

Reducing Demand for Human Trafficking: A Non-linear Approach for Developing Capacity

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As social service organizations develop capacity to address human trafficking, the foci remain preliminarily on linear approaches of prosecuting traffickers, providing emergency shelter, and forging service partnerships. The potential for change vis-à-vis grassroots organizing to reduce demand remains largely untapped. Building on The Salvation Army's initial efforts to serve trafficking victims—who lacked knowledge of available services, had difficulty accessing services and remained vulnerable to threats to themselves and their family—we suggest that demand reduction strategies be pursued as a complementary approach to address this vital social work issue.

EFFORTS TO EXPAND ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY WITHIN SOCIAL services that identify and refer victims of human trafficking continue. Positive outcomes, however, are slow to materialize as social service practitioners must deal with entangled law enforcement and criminal activity systems. This paper proposes enhancing outcomes for this vulnerable population via a non-linear approach that uses the lens of complexity theory as a model for reducing human trafficking demand. We suggest applying a network theory approach as a vehicle for establishing robust hubs of influence to affect those who knowingly and unknowingly contribute to the demand of trafficked persons as the next phase to alleviate this emerging problem.

This article uses The Salvation Army (TSA) capacity-building efforts during the past five years as a frame of reference. Beginning in the

1860s when William Booth founded The Salvation Army in the streets of London, this international religious organization concerned itself with spiritual and social issues such as human exploitation, addiction, and criminality (Booth, 1885). Recent efforts, consistent with the mandate from The Salvation Army's International Commissioners Conference in 2003 to address human trafficking, facilitated the implementation of anti-trafficking services in the United States. In response to this international problem in which children, women, and men are forced into labor and the commercial sex trade, TSA in the United States received and implemented a U.S. Department of Justice Office (DOJ) Victims of Crime (OVC) capacity-building grant with the objectives of identifying, rescuing, and rehabilitating trafficking victims.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 provided the initial legislation to address human trafficking (House Resolution 3244, 2000) by targeting prevention, protection of victims, and facilitating the prosecution of traffickers under severe federal penalties. It further established the use of temporary visas for granting permanent residence status for up to 5,000 trafficking victims following three years of program participation. The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) of 2005 renewed the Federal government's commitment to combat human trafficking (House Resolution 972, 2005). Potential clients may qualify for participation under The United Nations' definition of human trafficking:

...the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons by means of 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 (UN, 2006).

Demand Reduction

In the past decade, provision of services for trafficking victims has received a considerable amount of focus; however, efforts to reduce demand for sexual and employment trafficking have only recently received similar attention. The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization

Act of 2005 addressed demand and provided social service agencies and law enforcement the funding to combat it; however, gaps remain in addressing demand reduction (Yen, 2008). This is crucial because demand is the root cause of the sexual trafficking industry. Because males are the primary customers of the sexual trafficking industry, they influence the desired type of females and locations for seeking services (Yen, 2008). Male demand has increased the demand for the number of “clean girls” or virgins, which makes children an increasing target for the sex trafficking industry (Yen, 2008), with minority women and children of low socioeconomic status being particularly vulnerable (Huda, 2009).

The sex trafficking industry, tolerated worldwide, evolved because a combination of cultural socialization and personal rationalization by males helped to drive it (Yen, 2008). To combat this, there has to be a “re-education of more positive male norms and appropriate punitive measures” (Yen, 2008). In addition, many of these men are addicted to sex, which further complicates the demand factor. Sexual addiction counseling and strong educational programs can provide substantial reductions. For instance, in a study done with male buyers, a large portion of men admitted they had tried to stop going to prostitutes, but could not because of their sexual addiction (Yen, 2008). Male demand is the root problem of the sex trafficking industry, but reducing male demand remains the weakest link in reducing the incidence of trafficking (Yen, 2009).

Estimates of Trafficking

Despite the enabling legislation of TVPA and subsequent federal financial support, the U.S. Department of Justice (2006) acknowledged that victims of trafficking remain severely underserved (Report on Activities). DOJ divides trafficking cases into three categories; 1) sex trafficking—the use of force or coercion to obtain persons for commercial sexual activity, 2) sex trafficking of minors, and 3) labor trafficking—the use of force or coercion to engage individuals in typically legal work, like farming, factory work, or domestic services. People are being trafficked primarily from Central America, Eastern Europe, and Asia to industrialized areas including North America, Western Europe, and Southeast Asia (Smith, 2006). Because a considerable number of trafficking victims are undocumented, they have difficulty obtaining legal employment if released, and limited access to legal services (Huda,

2009). These individuals also have very limited access to physical and mental health services. This is paramount because typically they are beaten, threatened, and in some cases, forced to become addicted to alcohol or drugs in order to keep them subservient (Huda, 2009).

Of the three types of trafficking cases, sex trafficking has experienced a large gain in successful criminal prosecution. Between 2001 and 2006, federal prosecutors charged 189 defendants with sex trafficking. These charges resulted in 109 sex trafficking convictions. This increase compares to just 34 being charged with sex trafficking and 20 of these defendants being convicted between 1996 and 2000. From 2003 to 2005, of the 50 individuals indicted for child sex trafficking, 29 received convictions. The Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section of the Department of Justice took the lead role in prosecuting these cases along with investigating an additional 60 pending cases. From 2002 through 2005, the United States charged 59 defendants with labor trafficking, compared to 46 cases from 1996 to 2001, with approximately half of those charged being convicted (U.S. Department of Justice Report on Activities, 2006). With an estimated 17,500 individuals trafficked into the U.S. annually, only 1,000 individuals received formal certification in the six years following enactment of the TVPA (HHS, 2006). Certification makes victims of trafficking eligible to receive services from federally funded or administered programs. Even after significant funding for services to support victims of trafficking at the federal level, these resources appear insufficient to meet the demand.

Building Organizational Capacity

As state, federal and international law enforcement efforts continue to prosecute and reduce demand for all forms of human trafficking, efforts continue toward capacity building (U.S. Department of State, 2008). In The Salvation Army, capacity building has sought to develop understanding and enabling skills to assist excluded individuals to participate more effectively in their communities (Henderson & Thomas, 2002; Payne, 2005). This provided the overarching goal for TSA's project. In measuring this capacity building, Wolf-Branigin, Jensen, and Smith (2008) applied Glickman and Servon's (1998) five-component definition to analyze the resource, internal, programmatic, network, and political capacities of an organization. The first component, resource capacity, refers to an organization's ability to generate and acquire funding. Organizational

capacity, the second component, refers to the organization's internal operations such as staff size, experience, and development opportunities, along with management style and fiscal management. The third component, programmatic capacity, refers to the ability of an organization to provide specialized services. Network capacity, the fourth component, measures an organization's skills in interacting and working with other institutions, including other similar organizations and government agencies. Finally, political capacity refers to the organization's ability to represent its community in the political arena as an advocate.

The interaction between organizational capacity building and the other components of capacity building contribute to the success of creating an organization that is able to address the issue at hand. Capacity building literature reflects adherence to this combined component approach (Crisp, Swerissen & Duckett, 2000) and further suggests that a simple top-down or bottom-up approach to organizational capacity building cannot succeed. A combination of policy-driven change, staff development, and fiscal program support comprises the foundation of successful organizational capacity building. Establishing sustainability measures further facilitates organizational growth.

Application of Complex Systems to The Salvation Army's Project

The Salvation Army created the U.S. National Anti-Trafficking Task Force, comprised of representatives of each of the four territories (Eastern, Central, Southern, and Western United States) and Mexico, at the beginning of the initiative. The National Task Force for Trafficking Survivors Services evolved into the U. S. National Anti-Trafficking Council to implement the project's aims. This included a vast effort to share and provide information, identify untapped internal resources, create an initial model for service delivery, provide information on identifying victims, train social service professionals about victims needs, and establish protocols on how to respond to identified victims. These protocols laid essential groundwork as they addressed issues such as emotional attachment, victim trauma, safety, and ethical removal of potential victims from their trafficking settings.

