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# Caution, Traffick Ahead: Determining Message Design Features from Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit Organizations

Elayne Goldman

*Illinois State University*, [egoldma@ilstu.edu](mailto:egoldma@ilstu.edu)

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CAUTION, TRAFFICK AHEAD: DETERMINING MESSAGE DESIGN FEATURES  
FROM ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Elayne Goldman

98 Pages

This paper looks at the effectiveness of the messages distributed by anti-human trafficking non-profit organizations, from the perspective of members of the non-profit organizations themselves. Anti-human trafficking messages are disseminated to the public by non-profit organizations on a daily basis, but appear to be ignored. This paper tries to determine why. Research suggests non-profit organizations use either fear appeal, sex appeal or a call-to-action when creating and distributing their messages, and the goal of the study conducted was to determine the effectiveness of those messages from the perspectives of those who create the messages. Participants were individuals from anti-human trafficking non-profit organizations who have input or control in the creation and dispersal of messages. These individuals were asked a series of questions to understand the effectiveness of the messages they have created. The aspects following the Elaboration Likelihood Model that are specifically being analyzed will include: likelihood of future behavior, demographic information, the use of fear appeal and the use of a call to action.

KEYWORDS: Anti-human trafficking, Elaboration likelihood, Effectiveness, Non-Profit

CAUTION, TRAFFICK AHEAD: DETERMINING MESSAGE DESIGN FEATURES  
FROM ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

ELAYNE GOLDMAN

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CAUTION, TRAFFICK AHEAD: DETERMINING MESSAGE DESIGN FEATURES  
FROM ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

ELAYNE GOLDMAN

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Lance Lippert, Chair

Daniel C. Davis

John R. Baldwin

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This thesis is dedicated to those who have voices unheard by the people who promised to help them, to the victims who were able to escape and are still trying to get back on their feet, and most importantly, this thesis is dedicated to the amazing woman I call Stephanie, her bravery and the promise that her story will be heard.

E. G.

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## CHAPTER I

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

History is marred by exploits of the forefathers. Each country, each civilization, has an abundance of sins from the past for which they answer still today. In the United States, one of the greatest sins was slavery. As a country, US citizens chose to believe that slavery ended with the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, but it did not. Modern day slavery goes by a new name: human trafficking.

From before the time of the ancient Egyptian pharaohs, slavery spans human history, but human trafficking in its newest form did not exist until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Soderlund, 2013). As wars engulfed the world and economic crises tore at the hearts of countries, the number of human trafficking victims steadily grew. Nazis' took females from Concentration Camps to be used as sex slaves; females were forced into prostitution by bartenders who wanted to make more money off American soldiers during the Vietnam War; multinational companies including Nike and J. Crew use sweatshops, paying workers less than \$2 a day for 18 hours of work, and the list goes on (Quirk, 2011). Conflicts around the globe created opportunity for greedy business people, and in each devastated country, a significant, and astonishing increase in human trafficking shows those business people have been cashing in (Anderson & Rogaly, 2005).

All across the world, countries have banned the practice of buying and selling people, yet the problem persists. There are more slaves today than throughout history

combined. According to the U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP), as of 2013, an estimated 27 million people are considered modern day slaves and victims of human trafficking. Roughly 20.9 million of those slaves are forced labor, and an estimated 6 million are forced into the commercial sex industry, including two million children between the ages of 12-18. Children and female adults make up 98% of sexually exploited victims. Sex trafficking generates an estimated \$99 billion in illegal profits per year, making it the third most profitable illegal trade behind drugs and arms dealing. A single child can earn a trafficker as much as \$30,000 when sold internationally, and with the expansion of global capitalism, people will do almost anything to make more money (Department of State, 2013).

The question is how any of this was allowed to happen, as surely someone, somewhere, would have noticed these atrocities and tried to stop them. There are non-profit organizations around the world working to end human trafficking, but only a handful can show successes. This paper examines one of the contributing factors to the success or failure of anti-human trafficking non-profits: the message. The primary objective of this study is to discover the role the messages distributed by AHTNPs play in the overall success of the organization.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### **Human Trafficking**

Throughout the history of humankind, slavery has been an issue. Whether it was a monarch's unlawful oppression of a population, or the kidnapping of young males and females from one country and selling them in another, slavery is considered historic. Slavery is spoken of in terms of the past and of how it ended, but it never did. Modern day slavery exists, now it just goes by a new name: human trafficking.

The Department of State (2013) defines human trafficking as “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor, commercial sex or other services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery” (p. 8). It may seem like a broad legal definition, but there are still victims who fall between the legal cracks despite this umbrella-like term and are unable to receive help of any kind.

Since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the number of victims of human trafficking has been steadily increasing to the estimated 27 million victims currently worldwide (Department of State, 2013). Victims of human trafficking are not just in the sex trade. They are the males and females working the fields of local neighborhoods and the people who are never given a second thought.

**History of Human Trafficking in the Press.** The year 1885 was a turning point for both the local and international press in regard to human trafficking. Soderlund (2013) argues “between 1885-1917 an epistemic change occurred in the press....Media scandals around sex trafficking played a significant role in both of the major phases of this massive transformation” (p. xiii). Few records of sex trafficking existed before this time, due mainly to the circulation of, and access to information, but with prostitution on the rise in major cities, sex became part of the newspapers’ daily scandal. Human trafficking for the first time was being exposed on an international level, whereas prior to 1885, it was seen only as a local issue (Soderlund, 2013).

The *Pall Mall Gazette*, which circulated in London at the time, produced an exposé by William P. Stead titled “The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon.” The exposé told the story of the mother of a 13-year-old girl who was tricked into selling her daughter to a brothel keeper for a mere five pounds. The brothel keeper planned to both use and sell the daughter for sex in the more scandalous and poor neighborhoods of London. Eventually, the truth was uncovered, the brothel keeper was arrested, and the girl returned home with her mother (Soderlund, 2013). This exposé was crucial for two reasons: first, it was the first time human trafficking was the topic of an article in a popular newspaper (it was so popular, it was circulated in the United States after its original publication in London); second, this article helped fuel the social purity movement, as well as start the first anti-prostitution organizations around the world.

Years later, Chicago was the world’s center for “White slavery” and sex trafficking (Soderlund, 2013). Prior to 1907, the term “White slavery” was used “rhetorically during the Civil War by abolitionist newspapers in reference to working-

class White Southerners and Northerners who supported the Confederacy” (Soderlund, 2013, p. 2). The term was first used as a human trafficking concept in late 1906 when John B. Harris attempted to lead newspapers and unions alike to stop the slave-like conditions that men in the Florida Keys were experiencing. He had a plan to break the laborers free but was deterred by armed guards, thus furthering his idea that a slavery-conspiracy led by the guards and the local government was taking place to keep the men in bondage. From that moment on until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, “White slavery” became the all-encompassing term for modern day slavery.

Slavery as a concept on its own was a common phenomenon, and something that rarely struck at the heart of the everyday person. Yet the term “White slavery” struck fear into the hearts of every God-fearing Christian of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1909, George Kibbe Turner produced an exposé similar to Steads’ “Maiden Tribute,” which once again sensationalized prostitution and sex trafficking in print media around the world while using “White slavery” as the terminology for the human trafficking (Soderlund, 2013).

“The movement to combat sex slavery was protracted over thirty years, but key media moments in 1885, 1907 and 1909, respectively, took on similar contours that were specifically linked to the print media, their central locus of publicity” (Soderlund, 2013, p. 5). Media exposés of “White slavery” and sex trafficking became the means for newspapers to distinguish themselves from each other. Citizens were devouring stories of sex trafficking and “White slavery” on a daily basis, trying to learn more about this sensational, new, daring, yet terrifying concept. Eventually, papers had to start regulating the stories and putting limits on what could be printed. Soderlund (2013) argued that to be noticed papers had to make human trafficking stories sensational, but not

pornographic; eye-catching but not detailed enough to make you put down the paper. Stories were intended to make readers feel uncomfortable in their own homes.

A popular anti-trafficking image features a White Christian woman behind bars, her hands clasped together as if in prayer, her eyes looking mournfully up to heaven. Anti-trafficking polemics utilized this iconic image to pose the questions, “What if this was your child?”



(Soderlund, 2013, p. 9)

Newspaper editors quickly realized that the surplus of stories involving powerful public men and less powerful private women had the potential to “destroy careers, rattle governing institutions, and initiate broader crisis of authority” (Soderlund, 2013, p. 11) as trafficking encompassed larger problem areas like media, law enforcement and politics.



Alongside this discovery, the goal of ‘de-sensationalizing’ White slavery in the press became the desire of both those involved and those printing the stories. Law enforcement officials and politicians alike began to fear their names would be exposed in the daily papers, resulting in pressure on the newspapers to halt their production of “White slavery” and sex trafficking stories. This failure of reporting due to external pressures led to the newspapers discussing how vices affect lifestyles per city instead of how to stop them. Reports of human trafficking became part of everyday scandal and were no longer sensational and eye-catching.

By 1917, “White slavery” and sex trafficking were only a memory to the newspapers of the world. Local and national media were more concerned with events such as the sinking of the Titanic, World War One, the Great Depression, and World War Two. Between 1917 and the end of the Vietnam War, human trafficking was a phenomenon so forgotten that the world was able to pretend slavery never existed at all. Not only has modern day slavery increased drastically, but the ample opportunity created by war and chaos for people to be exploited during this timeframe was dramatic (Soderlund, 2013).

**Labor Trafficking.** Trafficking in coerced or forced labor is an important, and often overlooked, subset of human trafficking that mainly affects adult males and children. Forced labor, coerced labor, debt bondage, and serfdom all constitute labor trafficking, and are, therefore, aspects of human trafficking. Labor trafficking pollutes the supply chain of economically developed countries around the world as an increased demand for cheap goods and services drives corporations to seek a cheaper labor force,

thus creating the need for labor brokers. These, in turn, are able easily to exploit workers in foreign countries because many of them are desperately poor (Johnson, 2015).

The Hague in 2008 (Smit, 2011) showed that the stereotype of limited education for trafficking victims was not necessarily the case for labor trafficking in the Netherlands. The study accounted for 685 male victims from Belarus and Ukraine, with over 300 being skilled workers with a university degree. More than half had families and children. Of these men, 95% had accepted employment offers for well-known companies in Russia and were forced into labor trafficking upon acceptance (Smit, 2011). The promise of a better life during hard economic times can put even the most educated person into a situation he/she cannot escape without help.

In Canada, males and females must testify in court against their labor brokers or captors and secure a conviction against them before they can obtain legal status as a victim of human trafficking. Many victims put in this scenario are mistreated at the hands of the court (Sharma, 2003). For example, a young boy cannot say that he knew he was going to be trafficked to or through Canada, otherwise he is admitting his own guilt in committing a criminal offense. He would both have to claim and to prove that he was either kidnapped or coerced into being trafficked for the court to believe him (Sharma, 2003). The necessity of determining a connection between recruitment with deception and/or coercion leading to exploitation, is problematic for both victims and those trying to identify trafficking cases (Coghlan & Wylie, 2011).

Victims of labor trafficking hesitate to come forward for many reasons: they might prefer their current situation compared to a previous one, they might be too ashamed of their situation, they might not realize they are victims, or they might be

scared of their situation but more scared of what would happen if they were to be “rescued” (Smit, 2011). Victims who are trafficked to or between countries often have no legal status and are not protected under the laws of the country they are in. Most lack any form of identification paperwork, and if they had a passport, their labor broker “keeps” it for them. When a labor trafficking victim is “rescued,” they often are deported to their home countries where the situation is now worse for them than when they first left (Anderson & Rogaly, 2005).

**Commercial Sex Trafficking.** Rao and Presenti (2012) argue that two assumptions are universally true for sex trafficking, with the first being that poverty makes females more susceptible to being trafficked. Children and female adults are considered to be the groups most affected by an economic crisis. When a lack of both options and opportunity are prevalent, victims are often forced into the commercial sex industry. The second assumption is that females in countries with more severe forms of sex discrimination are more likely to be trafficked (Rao & Presenti, 2012). It is important to note that not all females in the sex trade are trafficked; some do chose the life of a sex worker (Steinfatt, 2002). The choice is never an easy one, however, with disadvantages at every turn and few options already existing. Women placed in this difficult position have to choose between working in a job that might not pay them enough money to economically survive, or they can choose the life of a sex worker, and potentially be subjected to a life they will never escape.

Sandy (2006) highlights the limitations women face in Southeast Asia due to minimal education opportunities, no welfare system, “sociocultural obligations,” and the “hierarchical structures of gender” (p. 464). She tells the story of an 18-year woman

named Linda who “no choice” but to work in the commercial sex industry. Linda, at the time, was a new mother, a divorcée, and had no family to help her raise her child. Her lack of education and her new responsibilities as a mother left her without a choice, necessitating the desire for economic survival for both her and her child.

Horror stories arise when children and female adults are unwillingly and unknowingly forced into the commercial sex industry. Stories of family members in countries like China and Thailand selling their children into slavery in order to pay off debts have become the unfortunate norm. After months, or even years of working in brothels and on the streets, sometimes the children find a way to escape. Often when they return home, they find their families in the same situation as when they left, and the families sell them all over again (Department of State, 2013).

