Journal of Human Trafficking, 1:318–337, 2015

ISSN: 2332-2705 print/2332-2713 online
DOI: 10.1080/23322705.2015.1090865

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Understanding the Support Needs of Human-Trafficking Victims: A Review of Three Human-Trafficking Program Evaluations

Deanna Davy

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Bangkok, Thailand

Human trafficking is a global crime and human rights violation that affects nearly every country of the world. Victims of human trafficking may suffer severe physical, psychological, and emotional health consequences as they are often subjected to a range of abuses such as physical violence, sexual assault, emotional abuse, mind-control, and torture. A variety of human-trafficking victim support programs exist in the United States and other countries that receive human-trafficking victims to support their immediate and longer-term needs. There is a dearth of contemporary literature on the subject of the support needs of human-trafficking victims. Further, due to a lack of publicly available program evaluations, little is also known about whether victim support programs are able to meet the needs of human-trafficking victims. This article aims to bridge a gap in knowledge and understanding of human-trafficking victims' support needs and whether they are being met by support programs by reviewing three recent U.S.-based human-trafficking victim support program evaluations.

Keywords: evaluation, human trafficking, protection, victims

INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking is a crime and a human rights violation that affects nearly every country of the world (Europol, 2005) and that is essentially synonymous with enslavement (Potocky, 2010). Trafficking victims are often kept enslaved through techniques such as debt bondage, isolation from family and the community, confiscation of identification and travel documents, the use of threat of violence towards victims and/or their families, threat of imprisonment, and control of victims' money (U.S. Department of Health and Human Service, 2008). The U.S. Department of State (2014) estimates that approximately 600,000 to 800,000 people around the world, both adults and children, are trafficked across international borders annually. Approximately 90% of

Deanna Davy completed a PhD at the University of Sydney on the subject of the effectiveness of transnational advocacy networks against child sex trafficking in Southeast Asia. She has worked in research and evaluation roles on the subject of human trafficking and migrant smuggling in a number of countries. The author is an independent researcher, and the views expressed in the article are not necessarily those of UNODC.

Address correspondence to Deanna Davy, 32/47 Wentworth Avenue, Kingston, ACT 2604, Australia. E-mail: deannadavy@gmail.com

these victims are female and more than half of all those trafficked each year are believed to be trafficked for sexual exploitation (U.S. Department of State, 2014).

Trafficking victims are frequently deceived through false promises of economic opportunities that await them in more affluent destination countries (Clawson, Small, Go, & Myles, 2003). It thus follows that patterns of human trafficking frequently flow from less developed countries to neighboring countries or industrialized nations with higher standards of living (Miko, 2000). Various "push" factors exacerbate the human-trafficking problem including economic and political instability, government corruption, illiteracy, civil unrest, low food production, high infant-mortality rates, and internal armed conflict (U.S. Department of State, 2002). Victims of human trafficking often suffer human rights abuses such as being held in slavery-like conditions and forced into prostitution, domestic service, or forced labor where victims may be held in bondage, raped, beaten, or starved. Trafficking victims suffer severe physical, psychological, and emotional health consequences as they are subjected to a range of abuses including physical violence, sexual assault, emotional abuse, mind control, and torture (Raymond & Hughes, 2001).

As the international community's recognition of the human-trafficking problem has increased in recent years so too has the legislation surrounding human trafficking and the design of protection mechanisms such as victim support programs. Many countries have developed policies to guide the identification of trafficking victims and have implemented support programs, which provide the psychosocial, medical, housing, and legal support that human-trafficking victims require, particularly in the immediate aftermath of the trafficking experience. However, despite increasing attention to the human-trafficking issue, knowledge and understanding of the issue and how to best support trafficking victims remains limited (Albanese, Donnelly, & Kelegian, 2004). Much remains unknown about the long-term impact of human trafficking on victims and their families, the services required to support the complex needs of trafficking victims, the effectiveness of victim support programs, and best practices for victim recovery (Clawson, Dutch, Salomon, & Goldblatt Grace, 2009). In addition to the lack of knowledge and understanding of victims' support needs and the services required to support human-trafficking victims, there are also few available evaluations of victim protection and support programs. In the absence of such studies service providers, advocates, policy makers, and others in the anti-human-trafficking field are left to draw conclusions from overviews, commentaries, and anecdotal information (Gozdziak & Collet, 2005) regarding the support needs of victims.

Through a review of several of the available human-trafficking support program evaluations in the United States, this article examines the support needs of human-trafficking victims and the extent to which the needs of human-trafficking victims are addressed by support programs. Social work ecological theory guides the findings of the study. The identification of victims' support needs and the coordination of multiple services by case managers can best be described through an ecological perspective. In this perspective, the support program case manager, situated in a unique and strategic position, performs multiple roles and simultaneously assesses victims' needs and anticipates and plans for interventions by the criminal justice system and service provider partner agencies.

In this article, I first examine the definition of "human trafficking" and discuss the United States Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (TVPA; U.S. Department of State, 2000). Second, I outline the research questions that guided the study and the methodology used

to search for and review recent evaluations of human-trafficking victim support programs. Third, I provide a brief overview of the three program evaluations reviewed for the study, including a description of the evaluation methods. Fourth, I discuss the findings of the three program evaluations. Finally, in the conclusion, I provide some comments on possible improvements to supporting trafficked persons.

REACHING A DEFINITION OF "HUMAN TRAFFICKING" AND THE U.S. POLICY RESPONSE TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Today the most widely accepted definition of human trafficking comes from the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the U.N. Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, better known as the Palermo Protocol (United Nations, 2000). According to the Protocol:

a. "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.
b. The consent of the victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in the subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in the subparagraph (a) have been used;
c. The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in the subparagraph (a) of this article;
d. "Child" shall mean any person under eighteen years of age. (United Nations, 2000, Article 3, page 2)

As the Protocol implies, human trafficking comprises trafficking for labor exploitation, sexual exploitation, and exploitation in a variety of other areas and industries. While labor trafficking comprises all kinds of trafficking for labor exploitation including sweatshop labor and key industries such as fishing and agricultural labor exploitation, sex trafficking refers to a specific subset of wider phenomena of human trafficking and can be understood as the component of human trafficking that deals with the use of persons—almost exclusively young women and children—in prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation. As subsection (b) of the Protocol (2000) clarifies, the use of whether a victim "consents" or not is "irrelevant." In essence, the Protocol holds that consent cannot truly be given when acts such as fraud and deception are employed. The Palermo Protocol has now been ratified by 147 member states (Van Dijk & Klerx-Van Mierlo, 2014).

National governments have also developed their own human-trafficking definitions and policies in recent years, and one of the first countries to achieve this was the United States. In federal U.S. statutes, there are no formal definitions of "human trafficking" or "trafficking in

persons." Instead, the United States Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 defines "severe forms of trafficking in persons" (U.S. Department of State, 2000). Specifically, Section 103 (8) of the TVPA defines this term to mean:

a. Sex trafficking in which a commercial act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or
b. The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. (U.S. Department of State, 2000, para. 8)

It is this definition, rather than the Palermo Protocol definition, that is applied in the context of U.S. anti-trafficking in persons policies and programs (Siskin & Wyler, 2012) and that the United States uses to measure national governments' efforts to eradicate trafficking. The TVPA's definition of "severe forms of trafficking in persons" is similar to the Palermo Protocol's definition of trafficking in persons as both identify force, fraud, and coercion as prohibited means or methods for obtaining the services of another person and both do not require movement of persons across national borders as a necessary precondition for identifying instances of human trafficking (Siskin & Wyler, 2012).

The TVPA is designed to combat human trafficking through protection, prosecution, and prevention. The protection element addresses trafficking victims' needs for support to recover and reintegrate into society and includes benefits and services to victims within the United States who are not American citizens or permanent residents (Potocky, 2010). Under the TVPA, two new immigration statuses were created—continued presence and the T-visa—and access to public benefits for trafficking victims was created through a mechanism known as "certification" (Potocky, 2010). Under the T-visa, adult victims of all types of human trafficking are granted temporary status and employment in the United States for four years, after which time trafficking victims may apply for permanent resident status (Potocky, 2010). