and this may instigate fear in the victim, who has come to the hospital for help. Receptionists, doctors or nurses who commence the appointment must act sensitively. Questioning the potential victim, asking for addresses or contact numbers – when the victim likely has neither - on the grounds that they believe that they are a victim of human trafficking will not instil confidence or faith in them. This may cause the victim to lie or to run away, both of which create further problems for the organisations and the victims themselves (Stoklosa et al. 2016; Ross et al. 2015). This creates a very difficult scenario, as hospital staff must gain information in order to correctly identify the victims and often this must be done before treatment is administered. This is arguably, from a psychological perspective, an incorrect way of proceeding with identification. Trust is essential, it must be built with the victim in order for them to depend on the staff and believe fully that they are safe and unlikely to be detained, deported or released back to their trafficker (Oram et al. 2012).

The NHS is made up of various medical facilities, not just hospitals and emergency centres. General Practitioner surgeries (GPs) and walk-in centres are becoming increasingly popular methods of gaining medical advice, due to national campaigns to reduce the strain on hospitals and emergency rooms. Dovydaitis (2010) states that healthcare practitioners are one of the few groups of people who come into contact with victims of human trafficking, whilst they are still in captivity. This is a striking observation; it may be due to severe health problems or issues relating to sexual exploitation. Either of these reasons would be likely to cause concern for the trafficker, who may suffer financial losses if the victim were to fall ill or become pregnant. There is limited academic literature concerning the interactions between trafficked victims and GPs or walk-in clinics. This gap is likely due to the low rate of victim identification in such places, as well as a lack of awareness in medical centres. Training plans are increasingly being implemented, to provide healthcare practitioners with the knowledge to both identify and help potential victims of human trafficking. Although, as previously mentioned, this is still a limited resource with funding and time constraints having an effect on the overall reach of this endeavour.

Cokar, Ulman & Bakirci's (2016) study on identification of victims in the healthcare setting highlights the issue of time restraints paired with awareness. In the research, 228 doctors were given questionnaires, the response rate was just 82. This low rate was likely due to a lack of time or understanding - of the crime or the severity of it. All of the respondents in this study believed that a significant number of trafficked women involved in sex-work are exposed to violence, coercion or exploitation. However, from this, only 80% of these professionals were aware that it is obligatory for them to alert the police or security forces of these potentially exploited victims. Furthermore, it was found that around 50% of these practitioners believed that they had provided care to a sex-worker and 39% thought that the worker may have a link to human trafficking offences. The key to this study is that only 10% of practitioners questioned actually informed the police of their suspicions regarding human trafficking. Cokar, Ulman and Bakirci concluded by suggesting that people working in a professional healthcare environment should have moral ethics. They stated that this would help them to comprehend a patient's dignity and wellbeing, as well as the ability to assess outright whether or not a patient is a potential victim of a crime. Although beneficial, this is an idealistic notion which is unlikely to ever come to fruition. Doctors and nurses are under significant strain to meet increasing deadlines and targets and it is evident that those in society who are vulnerable may be overlooked. The solution to the trafficking problem within the healthcare setting is not to expect the practitioners to outright determine a patient's likelihood of being a victim of human trafficking. The solution lies with the policy surrounding police involvement and the way victims are referred through the system. If the system were less intimidating and easier to apply or understand, then perhaps referrals from the healthcare industry would increase. Thus, helping more trafficking victims and eventually reducing the dark figure of crime.

3.3 Third Sector Organisations

There is a vast array of organisations which have been assigned, or taken on, the task of supporting victims of human trafficking. In particular the branch of sexually exploited women and children. These organisations are not wholly funded or helped by the government, some receive limited support and others run entirely independently. These organisations are extremely important as they run alongside government initiatives, enabling more victims of human trafficking to be identified and helped. It has been suggested that NGOs would not have to exist so prominently in this field, if the government worked to identify and support victims efficiently. There would be less demand for charities and other organisations (Cook, Wright and Andersson, 2017).

There are numerous charities set up within the UK to help support victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, as well as the many other forms of modern slavery. There are two main branches of NGO to consider; firstly, those who are long-standing - becoming involved in modern slavery as a progression of their previous work such as The Salvation Army. Secondly, there are those set up specifically to fight modern slavery and human trafficking, such as StopTheTraffik and Unseen. These charities each fight tirelessly to campaign against trafficking, as well as its many linked criminal activities. The charities have various aims, but many have the same fundamental objectives; to raise awareness of modern slavery, to help tackle the growing problem and to free slaves who have been held in captivity (Hyndman and McMahon, 2011). Charities are essential in the fight against modern slavery, one of the main reasons for this is the increased trust that victims have in these services and the people who volunteer for the organisations.

Charities run independently and are not authoritative or governmental bodies, therefore victims may have a higher level of faith in them. This may be due to feeling that they can approach charity organisations without fear of reprisal or repercussion. However, it is acknowledged that this may not be applicable to all victims and it is dependent on their experiences, culture and knowledge of NGOs (Kempadoo, Sanghera and Pattanaik, 2015; Unseen, 2016). There have been many instances in the past where victims have gone to the police and have been arrested or detained, due to the lack of identification documents or/and the fact that many victims are working illegally as forced prostitutes. Examples like this are becoming less common as awareness surrounding modern slavery is increasing, however these stories still circulate between trafficked victims and their fear is still very real. It is fear that drives the experiences of victims, not the reality. Experiences cannot be positive and safe if victims do not believe that they can come forward without fear of being locked in a police cell or treated as a potential offender (Beeks and Amir, 2006).

Trust is an overriding factor in being able to help victims who have been trafficked, especially those who have been sexually abused. Charities are able to provide training to their workers to ensure that they are fully prepared and equipped to deal with victims. Furthermore, a number of the volunteers working in these organisations are often ex-trafficking victims themselves, so have been through the process - unlike the majority of governmental organisation workers (Stanley et al. 2016). Volunteers are also able to ensure that each victim has the required provisions and access to relevant services, such as health care, psychological support or the police service if needed. Research suggests that a victim is significantly more likely to visit a charity if they have seen a poster or leaflet with the details on. Charities often leave stickers and information in places where victims may come across them, in places like public toilets or

local convenience stores. Charities also aim to educate and inform members of the public who may be using the victim's forced services, especially in terms of sexual exploitation (Bales, 2005; Unseen, 2016). Many clients of brothels are likely to be unaware that the sex worker they are visiting is being held there against their free will and as a direct result of human trafficking. If a charity is able to help educate one person, who can stop going to brothels or who can help to save the life of one victim, that is a positive outcome.

There are various organisations within the UK which are set up in local towns and cities to help combat the trade in human beings and to help victims after they have been identified. These charities have different aims and policies, as they are able to create their own agenda within reason. Essentially, they each hope to save victims and aid their rehabilitation into society. These organisations deal with many other groups such as the police force and border control, as well as social services and the NHS. This demand means that charities are essential in the link between professional bodies and the victims themselves; their work is invaluable (Mawby, 2016). This link is important throughout the country, however there are few regions which specify that inter-organisational sharing of information and cooperation is imperative. As stated, this is something the West-Yorkshire police are pushing and research suggests it is a successful endeavour. The overriding concern with local charities is that they are sometimes over looked and not listened to, it is hard for them to take to a high platform with their findings or doubts. In contrast, large national charities are often granted far more funding and increased opportunities (Munn, 20126). This situation could be exacerbated by a large-scale trafficking crisis, this is the type of event which often forces government officials and people in positions of power to reconsider their efforts towards a particular crime. This would lead to the creation of a new, dynamic, multifaceted approach. This theory can be seen in practice with the case of Victoria Climbe, whereby a child of eight years old died following horrific injuries and severe malnutrition inflicted by her Aunt over a long period of time. In brief, this occurred due to a severe lack of communication and cooperation between health care professionals, social workers and the police. The case sparked a national outcry which led to significant reforms within the health and justice services, to ensure that communication links were improved and a tragedy of this nature would not happen again (Houston and McColgan, 2016; Rustin, 2004).

In a bid to help the potential issue of a lack of communication between authorities and organisations, the Human Trafficking Foundation (HTF) set up the The National Network Coordinators' Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Forum (NNCF). This forum brings together regional anti-modern slavery systems and their organisers, plus the various partnerships which now operate all over the United Kingdom. NNCF was established in order to raise awareness

and promote the sharing of best practice and full organisation cooperation within the UK. The links between policy makers and external partnerships is bridged by the NNCF. The network then uses information, trends or areas of concern identified by the leading practitioners to alert the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner and the Home Office's MSHTU. This does, however, highlight the lack of input smaller charities have on the national scale, as the network prioritises information given by the national organisations, who are in a better position to be heard by the authorities (Human Trafficking Foundation, 2017).

Charities who operate nationally rely heavily on donations from individuals, private funding bodies and charitable foundations. This means that although they receive a greater amount of funding than the smaller charities, they are also placed under a greater amount of stress and demand for their services and the support they provide. This means that they are often still strained financially, as well as facing struggles with volunteers, employers and a growing work load. These non-profit organisations (NPOs) are central to the fight against modern slavery and the police and NHS also rely on them a great deal (Human Trafficking Foundation, 2017). As can be seen above, the work they put into the collection of data, statistics and facts, as well as the physical work they do with victims of human trafficking, means that the knowledge shared today would not be possible without their input and commitment (Van Dijk and Van Der Heijden, 2016). Although this is a step in the right direction for human trafficking, fighting the causes of trafficking and supporting the victims, it means that there is arguably less pressure on official groups such as the police and the government, as the national charities are taking a great deal of the burden (Cook, Wright and Andersson, 2017). To combat this issue, national charity groups have their own agendas. They are able to use their influence and size to hold the government and members of parliament accountable for promises, such as aiding victims and providing better training to companies. These large-scale NGOs also have the capacity to act on a national stage and represent the issues modern slavery is facing. Groups are able to attend parliament on some occasions and also attend debates surrounding human trafficking, policies, legislation and initiatives within the UK government. Big groups such as The Human Trafficking Foundation (2017) also reach out to European bodies. They are able to commit to increasing awareness and creating public affairs plans, to ensure that human trafficking continues to be placed high on the international agenda.

One of the biggest religious organisations and charities in the country, The Salvation Army, aims to use its religious values to aid the welfare of victims of crime. The organisation has a mantra which they strive to implement, to '*save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity'* (Salvation Army, 2017). For its members, this mantra is inspired by God and the Salvation Army group place their faith in the Christian principles, with the view that they will

help to save people physically and mentally. The group do not limit their help to those of the same faith, but open their doors to all religions and to those people who have no religious beliefs at all. The main aims are to confront injustice, help people to develop personal relationships, as well as their relationship with God and to assist the community as a whole (Salvation Army, 2017). The Salvation Army website details the work it undertakes in the area of human trafficking, their motto is '*committed to helping victims of modern slavery'*, directly referencing 'modern slavery' is an emotive move making the site initially striking to those visiting it. The Salvation Army (2017) have their own programme designed to support victims through a number of avenues; the preservation of self-respect, providing victims with safe lodging and giving the victims support whenever needed. The policy hopes to essentially provide the ability to *'reflect, recover and rebuild lives'* (Lee, 2015).

The Salvation Army and other charities provide publicly available stories on their websites, written in third person, from the victims of human trafficking. These stories are often based on the journey to freedom and how the victims came to be associated with the charity. These rare instances of freedom and survival have been loosely documented on these sites; however, the process by which the victims come to be with the charity appears to be vaguely documented (Hua, 2014). Most of these stories work on the premise that a victim was found or picked up by the police and then passed to the charities. However, research suggests that this may not always be the case, as the police struggle with specific identification of victims, especially if they have been found in brothels or committing minor crimes. So, what happens between the police finding potential victims and the charity being handed the victim? This is a key question which needs to be answered in order to fully assess the experience the victim has, when being liberated by official authorities and/or charities (O'Connell, 2013).

As The Salvation Army is a religious based charity, with aspects of religion and faith within its practices and policies it can be linked to the principles of restoration and reparation. The consideration of reflecting, recovering and rebuilding runs through this section on human trafficking - which could be linked with concepts of restorative justice. Roberts (2018) begins to consider the way in which victims are treated when they leave the NRM. This may be further considered and an exploration into how The Salvation Army and immediate treatment are integrated would be interesting. It may not be the group's intention to promote or use restorative justice, however the ideologies used could be developed to incorporate further areas of restorative practices. These may aid the victim's rehabilitation into society and the extension of their recovery (Cahill, 2016). This information regarding the restorative practices would be found through contact with the charity and through deeper investigation into their practices. If restorative justice isn't a key concept, it would be motivating to explore whether

this would be something of interest to the organisation. To find out if charity workers and victims themselves believe that it could be a useful tool when dealing with victims of human trafficking. This may be more useful with certain victims than others, perhaps those who have had a negative experience with the police or the NHS. These individuals may respond better to rehabilitation and those who have come directly to the charity may benefit from methods of empowerment; working with the victims psychologically to mentally compensate for their loss of self-respect or dignity (Stoklosa et al. 2016).

Cole (2017) suggests that the benefits of charity organisations goes further than simply helping victims and offering support to them. NGOs also help to provide training to organisations such as the NHS, local businesses and police forces. This work is of great importance as it again highlights an area of tackling modern slavery, which could not be done by the government alone. Charity support tries to ensure that all practitioners have access to assistance and educational resources, should they seek it out - this is a key achievement of charities. It also ensures that they are at the forefront of victim management, as they are able to view the victim experience from multiple angles. Some NGOs, such as the Salvation Army, have educational responsibilities, as well as being directly involved with victim support and being a first responder. This three-pronged approach means they have an overview of what is happening at each stage of the process – a benefit when putting a victim at the forefront of the modern slavery rhetoric (Munro, 2020).

The government argues that a lack of efficiency in the modern slavery field means that there is a growing burden on NGOs to provide statistics, results and continue to aid victims in the fight against modern slavery (Van Dijk and Van Der Heijden, 2016). However, funding is an issue for these groups, who are often all fighting for the same resources, rallying between high profile groups who are able to fund research and meet the on-going needs of the charities. This often means that there is a growing resistance to share information between NGOs. This subsequently allows the groups to ensure that each of them has their own ideas and research, or unique selling points (USP), to bring to the table to aid them in successfully securing available funding. There is substantiating evidence supporting human trafficking’s incredible dependence on NGOs and the help they provide victims, offenders, families and companies who have been affected by modern slavery (Human Trafficking Foundation, 2017; Unseen, 2016).

An interesting observation made whilst researching these organisations, is the type of dialogue used by the charities which have dealt with victims. The words used on the websites and social media are all very emotive and dramatic. Words such as vulnerable, horrific, abuse - all

conjured images of pain and suffering, they are used to illicit a shock response from the reader. These are words apparently used by the charities themselves not by the victims, as the stories are paraphrased. It would be interesting to compare the language used primarily by the victims to the language used by the staff and workers. This may help to clarify the experiences of the victims and identify which aspects of their journey they felt were the most traumatic, therefore which areas require increased counselling or help.

Within the following sub-sections, two charities will be explored through case studies. One is a local charity; Survivors. The other is a national charity; Unseen. Each have different ways of working with victims of human trafficking. They both aim to support potential victims; however, their practices are influenced by guidance, financial constraints, local support and training, amongst other things. These case studies offer an insight into the differing ways organisations work alongside victims to identify, refer and support.

3.4 Case Example: Survivors Hull Charity

"Survivors Hull & East Riding… Giving back your life"

Survivors (Hull & East Riding) is a rape and sexual trauma center. It provides therapeutic counselling and support to people affected by, or living with, the traumatic effects of childhood sexual abuse and any form of sexual exploitation including human trafficking.

Survivors was one of the leading victim support centres for survivors of sexual assault and trauma within the region. The team offer support, counselling, advice and safety for those who have been affected by any form of sexual violence, either directly or indirectly. The charity was based in Hull City Centre and had other sites in Hull and Grimsby. Established in 1996, the charity was originally formed to support male victims of sexual exploitation, due to a lack of facilities offering this service in the area. The group then expanded and became a registered charity in 2000, when they began to open their doors to any victim of sexual trauma. The group learnt how to successfully serve the survivors, their families and the wider community. Survivors provided services to anyone over the age of sixteen, including initial support, as well as therapy, counselling and legal or practical help.

Survivors had a number of accomplishments relating to the success and ongoing achievements of the charity. Yearly, around 4,340 hours were devoted to providing individual therapy for survivors of sexual trauma; highlighting the dedication of the team. Receiving help requests from inmates at HMP Hull Prison allowed Survivors to help many criminal offenders to regain

their life when they had been released, due to the support and counselling provided by the team. Survivors Hull worked with social services, mental health teams, the NHS, the Police, probation services, victim support and many other agencies. This enabled a joined-up thinking approach, incorporating multi-agency teams to give the survivors the best chance of rehabilitation.

The charity's principal aim was to preserve and protect health, as well as raising awareness of sexual violence and exploitation. The provisions of counselling and therapy were provided by qualified individuals and could take the form of face-to-face meetings, emails, letters or telephone conversations. Survivors prided themselves on their flexibility and ability to work with all clients to give them safety, confidentiality and hope. Victims could self-refer or be referred by agencies who were in contact with the charity, giving them a wider reach and greater scope to help people. Survivors offered a local help line which could be contacted to gain support or help regarding next steps. They also offered educational development and legal advice, including help with housing, finance and social services. The team particularly focused on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and how counselling might be an effective option to help survivors to overcome their negative experiences whilst at the hands of the traffickers.

Survivors Hull operated for 20 years with a wealth of experience, passion and desire to help. However, money is always an issue with charity organisations, especially those which are less popular or publicly relevant. An announcement was made in December 2016, detailing the closure of Survivors Hull, in June 2017. The charity did not take any further clients from December – they have closed their doors to victims of sexual violence and human trafficking. It is clear that Survivors experienced a great deal of success between 2000 and 2016/17 and showcased some incredible success stories, positively changing people's lives in many ways. The closure of this local charity affected many people, including the survivors it supported, the people who are yet to realise they are victims and those who have moved on with their lives. This closure also affected statutory agencies, such as the police and NHS, who referred to Survivors for many years. Much of the therapeutic and counselling side of their rehabilitation was passed back to the front-line services, many of who are also struggling financially.

Moving forward, there is a distinct lack of independent trafficking specific charities in Hull and the East Riding. This may be attributed to a lack of funding or a lack of education, however it is evident that there is a real growing need for charities, who are able to provide the services which Survivors were able to deliver. The growing pressure on the health service means that more victims are likely to 'slip through the net' and be over looked, instead of being referred

for the specific counselling and support they need. Although some services are linked to the official bodies, independent charities are important as many victims feel more comfortable and safer disclosing information to people who are independent or self-regulated.

(www.survivorshull.org.uk, 2017)

3.5 Case Example: Unseen UK Charity

"Working towards a world without slavery"

"At Unseen we are working towards a world without slavery.

It's a big aim and a big task, but we believe we can do it. By concentrating our efforts on three main areas - supporting, equipping and influencing - we can start to tackle the issue in a way that really works."

Unseen are a National charity with their head office located in Bedfordshire. The charity has numerous links around the country with offices in major cities. Unseen began working as a charity in 2007, after the extent of the trafficking problem became evident in the Bristol area. The charity began researching the phenomenon, speaking with the police and other officials. From 2011, Unseen began providing safe houses and resettlement services to survivors of human trafficking. This direct involvement then led to an increased responsibility to provide data and information to the Home Office and the UK's Human Trafficking Centre. These organisations requested the help of Unseen - together they considered various policy changes and initiatives in a bid to raise awareness and reduce instances of human trafficking across the country. Unseen consider themselves as an expert organisation in the field and rank themselves as one of the top anti-trafficking charities in the country.

Unseen has won a number of awards on the national stage, including; 2015 Charity Times Award and the 2015 Lloyds Bank Foundation Charity Achievement Award. Unseen founder Andrew Wallis was awarded an OBE for his services to eradicate human trafficking and modern slavery in 2015. The organisation also considers some of its largest achievements to be with individuals and with the fight against modern slavery as a whole. This commitment has led to the creation of a loyal and meticulous work force, as well as dedicated patrons, founders and ambassadors. The projects created by Unseen have been unique and specific to groups of vulnerable people. These projects have created the opportunity for people to learn and support the fight, as well as helping to provide training and support to aid the identification of

victims. Unseen is also able to offer paid jobs and opportunities for the public and for survivors of human trafficking. This is a key success as it enables the charity to give back to society, to those who have been affected by the crime, but also to those who may have been affected by other crimes or people who are just desperate to help.

Unseen fights to provide specialist care for survivors of human trafficking, to enable them to rebuild their lives and return to society. The charity also works to increase recognition and identification of the supply and demand side of human trafficking, stressing the importance of education in the fight against modern slavery. The charity has three aims, which are; supporting, equipping and influencing. These are key to working with survivors, stakeholders and society in their bid to end human trafficking. Unseen also works with its core values in mind, which the charity believes are essential to ensuring they carry out their best work and give victims of trafficking the best chance of rehabilitation. These values include ambition, honour and collaboration.

The charity has also commissioned a number of successful projects which have been an essential part of their work, with the help of dedicated teams and workers. The projects include; the Women's Anti-Trafficking Emergency Refuge (WATER) initiative which aims to provide refuge for trafficking victims over the age of 18. The team take referrals from all over the country and this is seen in as a first step in the long recovery process. The Resettlement, Integration and Outreach Project (RIO) looks to provide a wide range of ongoing services to the survivor, such as legal assistance and educational services. The anti-slavery partnership is a strategy which aims to see the eradication of human trafficking across the world through raising awareness of modern slavery in all its forms. They aim to support the discovery of victims and the response to potential victims of human trafficking. Alongside these projects, Unseen has a dedicated helpline and support team with a resource centre which operates twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Unseen has experienced a lot of success over the years and appears to be going from strength to strength. The group has a growing social media following, a wealth of experienced workers and ambassadors, as well as a dedicated influx of volunteers and businesses keen to help and support. They provide new and innovative projects to help survivors of human trafficking and work closely with the police and NHS to ensure their services are relevant to these organisations, as well as the wider public.

A national charity has many privileges which a small local charity may not. A key positive is the funding and support they receive from official bodies and organisations, such as the Home

Office. Another important influence is the link with patrons and supporters, many of whom may be famous or public figures. Unseen is supported by actress Emilia Fox, who attends events and provides talk on human trafficking and the Unseen.

These are all positive aspects of the charity's nature and help enormously in the fight against trafficking. However, there does appear to be a distinct lack of information surround the referral process and the means by which a victim of human trafficking may come to be associated with Unseen. This lack of transparency raises questions regarding the efficiency of the process and whether or not more could be done to aid the transition between victim and survivor. These services and the support offered sound ideal and they have no doubt helped victims of human trafficking. However, the experiences the victims encounter prior to reaching Unseen and other charities, may be the key to providing better support and services to these people. This may enable them to be fully rehabilitated and reconnected with society, wherever this may be.

(www.unseenuk.org, 2019)

3.6 Forms of Victim Referral

Following on from the consideration of organisations involved in the victim pathway, this thesis will now contemplate in detail how victims are referred in to the NRM system. This is a natural progression as the research develops; exploring how victims are treated, the support they are entitled to and the support they actually receive. There are two main forms of referral for victims of human trafficking. The first form of referral is via the Government's National Referral Mechanism (NRM) through first responder agencies. These authorised groups are able to refer potential victims through this designated procedure. A first responder will identify a potential victim and refer through to the NRM, they do not have to be certain that the individual is a victim of human trafficking, they just have to suspect. Furthermore, a victim must consent to being referred in to the system – without consent a first responder can only submit a 'duty to notify', not an 'NRM' referral. If a 'duty to notify' is submitted, the case will be held on record only and an investigation will not pursue. There are over twenty different first responder organisations, as previously listed, including the Police Force, Health Care Trusts and the Salvation Army. This includes a selection of both Governmental and Non-Governmental Organisations. The gov.uk (2020) website states that the First Responder Organisations have the following responsibilities:

1. *Identify potential victims of modern slavery and recognise the indicators of modern slavery*

Gather information in order to understand what has happened to them

2. *Refer victims into the NRM via the online process or via the archived paper referral form in exceptional cases (in England and Wales this includes notifying the Home Office if an adult victim doesn't consent to being referred)*
3. *Provide a point of contact for the SCA to assist with the Reasonable and Conclusive Grounds decisions and to request a reconsideration where a first responder believes it is appropriate to do so*

The NRM is a specific government tool for human trafficking victims to help identify and thus support them (National Referral Mechanism, 2017). Once the referral is made and received, a branch of the Home Office called the Single Competent Authority receive the referral electronically. The case is then allocated to a decision maker within the NRM team, they then have five working days to reach the first threshold; deciding if there are 'reasonable grounds' to suspect that the referred individual is a potential victim of human trafficking. After these five days, if the person is decided to be a potential victim, they are given a period of forty-five days, to begin their recovery. Further information is then gathered during this time, the decision maker can make enquiries to any linked organisation, such as medical services, local authorities and the police. The potential victim is able to assist in the enquiry if they wish or they are able to await the outcome with no input (Salvation Army, 2020). The process is outlined systematically as a guide for practitioners, which leads to limitations of the mechanism, which will be discussed.

There appears to be a gap in the information provided with regards to the five-day period of victim confinement. There is little guidance concerning what happens to the individual during this time, whether they are held in a police cell, released or contained within a safe house. This is an important part of the victim's experience and could help to shape the rest of their life outside of the trafficker's captivity. The first few hours and days of their freedom are often the most important in terms of gaining valuable information. Further, when looking to provide victims with the greatest opportunity to recover and be rehabilitated, these five days should be used effectively.

The second form is self-referral, which entails the self-identification of a victim of human trafficking. This means that an individual must identify as a victim and realise that they are being exploited or coerced. The victim is able to call or contact an agency who will then assist them through the referral procedure and ultimately endeavour to keep them safe throughout the process. There are numerous victim support groups who have dedicated helplines and

teams to speak with potential victims. There are also posters, leaflets and flyers in many community places around the country, which are available to victims to help them come forward and seek help (Victim Support, 2017). Victims who self-refer are lacking, due to the overwhelming pressure and fear they face when doing so. Many victims are too scared to come forward and are unlikely to go to the police or other agencies to report that they have been trafficked. Further problems arise in the placement of information and help, as many victims do not have access to community areas or places where leaflets or telephone numbers are located. This lack of access is important as it shows the extent of the victim's captivity, but it also highlights the barrier between the victim and the organisations working to help them. This is a difficult situation to overcome as a victim will always be, by definition, incarcerated. Thus, it is hard for any organisation to reach the victims and provide them with the support needed, or let them know that help is out there (Mawby, 2016).

This research outlines and highlights the vast range of experiences the victim may encounter on their journey, as well as the organisations who may support them along their way. It is clear that some of these experiences are extensive and require a great deal more consideration and understanding. Many organisations, such as the police and charities, play a huge role in the liberation and healing of the victim, yet the most important players are without doubt the victims themselves. The victims' overall experiences are key to understanding the most effective way to rehabilitate them and help them to return to society, however these experiences may be distorted or undervalued. A further consideration is the extent to which organisations use their limited power and resources to aid the victims. It appears that although many have time, funding and support, they are not providing as much help to the victims as they possibly could be, for a number of reasons. It may also be suggested that the government could provide greater resources and do a more effective job, so as not to place so much pressure on the charities and other NGO's. This would create a more balanced arena, were relevant organisations could work together instead of competing for increasingly limited money and resources.

Victims themselves have a lot more to say, however the research suggests that they are not always forthcoming with their true feelings. Victims are generally living in fear of organisations, especially official ones such as the police service. There is little by way of first-hand accounts detailing the experiences of victims who are encountered when being identified by the police and other organisations. If more could be done to understand the feelings and the thoughts of the victims and of what they truly experience, perhaps the way in which they are dealt with could be improved. Understanding these experiences could reduce instances of trafficking and help to ensure victims are fully and efficiently rehabilitated back into society.

Chapter 4 The Research Strategy

This chapter develops the methodology for the thesis, from the three research questions:

1. Are the current Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) frameworks working to ensure victims of human trafficking are successfully identified and supported, as well as helping to reduce victims of human trafficking?
2. What happens to victims of human trafficking within the first 24 to 48 hours following their identification, or self -referral?
3. Do victim interactions with official organisations follow the MSHTU framework?

There is a gap in the knowledge when considering how practitioners identify and respond to the victims of human trafficking and what guidance they use when making key decisions. This is an emerging issue that leads to inconsistencies in the process, as well causing frictions between the organisations. To further understand this area, a deeper understanding of the processes used by organisations alongside their professional opinions is needed. This chapter considers how to gain first-hand, unfiltered accounts from primary research. The use of different research methods is considered and it is identified that honest responses are extremely important to ensure that the research is as valuable as possible. Therefore, this chapter considers the use of interviews, as well as questionnaires, concluding that survey data is the most effective method.

The research questions have been developed from the explorations into the experiences of the victims and the organisations directly involved in the referral process. These may then be developed in to the key themes for the research – they are also fundamental to the creation of the survey questions, used within the questionnaire. Varying approaches are considered, to ensure that as much information can be elicited from the participants as possible. It is considered that a mixed-methods approach ensures that both qualitative and quantitative data can be gained from the participant responses. Ultimately, the tailored survey of key stakeholders and practitioners aims to achieve a range of expected respondent numbers at around 40-80, providing a plethora of high-quality responses. These responses will then be analysed, leading to a clear summary of results and recommendations.

Following the evidence and theoretical discussions in previous chapters, in this section of the thesis the academic research strategy and data collection methods used will be outlined. Furthermore, the justifications and ideas surrounding their selection will be discussed. Initially, there will be an exploration of what may be found from the data collection, then fundamental

details of the research strategy will be finalised and discussed. Next the research questions will be considered and the way in which these led to the collection methods used. The research questions form the basis of the study and are key to the structure and design of the survey. The questionnaire design can then be covered, considering the mapping techniques used to form the data collection method. Following this, it will be essential to expand upon the ethical implications and the pilot study and how this impacted the final design of the project. The research population and sample required a great deal of consideration, due to the unknown aspects of the study, which are discussed in detail. The way in which the data collection was managed, as well as the tools used and the expected timescale, can then be outlined. Finally, discussion of the data analysis, limitations and conclusions emerging from the results can be outlined.

The basis of this study is to essentially find out what is happening to victims of human trafficking, when they come in to contact with a first responder agency. At its most basic level, this involves considering who the victims come in to contact with, what occurs when organisations believe they may be a victim of trafficking and what happens to them after they have been identified as such.

4.1 Recapping the Gap in Research

The current literature on modern slavery, human trafficking and the response to it is extensive and continuously growing. There are a number of key academics who have helped to summarise the current state of the field and provide a reliable overview, as previously highlighted these include; Kevin Bales (1999, 2005, 2009), Anne Gallagher (2010, 2016) and Maggy Lee (2005, 2007). As a brief summary, these leading academics give an overview of modern slavery around the world. Their research covers overarching issues such as: violence, population growth, poverty and government failings. There is also research surrounding offenders - the trials and convictions of traffickers, as well as prosecution of offenders' data sets. Another theme is the documentation of modern slavery - the accuracy of documenting human trafficking and the lack of research surrounding the quality of governmental responses to victims. Theories are also explored, with particular focus on transnational organised crimes and sex or labour trafficking. Finally, there is work on the links with strains, divisions and inequalities related to trafficking globalisation and a differential freedom of movement.

It is important to note as the research progresses into the methodology, that there is an expanding amount of information on identifying and protecting victims, particularly in Asian

and African countries. Maggy Lee (2014) considers trafficking substantively in Asia and looks at custody for victims, as well as any gender influences surrounding victimisation. Overviews of this area can also be seen in Julia O'Connell Davidson's (2013, 2015) work, which links victims of trafficking with the prostitution trade and migration. Identifying victims of human sex trafficking has been less documented, the majority of available material is factual or instructional, provided by groups or organisations. This information is often aimed at individuals or workers and identifying the signs of human trafficking, which may help to identify a potential victim. The current literature mainly explores the health care profession and their responses to victim support, as well as considering identification of victims within the health care setting to an extent. Jordan Greenbaum (2015, 2017), in particular, has researched this area within the United States, he considers the needs of victims when they are identified in medical settings, in particular of children and the arguable failings of the health care setting in relation to this. However, there is a lack of literature delving into the exploration of all organisations associated with victims of sex trafficking and how victims may be identified and then supported. The above research gives little care to victim rehabilitation and management in relation to identifying and treating individuals who may be a potential victim.

One matter that receives relatively little attention in the existing research literature is the treatment of, or what is happening to, victims of human sex trafficking between the initial identification or self-referral and the referral on to a support organisation. Although the process that should be followed is made clear in the MSHTU Best Practice Guide, little is known about how this process actually operates in practice and about whether, or to what extent, it actually does help to ensure that victims of human trafficking are identified. Identification, referral and support are three essential considerations in understanding the victim's experience and the effectiveness of the MSHTU Best Practice Guide. If we were to understand these three areas and how organisations practically deal with victims, whether following the framework or not, this would lead to more effective ways of identifying and helping victims being suggested. This lack of information leads to a series of questions which, if answered, may be able to improve the current frameworks and subsequently provide victims with increased support. The most important questions to arise are;

1. Are the current Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) frameworks working to ensure victims of human trafficking are successfully identified and supported, as well as helping to reduce victims of human trafficking?
2. What happens to victims of human trafficking within the first 24 to 48 hours following their identification, or self -referral?
3. Do victim interactions with official organisations follow the MSHTU framework?

4.2 Choosing the Methodology

In order to fill the gap in knowledge identified above, data will be gathered from individuals who have the responsibility of identifying and referring victims of human sex trafficking. These front-line practitioners will include; charity workers, volunteers and workers from organisations such as the police force, the health care sector, border control, Bernardo's and The Salvation Army.

It was concluded that the most effective way to gather this data would be through the use of questionnaires. This would enable extraction of information from specific participants, relative to a series of research questions which will be discussed in the next section (Bailey, 1994). The survey aims to find out what happens during identification and initial referral, for the purpose of improving support for the victims of human trafficking. Looking at the way in which respondents answer questions depending on background and employment information, as well as age, gender and ethnicity, will help to identify strengths and weaknesses of the current system. This may also help to show how policy and guidelines are being applied, within a practitioner setting. Further, it may indicate if there is a lack of knowledge surrounding the identification and treatment of victims, as well as any inadequacy in communication between relevant organisations.

Interviews were a key contender at the start of the research journey. Semi-structured interviews were of particular interest, due to the facilitation of flexible questioning and the ability to alter the line of enquiry slightly in response to participant answers. This could have been beneficial with a topic like human trafficking and victimisation, as it is a sensitive area and the ability to move around certain topics and change the direction of the questioning would be useful. It was acknowledged that the in-depth qualitative information gathered from interviews might provide a robust insight into key areas. This method was strongly favoured from the start, to the extent where it was the only option considered at one point. This was a limiting attitude and a blinkered approach; all avenues should have been investigated from the outset – to ensure that time was used efficiently and the research was able to develop alongside the correct research tool. However, over the course of five months the use of interviews became problematic, this was mainly due to the restrictions of obtaining ethical approval for interviewing health care practitioners. Although this could have been overcome, it was decided that interviews were not the most effective tool for this particular research project. This decision was supported by the need to question a greater range of practitioners and organisations, to ensure a wide overview of the research area could be understood. This

was a key academic learning curve, which ensured the project remained on track and eventually progressed effectively.

Another option may have been a case study approach. This would have meant following a specific organisation and observing the way in which they deal with day-to-day instances of victim identification and referral. However, one limitation of this method is that it is extremely time consuming. A further issue, specific to this project, is that a wide range of organisations and practitioners needed to be consulted. Thus, it would have been impractical to pursue case studies with numerous organisations. A case study, although detailed, might only have provided evidence of how one organisation in one place, performs their tasks. This would have meant that any data would not have the desired scope, to provide the overview needed of the state of the field.

A final consideration was the possibility of conducting focus groups with members of relevant organisations attending together, to discuss topics outlined by the researcher (Williams et al. 2004). This method may have been time and cost effective, as a sample larger than that of individual interviews or case studies would have been brought together to talk and share ideas. However, as this is a sensitive topic, it was decided that focus groups would not be an effective way of getting individuals to open up about their experience with victims. It is an open forum, which would not be suited to confidential subject matter. Furthermore, as the content also related to other organisations, this would not have offered the anonymity needed in order to gain honest answers from participants. A major concern of using this tool may have been if confidential details were provided by some participants, relating to rival or partner groups. By ensuring the method eventually selected guaranteed that participants remained anonymous, this removed any problems with potential judgement. It also safeguarded against participants being untruthful, due to potential repercussions on one's self or potentially one's career.

