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Examining Factors that Influence Reactions to Human Trafficking

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EXAMINING FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE REACTIONS TO HUMAN
TRAFFICKING

By

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TRAFFICKING

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ABSTRACT

Human trafficking involves the transportation or harboring of individuals under conditions of force or coercion for the purpose of exploitation. Trafficking is a worldwide issue, and involves millions of individuals who cross all gender, racial, and ethnic lines. Previous research has shown that individuals high on the constructs of belief in a just world and human trafficking myth acceptance attribute greater blame to victims than individuals low on these constructs. The results of the present study suggest that belief in a just world, ethical ideologies, and human trafficking myth acceptance are significant predictors of blame attributions toward victims of human trafficking. The results further suggest that belief in a just world and human trafficking myth acceptance are significant predictors of willingness to help victims when the cost associated with helping is high. Implications are discussed.

Keywords: trafficking, myth acceptance, just world, blame, helping

PREFACE

This thesis was designed for the purpose of investigating the relationship between individual beliefs and knowledge about human trafficking and subsequent reactions to trafficking. More specifically, the aim of this study was to determine how individual differences in belief in a just world, ethical ideologies, and human trafficking myth acceptance predict outcomes of victim blame and willingness to help victims of trafficking. In addition, this study sought to determine how victim characteristics, such as victim age and gender, and situational characteristics, such as the type of trafficking, affect the same outcomes of victim blame and willingness to help. The literature review that follows provides an overview of the nature of trafficking itself before delving into the constructs examined: belief in a just world, human trafficking myth acceptance, ethical beliefs, victim characteristics, situational characteristics, victim blame, and willingness to help.

For ethical reasons and due to time constraints, seeking out survivors of trafficking for interviews or survey research was outside the scope of the present study. Rather, this study used a convenience sample of college students as a means to understand how individuals may react to victims and survivors of trafficking. In addition, for the purposes of this study, it is noted that helping behaviors refer to typical prosocial behaviors rather than professional, mental-health services. This research provides information that can be useful in implementing more effective outreach

strategies and better educating professionals who may interact with survivors of

trafficking. This research can also be useful in educating the public, who may fail to

realize how their beliefs may be affecting trafficked individuals.

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TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is not a new social issue. The topic of human trafficking, however, has become an increasingly popular area of investigation within the past few decades. Anti-trafficking organizations have spread awareness of the issue by disseminating information through social media and community outreach programs and by partnering with government agencies (Davy, 2016). Victims of human trafficking are enslaved through various means of deception or threat. Their identification and passports are usually confiscated, and they are subjected to forced labor for little or no pay. Victims often live under humiliating and inhumane conditions, and may experience psychological abuse as well as physical or sexual assault (Davy, 2016; Weitzer, 2014). The appalling treatment that trafficking victims are forced to endure often results in long-term physical and mental health complications. More specifically, trafficking survivors often report experiencing clinical depression and anxiety (Tsutsumi, Izutsu, Poudyal, Kato, & Marui, 2008). HIV infections and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) diagnoses are common amongst survivors. These physical and mental health consequences are not only distressing, but they are often fatal. A large percentage of victims commit suicide, become addicted to various substances, or are murdered by their traffickers (Kara, 2009; Silver, Karakurt, & Boysen, 2015; Waugh, 2006). According to the United Nations (UN), human trafficking is defined as

Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means

of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of

deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving

or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having

control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. (2005, p. 42)

Despite attempts to clearly define and grasp the scope of human trafficking, many

misconceptions remain in regard to the specific nature of tactics used in human

trafficking, how many and what types of victims are affected, and where trafficking

occurs. This is problematic, because research has shown that misconceptions about

human trafficking lead to difficulty identifying victims (Cunningham & Cromer, 2016).

Moreover, increasing misconceptions about victims may limit our ability to help these

victims (Farrell & Pfeffer, 2014). Therefore, because human trafficking represents such a

pressing societal/global issue, and because the crimes committed against victims of

human trafficking are so heinous in nature, it is important to develop and conduct more

extensive research in this area.

The two most common forms of human trafficking include human trafficking as

sexual exploitation and human trafficking as forced labor (Honeyman, Stukas, &

Marques, 2016). Sex trafficking is defined as the "recruitment, harboring, transportation,

provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act" (S. Rep. No.

106-386, 2000, p. 1470). Forced prostitution represents the greatest percentage of the

human trafficking as sexual exploitation population, with a majority of victims being

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women from Europe, Central Asia, and North and South America (Honeyman, et al., 2016; Tripp & McMahon-Howard, 2015). Human trafficking as forced labor, comparatively, is the "recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery" (S. Rep. No. 106-386, 2000, p. 1470). While human trafficking as sexual exploitation seems to be the primary focus of most outreach and awareness programs, less emphasis has been placed upon labor trafficking (Weitzer, 2014). However, labor trafficking represents a major portion of the trafficked population, as the combined demands placed on the agriculture, manufacturing, fishing, mining, and domestic service industries create a subsequent 'market' for cheap labor. In contrast to human trafficking as sexual exploitation, the majority of victims of human trafficking as forced labor are men from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia (Honeyman, et al., 2016).

It is noted that most research on traffickers revolves around those involved with human trafficking as sexual exploitation. Reid (2016) evaluated the different scripts that sex traffickers (i.e., pimps or johns) used to recruit and retain adolescent girls as sex slaves. Of the sample, many victims reported being deceived or coerced through flattery, extravagant gifts, faux relationships and trust, the normalization of sex, isolation, forced drug use, or a combination of these. Once enmeshed within the culture of trafficking, victims were kept from escaping through blackmail, pregnancy, isolation, threats and intimidation, monetary dependency, and sexual and physical assault. Traffickers impose

similar conditions on their victims as perpetrators of intimate partner violence, where victims are isolated, controlled, and battered (Reid, 2016). Reid's (2016) sample reported 67% of traffickers as male, ranging in age from 15 to 45 years-old.

Labor traffickers capitalize on so-called "push" factors, such as war, corruption, poverty, and starvation, which force individuals out of their home countries, by promising the illusion of a better future for these individuals and their families (Davy, 2016). Labor traffickers take advantage of social media in order to post employment opportunities where their motives for hiring laborers are unknown by potential victims (Owens et al., 2014). During the recruitment process, fees and debts are introduced which are used to coerce individuals to continue working under unfair conditions. Owens and colleagues (2014) found that these labor traffickers typically were employed by third-party companies originating from the victim's own country.

Because trafficking victims are a hidden population, there are limited methods which exist to assess or obtain accurate prevalence rates. A large portion of the literature relies on anecdotal evidence or statistics from government agencies and organizations (Zhang, 2012). The International Labor Organization (ILO) reported as many as 12.3 million trafficking victims in 2005, 21 million victims in 2012, and 40.3 million victims in 2016 (ILO, 2005; ILO, 2012; ILO, 2017). The U.S. Department of State further reported that trafficking victims account for 18% of the world's population (2010). Although these figures are startling, it has been pointed out that the ILO and the U.S. Department of State have provided no evidentiary basis for their statistics (Zhang, 2012).