Using a complex systems approach (Stevens & Cox, 2008; Wolf-Branigin, 2008), the components of the complex system were specified. Defining a complex system includes several components (Holland, 1998; Westley, Zimmerman, & Patton, 2006; Wolf-Branigin & Duke,

2007). This approach seeks to discern what attracts clients to services, and identifies if and how the self-organizing of clients results in an emergent behavior. Emergent behavior appears when a number of simple agents (trafficking victims on the supply side; employers and users of trafficked services on the demand side) operate in an environment that creates a collective (group) behavior. This approach, given human services' person-in-environment perspective, has applications in consumer and organizational decision-making, planning, and outcomes management. Building on Wolf-Branigin, Jensen, and Smith (2008) study that incorporated two perspectives when evaluating TSA's initial efforts—that of the clients and that of The Salvation Army units—it becomes apparent that the supply of and demand for human trafficking victims have overlapping complex systems. Uncoupling these two overlapping systems for disrupting the market may follow the model of the U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy (2009).

Figure 1: Complex Systems Components Applied to Supply of and Demand for Human Trafficking

Component	Supply	Demand
Initial conditions	Criminal networks, coercion, abduction, deception or abuse of power against victim	Environment tolerant to employers seeking low cost workers and individuals seeking prostitutes
Agent-based	Persons being trafficked	Employers and individuals seeking sex services
Attractor/Self-organizing	Supports/services offered to break trafficking cycle	Organized crime and employers seek increased profits,
Feedback	Victim's interactions with courts, counselors and others	Public provided with information on conditions of trafficked workers
Emergent Behavior	Trafficking victims, successful in program are freed	Change vis-à-vis grass-roots organizing to reduce demand

Complex systems are dissipative structures; they are unstable and exist at the edge of chaos (Byrne, 1998). When assessing the initial conditions, from the supply side, the trafficking victims were coerced, abducted, deceived, or were in some other way subjected to an abuse of power. From demand perspective, social and economic environments were tolerant to employers seeking low cost workers, consumers seeking

low cost goods, or individuals seeking sex services. On the supply side, self-organizing occurred in that social service organizations (e.g., The Salvation Army) or governments collectively sought to address the needs of persons being trafficked. From the demand side, organized crime and employers sought increased profits. Feedback on the supply side included the victims' interactions with courts, counselors, and others. This also included information on organizational decision-making for accessing the services, which represented the push/pull forces used to make later decisions (Hodge & Lietz, 2007). In order to begin disrupting the demand side of the market, feedback must be provided to users of both consumer goods and sex services. Creating the emergent behavior of disrupted markets includes the supply of workers and change via grassroots efforts in reducing demand.

Facilitating Change within Social Work Practice

Using the findings from applying the five-component Glickman and Servon (1998) capacity-building model reveals valuable lessons to reducing demand and market disruption from The Salvation Army's initial efforts. First, personnel expanded their ability to address human trafficking in the United States. The five components—resource, organizational, programmatic, network, and political capacity—were addressed in the course of the project's activities. Organizational capacity expanded during the course of the three-year project. The training manual provided a blueprint for state-of-the-art human trafficking training throughout the United States, India, and elsewhere. Staff and other key community stakeholders received training on recognizing signs of trafficking, assessing safety concerns, referring potential victims, and serving rescued victims (e.g., Salvation Army shelter programs). Addressing human trafficking victims involved careful planning in order to extract victims and fully restore their lives.

The component receiving the greatest capacity enhancement appears to be in programmatic capacity as hundreds of TSA personnel received awareness level training on identifying human trafficking. This included informing personnel on how to recognize trafficking and how to extract victims safely and ethically from their human trafficking situations. Although not tested to capacity, programmatic services are available throughout the four U.S. territories. This programmatic enhancement has potential for reducing the supply of workers.

Network capacity may be the component on which future anti-trafficking efforts rest. Results from TSA's experience demonstrate that current providers of anti-trafficking services will need to interact increasingly with other human service organizations in order to direct service provision in many areas of the country. Efforts similar to the U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy's *High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas* (HIDTA) that focus efforts on clusters of high incidence and prevalence provide useful lessons.

From a complex systems viewpoint, the political capacity for providing anti-trafficking services remains strong for playing a prominent national role. In the case of The Salvation Army, given the support of their General (the international leader of the organization), anti-trafficking efforts have support from the highest organizational level, while simultaneously having support from local providers.

Recommendations and Conclusions

For organizations developing efforts to combat human trafficking, four orientation points are beneficial (Westley, Zimmerman & Patton, 2006). First, questions are essential. As a body of knowledge regarding trafficking routes develops (United Nations, 2006), service providers know little about how individuals who were trafficked access services. Future efforts should include victims in the strategizing of services, through a participatory action research approach (Stringer, 1999). Therefore, individuals affected by trafficking participate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of future efforts to reduce demand. A knowledge base of evolving promising practices will further enhance the ability of advocates to identify persons at the grassroots level. Analyzing the narratives of those who have obtained services in order to identify barriers to both escaping from captors and the federal system of certification would be helpful.

Second, tensions and ambiguities arise through this questioning. Future efforts should encourage victims to self-organize in order to assure sufficient knowledge to deal with the multiple barriers they encounter. This should occur so that these victims may reach the collective or emergent behavior of seeking and completing anti-trafficking initiatives in order to reduce supply. Similarly, assuming that appropriate safety measures are in place, these victims may provide information on users of trafficking victims.

Third, relationships are essential to understanding and engaging to bring about change. In future efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of reducing demand, anti-trafficking programs must focus on understanding the substantial barriers interfering with victims seeking and sustaining their involvement. The rich history of faith-based organizations providing progressive viewpoints and robustness in the course of addressing social issues such as slavery, education, and social justice is well documented (Axinn & Stern, 2005). Faith-based organizations, in combination with governmental assistance, continually address the basic needs of persons seeking non-trafficking assistance (Fogel, 2000). In this realm, human trafficking, and other forms of oppression denying individuals their basic human rights, remains a cause well served by faith-based organizations.

Fourth, a mindset that encourages the understanding of interdependencies between demand and supply forces is critical for developing a long-term approach for resolving trafficking. Initial awareness level training and continued technical support of the evolving remains essential for staff to develop the requisite skills to identify and encourage victims of trafficking to seek assistance and to reduce demand for potential customers (e.g., *The Salvation Army's Anti-trafficking Training Program: The Problem of Human Trafficking*, Smith, 2006).

As human trafficking spreads, entrapped victims and their families desperately need rescuing and require services from knowledgeable and compassionate professionals (Hodge & Lietz, 2007). Confronting this issue requires more than developing new service programs tailored to meet the specific needs of the victims. Applying a social network analysis methodology may potentially solidify the gains and identify areas for further interconnectedness with service systems (Westley, Zimmerman, & Patton, 2006). Human trafficking has low public visibility as consumers of products may not even realize that they may contribute to the problem through the purchase of certain goods. Individuals who become aware of it, however, eagerly learn more, share this essential information, and possibly advocate for further resources.

New approaches addressing demand reduction of human trafficking are promising. For example, Swedish law classified prostitution as a male violence against children and women (Ekberg, 2004). On a micro level, as virtual environments become more popular, new media 2.0 technologies including blogs, social networking, and virtual reality provide information dissemination opportunities (Hollingshead &

Contractor, 2006; Mitchell, 1995). As new technologies such as virtual reality in the software platform, *Second Life*, emerge, their current uses occasionally include issues such as sex work, sex trade, and pedophilia (Boellstorff, 2008; Meadows 2008).

Opportunities exist for using these new media tools to spread information and link individual demand reduction efforts. As strategies develop to combat trafficking, advocates need the diverse perspectives and heuristics from a broad range of problem solvers (Page, 2007). These demand reduction opportunities may include identifying and providing online treatments for sex addiction (Abbott, Klein, & Ciechomski, 2008; Coren, Nath, & Prout, 2009) and demand reduction efforts similar to those used in the substance abuse field that employ virtual reality platforms (Gustafson, Shaw, Isham, Dillon, & Spartz, 2008).

Given recent efforts to provide services and supports to trafficking victims, the next tactic appears to focus on reducing demand. Markets gravitate toward equilibrium between supply and demand. Reducing demand will lead to the reduced supply of victims being trafficked. Modeling human trafficking demand reduction efforts based on the U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy efforts at market disruption may provide a valuable strategy. Prevalence and incidence estimates exist for supply and demand of human trafficking. Future research efforts should apply advanced statistical models—including agent-based modeling (Epstein, 1999; Gorman, Mezic, Mezic, & Gruenewald, 2006), spatial analysis (Bailey & Gatrell, 1995; Anselin, Florax, Rey, 2004) and social network analysis (Wasserman & Faust, 1994; Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). These methods will better quantify the complicated relationships between victims and their captors in order to provide valuable information in disrupting the market for human trafficking. ❖

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