Essentially, after considering the above this study aimed to explore the dynamic between identifying victims of human trafficking and practices of the front-line organisations. It would establish whether or not the current MSHTU frameworks are working efficiently and if these are always followed, particularly in the first 24 hours following initial identification. This research would then allow any organisation involved in the identification of human sex trafficking victims to consider their own practices, identifying whether they are in line with the MSHTU frameworks. If the survey demonstrated that the frameworks are insufficient, weaknesses could then be identified and improvements suggested. By providing data and

findings, these may then be considered by the NCA or individual organisations which could help to improve the identification of human trafficking victims in the UK.

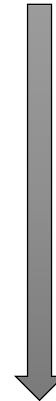
4.3 Developing Research Questions and Designing the Survey

The research questions played a vital part in the design of the survey and of the methods used overall. Through the consideration and investigation of the research questions, the survey was designed to gain as much information as possible from the participants.

The starting point for the research, to identify in which direction the questions would go, was a flow chart. This helped to clarify the process from identification to referral, for the victims. The flow chart can be seen in figure 5.

Figure 5 - Development of Research Questions

Victims of Human Trafficking
Who, what, where why?
Time / Gap. The 24-hour period
Who is slipping through the net?
Awareness? Training? Liability?
Support for victims in-between?
To Referral



Who comes to the attention of the authorities and how?

The 'window of opportunity' – 24 hours

Organisations, relationships and the process

What are the problems with positive victim identification?

Are some people better at identifying than others?

Is the training good enough? Effective enough? – Is it implemented?

Who are the victims? What are their experiences?

Does FASTER IDENTIFICATION = FASTER REFERAL?

SO…

Who is not getting identified? Who are potential victims? Are some social groups identified more than others?

What do organisations do with potential victims, after they have initially been identified?

MSHTU: Who is falling through the net? What are the flaws in the framework and system?

This chart was a key part in mapping the research thought process, which led to the three fundamental questions which arose from the secondary research:

1. Are the current Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) frameworks working to ensure victims of human trafficking are successfully identified and supported, as well as helping to reduce victims of human trafficking?
2. What happens to victims of human trafficking within the first 24 to 48 hours following their identification, or self -referral?
3. Do victim interactions with official organisations follow the MSHTU framework?

Following the development of these overarching questions, a number of secondary themes were developed. This was essentially to guide the research process and unpack the three leading ideas. The first question needed to address if the MSHTU frameworks are adequate and, if so, do they help practitioners to identify and support potential victims? Then, do these frameworks work to enable practitioners to reduce victims, likely through rehabilitation and driving down the number of re-victimised individuals. This also links to the issue of victims 'slipping through the net,' a phrase coined to highlight the number of potential victims who go unnoticed by official organisations. The second question expanded to look at the specifics of victim treatment, immediately after they are identified by a first responder of practitioner. This is currently a grey area, as there is a lack of information detailing exactly what a potential victim goes through when they are located. Finally, the way practitioners follow the government guidance would be explored. The research then considered the way in which policy is interpreted and the divergent training opportunities offered, in different organisations or areas of the country.

The secondary questions will be discussed further below:

What happens to the victims of sex trafficking between first contact with the authorities and referral to a support organisation?

This is important as there appears to be a gap in current literature surrounding this. There is evidence of victim accounts on charity websites. However, these anecdotal accounts often describe experiences from being legally identified as a victim of human trafficking within the UK, not from the moment they are identified generally, after having being involved in criminal activity in some way.

Does the kind of support victims receive from different organisations vary depending on variables such as location, gender, type of trafficking?

By considering this question, it would lead to further information regarding the processes implemented and how each may have differing rates of success in rehabilitating victims of sex trafficking. If the support varies greatly between one organisation or county to another, it could be suggested that the victims may respond differently and thus in the long-run they are likely to have varying rates of successful rehabilitation.

What happens in the first 24 hours, following initial contact? How does this effect the victims short-term and long-term options?

Considering the specific experiences victims have within their first 24 hours of identification are crucial to understanding the potential growth and healing they may encounter on their journey. As with many victims of crime, the hours following their ordeal, when they encounter new people and groups who are there to help them, can be overwhelming and stressful. If this experience is made more traumatic it could be detrimental to their long-term healing process. This may be due through a lack of information being given to them, or pressure on the victims to answer questions and provide their witness accounts of what has happened. In the future, understanding victims' opinions and thoughts surrounding this would be incredibly important. Gaining first-hand accounts of their initial identification time period would help to improve the way in which they are dealt with, to advance rehabilitation rates and decrease recidivism rates for exploited victims who return to the trafficking arena.

Is the support readily available and accessible to victims who have just been identified?

It is important for victims of trafficking to feel safe and secure as soon as they are identified. Beginning the long process to recovery starts the moment they are recognised by any agency or organisation and the people who are directly involved must have the relevant help immediately accessible. Medical, education and social support would all be required and may be needed instantly. Research suggests that there is perhaps a lack of information and cohesion from the relevant bodies, who are working alongside each other rather than together. An increase in joined up thinking between organisation and bodies would be beneficial to the victims and help them on their initial steps to recovery.

From this, the following final research questions were devised. The aim was to answer these key questions with the information gained from the survey:

1. How are the victims of human trafficking identified by first responder organisations?
2. Does the method of identifying victims always follow the MSHTU framework?

3. Does the type of first responder agency effect who gets identified as a victim of human sex trafficking?
4. Do the personal characteristics of the victim effect whether they are identified as a victim of human sex trafficking?
5. What provisions do victims initially receive, within the first 24 hours following identification? (i.e. accommodation, medical services, food, clothing, support)
6. Does the MSHTU framework need to be improved to ensure victims received the best chance of being identified, referred and subsequently supported?

Following the identification of these questions, they were then utilised to construct the questions to use in the survey. The mapping process to establish the key survey questions was as follows, in figure 6:

Figure 6 - Research Question Framework – Mapping the Link

Research Question	Link	Survey Questions
How are the victims of human trafficking identified by first responder organisations?	Considering the participants use of identification frameworks, the extent of the training they receive and confidence level.	Have you received training specifically on identifying victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation? On the below scale, please rate how confident you feel in your ability to identify a victim of sex trafficking?
Does the method of identifying victims always follow the MSHTU framework?	How are victims identified and does it follow the National suggested framework, if not, what process is used? Does identification impact referral?	Do you follow a framework [to identify]? Does the way in which victims are identified and referred always follow this framework? How soon after you have come in to contact with the victim, are they usually referred on to a support organisation?
Does the type of first responder agency effect who gets identified as a victim of human sex trafficking?	Do victims respond differently to different organisations, if so are some more susceptible to this than others, e.g. the police.	What practical problems do you encounter when dealing with victims of human sex trafficking? Please select any emotions/feelings from the below list which you feel may be applicable to the victim when they first come in to contact with the police force.
What provisions do victims initially receive, within the first 24 hours following identification?	When individuals are identified, are they treated as victims from that point?	When victims first come into contact with you, where do they stay?

		How do you initially decide where to send a victim following first contact?
Do the personal characteristics of the victim effect whether they are identified as a victim of human sex trafficking?	Identification of victims can be dependent on the victim and their cultural background – is this important? Might this link with re-victimisation?	Do you believe all victims of human sex trafficking wish to be identified? Why do you believe some victims may not wish to be identified? Once identified, do you believe victims of human sex trafficking may be re-victimised if they 'disappear' during the referral process?
Does the MSHTU framework need to be improved to ensure victims received the best chance of being identified, referred and subsequently supported?	Essential this considers how effective the frameworks are and whether or not organisations have faith in them. It also considers the usefulness for victims and the lasting effects.	Have you received training specifically on referring victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation? Do you receive any updates regarding the victim's well-being, or the progression of the case, after you have referred them on through the NRM, or to support services? When victims have come to the attention of the authorities, approximately what percentage of victims then 'drop out' of the system? Do you believe the current NRM referral process is effective in dealing with potential victims?

The final questions within the survey, which were posed to participants, were of a qualitative nature and they linked to all of the overarching research questions. To summarise the survey, these concluding questions were asked in the hope that participants would open up and share their honest opinions about the process. This would enable the research to gain a more detailed insight into the mechanisms of victim identification, treatment and referral. This decision comes from the concept that social experiences can be more easily articulated through the use of open-ended questioning.

- *What changes, if any, would you make to the way in which potential victims are identified?*
- *What changes, if any, would you make to the way in which potential victims are referred by first responder agencies?*
- *What changes, if any, would you make to the NRM?*
- *Do you have any further comments which may be of use to this study?*

The research questions directly led to the survey questions and the way in which the questionnaire was constructed. A collection of pre-written questions were used to gather the required information from the participants (see Appendix 3). The design of the questionnaire went through approximately three drafts. Each stage of the process aimed to improve the questions, to ensure they fully linked with the research themes and were able to extract as much relevant information as possible from the participants.

In summary, each draft comprised of an enhancing and refining process. Draft 1 was a large selection of around 50 survey questions, each was written from a brain-storming process. The procedure was to write as much information down as possible, to ensure every possibility was covered. At the end this draft was dissected, with each question linked back to the original research aims. If a question was not relevant, or was too vague, it was cut from the draft. A key issue with the first draft was that the focus was too large. The questions related to an overview of human trafficking, rather than honing in on the specific research priorities for this thesis. Draft 2 was more polished however, the main issues were with the wording of the questions, rather than the actual content. This draft was edited to ensure the questions were clear and easy to understand, by both experts and lay-people. A key priority was to ensure there was no room to misinterpret the question, which was important as the survey could not be explained to the participants. Finally draft 3 was produced, this provided an outline of the final questionnaire. The questions were unambiguous and the potential answers provided were clear. This draft was edited slightly, to include the final three open questions at the end of the survey. The decision to include these was to ensure the participant could provide as much information as needed. This meant there was no pressure on them to write lengthy

answers throughout, but if they wanted to add more or to clarify their responses, the option was there.

The questionnaire included closed-questions, such as *'Do you believe all victims of human sex trafficking wish to be identified?'* whereby a selection of pre-determined answers were given to the participants, they were then able to select the most appropriate response. This type of questioning benefits the analysis of the data, meaning that answers can easily be collated and explored to gain informative insights. The questionnaire also included a small number of open-ended questions as highlighted above which the respondent could provide a more detailed response to, providing more in-depth information. These responses could then be categorised in to sub-responses and coded, which eased the process of investigating the data.

The following outline of the final survey questions, and their individual rationale, is provided:

Figure 7 - Explanation of Questionnaire

Age:	**Occupation:**
Male / Female	**Length of time in occupation:**
Ethnicity:	**In which region is work based?**

The inclusion of the base questions to provide demographics for the respondents was important to the study. The most important characteristics were the occupation and the region in which the respondent was predominantly based. These questions highlight exactly what area of trafficking they are involved in, as well as whereabouts in the country they work. This helps when investigating results further, as it was expected that there would be major disparities between different areas in the country. It was decided that responses would first be explored according to location, to enable a geographical overview of the problems being faced. This was important as it would likely highlight areas in which organisations are failing in terms of communication between themselves, having a subsequent impact on the treatment of victims of human trafficking.

Have you received training specifically on identifying victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation?

This question was posed to look at the amount of people who had received specific training. As there are different types of identification training, this question was worded quite broadly. It was hoped that responders would take into account any training they may have received such as; e-learning, face-to-face or otherwise.

On a scale of 1 – 10, with 1 being not very confident and 10 extremely confident, how confident do you feel in your ability to identify a victim?

Confidence in identification is an important question to ask practitioners, as it enables the researcher to consider how assured they are in their own ability to support a victim. As this is anonymous, it is hoped that this encourages the practitioner to provide an honest answer. It is also worth noting that confidence in identification may not translate into confidence in referral. Thus, having two separate themes is important in distinguishing between which parts of the process encounter the most problems.

Have you received training specifically on referring victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation?

The referral of victims was expected to tie closely with training to identify victims. Using a similar type of question, to maintain consistency and illicit a similar response. Again, it was hoped any form of training would be taken into account. Specific types of training were not mentioned, so as not to restrict the participants thought process or answers.

On a scale of 1 – 10, with 1 being not very confident and 10 extremely confident, how confident do you feel in your ability to refer a victim to a competent authority (CA)?

This question may not have been relevant to all respondents, as CA practitioners may have been completing the survey. However, the aim was to find out more information about confidence level in referrals. Respondents may be confident in filling out a referral form or a duty to notify, but they may be less confident in who CAs are. This would be evident if the response numbers were much lower in this section.

Please select the main reason for your confidence / lack of confidence from the below list:

Asking a respondent to select a reason for their confidence, or lack of, meant that respondents could expand on their previous answers. This provided more detail and the potential to clarify some of the information if needed. Making the answers a drop-down list meant that the responses could be collated and explored easily. A word box was considered, but it was decided that the responses could be too vague or people might not answer due to difficulty in articulating their reasonings. Lack of articulation may come from an absence of understanding of the subject matter.

On a scale of 1 – 10, with 1 being not very confident and 10 extremely confident, how confident are you with the process of filling out a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral form?

Linking the specific referral mechanism with the consideration of confidence levels would help to indicate how familiar they are with the system. This question was constructed to link high levels of confidence with knowledge and experience, whereas low levels of confidence would likely pair with inexperience and a lack of awareness.

Do you follow a framework* to identify and refer potential victims?
in-house, NRM etc.
This was an intentionally open question which allowed the participant to draw on any prior knowledge they might have. Directly asking if a 'framework' is used provided enough scope for respondents to select 'yes' if they have had any guidance at all, surrounding identifying and referring victims. Although this may not be official government guidance, it would be interesting to see how many respondents have had any support/education at all in this field.

If yes, does the way in which victims are identified and referred always follow this framework?

This question would be skipped if 'no' was selected previously. Anonymity was important with this question, as it allowed the respondent to answer freely without fear of repercussion. The question seeks to understand if frameworks are helpful and practical, or if they are simply created to comply with overarching priorities – helping to make an organisation appear proactive in their modern slavery work.

Why do you believe some victims do not wish to be identified by first responder agencies?
This question moves the participant away from their own practices, towards the experience and path of the victim. Asking a practitioner to consider the way a victim may feel or what they might want, allows them to experience empathy. By doing this, practitioners should provide honest responses.

Where do victims stay, when they first come in to contact with you?

This question could be answered via a selection list. It provided various options relating to locations a potential victim may stay. Respondents could select as many options as they wanted. The purpose of this question was to show which organisations had victims staying in

which places. The hope was that a picture would form, whereby X organisation was most likely to house a victim in X location.

What practical problems do you encounter when dealing with victims of human sex trafficking?

Again, this was a selection list answer option. The respondent could select as many issues as necessary. This had a similar rationale to the above question, whereby some organisations would be more likely to encounter specific problems than others. If a pattern were to emerge, this would then create a clear picture, potentially highlighting areas for change in organisation specific frameworks.

Please select any words from the below list which you feel may be applicable to the victim when they first come in to contact with the police force:

The responses available here were both positive and negative. Care was taken in this question to use the term ‘words’ rather than ‘feelings’ or ‘emotions’. This decision was made in an attempt to ensure the respondent remained unbiased in their selection, basing their choice on practical experience rather than learned knowledge. This was also aimed at any practitioner, which meant responses were likely to vary between respondents in the police and those in other organisations.

How crucial is a fast response time? (Please select the most appropriate answer)

Understanding how quickly practitioners feel victims should be identified and responded to is important as it has a direct impact on the victim’s support pathway. The term ‘fast’ was used to enable practitioners to judge their response, on their own acceptable standards. Respondents could select a pre-set answer, which meant that there was less room for interpretation.

Following the successful referral of a victim, do you receive any feedback on the victim’s wellbeing and how their case is progressing?

This question was asked for two key reasons, firstly to encourage openness from the respondent, by asking about their needs and opinions. Bringing respondents into the picture and ensuring their feelings are taken in to account means they are more likely to provide engaging responses and honest data. Secondly, by investigating the feedback respondents receive, this helps to create a picture of how practitioners are utilised in the shaping of modern slavery policy and guidance.

4.4 Using Surveys as a Research Tool

The decision to use surveys has been outlined above, however it is acknowledged that there are strengths and weaknesses of using surveys as a research tool, which will now be discussed in this sub-chapter. Asking questions to a number of participants is a way to gain information from a group of people. The two most common ways in which research can be conducted are through an interviewer asking questions to the respondent or via the use of questionnaire completion. Examples of other possible research options may be focus groups, computer assisted programmes, case studies or observations (Krauss, 2005; Akinkove, 1994). Questionnaires are particularly useful in that they are able to be fully constructed beforehand, thus ensuring objectivity due to the pre-arranged format of the tool. Researchers are also able to gain answers without having to interview each respondent, by distributing a pre-populated set of questions for participants to complete. This is both time and cost effective and particularly useful when a larger number of respondents are to be contacted. A further positive of this method is that the responses do not affect the continuing nature of the data collection, as there is no option to alter the questionnaire throughout. Within this research this is a significant strength, as the answers must be as honest and unbiased as possible. Ensuring respondents submit their first, unedited response makes the data more authentic, thus more valuable to the study. The ability to gain anonymous responses is also a positive aspect of using questionnaires, as it increases the chances of receiving more honest feedback from the participants. Finally, in favor of questionnaires as a flexible, ideal tool for this research, the geographical limitations of other potential methods are greatly reduced. The survey tool can be shared via the internet and social media as far as possible. This means that in a nationwide study, such as this, where responses from across the UK are favored over local or regional ones, the breadth of respondents is far larger and more suited to the nature of the research. From a respondent's perspective it is also important to consider that questionnaires are far less time consuming than interviews, therefore further increasing the likelihood of participation and the improved chances of in-depth, useful data.

The inability to determine the exact number of responses was a minor problem which meant that constant surveillance of incoming responses numbers was needed. The desired response for this study was between 60 to 100 respondents. This was calculated by considering the generally acknowledged ideal of around 80 to 100, but taking into consideration the specialist area of research, as well as the difficulty in getting participants to discuss a sensitive subject area. A further reason for this was the length and breadth of the questionnaire, as the tool covered a number of topics in great detail. This allowed for some qualitative responses to be included, which meant that less respondents were needed to gain the same amount of

information as perhaps would have been needed if a less detailed questionnaire had been created. This could be considered as a positive part of the process, as the survey was detailed and specifically created to target a smaller audience. However, the risk of this design was that not enough people would engage with the survey.

Although there are a great many positives for the use of questionnaires, there are also some limitations. A first limitation would be the lack of control over the way in which responses are given. Within primary research it can be common for participants to leave questions blank, or answer incoherently to provide falsifications of information. The reasons for this may be an effort to impress or to provide the desired response to the researcher, which is known as participant bias (De Leeuw, 2008). However as previously indicated, this survey was aimed at a select group of people, with a specific interest. The desire was to gain the most authentic answers possible from this group. To facilitate this further, the survey was kept anonymous throughout – to ensure that the participant felt comfortable sharing honest information. It was considered that the only answers which would be left blank within this survey would be in response to the questions not relating to their specific line of work or a lack of knowledge surrounding that given area. A final issue may have been the lack of independence exhibited by the respondents when filling in the questionnaire, which might be an issue if someone assisted them in filling in the survey or if search engines were used. However, due to the nature of the research this is highly unlikely, given that it is a specialised area which only certain individuals would be able to answer questions relating to effectively.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations refer to guidelines surrounding how to act when conducting any type of research. The first modern code of ethics, established in 1947, was the Nuremberg Code – created as a response to the inhumane medical trails in Nuremberg, Germany during World War 2. This was a contentious subject at the time, as many people were under the agreement that social experiments were of benefit to the greater good of society. This belief did not take in to account the impact such experiments may have on the participants who were required to take part (Nuremberg Code, 2008). Since that time, ethical guidelines have evolved significantly, the UN Deceleration of Human Rights in 1948 paving the way for considerations of consent in participants. The Declaration of Helsinki, last amended in October 2013, is the current bench mark for any research involving human subjects. It is a statement of ethical guidelines, provided to guide practitioners. Today, research ethics are exceptionally important to any project. They ensure that, as far as possible, all participants involved in the research are

safe and free from any psychological or physical harm. Often similarities are made between ethics and morals, however there is a definite distinction between them. Morals reflect personal beliefs; the concepts of right and wrong. Whereas ethics are rooted in principles – created to be followed, irrespective of whether the individual agrees with them (Robson, 2002).

The Belmont Report (1974), created by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioural Research, suggests that there are three principles or areas which should be considered when human participants are used in investigations. These are; justice, respect for all persons and beneficence. These areas consider benefits, harm, equality and fairness to ensure that everyone involved is protected. A statement of ethical practice was developed by the British Sociological Association (BSA), which highlights rules to be followed and specifies certain areas to be aware of as a researcher. Confidentiality and anonymity, relationships with participants and covert research/privacy are all areas which are detailed in the BSA guidelines. Arguably, an imperative section of the guidance relates to the duty of care a researcher has to their participants. This includes such considerations as: necessity of de-briefing, full disclosure of research and offered psychological help (British Sociological Association, 2012). The creation of this good practice guide also helps researchers to appreciate and understand the potential issues which could arise during the research journey. Many organisations have their own versions of ethical guidance, such as the Social Research Association (SRA). However, they are generally very similar and all cover the core areas of ethical consideration for researchers in any field (Gilbert, 2008).

There are a number of identified ethical considerations within this research, due to the nature of the investigation and the methods for gaining participants (Bailey, 1994). Prior to this particular research taking place, ethical approval was sought from the University of Hull. The University Ethics Committee reviewed the proposed investigation and ensured that the methods of obtaining data were ethically comprehensive (see Appendix 5). The ethical approval was based on the research meeting the following four aims:

1. To survey individuals who are part of first responder agencies dealing with victims of Human Trafficking.
2. To gather anonymous data from these individuals to gain an insight into the way in which victims are treated.
3. To highlight potential issues in the laws surrounding human trafficking.
4. To interact with those who have first-hand experience of working with victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation; in particular professionals and charity workers

The ethics committee identified a key issue arising for the participants; they were not members of the University community, but members of the public. A subsequent concern for this research was the importance of ensuring data confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Therefore, in order to ensure minimal risk to subjects and satisfactory levels of safety, it was indicated that participants would complete the online questionnaire anonymously. It was also stated that they would be given a full briefing paper prior to the questionnaire starting and post-research the participant would be provided with contact details, if further information was required. A further concern for the research was the potential vulnerability of participants, the disclosure of any sensitive information or the delicate nature of the subject being discussed (British Sociological Association, 2012). This was addressed by providing participants with the option to remove themselves from the questionnaire at any point, without repercussion. The provision of support after the questionnaire also aided this aspect, by giving participants the freedom to make contact with the researcher if needed. Participants were given the option to provide any additional information or to request further information if they were unhappy with any aspect of the process. A restriction placed on the sample was the age of the participant, as it was decided that only participants over the age of 18 would be asked to take part. The data collection method was aimed at practitioners, working in the field of modern slavery. This requirement meant that under 18s would be less likely to be approached from the outset. Further, it would be difficult to obtain parental consent with an online survey. It was therefore concluded that it would be in the best interest of the research, not to approach potentially vulnerable individuals under the age of 18. This was also decided as it was unlikely that persons under the age of 18 would have been in direct contact, or would have worked, with victims of human sex trafficking, as they would most likely have still been in full-time education. This then helped to ensure that the questionnaires completed were relevant and applicable to the research, as the participants were over the age of 18 and working in relevant fields.

When completing the questionnaire participants were given an indication of the time it might take to complete, prior to them starting the process. It was also ensured that all questions included were necessary and useful to the research. Following the completion of the questionnaire, participants were given the choice to provide their email address. This inclusion may have risked the anonymity of the individual, therefore it was specified that '*personal information will be kept separate from the above survey data and will not be used except to make contact with you, as a participant*'. This therefore ensured anonymity was honoured as much as possible and participants could feel comfortable in agreeing to take part in other areas of the research. Within the write up of the results it was decided that participants would

be referred to as ‘practitioner’ or participant’, therefore any potentially revealing details would be untraceable and this would then protect the identity of respondents. The storage of the data was also considered, the results have been stored in a password protected computer file, only accessible by the researcher. All data is to be destroyed at the end of the research project.

A final ethical point to consider is the potential effect of the sensitive information on the researcher. This is an important as the data may contain distressing stories or challenging narratives. The University of Hull provides services of support to researchers. They also encourage researchers to speak with their supervisors if they feel that the data disclosed has a negative effect on their mental health, all of which help to minimise effects on the researcher.

4.6 Planning a Pilot Study

Pilot studies are an important part of the research process, as they help to ensure the data collection goes as smoothly as possible. A pilot study allows the researcher to remove any issues with the collection method and provides the best possible outcome for the study. The first consideration would be to ensure that there was little room to misinterpret any questions. Prior to the pilot test being carried out the researcher was able to critically analyse the questions, including the content and details of the questionnaire (Van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001). This helped to ensure that the research questions were thoroughly addressed through the questionnaire. This also ensured that irrelevant questions weren’t asked, thus ensuring that the core ideas of the study weren’t neglected (Gray, 2004). The use of complex words and phrases was also considered and those which may have been misinterpreted by the respondents were removed. The questionnaire was designed to be reliable, ensuring that it was accessible to all and could be easily understood. This aim was regardless of whether the background of the respondent was in victimology, charity work, medical practice, law enforcement or legal services.

The pilot study consisted of a sample of ten people who were asked to comment on the grammar and structure of the questionnaire, as well as how accessible and easy to interpret it was. This sample was a non-random sample selected for ease of communication and due to the nature of the requests, a random sample was not required. The sample was practically contacted in exactly the same way as the real research sample was ultimately reached, with participants being emailed a link to complete the survey. They were also asked to make any comments on the questionnaire and return via email. It was also important to gain information

relating to the amount of time it took to answer the questionnaire, the average time was 12 minutes.

The pilot study was a positive endeavor, with all ten of the participants completing the questionnaire to some degree and offering feedback on aspects of the structure and grammar. Seven responses came back wholly constructive with praise for the questionnaire. Two participants identified a spelling mistake in the questionnaire brief, which was easily rectified. The final participant expressed some concern over the need for a great deal of background information on trafficking victims, when completing the survey. However, when explained that the questionnaire was intended to be completed by individuals working with victims or in the field of modern slavery research, it became evident that all questions were relevant and clear. Overall, the pilot study was a success. The feedback from participants was positive on the whole and all suggested actions were implemented prior to the questionnaire being distributed to the public sample.

4.7 Sampling Technique and Data Collection

Following the decision to use surveys and the completion of a successful pilot study, the primary data was collected using computer aided survey methods (CASI). This utilised the online programme, Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com). This is a monthly subscription service, which gives the researcher access to unlimited questionnaires, unlimited respondents, page branching and skip logic. The most important aspects of the software were: unlimited questions available, unlimited respondents and the ability to utilise skip logic programming, if required. The programme also allowed the questionnaires to include dichotomous questions, multiple choice tick box, rating scale, example answers, semantic difference scales and open-ended questions. All of these options were utilised in the final version of the research questionnaire. The design of the questionnaire and its aesthetics could also be altered at any time, creating greater flexibility for the researcher. This program is also highly rated by scholars and researchers who commend its programming. It also provides users with a continuous option to analyse live data on the website, as it is received. The use of skip programming was essential to this research, as it helped to ensure that participants could be led to the correct question at the correct time, then answer the relevant questions dependent on any previous answers provided.

In terms of distribution, Survey Monkey permits the questionnaire to be shared via: Email, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Blogs. The questionnaire could also be disseminated in hard

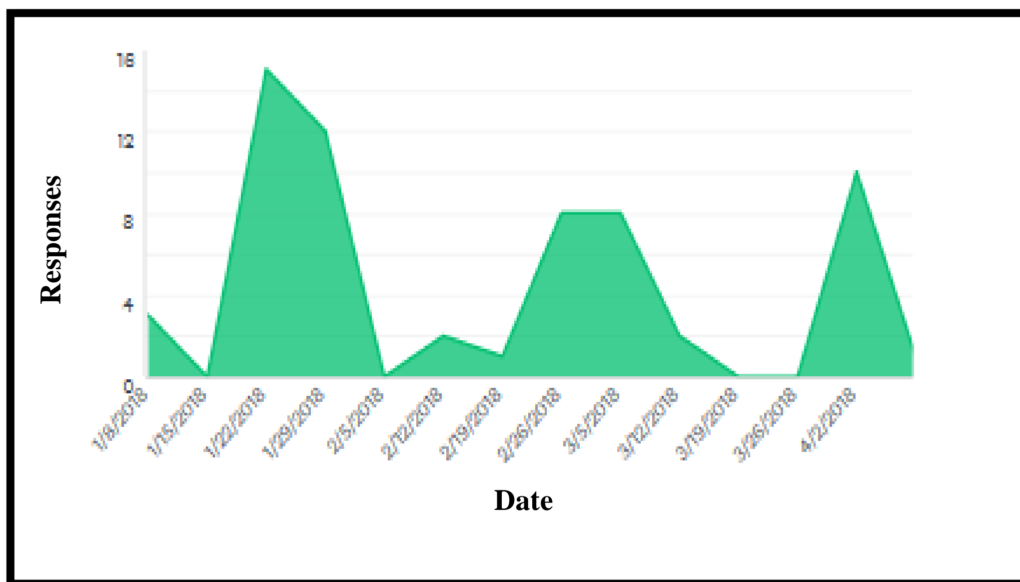
copy if required. To distribute the survey effectively a plan was constructed. Due to the specific nature of the research questions, a very precise knowledge of trafficking and sexual abuse of victims was required. Therefore, it was imperative that the participants selected had the relevant information to provide, in order to further the research (Akinkoye,1994; Lee, 1993). This meant that although random sampling is widely viewed as being one of the most effective and reliable techniques, it would not have been appropriate to use this technique alone within this research. The sample was therefore selected via a mixture of sampling techniques, initially a non-random technique was used, a selection of groups and individuals from the following areas were targeted specifically, as discussed earlier in the thesis; Police Force: Officers, back room staff, special units; Health Care Professionals; NGO's: Migration Yorkshire, Bernardos, Unseen, Salvation Army, Poppy Project, Migrant Help, NSPCC; Other: UK Border Force, Home Office Immigrations and Visas, Gang Masters Licensing Authority, Hull City Council, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

In order to ensure these groups were reached a four-phase approach was implemented. Initially, due to the connection with the Wilberforce Institute of Slavery (WISE), a compiled list of around 60 academics, practitioners and researchers was available to use. Thus, the first phase for roll-out of the questionnaire was to contact the participants from the sample list, via email. These potential participants were invited to complete the online questionnaire and provided with a brief description of the research aims. The sample then started to move towards a snowball sampling technique, as the individuals' emailed were invited to share the questionnaire with other people in their field of work. This would then widen the intended sample population and move the research in a clear direction. Phase two was to follow this up by sharing the questionnaire more generally, via a link on Twitter (see Appendix 4). This was tweeted out to an open number of possible participants on a public profile. It was also requested that the tweet be shared, to encourage others to complete the questionnaire. This meant that the research was released into the world wide web. Participants and members of the general public were able to share and expand on the questionnaire as they desired, without limitations. The aim of this was to ensure each of the target respondent areas, as listed above, were reached. Safeguards were also put in place to ensure only people with relevant experience would complete the questionnaire. The survey starts by asking about respondent experience and gives a summary of the research. Thus, only people with a relevance to the research and a view to aiding this field of study would ultimately complete the questionnaire online. The questionnaire was then monitored online for one week, during which time it gained a steady stream of responses. The response rate dropped after the first week. Phase three was then to release a further series of messages, sent via social media

platforms. It was decided that the questionnaire would then be left for a further two to three weeks, to gain responses organically and allow participants to engage when they wanted. After this period phase four was instigated, whereby a follow-up email was distributed. This included a third and final request to complete the survey, via social media. Each of the invites to participants were sent at a specific time, relevant to the fall in response rates in that period. A dip in completion called for a spike in requests, thus increasing participant levels.

The response rate of participants was expected to be between 60 to 100. This estimation was calculated through the number of people reached and the expected level of replies. Following the first wave of communications through email, there was a spike in responses in the preceding three days. This occurred following each of the five targeted communications. This can be seen in the following data trends image.

Table 2 - Response Rates of Participants



Following the chaser emails sent out on 18th January, 21st February and 25th March, there was a rise in the number of responses. This can also be seen on a lesser scale, when Tweets were circulated on 8th January and 11th February. This increase in participation is to be expected as the responses are a direct retort to the communication.

Overall, the questionnaire was kept live for four months, which was the initial planned period. This timescale was effective as it allowed for the above surges and falls of response without impacting on overall response rates. It also meant that a number of 'reminder' messages could be sent, as well as increased rollouts over social media platforms. If the timescale was shortened, it is assumed that less people would have responded and the reach may not have

been as great. If the time were longer, it is not likely to have generated many more responses, if any, as the reach was at capacity at that time.

4.8 Exploring Types of Data Analysis

The exploration of the data changed greatly over the course of designing the fieldwork tools. The questionnaire was not intended to be purely quantitative or qualitative. The questions were mixed with numbered scales, single word boxes, tick boxes and typed response options. This meant that, although there was both quantitative and qualitative data types, analysis was dependant on the amount of information provided by participants and the range of answers given. Quantitative research is likely to involve a large-scale study, due to the ease of collecting numerical data and the speed at which it can be collated. The focus is generally numerical and measurable, the collection method is often in the form of questionnaires/surveys. Quantitative data collection methods link skills and methods of data extraction to the natural sciences, therefore allowing for results in the form of tables, graphs and equations to be produced (O'Connell Davidson and Layder, 1996).

This research was grounded as an investigatory survey, to identify patterns and trends in identifying, referring and supporting victims of human sex trafficking. It was decided that a large-scale survey would not provide the depth and breadth of information needed to answer the research questions or address the overarching themes. Numbers and generalisability would not give an insight into the experiences, feelings or views of the practitioners, in the same way that qualitative data would.

Standard statistical tests were not used as a baseline for the quantitative elements of the study. If the data gained was extensive and collected in the form of numerical figures, multivariate statistical data analysis would have been the most appropriate form of examination. However, it became clear as increased data filtered through the system that numerical responses were lacking. Participants were opting to response qualitatively, taking the opportunity to use the typed 'expansion' boxes, to provide their own in-depth response to the questions. Some of these responses were related to the previous questions, others went off on a tangent and could not be directly linked to any particular theme. This meant that the method of data analysis had to be adapted to account for this development. However, although not the primary goal, some of the data was subjected to some low-level statistical analysis and in those areas where results were significant, they are reported in the results chapter. Overall, qualitative data analysis was implemented, as it was the most appropriate

form of analysis. It was expected at the beginning of the planning phase that qualitative data would be used as an 'add-on' to the original quantitative information gathered. Considering this data as the primary form meant using it to help understand and explain the quantitative results. It would provide a great range of non-numerical, in-depth information, which would be effectively analysed through the use of coding. Thus, providing a solid basis for discussion and allowing the literary responses to be used in addition to the quantifiable data, supporting or disproving the theories raised.

Coding is a system of investigation which categorises data in order to facilitate the analysis of information, making it much easier to view and understand. Manual coding was expected to be the primary method of analysis used to explore the written data collected, owing to the large amount of data gained and the need to organise the information logically in order to gain meaning and knowledge from it. Coding generally allows for the interpretation of data and subsequent analysis, to enable the research gained to fully support and contribute to the study (Bailey, 1994). Coding is commonly the initial point of investigation for any form of qualitative analysis. Lofland and Lofland (1995) consider different approaches when developing codes, their plan was followed in the development of effective codes for this project. The codes would then be used to create an index of words or phrases which facilitated interpretation and the ability to explore the data.

To develop the storyline and initial coding ideas the research questions had to be considered, as it was essential to remember the information required from the data. Re-visiting the survey responses created the opportunity to generate coding notes, which considered new ideas and approaches surrounding the data. This end-use strategising made it easier to locate the required information needed to begin coding (Bryman, 1988; May, 2002). A priori code set was decided first, to ensure consideration of the research questions was always a priority. It was decided that specific words would be used as codes, for ease of reference and personal preference. The responses provided in the survey questions could all be categorised broadly, as relating to three main areas:

1. Human Trafficking Policy 2. Victim Experience 3. Organisations

Each of these three areas represents a different type of data, which consequently include different topics - these are the overarching themes. The qualitative responses fit into each of these code themes. Following this, the verbatim data could then be systematically analysed in order to begin scrutinising the information and considering the coding categories. Whilst looking at the data, emergent, descriptive codes would then develop. It was expected that words such as; 'victim', 'police', 'charity', 'government', 'identification', 'referral', 'support' and

‘offenders’ would arise (Saldana, 2009). The process of refining would then ensure that the maximum amount of information could be gained efficiently. For example, ‘police’ and ‘victim’ might be merged in to the theme of ‘organisations’, due to the overlapping nature of the information provided. This process of refining the codes would help to ensure that at the end of the process, the final themes would fit the sample (Gilbert, 2008).