Across Eastern Europe in countries like Bulgaria and Moldova, both females and males are approaching girls on the streets and in their homes. These people offer girls jobs as waitresses and nannies, but only if they go to countries like Greece, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates. If the girls accept, they are given passports, money, and passed off to pimps once they clear airport customs. These pimps then take their passports and tell the girls that they will have to work to pay off the cost of the airfare and to get their passports back. The pimps tell them the waitress or nanny job is full, but there are other ways they can work off their debt. If a girl refuses, the pimps threaten violence on her, on her families, and even threaten death. If a girl refuses, the pimps threaten violence against her or her family, and even threaten death. If a victim borrows money from a pimp, be it to buy food, to keep their home, or for another reason, the pimp owns that person until their debt is paid. Every expense they ask for from a pimp costs them double the original

price, putting them further into debt. Anything a victim does to try to counter their situation becomes futile, and eventually they accept their situation to be hopeless (Steinfatt, 2002).

In 2010, the capital of Moldova, Chisinau, had the highest rate of exported females worldwide, with over 75% being unwilling participants. In Eastern European countries where economic opportunity is minimal, children from low-income villages have to decide if they are going to try their chances abroad and risk being trafficked, or if they are to grow up to be criminals, stealing food and money just to survive (The Price of Sex, 2011).

The problems associated with human trafficking span the globe and are not limited to countries most have never heard of. In a global community, people might be able to pretend it only exists outside of their sphere of influence because it does not directly influence them. Unfortunately the situation has changed, and with advancements in technology, the problem truly is in everyone's backyard.

In Illinois, a 19-year-old female responded to an Internet ad promoting modeling opportunities. Instead of offering her a modeling job, the offender enticed the girl to wait in a hotel room where she was expected to have sex with an unknown person. The offender, who would become her pimp, intended to sell the young woman for sex at an hourly rate. In this case, the pimp's would-be client was an undercover police officer who brought the young woman to safety (Dixon, 2013, pp. 36, 39)

Luckily, around the world there are organizations with the mission of ending human trafficking and helping victims of human trafficking.

## **Non-Profit Organizations**

A non-profit organization (NPO) is an organization with the intent to change or improve a social issue while being funded by a surplus revenue stream. The funds acquired by a Non-Profit by law must stay within the company to pay for salaries, expenses, and the activities of the organization. If the funds are used for the personal benefit of an individual, then the organization may lose its Non-Profit status and tax exemption status (Hall, 2010). Religious organizations are the oldest form of Non-profit organizations. The originally intended purpose of monetary collection from these organizations was to give funds to the poor, the homeless, and to help build communities (Kong, 2008).

**Non-Profit Expansion in the United States.** In 1886, Andrew Carnegie wrote a series of articles in which he summarized his views on wealth during the labor crisis and urged his fellow “men of affairs” to reinvest their fortunes. He strongly believed that inherited wealth was a dangerous concept, and that if others reinvested their wealth through the idea of an “intelligent philanthropy” (Hall, 2010, p. 12), the root of all social problems would be eliminated. Carnegie was “harshly critical of traditional charity, which, he believed, only responded to suffering rather than addressing the causes” (Hall, 2010, p. 12). Carnegie proposal held great promise for the potential philanthropists, but it was both a new legal and financial territory to which most were not yet ready to venture (Wiggill, 2011).

In the early 1900s, John D. Rockefeller was the first of a group of extremely wealthy individuals who appealed to Congress to create a \$100 million dollar organization for the “betterment of mankind” (Hall, 2010, p. 14). Due to lack of

immediate support, this cautious, yet hasty, new approach to philanthropy took 12 years to be approved. Its original intended purpose was to benefit Black schools in the South, but the fund went on to benefit higher education institutions nation-wide (Hall, 2010).

As appeals for charity began to grow, the donor base was shrinking. The Cleveland Ohio Chamber of Commerce formed the idea of a Community Chest, in which money was given to this “chest” and a board of overseers, made up mostly of bankers, who then distributed the funds. When board members were identified in public, people would approach them and tell them why their organization or cause needed funding from the board, and thus an early form of lobbying began (Hall, 2010; Kong, 2008). This idea was a success until the Great Depression.

In the 1930s, the emergency powers assumed by the government to deal with the Great Depression became permanent features of public life necessary to stimulate growth in the private sector. Due to the federal government “assuming primary responsibility for education, health, and social welfare, many wondered whether private philanthropy, subsidized by tax breaks, had outlived its usefulness” (Hall, 2010, p. 19).

Today, NPOs obtain funding primarily from foundations, corporations, and the government. Kong (2008) argues NPOs are on an unfair playing ground against large corporations in a world with tight resources and budgets: “They must be able to sit at the table with decision makers, and if you have not done your homework, know what they want or communicate in their fashion, you will not get what you need [funding]” (Wiggill, 2011, p. 226). These two types of organizations are in competition for funding and resources according to the author. The argument centers on the 1980s as the turning point for NPOs, saying an increased emphasis on management and production has

decreased the ability of NPOs to compete at the same level as for-profits. “Much of the Non-Profit world has adopted some of the worst practices of corporations. It has failed to distinguished between sound and ill-advised corporate policies between for-profit and non-profit activities” (Kong, 2008, p. 282). Many who manage and lead NPOs have it in their hearts to do the right thing, to be philanthropic, and to try to create a better world, however, not many who manage and lead NPOs are good at running an organization.

### **Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profits**

An Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit (AHTNP) is an organization that specifically devotes its time, funds and resources to combating human trafficking, helping victims, or both. Most AHTNPs operate on either a local, state, national or international level to both combat human trafficking and to help victims (Jaskyte & Dresslet, 2005).

AHTNPs tend to fall into one of three categories: government-oriented, abolitionist, or labor-based. Government-oriented AHTNPs base their concerns around the irregular immigration, transnational crime, and threats to national security human trafficking generates. Abolitionist AHTNPs place human trafficking as first on their political agenda and view trafficking as a problem directly associated with the increased globalization of female sexual exploitation. Labor-based AHTNPs work toward ending human trafficking for the general concern of human rights abuses and abusive working conditions to which particular groups of people are vulnerable (Anderson, & Davidson, 2004). There are dozens of AHTNPs across the world, and no two have the same mission. Many of the organizations run in to issues when it comes to policy proposals and



legislation, not only due to the amount of AHTNPs, each with a different mission, but also the different types of policy proposals being made by the various organizations.

While human trafficking is an issue spanning the globe, finding common ground between legislative authorities and AHTNPs is difficult. “The reality is that they continue to hold to differing understandings of what constitutes trafficking, with states relying on a narrow administrative definition, while NGOs refer to a broader, more descriptive one” (Coghlan & Wylie, 2011, p. 1515). Trafficking, therefore, is paradoxically defined in great detail but also with absolute vagueness (Coghlan & Wylie, 2011). A report from the UN released in 2000 confirmed that human trafficking is not only seen as substantially less important when compared to other crimes, but that, as a whole, is seen as an issue that cannot be stopped at this time (Mendelson, 2005). Those who fight against AHTNPs bring an unfortunate arsenal of legal issues to the table, when the problem is not simply a legal one, but an economic and a moral one.

The first issue concerns how trafficked persons are perceived and whether they are seen as victims or seen as exercising (an admittedly limited) agency. A second aspect of this debate centers on how traffickers are perceived: Are they cast as criminals whose illegal activities are the root of the problem? Or are they seen as actors in a larger tragedy, profiting from human desperation. The third contested issue is the solution to the problem of trafficking that emerges depending on the framing of the first two issues – that is, whether the solution is the removal/arrest of traffickers and the repatriation of trafficked persons; or the transformation of immigration laws and efforts to address global inequalities. (Rao & Presenti, 2012, p. 235)

AHTNPs, and NPOs in general are constantly put to the test by being asked to provide scientific evidence to support their claims. “This can be challenging for organizations that seek to base their advocacy positions on their experience ‘on-the-ground’ as this may be another way of saying that many organizations rely on anecdotal evidence when developing their advocacy positions” (Hortsch, 2010, p. 131). Members of leadership committees then give themselves the power to decide if there truly is an injustice happening where the AHTNP says it is. How both officers of the law and those in leadership positions view human trafficking directly affects how much time and effort they are willing to devote to stopping it. If they lack in caring for the issue, then these individuals will feel no pressure change their actions and help combat human trafficking (Jägers & Rijken, 2014). Often what is witnessed is “compassion fatigue” in which the “public’s perception of its social inefficacy compose a challenging dilemma for humanitarian organizations, which have previously used the depiction of suffering both to create legitimacy for the organization and its cause and to mobilize support from the public” (Vestergaard, 2008, p. 472). Corporations and those in leadership positions are equally important actors when it comes to stopping and preventing human trafficking, and to AHTNPs work to sway those decision makers to help their cause (Teegen, Doh, & Vachani, 2004).

Since 1946, NPOs that meet certain requirements set by the UN have been able to apply for consultative status, which allows them to attend meetings, commissions, and conferences associated with the UN (Foerster, 2009). This provides them both an “insider” and “outsider” status, with the capability to work within the framework of international institutions, while maintaining the ability to challenge those institutions

publicly. When AHTNPs, and Non-Profits in general, use their resources, time, and money effectively, they can immerse themselves into established business and political systems in order to influence social change (Teegen, Doh, & Vachani, 2004). “NPOs have tested the boundaries of political systems by assuming the right to mobilize and serve a public, the right to organize, and the right to monitor and comment on the governance process” (Hortsch, 2010, p. 130).

The concerns of AHTNP organizations are often drowned out, dulled, or neglected by the same institutions they are trying to change. Those in power often unanimously decide they would rather focus resources on problems that they can control and which they can specifically define, not problems that have multiple or long-winded definitions, like human trafficking. Leaders in AHTNPs spend so much time lobbying and playing politics with these institutions that they use all of their resources trying to change the minds of those in power. “Even though nonprofit organizations claim neither political power nor financial profit, they are exposed to the pressures of political and economic logics. Their legitimate attempts to influence both systems could lead to their domestication by strategies of ‘pacification’” (Deetz 1992, p. 196). When smaller AHTNPs lack the funding and volunteers needed to keep the organization running, they often have to decide whether to focus on changing the politics and on short-term functionality, or to use what resources they have left to help others (Sharma, 2003; Teegen, Doh, & Vachani, 2004), “at the expense of longer-term ‘strategic’ processes necessary for lasting social and political change” (Ebrahim, 2003, p. 826). One resource that is usually available to these types of organizations is that of volunteers; people who will often work for free to keep a non-profit functioning properly.

## **Volunteering for a Non-Profit Organization**

Volunteerism is the act in which individuals “freely donate their time, money, or services to benefit another person, group, or organization” (Botero, Fediuk & Sies, 2012, p. 5). Volunteering is considered a “manifestation of human helpfulness,” (Botero, Fediuk, & Sies, 2012, p. 6), and is “an emotional and value-based activity,” (Haski-Leventhal & Bargal 2008, p. 97) primarily intended to benefit others. The U.S. Department of Labor in 2006 determined volunteer activities to be “activities for which people are not paid,” and since the cost of volunteer labor is relatively small, the value of a volunteer’s time and resources to helping a non-profit for a specified cause has the potential to be higher than comparable efforts in the private sector, and can make significant contributions to societal needs and economic welfare (Briggs, Peterson, & Gregory, 2010).

It has been suggested that how individuals live and grow directly affects their intentions and likelihood to volunteer. For example, children who are taught about volunteering at an early age and who are encouraged to do so by their parents, schools, and communities, can develop pro-social attitudes that extend beyond their formative years. Children who are encouraged to volunteer are more likely to willingly continue volunteering later in life, seeking out specific causes for which to volunteer (Botero, Fediuk, & Sies, 2012). Volunteers who are raised with this mentality often realize they have the capability to directly influence social issues “such as inadequate health systems, entrenched poverty, environmental threats, and high-crime rates among other social ills” (Briggs, Peterson, & Gregory, 2010, p. 60). The benefits associated with volunteering are

much more than the positivity associated with the taken actions, and are often overlooked in the long-term.

It is well understood that volunteering can also have a positive impact on the volunteer themselves, as well as on society as a whole. Volunteers live longer, have better mental health, have higher occupational prestige, and have greater opportunities than those who do not volunteer. It is noted that charity brings happiness for psychological reasons because it gives individuals a sense of control, while volunteering time can provide an important way to mentally “reboot” and redirect energy away from personal problems. These benefits translate into reduced health care costs, greater productivity, and higher quality of life, directly benefiting society as a whole. (Briggs, Peterson, & Gregory, 2010, p. 63)

Even with the benefits associated with the aforementioned reasoning, obtaining help for non-profit organizations has always been a surprising struggle. As non-profit organizations are in competition with each other, and in competition for both government resources and attention, the challenge becomes greater (Meungguk, Turner, & Pastore, 2008). This competition for resources feeds into every aspect of an NPO, including volunteers and resources.

For NPOs to obtain both volunteers and resources, they need to develop effective promotional strategies for themselves, and to counter the lack of awareness regarding a particular social issue. A strong marketing campaign that encompasses mass media advertising has, in recent years, been deemed the most effective way to raise awareness

about a social issue and to initially gain volunteers for an NPO (Meungguk, Turner, & Pastore, 2008).

### **NPOs and Social Media.**

The creation of social media websites like Facebook and Twitter has changed the world of communication, not only for individuals, but for NPOs as well (Waters, Burnett, Lamm, & Lucas, 2009). In the past, many NPOs have shied away from using social media websites due to lack of website understanding and misunderstandings of website interactions, but that is no longer the case (Lovejoy & Saxon, 2012). The global use of social media websites has given NPOs the ability to communicate messages directly to members, volunteers, and ‘followers’ with little or no cost to the NPO (Waters, 2007).

Furthermore, the advanced Web technology enables nonprofits to have strategic communication with interested publics, including donors, supporters, clients, and the media...Social networking sites, such as Facebook, provide organizations with an environment that fosters engagement and dialogue in ways that their websites failed to achieve. (Waters & Lo, 2012, p. 299)

Social media have the power to reach a larger audience in a shorter amount of time, thus creating the ability for NPOs to spread their messages further, faster and more cost-effectively.

Through the advancements in technology specifically for social media usage, NPO leaders have the opportunity to reach their intended audience at any time (Brown, 2002). Leaders have the chance to “remain current” (Brown & Kalegaonkar, 2002), display their latest successes (Brown, 2002), gain social media followers and maintain their leadership status (Waters, 2007). Flanagin (2002) found evidence that organizations’

self-perception of leadership positively correlates with social media website adoption, indicating the need to lead rather than follow. While it is possible that “the growing volume of information facilitated by the new communication technologies paradoxically renders communication more difficult” (Daccord, 2001, p. 698), currently, the literature shows NPOs consistent and functional use of social media websites to be more beneficial than harmful in the context of retaining audience members and gaining volunteers (Das, 2010). Waters and Lo (2012) determined that promoting NPO news, updates, and accomplishments through social media websites like Facebook “impacts the global connectivity in favor of a virtual culture that promotes the global community” (Waters & Lo, 2012, p. 299). The promotion of news, updates and accomplishments on social media websites has proven to be successful for one NPO in particular: Amnesty International.

Amnesty International has followed the changing technologies since its inception in 1961 and currently maintains a Facebook and Twitter account updated every few hours with new stories and new information for their publics and volunteers to read. The group’s Facebook page currently has Amnesty International being ‘liked’ by over 700,000 individuals (Amnesty International Official Facebook Page, 2015), and their Twitter page currently noting their 1.39 million ‘followers’ from around the world (Amnesty International Official Twitter Page, 2015). In contrast, the UN-ACT (United Nations Action for Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons) maintains a Facebook page currently ‘liked’ by slightly over 15,000 individuals (UN-ACT Official Facebook Page, 2015), and their Twitter page currently places them as having 923 ‘followers’ (UNDP-ACT Official Twitter Page, 2015). According to the relevant websites, the UN-ACT updates their Facebook and Twitter pages about once a week.

Cho, Schweickart, and Hasse (2014) determined that when two-way symmetrical communication is used by NPOs, the target publics demonstrate high levels of engagement. Zorn, Flanagan, and Shoham (2011) concluded that organizations that are able to effectively use their social media websites are more likely to retain the attention of their publics, and the attention of potential volunteers as well. If these same NPOs are adapting to new technologies without responding to their publics through those technologies, the public sees it as a wasted effort. Those who might otherwise volunteer for these organizations determine them to be lazy based on their Internet activity and often decide not to work for them.

### **Post-Rescue Victim Care**

The care of a victim after he/she has been rescued is generally the most overlooked part of the combating human trafficking process. Whether it is through governmental, health or legal services, most organizations are either underfunded or overwhelmed with the need to care for victims once they have been rescued. Most AHTNPs have their hearts in the right place when it comes to post-rescue care, but often only have the resources to treat victims in a “one-stop shop” sense. This is the idea in which victims receive a general mental health evaluation, a minimal health examination, and are asked if they are “okay” before they are sent out the door to get “back on their feet” (Xin, 2013). There is a world-wide trend of rescuing victims of human trafficking from the evil clutches of their captors, but once these organizations and governments rescue the victims, they no longer care about them and send them off into the world on their own.



**Post-Rescue Health Care.** A study done in Manila by Williams et al. (2010) determined that once a victim is rescued, he/she is sent to a facility for age verification. If the victim is determined to be underage, the individual is often sent back to their families for “rehabilitation.” Why is this a bad thing? Sometimes the families are the ones who sold the child into the slave trade in the first place, and are likely to do it a second time. While Williams and his colleagues (2010) uncovered this truth, the Philippine government maintained the position that this form of rehabilitation for underage persons was crucial because it “may spell the difference between the child overcoming the initial trauma and developing into a healthy adult or [instead] going back into the cycle of victimization and abuse” (Williams et al., 2010, p. 140).

In most countries around the world, governments look to NPOs and AHTNPs to care for victims post-rescue. Yet, many of these organizations lack the funding necessary for the proper care of the victims they take in, thus these NPOs rely on other organizations like half-way houses, shelters, and faith-based organizations to shelter and care for victims once they have been “passed off” from the NPOs. Post-rescue victims are in dire need of both mental and physical care, and the inability to provide these crucial services by those who promised them in the first place is deficient.

Respondents described existing public health facilities as lacking materials and human capacity, and thus unable to deliver effective medical treatment on a population-wide level...In addition, the number of social workers and mental health professionals able to provide care was reportedly insufficient. (Williams et al., 2010, p. 141)

Resource allocation provided to organizations around the world is incredibly insufficient compared to the promises these rescue-based organizations and governments make. Sub-par mental and physical health services are the norm for human trafficking victims around the world once they are rescued, which only minimizes the choices they have once they leave the “one-stop shop” of NPO and AHTNP services. If these victims cannot mentally leave the trauma they encountered, they will physically return to it.

**Post-Rescue Legal Care.** The UN initiated a trafficking protocol in 2000 and a smuggling protocol in 2003 as supplemental legal instruments against transnational organized crime as defined by the UN Palermo Convention (Xin, 2013). This was significant because it was the first time a globally binding contract with the potential to truly be enforced was put into place regarding the definition of human trafficking, which is the beginning to ending the problem, according to government services. Two years later, the U.S. government followed suit and passed the newly revised Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) to replace the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) from 2000. This act, in theory, expands the resources of the Department of Justice to better assist victims of human trafficking with healthcare needs and overcoming issues of immigration (Xin, 2013).

In practice, however, the results of the TVPRA are rather different. Under the TVPRA, victims of human trafficking are eligible to receive healthcare and assistance with immigration services, even though they are not U.S. citizens, if they can receive the proper federal certification. This certification grants victims a generic refugee status and “provides victims of trafficking with the necessary documentation to be eligible to receive benefits and services that they may need to rebuild their lives while remaining in

the United States (Xin, 2013, p. 73). Victims of human trafficking also are able to receive a T-Visa, which is reserved for victims of human trafficking inside the U.S. who are able to establish a non-immigrant status. This visa allows victims to “remain in the United States to assist in an investigation or prosecution of human trafficking” (p. 73).

In theory, this is wonderful for victims of human trafficking as it provides them with transnational care and services, so that no matter where a victim is taken, they will be protected and provided for. In reality, victims of human trafficking are arrested and criminalized for the actions done against them. Victims of human trafficking are more likely to be put in jail or deported if they are rescued by a government service than receive any kind of healthcare or legal service. In an open letter to the U.S. Department of State in response to the 2014 TIP Report, one AHTNP, The Freedom Network (2014), wrote that victims of human trafficking were “prosecuted for crimes that they were coerced to commit in relation to their victimization, and sometimes deported multiple times, without any investigation of their alleged trafficking.” The Freedom Network continued by claiming the failure to investigate the issue, and the continued criminalization of trafficking victims is relative proof that the U.S. government is failing in its mission to help victims of human trafficking.

In the case of minors as victims of human trafficking under the TVPRA, they are ineligible for immigration relief or T-Visa status because they are under the age of 18. The argument is also made against minors that most often they are trafficked to the U.S. from other countries, therefore are not eligible for “asylum” like an adult.

These trafficked children face deportation from the United States back to situations where they have been or are likely to be trafficked. The United States

should not deport trafficking survivors or individuals likely to be trafficked if they are deported and instead should extend immigration protections to these individuals. (The Freedom Network, 2014)

This holds true for both victims of labor trafficking and victims of sex trafficking.

Victims of human trafficking must have legal representation and documented proof that they were coerced or forced into human trafficking against their will in order for them to even have a chance to obtain a T-Visa. Once they have obtained the necessary documents, they then have to face their traffickers in court, which only adds to the trauma they have already encountered. Due to these regulations, only 123 cases of human trafficking were brought to the federal level in 2014 (The Freedom Network).

### **The Elaboration Likelihood Model**

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), proposed by Petty and Cacioppo in 1981, is a general theoretical framework providing a comprehensive perspective on attitude change by categorizing, organizing and understanding the effectiveness of persuasive messages (Petty, Cacioppo, & Goldman, 1981). ELM is used to provide a framework through which researchers can work to determine the processes by which individuals are persuaded when they are exposed to persuasion messages. The model proposes there are two methods by which to persuade an individual: a central route and a peripheral route (Meungguk, Turner, & Pastore, 2008). These two routes represent the likelihood of cognitive effort being used to process a message. Depending on the motivation and ability of an individual, they will either have low or high elaboration likelihood, which will determine through which router persuasion will occur (Kitchen, Kerr, Schultz, McColl & Pals, 2014).

The premise of ELM is that when elaboration likelihood is high, information processing will occur via the central route of persuasion (Kitchen et al., 2014), in which individuals have the ability to process, understand and interpret a message, as an argument for persuasion is being made directly to them. Through the use of the central route, the ability to persuade an individual depends heavily on that individuals' cognitive processes and his/her resistance to change over time (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983). When individuals use the central route for persuasion, their thoughts about the issue during and after being exposed to a persuasive message immediately determine their likelihood to act (Meungguk, Turner, & Pastore, 2008). The following attitude change is the result of extensive consideration of the argument presented in the message and will be more persistent (Kitchen et al., 2014).

In contrast, when elaboration likelihood is low, processing occurs via the peripheral route of persuasion, which is by definition less direct and requires less cognitive processes to occur (Kitchen et al., 2014). The peripheral route allows for a general argument to be made with the intent of displaying information first and persuading second. The individual then decides on his/her likelihood to act toward or against a cause (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983). When individuals use the peripheral route cues like credibility of a source, the number of arguments made, and the influence of a celebrity are factors that can serve as the basis of people's primary judgments (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981). As a result, attitudes formed via the peripheral route are considerably unaffected by the quality of the argument being made and are not predictive of behavioral changes like those formed from the central route (Kitchen et al., 2014).

The ELM outlines four factors directly affecting likelihood on the continuum of persuasion in relation to an issue: involvement, personal responsibility, number of sources and need for cognition. For Non-Profit organizations and their attempts to persuade potential volunteers, the most prominent factor is involvement and the extent to which an individual determines the cause of the Non-Profit to be personally relevant (Meungguk, Turner, & Pastore, 2008).

McKeever (2013) suggests that the more personally relevant a social issue is to an individual, the more likely the individual is to become involved in combating it, an example being Relay for Life on high school and college campuses. Relay for Life, an event sponsored by the American Cancer Society, allows students the opportunity to ‘fight back’ against cancer and to raise both money and awareness for combating cancer. Research shows that individuals are more likely to volunteer for an organization when these individuals maintain positive attitudes toward the organization, the volunteering process and the cause for which they are volunteering (Briggs, Peterson, & Gregory, 2010). Personal involvement or connections to a specific social issue can predict the likelihood to volunteer, however, it is not always correct in predicting behavioral intentions. When all four factors (involvement, personal responsibility, number of sources and need for cognition) are present in a persuasive message targeted to a specific audience and processed centrally by the receiver of the message, the likelihood and motivation to volunteer will be higher than if just one factor was present (McKeever, 2013; Meungguk, Turner, & Pastore, 2008).

**ELM and Fear Appeal.** The idea of a metaphorical tipping point, the moment when something is about to fall over the metaphorical edge, is when a person, or the

public, begins to notice something terrible happening and realizes they can do something about it. For the participants in the study, it was the acquisition of the knowledge that smoking will harm their bodies; for those who work for the Invisible Children Campaign, it was Kony 2014 giving their cause popularity; for drug users it was the “This is Your Brain on Drugs” campaign. Research suggests that fear appeal can be an extremely effective attitude changing strategy when used efficiently.

Perloff (2014) defines fear appeal as “persuasive communication that tries to scare people into changing their attitudes by conjuring up negative consequences that will occur if they do not comply with the message recommendations” (p. 299). The use of fear appeal in persuasive messages, like those distributed by some AHTNPs, are meant to educate and scare the audience into understanding or combating a social issue but do nothing for the recruitment process. Many of the fear appeal messages used by AHTNPs retain the early 1900’s theme of “this could be your daughter” in attempts to scare the audience into compliance toward human trafficking issues. However:

Moderator variables such as familiarity with the topic and trait anxiety have an effect on the impact of fear on cognitive processing, fear generally promotes peripheral processing and reduces an audience’s ability or willingness to elaborate on the message through central processing. (Dunbar et al., 2014, p. 875)

The audience members’ willingness to elaborate, as well as their perception of the fear appeal message is crucial to the effectiveness of the message once it is disseminated.

Timmers and Van de Wijst (2007) argue that an audience receiving a fear appeal message must actually be threatened by the message in order to judge the effectiveness of the solution. However if the audience members perceive their actions to be ineffective

toward combating the problem, or become frightened of the problem, they are more likely to withdraw from the message than to continue combating it. This being said, the use of fear appeal alone in AHTNPs messages is as likely to change attitudes as it is to backfire.

**ELM and Sex Appeal.** The use of sex appeal in AHTNP messages, while not commonplace, is still used as an attention-grabbing method toward an audience. While one researcher finds the use of sex appeal as a compliance gaining strategy in the efforts to stop sex trafficking ironic, the fact of its existence remains. Sex appeal is loosely defined by Cheung et al. (2013) as the evocation of positive emotional responses that facilitate purchase intention due to one (or more) of five factors: nudity, sexual behavior, physical attractiveness, sexual allusions and sexual inclusions. AHTNPs that use sex appeal in their messages generally use displays of nudity, sexual allusions, and physical attractiveness to maintain the attention of the audience.

Booth-Butterfield and Welbourne (2002) argue that according to ELM, the factors that make up attractiveness in terms of sex appeal have the ability to influence both the central and peripheral routes equally, thus being capable of influencing attitudes more directly. That being said, the use of sex appeal in AHTNP messages has the potential to be incredibly effective, but again considered not the best way to approach the issue of forced sexual encounters due to slavery. The use of sexual content in advertising has the potential to backfire due to the nature of the persuasive message, the ability to make the audience uncomfortable, and the mixed messages that an organization would be sending out.



**ELM and Call-to-Action.** Fear and sex appeal alone as attitude changing strategies are not nearly as effective as they can be when combined with the opportunity by an audience to take action (Johnson, Warkentin & Siponen). The ability for an audience to take action after a fear or sex appeal message is used has a greater likelihood to retain audience voluntary participation in regard to a social issue than the use of a fear or sex appeal message alone to change attitudes. Many of the messages distributed by AHTNPs use only either fear appeal or sex appeal when trying to gain interest and acknowledgement by the public (Johnson, Warkentin & Siponen, 2015). Research shows this strategy can be effective, but it has the potential to be even more effective if a secondary compliance gaining strategy, such as a call to action, is used alongside it.

**Criticisms of ELM.** Stiff and Boster (1987) believe the use of ELM “fails to account for the effect of parallel processing of central and peripheral information on attitudes” (p. 250). In other words, the model does not account for how the routes influence attitudes, nor does it account for behavioral changes. The authors argue that a variable used as a stimulus can be processed as a central cue for one person and a peripheral cue for another, creating a level of ambiguity from which ELM can effectively function as the theoretical framework. This ambiguity allows for ELM to “explain all possible outcomes of an experimental study” (p. 251), and therefore ELM can claim no significant effect of a given route of processing on attitude changes. The authors also claim that ELM has no significant pertinence to persuasion theory, and accounts for too many flaws regarding the “conditions under which persons engage in central information processing, peripheral information processing, or both” (Stiff & Boster, 1987, p. 255).

Stiff and Boster conducted a meta-analysis of ELM research that uncovered these inconsistencies in the theory. Noted in the same article, Petty and Cacioppo rejected these findings and refuted the claims made by Stiff and Boster. Unfortunately for Petty and Cacioppo, as the meta-analyses results were published piece-by-piece, ELM appeared to fare worse and worse with reach result. The meta-analysis conducted by Stiff and Boster in all their studies “clearly contradict ELM predictions” (Stiff & Boster, 1987, p. 254). While the claims of inefficiency made by Stiff and Boster hold merit, and it was important to acknowledge the criticisms of ELM, the use of ELM as a theoretical framework in the context of this study was still determined to be the correct choice. The use of ELM for this study is to determine the likelihood of action based on the messages designed and disseminated by AHTNPs, and to understand the theory as a whole, the criticisms must be brought to light.

### **Research Questions**

This study investigates whether the Elaboration Likelihood Model was used in the design of the messages disseminated by anti-human trafficking non-profit organizations. This paper attempts to understand the levels of motivation and the likelihood to become involved in or combat the issue that audience members might have based on the information presented in the messages disseminated by these organizations. Research suggests that Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profits use fear appeal, sex appeal or a call-to-action when creating and distributing their messages; this paper will explore the effectiveness of those messages from the perspectives of those who create them. The following research questions guided the analysis for this study:

RQ<sub>1</sub>: What do messages about Anti-Human Trafficking look like?

RQ<sub>2</sub>: How do members of this Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit craft or design a message?

RQ<sub>3</sub>: What is the objective of this Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit?

RQ<sub>4</sub>: What is the intended outcome as an Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit?

It is important to distinguish here the intended differences between the research questions. Research question one was designed to determine the topical aspects and basic component that were part of messages being created by AHTNPs. The second research question was designed to determine the ways in which these organizations crafted and designed their message, for example, what specifically they kept in mind during the message-creation process. The goal of research question three was to examine the mission statements and ideological values represented by each AHTNP and determine how they conduct their day-to-day activities based on these values. Finally, research question four was designed to determine the concrete goals of each AHTNP and how they are working towards accomplishing those goals every day.

## **Conclusion**

Extensive research has been conducted regarding human trafficking, the causes, the conditions of the victims and the number of actual victims around the world. Little research, however, has been conducted regarding the opinions of the people who run the day-to-day operations of the organizations that seek to protect and provide for victims of human trafficking. This study focuses on the personal opinions of employees from various AHTNPs, how they create messages about human trafficking that are distributed to the public, and how they perceive the messages that they create. The following chapter

will describe the methods and procedures used to collect and analyze the data that were procured through an interview process.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODS

The previous chapters examine the history of human trafficking, how different organizations create their messages with which persuasive tactics, and the elements that go into the various roles that AHTNPs can take. The main theoretical focus of this study uses the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) as the foundation for gauging audience response, participation, volunteer retention and success from each AHTNP. The primary objective of this study is to discover the role the messages distributed by AHTNPs play in the overall success of the organization.

#### **Participants and Procedure**

Participants of this study were individuals from Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit Organizations who have input in the design and dispersal of messages to the public. After receiving Institutional Review Board approval for the study, the researcher solicited participants through the various publicly available Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit websites by the researcher.

Publicly available information through Internet access was used to contact 64 U.S.-based Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit Organizations. An additional 18 organizations were contacted which were not based in the United States, but had satellite offices within the U.S. Contacting the organizations was completed through email or on the “Contact Us” page for each individual organization.

Of the 82 organizations contacted, 35 replied to the original message. From the 35 organizations, 19 said they would potentially be available for an interview within the coming weeks but eventually could not participate, and eight immediately said yes. The eight that responded were the final participants for this study. The organizations that ultimately did not participate were either unresponsive to the emails sent to them, or had declined to be interviewed for this study. Each participant was a representative of an AHTNP who had influence in the design and dissemination of messages from that organization. Participants included seven females and one male, all of whom worked in U.S. based AHTNPs. For the purpose of this study, each participant was given a pseudonym.

A standardized emailed contact in order to establish contact with each organization. The email contained an explanation of who I was, what I was trying to accomplish, and the general timeframe for data collection. Once I had obtained the email addresses of the organization from their “Contact Us” page on each website, I requested an interview. If an organization responded to my email with further questions, I did my best to answer them while maintaining the need for an interview.

Through email, the original respondent indicated to the researcher who would be available for the interview, and either gave me their information, or had the potential interviewee added to the email thread. The potential interviewee and I then discussed the time and day of the interview, and the best way to contact that person, be if via Skype or cell phone. All participation was voluntary.

## **Data Collection**

Respondent interviews were selected as the data collection method for this study due to the nature of the questions being asked. This form of interview allows for the clarification of meanings and concepts, the formation of opinions to be understood and allows for the ability to understand interpretations of meanings (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Respondent interviews allow participants to speak about themselves and their experiences, which is what was specifically needed for this study. “Respondent interviews are constructed to find out how people express their views construe their actions, how they conceptualize their life world, and so forth” (p. 179).

Before each interview, a content analysis of each organization’s website was conducted to analyze the site content and mission statements. This was done so the researcher would have a better understanding of the organization prior to the interviews, as well as to be able to ask the organizations questions about how they communicate with their audiences through websites and social media. The content analysis was completed based on Baxter’s definition of domain content analysis, which “involved a description of a given category of meaning or domain through a relevant semantic relationship” (Baxter, 1991, p. 245). From this, the researcher took note of all the content presented on each AHTNP website homepage and mission statement page and categorized the information presented. Through the content analysis, it was determined that from the previously mentioned classifications by Anderson and Davidson (2004) that five of the organizations were abolitionist organizations, two were labor-based and one was government-oriented.

Also prior to each interview, participants received a Statement of Consent (Appendix B) that was read, signed and returned to the researchers via email. Prior to

each interview, a statement similar to the original email was read reminding each participant of the nature of the interview, that participation was voluntary giving a reminder that the interview would be recorded. The researcher then asked each participant if the use of a recording device for the interview was acceptable, and with the consent of each participant, the researcher began to record each interview.

Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured fashion, using the questions from Appendix A as the guide for the conversation. Interviews generally lasted from 15-25 minutes due to the open-ended nature of the questions being asked. The use of a semi-structured interview allowed each participant to explain in full detail the answer to each open-ended question. The structure of the interviews allowed them to be more conversational in nature, which created the ability for the researcher to ask follow up questions as well as further explanations. An example of a question that was most often used as the primary question asked was “Why did you choose to become involved in Anti-Trafficking efforts?” This question was used for two reasons. First, it allowed the researcher to understand the background of each participant and his/her relationship to the issue of anti-human trafficking, as well as allowed the participant to become comfortable with the interview. Each participant who participated in this study was someone who had direct influence in the creation and dissemination of the messages produced by the AHTNP.

Examples of questions include “what kind of message are you crafting” and “why do you craft your messages in this particular way.” These questions, among others, were asked to determine the design of the messages crafted by these organizations, as well as to determine information about how the messages were disseminated. Participants were



also asked a series of questions regarding their role in the Non-Profit, how they view the messages they have created and what, if any, persuasion methods they use to create their messages (See Appendix A).

The interviews were conducted via cell phone or Skype on the password protected personal computer of the researcher in a remote and enclosed location out of earshot of anyone who might have walked past. All interviews that were done on Skype were completed through audio Skype and were recorded with a handheld recording device. All interviews that were done via cell phone were done while the phone was on speaker and the handheld recording device was placed next to the speaker of the phone. Once each interview was completed, it was transcribed within 24 hours and saved on a password-protected computer that was only accessible to the researcher. All transcribed documents were kept on a password-protected personal computer to which only the researcher had access. Participant names were not recorded during the interview process to maintain the confidentiality of each participant.

Due to time constraints regarding graduate school semester deadlines and the inability to persuade more NPOs to agree to an interview, the interviews were not conducted to a degree that would appear to be redundant. However, regardless of the small amount of interviews, the repetition of themes in participant responses over the course of the eight interviews was enough to satisfy the researcher to saturation.

### **Data Analysis**

A thematic analysis of the collected data was conducted in order to understand the relationship between the communication messages and participants' personal opinions. A thematic analysis is the process by which qualitative research can be coded and

thematized. A theme is a “pattern found in the information that at the minimum describes and organizes possible observations or at the maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon” (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 4). Themes can be used as a way to make sense out of seemingly unrelated materials and to analyze qualitative information. Using this operationalization as a basis, the researcher sought to determine which themes emerged from the interviews conducted and analyze them further. When each interview was transcribed, the researcher coded units of data in the form of words or phrases from each interview and thematized them. Themes were not generated from vivid examples, but instead the coding process was thorough, inclusive, and comprehensive (Baxter, 1991).

Each research question was noted as a specific category, and therefore had specific themes that could be analyzed based on participant responses. For research questions one and two, the themes reviewed regarded the design of messages, the persuasive tactics used in the design of those messages, the audiences reached, who designed the messages and what specific words were placed in the messages. Research questions three and four looked at the opinions of participants and their personal feelings toward their AHTNP in regard to personal efforts in combating human trafficking, as well as how participants conduct day-to-day operations and campaigns.

After the thematic analysis was completed, a colleague of the researcher read the transcripts of each interview in order to unitize their own results from the data. This was done to ensure coding was consistent between the researcher and the colleague. The first and last page of the each transcribed interview was omitted from this process to maintain the confidentiality of the participant due to the nature of the primary question asked of each participant which requested personal information regarding the participant’s

background with human trafficking. Once all themes were unitized, they were placed into categories to be analyzed by the researcher.

### **Conclusion**

Data for this study were collected through a semi-structured interview process from participants who had been contacted through publicly available information on various anti-human trafficking websites. The data were then analyzed through a thematic analysis, with the intent to organize into categories the types of responses given by each participant in relation to the research questions. The next chapter will provide the results of the data analysis in accordance with the research questions.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

The previous chapter described the specific steps taken in the collection and data. In this chapter, the findings from the interviews conducted and the significant themes discovered in each interview will be discussed. Once again, each participant for this study was someone employed at one of the eight AHTNPs, and each participant had direct influence over the creation and dissemination of the messages of the organization. This chapter will describe the themes and categories discovered through interview in order of the four research questions.

Analyzed in the content analysis prior to each interview was the use of images on each website. Five of the websites had a running banner, meaning that the same words and images were consistently displayed at the top of every page. For three of the five organizations with a running banner, pictures of young girls in chains with words like “help,” “slavery,” “abuse,” and “hiding” were the prominently placed at the top of the banner. Interestingly, two of the three running banners with pictures used the same young girl in chains for their picture, but with different words.

The website homepages of four of these organizations revealed the organizations’ desire for audience members to subscribe to their mailing list, and all eight wanted audience members to “join the fight.” Four of the eight organization web pages had the phone number for the National Human Trafficking Resource Hotline prominently

displayed on their homepages, and four of the organizations displayed web-links to other AHTNP organizations and their success stories. Five of the homepages displayed information about human trafficking around the world, including statistics, and three of them had a call-to-action message following the statistics display.

The content analysis of each mission statement displayed on the websites often revealed more information about the history of the organization rather than the mission of the organization itself. Six of the organization web pages had anywhere from two to five paragraphs of information of the organizations' history prior to stating what the mission of the organization was, and the other two organizations had a single sentence or paragraph alone on a page with the mission statement. Five of the mission statements included the request for donations to the organization and three wanted audience members to know that they were 501(c)3 certified organizations. Once the content analysis was completed for each website, the interviews began.

### **RQ 1: What do messages about Anti-Human Trafficking look like?**

The goal of research question one was to discover the basic topical aspects of messages designed to combat human trafficking, change attitudes regarding human trafficking and gain volunteers for an AHTNP. The purpose of this research question was to determine the physical components that were included in the messages created by these organizations, but that data was unrepresented in many of the interviews. The interview data were examined in order to classify these main aspects of message components. The researcher asked participants what kind of message they design inside their organization, as well as why, and metaphorically speaking, the results were a mix of content and channel considerations. The first category that emerged related to the

elements of content, and the second category to channels, or, more specifically, to a single channel: social media.

**Elements of Content.** The content consideration is the usage of a slogan. A slogan is often what the general audience, in regard to an organization, remembers. When the same slogan is consistently used by an organization, it becomes one of the relative identifying factors for how an organization is identified by the public. For example, if the slogan “I’m lovin’ it” was said around the average person, many would identify this slogan with McDonalds. The use of a slogan does not reflect the effectiveness of an organization, but rather the nature of the operations of an organization itself.

**Slogan Usage.** Of the eight participants interviewed, only three had a slogan they used in every, or almost every message they created. All organizations saw their use of a slogan as an identifying factor to how the public viewed their organization, and each said that they tried every day to live up to the expectation they created for themselves based on the slogan. The first organization that used a consistent slogan crafts all of its messages using the words “advocacy, care, and empowerment for trafficked persons,” the second with the words “everyday hero,” and the third with “free forever.” The use of these words is important, not just as identifying factors for an AHTNP, but because the words themselves have strong, positive connotations attached to them.

The words in the messages crafted by these organizations send a strong signal to their audience, which creates a mental association to the power and reach of the organization itself. This conveys to the audience that as an organization, it is trustworthy, confident, knowledgeable, and most importantly, the cause is worth the time it takes to read the messages displayed and look for more messages in the future.

The five organizations that did not use a consistent slogan did so for various reasons, most of which pertained to the nature of the organizations themselves, rather than the content of the messages:

We focus on a call to action, using the theory of change to put pressure on people, through reason and rational arguments, and then we will be successful in understanding our audience, and understanding through advocacy, and building up that support network. (Joe)

This participant noted that this organization was in a unique position to both assist and criticize the governments of the countries in which it worked, due to the assistance it has provided the various governmental systems since its inception. This allows the branches of this organization to work independently of the headquarters, which helps them focus on the needs of each individual country. According to Joe, issues around human trafficking are consistently being brought to the attention of the various governmental systems, and it is the job of the organization to be always ready with a campaign to raise public awareness and enact change for the betterment of humanity. Due to the constant change occurring at the branch level of the organization and the needs of each country, the organization does not use a consistent slogan.

One participant, Sally, who works for an organization which only operates within the U.S., spoke of a slogan in the same terms:

We don't use a traditional slogan or tagline due to the nature of our target audience (politicians). Our messages are crafted to explain that the constituents support a particular bill. (Sally)

The remaining organizations highlighted their desire for the publicity of education-based messages regarding human trafficking, and the use of a slogan perpetuates the myths associated with human trafficking. An example of one of these myths would be “it is not illegal if a person consents to being trafficked” (Xin, 2013, p. 66). One participant in particular said:

We’ve actually seen some people get upset at some campaigns where they believe it’s one thing and then when they find out the trafficking isn’t really like that, they kind of get ticked off. If you look at most of our messages, they really go back to the fact that slavery hasn’t really ended. You know we have the whole ‘slavery is hiding’ campaign. Well, one of the PSA’s on our websites is a girl getting linked up...so that kind of is what we go to even when it’s an awareness campaign to stop that from. We just kind of debunk a lot of things. (Mary)

**Educational Messages.** The second content consideration involves the inclusion of educational messages from each AHNTN. At the root of each AHTNP is the desire to spread awareness and education about human trafficking. Each organization partakes in spreading awareness, but each organization does it differently. For many organizations, how they spread awareness and education is just as important as what is said:

We do a lot of community awareness, and we also have a youth awareness programming campaign so we can teach about all forms of human trafficking, not just sex trafficking. (Mary)

Many of the organizations base their messages on research and education and approach the idea of spreading awareness in a similar manner. One participant in



particular said: “I think we just need some good solid research to tell us where the problem is and how to solve it.” (Elise)

One organization uses their audience to spread awareness to other potential audience members, attempting to create a snowball-type method for spreading awareness, and gain members to fight human trafficking. This organization also asks former victims of human trafficking to help facilitate training programs so members know what to look for in the situation of a potentially trafficked person:

We have corporate sponsors that regularly donate, support and have anti-trafficking programs. They display these things on their websites, we display on ours, and they introduce us to more people that help us spread awareness. (Sarah)

Another organization spreads awareness through the idea of empowerment and the purchasing of products from this organization. Victims of human trafficking create jewelry and other products that are then sold to the public alongside the messages of education this organization spreads:

Our girls don’t want to be known as traffic victims, they want us to know ‘we’re like you.’ We have dreams and aspirations and things like that...a lot of the messages revolve around empowering women, and then by purchasing these products, you’re helping to empower and educate women. One of the ones we go back to and that we use a lot is called ‘Free Forever’ because our strategy is that we want to raise people way beyond the poverty level, and that’s kind of the message that we go back to, that they’re free forever. (Joan)

**Channels: Social Media.** As we consider the channel consideration, only one element relative to message design, the use of social media, comes into play. Social

media is the fastest, cheapest, and sometimes easiest, way to disseminate relevant information to large groups. It can be a wonderful marketing tool to organizations, or potentially be the root of image issues in the eyes of the public. Social media was also the only method of message dissemination that any of the participants spoke of.

**Inactive Social Media.** Four AHTNP organizational members saw the use of social media collectively as a way to reach audiences, but none of them saw social media as a marketing strategy to be used regularly. Common responses were along the lines of: “We have a social media presence, we have a Facebook, a Twitter and a Pinterest, but it’s not very well maintained,” or, “We have a Facebook and we post stuff on there, but we’re pretty conservative with that.”

Sally described her organizations’ use of social media as minimal due to the nature of their organization. This organization does not see the use of social media as a helpful tool to assist with their cause, and with the consideration of their audience in mind, they are right to make this assumption:

We have a social media presence on Facebook and Twitter, but since our primary target is Congress and our secondary target is the White House administration, the Facebook and Twitter isn’t as robust as with other grassroots organizations...we do share some posts in support of campaigns where our organizations are aligned, like with Walk Free. (Sally)

**Active Social Media.** The remaining four organizations described their activity on social media as being “very active,” “checked regularly” or “updated when possible.” One participant called Sarah was very proud of the social media presence created by her

organization, because she saw their social media presence as a contributing factor of their overall success:

We have a very active Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We've also had a few blog spinoffs from these. We use our social media presence to highlight different states and law enforcement agencies every few weeks. (Sarah)

These organizations see social media as the marketing tool to help spread the message and awareness, and while they feel they use their social media actively and correctly, they all described the desire to have a social media expert on their team to further their successes. When asked what could be done to make their organization more successful, one participant said:

Hire an expert social media person for \$100,000 a year. That we are not going to do because it's too expensive, but it seems like that is what it takes now is a full time person to be getting out there. (Joan)

In summary, the factors that make up a message about human trafficking are a mix of apples and oranges between the elements of content and channels: social media. Each of the organizations interviewed had but did not use, or did use, all of these components in each of their messages regarding human trafficking. Due to the nature of each organization, they had a specific reason to use, not use, or perpetuate their actions based on the messages they have created thus far, contributing to their perceived success as an AHTNP.

**RQ 2: How do members of this Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit craft or design a message?**

The goal of this question is to identify the steps are taken when an AHTNP is designing a message and what persuasion tactics were being used, if at all. There were many similar aspects of message design which overlapped with the categories discovered in the first research question, but four new categories emerged: team effort, target audience, persuasion tactics and public perception.

**Team Effort.** The first consideration of message design by AHTNP members is that of team effort. Each participant interviewed worked for an organization with a very small team, even if the organization itself was a relatively large one. The teams for which each participant worked were described as having anywhere from three to eight people, and there often were no communication teams. Messages are often created as a collaborative effort, or a larger organization gives a campaign message to the smaller organization:

We climb onto the messages created by the coalitions' larger organization, so we just work on a smaller scale under that umbrella. (Jane)

One organizations in particular felt it was both too small to create larger campaigns on its own, and that it had no time to create campaigns due to an overabundance of awareness programming opportunities they created within their community. The participant from this organization, Mary, did not see this as a hindrance due to the ability the organization now had to focus on the programming:

Honestly, we aren't the ones that create the messages. The PSA's that we use all the time were basically donated to us by marketing campaigns, so we were never part of the creative process. (Mary)

Regionally-based organizations often work closely with other organizations, creating collaborations, or sometimes, larger organizations adopt smaller organizations, creating collaborations. When this happens, depending on the larger organization, the smaller organizations do not make the campaign messages on their own. Instead, one participant describes:

Our messages are created through consensus through the 14 other organizations that are a part of our coalition. (Elise)

One organization that works internationally maintains small teams in each of the countries in which it operates. When presented with this information, the researcher asked participant Joe why this was done, posing the question that since this organization was a relatively larger one it might be easier to enact large-scale change in bigger groups. Joe responded:

There are some organizations that are big enough to survive and to have massive communication teams, massive campaigns teams, massive policy teams, massive research teams, there is a benefit, but it can also hinder the construction and dissemination of those messages. (Joe)

Joe later described the large-scale changes they have helped enact, especially across Europe, contributing part of their success to the small team in which they worked. The small team allowed for this organization to "jump through less hoops" when campaigns needed to be created and disseminated in less than 48 hours.

**Target Audience.** Another consideration that the organizations focused on when crafting their messages was who the target audience was. One question that was asked in each interview was who the target audience was for each organization. Three types of audiences emerged: no target audience, a specific target audience, and it depends.

**No Target Audience.** Four of the participants responded to the question about a target audience with some version of, “Our target audience is pretty much everyone” or, “We don’t really have a target audience because we’re really trying to reach out to anyone who will listen.” While some organizations consider this to be an ill-advised tactic, the members of the organizations with this strategy see nothing wrong with letting their message be heard by anyone who will listen. The downside, as described by Jane, is the need to constantly be creating new messages which can be understood by all.

**Target Audience.** The obvious counter to the notion of having no target audience is to have a target audience:

You have to have a target audience in mind: you have to focus your messages...you can’t just send out a blast without having an intended audience in mind. That doesn’t work. (Joe)

The organizations with specified target audiences describe crafting their messages for specific people. For example, an organization working directly with government figures will not craft the same messages, and does not have the same target audience, as the organization working with 30-60 year old women:

Everything is done in consultation but most messages created aren’t for the general public, the target audience is policy makers and staff – not traditional communications. (Sally)

**It Depends.** Two of the organizations try a different approach with their messages and specify their target audiences to be people who will be on the “front lines” when it comes to human trafficking, without knowing they are in that position:

We try to reach out to medical personnel, tattoo parlor artists because there’s a lot of branding involved that we’ve found...we’re also trying to reach out to people that would be on the front lines, like the hospitals, the medical staff, people that might see these people that are coming in for help and they don’t even realize they’re victims. (Sam)

Using an education-centered approach, the final organization describes their target audience in terms of age and location. They have the same message tailored in different ways based on the age and location of the group in which they are in contact:

It depends on who asks us. So it’s the general public, but it’s also professionals, its healthcare providers, its students beginning at about a junior high level, so we’re on college campuses, we’re in schools, we’re in churches, we’re in civic groups, and the general public. So it’s a wide variety, and we’ll tailor the message based on the group. (Jane)

**Persuasion Tactics.** The next category to be taken into consideration was that of the persuasion tactics used during the message creation. The relevant literature describes many of the persuasion tactics used by the various AHTNPs, and a content analysis of the various AHTNP websites have supported what was described in the literature to be the methods of persuasion most often used. However, when asking the eight participants to describe their persuasion tactics, none of them said anything to support the literature:

We use mostly education tactics because it's awareness raising. People don't think it happens here. First of all, they don't know what it is, and once they know they think 'Oh, it must happen in Cambodia - it probably never happens in my backyard.' But it happens here, it is a crime, and if we work together, we can make a difference. (Elise)

Almost every participant described an education or awareness-centered approach to how they used persuasive messages in their campaigns. Even organizations that felt that education was not necessarily an aspect of persuasion spoke of how educational messages are more important to how their organization operates:

I can't say we use anything specific to try and draw people in. Everything that we're doing is very evidence-based and it's all educational-based. (Mary)

Only Joan described no use of education-centered messages, but specifically spoke of the light they try to create alongside their campaign messages:

Our persuasion emphasis is really that we want to create a positive message because people hear enough about the darkness of trafficking and that darkness can either lead you on, or it brings you to a halt. (Joan)

While education-centered messages seem to work very well for some organizations, this "light-centered" approach works particularly well for Joan's organization because its focus is on empowerment and helping victims get back on their feet, rather than reminding them of the darkness they have already witnessed. Although this is counter to the relevant literature, this does seem to be an effective tactic.

**Public Perception.** The final category to be taken into consideration when designing messages according to the AHNTP participants is that of public perception.



Each organization has the potential to better or worsen its public image with the creation and implementation of each new campaign message, and therefore public perception is a constant concern for many of these AHTNPs. This concern influences the design of the messages they create. Some approach this concern by constantly reminding the public of the progress they have made over the years, thus reinforcing the ideas that the organization is credible, trustworthy and worth the time of the audience: “It’s necessary to show the impact that we have made and what more could be done.”

Other organizations take a more laissez-faire approach to how the public might view them, describing their messages as simply “trying to keep people informed.” Whether or not the public or government entities perceives their messages to be good or bad does not seem to be the main concern of these organizations, which, considering their educational messages may be the best approach for them at this time.

Only one organization, represented by Sally, tries constantly to appeal to its audience by crafting messages showing they are expanding with the times, thus incorporating social media and slogans to reflect their current standpoints: “We expand with the times and with the legislation.”

In summary, how an AHTNP designs their messages has four additional factors other than those already discussed from research question one: team effort, target audience, persuasion tactics and public perception. Many of the organizations take an education-centered approach to the persuasive tactics used in the creation of their messages, but only a handful seem to be concerned with public perception. Each organization interviewed works in small teams, but the messages they disseminate are not always created by the organizations themselves. All organizational members felt that, for

these factors, they are extremely successful in their efforts. No organization seemed to recognize that even though the messages it was creating were educational in nature, persuasion tactics were still being used.

### **RQ 3: What is the objective of this Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit?**

The goal of this question is to identify the goals of each AHTNP based on their mission statements of ideological values. The asking of this question coincides with understanding both the mission statement of each organization, and how each organization was classified based on the three AHTNP classification options: government-oriented, abolitionist, or labor-based. Through thematic analysis, two main categories emerged: post-rescue victim services and education and awareness.

**Post-Rescue Victim Services.** The first category to be taken into consideration in regards to the mission of the various AHTNPs is that of post-rescue victim services. Seven of the eight organizations interviewed maintained the position of “we are not a frontline service provider.” This means that the organizations provide no direct services to victims once they have been rescued, but instead partner with other organizations to provide these services:

We work with service providers and a network of service providers, they can speak to what is on the ground. (Jane)

These organizations partner with shelters, faith-based organizations, medical services and educational services in the hope they will provide the necessary services for victims once rescued. The desire of these organizations is to help victims get to a level of normality in their lives they had hopefully experienced at some point prior to being trafficked. These organizations rarely have direct contact with victims, but instead use

law enforcement officials or specialists to bring victims to these service providers once they are rescued:

Well one of the things to realize is that not one agency can take on all of the tangible and intangible needs of the victim. So what we do is form partnerships with other organizations that provide different services. So some of the services that victims receive are in house, and then there are other services that we refer our clients to our partner agencies or sometimes we'll have dentists and doctors or mental health counselors who will do work pro-bono. So we've kind of established a group of providers that can definitely assist in providing, again, some of the tangible and intangible needs of victims, or any form of human trafficking needs or may need that we ourselves would not be able to provide.

(Mary)

The only organization that was interviewed that provides a form of direct services for victims provides these services in the form of vocational training and education opportunities. This organization maintains contact with victims in its post-rescue shelters through the use of 'house parents.' These 'house parents' relay to the AHTNP how each victim is adjusting and what he or she needs. The organization is then able to provide them with direct service opportunities to help better themselves and their situation offering a full recovery:

We partner with advocate shelters; We have several really major shelters that we work with and with some small one and we do education sponsorship for children who are young enough to go to school and would still be able to grow in school and have it not be traumatic for them. We recruit people to provide education

sponsorship, and we work with several different orphanages and shelters that work with those younger kids, and we work with some other after care shelters that have probably ages 13 and older, and then we will work with students to provide them with vocational training. (Joan)

**Education and Awareness.** The next category that aligns with the mission and values of the AHTNPs is that of education and awareness. While the spreading of education and awareness from each organization was covered in the questions regarding message creation, when discussing organizational goals, this theme reemerged. It is the belief of each organizational member that there is not enough education and awareness about human trafficking at this time. One organization in particular detailed the need for incentives to be placed onto businesses and larger organizations in order to halt their labor trafficking usage. The participant from this organization, Elise, also highlighted the notion that often larger organizations and businesses have no idea their smaller operations and partners use labor trafficking, or maintain an ignorance of the situation. Therefore the use of incentives established from a multi-governmental source could help to curb the use of labor trafficking.

Some organizations choose not to focus on the trauma victims went through, but rather on the positive advances they have made since their rescue, and use those positive advances as a means to spread awareness and education:

We don't spend a lot of time talking about the exploitation but more about how people have risen out of the trauma that they've had and the human rights abuses that they've suffered to kind of create their own future. And for their futures, we give them the skills to design their own futures. (Joan)

The organization represented by Sarah, as previously mentioned, took an entirely new approach to spreading education and awareness about human trafficking by asking former victims to step forward and run training and awareness programs. The notion behind this is if victims are able to recount their stories and show others what to look for in a situation with potentially trafficked persons, they will have a better understanding of the situation and how to handle it. Sarah has also described the use of victims for these awareness raising programs and training opportunities as helpful for victims because they are working to ensure what happened to them never happens to anyone else.

In summary, the categories of post-rescue victim services and education and awareness were found to be the most important thing each AHTNP is trying to accomplish. While each organization approaches these concepts differently, the sentiment remains the same. Each organization believes widespread education and awareness regarding human trafficking will significantly reduce the problem across the world, along with the use of functional and readily available post-rescue services for victims. The AHTNPs that were interviewed all believed these were contributing factors to the overall success of the life of the victim post rescue, as well to the success of their organizations.

**RQ 4: What is the intended outcome as an Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit?**

The goal of this question was to identify the intended outcome of AHTNP. This is established through questioning what each organization wants, what it is trying to provide, and what it hopes to receive in reciprocation from their work. While the third research question looks at the mission and values of each organization, this question looks specifically at the concrete goals of each AHTNP. In essence, if each AHTNP had unlimited resources in an ideal world, what would that look like? The asking of this

question coincides with understanding how each organization functions and what it desires, and three familiar categories emerged: governmental support, raising awareness, and professional training programs.

**Governmental Support.** The first category taken into consideration in terms of concrete goals for each AHTNP was that of government support. Governmental support for AHTNPs can be established and maintained in many different ways, but according to the organizations interviewed, the government is almost always never doing enough to stop human trafficking. Two areas of governmental support were deemed as most important according to each organization: funding and the enforcement of laws. There is money available to organizations, but each organizations have to fight one another for the funding. There are laws in place to stop human trafficking, like the TVPRA/TVPA, but again these are not consistently enforced according to these organizations.

**Funding.** Overwhelmingly, the first response from each organization when asked what they wanted most was funding from the government:

We need the funding, we need more research and we need to target children, we need to let them know that this is an evil that exists and we need to bring them the message that is at their age level. (Sam)

Sally, who works specifically for allocated funding to be sent to other AHTNPs, and not just for her own organization own, said:

We advocate for money to go to anti trafficking government programs but we never advocate for money to be taken from one cause and given to “ours.” We always advocate for new money and additional funds to resource the federal agencies that we work with. (Sally)

Each organization maintained the position that the resources supposedly available from governmental sources would be the single most important factor contributing to the overall success of the organization. The problem is that they feel they are being denied these funding opportunities from governmental sources due to competition from other organizations. The way around the competition is for each organization to establish itself as the prominent anti-trafficking organization, able to provide for victims on every level while simultaneously combating trafficking around the world. The problem is, each organization needs funding to be able to prove to governmental agencies that it meets these standards in order to receive funding, and the cycle continues from there.

**The Enforcement of Existing Laws.** While there are laws in place around the world designed to protect victims of human trafficking and end human trafficking, they are rarely taken seriously according to the participants of this study. Two of the international organizations chose to focus on what the UN could do, instead of just the governmental systems:

The UN has their millennium goals, and those are great, and they're empowering women and they're reducing trafficking but we find there's still a lot of people that turn their heads to trafficking and the legal departments and the law enforcement issues and things like that and I think we just really need to get an international focus on law enforcement. That would be my own personal opinion, I don't know if that's the opinion of our organization. (Joe)

The second organization's participant, Jane, spoke of the UN and commended the UN for its definition of human trafficking due to the broad nature in comparison to the definition provided by the U.S. Jane, at the same time, was also disappointed in the UN

because that larger definition meant that there were more people who could be helped, but seemingly less was being done.

Many of the organizations were in agreement that the need for more enforceable laws was one of the factors that contributed most to how human trafficking is viewed on an international level, but maintained the position that enforceable laws were also potentially harmful for victims:

We want to see increased prosecutions, but we don't want to see increased prosecutions at the expense of the victims. And often what happens when you increase prosecutions is you actually place victims more at risk because police go in and often times criminalize victims of trafficking. (Mary)

Sarah claimed the reason police often criminalize victims is the lack of enforcement of the laws against human trafficking. This participant felt due to the nature of the laws already in place and the lack of desire on the part of each enforcement agency to really take charge of the issue, that the global community would never take it seriously:

So when you're working with police, when you're working with larger institutions, it can be a frustrating process attempting to change things because on the surface, hearing professionals say 'we're very much in tune to the issue and very much interested in protecting people' but in practice there's a big gap between those two fields, so the expectation is that there will be action once somebody has said something won't always match or is not always matched by their words. (Sarah)



Two organizations, however, remained relatively positive in their approach to how the enforcement of laws was being conducted regarding human trafficking:

There's a whole wide variety of groups that come together. And actually its their working together that is making a difference in terms of meeting needs that we can't meet alone, but if they work together, they can. (Elise)

Sally remained positive due to the nature of the organization itself. Her organization works closely with politicians on a regular basis, and considers themselves to be on the 'front lines' of the battle with enforceable legislation. They consider each semantic argument with lawmakers to be a win, and contribute those wins to their overall success:

We try to get bipartisan support to help with legislation and to reduce the politicization of human trafficking. (Sally)

**Raising Awareness.** The next category to be taken into consideration in terms of concrete goals per AHTNP is that of awareness raising. Each organization maintains the position that regardless of the situation, more can always be done to help victims and combat human trafficking. Raising awareness is the number one factor each organization sees as their intended outcome:

Of course there's always more that we could do. We're focused on a global situation and how it manifests itself in one county. We do a really good job of effecting change but simply affecting change in does not stop the root causes of human trafficking, it does not stop the root causes of inequality, of gender inequality, etc. So we could definitely do a lot more of that, and working across

social protection organizations, development organizations, coming up with ways to actually develop that anti-trafficking approach globally. (Joe)

While each organization approaches raising awareness differently, it is the single common denominator across the board. Each AHTNP maintains the position that the more awareness is raised, the more AHTNPs will be valued, understood and supported. They hope that this will lead to their specific means of success over time, and that it will increase exponentially.

**Professional Training Programs.** The final category to be taken into consideration in terms of concrete goals per AHTNP is that of the use and development of professional training programs. While the desire to have professional training programs is not maintained by every organization in this study, it was maintained by the majority of the organizations. Some organizations, created their own training programs from the knowledge provided by former victims of human trafficking, and some sponsor training programs for service providers and professionals:

Our major role has really been to keep the momentum going and also making sure that training and awareness is going on within all professional fields, as well as within the community. We've been mostly focusing on professionals like DCF, law enforcement, different service providers that already have the capability to give service for domestic violence and sexual exploitation and then helping them move forward and develop a wider program to better accommodate the needs of the trafficking victims. (Elise)

The organization represented by Sarah focuses on the training of the "everyday hero," while another focuses on the training of medical professionals to be able to spot

the signs of abuse for a potential victim of human trafficking. While each training program approaches human trafficking differently, each provides the knowledge necessary to help a victim if needed. The intended outcome of these training programs is to help as many victims as possible and get them to the services available to them for assistance.

In summary, the majority of the factors that fall under the category of intended outcome per organization are aligned. Each organization agreed the factors of success in regard to intended outcome include: government support, raising awareness, and most but not all, agreed on professional training programs. While it is clear the missions of each AHTNP interviewed and its individual approaches to human trafficking as whole are different, the fact that there are aspects on which they can agree says something to their willingness and desire to end human trafficking once and for all.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter analyzes the themes and categories that emerged from the interviews with the eight AHTNPs. Two of the research questions looked at message creation and design, while two research questions focused on the perceptions of success and organizational effectiveness. While the organizations differ in how they operate, approach victims, create messages and use the resources available to them, the notion that there can be crossover in how they operate should be taken as a sign of effectiveness. If each organization can agree that there are certain fundamental aspects to combating human trafficking, then there is hope that one day these organizations will stop fighting each other for resources and work together to end the problem. The perception of each organization by the members of the organization is important in comparison to how the

organization is viewed publicly, and the more positive that perception can be through the use of messages, enforceable laws and victim assistance opportunities, the more effective each organization will seem to the public, thus gaining more support.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

In this great land of the free we call it human trafficking. And so long as we don't partake in the luxury, ignoring slavery is of no consequence. It is much easier to look away and ignore the victims. The person who ignores slavery justifies it by quickly deducting [sic] the victim is a willing participant hampered by misfortune. -D'Andre Lampkin

The primary objective of this study was to explore the critical factors that played a role in the perceived effectiveness of anti-human trafficking Non-Profits from the perspective of those who work for those organizations, and how those organizations communicated with their audiences. The work is focused on the role communication has had internally and with their intended audiences in order to determine the perceived effectiveness each organization feels they have had in regard to their anti-trafficking efforts. Communication plays a vital role in anti-trafficking efforts for both the public and the victims themselves. This study has the potential to assist dozens of anti-human trafficking organizations around the world.

Due to the need for personal perceptions as a critical component of this research, it was necessary to conduct one-on-one interviews to obtain the study data. Originally 82 organizations were contacted, but only eight were available for interview. Through the

interview process, I was able to understand the mission and values of each organization, and how it works every day to end human trafficking. The use of interviews in my qualitative research allowed for the depth of responses that was vital to understanding this work. While no two AHTNPs are alike, they are all working toward the same goal of ending human trafficking. I will begin this chapter by providing personal and in-depth interpretations to the research questions and the responses that were given through interview. I will then discuss the limitations of this study, and finally the possibilities for future research.

### **Discussion of Research Questions**

The results discussed in the previous chapter appear to be inconsistent with the literature. The literature discussed in this study maintains that AHTNPs both design and disseminate their messages in the previously mentioned fashions, and is inclusive of persuasion tactics like the use of fear appeal, sex appeal and a call-to-action. However, the findings pose serious inconsistencies with the literature.

The content analysis of the websites in comparison with the literature review is an example to display the inconsistencies regarding the messages designed by these organizations. Most of the organizations had on their website messages using fear or sex appeal, which is consistent with the literature, but maintained the opinion that their messages were solely regarding education and awareness, which is inconsistent with the literature. Each organization maintains the stance that their messages were purely intended for educational purposes, but the reality of their messages is very different. These were not the only inconsistencies found between the literature, and the opinions of

those who participated in this study as representatives of their specific AHTNPs. The rest of this chapter will discuss other themes that emerged as a result of this study.

### **Design of Anti-Human Trafficking Messages**

In response to research question one, the participants recounted the ideas of the elements of content to be the use (or lack) of a slogan, educational messages, and the role of social media tactics as vital components to the messages being created. While some organizations found the use of a slogan to be vital, others did not, but all still perceived their organizational efforts to be effective and successful. Each organization displayed the desire to constantly be disseminating messages that raise awareness about the problems associated with human trafficking, though each approached this in a different fashion. The contradiction here is that many of the organizations want to display new and relevant information regarding human trafficking, though most go through no processes to create this new information. A handful of organizations wished to be able to have access to research being done in regard to human trafficking in order to disseminate the most accurate information, but almost none of these organizations go through the research process themselves, or attempt to contact outlets where the research has already been conducted.

While this study focused on the Elaboration Likelihood Model and the methods of persuasion that could be used to change attitudes in large audiences, only one organization based the creation and dissemination of their messages on any theoretical framework. The organization represented by Joe did have this structure already in place has been able to enact more large-scale change in a single area than any other of the organizations I had the opportunity to interview due to their ability to create and send out

effective messages targeted at select audiences. While this organization has been successful with the use of a theoretical framework called “Theory of Change” in order to persuade their audience to take action against human trafficking, I do believe that the use of ELM for the other organizations with the creation and dissemination of their messages would be beneficial.

The role social media plays in each organization was the rather shocking aspect of this study. While each organization maintains at least a Facebook page as a social media outlet, the majority of the organizations had the same general response of inconsistent usage on social media accounts. Understanding the role social media has in society today is vital to reaching audiences of all ages successfully (Waters, Burnett, Lamm, & Lucas, 2009). Not only is the use of a consistently updated social media platform the fastest way to disseminate a message to a larger audience, but the use of social media itself is free (Lovejoy & Saxon, 2012). Almost every organization interviewed displayed concern for spending money or receiving funding, yet they all seem to neglect the fact that use of social media is the fastest, and most cost-effective, way to reach a larger and constantly new audience on a daily basis.

Not only was social media an overlooked phenomenon for the design of message, but other channels of message dissemination were overlooked as well. When asked about the overall message being created, not one organization referred to their methods of message dissemination being anything other than electronically mediated. No participant discussed the use of flyers, hanging posters in public places, information through the mail or even having volunteers go door-to-door to spread awareness. The lack of this area of discussion led the researcher to believe these are not tactics used in message



dissemination. There seemed to be no strategy for many of these organizations when it came to message dissemination.

While each organization feels that what it was doing as far as message creation has been successful thus far, the choice of information channel has to be taken into consideration. If, for example, an organization has chosen the target audience of 50-75 year old adults, the use of social media should not be the only channel used to disseminate that organization's information. Channel use, the information presented in the message and the persuasion tactics all need to be taken into consideration when shaping these messages, which does not seem to be the common theme at this time. A theoretical framework, like that of ELM, would help these organizations pay greater attention to these concepts and further the success of each organization. The use of different message styles, like that of flyers and posters and not just social media use, combined with different dissemination techniques has a greater likelihood of attitude change through either the central or peripheral route than one style of message used with one dissemination tactic.

### **Crafting and Designing Anti-Trafficking Non-Profit Messages by Members**

Research question two brought to light other factors in the creation and dissemination of a successful message from an AHTNP. The categories uncovered included the use (or lack of) a team effort, a target audience, persuasion tactics, and the perception by the public of the AHTNP after a message was disseminated.

After the interviews were analyzed and the categories for this research question implemented, I found the responses of the participants to be extremely inconsistent. The combined effort of a team, as well as the initial fear of how the public might react to a

message are well-thought concepts which deserve to be taken into consideration for every message. The responses from the participants regarding a target audience and persuasion tactics, however, were concerning. Four of the eight organizations interviewed had no specified target audience in mind when creating their messages, stating explicitly that they were sending their messages out to anyone who would listen.

Only two organizations had intended audiences in mind when creating and disseminating their messages, as participant Joe said: “You have to have a target audience in mind, you have to focus your messages...you can’t just send out a blast without having an intended audience in mind, that doesn’t work.” If participants are fully aware of who their target audience is at the time of message creation, and craft the message specifically to that audience, then they are more likely to change audience attitudes. Sending out messages to whoever might stumble upon them is rarely effective, especially in organizations dedicated to combating social issues (Cho, Schweickart, & Hasse, 2014).

Only one of the eight participants discussed using specific persuasion tactics as a means to change attitudes. This method has worked extremely well for this organization, and this organization is able to continue the work it has already done due to the success that it is able to display publicly. This organization has not single-handedly ended human trafficking, but they have helped pass laws in other countries that allow for the fair treatment of victims instead of their criminalization. They have created and provided new services for victims to help get them back on their feet, and they are working with and within governments around the world to stop the root causes of human trafficking.

The success this organization is able to display due to their methods of persuasion alone could be a model for other AHTNPs to follow. This organization uses rational

approaches in their arguments and is able to show for more success and effective change than organizations utilizing messages containing sex appeal to stop sex trafficking.

While only one organization discussed the use of persuasion tactics as attitude changing strategies, many of the organizations' websites said something different. As revealed from the content analysis, some of these organizations used pictures, information and running banners to create a relative mood for their websites. As three of these organizations used pictures of girls in chains on their website running banners, there is a dire inconsistency with these organizations claiming they are not using either a fear appeal or sex appeal message.

These inconsistencies reveal that these organizations often may not consider that what they say or do to may have a potential downside. If an organization is claiming to be afraid of public perception if they use of fear and sex appeal messages, yet plastering those messages on the running banner of their website, there is a wonder as to how these organizations view themselves and their actions. The content analysis of each website in comparison to what was said by each participant during their interview has proven to be contradictory. There is no strategy being implemented by most of these organizations, and therefore the need for a framework from which to work is necessary and apparent.

### **The Objective of Anti-Trafficking Non-Profits**

The third research question revealed responses in-line with the mission statements of each organization as noted from both the content analysis and the interviews. As a collective, each organization wished to spread education and awareness regarding human trafficking in efforts to stop it as a whole, as well as provide services for victims post-rescue in order to get them back on their feet. While each organization advocated help

and services to victims upon their impending rescue, only one of the eight organizations provided direct services for victims. Although it is not always possible for organizations to provide these direct services to victims due to resources and funding, the fact remains that the majority of these organizations lack the knowledge and resources to help victims once they have been rescued, and are therefore sending them to secondary organizations for assistance. As shown in the literature, the lack of proper services for victims once they have been rescued can be extremely detrimental to the process of recovery. A proper support system is the crucial factor that can either perpetuate the cycle of victimization or end the trauma per victim (Williams et al., 2010).

If an organization advocates assistance and help to victims, yet no employees of that organization have ever actually had contact with a victim, let alone provide direct services for them, it says something to the practice of the organization itself. Again, direct services are not always possible, but if it is possible, these services should be known and properly utilized. If direct services are not possible for an organization, it should have caseworkers to assist victims through the entire process of transitioning into a “normal life,” rather than dumping them at a shelter and claiming to have saved them.

Spreading education and awareness is a goal each organization is attempting to accomplish, specifically attempting to debunk the myths associated with human trafficking and combat it at the same time. Myths associated with human trafficking run rampant in our world, and education is vital to combating the problem. The following list is a compilation of the more common misconceptions regarding human trafficking:

1. Human trafficking requires crossing national or international borders.

2. The crime of trafficking in persons must involve moving victims from one location to another.
3. Trafficking only involves foreign nationals, not US citizens.
4. It is not illegal if a person consents to being trafficked.
5. You can consent to labor exploitation, domestic servitude or slave type of work.
6. If someone is paid, he or she cannot be a victim of human trafficking.
7. Sending victims home is the best solution for victim assistance/services (Xin, 2013, p. 66)

Many of the organizations interviewed are working toward debunking at least one, if not all of these myths every day. Spreading awareness about human trafficking is not enough. The public has to be able to truly understand the issue and the root causes in order to support an AHTNP and help them end human trafficking. The messages created by each AHNTNP are vital to spreading that awareness, as they are the first messages seen on the front lines making their way to their intended audiences. The problems are that for many of these organizations, there is no intended audience, the messages are crafted based on outdated information, and the information is disseminated through tired communication channels that are more likely to be ignored than noticed (Waters & Lo, 2012). To put it in layman's terms, many of these organizations do not practice what they preach, and they contradict themselves at every turn.

## **The Intended Outcome for Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profits**

The final research question revealed the commonalities between each of the organizations and what they hope to be able to accomplish in accordance with the aforementioned categories. The categories that emerged in reference to this research question were raising awareness, professional training programs and government support. Inside the category of government support were two subcategories of funding law enforcement.

While the organizations discussed the need for funding from government sources in order to expand their operations, not all of the organizations discussed the need for professional training programs to assist with victim identification and assistance. Each organization cited the need to reassess how the U.S. government approaches the enforcement of laws like the TVPRA/TVPA (Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act/Trafficking Victims Protection Act), but none of them discussed the process victims are forced to go through when trying to gain their government-promised T-Visa. Each organization once again cited the need for public awareness campaigns, but only one of them asks victims to step forward and lead the awareness campaigns and training programs so that professionals know what specifically to look for.

Surprisingly, only two of the organizations interviewed tried to fundraise for their organization, instead of relying on government resources. These organizations rely on corporate sponsors or personal donations, and in terms of funding, are doing rather well for themselves. Many of these organizations neglect to consider is that through the act of fundraising, awareness and education about human trafficking is simultaneously being spread alongside the fundraising efforts. Even something as simple as a bake sale

sponsored by an AHTNP has the potential to spread awareness, even on a small scale, to a larger community and raise money at the same time. If every effort counts, for both fundraising and awareness spreading, more organizations should partake.

### **Post Hoc Discussion**

While spreading awareness is vital to ending human trafficking, so is incorporating awareness into nursing, public health, and criminal justice programs. We can consider the laborious process of obtaining a T-Visa for a victim as an example: Lawyers need to be prepared to defend victims in court, and nurses need to recognize the physical abuse to which many victims are subject, providing victims with supporting evidence in court. Sometimes hoping awareness will spread like a wildfire is not enough; the curriculum needs to change as well. Victim care must be incorporated and available as a subject of study in schools if we can ever hope to end the root causes of human trafficking worldwide. Students should learn that human trafficking is a problem that can be solved, and they can do something about it.

How each organization views itself and communicates to its audiences is vital to its success. Each of the organizations interviewed has determined itself to be incredibly successful since its inception, but the inconsistencies with the approaches taken by each organization cannot be overlooked. As a whole, this tells us that these organizations believe that what they are doing is successful, and to a degree they are right, but they could be doing much more. If any of these inconsistencies were reduced for a single organization, and if they began to use a theoretical framework, like ELM, that makes them consider message channel, dissemination tactics and methods of persuasion, then these organizations would be so much more successful.

While it is uncommon for professional organizations to take academic theories into consideration when designing and disseminating messages, the analysis of ELM remains, to me, to be the best option for these organizations. ELM, when used properly, would help each of these organizations consider all of the facets of message creation and dissemination that they have so far been overlooking, as well as the proper channel to use per message created. The use of ELM could help when designing messages to specifically target either the central or peripheral route in order to persuade audience members to take action against human trafficking. It would also help these organizations put an end to the inconsistencies between what they believe they are doing and what their websites are actually saying. Even though academic theories are rarely taken into consideration by these types of organizations, understanding how a theory like ELM works could be a vital tool to the overall success of an organization. The organization for which participant Joe works uses an academic theory when designing their messages and has been very successful for its efforts. The use of ELM will not fix every organization so completely that human trafficking will end overnight, but it is a good starting point that should be taken into consideration.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The limitations of this study include the types of anti-trafficking organizations analyzed, the location of these organizations, the response rate of the organizations requested for interviews, the lack of persuasion analysis and the age of the organizations themselves.

The AHTNPs contacted and analyzed for this study were all Non-Profit; no government-based or government-oriented organizations were analyzed for this study.



This was due primarily to an inability to maintain contact with these organizations, and for no other reason. The AHTNPs used for this study were all based, or had headquarters in the United States. Organizations solely based in countries outside the United States were not contacted or analyzed. While determining the effectiveness of the messages disseminated by these AHTNPs, persuasion was not analyzed. Since each organization has both different means of persuasion, as well as different types of messages, the analysis of persuasive messages themselves were discussed with the participants of the study, but not examined.

While some of the AHTNPs analyzed for this study have been around for many years, many of these organizations are relatively new. Being that many organizations are new, not all of them have the history of success other organizations do. There is a multitude in the variations through which an AHTNP can be created, and to what it will fight for, or against. Each organization has a different mission, and even AHTNPs with similar missions will have different obstacles and goals. Research determining the effectiveness of these organizations themselves should be done longitudinally, and not taken at face value. The success of an AHTNP may take many years to build up, and that should always be taken into consideration. The messages disseminated by each organization are crucial to how the organization is viewed; however, it is entirely possible that an organization can disseminate meaningful and thought-provoking messages about human trafficking and still remain unworthy and ineffective in the eyes of the public

As previously mentioned, 82 AHTNP organizations were contacted for this study, but only eight agreed to an interview. This was, by far, the largest limitation presented in this study, as a larger amount of interviews would have been able to provide more

accurate results. While the results and information discovered through the analysis of this study was completed effectively, again, a larger amount of interviews from members of AHTNPs would have generated even greater results.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Each research question brought to light specific categories of information which could be analyzed more thoroughly to determine the effectiveness of an AHTNP and how, or it, if affects their communication with their intended audiences. Very little research has been done to the perception of the communication messages and the perceived effectiveness from the AHTNPs themselves, therefore a continuation of that line of research is another possible path.

While the researcher was conducting this study, one of the participants commented on the use of the word “victim” and how no employee of that organization was allowed to use the word “victim” when referring to formerly trafficked persons. This suggests a new research area regarding the use of the word “victim” as it relates to human trafficking, how this is communicated to victims once they have been rescued, how through the use of this word, people once rescued perceive themselves, and if that perception changes based on the word “victim.”

Another area that should be taken into consideration as an area of research is the retention of volunteers, which is considered one of the most difficult issues for an NPO. Most individuals who are targeted for a social issues marketing campaign are willing to volunteer at least once, but if their experience is not what they were expecting, or if there are other factors inhibiting their experience, they are less likely to volunteer for the same organization again, let alone to volunteer again (Herman & Renz, 2004; Studer &

Schnurbein, 2013). AHTNPs and NPOs alike mostly rely on a large volunteer base for events and campaigns. Thus, the degree to which a volunteer feels welcomed, appreciated, and managed, and to which the volunteer can personally identify with the values of one of these organizations, is crucial to volunteer retention.

If an NPO is to “be used effectively as a medium of change, those people who are to be changed and those who are to exert influence for change must have a strong sense of belonging to the same group” (Platow, Haslam, Reicher & Steffens, 2015, p. 23). Based on the definition of identification as “the process by which an individual claims oneness with or belongingness to a group” (Bisel, Ford, & Keyton, 2007, p. 138), the idea of “organizational identification” is recognized as a key determinant of employee morale and work behavior (Maneerat, Hale, & Singhal, 2003). Organizational identification is a vital aspect to the sense of belonging each member or volunteer desires to feel in order to continue working for an organization.

If volunteers of an NPO feel no sense of belonging to the organization, they are less likely to continue their affiliation. “Communication scholars argue that a person’s organizational affiliation provides him or her with an ‘organizational identity.’ By internalizing that identity, the individual gains a sense of meaning or connection, as well as a sense of status and prestige” (Maneerat, Hale, & Singhal, 2005, p. 189). Based on this classification, individuals who partake in organizational functions have the opportunity to draw positive implications in regard to their own self-image. “For example, if an individual claims her employment as a university teacher to be a positive and distinct membership, that individual will understand her own self-concept as being like a teacher from her university” (Bisel, Ford, & Keyton, 2007, p. 139).

When volunteers for an AHTNP or NPO are able to associate themselves positively with the organization, they increase the likelihood of the organization longevity. The image projected by the volunteers of the organization has been directly associated with the image the public holds of the organization itself (Witteborn, 2010). “Volunteerism remains crucial to the identity of nonprofit organizations as players in civil society” (Hoffman, 2011, p. 100). Research possibilities here include how volunteer retention affects an NPO and what specific NPOs do to keep their volunteer base.

My final recommendation for future research is to look specifically at organ trafficking and how AHTNPs are, can, or will be able to battle it in the future. Organ trafficking is the lesser-known side of human trafficking, but just as important as its counterparts: “This type of trafficking involves the transport of humans through threat, force, or other coercion, including payment, though most victims never receive any form of compensation” (Kelly, 2013, p. 1321). Organ traffickers often find their victims to be poor individuals who are desperate to make money for survival, and exploit them (Chen, 2014). The trading and selling of organs is prohibited worldwide and has been since 1987 when the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the trade is “inconsistent with the most basic human values and contravenes the Universal Declaration of Human Right” (Ambagtsheer, Zaitch, & Weimar, 2013, p. 4).

Organ trafficking has become a profitable enterprise, in league with arms, drugs and humans: “The international community recognizes organ trafficking as a human rights and public health concern. The underground organ trade constitutes ten percent of worldwide organ transplants, producing between \$600 million and \$1.2 billion in illicit revenue each year” (Kelly, 2013, p. 1319). A black market for organ trafficking was

founded to meet the overwhelming demand for healthy organs. Ambagtsheer, Zaitch, and Weimar (2013) showed that as of 2010, on average 10 people in the European Union die every day waiting for an organ transplant. In the United States at that time, 105,966 patients were waiting for an organ transplant, with the average wait time being anywhere from three to five years.

The overwhelming number of individuals on the donor waiting list only fuels the black market for organ trafficking. Victims of the trade can be willing participants who are desperate for money, can already be victims of human trafficking and have no choice in what happens to them, or can be drugged and kidnapped walking home in poor neighborhoods (Chen, 2014). Often surgeons do little to care for the victim once the organ is removed and leave health care to the already-in-pain victims. This results in the impeded ability to work, worsening the long-run financial and physical condition of the victim and forcing them to use the money they received for their organ to pay for health care costs. As a result, donors rarely succeed in paying off the very debts that often lead them to sell an organ in the first place (Ambagtsheer, Zaitch, & Weimar, 2013; Kelly, 2013). Future researchers could choose this as an area to explore in terms of how these victims communicate with the world, the identity they choose, and how both AHTNPs and NPOs alike are working to solve this worldwide issue.

### **Summary**

This qualitative research project focused on how AHTNPs communicate with their intended audiences through the creation and dissemination of messages, as well as how members of these AHTNPs perceive the effectiveness of their organizations. This avenue of research will hopefully further success for each of the organizations that I had

the pleasure of interviewing, as well as hopefully allow other organizations to join the conversation about what else can be done to become a more effective AHTNP, and end human trafficking once and for all. Human trafficking is a global and complicated issue, affecting facets of our daily lives, even when we do not see it.

How an AHTNP communicates with its intended audience is just as important as what is being said to that audience. Only a handful of the organizations used their social media accounts, claiming inefficient resources to maintain them properly, yet previous research claims that the use of social media in this day and age is a determining factor to the overall success of an organization. Two of the eight organizations had a specific target audience in mind, while, regardless of the use of a theoretical framework, the research states that no target audience when crafting and disseminating messages simply does not work. Every organization claimed to not use persuasion tactics that involved fear appeal, sex appeal, or a call-to-action, yet the websites of these organizations all disagree. The contradiction to what each organization is claiming they have done compared to what they are currently doing is astounding.

If the perception of the message about human trafficking by the audience is considered to be ineffective, then the effectiveness of the organization will decrease. If the perception of the organizations' effectiveness by the employees who work for it determine their efforts to be futile, then the way that organization communicates with their audiences will become lazy, and the effectiveness of the organization will decrease. The design of messages by each AHTNP needs to be thoroughly considered in every aspect prior to its dissemination. This includes not only what is being said in each message, but the channel being used for dissemination, and the persuasion tactics that go

into the message. A theory like that of the Elaboration Likelihood Model being used as a theoretical framework by any of these organizations will for the message creators to consider all of these aspects prior to message dissemination. The use of this can hopefully allow for furthered success in each organization. How these organizations communicate is the vital piece of the puzzle to the success or failure of each AHTNP, and if these organizations are unable to effectively communicate amongst themselves, let alone to their audiences, then their effectiveness as an organization will be minimal, if at all, and human trafficking will not end.

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## APPENDIX A

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Without providing any personal details regarding yourself or those you work with, why did you choose to become involved in Anti-Human Trafficking efforts?
2. What are your expectations of your Non-Profit Organization?
3. What is the mission of your Non-Profit Organization regarding Anti-Human Trafficking efforts?
4. What are you trying to accomplish?
5. Do you think the goals of your Non-Profit Organization are realistic?
6. Without providing any personal details regarding yourself or those you work with, can you tell me who creates the messages regarding Anti-Human Trafficking efforts?
7. Who is the target audience of the messages from your Non-Profit?
8. Why is this audience your target audience?
9. Do you feel that the messages your Non-Profit sends out regarding Anti-Human Trafficking efforts are effective?
10. What could be done to make those messages even more effective?
11. What kind of message are you crafting?
12. Why do you craft your messages in this particular way?
13. Do you feel as though you have made a positive impact in the lives of the victims you have helped?
14. How does your organization help victims after they have been rescued?
15. What do you feel would make your Non-Profit more successful?

## APPENDIX B

### PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

You have been invited to participate in a research study examining the effectiveness of messages distributed by Non-Profit organizations. You have been selected as a possible participant in this study because you are 18 years or older and you are an employee of an Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit Organization. I ask that you read this consent form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to participate in this study. Your responses will be protected and remain confidential. The following is a brief description of the project and your rights as a research participant.

#### **Purpose of this Study**

The purpose of this study is to determine the types, as well as effectiveness of messages disseminated by Anti-Human Trafficking Non-Profit Organizations, and the success of those messages.

#### **Procedures and Duration of Study**

Participants in this project will answer questions through an interview process. The interview will take approximately 15-45 minutes to complete and will be recorded. I will use aggregate data only in the research report in order to maintain confidentiality.

#### **Risks and Benefits of Participation in the Study**

There are no direct benefits of participating in this study for the participant other than the validation of the hard work being put in by the participant for the Non-Profit Organization. The possibility exists that a participant may become uncomfortable with some of the questions being asked, and should this occur, the participant is allowed to skip the specific questions or end the interview at any time without penalty. Each Non-Profit organization has taken measures to minimize the risks to their employees, as well as the PI and co-PI excluding names and job titles of those interviewed during the data collection process. The organizations that employ each participant will know about the interview and the topics of conversation that are to be discussed so that employment will never be at risk for the participant. What is said specifically in the interview will be confidential, and as no names will be recorded, the information given by the participant will be known by only the PI and the Co-PI.

#### **Voluntary Nature of the Study & Optional Recording**

Participation in this study is voluntary, and there is no penalty for not participating, skipping questions, or not completing the interview. The decision to participate (or not to participate) will not affect your current or future relations with Illinois State University.

Responses will remain confidential as records of this study will remain private. Only the principal and co-principal investigators will have access to the data. If you decide to participate, you are free not to answer questions you do not like, you have the option to not have your interview recorded, or you have the option to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. If you feel uncomfortable, you may skip questions or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

**Confidentiality**

Participation is voluntary, and there is no penalty for not participating or not completing the survey. Responses will remain confidential as records of this study will remain private. Only the principal and co-principal investigators will have access to the data.

**Contacts and Questions**

The primary investigator for this study is Dr. Lance Lippert. If you have any questions regarding the study you are encouraged to contact him by phone at (309) 438-7329 or by email at [llipper@ilstu.edu](mailto:llipper@ilstu.edu). If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant, you are encouraged to contact the Research Ethics and Compliance office at Illinois State University by phone at (309) 438-2520.

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. By clicking written agreement, you are consenting to the study.

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I have voluntarily agreed to participate in this study. I understand that I may withdraw my participation at any time.