Therefore, it is important to be critical consumers of these estimated prevalence rates, keeping in mind that our perceptions of victims may be limited. It also should be noted that much of the research conducted on trafficking has taken place in the United States. As international attitudes towards trafficking (including policies) may differ from attitudes in the United States, it is important to take into consideration that studies conducted elsewhere may yield different results compared to studies conducted in the U.S.

Human Trafficking Myth Acceptance

Although combatting the issue is the goal of most agencies and organizations involved in the detection and elimination of human trafficking, the lack of consensus among existing findings may have engendered negative consequences. Cunningham and Cromer (2016) were the first to create a measure of human trafficking myth acceptance and examined the relationship between false beliefs about human trafficking and perceptions of trafficking victims. Their results showed that greater human trafficking myth acceptance was associated with greater victim blame as well as greater skepticism of a victim portrayal. Although levels of victim blame were generally low, approximately one-third of the sample blamed the portrayed victim to some degree. Greater myth acceptance may make identifying actual victims of human trafficking more difficult, such that incorrect information about the true nature of trafficking distracts law enforcement officers, thereby impeding justice proceedings (Cunningham & Cromer, 2016). Moreover, Farrell and Pfeffer (2014) reported that police forces may place a low priority

on trafficking when they and community members are confused about the nature of the crime and/or the characteristics of victims. It is therefore likely that acceptance of myths about human trafficking may be interfering with individuals' willingness or ability to help victims. No research has examined the relationship between human trafficking myth acceptance and willingness to help victims of human trafficking to date. In fact, very little research has examined prosocial behaviors within the context of human trafficking. Honeyman and colleagues (2016), however, found that factors such as efficacy of help (i.e., the degree to which the helpful behavior is successful and/or leads to a desirable result), the cost of help, and certain emotional reactions including empathy, played a role in participants' expressed willingness to help combat the issue.

Belief in a Just World

As described, Cunningham and Cromer (2016) found that increased human trafficking myth acceptance was associated with greater victim blame. The just world theory may explain why certain individuals attribute blame to victims of sexual assault, and may also apply to victims of other crimes such as theft or physical assault, and in this case, human trafficking. Lerner (1980) was the first to propose the concept of belief in a just world as an attributional process. Individuals who believe in a just world basically perceive the world as a fair place in which good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad people. In other words, people get what they deserve (Landström, Strömwall, & Alfredsson, 2016; Lipkus, 1999). When something as heinous as a sexual assault occurs, individuals attempt to justify the event, and in doing so, may attribute

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blame to the victim. This process reinforces the belief that the world is a fair place, and that because the world is a fair place, sexual assault could not happen to a good person, such as the individual himself. Research supporting the link between belief in a just world and victim blame is extensive (Dalbert, 2009; Landström et al., 2016; Lipkus, 1999; Strömwall, Alfredsson, & Landström, 2013).

Within the past few decades, researchers have begun examining the negative effects that victim blame has on victims. Often, victims must not only endure the distress of the event itself, they must also endure secondary victimization, defined as the "unresponsive treatment" and "victim-blaming behaviors and practices…which further the [traumatic] event, resulting in additional stress and trauma for victims" (Campbell & Raja, 1999, p. 262; Landström et al., 2016; Williams, 1984). Although the exact relationship between belief in a just world and helping behaviors within the context of human trafficking has not been determined, Campbell and Raja (1999) reported that some legal and medical professionals display victim-blaming attitudes and provide "unresponsive treatment," resulting in a detriment to mental health and the secondary victimization of sexual assault victims (p. 262).

Belief in a just world arguably has some relationship with ethical decision-making. According to Jost and Hunyady (2005), belief in a just world acts as one of many different system-justifying ideologies. That is, belief in a just world is one avenue through which individuals justify existing social norms and mores. Forsyth (1980) discusses two factors implicated in moral decision making: relativism and idealism.

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Individuals who display greater levels of relativism tend to reject absolute or universal laws during ethical decision-making. Comparatively, individuals who are highly idealistic feel that, in every instance, the most desirable outcome is possible if the correct choice is made. To date, little research has examined the relationship between ethical beliefs and belief in a just world. Because human trafficking obviously represents an unethical situation, it is important to determine how ethical beliefs are related to belief in a just world, and how these two variables affect attributions of blame to victims of trafficking.

Characteristics of Victims

A large body of research examines the role that gender plays in the attribution of blame toward victims of sexual assault. Research supports that female victims are often blamed for their own sexual assault (Bell, Kuriloff, & Lottes, 1994; Glaser & Frosh, 1993; Howard, 1984). However, research examining attributions of blame to both male and female victims finds that male victims are frequently blamed more than female victims (Burczyk & Standing, 1989; Rye, Greatrix, & Enright, 2006; Whatley & Riggio, 1993). One reason for this may be the conflict between the event and the societal stereotype that men should be strong and able to defend themselves (Back & Lips, 1998). Research has not yet examined the extent to which these results generalize to human trafficking. More specifically, it is still unclear whether the gender of a trafficked victim is a factor in the blame attribution process.

Victim age also plays a role in attributing blame to victims of sexual assault. Strömwall and colleagues (2013) investigated whether participants would attribute more blame to a young adult or a middle-aged adult. Their results showed an interaction effect, so that female, middle-aged victims were assigned more blame compared to younger female victims, and younger male victims were assigned more blame compared to middle-aged males. These results are interesting, as older victims have typically been ascribed more blame than younger victims (Kalichman, 1992; Maynard & Weiderman, 1997; Wagner, Aucoin, & Johnson, 1993). Likewise, Back and Lips (1998) investigated the role of age in attribution of blame in cases of child sexual assault, precisely in children aged 6 and 13 years old. Although the overall level of blame was low, 13 year-old children were blamed more than 6 year-olds. These results are likely to generalize to the human trafficking population, as the average age of entry for victims of human trafficking as sexual exploitation is 12 to 14 years-old for girls and 11 to 13 years-old for boys (Allen, 2010; Estes & Weiner, 2001). Children who are trafficked for labor purposes are recruited as early as 5 years old (U. S. Department of Labor, 2015).

Situational Variables

Several situational variables have been found to influence an observer's attribution of blame to a victim of sexual assault, some of which include whether the victim attempts to escape or actively resists (Davies & Rogers, 2006), knows the offender (Bell et al., 1994), is respectable (Luginbuhl & Mullin, 1981), or is provocative (Grubb & Harrower, 2009; Rye et al., 2006; Scroggs, 1976). Presently, it is unclear whether levels

of blame attributed to victims of human trafficking are affected by situational variables such as the type of trafficking. Honeyman and colleagues (2016) did however investigate the differences in participants' willingness to help victims of human trafficking depending on the type of trafficking with which the victim was associated. From their sample, participants considered human trafficking as sexual exploitation significantly more "serious, concerning, and important" than human trafficking as forced labor (p. 537). Moreover, participants endorsed more willingness to get involved if it were to help victims of human trafficking as sexual exploitation compared to victims of human trafficking as forced labor.

Another factor that influenced Honeyman and colleagues' (2016) sample was the perceived cost associated with helping, defined as the amount of effort expended to take action. Their results showed that participants were more willing to participate in activities to combat human trafficking that were associated with a low cost of helping. It should be noted, though, that Honeyman and colleagues (2016) conducted their study in Australia, so the degree to which their results generalize to American participants is still unclear.

Unaddressed Issues in the Current Literature

Literature on helping behaviors is plentiful, but research examining helping behaviors within the context of human trafficking is scarce. Currently, Honeyman et al. (2016) and Silver et al. (2015) provide the only known study examining this relationship. It is important to establish whether human trafficking represents a unique situation in which participants will be more or less likely to help victims depending on factors such

as victim age or victim gender. In addition, Cunningham and Cromer (2016) examined how endorsement of human trafficking myths influenced victim blame, but research has not yet examined whether human trafficking myth acceptance affects participants' willingness to help. Finally, research has shown that levels of attributed blame are affected by victim characteristics and situational variables. Yet, to date, there has been no research examining whether participants will be more likely to blame victims of one type of trafficking compared to the other.

Current Study

The purpose of the current study was to focus on the unaddressed issues in the literature on human trafficking by first examining how the gender and age of portrayed victims influence participants' willingness to help those victims. The current study also examined the effects of belief in a just world and human trafficking myth acceptance on participants' willingness to help. Second, this study examined the replicability and generalizability of the existing findings from the current literature, namely, the relationship between human trafficking myth acceptance and victim blame (Cunningham & Cromer, 2016) and the relationship between the type of trafficking and willingness to help (Honeyman et al., 2016). This study further examined the generalizability of the relationship between belief in a just world and victim blame, as well as the relationships between victim gender, victim age, and victim blame to the domain of human trafficking.

Hypotheses

      Hypothesis 1. Previous research supports the relationship between belief in a just world and victim blame, such that increased belief in a just world is associated with increased victim blame (Dalbert, 2009; Landström et al., 2016; Lipkus, 1999; Strömwall, Alfredsson, & Landström, 2013). Previous research also supports the relationship between human trafficking myth acceptance and victim blame, suggesting that increased human trafficking myth acceptance is associated with greater victim blame (Cunningham & Cromer, 2016). Finally, research has not yet established a solid relationship between belief in a just world and ethical decisions. However, it was expected that ethical ideals, such as idealism and relativism, would contribute unique variance to levels of victim blame. As such, Hypothesis 1 stated that belief in a just world, human trafficking myth acceptance, and ethical ideologies would uniquely contribute to the variance in victim blame.

      Hypothesis 2. Because greater belief in a just world and greater human trafficking myth acceptance would likely be associated with greater victim blame, it seemed reasonable that belief in a just world and human trafficking myth acceptance would also influence levels of willingness to help victims of human trafficking. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 stated that belief in a just world and human trafficking myth acceptance would uniquely contribute to the variance in willingness to help victims of human trafficking.

Hypothesis 3. Although female victims of sexual assault have frequently been found culpable for their own assault (Bell, Kuriloff, & Lottes, 1994; Glaser & Frosh, 1993; Howard, 1984), male victims of sexual assault are generally blamed to a higher degree when compared to female victims (Burczyk & Standing, 1989; Rye, Greatrix, & Enright, 2006; Whatley & Riggio, 1993). Because human trafficking is broad in the sense that it can include, but does not always include sexual assault, the current study aimed to determine whether the gender of a portrayed victim is a factor in the blame attribution process for victims of human trafficking. Hypothesis 3 stated that participants would be more likely to blame male victims of human trafficking compared to female victims of human trafficking.

Hypothesis 4. If participants attributed more blame to male victims of human trafficking as Hypothesis 3 assumed, then it seemed likely that they would also be less willing to help the portrayed male victim of human trafficking compared to the portrayed female victim. So, Hypothesis 4 stated that participants would be more willing to help female victims of human trafficking compared to male victims of human trafficking.

Hypothesis 5. Previous research has found that older victims are blamed to a higher degree than younger victims (Back & Lips, 1998; Kalichman, 1992; Maynard & Weiderman, 1997; Wagner, Aucoin, & Johnson, 1993). If this is the case for victims of human trafficking, then it was likely that participants would be more willing to help a younger victim of human trafficking compared to an older victim. Thus, Hypothesis 5

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stated that as victim age increased, participants' levels of willingness to help would decrease and participants' attributions of victim blame would increase.

Hypothesis 6. It was unclear whether the type of trafficking is a situational factor which influences individuals' attributions of blame to victims of human trafficking. However, the majority of victims of human trafficking as sexual exploitation are female and the majority of victims of human trafficking as forced labor are male (Honeyman et al., 2016; Tripp & McMahon-Howard, 2015). If Hypotheses 2 and 3 were supported, then it was likely that the type of trafficking with which each gender is generally associated may be a contributing factor in participants' attributions of blame. Therefore, Hypothesis 6 stated that participants would be more likely to blame victims of human trafficking as forced labor compared to victims of human trafficking as sexual exploitation.

Hypothesis 7. Honeyman and colleagues (2016) reported that, of their sample, participants were more willing to help victims of human trafficking as sexual exploitation compared to victims of human trafficking as forced labor. As such, Hypothesis 7 stated that participants would be more likely to help victims of human trafficking as sexual exploitation compared to victims of human trafficking as forced labor.

Method

Participants

Participants were undergraduate students recruited from the psychology department at Stephen F. Austin State University. Based on a power analysis with a power of 0.95 and a medium effect size of 0.06, the ideal number of participants was 230.

A total of 303 participants were recruited. Participants were generally representative of the student population at SFA (66.4% White; 20.1% Black; and 23% Hispanic). All participants were at least 18 years old ($M = 19.13$, $SD = 1.79$), and the majority of participants were female (80.2%). In exchange for participation, students received course credit.

Measures

Human Trafficking Myths Scale (HTMS). The HTMS is a 17-item scale composed of false statements about the nature of human trafficking (Cunningham & Cromer, 2016). The HTMS is designed to measure the degree to which participants endorse human trafficking myths. Fifteen of the items from the HTMS apply to both forms of human trafficking, and two of the items are specifically related to human trafficking as sexual exploitation. Cronbach's inter-item reliability scores were found to be good ($\alpha = 0.81$). Participants responded to each item to indicate the degree to which they believed each statement was true or false, on a scale from 1 (*definitely false*) to 6 (*definitely true*). An example item is "Human trafficking is another term for smuggling" (See Appendix B).

The Global Belief in a Just World Scale (GBJWS). Earlier studies have used the Multidimensional Belief in a Just World Scale designed by Rubin and Peplau (MBJWS; 1975) as a measure of belief in a just world. However, more recent studies have found inconsistencies in the reliability of the items (Lipkus, 1999; Rye et al., 2006; Whatley & Riggio, 1993). The GBJWS is a 7-item scale which measures global belief in a just world

and was designed to be more reliable than the MBJWS (Lipkus, 1999). For the present study, reliability was found to be good ($\alpha = 0.77$). Participants responded to indicate the degree to which they agree with each statement, on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). An example item is "I feel that people get what they deserve" (See Appendix C).

      The Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ). The Ethics Position Questionnaire is a 20-item scale established by Forsyth (1980). The EPQ is composed of two subscales designed to measure the degree to which participants endorse idealistic and relativistic ethical ideologies. Each item was rated on a scale from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 9 (*completely agree*). Cronbach's reliability analyses were good for both the idealism ($\alpha = 0.84$) and the relativism ($\alpha = 0.73$) subscales. An example item from the idealism subscale is "A person should make certain that his/her actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree." An example item from the relativism subscale is "Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends upon the circumstances surrounding the action" (See Appendix D).

      Vignettes. Participants were randomly assigned to one of eight vignettes adapted from those used by Cunningham and Cromer (2016). The vignettes depicted a scenario in which a child became a victim of human trafficking. The gender (male versus female) and age (6-years-old versus 13-years-old) of the child were manipulated along with the type of trafficking (sex trafficking versus labor trafficking). The ages 6 and 13 were chosen based on the study conducted by Back and Lips (1998). Moreover, these ages

correspond with the average ages at which children become victims of each type of

trafficking (Allen, 2010; U.S. Department of Labor, 2015). An example vignette is

Steven, a six-year-old male victim of human trafficking as forced labor:

> At 6 years of age, Steven ran away from home to get away from an abusive father.
>
> Within a couple of days, Steven was befriended by a man who said he would take
>
> care of Steven. Steven did some labor for him in exchange for shelter, food, and
>
> clothing. The man said he would keep Steven safe, but soon he moved Steven to a
>
> different state and began to force him to work for other people for money.

(See Appendix E).

Victim Blame Scale (VBS). The VBS is a four-item scale created by Strömwall

and colleagues (2013) as a measure of victim blame. Participants rated the extent to

which they felt the victim from the vignette was at fault for what happened to him/her on

a scale ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 100 (*completely*). For the VBS, inter-item reliability

was found to be very good ($\alpha = 0.91$). An example item is "To what extent do you think

that Steven can be blamed for the event?" (See Appendix F).

Activities to Combat Human Trafficking (ACHT). The ACHT is a 12-item scale

composed of actions that a person can perform to combat human trafficking (Honeyman

et al., 2016). Because of concerns of potential ceiling effects, we modified the ACHT to

include six items associated with high cost and six items associated with low cost of

helping. Reliability for both the high cost ($\alpha = 0.91$) and low cost ($\alpha = 0.87$) subscales

was found to be good. Participants responded to indicate their degree of willingness to

perform each action in order to help the victim from the vignette on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). An example item from the high cost subscale is "Attend a weekend-long conference focused on combatting human trafficking." An example item from the low cost subscale is "'Like' the Facebook page of an anti-trafficking organization" (See Appendix G).

      Attention Checks. In order to verify that participants were paying attention to the survey, an attention check was embedded in the survey after participants completed the HTMS, GBJWS, and EPQ, and then again after participants finished reading the vignette. The attention checks were adapted from Oppenheimer, Meyvis, and Davidenko (2009). For the attention check following the HTMS, GBJWS, and EPQ, participants saw a set of instructions and a corresponding question asking them to indicate the degree to which they enjoy exercising on a scale from 0 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). However, if participants read the instructions, they saw that they should type "I read the instructions" into the textbox below the question rather than responding to the item itself. The attention check following the vignette simply asked participants the name of the victim from the vignette (See Appendix H).

      Demographics. The demographics collected in the current study included participants' age, gender, race, and ethnicity. In addition, participants were asked to report what they believe to be the age, gender, race, and ethnicity of a typical victim of human trafficking. Finally, participants were asked to report whether they are a first-generation college student, whether they grew up in a rural or urban area, the degree to

which they are religious or spiritual, the degree of their awareness about the nature of

human trafficking, and the degree to which they are interested in the topic of human

trafficking (See Appendix J).

Procedure

Participants were recruited through Stephen F. Austin State University's SONA

Systems. Participants signed up for the current study in SONA and were subsequently

given a link to access the survey. The study was completed online through Qualtrics. To

control for potential order effects, half of participants completed the HTMS, GBJWS, and

EPQ after providing informed consent (See Appendix A). The HTMS, GBJWS, and EPQ

were randomly presented to each participant. Afterward, participants responded to the

first attention check. Then, participants were randomly assigned to read one of the eight

vignettes. After reading the vignette, participants responded to the second attention

check. Participants then completed the VBS and the ACHT, which were evenly

counterbalanced. After providing consent, the other half of participants first read the

vignettes and completed the VBS, ACHT, and corresponding attention check before

completing the HTMS, GBJWS, and EPQ. Finally, all participants responded to

demographic items and were debriefed (See Appendix K). At the conclusion of the

survey, participants were automatically given credit through SONA.

Results

Data Cleaning

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS statistical software. Before conducting data analysis, data were screened for missing responses, response sets, and attention check fails. Participants who reported being under the age of 18 or who did not provide informed consent were removed from analyses ($n = 10$). One additional participant was removed from analyses for completing only 31.5% of the survey and for failing both attention checks (McCabe, Mack, & Fleeson, 2012).

As previously mentioned, in order to control for potential order effects, half of the sample completed the GBJWS, the HTMS, and the EPQ before reading the vignette and completing the VBS and ACHT (Survey ABC). The other half of participants read the vignettes and completed the VBS and ACHT before the GBJWS, HTMS, and EPQ (Survey BCA). Independent samples t tests revealed no significant differences in responses to the VBS ($p = 0.45$), ACHT (high cost subscale, $p = 0.52$; low cost subscale, $p = 0.74$), GBJWS ($p = 0.57$), or the EPQ (idealism subscale, $p = 0.97$; relativism subscale, $p = 0.29$). There was a significant difference between surveys on the HTMS, $t(287) = 2.34$, $p < 0.05$. Participants in Survey BCA endorsed significantly fewer myths on the HTMS ($M = 2.44$, $SD = 0.62$) than participants in Survey ABC ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 0.63$). However, the practical significance of this difference was small. As such, the two separate surveys were consolidated into one dataset.

Due to a survey error, 4.86% of responses on the VBS were missing. The VBS was included as an outcome variable in Research Models 1 and 3. For these models, missing data was treated in a listwise fashion, meaning participants who did not respond to items on the VBS were excluded from analyses ($n = 14$). Finally, there were two missing responses on both the HTMS and the EPQ. For these responses, mean scores were inserted (Schafer & Graham, 2002).

Assumptions

To test the assumption of normality, histograms for each variable were produced. Each variable was within the bounds for skewness (ranging from -0.52 to 1.34) and kurtosis (ranging from -0.77 to 0.95), indicating the assumption of normality was met (Field, 2013). Scatterplots were produced and suggested linear associations between variables. The assumption of independence of errors was tested with the Durbin-Watson statistic. The values obtained (1.87 and 2.08) indicated that this assumption was met. Multicollinearity was assessed by checks of produced correlation matrices, as well as through variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance statistics. There were no Pearson correlation values greater than 0.9, each VIF statistic was less than 10 (ranging from 1.00 to 1.09), and each tolerance statistic was greater than 0.1 (ranging from 0.92 to 0.99). These results provide strong support for a lack of multicollinearity between variables (Bowerman & O'Connell, 1990; Field, 2013; Menard, 1995). The assumption of homoscedasticity was tested by a visual inspection of P-P Plots. A P-P Plot for the VBS indicated some heteroscedasticity, but according to Bray and Maxwell (1985), Pillai's

trace is robust to violations of homoscedasticity as long as the assumption of equality of

covariance matrices is met. Since this was the case in our model, Pillai's trace statistic

was assumed to be accurate. All other P-P Plots were normal. Univariate outliers with

standardized residuals greater than 3 and multivariate outliers were further inspected

through case summaries. A Mahalanobis' distance critical value of 20.59 was used, based

on a chi-square distribution with 200 events at the 0.05 error level (Barnett & Lewis,

1978). Cook's values greater than 1 (Cook & Weisberg, 1982), leverage values greater

than 0.05 (Stevens, 2002), and covariance ratio values outside the range of 0.94 – 1.05

(Belsey, Kuh, & Welsch, 1980) were used to identify problematic residuals. A total of

five participants were excluded from analyses for violating these constraints. Levene's

test yielded no significant values, and as such, the assumption of equality of variances

was met. Finally, Box's test yielded a nonsignificant value, suggesting the assumption of

equality of covariance matrices was met, as previously mentioned. After data cleaning

and testing of assumptions, the total number of participants was 283.

On average, participants indicated disagreement with human trafficking myths (M

= 2.54, SD = 0.63). However, 12% of the sample had scores of 4 or higher for at least

half of the scale. In other words, 12% of participants agreed with at least half of the

HTMS. In addition, participants generally assigned a limited amount of blame to victims

(M = 16.35, SD = 20.27). Interestingly, participants were more likely to engage in

activities to combat human trafficking when the associated cost of helping was high (M =

3.66, SD = 0.96) compared to low (M = 2.83, SD = 1.05). Participants were slightly more

idealistic ($M = 6.80$, $SD = 1.18$) than relativistic ($M = 5.96$, $SD = 1.01$), and indicated slight disagreement with items on the GBJWS ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.83$).

Research Model 1: Hypothesis 1

A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to determine the degree to which belief in a just world, ethical ideologies, and human trafficking myth acceptance contribute to the variance in victim blame. Because previous research strongly supports the association between belief in a just world and victim blame, belief in a just world was entered first into the model. The computed idealism and relativism subscales of the EPQ were entered simultaneously into the model during Step 2, as there was no precedent for entering one before the other. Human trafficking myth acceptance was then added into the model in Step 3. When including only belief in a just world, the model was significant, $F(1, 267) = 7.37$, $p < 0.01$. Step 1 produced an R^2 value of .027, indicating that this model accounted for 2.7% of the variance in victim blame. The model was also significant when belief in a just world, idealism, and relativism were included, $F(3, 265) = 3.12$, $p < 0.05$. Step 2 produced an R^2 value of .034. Finally, the overall model (including belief in a just world, idealism, relativism, and human trafficking myth acceptance) was significant, $F(4, 264) = 5.34$, $p < 0.01$. Human trafficking myth acceptance emerged as a significant contributor to the variance in victim blame ($\beta = 0.21$, $p < 0.01$). An R^2 value of 0.075 indicated that the final model accounted for 7.5% of the variance in victim blame, and was a better predictor of victim blame than the models in Steps 1 and 2. Table 1 summarizes the results of the analysis.

Table 1

Results of a hierarchical multiple regression examining the influence of belief in a just world, idealism, relativism, and human trafficking myth acceptance on victim blame.

Variables	Step 1			Step 2			Step 3		
	b	*SE*	β	*b*	*SE*	β	*b*	*SE*	β
Belief in a Just World	4.06	1.50	0.16**	3.99	1.50	0.16**	2.60	1.52	0.11
Idealism				-0.74	1.06	-0.04	-0.37	1.04	-0.02
Relativism				1.66	1.24	0.08	1.44	1.21	0.07
Myth Acceptance							6.71	1.97	0.21**
R^2	0.027			0.034			0.075		

Note. N = 269. *p < 0.05. **p < 0.01. ***p < 0.001.

Research Model 2: Hypothesis 2

Because the ACHT was composed of two subscales which were treated as separate outcome variables (high-cost and low-cost), two forced-entry multiple regressions were conducted to determine the degree to which belief in a just world and human trafficking myth acceptance uniquely contribute to the variance in willingness to help victims of human trafficking. As previously mentioned, the forced-entry method was chosen for these models because no precedent had yet established clear relationships between belief in a just world, myth acceptance, and willingness to help victims of human trafficking.

For the high cost subscale, the overall model was significant, $F(2, 280) = 6.85$, $p = 0.001$ (See Table 2). Belief in a just world and human trafficking myth acceptance explained 4.7% of the variance in willingness to help. In addition, human trafficking

myth acceptance was a significant contributor to the variance in willingness to help, when

the cost associated with helping was high (β = -0.22, $p < 0.001$).

Table 2

Results of a forced-entry multiple regression examining the effect of belief in a just world and human trafficking myth acceptance on willingness to help (high cost subscale).

Variable	b	SE	β
Belief in a Just World	0.001	0.07	0.001
Myth Acceptance	-0.33	0.09	-0.22***
R^2	0.047		

Note. $N = 283$. *$p < 0.05$. **$p < 0.01$. ***$p < 0.001$.

The regression examining the contribution of belief in a just world and human

trafficking myth acceptance to the low cost subscale of the ACHT was nonsignificant,

$F(2, 280) = 0.49$, $p > 0.05$. Table 3 summarizes the results of the analysis.

Table 3

Results of a forced-entry multiple regression examining the effect of belief in a just world and human trafficking myth acceptance on willingness to help (low cost subscale).

Variable	b	SE	β
Belief in a Just World	0.02	0.08	0.02
Myth Acceptance	-0.10	0.10	-0.06
R^2	0.003		

Note. $N = 283$. *$p < 0.05$. **$p < 0.01$. ***$p < 0.001$.

Research Model 3: Hypotheses 3 through 7

A 2 (male versus female) x 2 (6-year-old versus 13-year-old) x 2 (sex trafficking versus labor trafficking) factorial multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine the relation between victim gender and age, the type of trafficking, victim blame, and willingness to help. Using Pillai's Trace, there was no significant effect of victim gender, age, or type of trafficking on participants' attributions of blame or willingness to help $F(21, 783) = 1.48$, $p = 0.07$. Table 4 shows the means and standard deviations for each condition.

Table 4

Means and standard deviations for each condition.

Outcome	Condition			Mean	SD	N
Victim Blame	Male	6-year-old	HTSE	14.97	21.56	35
			HTFL	11.71	16.91	36
		13-year-old	HTSE	20.42	22.89	36
			HTFL	14.64	16.20	34
	Female	6-year-old	HTSE	11.75	18.85	34
			HTFL	15.58	19.19	28
		13-year-old	HTSE	20.84	20.91	32
			HTFL	21.11	23.58	34
Willingness to help (high cost)	Male	6-year-old	HTSE	3.80	0.76	35
			HTFL	3.46	0.95	36
		13-year-old	HTSE	3.60	1.03	36
			HTFL	3.40	0.98	34
	Female	6-year-old	HTSE	3.98	0.81	34
			HTFL	3.77	1.07	28
		13-year-old	HTSE	3.76	1.06	32
			HTFL	3.36	0.98	34
Willingness to help (low cost)	Male	6-year-old	HTSE	2.90	0.90	35
			HTFL	2.43	0.97	36
		13-year-old	HTSE	2.82	1.02	36
			HTFL	2.82	1.10	34
	Female	6-year-old	HTSE	3.21	1.14	34
			HTFL	3.04	0.97	28
		13-year-old	HTSE	2.84	1.18	32
			HTFL	2.54	1.02	34

Note. $N = 269$. HTSE = Human trafficking as sexual exploitation. HTFL = Human trafficking as forced labor.

<center>**Discussion**</center>

Implications

     Research Model 1. Each step of the hierarchical regression model was significant, implying that belief in a just world, idealism, relativism, and human trafficking myth acceptance were significant fits for the data. When including all four of these variables into the model, however, only human trafficking myth acceptance uniquely contributed to the variance in victim blame. Although belief in a just world was a significant contributor to the variance in victim blame in Steps 1 and 2, its significant contribution disappeared when human trafficking myth acceptance was entered into the model in Step 3. These results suggest that even though belief in a just world is an adequate predictor of individual differences in attributions of blame toward victims, human trafficking myth acceptance is better at predicting the relationship. Overall, the results of Research Model 1 provide support for Hypothesis 1.

     Individual differences in victim blame were positively associated with belief in a just world, relativism, and human trafficking myth acceptance, and were negatively associated with idealism. These results support previous findings that as belief in a just world and human trafficking myth acceptance increase, so do attributions of victim blame (Cunningham & Cromer, 2016; Strömwall et al., 2013). The findings that higher idealism was associated with lower victim blame while higher relativism was associated with higher victim blame makes theoretical sense. Arguably, individuals who hold idealistic ethical positions would disagree with blaming any victim, while persons who hold

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relativistic ethical positions would argue that the victim's culpability depends on the situation (Forsyth, 1980).

Research Model 2. When the associated cost of helping a victim of human trafficking was high, belief in a just world and human trafficking myth acceptance were significant predictors of participants' willingness to help. More specifically, higher levels of belief in a just world and lower human trafficking myth acceptance were associated with greater willingness to help. Conversely, when the associated cost of helping was low, belief in a just world and human trafficking myth acceptance were poor predictors of willingness to help. It may be, perhaps, that other variables, such as emotional reactions or efficacy of help, are better at predicting individuals' willingness to help when the personal sacrifice of helping is small (Honeyman et al., 2016). Overall, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported by Research Model 2.

Considering Research Models 1 and 2 together, the similar directionality observed between belief in a just world, victim blame, and willingness to help was interesting. These results indicate that individuals high on belief in a just world tend to be more willing to both blame and help victims compared to individuals low on belief in a just world. The cognitive dissonance theory may explain this pattern (Festinger, 1957). For example, an individual high on belief in a just world may be forced to reconcile conflicting events such as trafficking by reasoning that the victim did something to deserve what happened to him/her. In the same vein, blaming a child for being a victim may arouse cognitive dissonance, which may lead to compensatory helping behaviors.

Research Model 3. The findings from Research Model 3 suggest that participants were neither more nor less likely to blame or help victims depending on victim age, gender, or type of trafficking. Previous research findings that male victims are likely to be blamed more than female victims of sexual assault (Burczyk & Standing, 1989; Rye, Greatrix, & Enright, 2006; Whatley & Riggio, 1993), as well as findings that older victims are likely to receive greater blame than younger victims (Back & Lips, 1998), were not supported by the current study. In addition, Honeyman and colleagues' (2016) findings that participants are more willing to help victims of HTSE than HTFL were not supported. There are several explanations for why Hypotheses 3 through 7 were not supported by the data. First, many studies examining victim blame attributions based upon victim gender and age were conducted in the 1980s and 1990s. Cohort effects, including increases in ready access to information, may have increased awareness of trafficking for current generations, thus leading to greater education about the issue and influencing subsequent reactions to trafficking. Second, because the VBS provided anchors from 0 to 100, the variances obtained were large and may have overshadowed any mean differences obtained. Future studies could constrain responses to the VBS, potentially accounting for this limitation.

Although nonsignificant, these results are encouraging. Within our sample, participants' responses did not seem to be influenced by victim characteristics or situational variables. If generalized to the true population of trafficked victims, chances

of being helped, or contrastingly, blamed, do not depend on individual age, gender, or type of trafficking.

Limitations

There are some limitations to the current study that should be addressed. First, the sample was primarily composed of females. However, enough males were recruited to satisfy the requirements of the central limit theorem ($n = 55$; Lumley, Diehr, Emerson, & Chen, 2002), so the differences between groups should not have had undue influence on the research models. In addition, and as previously mentioned, 4.86% of the responses on the VBS were missing due to a technical issue. Although the remaining participants still provided the analyses with enough power to reach statistical significance, the missing data may have had a small effect on the results. It should further be noted that items on the ACHT were not randomized. As the low cost items were listed before the high cost items, a potential order effect may have occurred. By agreeing to complete easier actions to combat human trafficking, participants may have felt obligated to continue agreeing to perform actions requiring more effort. This may also explain why mean scores for the ACHT high cost subscale were slightly higher than mean scores for the ACHT low cost subscale. Finally, Research Models 1 and 2 did not involve experimental manipulations, so causality cannot be inferred amongst those variables.

Future Directions

Along with addressing the limitations of the current study, future research could examine helping behaviors in real-world settings. For example, many of the activities

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found in the ACHT could be examined in an analog setting. Although outside the scope of the present study, it is important to determine whether the relationship between belief in a just world, human trafficking myth acceptance, and helping behaviors would continue to be relevant in a real-world setting, as it is likely that discrepancies exist between willingness to help and true helping behavior. As victim race and ethnicity were not included as part of the experimental manipulation in the current study, it is also important to determine whether these characteristics could influence attributions of blame or willingness to help. Indeed, there are many other victim characteristics and situational variables such as race, country of citizenship, and victim background (e.g., childhood factors), that should be examined. Finally, as the manipulation in the current study utilized a vignette, future studies could investigate whether victim salience affects outcomes of victim blame and willingness to help. For example, victim proximity as well as the presence of an image of an ostensible victim could be manipulated to determine how these factors contribute to blaming or helping behaviors.

Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to determine factors that influence reactions to human trafficking. More specifically, the current study was designed to examine the relationship between belief in a just world, ethical ideologies, human trafficking myth acceptance, victim age, victim gender, and type of trafficking and their respective effects on victim blame and willingness to help. The present findings contribute to the literature on human trafficking by supporting the predictive relationship between belief in a just

world, ethical ideologies, human trafficking myth acceptance, and victim blame. The current study further contributes to the literature by establishing a significant predictive relationship between belief in a just world, human trafficking myth acceptance, and willingness to help victims of trafficking, dependent upon the cost associated with helping. This research provides information that can be useful in implementing more effective outreach strategies and better educating professionals, including law enforcement and mental health practitioners, who may interact with survivors of trafficking. This research may also be useful in educating the public, who may fail to realize or have limited awareness of how their beliefs could be affecting trafficked individuals.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT
INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to examine factors that may influence reactions to human trafficking.

DURATION: The length of time you will be participating in this study is approximately 30 minutes.

PROCEDURE: If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a series of surveys and read a vignette depicting a hypothetical human trafficking scenario.

RISKS: You may experience some mild discomfort due to the nature of this study. Please know that you are free to withdraw your participation at any time.

BENEFITS: Students recruited from participating introductory classes will receive 1 credit for every 30 minutes of research participation. This study is worth 1 research participant credit. Students from other classes will receive credit in that class in an amount that is considered appropriate by the course instructor (e.g., 5 points extra credit or 1-2% of the overall points possible in the class).

CONFIDENTIALITY: The records of this study will be kept private. (Your name will not be attached to your answers). The investigators will have access to the raw data. No identifying information will be used in any fashion of presentation of the data gathered. Once collected, all data will be kept in secured files, in accord with the standards of SFASU, federal regulations, and the American Psychological Association. In addition, please remember that the researchers are not interested in any individual person's responses. We are interested in how people in general respond to the measures.

VOLUNTARY NATURE: Your participation in this study is voluntary. In addition, you may choose to not respond to single items in the survey. Your choice to participate or not will not affect your current or future relations with SFASU nor any of its representatives. If you decide to participate you may withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS:
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If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to speak with someone other than the researchers, you may contact The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at (936) 468-6606. In addition, if you would like to receive a copy of this form, please contact one of the researchers through the means stated above.

<p style="text-align:center">Statement of Consent</p>

The procedures of this study have been explained to me and my questions have been addressed. The information that I provide is confidential and will be used for research purposes only. I am at least 18 years of age and I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw anytime without penalty. I have read the information in this consent form and I agree to participate in the study.

Signature of Participant: (Participant will click to confirm their electronic signature)

APPENDIX B

Human Trafficking Myths Scale (HTMS; Cunningham & Cromer, 2016)

Instructions: Please indicate the degree to which you think each statement is true or false. 1 (*definitely false*); 2 (*mostly false*); 3 (*probably false*); 4 (*probably true*); 5 (*mostly true*); 6 (*definitely true*)

1. Human trafficking is another term for smuggling.
2. Human trafficking must include elements of physical force, restraint, bondage, and/or violence.
3. Human trafficking does not happen in the United States.
4. If someone did not want to be trafficked, he or she would leave the situation.
5. U.S. citizens are trafficked in their own country (reverse coded).
6. Human trafficking victims will seek help as soon as they have the opportunity.
7. People from other countries who are trafficked in the United States are always illegal immigrants.
8. Normal-appearing, well-educated, middle-class people are not trafficked.
9. Human trafficking victims will tell authorities they are being trafficked as soon as they have the opportunity.
10. Human trafficking must involve some form of travel, transportation, or movement across national borders.
11. If persons are trafficked in the United States, they are always from poor, uneducated communities.
12. If a child solicits sex from an adult in exchange for money, food, or shelter, he or she is not a victim.
13. Only foreigners and illegal immigrants are trafficked.
14. Human trafficking is always controlled by organized crime.

15. A person who is trafficked will always feel negatively toward the person(s) trafficking him or her.

16. If a person receives any kind of payment for sex, he or she is not being trafficked.

17. Human trafficking only occurs in undeveloped countries.

APPENDIX C

Global Belief in a Just World Scale (GBJW; Lipkus, 1999)

Instructions: Please indicate the degree to which you agree with each statement.

1 (*strongly disagree*); 2 (*moderately disagree*); 3 (*slightly disagree*); 4 (*slightly agree*); 5 (*moderately agree*); 6 (*strongly agree*).

1. I feel that people get what they are entitled to have.
2. I feel that a person's efforts are noticed and rewarded.
3. I feel that people earn the rewards and punishments they get.
4. I feel that people who meet with misfortune have brought it on themselves.
5. I feel that people get what they deserve.
6. I feel that rewards and punishments are fairly given.
7. I basically feel that the world is a fair place.

APPENDIX D

The Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ; Forsyth, 1980)

Instructions: You will find a series of general statements listed below. Each represents a commonly held opinion and there are no right or wrong answers. You will probably disagree with some items and agree with others. We are interested in the extent to which you agree or disagree with such matters of opinions.

Please read each statement carefully. Then indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by choosing the number corresponding to your feeling, where:

1 (*completely disagree*); 2 (*largely disagree*); 3 (*moderately disagree*); 4 (*slightly disagree*); 5 (*neither agree nor disagree*); 6 (*slightly agree*); 7 (*moderately agree*); 8 (*largely agree*); 9 (*completely agree*).

1. A person should make certain that his/her actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree.
2. Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be.
3. The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.
4. One should never psychologically or physically harm another person.
5. One should not perform an action which might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual.
6. If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done.
7. Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral.

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8. The dignity and welfare of people should be the most important concern in any society.

9. It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others.

10. Moral actions are those which closely match ideals of the most "perfect" action.

11. There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be a part of any code of ethics.

12. What is ethical varies from one situation and society to another.

13. Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers to be moral may be judged to be immoral by another person.

14. Different types of moralities cannot be compared as to "rightness."

15. Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual.

16. Moral standards are simply *personal* rules which indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in making judgments of others.

17. Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.

18. Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions could stand in the way of better human relations and adjustment.

19. No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie is permissible or not permissible totally depends upon the situation.

20. Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends upon the circumstances surrounding the action.

APPENDIX E

Vignettes (adapted from Cunningham & Cromer, 2016)

Participants will be randomly assigned to one of the following vignettes.

1. Six-year-old male victim of human trafficking as forced labor.

    At 6 years of age, Steven ran away from home to get away from an abusive father. Within a couple of days, Steven was befriended by a man who said he would take care of Steven. Steven did some labor for him in exchange for shelter, food, and clothing. The man said he would keep Steven safe, but soon he moved Steven to a different location and began to force him to work for other people for money.

2. Six-year-old female victim of human trafficking as forced labor.

    At 6 years of age, Michelle ran away from home to get away from an abusive father. Within a couple of days, Michelle was befriended by a man who said he would take care of Michelle. Michelle did some labor for him in exchange for shelter, food, and clothing. The man said he would keep Michelle safe, but soon he moved Michelle to a different location and began to force her to work for other people for money.

3. Thirteen-year-old male victim of human trafficking as forced labor.

    At 13 years of age, Steven ran away from home to get away from an abusive father. Within a couple of days, Steven was befriended by a man who said he would take care of Steven. Steven did some labor for him in exchange for shelter, food, and clothing. The man said he would keep Steven safe, but soon he moved Steven to a different location and began to force him to work for other people for money.

4. Thirteen-year-old female victim of human trafficking as forced labor.

At 13 years of age, Michelle ran away from home to get away from an abusive father. Within a couple of days, Michelle was befriended by a man who said he would take care of Michelle. Michelle did some labor for him in exchange for shelter, food, and clothing. The man said he would keep Michelle safe, but soon he moved Michelle to a different location and began to force her to work for other people for money.

5. Six-year-old male victim of human trafficking as sexual exploitation.

At 6 years of age, Steven ran away from home to get away from an abusive father. Within a couple of days, Steven was befriended by a man who said he would take care of Steven. Steven had sex with him in exchange for shelter, food, and clothing. The man said he would keep Steven safe, but soon he moved Steven to a different location and began to force him to have sex with other people for money.

6. Six-year-old female victim of human trafficking as sexual exploitation.

At 6 years of age, Michelle ran away from home to get away from an abusive father. Within a couple of days, Michelle was befriended by a man who said he would take care of Michelle. Michelle had sex with him in exchange for shelter, food, and clothing. The man said he would keep Michelle safe, but soon he moved Michelle to a different location and began to force her to have sex with other people for money.

7. Thirteen-year-old male victim of human trafficking as sexual exploitation.

At 13 years of age, Steven ran away from home to get away from an abusive father. Within a couple of days, Steven was befriended by a man who said he would take care of Steven. Steven had sex with him in exchange for shelter, food, and clothing. The man said he would keep Steven safe, but soon he moved Steven

to a different location and began to force him to have sex with other people for money.

8. Thirteen-year-old female victim of human trafficking as sexual exploitation.

At 13 years of age, Michelle ran away from home to get away from an abusive father. Within a couple of days, Michelle was befriended by a man who said he would take care of Michelle. Michelle had sex with him in exchange for shelter, food, and clothing. The man said he would keep Michelle safe, but soon he moved Michelle to a different location and began to force her to have sex with other people for money.

APPENDIX F

Victim Blame Scale (VBS; Strömwall, Alfredsson, & Landström, 2013)

Instructions: Please respond to the following items on a scale from 0 (*not at all*) to 100 (*completely*).

1. To what extent do you think that [Steven/Michelle] can be blamed for the event?

|——|
0%   100%

2. To what extent do you think that [Steven/Michelle] was acting inappropriately?

|——|
0%   100%

3. To what extent do you think that [Steven/Michelle] is responsible for the event?

|——|
0%   100%

4. To what extent do you think that [Steven/Michelle] is culpable (at fault) for the event?

|——|
0%   100%

APPENDIX G

Activities to Combat Human Trafficking (ACHT; adapted from Honeyman et al., 2016)

Instructions: Please indicate how willing you would be to complete the following activities to help [Steven/Michelle].

1 (*not at all*); 2 (*slightly*); 3 (*moderately*); 4 (*very*); 5 (*extremely*).

1. "Like" the Facebook page of an anti-trafficking organization
2. Sign a petition to support the formation of anti-trafficking legislation
3. Limit buying products associated with trafficking, such as certain coffee or clothing brands
4. Take a fifteen-minute online Human Trafficking Awareness Training course
5. Set up a web alert to receive human trafficking news updates
6. Hang human trafficking awareness posters around your university
7. Establish a university club to raise awareness and combat human trafficking within the local community
8. Be involved in a fundraiser that donates its proceeds to an anti-trafficking organization
9. Attend a weekend-long conference focused on combating human trafficking
10. Become a telephone assistant to aid research
11. Donate monthly to a local anti-trafficking outreach group
12. Meet with your state and local government representatives to promote anti-trafficking legislation

Attention Checks (adapted from Oppenheimer, Meyvis, & Davidenko, 2009)

Following HTMS/GBJWS

Instructions: If you are paying attention, please ignore the question below. Instead, please type "I read the instructions" into the textbox below the question. Thank you.

1 (*not at all)*; 2 (*slightly*); 3 (*moderately*); 4 (*very*); 5 (*extremely*)

1. To what extent do you enjoy exercising?

Following Vignette

Instructions: Please respond to the following question.

1. What was the name of the child from the vignette you just read?

    a) [Scott][Melanie]
    b) [Spencer][Megan]
    c) [Steven][Michelle]
    d) [Sean][Melissa]

APPENDIX J

Demographics Questionnaire

Instructions: We are interested in your perceptions of victims of human trafficking. In the left column, please respond to the items as they apply to you. In the right column, please respond to indicate what you think is representative of a typical victim of human trafficking.

1. What is your age?
2. What do you think is the age of a typical victim of human trafficking?
3. What is your gender?
   a) Male
   b) Female
   c) Other
4. What do you think is the gender of a typical victim of human trafficking?
   a) Male
   b) Female
   c) Other
5. What is your ethnicity?
   a) Hispanic or Latino
   b) Non-Hispanic or Latino
6. What do you think is the ethnicity of a typical victim of human trafficking?
   a) Hispanic or Latino
   b) Non-Hispanic or Latino
7. What is your race?
   a) American Indian/Alaska Native
   b) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

     c) Black or African American

     d) White

     e) More than one race

     f) Unknown or not reported

8. What do you think is the race of a typical victim of human trafficking?

     a) American Indian/Alaska Native

     b) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

     c) Black or African American

     d) White

     e) More than one race

     f) Unknown or not reported

9. Are you a first-generation college student?

     a) Yes

     b) No

10. Did you grow up in a rural or urban area?

     a) Rural

     b) Urban

11. How religious/spiritual do you consider yourself?

     a) Not at all

     b) Slightly

     c) Moderately

     d) Very

     e) Extremely

12. How aware do you think you are about the nature of human trafficking?

     a) Not at all

     b) Slightly

     c) Moderately

     d) Very

e) Extremely

13. How interested are you in the topic of human trafficking?

   a) Not at all

   b) Slightly

   c) Moderately

   d) Very

   e) Extremely

APPENDIX K

DEBRIEFING FORM

Thank you for participating in this study. The purpose of this study was to examine factors that may influence reactions to human trafficking.

During your participation in this study, you responded to items from a scale called the Human Trafficking Myths Scale (HTMS; Cunningham & Cromer, 2016). You should know that the HTMS is a scale that is composed of false statements about human trafficking.

If you would like to learn more about the issue of human trafficking, please visit https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/faqs.html.

If you have any emotional distress, please contact our campus counseling center at (936) 468-2401 or counseling@sfasu.edu.

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VITA

After completing high school at Henderson High School in Henderson, Texas, Tessa

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