By using descriptive coding techniques, the expectation was that the data set could be considered more objectively. This would help to ensure the opinions and ideas of the participants were analysed individually whilst being linked by the coding themes, to enable easier comparison and examination. The heuristic nature of coding would enable a more in-depth investigation of the data. The themes could then be explored allowing for concepts and ideas to begin to appear, which could then be linked with existing theories and further secondary research (Saldana, 2009). It was expected that a limitation of coding would be the potential risk of processing errors occurring during the procedure, however in order to minimise this risk the coding and exploration of data was to be completed manually, instead of via computer programme software (Black, 1993). This strategy took shape and was ready to implement when the questionnaire was closed off. However, problems began to emerge and the key issue was the variance in the data gathered. As each of the responses were broken down there were little similarities between the answers, thus emergent codes were difficult to create.

It was initially considered that responses might first be explored against location, to enable a geographical overview of the problems being faced. Location was important throughout the research, as there are differing frameworks and guidelines for working with victims of human trafficking around the country. Considering the locations of the respondents could begin to provide an explanation and rationale for the issues relating to different approaches around the UK. However, an issue with this was that there was a distinct lack of breadth in geographical location of the respondents, but an extensive variance in their occupations. To categorise according to location would have meant three pools: London, Yorkshire and Other. London and Yorkshire would be clear geographical areas, however ‘Other’ would be too broad, effectively considering the rest of the UK as one entity. As a result of the surprising geographical bunching, which will be discussed in the results chapter, location became a problematic variable. Instead, it was decided that ‘profession’ would have the expected range of responses, thus this was used as a baseline variable. The occupations ranged from the expected (charity workers, responder organisations and health care professionals) to the very unexpected (teachers and funeral celebrants). Although this created another ‘Other’ pool, it was a group of anomalies, easily categorised as professions which one would not normally

associate with coming into frequent contact with victims of human trafficking. In terms of quantitative analysis both of these variables would have created problems, as it was expected that there would be major disparities between different areas in the country.

After considering the issues of both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques as stated above, it was decided that a more descriptive approach would be utilised. Nassaji (2015) explored descriptive analysis, considering it as a useful instrument to examine written data in a naturalistic setting. Observation, analysis and description are the key tools to implement descriptive analysis. Thus, this developed into a useful way of investigating the data gained and pulling useful information from it. The research methods identified above were worked on throughout the data collection phase, before the emergence of the mixed data. This would guarantee that the analytical techniques were not wasted, but could essentially be used to shape the direction of the analysis and guide the research towards the required themes.

4.9 Summarising an Exploratory Strategy

The research strategy strongly focuses on the exploratory nature of the study, and the design and goals outlined in this chapter have been developed to incorporate this. It was essential to stick to the themes of the research, whilst uncovering the thoughts and opinions of practitioners. By exploring the field and taking a more reactive approach, this enabled the research to develop organically, whilst maintaining focus on the aforementioned research questions.

1. Are the current Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) frameworks working to ensure victims of human trafficking are successfully identified and supported, as well as helping to reduce victims of human trafficking?
2. What happens to victims of human trafficking within the first 24 to 48 hours following their identification, or self -referral?
3. Do victim interactions with official organisations follow the MSHTU framework?

These questions were used to formulate a specific set of survey questions, which were distributed to practitioners in the field of modern slavery and human trafficking.

Throughout this chapter, the discussion has surrounded the collection of primary data and the methods used to gain the required information. The use of survey questionnaires was

identified as the most appropriate method of collection for this study, as highlighted throughout this dialogue. The information gained is of great use to the research, as it facilitates an exploration. It begins to piece together the first-hand opinions and realities of individuals working for organisations who deal with the identification, referral and treatment of victims of human trafficking. The analysis of results within the next chapter will begin to link together the ideas presented, alongside the academic literature. The challenges faced through the collection period have also been measured, as well as the ethical and practical considerations of conducting a research project. Literature is integrated throughout the previous chapters and will be considered alongside the primary data collected, which will ensure the investigation is detailed and as much information can be discovered as possible.

Chapter 5 Exploring the Results

This chapter will explore the results gained from the survey questionnaire and will consider the investigatory nature of the research and link the data directly to the three research questions. This will connect the victim experience case studies, the secondary research and the responses from participants. A full outline, investigation and explanation of the results from the questionnaire is essential, as it will lead to a comprehensive overview of key findings in the subsequent chapter. The following chapters will show which of the results are the most significant and how they link with broader research conducted throughout this thesis.

Firstly, the emergent demographics of the participants will be explored. The types of respondents will be examined as there are a range of responses from varying organisations, such as the NHS, Police Force and Charities. The majority of respondent practitioners are from either London or Yorkshire; however, this is not exclusive. This range of participants is significant – as it provides insight into the experiences of practitioners across the country. The research questions will then be re-identified and the data will be attributed to the relevant sections, providing answers and in-depth information. The results are analysed in accordance with the specific research themes, which means that each theme corresponds to each question, making the flow of information clear and easy to explore. The results will be addressed through sub-headings, according to each of the key research questions they link with. The merging of the quantitative and qualitative data types begins to help identify emerging themes that will be explored further in the discussion section. Finally, four key findings will be proposed and explained at the end of this chapter. These will be emphasised - placing a spotlight on the most interesting outcomes of this study, thus paving the way for further discussions in the next section of the thesis.

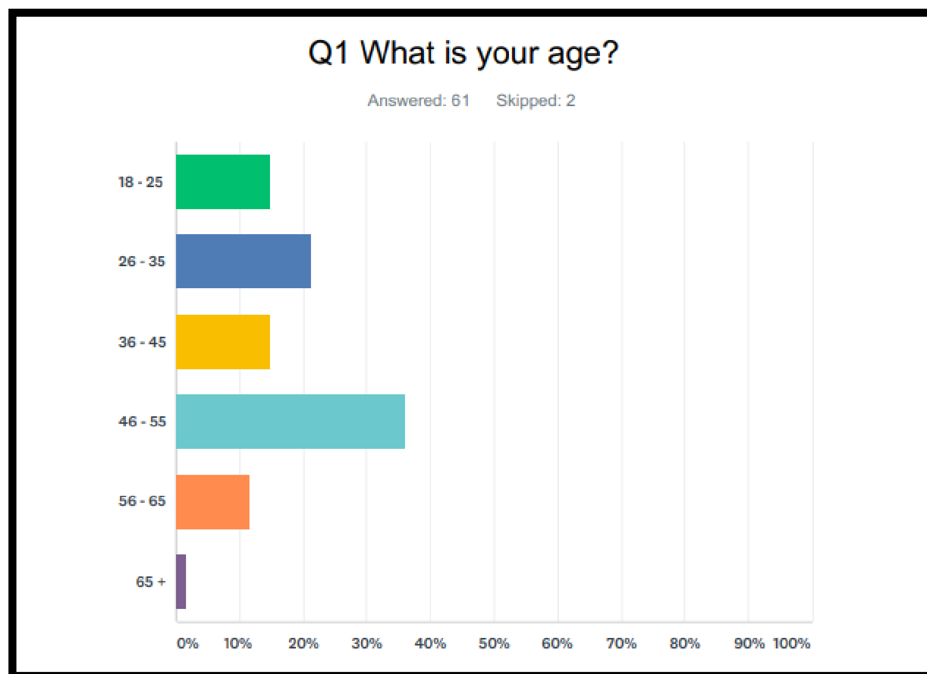
5.1 Who are the Participants?

Within this research the breadth of participant characteristics is extensive. There was a great deal of flexibility open to participants being able to access the questionnaire, therefore only limited restrictions were placed on those able to take part. Essentially, the two key requirements for participation were that the participant was over the age of 18 and had experience in dealing with victims of human trafficking. Furthermore, the primary use of social media, as discussed in the previous chapter, served to extend the reach of the survey. The preferred response rate for this study was between 60 to 100 respondents. This is an accepted amount as highlighted by Bryman (2005); the type of study and the specialised nature of the

area results in a smaller participant pool, thus a sample of sub 100 people is deemed acceptable. The final number of participants, within this study, was 64.

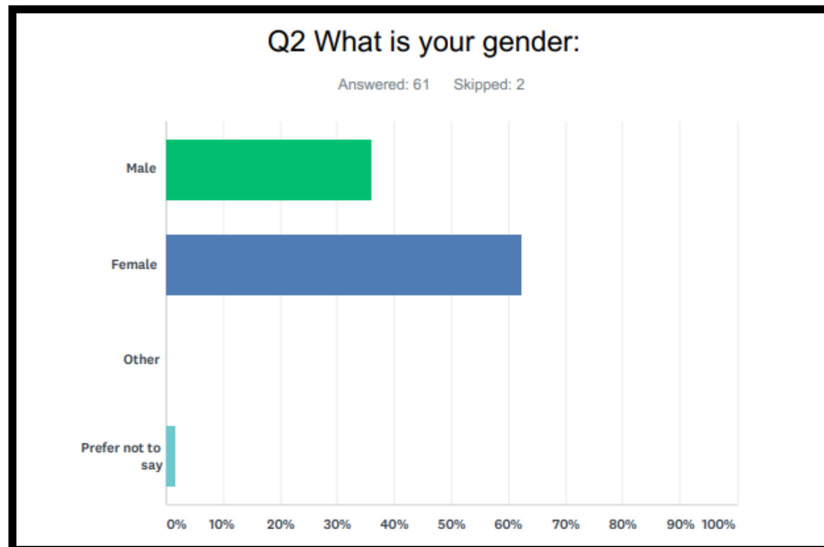
Participants ranged from 18 to over 65 years of age. The restriction was placed on the sample, to try to ensure that only individuals over the age of 18 were able to participate, however these was no upper age limit. The largest cluster of ages fell within the 46-55 age bracket, with 22 individuals sitting in this section, which was unsurprising as the research was aimed at professional workers. There were lower numbers at both end of the scales, 12% being 56 or above and 14.75 below the age of 25. This range meant that a range of variety of attitudes could be explored, from different generations.

Table 3 - Respondents Ages



The gender breakdown of the participants was interesting; 63% of participants were female, 36% were male and 1% did not disclose. The national demographic, as detailed by the 2011 Census in England Wales, was that females accounted for 51% of the population and males for 49%. Thus, the breakdown within this study was comparable to national averages. However, due to the nature of the organisations targeted it was anticipated that there would be a greater response rate from males. For instance, in 2015 female police officers comprised just over a quarter (28.2%) of the England and Wales Police Force (gov.uk, 2015). If this is compared to the demographics of the participants within the study, 12% of the respondents were police officers, showing a high female response rate.

Table 4 - Respondents Genders

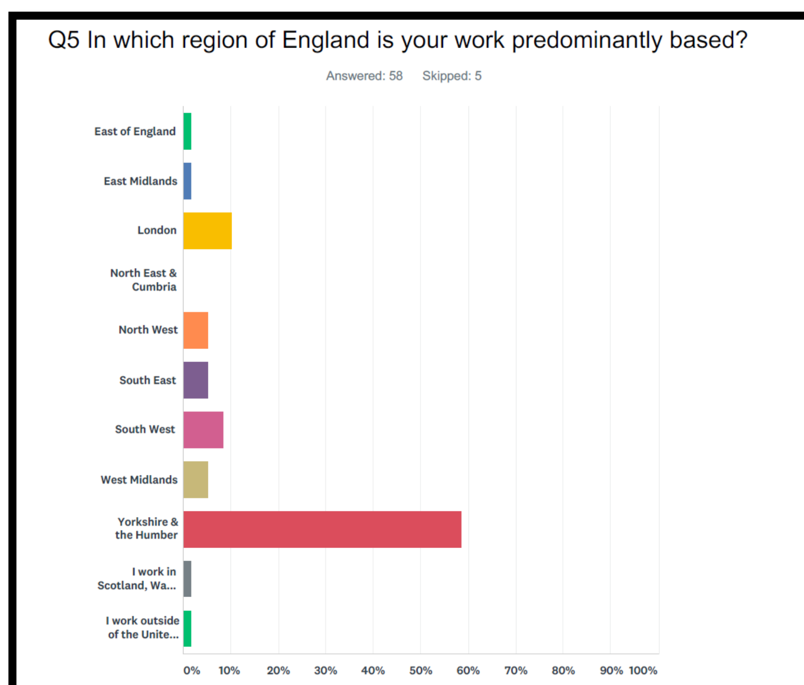


Furthermore, considering the organisations represented in the participant sample - only 1 respondent worked as a legal representative. This may be expected due to the lack of first-hand experience solicitors have with victims of human trafficking. The largest response came from social worker paths, with 34% falling within that category. Charity workers and specialist trafficking support workers made up 28% of the population. The remaining 24.44% were in the 'other' category and contained some notably unusual inclusions, such as funeral director, sports scientist and teacher. These professions were still regarded as relevant, as it was assumed that by actively choosing to take part in the study, they had some experience in dealing with victims of human trafficking.

The lengths of time in the occupations also varied greatly, from a minimum of one monthly term to over 35 years. This breadth ensured that the responses given came from those who had new, clear experience of evolving procedures, alongside those who had participated in the evolution of human trafficking guidelines and witnessed the changes over a prolonged period.

Another demographic consideration is the region in which the participants worked; this is highlighted in the below table. The heaviest areas were Yorkshire & Humberside, with 58.62% and also London, with 12.06%. The other areas were fairly limited, with around 1% to 9% in each. This led to the above explained merging of these smaller response areas, to create an 'other' group, comprising 29.32% of the overall respondents.

Table 5 - Respondents Regions



Following on from the participant demographics, whilst conducting the research the running themes were as follows:

1. Are the current Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) frameworks working to ensure victims of human trafficking are successfully identified and supported, as well as helping to reduce victims of human trafficking?
2. What happens to victims of human trafficking within the first 24 to 48 hours following their identification, or self -referral?
3. Do victim interactions with official organisations follow the MSHTU framework?

Arguably the most interesting area of these questions is the focus on the Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) frameworks, owing to the varied responses already noted to the frameworks and the way in which they can be used by practitioners. Also, it was important to try to ascertain whether these frameworks were used by specific organisations and, if so, if they helped to not only identify the victims of human trafficking but also potentially to aid the referral process. Both of these considerations are key areas in the ongoing treatment of potential victims. Ultimately, the question arising from the developed data was; are victims treated correctly during the identification and referral processes and do the current frameworks help this to happen?

5.2 How are the victims of human trafficking identified, by organisations?

To recap, the development and design of the survey can be seen in Chapter 4.3, along with figures 5 and 6 which outline the process of creating the survey questions (The full survey can be found in Appendix F.)

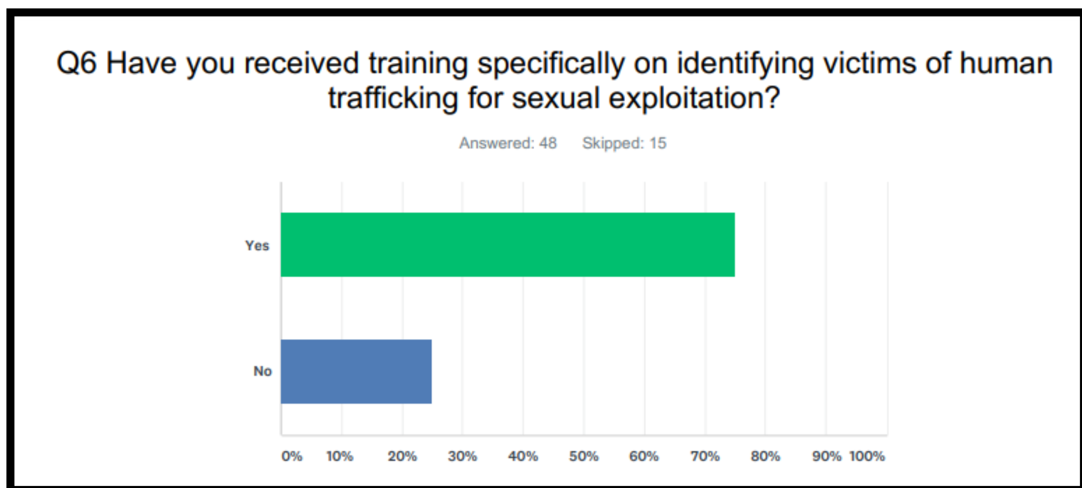
The data gained relating to this first research question creates a broad picture detailing the methods of identification used by the three main types of organisations within the research. These organisations are discussed previously, they are:

1. First responders, such as the police or front-line members of charities
2. Non-government organisations (NGOs), which include charity groups such as the Salvation Army
3. 'Other': general group which comprises of those individuals who may have limited contact with victims, such as teachers, solicitors or social workers

The first three survey questions which were designed to consider the research question highlighted will be linked to the main findings of the research and highlighted as follows:

1. Have you received training specifically on identifying victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation?

Table 6 - Response Data: Have you received training on identifying victims?



This question was posed to explore the amount of people who had received specific training, the results indicated that those people who have been trained are more likely to work in the Yorkshire and London area. It also indicated the most common types of organisations who provide any form of training are: police forces and human trafficking specific groups.

Firstly, the regions will be considered; the results from the survey indicate that those people who have received training on identifying victims of human trafficking, are more likely to work in the Yorkshire and London area. This accounts for 68% of the total number of 'yes' responses. It also indicated the types of organisations who provide training, which tend to be police forces. In particular, West Yorkshire Police which links with human trafficking specific groups, such as Hope for Justice. In total, these organisations take up 2/3rds of the overall pool. The results also show that those who did not receive specific training work in areas such as management or education, where they would arguably be less likely to encounter victims first-hand, as a front-line responder. However, due to the nature of the questionnaire it can be assumed that any individual who chose to take part would be likely to receive some form of exposure to trafficking victims in their line of work. A further consideration is that the 'Other' category only accounts for a small percentage of the overall participant bank; 24% in total.

The focus shifts towards Yorkshire alone, where the majority of participants working in that area (82%) stated that they did receive some form of training. It must be considered that this may be due to participant bias, meaning that those who have completed the questionnaire are more likely to have received training, simply highlighted due to their taking part.

2. On a scale of 1 – 10, with 1 being not very confident and 10 extremely confident, how confident do you feel in your ability to identify a victim?

Confidence in identification is an important question to ask practitioners, as it enables the researcher to consider how assured they are in their own ability to support a victim. As this is anonymous, it is hoped that this encourages the practitioner to provide an honest answer. It is also worth noting that confidence in identification may not translate in to confidence in referral. Thus, having two separate themes is important in distinguishing between which parts of the process encounter the most problems.

The response rate for this question was 90%, suggesting that those who do identify victims are happy to rate their confidence levels. 71% of respondents stated that they are quite or extremely confident in identifying victims of human trafficking. A reason for this significant figure may be the improved training specifically within Yorkshire based regions. It is known that West Yorkshire have taken a lead on combating Human Trafficking, as previously

discussed, with the development of the National Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Network (NATMSN) in 2014. This type of initiative or group creates an increased awareness of the issues within local businesses and ensures that they are able to gain the training required, specific to their industry.

Within the open, further information section of the survey, one participant stated that;

> *'the identification of victims is always reliant upon awareness and resourcing, the greater awareness of the issue that exists, aligned with sufficient resources to respond will always increase the number of victims identified.'*

This shows that the high levels of confidence shown in these responses may be attributed to an increase in public awareness and resourcing, as suggested above. Resourcing is likely to be an area which does create barriers, due to funding and budgets within organisations as well as the varying levels of priority given to Human Trafficking. This particular participant suggests that the identification of victims is reliant on individual awareness of frameworks. Also, the resources available to those who need to use them – such as training and knowledge requirements. Understandably, those who use the tools available to them would be aware that they exist due to the nature of their work. Likewise, it can be seen that those in the 'Other' category exhibit less confidence in identifying; 86% fell below the mark of 'quite confident'. This suggests that they are less knowledgeable, potentially due to a lack of training or awareness of the tools available to them.

3. **A.** Do you follow a framework* to identify and refer potential victims? *in-house, NRM etc.

More than half or the respondents selected that they did not follow a framework of any kind when referring victims. This is a concerning finding as it shows that organisations may be lacking the required protocols to protect victims, as well as to ensure that they receive an adequate level of support and treatment going forward. It is important to provide the same standard of care to all victims, to ensure that they remain safe and secure in the system until they may be rehabilitated.

This question shifts the focus on to the participant's specific methods of identification and the frameworks followed. This was constructed as a closed question initially (yes or no), with the option to then add in the method of identification used in the form of an open answer box. Over half of the respondents stated that they did not follow any framework or specific method of identification at all. This is a concerning but unsurprising finding, the NRM and the MSHTU

frameworks are specific tools used to identify and refer potential victims. However, Davis (2019) argues that these frameworks are not always user friendly. They often use specific terminology that may isolate those unfamiliar with human trafficking. Furthermore, the process itself is unclear with a lack of simplicity on certain aspects. An example of this lack of clarity is the issue of who is able to fill in the referral.

B. If yes, does the way in which victims are identified and referred always follow this framework?

Those who indicated that they do follow a framework mainly selected NRM or in-house within this section. This shows that the NRM is available, for those who have been directed to use this tool. In-house frameworks are an interesting inclusion, as this has not been previously explored. The use of such frameworks will be discussed further and the extent of their usefulness will be investigated.

Of those individuals who stated that they do follow a framework, around 60% followed other methods including their own in-house policy, rather than the NRM specific framework. Respondents stated that the specific methods used ranged from ideas derived from organisational policy, such as 'partnership working' and 'the law', to a more dedicated reliance on supporting associations such as 'the police' and 'the Salvation Army'. One participant stated that reliance on the police was an '*obvious choice'*, however Saunders and Harris (2019) have suggested that many police officers aren't trained as extensively in victim identification and referral as would be necessary or ideal. This leaves the police force in a difficult situation, as they are being relied upon in an area which is not their specialism. Furthermore, many forces aren't equipped with the resources or finances to further develop their trafficking units. Those who do have a dedicated team often rely on a handful of individuals to represent the entire force (Farrell et al. 2019).

The inclusion of the Salvation Army was a positive response, as this is a dedicated referral group who are equipped with the resources to aid people looking to identify or refer victims. Raising awareness of these types of groups is imperative to helping people understand their options and responsibilities, when considering their choices in terms of identification and referral. Two angles to consider following this survey question were whether the restricted use of the NRM was purely down to a lack of awareness, education and training. Or whether the NRM had been considered as a potential tool for these individuals and then dismissed due to potential concerns. These two contrasting ideas will be investigated in the next chapter.

To highlight the way in which victims are (or are not) identified, the NRM statistics from 2017 state that this specific framework was used 5145 times in the year to report potential victims. This is a substantially lower amount than the total predicted number of victims (13,000) within the UK in the same period (Anti-Slavery.org, 2019). This figure suggests disparity between the organisations practically identifying victims and the way in which they are actually being identified and referred through the system. At present, the research suggests that some potential victims are not being identified at all. Those who do attempt to identify victims do not follow a systematic model and often rely on intuition or self-directed models. 86% of participants responded to this question, with a variety of answers. Although there was no overriding response which stood out as a definite method of identification, 19% of respondents stated that they used 'in-house' guidance. This is an interesting finding and essentially a concern. It is acknowledged that there is a definite 'dark figure of crime' within the human trafficking arena. This seems to be exacerbated by the lack of consistency surrounding the identification of potential victims. If organisations do not know how to consistently identify victims, some will, as a result, be overlooked. With such a large number of victims being hidden or unidentified, this is in-part due to the lack of knowledge and information surrounding the frameworks available to individuals and organisations both nationally and locally. This will be further explored in the following chapter.

As well as this, a further question was provided at the end of the survey. This was to enable the participant to develop their suggestions, indicating how this issue may be improved with alterations:

What changes, if any, would you make to the way in which potential victims are identified?

This question aimed to assess the feelings of the participant in a simple, easily identifiable way. By providing the participant with the opportunity to provide in-depth answers if desired, a full picture could be developed in terms of changes needing to be made. 20 respondents provided answers to this question. Of these, 14 were brief suggestions in the areas of; raise public awareness, increase education in schools and provide more training to front line workers. One of the most interesting findings was the suggestion of increased multi-agency collaboration, suggested by 3 respondents. One participant championed the need for a '*multi-agency database'* which could be accessed across all organisations, involved in human trafficking identification, referral and support. The remaining participants focused on the needs of the victims, expressing that they should receive more guidance, support and a longer recovery period.

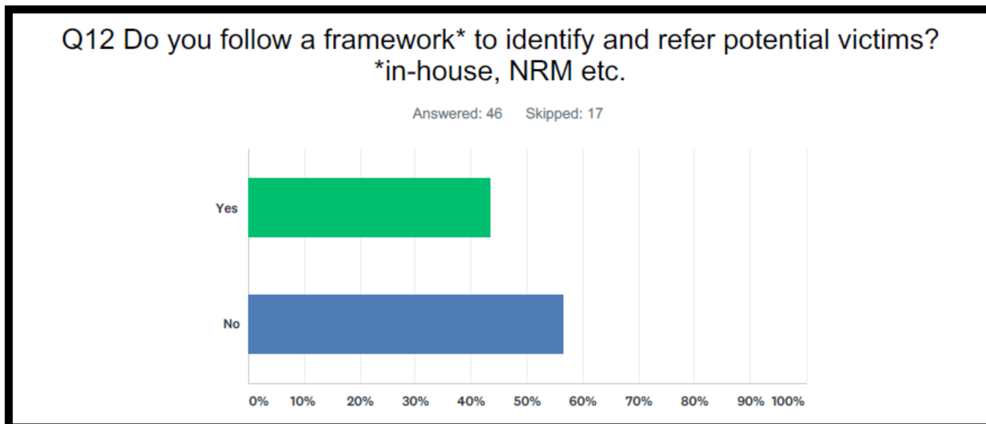
When considering how the victims are identified by organisations it was important for the data to cover practical implications, such as the identification process, as well the way respondent feel about the process, assessed in the open question. To conclude, this research question is summarised by the amount of people who have received training on identifying victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. The emerging trends within this section are that there are a significant number of practitioners who have received training on identifying victims of human trafficking, however around 26% have not. This may lead to wider issues relating to the knowledge of victim identification and the way victims are recognised. Suggestions for further training and increased knowledge are themes which run throughout this section, with participants clearly engaged in raising awareness on a public level, as well as within their own organisations. In particular, the desire for a multi-agency approach has been identified and will be discussed further in the next chapter.

5.3 Does the method of identifying victims always follow the MSHTU framework?

It has been recognised from the literature that victims may not always be identified, or those who are, have not been identified through a specific model. This research question was targeted to begin to unpick the actual methods used and try to cement the justifications for using a particular method, or not. By using a number of different survey questions, the main aim was to gain information surrounding the how victims are identified, considering the specific links to the National suggested framework, also investigating if these frameworks are not followed, then what is used instead? A further consideration was the potential lack of consistency across organisations and regions in the country and the subsequent impact this may have on identification and referral.

In order to establish if the participants used a framework, this was addressed in the previous question 'Do you follow a framework* to identify and refer potential victims? *in-house, NRM etc.' - as highlighted in the responses; over half of participants do not use a specific framework to identify a potential victim of human trafficking. This would initially suggest that over half of the participants do not follow the MSHTU framework, as they do not follow a framework at all. This is a large number of individuals who are all involved in varying degrees of responsibility, with potential victims, who do not have a consistent method or ensuring these potential victims receive the support, direction and referral that they likely need.

Table 7 - Response Data: Do you follow a framework?



This in itself is a substantial finding, as the use of a nationwide policy would create cohesion between organisations and individual practitioners in the field. A framework could be used by all practitioners to guide the process of victim identification. This would mean that anyone involved could efficiently act on intelligence or information they have gained to positively affect the victims, providing greater clarity in the moves they subsequently make. This could be either in substantial ways, such as assisting police officers or front-line staff, who may come face-to-face with potential victims every day. It may also aid those who have more limited contact with potential victims, such as charity workers or teachers.

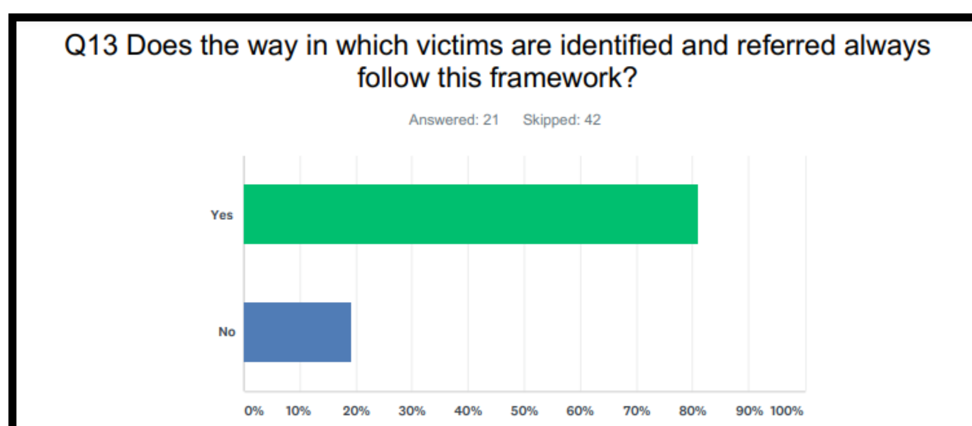
The way in which this question was worded was also important as consistency when dealing with any victim of crime is extremely important, thus the use of a reliable referral framework is imperative. Even if the respondent stated that they use the MSHTU approved framework – this was a minority. This suggests a great lack of constancy, which will in turn have a large effect on those victims and their progression through the criminal justice system. A further consideration is to look at why people are not using the NRM framework. A possible explanation that will be considered further in the next chapter is that the framework itself may be complicated, or perhaps too broad to explicitly apply to the particular sector the practitioner works in.

This finding shows an overall rejection of the Modern Slavery Human Trafficking (MSHTU) Framework, from the participants within this study. Almost 60% of participants indicated that they do not always follow the framework when identifying and referring potential victims. This framework was created with practitioners in mind, to help them to identify and refer victims, but also to provide them with a tool to deal with victims and effectively keep them safe. If the

framework were to be improved, it could be used successfully to reassure practitioners and provide them with clear guidance when dealing with vulnerable people in a sensitive situation. The ability to follow a successful, generic framework throughout the country would have the ability to bring practitioners together, through the use of a standardised set of guidelines. This would also help to ensure that all victims were being treated the same way, by competent, confident practitioners and front-line responders.

Does the way in which victims are identified and referred always follow this [answer identified in the previous question] framework?

Table 8 - Response Data: Does the way in which victims are identified and referred always follow this framework?



The minority group of those who do follow a specific framework went on to say that they did use the same method consistently. This may have been the MSHTU framework or their own organisations identification and referral process. Just under 20% of the group stated that they do not always follow the framework provided by the MSHTU or their own organisation. These individuals were then able to provide feedback and specify what they may have used instead.

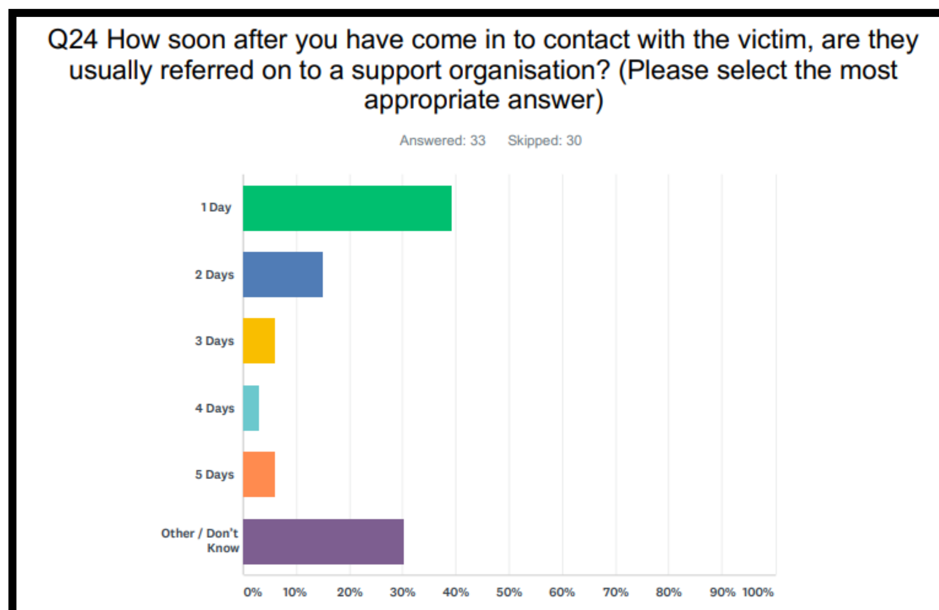
'Initiative' and 'experience' were words which dominated the text. Participants often suggested that their own knowledge on how to handle the subject would be the main source of guidance in the identification and referral process of potential victims. This is an interesting finding, as it suggests that practitioners seek guidance and structure when dealing with issues of victimisation and criminal deviance. However, in keeping with the wider field of victim identification, it seems that practitioners are open to their own interpretations of assisting victims, using their own knowledge as guidance. This may be a direct result of an arguably fragmented system, whereby frameworks have developed over time and not being readily available at the point when victims were beginning to emerge. One practitioner stated that

their own experience was '*necessary, as the organisations does not have clear guidance*', thus increased pressure was placed on the practitioner to develop their own methods, as well as having to be dependent on instinct.

The reasons for the participants choice of whether to follow a framework, or not, were interesting and based on entirely differing viewpoints. Within the responses, one participant stated that *'In situations where the preservation of life is the main objective, this will always take priority over referral'*. Overall, the participant makes an interesting point; that all victims may be at risk and if this is the case, the priority will be to keep the victim safe. This should essentially be the same consideration for everyone, with the preserving of life being a key factor in the criminal justice system. However, to explore this comment further, it does convey a lack of trust in the NRM system as well as the lack of focus the MSHTU framework places on helping and rehabilitating victims, to further protect them. This protection would not just be in the immediate future, but ongoing with the hope that victims will be kept safe throughout the identification and referral process, as well as the rehabilitation period. This would allow victims to feel safe, as they are reintegrated back in to the community. As this is a key priority, the research suggests that practitioners do not feel like the current system enables the full protection of victims throughout the system to happen effectively. This is a distinct concern and one which will have a detrimental effect on the whole system.

How soon after you have come in to contact with the victim, are they usually referred on to a support organisation?

Table 9 - Response Data: How soon after you have come in to contact with the victim, are they usually referred on to a support organisation?



This question begins to consider the link between identification and referral. It referred directly to the initial contact made and the subsequent referral to any support organisation. Within this survey question, there was no guidance provided surrounding the MSHTU recommended time-frames, which were deliberately omitted to allow the participants to clearly answer without any prompts. Interestingly the second most common response (30%) was the answer 'other/don't know'. This suggested that the participants simply weren't aware of the exact timeframes or that the timeframes exceeded the maximum suggested frame of five days. This may mean that there is a difference between those who identify and those who go on to actually refer the victims. As the MSHTU states that only first responders are able to complete the referral, this indicates that there may be one practitioner identifying and another referring the victim. One responder states that this is a '*confusing aspect of the system'* and that they *'do not know who can make the referral, so just send the victim to the police'*. This is a response which has been observed previously, particularly relating to smaller, local charities, with less training and knowledge of the system. This suggests that these smaller groups were unaware of their restricted ability to refer a potential victim, furthermore they would not know where to turn for this stage in the process. Passing a victim on to another agency can be an effective progression when the identifying organisations have strong links with first responders, such as the police or the Salvation Army. The issue arises when organisations do not have any link with an official body, which is often the case with smaller NGOs or private companies.

Linking the above concerns to the MSFTU framework specifically and the initial guidance on time frames, it can be seen that the unit does not offer detailed advice on the period of time between initial identification and subsequent referral to the NRM. The Anti-Slavery Commissioner and Modern Slavery Helpline (2019) provide an overview of this process. The provided 45-day reflation period is only activated once the NRM SCA has received the referral from the First Responder (FR). At this point the victim's information will have already passed through at least three groups. The referral time through to the SCA taking hold of the case is not very transparent, which causes issues with awareness and consistency from the bottom of the referral process. Furthermore, this process is one which many practitioners are unfamiliar with, which this can be seen through the varied responses given. Those who have entered a lower time scale on the questionnaire, such as 1 or 2 days, are acting quickly when they have received the intelligence. It can also be assumed that they are familiar with the system and know how to process the referral correctly. In theory this may be beneficial to the victim, in terms of moving them through the system to enable receipt of the referral by the NRM and be granted a reflection period. However, this also means that the referral itself from the initial

first responder through the SCA and in to the NRM may not be as detailed, or potentially as accurate as it may have been, if there wasn't pressure to refer quickly. This is a key area of discussion, considering the pressure responders face to act on intelligence and refer the victim through as soon as possible. This may have a detrimental effect on the wellbeing and future rehabilitation status of the victim, due to the rushed nature of the case progression. This is a delicate issue; it is important to refer victims in a timely and efficient manner. However, it is also important to ensure that victims are well supported and that their case is fully understood, to give them as much chance as possible of being actually identified as a victim.

This section shows that practitioners fit into one of three key areas:

1. Those who identify victims and always use the NRM framework to do so - 22% of the respondents.
2. Those who identify victims and do not use the NRM consistently, but use it alongside another method of identification and referral - 33% of the respondents.
3. Those who never use the NRM and rely on their own methods entirely - 52% of the respondents.

This finding identifies major inconsistencies in the way in which victims are being identified and passed through the system. If this is an on-going issue, which it appears to be, this means that practitioners are using entirely different methods of identification and referral. There is a lack of a recognised, uniform system in place nationally to ensure that all victims are being identified, protected and referred. Essentially, victims are consistently being progressed in different ways without any regularity. This directly leads to the next chapter, which considers what actually happens to the victim within this process, from initial identification to the referral and ultimate outcome of the process.

5.4 Does the type of first responder agency effect who gets identified as a victim of human sex trafficking?

This is a key question which directly relates to the organisations involved in the identification of the victim. It considers whether or not there is a relationship between the first responder organisations, charities or individuals who come in to first contact with the victim directly. There is also the consideration of the individual actually being identified as a victim of human trafficking, rather than, for example, as an offender or simply a foreign national. This also considers the abstract response of the victim's themselves, looking at whether they are more

likely to respond positively to some organisations over others. It will also be discussed whether this should therefore be taken into account in the human trafficking victim identification and referral process, through the use of alternative frameworks.

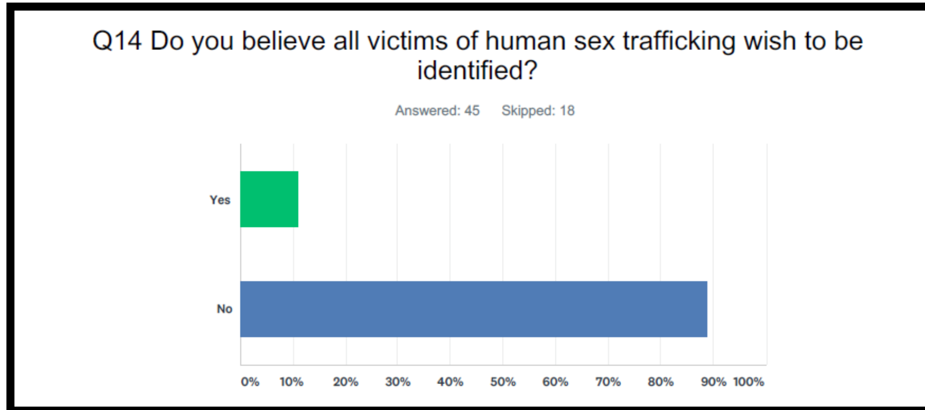
This finding creates an interesting link between the organisation and the response given, in terms of the belief that victims may not wish to be identified. This then creates a dynamic between the view of the individual and the actual figures of identification. The charity organisation Unseen (2018) state that '5,145 potential victims were submitted to the National Referral Mechanism in 2017', which shows that a substantial number of victims are not being identified. This under-identification may have a significant connection to the attitudes of the organisations involved in the identification and referral process. The specific attitudes of each of the three identified organisations is highlighted in the following table:

Table 10 - Response Data: Organisational trends

	Victim wishes to be identified: YES / NO		
Organisation	**YES**	**NO**	**Total**
Public Sector	2	33	35
Third Sector	3	4	7
Other	0	3	3
Total	5	40	45
Percentage Total	11.11%	88.89%	100%

The consistent opinion throughout the literature, as discussed previously, is that victims are not being adequately identified. However, this may not be the case; there may be a deeper relationship with the outlook of responder organisations who are directly involved with potential victims of human trafficking. It can be seen that almost 90% of participants acknowledged that they did not believe victims wished to be identified, this figure is actioned against the organisation codes and the data produced is as follows:

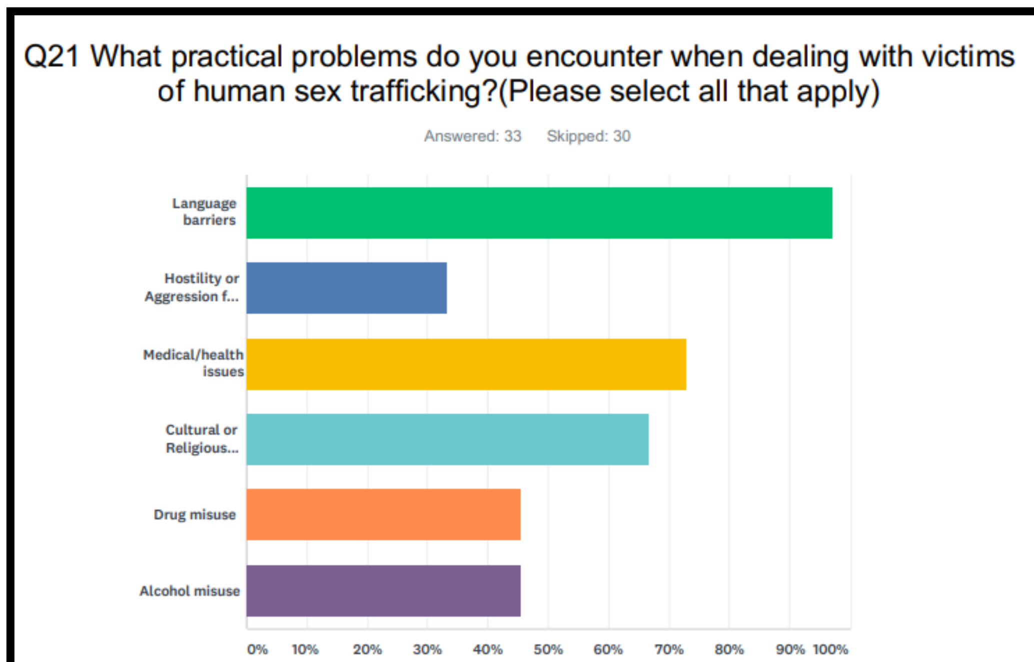
Table 11 - Response Data: Do victims wish to be identified?



What practical problems do you encounter when dealing with victims of human sex trafficking?

This question aimed to delve into the problematic situations that practitioners may face when they first come in to contact with a victim. It provided the participant with a number of options to select, which may all pose as some sort of issue to the responder in the identification process of the victims. It is essential to reiterate that there is a large variation in respondents within this questionnaire, thus meaning the responses are diverse and shed light on many different issues faced, some of which are more generalisable than others.

Table 12 - Response Data: What practical problems do you encounter when dealing with victims of human sex trafficking?



Practical problems in identification and referral may be seen as barriers to progression for potential victims. The more barriers there are, the less likely the victim is to receive the standard of care they require. This may be due to a lack of understanding, an inability to understand the victims or due to health problems, such as drug use, pregnancy or the need for medical treatment. This data highlights language barriers as a problem for many participants, however most notably the public sector organisations. 96% of individuals selected language barriers and of that 74% were members of a public sector organisation. The next largest problem was medical issues, this therefore is an area for concern. 74% identified this area - 35% of participants selected both of these variables as the only two issues. Victims need for medical treatment is substantial and the issues they face vary from low level infection and illness, to drug or alcohol related complications. A large number of victims also suffer substantial physical abuse, which often results in bruising, cuts and in extreme cases, broken bones. Health problems also encompasses psychiatric illness and many victims suffer a substantial amount of mental health problems, owing to the abuse and coercion they face. The most common forms of mental illnesses are stress, anxiety and depression. All of which will likely require medical intervention to treat and attempt to overcome.

The most common answer was that 'language barriers' cause the biggest concern for the organisations. This is further highlighted at the beginning of the NRM best practice guide, which states that 'There may be language and communication barriers, including literacy or learning disabilities, as well as cultural considerations'. This is a concern for both the responder and the potential victims, the degree of the barrier will vary from case to case and may be far more severe in some instances than others. However, it may also be assumed that most major organisations have direct access to a translator. They may be on hand or on the other end of a phone call to readily assist in such matters, should that be necessary. This is supported by the data, as no respondents from the police selected 'language barriers'. Although, for smaller organisations such as independent charities or places like churches, schools or doctors surgery's, the availability of a translator may not be as immediate. This may cause some serious concerns between the responder and the victims. Again, the data shows this is accurate, as 8 participants from smaller NGOs selected 'language barriers' as a potential obstacle. The outcome of this disparity may be that the victim does not get identified as quickly as would be ideal. This may also cause escalating problems such as the victim not being identified at all which may ultimately result in re-victimisation and the victim falling back in to the trafficking cycle.

Participants were then given the opportunity to provide written comments in the 'other' section, only 5 actually utilised this option. A comment made by one participant was; '*lack of trust*' being a major concern for the organisations. The victim's lack of trust may be based on a number of causes. The participant states that victims '*don't trust the police'*, this may be extended to a general lack of trust for authorities or specifically for certain people, perhaps due to cultural, racial or gender bias. Although this cannot be eradicated, it is important for organisations to be able to increase trust and work with the victim. This would enable them to be effectively protected from potentially being re-victimised, as well as making the rescue process more comfortable, as it is often traumatic for the victim. Hanson (2016) looks at methods of preventing re-victimisation, which can be linked with victim-practitioner interaction. If the responder is unable to effectively speak to the victim or to understand them accurately, this may lead to inconsistencies in evidence. It may also create a further lack of trust between the parties, due to the inability to communicate effectively. Many victims come from countries where the police and governments are thought of as being untrustworthy and even dangerous in some instances. If the victim has come from one of these countries and has a general fear of authority already, they are unlikely to want to engage with the NRM or Criminal Justice system. This lack of trust is a real issue as the authorities are likely to be involved in some capacity, within the process. If the victims aren't willing to engage potentially due to fear, this makes the process more difficult and places further time restraints on the referral. Equally, if the victim is unwilling to cooperate there is little the organisations can do, as the process relies on victim consent to be referred through the NRM. A further issue is the way in which victims may be identified. This will be explored in further detail in the next sub-chapter, with focus on the police force specifically. Essentially, the lack of trust is a key issue in the process it is also very difficult to combat (Dinisman & Moroz, 2017; Franklin et al. 2020).

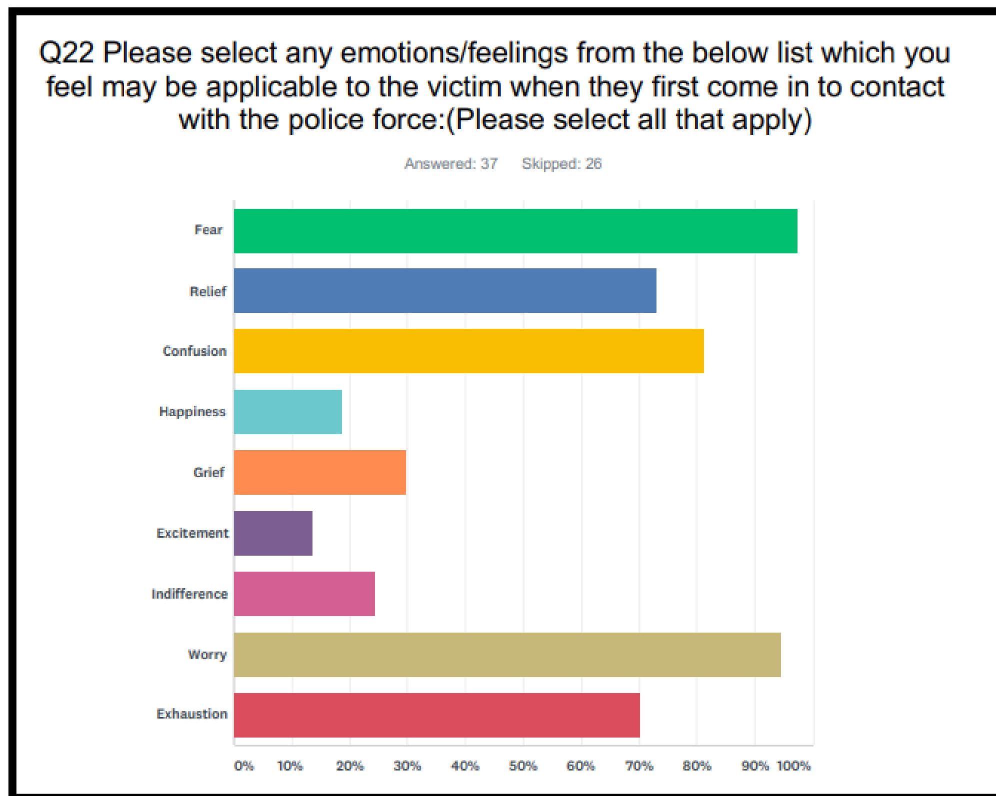
Further practical problems were addressed differently within the response section for the questionnaire. It is interesting that one option provided was 'cultural or religious issues' which 66% of participants selected. Furthermore, in the section provided for further responses 2 respondents mentioned '*shame and embarrassment'*. It could be argued that shame may be prevalent through cultural ideologies, which may be based on the victim's family or community (Maruna & Pali, 2020). The shame they face as a result of their ordeal often leaves them unwilling to return to the country or their local family. This may be due to the embarrassment they feel, which is not of their own doing. This is a wider reaching issue, which could be considered more appropriately within the MSHTU framework. This is a large part of the victim experience and the subsequent reintegration back into society following the victimisation they faced. It may also be considered that if a victim feels shame they may not be able, or wish to,

be removed from their trafficker's capture. This is due to the bond they may have developed incorporating the concept of Stockholm Syndrome; the victim develops a strong alliance and dependence on the traffickers whilst in their captivity. If the victim cannot see a way to rid themselves of the embarrassment they feel, it is likely they would see no way out at that time (Mayer 2019; Boyle & Clay-Warner, 2018).

Medical conditions and drug or alcohol addictions are another area of great concern for the authorities and organisations who come in to contact with the victim initially - each accounted for 48% of the responses individually. A considerable practical problem is that many victims require urgent medical attention or they are in need of support for an addiction (Roberson, 2017). The most common medical emergencies are usually for sexually transmitted diseases or pregnancies, particularly for the victims of sexual exploitation. Drug and alcohol addictions are another concern, particularly as they have the potential to cause such consequential underlying psychological impacts on the victims over time (Gibbons & Stocklosa, 2016). Again, the link with cultural beliefs and experiences here is prominent, as victims may not have been able to gain a great amount of medical attention in their home country. This is an issue as it further limits the trust of the UK system and the authorities who work within it. There is however, some low-level guidance within the MSHTU frameworks. If there is a significant medical emergency when the victim comes into contact with a first responder, the NRM policy states that 'It is important to ensure that the appropriate physical healthcare and psychological support is provided to all victims in a timely manner'. However, yet again, this is incredibly vague and does not provide a great amount of guidance to the responders. It can be assumed that the first point of contact would be the ambulance/paramedic services, in situations of physical medical emergencies. Although, if a victim suffered from traumatic psychological issues, the support and advice surrounding this may be more restricted due to a lack of appropriate immediate referral systems available to practitioners (Le, 2017).

Please select any emotions/feelings from the below list which you feel may be applicable to the victim when they first come in to contact with the police force.

Table 13 - Response Data: Please select any emotions/feelings from the below list which you feel may be applicable to the victim when they first come in to contact with the police force.



This question aimed to establish the level of empathy responders have with the victim and to explore expectations against reality when victims are originally discovered by the police specifically. The inclusion of both positive and negative emotions within this list was intended to allow the participant to select the most appropriate feelings, without the sense of pressure or guidance. Providing a mixed pool of options would allow the participant to naturally select whichever emotion/s are most appropriate. Unsurprisingly, the most prominent emotions were negative ones, with over 90% of participants selecting 'fear' and/or 'worry' when they first come in to contact with the police

The data also suggests clear cultural differences between police forces in this country and the victim's country of origin, which will be further explored. Some police forces around the world are considered to be dangerous and unpredictable. Some experience extensive corruption, such as the South African and Indonesian authorities. However, it is acknowledged that levels of corruption are also present in the Police in the UK (Buttle, Davies & Meliala, 2016; Agbiboa,

2015; Abbink, Ryvkin & Serra, 2018). Furthermore, Jonson (2019) highlights that countries known to experience extensive police corruption would be more likely to be affected by 'trafficking outflow'. This suggests that more trafficked victims are transported out of the countries where police corruption is most severe. This is supported by the data as 'fear' of the police in the NRM system can be linked to corruption. Dandurand (2017) considers the links between police investigation, international cooperation and immigration policies. In some instances, the police are intrinsically involved with trafficking gangs, taking pay-outs and facilitating the movement of individuals. This can be common knowledge for victims and cause them much fear and confusion, as highlighted by one participant '*Mistrust of police based on experience of police back in their home country'*. For victims who arrive in the UK and are confronted with the police straight away, they may be likely to feel worry and fear. This could be due to the fact that they compare the force to their own and have little reason to trust them. This is a huge hurdle for the police forces and is an intrinsic failing of the current framework. There are limited options to encourage trust and cohesion. If the victim does not trust the first responder, often a police officer, the case is restricted from the start as it becomes increasingly difficult to gain information from the victim (Farrell et al. 2019).

In terms of policy the MSHTU framework and best practice guide highlights possible issues with the first contact made by the police, however it does little to provide any reasonable solutions to the problems the police may face. This lack of guidance for the police is a clear issue which has been highlighted within the questionnaire, one participant noted; *'The police have a really important decision to make in a very short space of time re the NRM / support and are very often under pressure from alphas, so are never going to consent to the NRM, as it's a giant leap into the unknown'*. This highlights the lack of trust in the system and suggests that the 'unknown' could be a lack of guidance and support on how to effectively deal with victims. As stated, it is a hugely important process not only for the potential victims, but also for the force and the reputation of the government, the Home Office and the NRM. Also, there is a very limited timescale in which to make this important decision. If the police get it wrong, it is likely that the potential victim will be released and would be almost certain to fall back in to the hands of the traffickers. This is a great concern, but this pressure does not make the job of the first responder any easier.

Another concern is if the police wrongly accuse a potential victim of being an offender or an illegal immigrant. This is often likely to happen in cases of drugs raids or sexual exploitation, when a potential victim may be first identified in a cannabis factory, brothel or sex shop. The police, when undertaking raids, may arrest the individual on the basis that they are a sex worker, rather than assume they are a victim (Snow, Smith & Radatz, 2019). Again, this has the

potential to place the police in a negative light, as it will further limit the trust between the potential victim and the police force. It is likely that relationships between an officer and a victim will be jeopardised if a raid and subsequent arrest is the first contact they have with the police force. In the questionnaire, one participant stated that the victims will experience *'shock when they realize the police are there to arrest, rather than support them'*. This is a major concern, but again one which receives very little guidance form the NRM and MSHTU. Throughout the exploration of the impact that the responder agency may have on the victims, it is essential to consider who the respondents actually are, as this will have a crucial impact on the findings.

5.5 Do the personal characteristics of the victim effect whether they are identified as a victim of human sex trafficking?

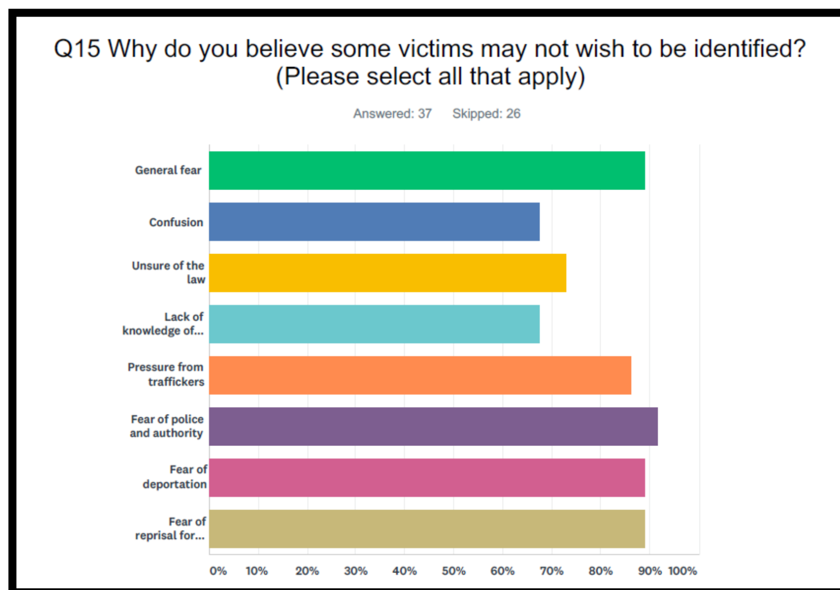
This is an important question when exploring the reasons or lack of, for identification of potential victims. Perception of individuals is very important, as this will likely impact the level of support they receive from the police and other organisations. There are many different factors which can influence victim identification, however the personal characteristics, such as race, religion, physical appearance and attitudes of the individuals, are an area often overlooked within the academic literature. These are all areas which should be explored as organisations may unknowingly be treating victims differently due to certain characteristics. This survey question aimed to shed a light on these issues and break down some of the potential barriers experienced when victims are attempting to access justice and subsequent rehabilitation. A further consideration is the potential link to re-victimisation and whether certain characteristics are connected with this.

Do you believe all victims of human sex trafficking wish to be identified?

Gaining an insight into how victims perceive their situation is important, as it allows the organisations involved in identifying and rescuing the victim to somewhat understand their position. The lack of understanding of the victim's situation is likely to play a key part in the responses received. Many of the responders have a real absence of experience in the area of human trafficking identification and referral. This is not necessarily due to inability, but more likely due to the crime itself being hidden. There is a general lack of identifiable victims, therefore a lack of responders who have identified in great numbers. This suggests that the view of victims may be influenced by anecdotal evidence and historical cases or research, not consistent first-hand experience.

96% of respondents believed that victims do not wish to be identified. This may be due to a number of factors, which concern their present situation or the options they have available to them. This view may also subconsciously affect the way in which authorities deal with the victims, due to their pre-conceived notions of what a victim does or does not want. If a respondent attends a scene whereby the victims is reluctant to cooperate, they may see this as resistance. However, it is more likely that the victim will be fearful or may not know who the respondent is or what the organisation aims to do (Farrell et al. 2019).

Table 14 - Response Data: Why do you believe some victims may not wish to be identified?



Why do you believe some victims do not wish to be identified by first responder agencies?

The follow-up question asked why the participants feel the way they do and provided eight separate reasons to select from. Each of the provided responses for this particular question rated highly, with an over 60% response rate per option. The most popular response (93%) was 'fear of police and authority', which directly links to the data findings discussed in the previous sub-chapter, relating to how victims view the police. The lowest selection was 'lack of knowledge of the country' (67%). This percentage helps to highlight a number of key problems, chief among them that there was a great range of participant responses. Those from the police, healthcare setting and NGOs chose at least 3 responses - suggesting that there are varied opinions surrounding the matter. If the responses vary, there may be a lack of knowledge surrounding victims and their circumstances. This again may lead to a lack of identification, due to the responders not believing that the victims wish to be identified. If the respondent trusts this is due to the victim being 'better off' as a trafficked person that may provoke a different reaction and a different way of dealing with the situation. Compared to if

the victim did not wish to be identified due to a more vulnerable reason, such as fear or illness (Campana and Varese, 2016).

A key finding from the extended answers was the suggestion that '*Although exploited, sex work is preferable to alternatives in home country*', as written by one respondent. This is interesting as it is often suggested that the conditions victims in the UK face are still better in terms of the quality of life than those they are subjected to in their home country. More often than not, victims in the UK have a roof over their heads, food and water, as well as the potential to earn small amounts of money (Rao & Presenti, 2012). However, this response highlights potential cultural bias from the research participants. It is worth considering what the 'alternatives' suggested may be and why a participant may believe that sex or drug work is a preferable alternative to being a victim of human trafficking. Yousaf (2016) discusses trafficking as a result of attempting to flee violence in war-torn countries. This is an area to consider and may also be linked to some of the other reasons victims may not wish to be identified, such as 'pressure' (86%), 'fear of deportation' (89%) and 'fear of reprisal from family' (89%).

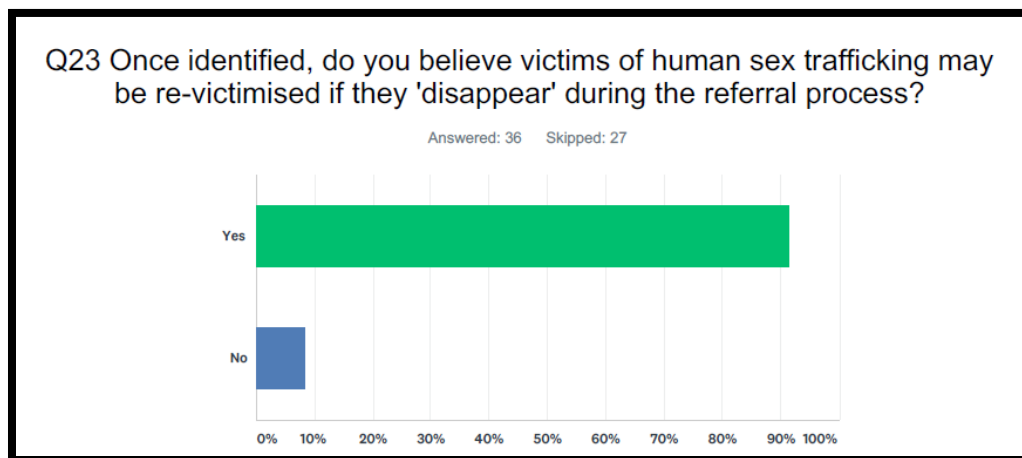
In some circumstances, this is not the case and victims can be subjected to horrific conditions. However, for the majority the environment can certainly be a small improvement on the conditions experienced in their home countries, where victims are often homeless, starving or suffering from medical issues. If victims are more likely to accept their trafficking status, to ensure they are not deported and sent back to the conditions they lived in previously, this places huge pressure on the organisations tasked with dealing with the victims. An individual may resist identification or opt out of the referral process, if they feel like they may lose what little security they have in their current situation. This is especially common in labour trafficking, where victims may earn nominal amounts of money, but they are safe and somewhat secure in their situation. With female victims, they may have been trafficked from a country where there is substantial gender inequality. This would have a big impact on their position and the exploitation they may be subjected to as a trafficked victim. These victims are often made to work as prostitutes, for up to twelve hours a day, with many clients. However, they are paid for their services, if not in currency, with food and shelter. This can be a safer arrangement than in countries of origin, where females may have been raped or abused on a regular basis. This poses huge problems for the authorities who deal with these victims, it is difficult for responders to show that they are a safe option, who can offer help and support to a victim who has only ever know abuse and exploitation. A further issue for female victims, is that responders are often male, which challenges the traditional views held by women who have been trafficked into prostitution, as their captors are frequently males. This further links

to the lack of trust victims may experience, particularly when faced with the option of being identified. However, increasingly female traffickers are recruiting victims after 'working their way' up from being a victim themselves. This is a further issue which will be discussed in the next section.

Once identified, do you believe victims of human sex trafficking may be re-victimised if they 'disappear' during the referral process?

Firstly, it is important to identify the word 'disappear'; this refers to a victim not completing the identification and referral process, due to them voluntarily withdrawing for any reason. Often this means that the victims will essentially go missing, with no warning and little by way of a sign. The organisations will be unlikely to know where they have gone and the victims will not complete the process of identification and referral. It has already been identified that participants believe that many victims do not wish to be identified for a number of reasons. This theory then extends itself to the likelihood of victims engaging with the entire NRM process. The use of the word disappear was intended to cause an emotive response from participants, ensuring they were able to link the idea of the victim effectively running away, with the consideration of them being more or less likely to be re-victimised as a result of this.

Table 15 – Response Data: Will victims be re-victimised?



The above table shows that over 90% of respondents said that they think victims would be re-victimised if they were to disappear during the referral process. This is a large percentage of the overall sample, which suggests that there are significant concerns amongst practitioners relating to the threat victims face, if they are not adequately looked after and protected. Practitioners want the victim to progress through the referral pathway and receive as much help as possible, however this is not the reality of the situation. Until 2019, there was a lack of

data surrounding re-victimisation statistics relating to victims who are already in the system. However, the release of the UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery in 2019 published a range of figures, gained through the collection of NRM data. Evidence suggests that re-victimisation is prevalent, however this is a difficult area to quantify as those victims who have disappeared from the system are often untraceable. Therefore, it can be difficult to know if they have been re-victimised or if they have escaped to freedom. The research suggests that by linking trafficking to other crimes, similar in nature to some aspects of the phenomenon, such as domestic abuse, prostitution or drug work, correlations can be seen between victimisation and escape. This is particularly evident when victims have a form of loyalty to their trafficker or they are in debt to them. The government have set a specific priority known as 'Prevent' within the 2019 Modern Slavery Report, which focuses on preventing instances of re-offending and re-victimisation.

5.6 What provisions do victims initially receive, within the first 24 hours following identification? (i.e. accommodation, medical services, food, clothing, support)

This is a really important area of the questionnaire which begins to tie together the actual experiences of the victims before, during and after their potential identification and referral. A key idea throughout this was; when individuals are identified, are they treated as victims from that point? Do they receive the same support as other victims of crime would? This is as essential part of the victim experience. It will likely have a substantial effect on the way they progress through the system, as well as the way in which they are rehabilitated following the process. If victims are subjected to poor conditions, do not receive adequate support, or are not given the help they fully need, they are more likely to have a negative experience. This may lead to a lack of engagement or a desire to escape the system. Conversely, the victim may have a positive experience with substantial support and immediate care in the form of supplies and accommodation. With this, it can be predicted that they would be more likely to fully engage with the process and have a better chance of successful reintegration into society.

This was considered directly through the question 'How do you initially decide where to send a victim following first contact? (Please provide as much information as possible)' the respondent was provided with a box to write as much information as desired. The emergent code from this question became the distinction between official options, such as a safe house and unregulated places, such as hotels and own accommodation. One finding was that 57% of

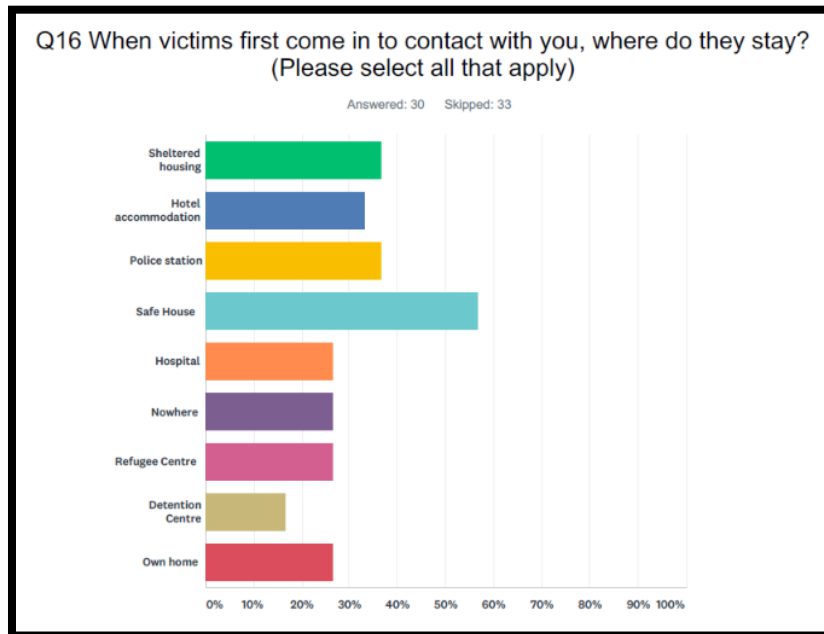
participants selected safe house, which was not expected. The research suggests that many victims are not kept in a safe house, rather they are left to find their own accommodation, or they are kept in police cells. However, a problem with this question could be the implication of the victims already being identified as such. For instance, if the questions were worded 'potential victim' the responses may have been different, as first responders would include individuals who were only suspected to be a victim. As previously discussed, the research shows that often individuals are not immediately identified as a victim of trafficking, so if perhaps they were viewed as a criminal, the response may have differed significantly.

In general, when exploring victims and the experiences they have, the initial hours following their victimisation are of extreme importance. This experience is likely overwhelming and somewhat traumatic (Karmen, 2012). This could be made more distressing through the involvement of new people and groups, as well as the way in which the victim is dealt with. Stressful factors such as pressure on the victims to answer questions and provide their witness accounts of what has happened, as well as a lack of information being given to them could be detrimental to their continuing rehabilitation process (Wohlfarth, Winkel & Van Den Brink, 2002). This question aimed to delve into the way in which first responders deal with victims and what they think the advantages and disadvantages of this process may be. As well as providing the opportunity to give information on how the process may be improved in the future, if needed.

When victims first come into contact with you, where do they stay?

This question was posed to gain an initial insight in to the views of participants, however it was acknowledged that the listed options may vary for different areas and were not extensive. The options were; Sheltered housing, Hotel accommodation, Police station, Safe House, Hospital, Nowhere, Refugee Centre, Detention Centre, Own home. This list covered the main options for workers, giving a clear spread of residences. The question stated 'first come into contact with you' therefore a time scale was not given, as different respondents may meet the victims at different stages, this therefore gives a well-rounded view of overall treatment of victims. The responses were varied, however there were some front runners, with 'safe house' taking 56% of the responses, and 'police station' and 'sheltered housing' following closely behind, both with 38%. The least common response from the selection was 'detention centre' with only a 16% selection rate.

Table 16 - Response Date: Where do victims stay?



Beginning with the least popular response, this is an interesting finding, as it was predicted that 'own home' would be the least common. Allowing the victim to return home is potentially acknowledging that victims would be allowed to return to their captors or be released from the protection of services. This is both dangerous and essentially unhelpful to the victims, as it would increase the chances of the victim being re-victimised. This response gained 26%, which is still a relatively low statistic. The consideration here is the lack of context for this particular response, as this may be an inclusion for victims who refused immediate support or those who were left to consider their options and the path they wished to take. Another reflection is that in some areas, there may be a lack of alternative accommodation. This may also be the case for the detention centre selection; with support for immigration being closely linked to human trafficking in some areas, it is not a surprise that this is an option for some respondents. It is, however, to some extent reassuring to see detention centres so low on the selection list. This suggests that it is last resort for respondents, who do not want to encourage links between immigration and human trafficking, when the lines are already somewhat blurred in many instances.

At the other end of the scale, the most commonly selected answers are largely as expected. Police station was the second most common response, which was anticipated to feature highly for two key reasons; time restraints and general confusion. This response was selected by a variety of respondents including charity workers and police officers. This shows the range of beliefs and that there is clear indication that a police station is a common temporary

residential option for a victim of human trafficking. It has been identified that there are issues with identifying victims as offenders in some capacity, when they first come into contact with the police. This confusion is likely to lead to authorities believing that the safest and most appropriate place to hold a potential victim may be a police cell. This assumption is somewhat warranted, as officials must err on the side of caution in these instances. If an individual was identified as a potential victim in a criminal environment such as a brothel, it would be necessary for the police to first ensure the individual is in fact a victim, not a criminal. In this circumstance the individual would be held in a police cell, which would be the only current logical option. However, the concern is that it is also an easy option for the police. If there is any possibility that the individual may be an offender, it seems they are automatically held as such.

The situation a victim is in is often so traumatising that further distress would only be of great detriment to the case, the victim and their future chances of rehabilitation. The consideration here is that every effort should be made within the first 24 hours to ensure the authorities are clear on who and indeed what situation they are dealing with. This is an imperative part of the victim support pathway. If a victim receives immediate support and is cared for, they are significantly more likely to participate in the process and engage with efforts to identify traffickers, gain adequate support and go on to eventually live a more normal life. Essentially, victims will likely be more open with authorities and provide much needed information about their experiences, this is useful not only for that specific victim, but also for future cases. Creating a safe, comforting environment for someone who may have been trafficked should be a number one priority for anyone who comes in to contact with a potential victim.

The following two responses featured highly and are to some extent connected: safe housing, where a victim may reside to stay protected, or sheltered (support) accommodation for people in need of urgent living space for a number of reasons. The most selected response was safe housing (56%), which is a very positive outcome. This response shows that the majority of participants would be likely to send a potential victim to a designated safe-house. This would aim to ensure the individual is as safe as possible – providing refuge without the risk of identification from people who previously had contact with them, such as their traffickers. A safe house is the NRM recognised option for a potential victim of trafficking. However, the key issue here is that the NRM suggests the use of a safe house, only after the allowed five-day period, in which a victim can be considered as such. Officially, there is little advice on what to do with the victim during that five-day period, again linking back to the likelihood of a victim being kept in prison or in a sheltered accommodation. This survey question did specify 'first comes in to contact' suggesting that a safe house may be a realistic option initially, which is

potentially a successful outcome. This is, however, unlikely to be the situation in the majority of cases and safe housing will only be considered where it is available. The availability of safe accommodation is crucial, one participant states that this is affected by 'budgets, physical housing and accessibility'. These three considerations are often outside of the control of the victim and the practitioner, which influences the decision to send a victim to a safe house.

A loop is beginning to form, whereby the actual status of an individual considered to be a victim of modern slavery is the key to ensuring they are protected within the first 24 hours of identification. This creates a conflicted situation, as responders cannot protect victims if they do not share their experiences because they don't feel protected and safe. However, a full review of how victims are identified and how professionals are made aware of (for example) unconscious bias or occupational bias will be discussed in the next chapter. This outcome is supported by comments from the survey, with one respondent specifically identifying the way in which support is offered through the NRM; 'Safe house support only (offered) to victims escaping their situation'. This suggests that a conscious, consenting decision is needed by a possible victim to be offered safe house accommodation. The need for consent is a further potential issue with the system, as adult victims are not always willing to give their consent in the early stages of the investigation. Obviously, consent cannot be revoked, however it may be useful to include a form of implied or assumed consent in certain circumstances. This could be particularly useful when the victim is under a lot of stress, is found in a dangerous or concerning situation, or is unable to converse in English.

A final consideration for this section was found in the additional comments, with 4 respondents adding '*Home Office NASS Accommodation'* to the responses. This refers to the National Asylum Support Service accommodation for individuals and families in the UK who are waiting to find out if they will be granted asylum. Housing and support can be supplied to these individuals if they are homeless, do not have currency to purchase food or drink and can verify that there is an exact reason why they cannot leave the country immediately (Asylum Support, Gov.uk, 2019). This may be an option for victims of trafficking if they have already been identified, as this may mean that there is an on-going investigation into their circumstances which restricts them from leaving the country. If this is the case, the NASS option may be available, however this is not strictly in line with the guidance. The accommodation is for people who are seeking asylum, whereas human trafficking victims are not voluntarily fleeing or pursuing refuge. This can be a confusing cross-over, but it seems evident that the two situations should be kept separate as this removes confusion over the status of the individual. If a potential victim is, as a result of their circumstance, seeking asylum this should be a separate service which deals specifically with modern slavery. This is due to

the specific needs of modern slavery victims. Again, a problem arises with those victims who have not yet being officially recognised, as they may not have a specific reason to remain in the country. This is a limbo period, where the individual is not a victim, an offender or a refugee. Without immediate clarification the victim will not warrant using the NASS system.

How do you initially decide where to send a victim following first contact?

Following on from addressing the accommodation types potential victims are offered, the decision making behind this outcome will now be considered. This was an open question, posed to extract as much information as possible from respondents, on their own personal decision-making process and the rationale behind this. The question itself was very well received, with a high response rate and a great deal of information to be extracted from the responses.

Circumstances are a consideration, which over 40% of respondents identified. Many suggested that the key considerations are 'threat' and 'risk', to both the potential victims and the authority dealing with the individual. There appear to be two unofficial options, depending on whether there is immediate danger or not. Interestingly, one respondent (a police officer) stated that if there is any risk at all to the potential victim or the police, they will be held at a police station, in custody. The individual states that this is for their '*own safety'* as well as a *'lack of alternative options in that situation'.* Another officer believes that '*some have to stay in a cell as we have nowhere else to send them'*. This is interesting as it suggests an issue with providing immediate care, as has been previously suggested. This is supported by another respondent, from a leading NGO practitioner, who says '*the police may take the initiative and arrest for safety on this in any case, therefore we don't need to make a decision'*. Interestingly this also points towards some tension between the organisations, with a lack of clarity on who deals with which aspects of victim management and who has responsibility for immediate support and housing. Respondents are clear that if there is any risk to the victim, then they must be made a priority. However, it seems that what constitutes action at a priority level, is very inconsistent between organisations.

Interestingly in this section no one explicitly points towards the use of Home Office guidance or NRM frameworks. It is more common for people to seek advice from the police or charity organisations directly, rather than refer to government guidance as a first point of information. This reflects a lack of belief in the NRM and the frameworks provided. It also points towards inconsistencies and a disjointed approach nationally, as many organisations are working in completely different ways. This means that victims who are identified and referred in a city such as London will likely be treated completely differently to those in a different city, such as

Manchester or Newcastle. Evidence from the Anti-Slavery Commissioner (2019) and the UK Modern Slavery Report (2019) points towards this finding.

Another common outcome is the idea that organisations are only there to 'suggest' options to potential victims, having no real ability to enforce the guidelines and ensure victims are protected. One respondent specifically says '*it's the survivor's choice, I can only give suggestions but ultimately it's their own choice*'. This can be viewed in two ways. The first consideration is the respect and power this gives the potential victim, which is an important part of the process. If the individual has been exploited, treating them like a human-being and giving them options and advice is a way to begin building relationships and helping that person. However, this will only be successful if the individual has the ability to digest relevant information and make rationale choices, based on advice. A number of factors contribute to this which have been discussed, however essentially victims may be too vulnerable to give or remove consent in this situation.

The consideration of where victims are sent and how that decision is made is one shrouded in confusion and inconsistency. This is a really important part of a victim's treatment as it has the potential to affect their ongoing treatment, their cooperation levels and the way in which they engage with rehabilitation attempts. Essentially this could have a lasting impact on a victim's reintegration attempts and whether they become a survivor of human trafficking or are re-victimised. Overall, there was a great lack of uniformity between responses for this section of the survey. There was no clear idea of where a potential victim should be housed immediately, whilst a decision is being made or following a positive conclusive ground decision. There was also no obvious regulation identified for all responders to follow; to provide guidance on where to house, when and for how long. This is really a fault in the system which will have a direct impact on victims and their chances of being identified, referred and rehabilitated. It is suggested that by addressing this and providing a nationally recognised victim care pathway, from identification through to referral and beyond, this would have strong benefits to the system. Victims would profit from a robust pathway, designed to be consistent and fair throughout their journey. Practitioners would have the guidance and support they need, whilst being able to implement a reliable framework, understood by everyone involved in the process, from start to finish.

5.7 Does the MSHTU framework need to be improved to ensure victims receive the best chance of being identified, referred and subsequently supported?

The final research question considers how effective the frameworks are and whether or not participants have faith in them. Importantly, it also gives the participants a chance to express their views and really evaluate the system, providing scope for them to suggest improvements or successes of the system. This area also considers the usefulness of the MSHTU framework for victims and the lasting effects of the whole process on their chances of rehabilitation and reintegration in to the community.

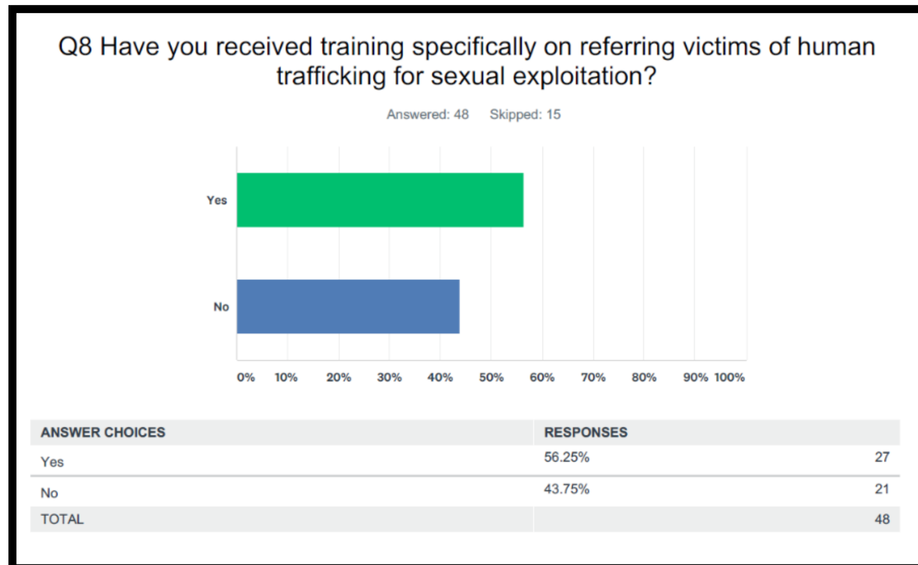
The question is split in to three sections, therefore there are three key focus areas:

1. Does the system need to be improved?
2. Does it actually aid identification and referral?
3. Does it address supporting victims, throughout the entire process?

These are very important questions which frame the end of the survey data, bringing it to a clear conclusion. It also allows for further exploration of these key areas, through further discussion. These results show a number of issues have been raised surrounding the understanding and application of the NRM. The first point to show is the level of confidence in the system, which can be identified on the below graph through the use of 'own knowledge' as a selection by the majority of participants (74%). This result suggests that the majority of people have a greater confidence in their own ability to identify and refer victims of human trafficking.

Have you received training specifically on referring victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation?

Table 17 – Response Data: Have you received training specifically on referring victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	56.25%	27
No	43.75%	21
TOTAL		48

This question was posed to supplement the initial question relating to training on identifying potential victims (see Chapter 1). This was an extension, exploring the referral practice of the practitioners and trying to determine if they had received training on this process. The referral of victims was expected to tie closely with the training to identify victims. For the most part this was accurate, however it can be seen that a number of respondents did not receive training to refer even when they did receive identification training, possibly affecting their confidence and ability to engage with victims. The reasons for this could be due to a restriction on funding for training, however it is a concern that respondents were taught to identify, but not to refer. Thus, potentially leaving identified individuals in limbo, with organisations not knowing where to send or how to treat potential victims.

The results of this questionnaire showed almost a 50/50 split between those who have and have not received training. However, what's thought-provoking is the contrast between this response and the response gained from the previous 'identifying' question, as this split was closer to 80/20 in favour of the participant receiving training. This is interesting, as it shows a gap in the training process of practitioners in the fields. They appear to be receiving training to identify, but not to then refer the victims on to relevant organisations. This is a key issue, because it creates a gap in the system. Having the knowledge to identify a victim is crucial and an important first step. However, it is a limited step if the victim is left at a midpoint, without

being fed through the appropriate referral process. This is further highlighted by primary observational research at a victim pathway conference in 2018. It was informally observed that over 80% of the room had never had any training on the referral process and almost all attendees were unaware of the correct procedure to follow when referring a victim. Many did not know that only certain organisations had the power to refer through the NRM, with the use of referral forms. This is a concern and an area which needs to be addressed with urgency. Without front line practitioners such as local charities, social services and housing associations knowing the correct procedure for victim referral, it can be predicted that many victims are going unreferred or will lose faith in the system due to a lack of guidance.

Following on from this question, respondents were then asked about their knowledge of the referral process and where it comes from. It was expected that those who answered may have been those who received training. However, this was not the case, as the majority selected 'own knowledge' which further highlighted the lack of referral training available. If those who are referring victims are using their own knowledge of processes, this is an inconsistent process. This also links back to the findings of identification processes. The main problem is that the knowledge that people are using may be outdated or inaccurate. To further highlight this, 'experience' was the next most frequently selected response, again this could indicate problems with regularity and possibly geographical inaccuracies. If people are using their previous experiences to guide their current working patterns, they could be using wrong or outdated experience. If the process they followed was inaccurate, all future processes will likely follow the same structure, thus also being completely inaccurate. As mentioned, the largest impact this will have, will be on the victims and their on-going experience within the justice system. The primary concern should be for the victim's wellbeing, to ensure they are properly cared for throughout, whilst being identified and referred.

'Support from outside organisations' was the least selected reason for confidence when referring victims. This is not as expected, it was predicted that this would feature highly with participants using modern slavery charities and specific organisations, such as the MSHTU, to aid their decision process when referring a victim. If participants are reluctant to use outside organisations this may be for number of reasons. Firstly, accessibility must be considered. Although charities such as Hope for Justice and Modern Slavery Helpline have well-advertised campaigns, these are mainly aimed at victims themselves helping them to self-identify or providing support. Little is aimed at organisations who are working with the victims, to offer them support or guidance. This means that practitioners may feel like they lack support from leading organisations, thus pushing them to work alone and use their own intuition. This is detrimental in the long run to both the practitioner and their development, as well as the

victim. This links to the need to improve the MSHTU framework, as it would be beneficial to include further support on methods of referral and support organisations within the guidance.

On the other hand, the largest reason for lack of confidence in referring victims on trafficking is a lack of training. This is to be expected and ties in with previous findings identified through the questionnaire. Practitioners appear to be experiencing levels of frustration and confusion, as they are not given adequate training to enable them to deal with the issues they are facing in terms of victims referral. If the practitioners were provided with the correct training, it can be expected that their confidence levels would increase. This would, in turn, have a positive impact on the victims and improving their chances of successful referral and ongoing community rehabilitation. Training could come in many forms, from online courses to in-house projects and external organisation support. It can be assumed that any level of training would be of benefit to a practitioner who has received none at all. Not only would this have a positive impact on the referral process, it would increase the confidence of the practitioner. Increased confidence would enable them to make more effective decision and support the victims correctly moving forward.

On a scale of 1 – 10, with 1 being not very confident and 10 extremely confident, how confident are you with the process of filling out a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral form?

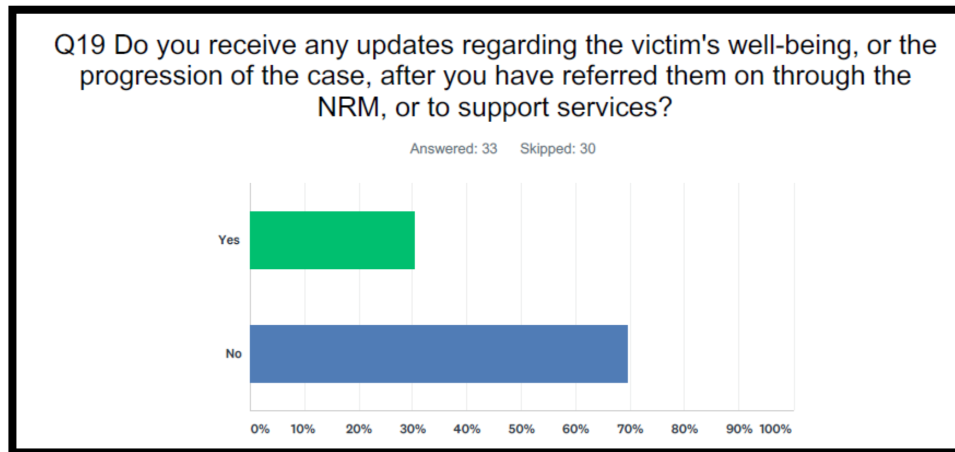
In contrast to the above questions on confidence, 72% of responses in this area fell in to the 'not confident' section, suggesting that respondents were not familiar with the system or did not use it often. It may also be that they have not received training, as one participant stated '*we have never been shown how to fill it in, I wouldn't know where to start*' this strongly supports the suggestion that not all organisations receive training on referring a victim. It does, however tie in with the results concerning the separate training goals of 'identification; and 'referral' - as more respondent selected that they have received training to identify, but not refer.

Do you receive any updates regarding the victim's well-being, or the progression of the case, after you have referred them on through the NRM, or to support services?

This is a key question when considering the support a victim receives and whether or not this was adequate. If a practitioner has the opportunity to reflect upon their practices, as well as the outcome for both themselves and the victims, this would no doubt aid their practices in future cases. It would allow them to work to a best practice objective, focusing on the areas which went well. Whilst those areas which perhaps did not help to forward the cases

successfully could be revised and altered for future cases, to ensure the system continues to improve. This finding was as expected, as shown in the following table:

Table 18 - Response Data: Do you receive updates?



Over 70% of respondents stating that they do not receive any updates on the progression of the case or the status of the victim, after they have been referred. This is a significant percentage, which is of concern to practitioners. Practitioners who come into contact with victims will develop an interest in their case, the safety of the victim and their on-going journey. It would be beneficial to them to hear what happens to the victim, after they have left the practitioners care. The lack of feedback could be due to a number of reasons. Firstly, it may be a lack of awareness from the onwards organisations. If the referral body is unaware of the need for feedback and updates, they are unlikely to provide these. This is a fault in the system, as well as the guidance provided to organisations at each stage in the process. The frameworks should be clear about the need for feedback to filter through the system at each level of intervention. This would also link to the need for a multi-disciplinary approach and inter-organisational working. One participant stated; *'a computer programme would be good. So, we can all see the victims in one place*.' This would benefit all levels of involvement and will be discussed in the next chapter.

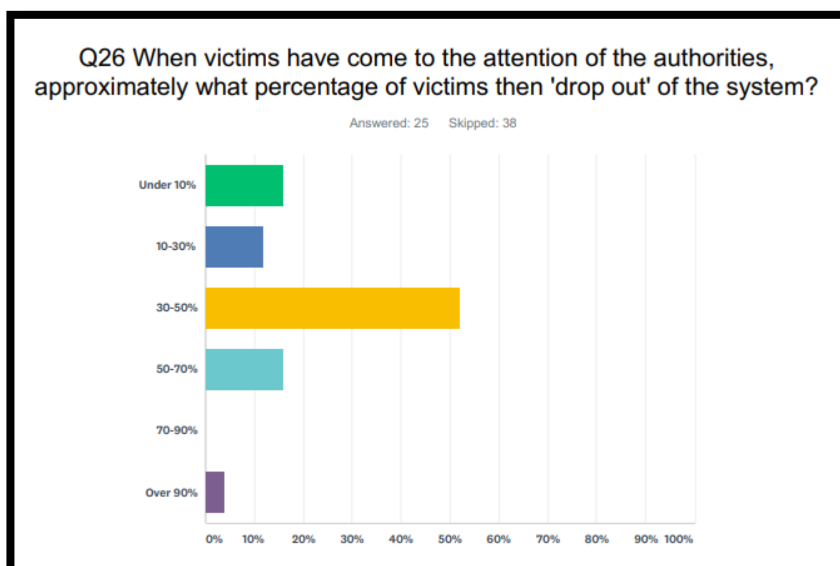
Following this question, participants were then asked whether they believed that it would be helpful to receive feedback. 98% of respondents stated that they believed feedback would be important. The participants offered varied responses, giving more detailed insight into their beliefs and ideas. 63% of the participants stated that they believed it would help them to make better informed decisions and recommendations in future cases. One participant claimed *'my job involves risk assessment and advice to investigators and prosecutors. Updates would help to develop and refine my knowledge and advice'*. This statement is insightful, it shows that feedback would not only help practitioners in developing their skills, but also the way they deal

with future victims, the advice they can give them and the support they can offer. Another participant explained about the use of '*evidence gathering'* through continued updates and feedback, which is another important area to consider which would help many organisations. If providing feedback and case updates to people who have previously identified or referred victims would be this useful, it is certainly an area for consideration and development within the victim pathway.

The main issue with this seems to be the consideration of consent from the victims, particularly in relation to information gathering and disseminating intelligence relating to their case. Three participants detailed their concerns around the practicality of gaining feedback, although they acknowledged it would be beneficial. One participant stated that they *'would need to have the victim's consent to share that, which would be most important'*, which indicates that practitioners have a high regard for the victim's safety and their well-being, ensuring that safeguards are in place and adhered to. Consent from the victim is a paramount consideration, however it must also be acknowledged that without this feedback, practitioners will be limited in their approach to improving their practices. Consent from victims would only be needed if the details given were specific to their case and if the information was sensitive. A way around this would be to pass on more generic feedback anonymously through the referral system, to ensure practitioners have an overall view of the situation.

When victims have come to the attention of the authorities, approximately what percentage of victims then 'drop out' of the system?

Table 19 - Response Data: Victim Drop-Out Rates



After considering the confidence levels of participants when referring and the feedback they receive throughout the process, the next logical area for review would be to consider how

many of the victims actually remain in the system. The most common selection for this question was; 30-50% of victims ‘drop out’, with over 52% of participants selecting this response. It was expected that this response would elicit a high number for the amount of victims falling from the system. There could be many reasons for this response and it is likely to be subjective, with many organisations not been able to keep exact statistics on these areas due to the lack of finality of the process. At the top end of the scale 4% of participants selected over 90% of victims drop out, which is important as it shows that there is a real issue with victims not completing the full process.

When asked to comment on these issues, there was a clear response bias to the term ‘fear’ with 82% of participants selecting this adjective to explain the reason behind victim drop outs. Fear is a key area for concern, which seems to be prevalent throughout the victims’ pathway from start to finish. This again highlights the importance of dealing with victims correctly and ensuring they feel safe and supported through the process. This fear ranges from fear of the authorities and the police to fear of the unknown and of being rediscovered by the traffickers. These differing forms of fear make it hard to blanket a solution to this problem. However, it is clear that victim care, safeguarding and protection should be considered a top priority, to ensure the victim feels as safe as possible. This would make fear a less likely reason for the victim to drop out of the system.

A key finding from this section of the survey, was a response as follows;

> *‘Many don't drop out, they actually never engage with an account to begin with, so a Duty to Notify (DTN) is submitted. Actual engagement with the process is a massive problem due to a combination of their vulnerabilities, the trauma from the exploitation and the concern about what will happen to them and their families’.*

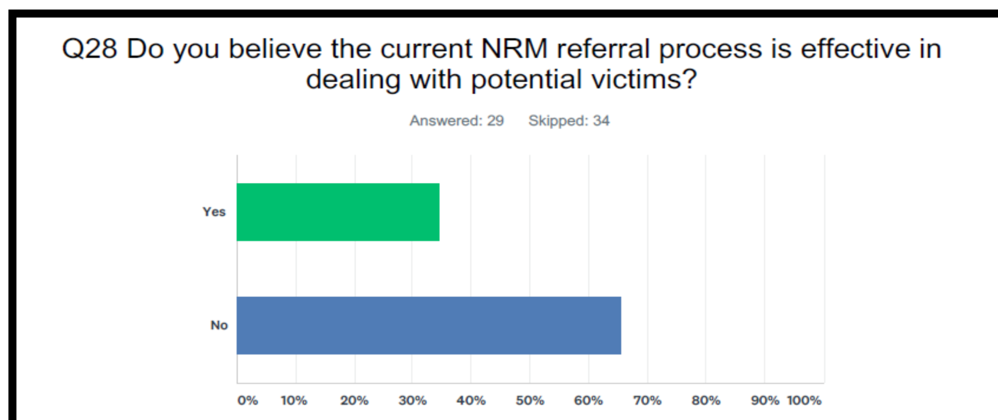
This is really important because large numbers of victims are being identified and dealt with by organisations, who are unable to move them through the system. If victims do not wish to engage, they cannot be made to do so, their engagement must be voluntary. If victims are fearful, they will be much less likely to participate in the system and proceed through to gain support. Vulnerabilities are also a key concern, as the victims have already been through a very distressing situation, making them extremely exposed. This issue fits alongside the language barriers, medical issues and any other problems practitioners may face. Families are also a significant concern for victims. Many may have found themselves being trafficked initially due to their desire to provide for their families, move to another country and earn money. With this is mind, many victims will still have their families as their paramount concern, particularly if they have children, or elderly relatives. Victims are likely to worry about what would happen

to their families, if they engaged in the referral and rehabilitation systems. This shows that more emphasis should be put on protecting the victim's interests and reassuring them of their safety in this country. This would include addressing issues such as finances for both themselves and their families, as well as deportation and medical care.

Do you believe the current NRM referral process is effective in dealing with potential victims?

This was the final closed question posed to the participants, to really ascertain their feelings towards the system as well as summarising their key views. It was predicted that this would receive quite a split response, with an even divide of opinions. This was not the case, over 66% of respondents selected 'No' they do not believe the NRM referral process if effective.

Table 20 - Response Data: Is the NRM effective?



This is arguably one of the most significant findings of the research, as it cements concerns surrounding the official victim identification and referral mechanism. In total 34% of respondent stated that the NRM was an effective referral tool for supporting potential victims of human trafficking. In contrast, 66% of participants did not feel it was effective. This question effectively considers two key areas; the effectiveness of the NRM overall and the subsequent impact it has on potential victims. It is considered that 66% is a significant figure, this means that over 2/3rds of the practitioners involved in this study do not have confidence in the main tool designed to enable safe referral and protection of human trafficking victims.

Following this, comments were invited from the respondents to expand on their answer. The most notable outcome of the extended question was that 54% of the responses included ideas that the NRM was not designed with victims in mind. One participant believed that it does not offer '*adequate support throughout the process*'. This is a major finding as the referral system rests on the NRM's ability to support victims and give them the best chance of progression in

life, away from their past experiences of trafficking and abuse. One participant suggested that specific services should be made available for victims, to enable them to receive immediate counselling and be assigned a Modern Slavery caseworker from the point of initial identification. The suggestion is that this caseworker would them '*stay with the victim right through their journey, until they are effectively rehabilitated in to society'*. A further comment is that the NRM is '*too associated with the Home Office*', which ties in to earlier exploration of the link with immigration and asylum. It may be considered that an entirely separate department would be more beneficial, when working with victims of human trafficking. This would help to make the process less biased - based solely on the needs of the victim. There are also 2 responses which acknowledge the lack of training or guidance on how to effectively complete an NRM referral. Providing basic support to practitioners would '*make it easier to fill in the referral and make first responders more inclined to participate'*, as stated by one respondent. This is an area which will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Within this section of the primary research, it is important to consider that the NRM was reviewed in 2019, after this fieldwork was undertaken. However, the review focused almost exclusively on negative conclusive ground decisions for potential victims moving through the system.

5.8 Strengths and Limitations of the Research

This primary research aimed to be an investigatory study overall, this was a success and the data produced was of use to the thesis. However, it is acknowledged that there were some barriers and constraints to this and some limitations in the design and subsequent results of this study.

5.8.1 Limitations of the Research

As identified in the literature review, first-hand accounts of victim encounters were difficult to locate. Those which were identified often focused on the optimistic side of the victims encounter with front-line practitioners. This was of some use to the study, but it was imperative to gain a first-hand knowledge of the situation on the ground, rather than just the positive aspects of the victims identification and referral process. Thus, although the lack of personal views available was an initial limitation, the research overcame this by focusing the data collection on gaining these important first-hand accounts.

Firstly, by using questionnaires as the primary data collection method, this inevitably created limitations. One issue with questionnaires is that the data is self-reported, meaning the information may be biased. This is due to the lack of monitoring of the participant; this was overcome by ensuring the survey was anonymous. Providing anonymity ensured that participants could deliver responses freely. Some issues with self-reported data which could have affected this study, include exaggeration, selective memory and social desirability or exhibition of demand characteristics through the survey responses. This was more of a concern due to the nature of the study; respondents may have been keen to give the 'correct answer' or please the researcher. This may have been due to the topic of human trafficking being sensitive and prevalent in the media currently. However, as the questions went through three drafts, consideration was given to the wording of the survey to overcome response bias. Thus, the survey was designed according to the principles of survey strategy intended to minimise acquiescence response bias by following the approach taken by Holbrook, Green and Krosnick, 2013). On reflection, there was little indication that the data was skewed, all responses were consistent with the broader expectations of the study, thus it was decided that the data could be trusted as far as possible. If this research were to expand, however, it would be useful to consider similar questions with a much larger sample size. Initially a larger quantitative study was considered but rejected on the grounds that the study needed to be investigatory, rather than generalisable given the lack of insights from existing research in the area of the project.

Limitations of the research method came in the form of access to participants. Once the questionnaire had been released via the internet, in as many ways as possible, it was difficult to ascertain who had seen it and who was completing it. This meant that access to individuals and organisations was largely unknown throughout the period of data collection. Initially the questionnaire was sent to a list of emails from a personal network (WISE), therefore demographic information was clear. However, the survey was then distributed via social media, which meant the geographical spread grew, allowing the questionnaire to be shared with a larger number of people. It became clear that participants were emerging predominantly from Yorkshire and London, with an equal number coming from across the rest of the country. This was an important initial consideration, which influenced the way in which the data was explored.

The results of the data collection method were varied, with a range of organisations being represented. However, a questionable issue to arise from the data was that some of the professions were far less traditionally involved in the trafficking process than others, such as a teacher and a funeral director, meaning considerations had to be made for this. Although

unusual, this did not limit the usefulness of information gained from the data, as it showed the great variety of people who have come in to contact with potential victims of human trafficking. Thus, these participants were kept in the study and their responses were explored, alongside those of more expected occupations, such as the police and social workers. This also influenced the interpretation of the results from the study, as it was known that the range of respondents was very diverse.

A fundamental issue in the area of Modern Slavery in general is the overriding issue with the language and terminology used. The discourse for Modern Slavery is ever changing, as are people's opinions on what is the correct and incorrect vocabulary to use. One of the key issues encountered throughout this journey, was the disagreement over the term 'victim' when used for someone who has been through human trafficking exploitation and has been effectively saved. There is a great difference between the use of 'victim' and the use of 'survivor'. Many people argue that the term 'survivor' is intended to overcome the negative connotations and the label of 'victim'. It also highlights the fight individuals have faced and the fact that they have lived through their ordeal. The problem with the term 'survivor' is that, by default, it implies that all of those individuals who are still being trafficked, have been re-trafficked, or are yet to be found, are not surviving. This is not only damaging to those individuals who are still being trafficked, it is detrimental to the practitioners who are working to help these people. This research focuses on people who are still suffering, as such the term victim is considered to be more appropriate. Many heated debates have unfolded over the course of this research, surrounding the terminology used to describe those who have been trafficked but are now free. The view of this study is that, as the focus is on identification and the initial response to victims the term victim would be used, as it is the term used in the NRM. It is also recognised that if more victims are supported and the public becomes more educated about human trafficking, the discourse will develop and those who are freed can help to shape that discourse.

5.8.2 Strengths of the Research

The study aimed to focus on the experiences and linked policies involved in the human trafficking process in the UK. The level of focus of the study could no doubt be refined further, by solely considering the experiences of the victim or the offender. However, it could be argued that this would limit the study's usefulness, as only one side of the involvement would be considered. By gaining the views of those individuals on both sides, victim and practitioners, this could then be merged to produce an accurate picture of the current situation.

There is a lack of previous exploration of a similar nature in this research area, which meant that the foundations on which to build the study on were scarce. This was a perhaps weakness of the academic area as a whole, as that meant that there was little known about the direct views of organisations involved in human trafficking victim identification and referral. However, in terms of this specific research study it was beneficial to be able to conduct the investigation with a fresh perspective, exploring the views of each respondent fully. It is important to acknowledge that this is an evolving area of research, which has developed greatly over the past three to four years. When this research was in its early stages, there was a great lack of secondary data surrounding this area. A further strength of the research is that there was also an absence of data from practitioners, as minimal studies had been conducted with primary research data acquisition as a key objective. Finding out how practitioners viewed the system, as well as how they interpreted victim experience was an important part of this research. It allowed the study to produce innovative findings, based on the usage of guidelines and the confidence of the front-line workers.

The data collection method used in this research evolved over the space of a year. The initial plan was to use semi-structured interviews to gain the data. It was thought that by recruiting both victims and practitioners, then conducted in-depth interviews with approximately three or four of each, this would provide depth the to study and provide rich details of the individuals encounters and experiences. However, after considering the requirements of the study and looking at the practicalities of the research, questionnaire-based survey data collection was considered. A key issue to arise from the consideration of interviews was that despite exploring access to specific professional groups, given the different agencies involved in identifying and responding to the victims of human trafficking it was not logistically possible to go via individual agencies. In contrast, the advantages of using survey questionnaires were that they could be easily accessed and shared to a wide audience. This meant that a greater range of participants could be consulted. The decision was made to use survey questionnaires, instead of in-depth interviews because it was necessary to reach as wider pool of people as possible. To supplement this, qualitative questions were used to provide some of the best insights.

The method of data collection then leads on to the consideration of the sample size. This study aimed to have a sample of between 60 and 100 participants to ensure a diverse exploration could be conducted. The outcome of the sampling method meant that the final number of participants was 64. This was a significant strength, as the sample size aim was met within the

set time-frame. Furthermore, it became evident that the responses provided in the questionnaires were in-depth and insightful. A wealth of data was provided by each participant. A further positive was that there were no 'non-responders' in the data set, participants completed the questionnaire as fully as possible. In terms of survey response rates, a 64/64 (100%) completion frequency was extremely positive.

5.9 Summarising the Results

There are a number of interesting outcomes, which came from the research and the exploratory analysis which followed. The results of the primary research can be sectioned into four main areas, which are then translated in to key findings to be discussed in the next chapter:

1. Identification

The research themes;

- How are the victims of human trafficking identified by first responder organisations?
- Does the method of identifying victims always follow the MSHTU framework?
- Does the type of first responder agency effect who gets identified as a victim of human sex trafficking?

Identification was engaged with, by all participants at some point in the survey. It was found that around 66% of practitioners did receive some form of training to help them to identify victims of human trafficking. However, the data pointed towards a lack of certainty surrounding which frameworks to use when identifying victims. This also led to the finding that many practitioners use in-house guidance or their own experience and knowledge to assist them in making identification decisions. This theme also engaged with the role of the police in identifying victims and the impact police fear may have on victim cooperation, linking to the role of organisations in identification.

This theme and the results gained will be discussed in the following sub-chapter;

- Lack of knowledge about correct identification and referral processes

2. Referral

The research themes;

- Do the personal characteristics of the victim effect whether they are identified as a victim of human sex trafficking?
- Does the MSHTU framework need to be improved to ensure victims received the best chance of being identified and subsequently supported?

Overall, this section focused on two key areas; the perception of victims and the effect this has on referrals. As well as the perceptions of the MSHTU frameworks and NRM usage. Both of these areas related to the referral of the victim; the understanding of the system and how victims might be referred in to the NRM. The data pointed towards characteristics of a victim having underlying effects on their referral. The research looked at participant bias, cultural differences and the feelings or experiences of the victims, including the way they were perceived to view the organisations involved in the referral process.

Furthermore, the participants were directly asked to provide their views on the NRM, its ease of use and practicality. In total, 65% of the participants did not feel that the NRM referral process is effective in dealing with potential victims, this will be discussed further in the next chapter.

This theme and the results gained will be discussed in the following sub-chapter;

- Lack of confidence in the NRM (or MSHTU)

3. Treatment and Protection

The research themes;

- What provisions do victims initially receive, within the first 24 hours following identification? (i.e. accommodation, medical services, food, clothing, support)

Exploring the provisions provided to victims was key to understanding the way in which practitioners support victims, at a difficult time in their journey. The data collect on accommodation was extremely useful as it provided an insight in to which organisations were more likely to use different types of accommodation. It also highlighted the limitations of the system, as facilities like safe houses are not always available and are heavily reliant on budgets. This leads to the consideration of how best to provide victims with protection and refuge and will be developed as indicated below.

This theme and the results gained will be discussed in the following sub-chapter;

- Lack of understanding surrounding how to create a safe environment for potential victims
- Lack of clarity about how to treat potential victims

Chapter 6 Discussing the Key Findings

The discussion of the results is an important part of the research. Throughout the analysis of the survey results, key issues begin to emerge from the data. These issues are linked by varying similarities, as detailed in the previous chapter. As such, the discussion can be split into these overriding areas, all of which are extremely important to the field and the improvement of the human trafficking victim pathway:

1. Lack of knowledge about correct identification and referral processes
2. Lack of confidence in the NRM (or MSHTU)
3. Lack of understanding surrounding how to create a safe environment for potential victims
4. Lack of clarity about how to treat potential victims

Firstly, 'lack of knowledge about correct identification and referral processes' - a significant number of respondents expressed concerns over their own levels of training and the lack of consistency between organisations, in terms of the processes and guidelines they use. The concern was for both the identification and referral processes. Next, 'lack of confidence in the NRM (or MSHTU)' – this theme is quite generic across all organisations, but is particularly prevalent in NGO responses, this is a distinct concern surrounding the system. In particular, the NRM and its abilities to protect victims. The 'lack of understanding surrounding how to create a safe environment for potential victims is then identified, with participants highlighting again the lack of uniform guidance on what to do with a victim once they have been identified as such. This also ties into the need for greater communication between organisations, with many participants stating this would be very beneficial to their work and the victims' on-going needs. There is a lack of support nationwide for victims of human trafficking and research shows that there is a need to include more restorative elements in their recovery and rehabilitation periods. Finally, 'lack of clarity about how to treat potential victims' is a broad concern, but a great focus is on the police and the way they treat potential victims – particularly those who have been involved, unwillingly, in criminality. The treatment of victims from the onset sets a tone, particularly for their chances of successful recovery and rehabilitation.

Following these discussions some interesting ideas are asserted within the survey data, such as the need for the MSHTU to be a detached unit, separate from areas such as the Asylum Team – as this could be considered as a conflict of interest. A further consideration is the discussion surrounding policy vs practice – looking at organisational obsessions with following protocol, rather than using a common sense-based approach. Finally, it was found that discussions also

point towards a link being made with the Victoria Climbie Case (2000), considering the overwhelming need for a 'joined-up approach' between all services involved in a victim's case. This can effectively ensure all organisations are communicating and sharing intelligence, consequently giving the victim the best possible chance of recovery.

The extent of human trafficking is a key area for discussion. It is acknowledged by leading organisations, such as The Salvation Army, Anti-Slavery and the Global Slavery Index, that there are a significant number of victims, many of which go un-reported or who are hidden. There is still a great difficulty in identifying and quantifying victims of human trafficking; there are varying statistics surrounding the phenomenon. Each type of trafficking, such as debt bondage, forced labour and sexual exploitation, has its own body of figures. Each state, government, charity and NGO also has differing statistics, which contribute to the overall figures (Bales, Hesketh & Silverman, 2015; Gallagher, 2010; OVCTTAC, 2012). One of the main issues with human trafficking and data collection is the evidence pointing towards the 'dark figure' of crime. Although not unique to modern slavery, the crime is extremely well hidden and works as an underground system in each country. This means that the authorities often struggle to identify both victims and offenders (Rojas, Tapia & Rodríguez, 2020; Silverman & FAcSS, 2014; Lipscombe & Beard, 2014). Each year, specific commissions are set in place to provide an overview of human trafficking within most countries. This is to attempt to enumerate the victims and the offences, to enable people to understand the crime better, to comprehend the rate at which it is growing and to aid increased support to tackle the crime. Although these directives are in place, which suggest that trafficking is a growing concern, the lack of reliable data makes it difficult to confirm (Shelley, 2010; Lee, 2013). An example of this is the 'estimate' of slavery released by varying organisations. Farrell and De Vries (2020) acknowledge varying attempts to develop methods of gaining reliable data, but state that completely dependable studies do not exist. Although this has been attempted, there is still a great deal to be learnt about how traffickers operate and how victims may be identified and referred. This leads to the first substantial area for consideration.

6.1 Lack of knowledge about correct identification and referral processes

“A large number of victims are not being identified at all” - Respondent Quote: Solicitor

Being unaware of the process of identification when considering victims of trafficking is a key issue, which links heavily to confidence. People who do not understand a process are far less likely to use it, due to fear of being wrong. If people are not using the trafficking identification and referral system, or are using it minimally, there will be a deficit in identification of victims of human trafficking. Silverman et al. (2015) compiled a great deal of work on a statistical approach called multiple systems estimations. The number of victims can be estimated by examining a list of cases which are known to the authorities. This is argued to provide a more reliable measurement of human trafficking crimes. Although this is a useful approach, it was acknowledged by Silverman in his findings that this is still an estimation technique and there will still be a large dark figure in the statistics. The hidden figure of trafficking is something which will always cause problem when trying to quantify victims and indeed offenders. The phenomenon is extremely well hidden and works as an underground system in each country, meaning the authorities often struggle to identify both victims and offenders (Silverman & FAcSS, 2014; Lipscombe & Beard, 2014). This is a key indicator that a large number of victims in the UK aren’t being identified, therefore they aren’t receiving the help they need.

This therefore raises the question; what would be a more effective method of quantifying victims of human trafficking? A possible solution to come from this research would be to focus on those victims that present themselves to the authorities, but do not remain in the system for long enough to be an official statistic. This would also include individuals who drop out of the system, who do not give consent or those who refuse to cooperate.

The primary research conducted in this study highlights three identifiable stages at which victims are not being identified at all;

1. Initial Recognition Stage

This is where someone sees an individual and believes that there is something unusual about that person’s situation, persona or general circumstance. In this initial recognition period first responders have three clear options; either they approach the person and question them, they report the situation to an official organisation or they continue without enquiring further. Each of these scenarios may result in a victim being identified, or missed, depending on how the process unfolds. However, it can be assumed that by not making any further enquiries the

individual would likely not be identified as a potential victim of trafficking. This could be down to fear, confusion or a lack of confidence from the responder. Silverman (2015) doesn't seem to acknowledge this possible situation in the method of quantifying victims, the focus is solely on those individuals who progress through the system effectively.

2. Victim Cooperation Stage

This is when a potential victim is identified by a responder, but the victim is uncooperative. This is a difficulty due to limited time and resources. The victim must consent to being referred and they must offer their cooperation in the matter to some extent. If a victim desperately does not want to enter into the system, due to fear or confusion for example, this would inhibit the entire process. This potential victim would then have to be released and allowed to leave without further investigation into the potential matter of human trafficking.

3. The Drop-Out Stage

It is likely that many identified victims move through the process to being referred on to the NRM. At the point when the case reaches the NRM - the process becomes official and investigative. It is plausible to believe that victims may become overwhelmed by this and feel the need to run away. This means that some victims are essentially falling at the final hurdle. When victims need security and support the most, they are being allowed to fall through the net and leave the system.

The primary data from the research suggests a response to increasing the number of identified victims. If more victims were being identified at any point in the system or the process of identification at the entry level were simpler, it can be assumed that more victims would be identified and the number of victims being supported would therefore increase. Specifically, there was a great deal of support for the notion that individuals at any point in the system should be identified as victims, regardless of their legal status. The advantage of this would be an increase in official statistics, which would more accurately represent the real extend of modern slavery. However, a key problem with this would be that there may be individuals registered as victims, who turn out to be offenders, or who simply do not meet the legal criteria to be classified as a victim of human trafficking. If this were the case, it may be argued that the small number of inaccurate figures would be massively outweighed by the more accurate overall figure. Furthermore, the inaccurate figures would also help to account for the dark figure which will always be present. Each of the three situations outlined above would result in a victim being unidentified, it can be seen from the research that it is fairly simple for these scenarios to unfold within the current process. This is an important finding, as a lack of

victim identification at any point in the process not only distorts the overall figures of victims of human trafficking. This can also affect more practical things, such as funding to tackle the crime and resources at the disposal of charities, the police and the NHS. If individuals were officially registered as victims from the initial point of contact, this would not only make the figures more reliable, it would also help to raise responsiveness to the issue through increased public awareness.

Another issue to arise from the research and the literature is that the official statistics show increased victim identification as time progresses. It is clear that the validity of statistics gained after 2015, when the Modern Slavery Act was introduced, increases due to the link with The Act and increased international policy. This is likely due to the fact that an official definition and guidance was brought in, which therefore made it easier for organisations to correctly identify a victim and alert the relevant authorities. However, previous figures are also important in discovering the extend of the problem, as well as aiding the prediction of growth in the future. The variation in figures post- and pre-2015 also points towards the confusion in definitions prior to the Act and the impact this had on identification and subsequent prevention (Geddes, 2005). Focusing on the sharp increase in identification after 2015, there is a debate between simply an increase in public understanding or an actual increase in the number of offences being committed. The ILO stated that there had been a national 12% increase in victim identification from 2014 to 2016/17, following the introduction of the 2015 Act. An interesting view on this subject come from Bales (2014), who suggested that the growth is due to increased awareness, alongside an increase in identification. He states that awareness and education have created a more confident practitioner, which in turn has made identification numbers rise. Although this may have some truth, the idea that a rise can be solely attributed to an increase in awareness is questionable. If the increase in victims is being attributed only to improved systems and clearer knowledge, that is simply not the case. The research in this thesis shows that practitioners have experienced growing numbers of cases, this is consistent regardless of the amount of training the individual has had on identifying victims. More awareness campaigns have certainly increased alertness to human trafficking, particularly throughout the general public, therefore people are more knowledgeable and vigilant to instances of trafficking. However, this research corresponds with the Anti-Slavery Commissioner Strategic Objectives 2019-21, which suggest that increased instances of trafficking can be linked to better education and tools for practitioners to identify a victim.

In general, statistics are beneficial in attempting to understand and tackle human trafficking. The vast majority of statistics are based on estimations, sample studies or broad government

valuations. It is predicted that many of them continue to grossly underestimate the true extent of global human trafficking. Gallagher (2017) considers the Global Slavery Index, citing a key issue with their estimates as being the inclusion of extensive types of exploitation and a lack of a consistent definition. Gallagher further states that a universally acknowledged tool to quantify potential victims has not been agreed up, thus making any estimates questionable by other authorities and organisations. A final point made is that data can easily be manipulated to answer certain questions or meet certain goals. This highlights the potential lack of reliability of data estimates, such as those from the Global Slavery Index (GSI). However, it is considered that regardless of these issues, the statistical studies are imperative to providing a view of trafficking at its current state. These are currently the closest form of representative data available (Hernandez and Rudolph, 2015).

"Everyone identifies victims differently, from the police to the Salvation Army, there isn't one framework for us all to use" - Respondent Quote: Investigator

As highlighted in the literature review, there is a lack of research surrounding which organisations use certain methods of identification and the frameworks each group may follow. This is likely due to this being a relatively new idea, that organisations should have a framework in pace to identify and refer a victim. Many companies now have a modern slavery statement which details their commitment to ensuring their supply chains are clean, which is very beneficial. However, this theme is concerned with front line practitioners and the frameworks they use, or may not sue, in order to identify if someone is a victim. Sigmon (2008) first started to discuss the problems with identifying victims. He pointed strongly towards a lack of any advice or guidance in many countries across the world. This is now outdated and most western countries have new and improved guidance for practitioners, the issue is often that there is a lack of consistency withing the guidance.

This is an interesting point which has been identified through the primary research as well as general observation at modern slavery events. There isn't one key method of identifying a victim of human trafficking – used by all agencies across the country. Not one single framework is easily adopted and rolled out. This lack of uniformity will have a deep impact on victim identification figures. Many organisations have expressed their discontent around the lack of standardisation in this area. Langhorn (2018) considers the need for standardised data collection and assessment tools in the contact of human trafficking gang crime in Australia. This lends to the consideration of introducing nation-wide tools, to assist anyone involved in the identification or referral of victims. There has been an increase in campaigns to 'spot the

signs' of trafficking recently, however this does not explicitly say what to consider or how to approach a potential victim of trafficking. The campaigns are aimed at members of the public, who may come across a potential victim in a nightclub toilet, a train station or an airport. This is a solid idea and no doubt helps lay people; however, it does not assist the people who are meant to have a more formal role in the process of identification. According to the results of this study, this may be the police and leading charities, who in many areas do not have the skills or the knowledge to understand how exactly to identify a victim. The methods provided vary greatly between leading organisations, such as the government guidance, the police guidance, in-house systems and charity advice from large NGOs such as Hope for Justice. This contrasting advice only serves to confuse and deter practitioners, rather than encourage them.

Comparing human trafficking to somewhat similar crimes is useful here, the likes of domestic violence, where victims are hidden and the crime is difficult to identify. Under-reporting is an issue with both human trafficking and domestic violence. Horley (2017) identifies links with the formation of a relationship between the victim and the offender. Any form of connection can be built upon and often having ties with a trafficker or an abuser can make a victim less likely to come forward and seek help. Poor police practice is also a consideration, which affects both of these phenomena. There is also contemplation of front-line action and the detrimental impact this may have on victims. Further, the guidance provided to police officers, in both crimes, can be vague and ill-informed pointing to a lack of education and training (Diemer et al. 2017; Bishop, Bobadilla and Caldwell, 2019).

The NHS, Police and charities have all ran specific events to help identify victims. A surge in public awareness is always helpful to any campaign. But the key issue with modern slavery is that, much like domestic violence, often the victim does not view themselves as such. There has been a push for victim self-identification in cases of domestic abuse, which may be a step in a new direction for victims of human trafficking. Technically this may be difficult, due to barriers such as language and cultures. However, in theory it could be an interesting campaign to heighten awareness to those more at risk of being trafficked, as well as those who have perhaps been deceived by their captors.

Roman (2019) considers the impact of training employees to identify victims of human trafficking. The consideration of how important it is to train people to identify a victim seems obvious, clearly alerting people to the frameworks and guidelines is important and there is no disputing their existence. The question should more likely consider, the impact of training people using different frameworks – does this matter? Does it affect outcomes? Does it impact

practitioner confidence in the system overall? These questions are important as a follow-on from this research, they have been touched on somewhat and the evidence seems to suggest that this is incredibly important. People are less likely to use a framework if they are unsure about it. Bespalova, Morgan and Coverdale (2016) support this theory. They state that in their study they found many different screening tools for identifying victims of human trafficking in the healthcare setting. Of these, only nine met the criteria for effective use. These nine then varied greatly showing a huge lack of consistency and thus, reliability.

Looking at the findings from the primary research, linked with that from the literature, practitioners support a unified framework and guidance document. It is suggested that if this were to be rolled out to all institutions involved in identifying victims of trafficking, it would be the most useful solution to the issue. This would be a costly endeavor and would have to be rigorously tested, however if it is achieved, it can be predicted that instances of trafficking identification would increase and be more accurate.

"Organisations and individual practitioners aren't aware of their roles and the limits to identifying and referring victims. Some people I worked with didn't even know a victim had to be referred" - Respondent Quote: Charity Case Worker

i. Many did not know that only certain organisations had the power to refer through the NRM, with the use if referral forms. This is a clear concern and an area which needs to be addressed with urgency.

Chapters 2 and 3 consider the introduction of the NRM in 2009; the primary research was conducted based on the system as it was in 2017/18. As with any process or framework, the initial task from a practitioner perspective is to identify and be aware of the framework itself, if the tool is unknown it simply cannot be used. A key issue with the original NRM process was that it was generally unknown or misunderstood by the organisations who needed to be aware of it and use it. When the NRM was first introduced in 2009, it was a considered as a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking, then helping them to gain protection, support and rehabilitation. However, it was not clearly rolled out, with training and advice on how it may be used. There were also criticisms of the tool's focus on the potential victim's immigration status (Lipscome & Beard, 2014). This led to an increase in large, mainstream organisations being aware of the NRM and mostly clear on its usages. Nevertheless, smaller charities and organisations with a more abstract link to human trafficking were not aware of the NRM. This is due to a number of reasons, but the main issue was the lack of clarity over who should use the NRM, who can refer a victim and how it works in practice. It is worth

noting that this procedure is different to any other criminal justice process. Generally, government departments, removed from the police, are not set up to deal with crimes. The only exception to this would be the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), which has a government department charged with overseeing this area of crime. Roberts (2018) identifies gaps in the system as discussed previously, she particularly focuses on the failings of the paper-based system which the NRM relied on. This meant that all practitioners who wanted to refer a potential victim, had to forward hard copies of the relevant paperwork. In an ever more digitalised world, with increased victims, this was simply not practical.

Research showed that the majority of practitioners did not understand the system and did not know where to refer their victims to. In August 2019 the government changed the process for referring victims of modern slavery. The outdated process was based entirely on paper referrals. This system is now centered around an online database, where practitioners can create detailed referrals in digital format and submit online via a portal. This is a clear change in the systems, which means that practitioners can save time by moving referrals through much quicker. This will lighten the load for the practitioners, meaning it is also likely that they will be able to refer more potential victims through the NRM. If this is the case, this should result in statistics increasing and becoming a more accurate reflection of the true picture. Although this process has been positively improved, the issue of awareness still exists. The data highlights a large number of respondents did not know who to send a referral through to, or if they were even able to make the referral. This will still be an issue if the government do not effectively transfer the message to the organisations involved. This revolves back to the problem of education and awareness, particularly in the smaller charities.

A further problem is that over 40% of participants do not know that the NRM framework even exists. Follow up investigations, at victim pathway conferences, highlighted the lack of awareness of the NRM. Many individuals from specific charities, such as Homelessness, Women's Support and Drug Addiction help centers, were entirely unaware of the system and did not know that there was a specific framework to refer a victim of human trafficking. Furthermore, these individuals suggested that their own organisations did not have a framework to rely on either. This is a clear issue as many organisations lack clarity and direction in terms of how to deal with potential victims and ultimately whose responsibility it is to address these concerns. It is clear that these smaller charities and local organisations are the groups who are most unfamiliar with the NRM and how it works, even now, over ten years after its introduction (Fudge, 2018; Sands, 2019). In April 2019 changes were made to the competent authority moving from a two-pronged approach, to a single point of contact; the

SCA. This was part of the wider solution to making the system easier to use and more supportive for the victim. However, it has been identified that many practitioners in this broad area are also unaware of the Single Competent Authority (SCA) or that they themselves are unable to refer potential victims. Therefore, if they were unaware of the SCA before the changes were made in April, it is worth considering how they would now become alert to it.

This then relates to awareness of first responders, with some practitioners also being unaware of who they are or what they do. It has been expressed on more than one occasion that this is an unusual method of crime identification. This is an accurate observation, those who are coming in to contact with the victim, are essentially not allowed to refer them for help or protection. This referral must pass through a 'middle-man', then on to the SCA for clarification and finality. The main, overriding issue with this is that it causes more work for the practitioners on the ground who have first come in to contact with the potential victim. If people are asked to fill out more paperwork or search for valid first responders, this is likely to mean that some victims are going unidentified or are being passed through in different areas of crime.

One participant in the questionnaire stated:

> *'when a schedule is busy and we have the option to refer an individual as a victim of domestic violence, or a victim of sexual offences, it can be quicker and easier to go down this route'*

although this is a concerning finding, it sheds light on this key issue. The NRM has to become more user-friendly to increase confidence from everyone working in the field.

6.2 Lack of confidence in the NRM (or MSHTU)

"Clear lack of belief in the NRM and the frameworks provided. It also points towards inconsistencies and a disjointed approach nationally, as many organisations are working in completely different ways." - Respondent Quote: Police Officer

Effective, constructed responses to the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and any subsequent guidance have been limited. It is clear from the literature that there is a great deal of skepticism surrounding the NRM and the frameworks it provides. Most recently, Zimmerman (2019) considered the usefulness of the NRM and how far it reached in terms of user-friendly applicability. His work focuses mainly on labor trafficking but has far-reaching applications in the field of human trafficking in general. Zimmerman considers the healthcare profession within his research and looks at the likeliness of them being the first point of contact for many

potential victims. His findings showed that those who worked in the healthcare sector have only recently begun to 'engage in responses to trafficking' (Zimmerman, 2019). The most common area of policy improvement and government focus has always been on law enforcement. This means that police are often familiar with the NRM and may be more likely to engage with it, however other front line organisations who have not received the same level support are less familiar. This research supports Zimmerman and shows that confidence in the system being used by these various front-line practitioners is a key issue with the NRM and the MSHTU in general. It can be seen that "locating and identifying" (Council of European Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, 2005) victims is the key feature of the framework, completing the NRM should result in an effective referral for the victim and a clear outcome for the organisation involved: are they a victim of human trafficking, or not? For these improvements to effectively take place a joint approach nationally would be beneficial. The very nature of trafficking means that people from all over the UK are affected, between regional borders, as well as national ones. The research conducted in this study focused on the opinions of practitioners who identify and refer victims of human trafficking. The data collected shows that the current mechanism, the NRM, in not fit for purpose. If every police force and every organisation in the country used the same process for identifying and referring victims, one that was universally understood, this would inevitably lead to more confidence in the system. Although the NRM attempted to provide this for referrals, there is still a lack of clarity and guidance surrounding identification of victims and how they can be supported. This would therefore lead to a more successful approach in general, in terms of the victim care pathway.

A further issue identified by respondents, was the link between the NRM and the Asylum Directorate, through the Home Office. One participant supports this by stating *'how can a decision maker come to a fair verdict, when their thoughts are influenced from the start of the investigation, by the Asylum information'.* The Home Office (2020) states that, in order to claim Asylum in the UK, 'you must be unable to return to your home country, due to fear of prosecution'. Jobe (2020) states that there is a link between people seeking asylum and being a victim of modern slavery. It is suggested that women are particularly at risk of this. The link between the NRM and the Asylum Unit has weakened in recent years, as the SCA moved away from the UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) Department, into the Serious and Organised Crime Group (SOC). However, it is still considered that there is some influence between the two organisations which remains a contentious topic.

This research suggests that many practitioners are unclear on how the process actually works, after the identification has been made. The data collected shows that this leads to a distinct lack of trust in the system. This lack of trusts stems from an inability to understand or work the process, which in turns leads to a lack of productivity and a difficult attitude being adopted by practitioners. The data collected indicates a need for change in general, with regards to the frameworks used and their uniformity. A further area for improvement, highlighted in the survey results, would be to provide practitioners with updates and information on how a victim's case is progressing. It was suggested that this would be an ideal way to ensure practitioners are involved at all levels. It would also help to ensure that practitioners know that the referral they made was important, to enable them to learn from previous referrals, improving their overall ability to deal with potential victims of human trafficking. The Refugee Council (2019) highlight the need for feedback from key organisations such as the police. They state that this helps to ensure all practitioners know how cases are progressing, particularly enabling an assessment of any danger a victim may be in. More than this, it would simply provide a sense of 'worth-while' amongst front-line workers, essentially improving morale and increasing confidence. Respondents overwhelming agreed with this proposal, stating that this would not only help them in terms of their abilities to learn and develop, but also that it would ensure that victims were able to be better cared for and more effectively managed. People are naturally inquisitive, if an individual is taking the time to work with a potential victim and pass them through a pathway, they are likely to want to know what the exact process is. Furthermore, being able to trust that the process is best for the victim and will deliver the most effective outcome is also of upmost importance. At present, this is not the case. This lack of trust and confidence in the NRM is leading to missed victims and a lack of referrals.

In 2018, the government released guidance detailing plans to increase training for practitioners to help them to identify and refer victims of modern slavery. The guidance also aims to substantially increase awareness of the issues, which, in turn, would increase instances of identification, as well as making practitioners more confident in their abilities to work with victims of human trafficking. The resource provides very basic materials to help organisations to increase awareness and provide in-house training. The government acknowledged that in many instances higher levels of training would be required, but this as a step in the right direction in tackling modern slavery in the UK.

6.3 Lack of understanding: creating a safe environment for potential victims

"Practitioners do not feel like the current system enables the full protection of victims, throughout the process, to happen effectively." - Respondent Quote: Social Worker

Protecting and supporting victims should be a paramount concern for all practitioners. Roberts (2018) suggests that victims cannot be expected to focus on their recovery and rehabilitation if they still need necessities such as food and clothing. She suggests a bottom up approach, whereby practitioners focus on the needs of the victim before the practicalities of their legal battle or fight for justice. Thus, if the victim is in a more secure environment and has access to basic subsistence, they will be in a much better position to work with authorities and deal with their case. This is a simple, yet interesting solution to the issue of victim compliance and protection. By making the victim feel welcomed and secure, by providing essentially basic supplies, they can build a relationship with practitioners which will place them in a much strong position both personally and legally. The research supports this as respondents were keen to suggest that many victims simply require comfort and safety from the outset, but a lack of knowledge and potential barriers means that this is sometimes hard to achieve. Also, the lack of legal guidance and policy protection for practitioners suggests that there is often reluctance to work outside the parameters of the guidance they have been given.

The aim from a government perspective is to ensure as many victims of trafficking as possible are identified and rehabilitated. However, there are some evident barriers which are making this process far more complicated. Although the survey results show that practitioners have voiced concerns surrounding the process, it is also worth acknowledging that time restraints and financial pressures on organisations will all add to the limited ability to provide a safe environment. The less money and resources available within the field of modern slavery and human trafficking - the more limited a practitioner's tools are, to support a potential victim. To protect a victim a number of variables need to be considered. First is the immediate danger a victim may face - this could be from the trafficker, from themselves and in occasional circumstances it may also be from other victims. This is a number one priority, keeping the victim safe in the early stages from any physical danger. Essentially, this may be a priority for the police in the first instance as they are trained to deal with physical violence, however if immediate danger has passed, it then often falls to NGO practitioners to provide ongoing protection and safety at a fundamental level. To completely protect a victim of human trafficking, it would take a great deal of time and money. It is worth noting that many victims are foreign nationals, so at a basic level the protection would have to encompass some form of

communication and therefore the use of translators. This would also have to incorporate various organisations and outreach programmes. Effective communication and protection of the victim can be achieved by having a more fluent approach to victim safety and well-being (Dalrymple, 2005; Hopper & Hidalgo, 2006).

Roberts (2018) considers the involvement of major companies and the programmes they are offering to support victims and practitioners. The Co-op chain created a national model in 2017, called Bright Futures. This programme is aimed at survivors of trafficking and offers them the chance to gain paid work within their stores. This is a solid example of providing a future for a victim, however this is an end stage result. As discussed, the research suggests that only a small number of victims actually reach the end stage of the pathway in a successful manner, ready to be rehabilitated. A further issue is the need for a legal right to work in the UK. This is another obstacle for a victim to overcome, often when they have fought through the criminal elements of their case already. Therefore, programmes like this are undoubtedly useful and a clear help to victims, but only those who have already made significant progress with their case. Again, this reverts back to the notion that a supportive, safe start to the victim's journey is paramount in all cases.

The primary research suggests that a potential solution to this situation would be the assignment of a caseworker, who would stay with the victim right from initial identification through to the referral and rehabilitation programmes. This would not only provide strong consistency for the victim, but it would also aid the issue of protection. Instead of passing a victim between organisations with no constant, the case worker would be on hand throughout the process. A caseworker may be assigned from a local or government organisation, to assist with transition processes, accountability and the overall well-being of the victims. This would create a more fluent approach to deal with victims as the casework would know all aspects of their case. It would also make it significantly easier for all organisations involved. Respondents agreed with this, suggesting that a single point of contact would not only speed up the process, but reassure the victim throughout their case – making everyone's job essentially much easier. In summary, the caseworker would always be a key point of communication for each victim, who could be easily contactable and available throughout the process.

"There is a lack of data surrounding re-victimisation statistics; of victims who have already entered the system." – Respondent Quote: Lecturer in Law

Revictimisation is an area of interest within this study. Research suggests that 2 out of 3 people who have been a victim of sexual exploitation, will likely be revictimised at some point.

Statistics concerning re-victimisation are important because the more that is understood, the more effective the treatment of victims can be in the long-term from the beginning of the process to the end. If there is a key reason why victims are falling out of the system and subsequently being re-victimised, this needs to be identified and addressed (Classen, Palesh & Aggarwal, 2005). Currently, there is a great lack of statistics or figures available detailing this information, therefore it an accurate investigation must rely on other sources (Hanson, 2016). Adams (2011) initially focused the human trafficking re-victimisation issue on human rights approaches to limit instances. Adams further highlights the lack of focus on victims' human rights within the legislation prior to 2019, suggesting it instead focuses on crime control and offender identification. Emphasis is placed on the use of the victim as a tool, to elicit information about trafficking gangs, gain evidence and provide testimony, rather than consider the victim's own needs and rights. It is suggested that a human rights approach may be an effective way of protecting victims and reducing the risk of revictimisation. Looking at the rights that have been violated for the victim, rather than using them as a way to punish a perpetrator, which would be the criminal justice approach. This approach would consider the victim first and the offender second, it acknowledges criminality and the need for justice but only after the protection of the victim is secured.

Focusing on human rights, Adams (2011) suggests, will ensure the victim is fully supported throughout the process. This will work to reduce re-trafficking in two key ways, firstly the victim will simply have less opportunity to fall out of the system. If they are being effectively monitored and their rights are being upheld, they will have more support and be monitored closely. The second notion is that they will feel more secure and protected, therefore they will have less desire to run away or escape from the authorities. Respondents in the study generally stated that a main concern in terms of revictimisation was that a victim would simply run away if they are scared. One respondent stated *'a victim does not have to stay with us, if they are scared or they are being contacted by the trafficker, they usually just leave and go back to them'*. This is a concern for the practitioners and also has wider implications on collection of data. Therefore, this human rights approach may help to significantly reduce instances of this.

The pattern of re-victimisation can be addressed in open terms whereby a victim of crime, specifically human trafficking, has a statistically higher chance of being victimised again, shortly after the original abuse. This is particularly important in this field, as victims so often drop out of the system. This has been discussed previously, the link is evident as the more victims that drop out of the system – the more likely they are to be picked up by their abusers again. If the

statistics are not accurate surrounding how many people fall out of the system, they cannot possibly give an accurate reading of how many people are being victimised. The key issue with trafficking is that there is a large degree of coercive manipulation and control, by the traffickers. The data shows that these traits mean that those who have been trafficked are significantly more likely to return to their captors; it is a familiar situation to them; they may even feel a sense of safety within their previous situation. The alternative is that they fear what the traffickers may do to their families, in their country of origin, or that the victims may not be able to send money back to their relatives. Respondents stated that the most common place for a victim to go if they do run away, is back to their traffickers, simply through fear. The psychological manipulations presented by traffickers creates immense problems for practitioners, as they are fighting against a crime as well as the will of the victims. If the victim has been heavily manipulated by their captor, it is significantly more likely that they will not engage in the pathway of identification, referral and rehabilitation. If the victim does not engage and actively tries to flee, there is very little that the authorities can do in this situation (Zornosa, 2016). A further problem is the lack of identity of the victims, they are unknown or 'disposable' people, generally without identity documents and with a real fear of exposure (Bales, 2012). These factors weigh heavily against the authorities and directly lead to a lack of statistics. Many questions will be asked of the victims in an attempt to identify them, their origin and to ultimately keep them safe. Consent is pivotal to this and if they want to escape, they are likely to find a way to do so.

"There is a major deficiency in communication between all organisations – relating to the support and progress of victims." – Respondent Quote: Legal Advocate

In 2011, Harvey, Hornsby and Sattar (2015) conducted a study into the multi-agency provisions available in child trafficking cases. The research focused on the importance of effective cooperation between agencies, alongside the subsequent support they are then able to offer victims. The study found that partnerships at all levels were fragmented, particularly between the police, the health care sector and social services, leading to a disjointed understanding of the protocols and guidelines each organisation follows. The primary research in this study strongly supports this, with over 70% of participants calling for a multi-agency approach to human trafficking as a whole. The study acknowledges the complexity of multi-agency partnerships but confirms the need for a rigorous overhaul in terms of communication techniques and sharing of information. There are two key issues; firstly, the tensions between organisations, largely arising due to differences in definitions and guidelines, as well as the lack of accountability in some areas. Secondly, budgetary constraints, although funding has

significantly increased in recent years, there are still large variances between organisations and the money they have to spend on tackling trafficking. Work from Eccleston (2014) goes on to suggest that traditional differentiations between organisations such as the health care sector and the law enforcement sector, creates large barriers to information sharing.

Communication between organisations is a well-established issue, one which was specifically highlighted over 42 times throughout the primary research. The key issue is that many practitioners are putting in a great deal of work to assist, identify and refer victims, then not receiving feedback or updates throughout the rest of the process. Not only does this effect the victims and the transition they may have. It also greatly effects the practitioner, their confidence and their morale (Brewster, 2019). Sharing information is incredibly important between the organisations involved in human trafficking; victim identification and referral. If a victim is passed through the system, from one organisation to another there must be a degree of accountability and feedback between these groups. This would help to ensure that everyone in the process knew what was going on and how the case was developing. It would also provide key comments for the practitioners in terms of the how they dealt with the case, if the method was effective and how it may be improved in the future (Broad & Turnbull, 2019; Jackson et al. 2018).

The other significant consideration is based solely on the morale of practitioners – knowing that they have done a good job and helped somebody to gain a better life. This may seem like a small thing but when people are dealing with victims on a daily basis, positive news is a great symbol of success and happiness for both the practitioner and the victims. This is particularly the case for police officers, who deal with both the victims and the offenders of human trafficking. Their success can be measured by both victims rescued and offenders prosecuted – both of which are relevant in instances of human trafficking (Fohring, 2020). One concern highlighted by respondents was that a potential data sharing issue could arise, if the victim had to give consent to share the information on how their case is progressing.

The feedback would be purely objective, indicating the status of the case and possibly feedback on the referral itself, not the actual intimacies of the case. A selection of feedback details, it seems, would be better than none at all. Almost all participants asked stated that this would be of great use and definitely something to change in the future. This is a fairly small alteration to the process, which would have a big impact on those working in the field. It could be achieved with simple technologies; a questionnaire, or brief report, automatically sent to the previous practitioner in the case, when the case is received or referred on (Bjelland, 2020).

The research in this study strongly supports the need for a joined-up approach but suggests that this cannot be achieved on a national scale straight away. Rather a localised approach would be the solution in the first instance. Creating a centralised local body to oversee all aspects of the victim care pathway, so that there is a constant need for communication and information sharing between all first-responders and involved organisations.

"Creating a safe, comforting environment for someone who may have been trafficked should be a number one priority for anyone who comes in to contact with a potential victim." – Respondent Quote: Charity Case Worker

This issue is one which many practitioners, within this survey, are particularly passionate about. This finding represented the level of concern people have surrounding this. It is clear that victims of any crime require a substantial amount of attention and understanding to enable them to recover as much as possible. A victim is defined as 'a person who has suffered physical or emotional harm, property damage, or economic loss as a result of a crime' (Justice, 2019). An individual defined as a victim will require a degree of reparation to enable them to recover from their experience. Practitioners generally feel that this begins from the moment they come in to contact with a potential victim. From this point the victims is in their care and should feel as safe and protected as possible. Safety and protection are key points, as they not only allow the victim to feel more at ease, they also facilitate a smooth investigation. This allows practitioners to work more effectively with the victim (Pascual-Leone, Kim & Morrison, 2017; Fohring, 2020). This can lead to victims being rehabilitated effectively, investigations running smoothly and criminals being identified, detained and prosecuted. If a victim is treated correctly from the outset, this could be a massive benefit to the organisations involved throughout the process.

The issue here is that victims aren't being treated correctly from the beginning. This has been identified by those who first come in to contact with the victims, who have detailed a lack of clarity and a lack of awareness as being a key barrier. It is difficult to create a safe environment for someone, if guidelines are unclear surrounding how to proceed with investigations and referrals. Other key pressures are time constraints and financial stresses, with both of these factors being important within the pathway of a victim (Barkworth & Murphy, 2016). A safe house is the NRM recognised option for a potential victim of trafficking. However, the key issue is that the NRM suggests the use of a safe house, only after the allowed five-day period, in which a victim can be considered as such – this is too long. This is a limbo period, where the individual is not a victim, an offender or a refugee. In February 2019 there was a significant alteration to the system, which included a change in the reflection period, which was increased

from 45 days to 90 days (National Crime Agency, 2019). This was a direct effect of cases being inadequately managed and rushed through the system. Officials rightly suggested that there should not be a strict time limit and that cases make take as long as they need to, to progress effectively. All these changes are in the process of being trialled or observed, to ensure that they work effectively for both the organisations involved and the victims themselves. Each of these alterations are a positive change, they reflect the research throughout this thesis (Roberts, 2018; Dell et al. 2019; Gordon et al. 2019).

6.4 Lack of clarity about how to treat potential victims

"Changing the way we perceive victims from the outset - the key theory is that victims who have been trafficked should be assumed to be a victim first and foremost." – Participant Quote: Healthcare Practitioner

Treatment of potential victims is an important part of this research; it has been a running theme throughout the study. Protecting vulnerable victims should be at the forefront of each organisation's practices, as stated by one of the research participants; '*victim treatment should be a priority. We should make sure victims are cared for and comfortable along their journey*'. The first 24 hours following initial identification have been highlighted as being important in the victim's journey, as well as in the road to long-term recovery. The primary research supports this, acknowledging that security is important; without it the victim may not be adequately protected and they may not remain in the system (Paasche, Skilbrei & Plambech, 2018). In the primary research all practitioners stated at some point that they have a duty to care for, support or protect victims. This is important as practitioners are aware of their responsibilities, however the evidence suggests they do not always know how to treat potential victims, in order to offer them the best care possible. As previously mentioned, an issue with this is that victims may not share their experiences, if they are not made to feel protected and safe. Further, they may not self-identify as a victim in the early stages of identification, thus creating further barriers for practitioners (Kerr & Dash, 2017). When identifying victims within the remit of criminal exploitation it has been suggested by Villacampa & Torres (2017; 2019) that a victim centered approach is mandatory. They call for a more robust, comprehensive national system in order to better protect victims who have been forced to commit criminal acts. This system may ensure that anyone who is suspected of being a victim is given direct access to controlled services and temporary immunity to criminal prosecution until the status of the individual is certain. This could be a risk as the suspected

victim may turn out to be a criminal, this may be the case with drug or sexual offences. This is a risk that is inevitable in these circumstances, however it is important to look at the macro-picture and the idea of canvasing the greater good. However, if all potential victims are given adequate care and protection, but a small proportion are then identified as criminals, this may arguably be a small price to pay. A further risk is that the identified individual is a victim of another crime. This would then mean that, although not subjected to human trafficking, they would still require care and protection - if they are a victim of another offense. Overall, by treating victims as victims, this would have a significant positive effect on their journey from the offset. This would also help to reduce drop-out figures and prevent them from remaining as hidden-victims (Villacampa & Torres, 2017; Stone, 2018). In January 2020, a new Victim Support Bill 2019-2021 was introduced in the House of Lords, which aims to advance provisions for modern slavery and human trafficking victims. Current laws do not give victims the right to support from the local services, the bill hopes to change this as well as provide more security for the victim whilst their case is being assessed. Currently the Modern Slavery Act 2015 does not provide legal means to support victims, thus the care received is often inconsistent, as previously discussed. The new bill highlights key changes in the way victims obtain protection, particularly that victims will receive support for at least 12 months after they receive a positive grounds decision. This will be discussed further in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

"The use of victim consent is a concern; is it needed? How is it gained?" – Participant Quote: Charity Case Worker

For someone to consent, they must have both capacity and freedom to give the consent (Archard, 2019). A key issue with victims of human trafficking is that consent is required from the victims at a number of intervals throughout the process. Lee (2013) details the need for a victim to consent to being interviewed, consent to being classed as a victim, consent to referral, consent for information to be passed out to other organisations. If this consent is provided by the victims then the case can progress quickly and efficiently, if the consent is not provided the case gets held up significantly. There are some problems with this, as a respondent in the primary research stated '*how can a victim consent when they are so scared and they really don't know what it going on, or what is for the best?*'. The question of whether a victim needs to consent, at every point, will be discussed further below (Massey & Rankin, 2020). An initial problem is that there are often language barriers which can significantly change the mind-set of the victim as well as their ability to fully consent. Even with the use of a translator it is possible that the victim may not fully understand or comprehend the situation

they are in. It is therefore essential to ensure consent is fully informed. Consent is extremely important, it protects the victims and gives them a voice (Massey & Rankin, 2020). Victims may be vulnerable and afraid; the primary research supports the view that victims experience fear and worry when they are identified. As such, a more straightforward way to address this issue links to the use of a caseworker, who stays with the victims through the process. This has been briefly highlighted in preceeding chapters. The caseworker would be a single point of contact, available to guide the victim through the process, helping them to complete forms and navigate the processes. A participant in the primary research suggested '*using the same casework all the way through the victim's journey would be helpful, it would probably make the victim feel safer'*. This is a valid point, which would be quite simple to implement through the use of a joined-up approach and multi-agency working, as previously suggested. By doing this, it would also open up the opportunity to share relevant information between organisations if this is deemed necessary.

"First-responders are clear that if there is any risk to the victim, then they must be made a priority. However, it seems that what constitutes action at a priority level, is very inconsistent between organisations." – Respondent Quote: Police Officer

This links directly to the way a victim may be viewed, when they first come to the attention of the authorities. A responder's first priority should be the welfare of the potential victim, however there may be confusion surrounding whether or not individual in question is a victim of human trafficking, an offender, or an unknown (Farrell et al. 2019). Evidence suggests that when responders attend a scene, they react much faster if there is a potential victim involved (Fagerlund, Kääriäinen & Ellonen, 2018). There may also be risks to the victim to consider; if there is the potential for immediate harm. This could result in a victim being taken immediately into refuge housing or being kept in a secure-house. If victims need immediate shelter their options may be limited, as there may be a lack of available safe accommodation. The difference between organisations is that some may place victims in a safe house automatically, particularly if they have the finance and provisions to do so. A further potential issue is that often if a victim is in immediate danger, the easiest place to house them is a police cell. They are therefore kept safe and secluded, but they are placed into a hostile situation. As this option is only available to the police; it may result from a lack of training or knowledge. This may also be due to uncertainty surrounding the identity of the potential victim, or for the victim's own safety. A participant in the primary research stated that '*sometimes a prison cell is the only place to put a victim. It's not ideal, but it keeps them safe till we know what to do'*. This is a very inconsistent process which has the potential to negatively impact the victim. If an

individual is considered to be a potential offender, this would also alter the way that they are viewed and treated. The individual may be a victim and they may require protection. However, if the authority is unaware of their position, this would massively alter the provisions they received and the way in which they are treated from the offset. This is also extremely inconsistent between organisations, as can be seen in the primary research. The data shows that the police are more likely to house a victim in a police cell or a refuge, whereas charities seek to place victims in safe-accommodation as soon as possible. A further consideration is the contact process for practitioners who identify a potential victim, options range from calling the police to contacting helpline or charity organisations such as the Modern Slavery Helpline or the Salvation Army. The most important point within this process is that there isn't a clear structure to deal with victims if they are at risk of violence or abuse, at the point in which they are found. This links back to the lack of uniformity between organisations across the country. If the pathway and framework was detailed and showed how victims should be dealt with if they are at immediate risk, this would ensure that all practitioners knew what to do with these individuals, as well as increasing confidence between themselves.

6.5 Concluding Thoughts

To recap, this research identified these main concerns:

- Lack of confidence in the NRM (or MSHTU)
- Lack of knowledge about correct identification and referral processes
- Lack of understanding surrounding how to create a safe environment for potential victims
- Lack of clarity about how to treat potential victims

Throughout this chapter there have been links between the literature, practices and the data gained through the surveys in the research process. It has been highlighted that the attention on fighting human trafficking needs to be largely refocused. The emphasis must shift from an offender-focused approach, whereby the goal is to apprehend the criminal - to a victim-focused approach, with the victim at the core of the process. This would not only provide the victim with increased support and safety, which is needed, it would likely result in a more efficient criminal investigation, as the victim would be more open to cooperating and providing information.

The key to a victim-centered approach includes; better provisions, an alternative mechanism to the NRM to improve the identification and referral processes and a shift in overall focus from the offender to the victim.

This can be achieved in three key ways, which will be discussed in the concluding chapter, focusing on policy, practice and protection;

1. Creating nationally recognised guidelines, from the MSHTU, for agencies to use when identifying and referring victims. These must be simple, coherent and easily accessible.
2. Encouraging a multi-agency approach throughout the victim care pathway, whereby a joined-up venture between all organisations involved is paramount to both the victim's recovery and the prosecution of offenders.
3. Allowing the victim to access basic support from the outset, regardless of their legal status. This would also help to reduce the stigma surrounding victims and reduce instances of false criminalisation.

These areas have been discussed in detail, however there are still some evident gaps in the knowledge, which have resulted from this study. A key area for further consideration is the re-victimisation of trafficked individuals. With such a lack of data available to examine in both the primary and secondary research, this was difficult to effectively investigate within this study. If more data were available, a more reliable solution could be proposed to help to reduce re-victimisation figures in human trafficking.

In summary, the primary research gained has provided a great insight into the process involved in human trafficking from victim identification through to referral and rehabilitation. It considers the organisations involved and received a great deal of new information from the practitioners used in the survey. All of this information goes some way to explain the issues currently faced by the government and the organisations involved in human trafficking. The literature reviewed supports many of the findings in this work, such as the need for multi-agency cohesion and the importance of victim's safety and protection. However, there have been a number of discrepancies within this research, such as the need for increased awareness of human trafficking, as well as the origin and explanation of increased human trafficking figures throughout the last ten years.

Chapter 7 Conclusion: Protecting Victims of Human Trafficking

This chapter will summarise the key information from this study. It will draw on the academic literature, primary research, findings and discussions. This chapter is structured to consider human trafficking in practice, first and foremost. It then goes on to highlight policy implications, the key changes suggested to frameworks and guidelines. Next, the chapter looks at protecting victims, drawing on other cases and key suggestions coming from this research. Finally, there will be a summary of key findings, an overview of potential future research and an outline of policy recommendations.

7.1 Summary of the Original Contribution to Knowledge

This thesis identified a gap in knowledge - a lack of clear information surrounding the immediate time period (24-48 hours) after a victim of human trafficking is identified by the authorities. Previously, very little was known about the way in which victims were treated and supported within this window by first responder organisations. The thesis addressed this gap in research by considering the experiences of victims through a practitioner lens. The primary research was conducted through the use of questionnaires, sent to practitioners who identified as first responders. The study focused on the way in which organisations offer support and protection to victims, as well as considering the lack of knowledge surrounding how organisations work with relevant frameworks.

These considerations led to the formation of the following research questions:

- Are the current Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) frameworks working to ensure victims of human trafficking are successfully identified and supported, as well as helping to reduce victims of human trafficking?
- What happens to victims of human trafficking within the first 24 to 48 hours following their identification, or self -referral?
- Do victim interactions with official organisations follow the MSHTU framework?

The importance of this research is that it identified the following key findings:

1. Lack of knowledge about correct identification and referral processes
2. Lack of confidence in the NRM (or MSHTU)
3. Lack of understanding: creating a safe environment for potential victims
4. Lack of clarity about how to treat potential victims

Following the discussion of these key findings, the concluding chapters suggested improvements to the current frameworks, alongside future policy and practical recommendations:

Policy – The importance of focusing on the inclusion of restorative justice principles, combined with an 'every victim matters approach' with a specific victim caseworker.

Practice – Improved training on nationwide identification and referral mechanisms for practitioners from all organisations

Protection – Increased support for victims in the 24-48 hour window, so they are better protected and less likely to be immediately re-victimised

Exploring the experiences of victims from a practitioner perspective has shed new light on the way human trafficking victims are treated, when they first come into contact with the authorities. This research demonstrates that there is a lack of clear processes and understanding in the initial identification and treatment of the victims of human trafficking, which exposes them to further risks as they slip through the support system, potentially back into the hands of abusers. This original contribution to knowledge can help to progress the identification, referral and rehabilitation of human trafficking victims in the UK.

These issues have been discussed and analysed in depth, throughout the results chapter of this thesis.

Are the current MSHTU frameworks working to ensure victims of human trafficking are successfully identified and supported, as well as helping to reduce victims of human trafficking?

This question can be separated into two key parts; firstly, are the MSHTU frameworks working to ensure that victims are identified and supported successfully? The MSHTU framework specifically aims to help identify victims, then refer them to be supported. This question directly leads on to question three, looking at whether the frameworks are used by practitioners. If they are not being used, for any reason, it can be assumed that they are not working. Further, if there are drop-outs from the system or a lack of engagement this would also suggest a faulty framework. Secondly, do the frameworks help to reduce victims of trafficking? Again, this is clearly linked to the overall effectiveness of the system and practical uses of the framework. The questionnaire pinpointed areas were victims had been re-victimised when they had fallen out of the system, suggesting that victimisation is not reduced as they re-enter the system, in some cases.

What happens to victims of human sex trafficking within the first 24 hours following their identification, or self -referral?

This was an important part of the research from the outset. It was clear that there was a distinct lack of information surrounding what actually happened to the victims in the first 24-48 hours. This topic was difficult to research as there was little information available. Case studies were explored from leading charities – these were found on their websites. Many of these victim stories did detail trafficking experiences, however they did not cover the crucial 24-48 hour time period. It was therefore imperative to question participants on this area, including where victims stayed and what provisions they were given. The research answered these concerns, with the questionnaire pinpointing parts of the process; identification, referral and support. Asking practitioners where they would house a victim gives invaluable insight into the options of the practitioner, but also into the experiences the victim has on first contact. Likewise, looking into the provisions provided by the organisations shows exactly what level of support the victim has. Crucially, the results changed drastically depending on the organisations questioned, highlighting the disparity between organisations all working in the same field. Essentially doing the same job – identifying and referring a potential victim of human trafficking.

Do victim interactions with official organisations follow the MSHTU framework?

The gap in the literature may be considered a consequence of the relative newness of the MSHTU, combined with the overarching focus being on the 45-day identification and referral process. The research found that both of these reasons played a part in if and how practitioners used the MSHTU frameworks. Questions were put to practitioners, asking them if they used the frameworks, if they felt confident, or if they were more likely to use their own knowledge. The research pointed towards a lack of knowledge, as well as a lack of awareness of the frameworks and how they should be correctly implemented.

7.2 Practice: Human Trafficking and the Asylum Process

At present, the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), Single Competent Authority (SCA) and the UK Visa and Immigrations (UKVI) teams work closely together. The Asylum branch conduct interviews and forward their information on to the SCA. Both departments also share the same database, with access to all the case documents and findings from each – available to openly view. This means that a lot of the evidence decision makers base their information on, to make

a conclusive grounds decision, comes from the Asylum directorate. This is, quite simply, a substantial conflict of interest. The overarching aim of Asylum policy is to ensure those people who are in the UK, from foreign countries, have a legal right to be there due to well-rounded fear of persecution in their home country (Immigration Act 1971, Human Rights Act 1998). However, limitations have increasingly been placed on Asylum seekers in the UK. Their basic rights have been limited, such as restrictions on appeals, lack of safeguarding surrounding 'fast track' applications and non-suspensive appeals. In extreme cases Asylum seekers have been denied food, shelter and basic access to medical support.

In contrast, the purpose of the MSHTU SCA is to identify and support victims of human trafficking, providing the leave to remain in the UK if required. This is a clear contradiction; the Asylum team are trying to remove aliens, foreign nationals who have no legal right to remain in the UK. Whereas the SCA want to identify and assist aliens, who may be victims of human trafficking. If Asylum are providing the information to the SCA, some of that information is likely to be biased, if not knowingly, then subconsciously. Leading interview questions, poor interpretation and pressure on the potential victim are all predictable occurrences in this type of process. Following the initial claim for asylum, if the potential victim is referred through the NRM, the SCA team then have full access to the Asylum case files. In many of these instances a decision on asylum may have already been made. If the potential victim has not been granted any asylum in the UK then the SCA still have to make their human trafficking decision, which already puts a negative light on the victim's story and their chances of being recognised as a trafficked person are likely reduced (Jobe, 2020).

The research in this study supports these ideas, showing a fundamental lack of trust in the NRM system from practitioners. The attitude of 'what's the point' is evident, as there is such a negative view of the Asylum and SCA link. One participant supports this by stating *'how can a decision maker come to a fair verdict, when their thoughts are influenced from the start of the investigation, by the Asylum information'*. For a victim of human trafficking to be truly acknowledged and for all potential victims to have a fair investigation of their case, there is no doubt that the MSHTU SCA should detach themselves entirely from the Asylum UKVI Department.

7.3 Policy: Changes to Frameworks and Guidelines

As the field of modern slavery develops, research, policies and reports also progress. It is important to acknowledge that there have been some changes in the legal landscape, sine the

fieldwork was completed in this study. One of the most significant changes, as briefly mentioned in Chapter 6, on 27th September 2019 the government published its new Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) Process Guidance. This policy is aimed at supporting and protecting confirmed victims of human trafficking and/or modern slavery. The RNA was suggested as a result of Lord McColl's outline of the Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill [2019-2021] in 2018. One of the most significant changes to the system was the Victim Support Bills proposal to end the 45-day-reflection period, previously outlined by the NRM. At present, the Bill has progressed through the formality of the first House of Lords reading, there is no date scheduled for the second reading. The Bill may still be subjected to changes; thus, this research is important in ensuring the Bill is fit for purpose.

The government have previously stated that they want to lead the world in the fight against modern slavery (Anti-Slavery Commissioner, 2019). To do this, victims must be at the forefront of the agenda. The research in this study has highlighted the need for a more victim-centred approach - from increased training to identify and refer, to providing organisations with the right tools to offer victims the support they need throughout their journey. Currently, there is no legal support for victims of human trafficking in the UK. Care is provided, case-by-case, on a non-statutory basis. This leads to inconsistencies and inadequate support for the majority of victims. One of the major turning points in the development of the new Victim Support Bill, was the admission from the government that the current 45-day period is not in-line with the Trafficking Convention. This admission brought about campaigns for greater support to be offered to victims of human trafficking (Care, 2019). The Victims Support Bill has been developed with victim protection at its core, suggesting key changes to the way victims are treated (Freeforgood, 2020)

One of the main organisations to back the Victim Support Bill was AntiSlavery.org (2018). The NGO states that the Modern Slavery Act 2015 is not fit for purpose, as it has a strong offender focus. The key issues which the Victims Support Bill aims to address are; no legal provisions for victims, a lack of support after the 45-day period and inconsistencies in the immigration status of victims (NAWO, 2020). Anti-Slavery.org believe that the new Bill will offer increased protection to victims, as well as improving conviction rates of offenders.

The Victim Support Bill provides four key improvement, these are:

1. Guaranteed support for 12 months, following positive decision
2. Minimum standard of support identified; accommodation, money, social/legal/health care
3. Access to 'leave to remain' immigration decision for a recovery period
4. The provisions for support are written in law, securing the standard

Although this is a clear improvement, this research has highlighted issues which are not addressed in the Victim Support Bill. The first consideration is the level of training provided to practitioners. Data collected strongly points towards a need for training and guidance improvements across all sectors. While this has not been adequately addressed in the proposed policy, this research shows that it as an important part of the victim centered approach.

In 2015, the US Trafficking in Persons Report noted the insufficient response to victim support in the UK. Specifically, the report highlighted the lack of support provided after the 45-day period, drawing attention to the vulnerabilities of victims, the need for rehabilitation and long-term support (Craig et al. 2019). The new Victim Support Bill proposes a 12-month care plan for every identified victim of human trafficking and modern slavery. This would give the victim access to a support worker for one year, as well as a specific care plan, tailored to their individual needs. The new guidance details the need to "provide them with a period of intensive support to assist with their recovery and get them to a position where they can begin to re-build their life" (Home Office RNA, 2019). The clear benefit here would be the removal of the 45-day time restriction, replaced by a system where the victims needs are considered for a longer period of time. However, this may incite a 'quantity not quality' reaction, whereby more victims are pushed through the system in a shorted period of time. This would ensure more conclusive grounds decisions are made, but there would be an increase in victims needing support. Although the 45-day period is somewhat ineffective if victims need a longer period of support, it does act as a protection for workers and victims, as they have that period of time to ensure everything is in order. This Bill must address what will happen to a victim when they are initially identified – what support will they receive from the outset? Without this consideration victims will be no better off in the short-term if this Bill is passed. The primary research in this study shows that this is one of the key concerns for practitioners; how can a victim be adequately identified and supported within the first 24 hours. This Bill is aimed at protecting those who have been legally identified and recognised as victims. It does not consider potential victims who are stuck in the NRM system, sometimes for two or three years awaiting a modern slavery decision. These individuals are often the most vulnerable and would no doubt benefit from a care plan and an on-hand social worker to guide them through the process. A further long-term issue to be identified with the 12-month support plan is that it still imposes a time limit on the victim's welfare and support. The key question here is; what happens to the victim in month 13? The Victim Support Bill does not directly address this concern. Without this issue being addressed, the process becomes an elongated version of the

45-day period – with no clear end for the victim. The bill is yet to be passed, so as such there is currently a lack of academic literature available on this area. Further research into its limitations and successes will be required when it is in circulation.

One of the key findings in this study was that practitioners believed that victims were fearful of authority and too scared to seek help in the UK. It is suggested that the answer to that does not lie with victim accountability, but with the processes actioned by the front-line workers. In a society fuelled by tick-boxes and ensuring the correct protocols are followed, is that reflecting on the way victims are treated? The introduction of this new policy goes some way to support this theory, allowing a longer timescale for practitioners to work in. Many victims do not receive their conclusive ground decisions until two or three years after they have been referred. This is simply unacceptable and certainly will be of no benefit to the unfortunate victim. In these years where the victim is awaiting an outcome in their case, they are ultimately left to fend for themselves. Some may have access to charity organisations to support them in some way, such as Hestia or the Salvation Army, but many do not have any support or access to legal services. This can be an incredibly stressful time for the victim and it often exacerbates any mental health condition they may have. This also places pressure on victims to abscond, thus increasing their chances of re-victimisation. This is clearly an area which requires further exploration and a change in policy to improve the conditions for victims during this time.

7.4 Every <u>Victim</u> Matters; Parallels with the Victoria Climbie Case

The system is fractured. Without a nationally recognised and enforced training and policy framework, victims will continue to go unidentified and be mistreated within the system. Where have we seen this before? This is a well-known issue; precedents have been set in this area from several related areas of policy. For example, Kotiswaran (2017) discusses the failures of the current support system, not just in the UK, but across the world. Discussing the current protocols and the efforts made by the British Government to implement the UN Protocol (2000), Kotiswaran draws attention to the grave lack of standardisation between governments and even national bodies. Further, the ineffectiveness of anti-trafficking laws are highlighted, with focus on the offenders and the lack of convictions. The research in this thesis suggests that national reform surrounding anti-trafficking, with a particular focus on standardised training, is needed. In contrast to Kotiswaran's work, the focus here is on the victim not the offender. Although clearly conviction rates are important, if vulnerable people aren't safeguarded against potential trafficking situations, they are more likely to become targets for

exploiters. Similarly, if current victims aren't cared for in the most effective way they are likely to be re-victimised. The need for the guidelines to be uniform and nationally recognised across all organisations and all regions has been highlighted. This is essential to ensure that all practitioners are working from the same page. Without this increase in consistency, there will continue to be issues surrounding victim identification, referral and rehabilitation.

Returning to the survey results, one participant states that *'we all have different guidelines, different way of dealing with spotting a victim and what to do next'*. This outlines the confusion felt by front-line workers and the stresses they face on a daily basis. This is a situation which can be resolved. Police services like the West Yorkshire Force have piloted successful schemes such as the West Yorkshire Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Network, which was discussed in Chapter 3. This enabled people from all areas to join the network in West Yorkshire to share their experiences with Modern Slavery. This was a key turning point, it was embraced by the police and many charities however the network failed to penetrate the NHS or smaller charities. Similarly, the National Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Network (NATMSN) was a clear step in the right direction in 2016. The scheme hoped to bring together key figures from across the UK to discuss and improve relations, when dealing with victims of Modern Slavery. However, the key issue with this network is that it simply does not incorporate all the key bodies. There is no representation from social services, from the NHS, from local councils or from smaller NGOs. This means that only half of the story is being told and only half of the correct solutions can be raised. This type of situation is one that has surfaced throughout history, with major incidents having to occur for a reform to be commissioned.

There are significant comparisons between the fractured system of human trafficking management and the inadequacies of the child support system pre- Every Child Matters and the Laming Inquiry 2003. It was recorded that failures of the system, a disjointed approach and an incredible lack of communication between key organisations, can lead to child abuse being missed. The death of Victoria Climbie in 2000 sparked national outrage. Within this case, Climbie (an eight-year-old girl from Ivory Coast) was in the care of her guardians in London. During a period of approximately two years she was subjected to abuse, torture and depravity. Throughout this time, she was examined by doctors, she met with social services, the police investigated some instances, her school raised concerns… many separate organisations were aware of the situation. The fundamental issue within this case was that none of these organisations communicated with each other, no-one saw the bigger picture. Consequently, on 25th February 2000, Climbie died at Middlesex Hospital, from malnutrition and hypothermia.

The pathologist found that she had over 128 separate injuries and scars and he described it as "the worst case of child abuse I've encountered".

This is an ideal comparison with regards to the abuse women and girls experience as a consequence of trafficking, as the fundamental issues with the overall system are incredibly similar. Communication between organisations is the biggest failure, this leads to other inadequacies such as mismanagement of cases, failure to spot safeguarding indicators and ultimately victims falling out of the system and potentially being re-trafficked.

The Laming Report (2003) was a direct response to Climbie's death, the investigation highlighted 108 recommendations.

These are key points from the inquiry:

i. A board for 'children and family' needs to be created. Chaired by a senior government minister, with the aim to coordinate policies and frameworks.
ii. Establish a national agency, led by a children's commissioner, to ensure services meet national standards for child protection.
iii. Committees should be established by local councils, drawing members from education, NHS, social services, housing and the police (and probation). Further, local management boards - chaired by council chief executives (same members) - to oversee interagency work on child protection and welfare.
iv. A national children's database should be created – with a record of every child and their linked personnel: police, charities, local authorities and health care services.

These points can be linked directly to the state of human trafficking in the UK at the present time. The first two points have been implemented to an extent, by the government and national NGOs, the National Anti-Trafficking and Modern Slavery Network (NATMSN) is a board clearly tasked with considering policy and framework. Further, the National Crime Agency (NCA) and the Single Competent Authority (SCA) are tasked with implementing the policies and ensuring they meet national standards.

However, the second two points are clear areas that need addressing with the Modern Slavery arena in the UK. The first point to address is the creation of a national database; although individual organisations already have their own databases to record victims, a national system accessible by all organisations would be extremely beneficial. A system that not only documents the facts of the case, but also provides access to police, charities, local authorities and health care services. Currently, the likes of the NRM have access to their own database

which documents all known contact with authorities and recognised charities. However, this isn't accessible to other organisations and is only available when the case goes through to be assessed for reasonable or conclusive grounds decisions. This system is also linked to Asylum decisions as previously mentioned, this is further concern. If a national database were created this would ensure all organisations can track and support a victim from the very moment they are identified. Anyone involved in the victim's journey can contribute to the overall profile of the victim, ensuring as much knowledge is shared as possible. This would be beneficial for the following reasons:

- Transparency between all organisations
- Increased knowledge of safeguarding concerns for victims
- Knowledge shared if victim is a potential flight risk, thus reducing drop-outs
- Sharing of outcomes; helping to shape future cases and provide both positive and negative feedback to all involved
- Evidence accumulation; particularly important if a case is involved in criminal investigations

This then leads on to the creation of a local inter-agency team. They would be tasked with ensuring each victim has a seamless process, with all involved organisations being aware of the personalised victim pathway from start to finish. The Climbie Inquiry led to local teams like this, within the childcare setting. This meant that the communication between organisations and the sharing of information became far easier and more effective. Hubs are now set up to ensure that representatives from each division are present, enabling fast responses between groups and clear identification / referral procedures. A similar set up for modern slavery and human trafficking would safeguard against victims being misidentified as offenders, ensure that the whole victim experience is considered and it would also subsequently reduce re-trafficking figures. Additionally, the formation of a hub would have significant positive impacts for practitioners. This would make their roles easier and protection against possible mistakes or oversights.

The Leeds City Council Children's Social Work Service; Practice Standards Manual 2015 was constructed using some of the recommendations outlined in the Laming Report (2003). The principles of this manual are based on; *'Restorative philosophy that seeks to work with children, young people and families, building on their strengths to better manage the risks and challenges they face'* (P.4). The Manual addresses a number of service standards and acceptable practices, however the focus here is on *'children and young people … will have a good quality social work assessment and analysis of their needs on their record that is*

produced within specified timescales'. This is comparable to that of human trafficking victims, child or adult, as they require a needs assessment to analyse the standard of support they require. The practices in this manual were shaped by two key findings, from the Victoria Climbie - Laming (2003) Report, these are:

> *Practitioners need appropriate support and training to ensure that as far as possible they put themselves in the place of the child or young person. They need to be able to notice signs of distress in children of all ages (Laming 2009: 3.1).*

This recommendation focuses on both the victim and the practitioner, acknowledging that both parties have specific needs. To ensure the best outcome for the victim, both needs must be met. The claim that practitioners should be able to position themselves in the place of victims, to better understand and support them, is attributable to human trafficking situations. Choi, Green and Gilbert (2011) consider the importance of empathy as a restorative principle, when dealing with people who have been affected by crime. They suggest the use of discourse markers to help victims fully understand important conversations and interactions – thus, improve compassion and empathy between a practitioner and a victim.

And:

> *Whenever a joint investigation by police and social services is required into possible injury or harm to a child, a manager from each agency will always participate in the strategy discussion. (Laming, 2009 Recommendation 93, 13.52).*

This recommendation further supports the use of restorative principles, to provide a voice to the victims of human trafficking. To support this recommendation, the Manual also states that *'Practitioner takes steps to encourage and support child's active involvement in decisions or meetings about them … use of restorative practice approach'*. This is supported by the need to effectively safeguard victims, whilst empowering them to make decisions regarding their own future and support. Evidence from the primary research, whereby a practitioner stated *'victims should be involved in decisions about their own support and wellbeing'* strongly supports this notion. Victims must be effectively safeguarded by improving multi-agency support and practitioner collaboration. Doing this will enable victims to safely participate in discussion relating to their own futures (Wallbank and Wonnacott, 2015).

In conclusion, it is clear that there are substantive links between the Victoria Climbe Case, the subsequent Laming Report (2009) and current modern slavery and human trafficking situation. The Climbie case was a horrific event in modern history, it served to highlight the substantive

faults in the childcare system, as outlined above. The Laming Report set out recommendations to improve, support, protection and safeguard victims, as well as suggesting way to advance practitioner management, training and communication. This report changed the way children are supported in the local community, as can be seen from the Leeds City Council Children's Social Work Service; Practice Standards Manual 2015. These recommendations, although intended for children support, can be instrumental in the design of a new human trafficking victims support system. The report focuses on victim protection, offering ways to safeguard whilst empowering. Utilising proven case studies such as this, with well-established mechanisms already in place to promote multi-agency working and encourage the victim-voice is an evident way of progressing human trafficking to take on an 'every victim matters' approach.

7.5 Empowerment: Providing a Voice to Victims of Human Trafficking

One new practice that could help draw agencies together and support the development of policies and practices, in-line with the Laming Report, is restorative justice. The support provided to victims is a fundamental part of this research. By exploring treatment and improving the standard of care offered to the victims, as well as implementing new techniques to support them, this may increase victim participation rates and reduce victimisation in the long term. This research has explored the journey of a victim of human trafficking through practitioner feedback. In order to adequately support victims of crime, remedies are available. The previous sub-chapter highlights the potential issues with the newly proposed Modern Slavery Victim Support Bill 2019-2021, it is therefore necessary to consider other approaches for examples of good practice.

Restorative justice is a key alternative to the criminal justice approach. Current human trafficking systems, such as the NRM, could be improved to incorporate restorative practices. Section 7 of the Ministry of Justice, Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (2015) defines restorative justice as '*the process of bringing together victims with those responsible for the harm, to find a positive way forward.*' The concept of restorative justice became prevalent in Britain in the 1970s, it advocated the importance of victims and the need for them to be better acknowledged as victims of crimes whilst playing a key part in the justice process. It grew as a model of justice and created a dynamic social change in the 1990s, when knowledge surrounding the area began to develop and people became more aware of it. By 2000 restorative justice was an expansively used concept, attracting support from the police service, prison officers, solicitors, judges and government officials (Strang, 2002).

This sub-chapter focuses on the use of restorative practices within the field human trafficking. Hermann (2017) distinguishes the more traditional retributive justice as focusing on the punishing the offender, whereas restorative practices primarily consider the victims needs and relationships. A leading restorative justice practitioner, Zehr (2002), explains the participants and goals of restorative practices as; "*a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to carefully and to collectively identify and address harms, needs and obligations, in order that one put things as right as possible*." These considerations can be seen as principles of participation, collaboration and inclusion. Evidence from the previously identified Lord Laming Report (2003) points towards elements of restorative practice being beneficial within a victim-centred pathway. The main area of focus, within this sub-chapter, is giving the voice back to victims of human trafficking. In the context of this work, the perception of victim voice is the concept of hearing directly from a victim of human trafficking. Gaining information from a currently unheard demographic, which emphasises their priorities, needs and aims (Koss, White and Lopez, 2017). By providing a voice, this sets the scene for empowerment, as well as encouraging engagement between practitioners and victims.

Empowerment to encourage the use of victim voice is an important notion. Zehr (2002) states that victims *'need to have this sense of personal power returned to them'* – within this work he considers the importance of empowering victims and regaining autonomy. The link to autonomy is especially relevant in human trafficking cases, where victims lose their independence and freedom. The concept of empowerment can be an enabler; regaining a victim's sense of worth and power. Empowering victims has been attempted in other areas of victim reparation, such as domestic violence and rape. Providing opportunities to discuss experiences throughout the victim-pathway, with qualified practitioners, has been shown to assist the healing process (Smith & Kelly, 2001). This also further supports the suggestion of providing permanent caseworkers to each human trafficking victim, with the expectation that this individual would be there throughout the victim's journey through to rehabilitation. Comparing this to the way therapy has been used in domestic and rape cases, it is suggested that this might help to encourage victims to talk, express their feelings and ultimately take charge of their future (Sweet, 2019). Using restorative principles to discover the needs of each victims, can enable them to consider the value of rehabilitation and progression as they move through their journey. The principle of value looks at respecting the dignity of anyone who has been affected by crime (Serving Canada, 2019). Empowerment and honest communication are both important features of restorative values. In terms of enabling the victim voice in the early stages of intervention, participation is important. Victims may

begin their communication slowly interacting in small amounts, they may then start to initiate dialogues and move to more substantial practitioner – victim interaction. Building rapport is important, as is allowing victims as much time as they need to engage in communication (Ahern et al. 2017). By providing a platform for victims to begin their healing process this can encourage them to not only rebuild, but to help other victims of human trafficking. This could be through networking, communicating or leading discussions based on their experiences - both positive and negative. It is important to consider a possible issue with this; victims ideally must take an active part in restorative processes; without the cooperation of the victim it would be difficult to fulfil the criteria of a restorative framework. This means that victims would be required to communicate with authorities and potentially the offenders, to ensure their needs are being met. Restrictions on this may come in the form of the sensitive nature of the offences, as well as language barriers and communication issues (Lee, 2012).

Considering empowerment, communication and the victim voice has been previously been attempted in part, in generic victim treatment. An example of this is the use of victim impact statements, which address the needs of victims of crime. Impact statements provide an opportunity for victims to share their story, most often with courts and judges in criminal trials (Booth, 2016). Providing victims with the chance to articulate their feelings and the impact a crime may have had on them, in the criminal process, is an important restorative tool. This allows the victim to become a part of the justice process, giving them the voice to express the effect of criminal actions so that it might be taken in to account when sentencing an offender (Erez, 2004). Expanding on the use of victim impact statements, which are traditionally used in a trial towards the end of the criminal process, further opportunities for victims to express their feelings and needs might be provided. This would enable the rebalancing of justice throughout the victim's journey, not just at the end within a criminal trial.

A further example of attempts to provide a voice to victims can be seen in video-link testimony. This is a way of encouraging safe participation, from victims, within a criminal trial (Heffernan, 2017). The CPS (2020) discuss victims of rape and sexual offences and the support available to them through the justice process. The Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 states that the use of live link in court is given to victims who may be intimidated, classed as a minor or may be considered vulnerable. The Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales (2018) discusses the use of Registered Intermediaries (RI) who are classed as specialist communicators. The Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 states that RIs may be given to children and vulnerable victims, to accompany them and assist in providing evidence. It is suggested that the use of live link and assistance from RIs provide victims with a voice that

they did not previously have. This may have been due to communication needs, victim vulnerabilities or the inappropriate use of questioning. This has been beneficial in empowering victims, within the criminal justice system. However, it is considered that again the limitation of this is that it is somewhat restricted to the criminal system and the trial process. As previously stated, the use of a caseworker for victims of human trafficking would be beneficial. This might be modelled, to an extent, on the Registered Intermediaries currently used in youth and vulnerable victim cases.

A final comparison to be drawn, when considering restorative practice, victim needs and empowerment is to the Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVA) offered by specialist rape and sexual assault support agencies. The role of ISVA was commissioned in 2005 through the Home Office Violent Crime Unit. ISVAs are independent advocates trained to support victims, to assess their needs and protect their rights. They are essential in guiding victims through the criminal justice system, explaining processes and helping them to regain control of their situation (Survivors Trust, 2020). The Home Office (2017) guidance states that an ISVA should *'provide non-judgemental, impartial information to empower individuals to make informed choices*.' This provides a clear link with the notion of providing a voice to victims, whilst taking account of their diverse needs. Providing human trafficking victims with similar advisers, who would provide support in a comparable way, could be successfully implemented in the current Modern Slavery Victim Support Bill 2019-2021.

The principles of restorative practice can be taken forward to empower victims. Limitations such as communication barriers, vulnerabilities and a lack of understanding could be solved by utilising the methods identified in this sub-chapter. Drawing on evidence of restorative ideas for giving victims a voice is a significant consideration. By focusing on the specific harms, needs and obligations of each individual victim, as outlined by Zehr (2002), they can begin to be more involved in the process of their own support and protection. By calling on other areas such as rape and sexual violence, proven methods of victim integration can be utilised. This also links significantly back to the feminist theory discussed in Chapter 1. It must be considered that female victims must be empowered to find and use their voice - this cannot be given to them. Re-visiting the view that exploitation of females can be seen in the context of patriarchal systems of power and control. Using dedicated caseworkers and modern slavery specific methods of victim support can help to reset the balance of traffickers holding a superior role over the past vulnerabilities of victims. Empowerment from a feminist perspective could take the form of rehabilitation, to facilitate the victim being able to support themselves, reflect on their experiences and take charge of their future. Enabling a greater amount of control and power would re-adjust the power imbalance. This would also be likely to reduce the chances of

re-victimisation. This section has considered the use of caseworkers as an important tool to aid victim empowerment, this has been linked to the use of ISVA's in rape and sexual violence cases. The use of an adviser would be beneficial to victims of human trafficking; providing guidance and supporting communication.

7.6 Aims of the Research and Protecting Victims of Human Trafficking

Victims of human trafficking in the UK do not currently receive the support they need to enable the best recovery and rehabilitation possible. This thesis aimed to explore practitioner insights into the problems of supporting the victims of human trafficking within the first 24-48 hours of their initial identification by a first responder. The research looked to consider the guidelines available to those who worked with victims in organisations, such as the Police Force, the NHS and Charities; anyone considered to be a first responder. Reviewing existing research, considering the experience of the victims and the organisations who support them, highlighted key issues with the NRM process. This also shed light on the need to improve areas, such as training to identify and refer victims and an increase in victim-focused support, which could be enhanced to unify and strengthen the victim pathway.

The research considered the guidelines available to those who worked with victims and who those who identify as a first responder. The investigation focused on the need to improve the standard of guidelines for practitioners; to educate on identification and referral, as well as exploring the support opportunities open to victims. The primary research was essential in gaining first-hand insights into the opinions of those working with the victims of human trafficking and the systems that currently exist to support them. The data was gathered in the form of an online questionnaire, there were 64 respondents; practitioners from organisations such as; the police, NGOs, health care workers and social services. Practitioners were presented with questions which explored human trafficking identification and referral practices, alongside the support options available to potential victims.

The responses gathered were explored qualitatively and they identified key weaknesses in the current system; both practically and within the government policy. The research supported the need for a reform in these areas. This would in turn make the process easier, encourage an increase in victim identification and referral figures and ultimately help victims of human trafficking to be identified, referred and rehabilitated.

The data gathered pointed towards four key findings, which were discussed in Chapter 6, these were:

1. Lack of knowledge about correct identification and referral processes
2. Lack of confidence in the NRM (or MSHTU)
3. Lack of understanding: creating a safe environment for potential victims
4. Lack of clarity about how to treat potential victims

To summarise; increasing the communication between organisations involved in the process, from start to finish, is essential to improving the overall experience for the victims. This would also substantially improve the way organisations operate. The survey also identified a need for increased opportunities for victims, such as secure accommodation, increased access to support from the outset and better immediate provisions (translators, money, health care). This would protect victims, offering them support through identification, referral and rehabilitation, aiding them to recover more effectively. These key findings point towards a victim-centred approach, improving identification and referral, increasing training and support to practitioners and ensuring victims do not slip through the gaps in support, finding themselves trapped in an endless cycle of abuse.

The concluding sub-chapters suggest improvements to the frameworks and future recommendations. The key aim being to help progress the identification, referral and rehabilitation of human trafficking victims in the UK.

7.7 Policy Recommendations

The findings of this research offer an insight into the practical and policy issues faced by practitioners working with victims of modern slavery and human trafficking. The research is of interest to academics and scholars, as it builds on a foundation of literature from the likes of Bales, Lee, O'Connell Davidson and Shelly. It adds to the knowledge base by producing a previously un-explored area of human trafficking, questionnaires aimed at the experiences of practitioners. This has filled gaps in the current body of literature, with exploratory studies and practical proposals to improve the way victims are supported. The research suggests that better provisions are needed, to deal with victims and to make their journey easier. This would increase the number of victim identifications and referrals, meaning more individuals are being supported. The research offers new understandings of the victim's experiences whilst also considering the insights of the practitioner. By identifying the practitioners' experiences and

opinions, alongside that of the victims, this can enable the development of new policies and procedures. Suggestions are made to introduce new guidelines, not only to aid the victim but also to ensure practitioners are able to understand and utilise all of the tools available to them. This will help to ensure that all practitioners are working from the same page - making accurate, timely, informed decisions. These practical alterations to policy and guidelines enable further research to be conducted, these will be discussed next.

The three main recommendations for improvement are:

Policy:

Inclusion of restorative principles combined with an 'every victim matters' approach and a victim caseworker.

The first suggested change to the current system needs to be a joined-up, multi-agency approach within all organisations involved in the victim care pathway. This needs to be implemented nationally.

This can be linked with the earlier mentioned victim-focused approach, which suggested:

1. Creating practical national guidelines, for all organisations to use when identifying and referring victims.

These must be universal, so that all organisations are able to use the same frameworks. The main focus would be on directing practitioners effectively, giving them the support needed to effectively protect potential victims of human trafficking. They would focus on how to identify a potential victim and how to subsequently offer short-term support and a safe referral. These guidelines should be simple, coherent and easily accessible. New guidance must also have a victim-centered approach.

2. Encouraging a multi-agency approach throughout the victim care pathway. A joined-up venture between all organisations involved is paramount to both the victim's recovery and the prosecution of offenders.

This research drew on significant comparison the Victoria Climbie Case and the subsequent Lord Laming enquiry. This report should be used as a foundation, to build adequate multi-agency mechanisms within the field of modern slavery and human trafficking. The inclusion of restorative principles such as including the victim in discussions and using discourse marker - to give victim a voice, would be key to this approach.

3. Providing increased, standardised victim support from the outset, regardless of their legal status.

As victim support is not currently legislated, the provisions offered to victims vary between organisations and counties. Thus, there is a need for consistent provisions for victims within the first 24 to 48 hours, such as secure accommodation, access to support from the outset and better immediate provisions (translators, money, health care). This support should be regulated and standardised across the country. This would aid victims in their recovery process and help to reduce the stigma surrounding victims, as well as reducing of false victims criminalisation.

Practice:

Improved training on identification and referral mechanisms for practitioners.

All of these areas have a key link to training, particularly training of first-responder, front line organisations. The research points towards some organisations having frameworks to follow, which are likely effective and easy to follow. However, the issue presented in this study is that not everyone works from the same framework - where some organisations may be leading the way in terms of effective guidelines, many are falling behind. A large gap is therefore created between those organisations leading the way and those, often smaller, organisations who do not have a consistent way of identifying and referring victims of human trafficking. Thus, it would be sensible to converse with and further explore those organisations who feel that they do have effective guidelines in place. Working with these groups will help to create a substantial, nation-wide training programme. This would help to ensure that all organisations, who are dealing with victims of human trafficking are able to identify, refer and support these individuals in the same way – effectively and successfully. This also ties in with a recommendation to make changes to the identification process. It has been suggested throughout this research that the identification process is often unclear and time-consuming. If new guidelines were created, taking in to account the issues with identification would be a key consideration.

Protection:

Increased support for victims in the short term (24-48 hours) so that they are protected and not immediately revictimised.

A further recommendation would be to provide clear guidance on how to treat a potential victim, from the outset. The primary research indicated a lack of knowledge surrounding how

to treat a victim, particularly if barriers such as language or fear are in place. This should be in the form of simple guidance reports, to ensure that any practitioner might know how to best support a victim of human trafficking.

Brewster (2019), and Harvey, Hornsby and Sattar (2015) advocate a multi-disciplinary method, this approach has also been championed throughout this study. It is therefore suggested that the creation and implementation of this improved guidance should come from the organisations who use it – practitioners on the front line. The best way for policy and research to inform practice is to encourage collaboration between all organisations involved. The key national players in this dynamic would be the Home Office, Police Force, Salvation Army and the Health Service. A selection of representatives from other areas such as local charities, social services and legal bodies would also be key to gaining a representative overview of the field on human trafficking. Finally, victim empowerment and providing victims with a voice has been another central finding within this research. Thus, it would be important to ensure victims were represented at multi-agency discussion, moving forwards.

A key point in creating and implementing this would be consistency, it is imperative that the guidance is country wide whilst still being tailored to each type of first responder organisation. If each organisation had resources to provide victims with food, support and immediate shelter, this would benefit the victim and the process. In turn, the victim would be more comfortable with the authorities and the organisations involved, thus being more open to engaging with the services. If this were a generic process each victim would have largely the same experience at the start of their journey.

Not only would this recommendation improve the victim experience, it would have two further major benefits: firstly, it would have a positive impact on confidence levels of practitioners. Given the findings of this research, this would have an impact on practitioner satisfaction and engagement. Practitioners would have consistent guidance and implement the same techniques; therefore, people could support each other in decision making processes and offer support where needed. A second benefit would be that organisations would have increased opportunities to work together, sharing experiences and best practice. If all practitioners are educated to treat victims in the same way, they can provide increased backing and direction to each other.

Finally, it can be predicted that this recommendation would also help to reduce re-victimisation levels, as victims will be better protected and front-line organisations will be more knowledgeable. Victims will be more engaged in the process and fear the authorities far less. This would have the biggest impact on victims who have fallen out of the system already

or who are involved in county lines drugs offences. This is due to the fact that these victims will move around the UK and will likely be identified in more than one county. Thus, it is imperative that each region or each area has the same guidance and implements the same support process for the victims. This would ensure they feel comfortable and safe in the hands of the front-line practitioners. This links in with the view that a victim's experience of contemporary slavery could be considered preferable to their previous situation or to life after escaping their exploitation. This places increased pressure on the practitioner organisations to ensure that victims know their rights, know that they are safe and know that they will not be further exploited. In summary, victims must understand that they are safe - they are free.

Finally, there must be a shift in the general assessment of victims, moving away from viewing them as an offender or as being complicit in their capture and exploitation. This is a key area for future research and policy recommendations. It is clear from the data results that many victims are being treated as offenders. This may be for a number of reasons, but generally this links to drug offences and sex work where an individual is found by police officers, in a criminal environment, thus treated as an offender. Recommendations focus on implementing a strategy to deal with people who are found to be in a situation which may fall under the bracket of modern slavery. At a basic level, this would likely involve identifying foreign nationals working in the sex trade or in drug related (county lines) environments. This would mean that police officers have a specific way of dealing with potential victims in these areas. Officers clearly identify the lack of options they have when they suspect a victim, as they must often treat the individual as an offender first and foremost. It has already been discussed, the detriment this has on the victim as well as the relationship between the organisations working with the victim and the individual themselves. If new guidance were introduced this would mean that potential victims could be interviewed almost immediately, with translators if necessary, in the closet possible safe location (likely a police station). It is predicted that this would have a huge positive impact on victim experience as a whole. Furthermore, it would help ensure that the victim felt completely safe and ready to proceed with the enquiry – with as much compliance as possible.

7.8 Suggestions for Future Research

This research has provided an exploratory study, focusing on practitioner experiences and the difficulties they face when working with victims of human trafficking. These areas have been discussed in detail, however there are still some gaps in the knowledge which have resulted

from this study. These gaps will be outlined in the final section of the thesis, as suggestions for future research in to this area.

The first area for further consideration is the re-victimisation of trafficked individuals. With such a lack of data available to examine, this was difficult to effectively investigate. If more data were available to study, a more reliable solution could be proposed, to help to reduce re-victimisation figures. As methods of quantifying human trafficking victims begin to improve, leading organisations such as the Global Slavery Index will being to provide figures on areas such as this. However, until that time it may be beneficial to examine the re-victimisation figures of somewhat similar crimes. Within this study, instances of human sex trafficking have been linked to the crime of domestic abuse. This has been particularly insightful when dealing the hidden figure of crime. Thus, a further idea may be to examine the re-victimisation figures of somewhat similar crimes in more detail. A suggestion for this would be domestic abuse cases, as a link has already been made within this study, highlighting some of the similarities between domestic abuse and human sex trafficking. This may give the research an insight into the scale of the problem and how it might be combated using similar techniques, tailored to the international scope of human trafficking as a crime.

Another key consideration is; a supplementary investigation could be conducted to further consider the view of the human trafficking system from the perspective of the victim. This would explore the experiences of victims who have been identified, referred and supported. This would be achieved by conducting in-depth interviews with victims of human trafficking. This is a logical next step from this study as, at present, only the views of the practitioners are explored. By investigating victims personal accounts of their journeys this would add a greater level of understanding, of how to support them in the future. Furthermore, this would help to solidify calls to empower the victim voice and involve survivors in decisions made about their own pathway and future. If a victim-centered approach is to be accepted, the most organic way to implement this is to ensure victims have a say in their own journey.

Finally, the government must acknowledge the need for amendments to the current Modern Slavery Victim Support Bill 2019-2021. Statistics and primary research in this study highlight the pressing need for a more robust, victim-focused practitioner guidance tool. This insight can help to create leading methods of practitioner identification and referral, whilst offering the best possible support to victims. This tool can be incorporated in to the proposed Support Bill, as a supplementary aid in supporting victims of human trafficking and modern slavery.

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Appendix

A. Informed Consent Form

I _______________________________ of _________________________________

(Company/ University/ Institution)

Hereby agree to participate in this study to be undertaken

By Chloe Wilson (Researcher)

And I understand that the aims and purpose of the research is:
To survey individuals who are part of first responder agencies dealing with victims of Human Trafficking.

By signing this consent form, you are agreeing to your participation in this research process and to the collation of the material.
Participants have the right to withdraw from participation in the research process at any point and materials collated from them up to that point will be removed.

I understand that…

1. Upon receipt, my questionnaire will be coded and my name and address kept separately from it.
2. Any information that I provide will not be made public in any form that could reveal my identity to an outside party i.e. that I will remain fully anonymous.
3. Aggregated results will be used for research purposes and may be reported in scientific and academic journals (including online publications).
4. Individual results **will not** be released to any person except at my request and on my authorisation.
5. That I am free to withdraw my consent at any time during the study in which event my participation in the research study will immediately cease and any information obtained from me will not be used.

Participant's Signature: ______________________________ Date: __________________

The email contact details of the Researcher are: c.j.wilson@2015.hull.ac.uk

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study.

In some cases, consent will need to be witnessed e.g. where the subject is blind/ intellectually disabled. A witness must be independent of the project and may only sign a certification to the level of his/her involvement. The form should also record the witnesses' signature, printed name and occupation. For particularly sensitive or exceptional research, further information can be obtained from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee Secretary, e.g., absence of parental consent, use of pseudonyms, etc.

B. Information Sheet for Participants

We would like you to consider participating in a study we are conducting at Hull University, Faculty of Business, Law and Politics. This invitation sheet provides further information about this project and your involvement in the research.

<u>The aim of the project is:</u>
To survey individuals who are part of first responder agencies dealing with victims of Human Trafficking.

<u>The project will focus on:</u>
Through the use of questionnaires, I hope to gain further insight into the experiences victims of sex trafficking have between initial contact with a first responder organisation and the point at which they are formally identified as a potential victim of human trafficking.
Anonymous data will be gathered via online computer questionnaires. This is with a view of gaining an insight in to the way in which victims are treated, to highlight issues in the laws surrounding human trafficking and to interact with those who have first hand experience of trafficking and sexual exploitation.

<u>The procedures involve:</u>
Answering a series of short questions, through the use of an online survey tool. The participant can end the study at any time, and all answers will be kept anonymous. The participant will have the opportunity to state if they would like to be considered for a follow-up interview, if necessary.

You may decline to answer any of the survey questions if you so wish. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences by ending the programme or advising the researcher(s).

With your permission, the survey will be retained and data will be collected from this, then later transcribed for analysis. After completion of the questionnaire, you may request a copy of your answers. The researcher will be able to provide this via email. Participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve an online questionnaire of approximately 20-30 minutes in length.

All information you provide is considered strictly confidential. Your name and your organisation's name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study, however,

with your permission anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained for approximately 2 years in a locked memory stick, at the researcher's home address. Only researchers associated with this project will have access. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

Should you [the participant] have any concerns about the conduct of this research project, please contact the Secretary, Faculty of Business, Law and Politics Research Ethics Committee, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX; Tel No (+44) (0)1482 463536.

We hope that the results of our study will be of benefit to the organisations directly involved in the study, as well as to the broader research community.

We very much look forward to speaking with you and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

Yours Sincerely,

Chloe Wilson

c.j.wilson@2015.hull.ac.uk

C. Survey Declaration Form

Date:______________________________

Time:______________________________

Location:___________________________

I ____________________________________ hereby give my permission for Chloe Wilson of the University of Hull to use the responses provided in my completed questionnaire in a scholarly research paper/dissertation. I also recognise that this project is for academic purposes.

I understand that this research paper will be submitted to a professor at the University of Hull, where it will be studied and graded.

I understand that I relinquish any claim to copyright of this material should the student ever publish it in a scholarly journal, in electronic format online, or in any other form of publication.

I understand that the author will wholly preserve my anonymity as a part of this research.

I hereby give my consent to the above information, in the form of my signature below.

Signature___________________________ Date___________________________

D. Research Ethics Approval Form

Faculty of Business, Law and Politics

<u>This proforma must be completed by all staff and research students undertaking any research project</u>

Please note this form must be completed electronically and full details should be provided where requested

Part A (compulsory)

It is essential that you have read the University Code of Practice and the Faculty Ethics Procedures before you complete this form. Please confirm that you have read and understood these documents: **Yes~~/No~~**

Status

Member of University Staff	~~Yes/~~No
Postgraduate Research Student	Yes~~/No~~

Email address & contact telephone number

c.j.wilson@2015.hull.ac.uk 07450845141

Full title of research project

PhD Restorative Justice and Human Trafficking

Investigator (name and qualifications of Principal Investigator)

Chloe Wilson (BA Hons)

Names and addresses/affiliations of other investigators

N/A

Research Funder details (if applicable)

The University of Hull

Name and addresses/affiliations of research supervisor/s (if applicable)

Prof. Gerry Johnstone (J.G.Johnstone@hull.ac.uk)

Dr. Simon Green (S.T.Green@hull.ac.uk)

Please outline the aims and methodology of your research

Aims:

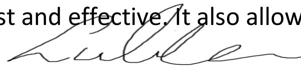
5. To survey individuals who are part of first responder agencies dealing with victims of Human Trafficking.
6. To gather anonymous data from these individuals to gain an insight in to the way in which victims are treated.
7. To highlight potential issues in the laws surrounding human trafficking.
8. To interact with those who have first hand experience of working with victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation; in particular professionals and charity workers

Methodology:

I intend to investigate what happens to victims of human sex trafficking after they first come in to contact with the authorities, but before they are formally identified as a victim. I hope to gain primary evidence about the processes involved in the identification and referral of these victims, from the participants.

I will use an online survey tool to generate a questionnaire for individuals to confidentially and anonymously answer a series of questions relating to the above aims. Surveys will be used in order to

gain a large amount of data in a short period of time. The surveys will be distributed online, and answered by as many relevant participants as possible. Computer aided surveying methods will be used as the programming is fast and effective. It also allows for ease of collection and statistical analysis.



It must be acknowledged that potential problems may arise and these will be considered in order to minimise possible issues. In case of a technical error, hard copies of the survey will be produced. The survey programming will also be meticulously selected to ensure that it is a secure, safe tool to wholly protect data sensitivity and participant anonymity.

After the survey has been completed, each volunteer will be asked if they may be willing to partake in a follow-up interview at a later date, this may/may not occur. If this does proceed, separate ethics forms will be submitted for this research.

Tick and sign one of the following statements:

1) ~~I confirm that human participants **are not** involved in my research and in addition no other ethical considerations are envisaged.~~ [ ]

~~Signature of researcher...~~

2) Human participants **are** involved in my research and/or there are other ethical considerations in my research. [X]

Signature of researcher...

If statement 1 is ticked and signed, there is no need to proceed further with this proforma, and research may proceed now.

If statement 2 is ticked and signed the researcher should complete part B of this proforma.

Part B

This proforma should be read in conjunction with the Ethical Principles for Researchers. It should be completed by the researchers. It should be sent for approval to the Faculty

Research Office (fblp-research@hull.ac.uk) who will forward to the respective Research Ethics Committee member.

Ethical Considerations

Does your research involve people under 18 years of age? **~~Yes/~~No**

When/how will you seek the consent of their parents or guardians?

N/A

Have you undergone a DBS check (Disclosure and Barring Service)? **Yes~~/No~~**

Will you obtain written informed consent from the participants? **Yes/~~No~~**

*If **Yes**, please include a copy of the information letter requesting consent. In the case of electronic surveys, it is acceptable to advise participants that completion of the survey constitutes consent. Please provide a printout of the survey template.*

~~*If **No**, the research should not proceed unless you can specifically satisfy the Research Ethics Committee with the measures you will take to deal with this matter.*~~

Has there been any withholding of disclosure of information regarding the research/teaching to the participants? **~~Yes/~~No**

*If **Yes**, please describe the measures you have taken to deal with this.*

Issues for participants. P*lease answer the following and state how you will manage perceived risks if any answer is **YES**:*

Do any aspects of the study pose a possible risk to participants' physical well-being (e.g. use of substances such as alcohol or extreme situations such as sleep deprivation)? ~~YES~~ NO

Are there any aspects of the study that participants might find humiliating, embarrassing, ego-threatening, in conflict with their values, or be otherwise emotionally upsetting? * ~~YES~~ NO

Are there any aspects of the study that might threaten participants' privacy (e.g. questions of a very personal nature; observation of individuals in situations which are not obviously 'public')? * ~~YES~~ NO

Does the study require access to confidential sources of information (e.g. medical records)? ~~YES~~ NO

Could the intended participants for the study be expected to be more than usually emotionally vulnerable (e.g. medical patients, bereaved individuals)? ~~YES~~ NO

Will the study take place in a setting other than the University campus or residential buildings? ~~YES~~ NO

Will the intended participants of the study be individuals who are not members of the University community? YES ~~NO~~

<u>Managing perceived risks:</u>

Participants will complete anonymous online survey.

They will be provided with a full brief and given contact details if further information or contact with the researcher is required.

*Note: if the intended participants are of a different social, racial, cultural, age or sex group to the researcher(s) and there is **<u>any</u>** doubt about the possible impact of the planned research, then opinion should be sought from members of the relevant group.

Might conducting the study expose the researcher to any risks (e.g. collecting data in potentially dangerous environments)? Explain your method of dealing with this. ~~YES~~ NO

Is the research being conducted on a group culturally different from the researcher? **~~Yes/~~No**

~~*If **Yes**, are sensitivities and problems likely to arise?* **Yes/No**~~

~~*If **Yes**, explain how you have addressed/will address them.*~~

Does the research conflict with any of the University's research ethics principles? **~~Yes/~~No**

~~*If **Yes**, <u>do not proceed</u>. Explain what action you have taken to address this.*~~

Does the research require the consent of any other organisation?

(for example, Health sector ethical committees). **~~Yes/~~No**

~~If ***Yes***, have you obtained the consent? please give details.~~

If you have been unable to obtain this consent, please describe for the Research Ethics Committee what action you have taken to overcome this problem.

You **<u>must</u>** discuss any ethical issues and challenges of this research with a colleague or your personal supervisor.

Please name the colleague or supervisor and the date of discussion.

<u>Prof. Gerry Johnstone and Dr. Simon Green</u>

<u>20th November 2017</u>

What are the ethical issues and challenges with this research? As discussed with the person named above? Please give brief details.

- Surveying members of the public
- Ensuring data confidentiality and anonymity of participants
- Questions regarding victims of a crime
- Questions regarding legislation and policy

<u>Proposed Methods</u>

Sample (description and size)

Approximately 80-100 people, aged 18+ years. Male and female. The following will be specifically recruited: • First responder agencies – dealing with victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

How will your participants be recruited?

Online computer-aided survey methods, social media, email contact and snowball sampling.

<u>Data Management</u>

How will the data be managed and stored? (Further information can be found on <u>http://libguides.hull.ac.uk/researchdata</u>)

Data will be stored at my home address.

This will be stored for the duration of the research, approximately two years.

All data will be kept in password protected computer files and locked cabinets.

How will confidentiality of data be ensured?

Data will be stored on a password enabled memory card, ensuring access is limited. All data will be destroyed at the end of the project.

Names and identifying details will be changed in order to protect the identity of respondents.

List the people and organisations with access to the data

- Myself (researcher)
- Participants (own data)

Are there any other issues regarding your research?

None.

Please confirm the following before sending your proposal for consideration:

Have all the necessary areas of the Research Ethics Approval Form been completed? **Yes/~~No~~**

Have you included all necessary documents?

- A sample research tool including qualitative questions or survey x

- Information sheet for participants x

- Sample Consent form x

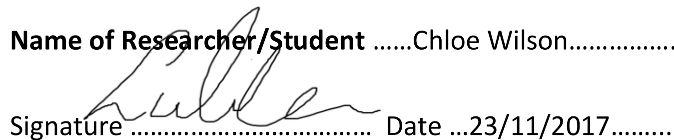
- An outline of the project aims, objectives and methods x

Please confirm whether you have submitted the Personal Travel Plan and Risk Assessment*

with this form (*for PhD students only*)

***N.B. ETHICS APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT THE PERSONAL TRAVEL PLAN AND RISK ASSESSMENT.**

Name of Researcher/Student ……Chloe Wilson……………………………



Signature ……………………………… Date …23/11/2017……..

Name of Supervisor/Colleague ………Gerry Johnstone / Simon Green…

Signature ……………………………… Date ……………………………..

Name of authorising Research Ethics Committee member

Signature…………………………………… Date ……………………………..

E. Survey Distribution Examples

Email – Invitation to complete the survey

Good afternoon,

I hope this email finds you well.

You are invited to complete the following survey in the fulfilment of a research project for investigating the specific experiences of victims of human sex trafficking.

The aim of the project is: To ultimately improve the way in which organisations deal with victims of human sex trafficking; from first contact, through to identification and referral. The project hopes to gain invaluable knowledge and experiences from key individuals and practitioners, which will then help to shape increased choices relating to help, support and rehabilitation, for victims.

The results of this research will be of great benefit to the organisations directly involved in the study, as well as to the broader research community. Please do feel free to forward this on to your colleagues, and to share on social media.

I very much look forward to receiving your answers and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

To begin the survey please follow the link:
https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/victimsoftrafficking

Best wishes,
Chloe Wilson
c.j.wilson@2015.hull.ac.uk

PhD Candidate
The University of Hull, Law School & WISE

Email - Follow-up sent to sample

Good morning,

Just a quick follow-up on the below email.

I would really appreciate it if you could complete my survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/victimsoftrafficking

Each response is very important, surveys can be completed in full, or feel free to just answer the questions relevant to you and your experiences.
You can stop the survey at any time and your answers will be saved.
Although the research stipulates research on 'victims of human sex trafficking', all participants are welcome to take part, as your knowledge is vital in investigating the experiences of all victims.
I would also appreciate it if you could please forward on to any colleagues who may be able to help.

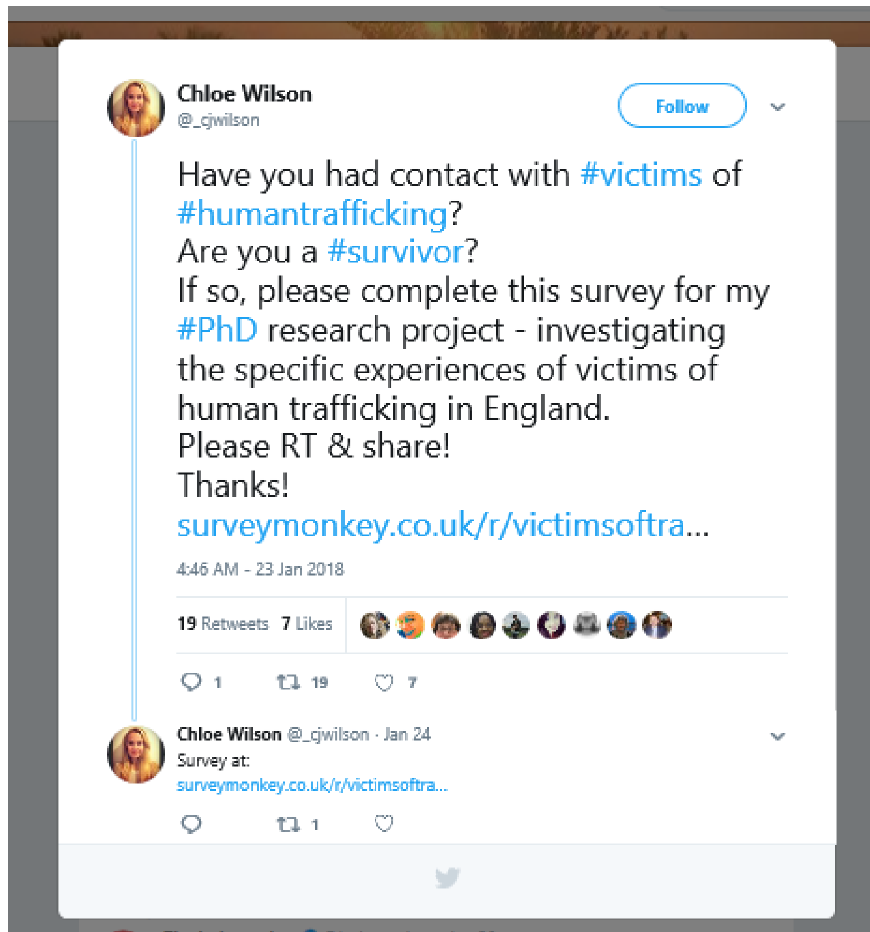
If you have already taken the time to take part in my survey, thank you, each response is extremely valuable and greatly aids my research.

I hope you enjoy the rest of your day.

Best wishes,
Chloe Wilson
c.j.wilson@2015.hull.ac.uk

PhD Candidate
The University of Hull, Law School & WISE

Twitter – First tweet sent for requests to complete questionnaire



F. Questionnaire

Investigating the Specific Experiences of Victims of Human Sex Trafficking in England.

Information Sheet for Participants

Hello,

You are invited to complete the following survey in the fulfilment of a research project for investigating the specific experiences of victims of human sex trafficking in England.
This research is being conducted by Chloe Wilson, PhD Researcher, University of Hull.

This is an anonymous survey, supplying confidential data. By completing the survey, you are consenting to take part in this research. You are advised to first read the below carefully as it explains fully the intention of this project.

The aim of the project is: To ultimately improve the way in which organisations deal with victims of human sex trafficking; from first contact, through to identification and referral. The project hopes to gain invaluable knowledge and experiences from key individuals and practitioners, which will then help to shape increased choices relating to help, support and rehabilitation, for victims.
The project will focus on: Gaining further insight into the experiences victims of sex trafficking have between initial contact with a first responder organisation and the point at which they are formally identified as a potential victim of human trafficking.
The procedures involve: Answering a series of short questions, through the use of an online survey tool. You can end the study at any time, and all answers will be kept anonymous. The survey will take around 10 - 15 minutes to complete. You may decline to answer any of the survey questions if you so wish. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences by ending the programme.

This research is aimed at participants over the age of 18 only, by continuing with the study, you are confirming that you are aged 18 or over.
Should you have any concerns about the conduct of this research project, please contact the Secretary, Faculty of Business, Law and Politics Research Ethics Committee, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX; Tel No 01482 463536.

The results of this research will be of great benefit to the organisations directly involved in the study, as well as to the broader research community. I very much look forward to receiving your answers and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project.

Yours Sincerely,
Chloe Wilson
c.j.wilson@2015.hull.ac.uk

Investigating the Specific Experiences of Victims of Human Sex Trafficking in England.

Participant information

1. What is your age?

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2. What is your gender:

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female
- ◯ Other
- ◯ Prefer not to say

3. What is your occupation?

4. Length of time in occupation?

5. In which region of England is your work predominantly based?

- ◯ East of England
- ◯ East Midlands
- ◯ London
- ◯ North East & Cumbria
- ◯ North West
- ◯ South East
- ◯ South West
- ◯ West Midlands
- ◯ Yorkshire & the Humber
- ◯ I work in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland
- ◯ I work outside of the United Kindgom

Investigating the Specific Experiences of Victims of Human Sex Trafficking in England.

Section 1 - Knowledge and experience of practices

6. Have you received training specifically on identifying victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

7. On the below scale, please rate how confident you feel in your ability to identify a victim of sex trafficking?

Not confident at all	Not very confident	Unsure	Quite confident	Extremely confident
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

2

8. Have you received training specifically on referring victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation?

◯ Yes

◯ No

9. On the below scale, please rate your level of confidence in your own ability to refer a victim to a competent authority (CA)?

Not confident at all	Not very confident	Unsure	Quite confident	Extremely confident
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

10. Please select the main reason/s for your confidence OR lack of confidence from the below list: (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Own knowledge
- ☐ Experience
- ☐ Training
- ☐ Support from Colleagues
- ☐ Support from outside agencies
- ☐ Online guidance / policy
- ☐ No personal knowledge
- ☐ Lack of experience
- ☐ Lack of training
- ☐ Little support from Colleagues
- ☐ No support from outside agencies
- ☐ No online guidance / policy

Other (please specify)

11. On the below scale, please rate how confident you feel with the process of filling out a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral form?

Not confident at all	Not very confident	Unsure	Quite confident	Extremely confident
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

12. Do you follow a framework* to identify and refer potential victims? *in-house, NRM etc.

◯ Yes

◯ No

If yes, which framework do you use?

Investigating the Specific Experiences of Victims of Human Sex Trafficking in England.

Section 1 - Knowledge and experience of practices

3

13. Does the way in which victims are identified and referred always follow this framework?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If no, what is used instead...

Investigating the Specific Experiences of Victims of Human Sex Trafficking in England.

Section 2 - What happens to victims of human sex trafficking?

14. Do you believe all victims of human sex trafficking wish to be identified?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Investigating the Specific Experiences of Victims of Human Sex Trafficking in England.

Section 2 - What happens to victims of human sex trafficking?

15. Why do you believe some victims may not wish to be identified?
(Please select all that apply)

- ☐ General fear
- ☐ Confusion
- ☐ Unsure of the law
- ☐ Lack of knowledge of the country
- ☐ Pressure from traffickers
- ☐ Fear of police and authority
- ☐ Fear of deportation
- ☐ Fear of reprisal for family / friends

Other (please specify)

4

16. When victims first come in to contact with you, where do they stay?
(Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Sheltered housing
- ☐ Hotel accommodation
- ☐ Police station
- ☐ Safe House
- ☐ Hospital
- ☐ Nowhere
- ☐ Refugee Centre
- ☐ Detention Centre
- ☐ Own home

Other (please specify)

17. How do you initially decide where to send a victim following first contact?
(Please provide as much information as possible)

18. When starting to investigate and progress a victim's case, how crucial is a fast response time?
Please rate on the below scale.

Not important at all	Not too important	Unsure	Quite important	Very important
○	○	○	○	○

19. Do you receive any updates regarding the victim's well-being, or the progression of the case, after you have referred them on through the NRM, or to support services?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Investigating the Specific Experiences of Victims of Human Sex Trafficking in England.

Section 2 - What happens to victims of human sex trafficking?

20. Do you think it would be beneficial in terms of dealing with future victims, to receive some feedback or an update? (Please provide as much information as possible)

21. What practical problems do you encounter when dealing with victims of human sex trafficking? (Please select all that apply)

- [ ] Language barriers
- [ ] Cultural or Religious barriers
- [ ] Hostility or Aggression from Victim
- [ ] Drug misuse
- [ ] Medical/health issues
- [ ] Alcohol misuse

Other (please specify)

Investigating the Specific Experiences of Victims of Human Sex Trafficking in England.

Section 3 - The victim experience

22. Please select any emotions/feelings from the below list which you feel may be applicable to the victim when they first come in to contact with the police force:
(Please select all that apply)

- [ ] Fear
- [ ] Relief
- [ ] Confusion
- [ ] Happiness
- [ ] Grief
- [ ] Excitement
- [ ] Indifference
- [ ] Worry
- [ ] Exhaustion

Other (please specify)

23. Once identified, do you believe victims of human sex trafficking may be re-victimised if they 'disappear' during the referral process?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

If yes, approximately what percentage?

24. How soon after you have come in to contact with the victim, are they usually referred on to a support organisation?
(Please select the most appropriate answer)

25. How soon after coming in to contact with a potential victim do you refer them through the NRM?

26. When victims have come to the attention of the authorities, approximately what percentage of victims then 'drop out' of the system?

- ◯ Under 10%
- ◯ 10-30%
- ◯ 30-50%
- ◯ 50-70%
- ◯ 70-90%
- ◯ Over 90%

27. What do you believe is the reason for this percentage of victim drop out?

Investigating the Specific Experiences of Victims of Human Sex Trafficking in England.

Section 4 - Participant thoughts... strengths and weaknesses of the current system

28. Do you believe the current NRM referral process is effective in dealing with potential victims?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Other comments

29. What changes, if any, would you make to the way in which potential victims are **identified?**

30. What changes, if any, would you make to the way in which potential victims are **referred** by first responder agencies?

31. What changes, if any, would you make to the **NRM?**

32. Do you have any further comments which may be of use to this study?

Investigating the Specific Experiences of Victims of Human Sex Trafficking in England.

Thank you for taking part

33. We may require a small number of key individuals to take part in a potential follow-up interview, to gain further insight in to the experiences of victims.
Would you be willing to provide further assistance in this?

(N.B this personal information will be kept separate from the above survey data and will not be used, except to make contact with you, as a participant)

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide your name and email address

8

Thank you for taking part in this survey.

If you wish to speak about this research further, please contact:

Chloe Wilson - c.j.wilson@2015.hull.ac.uk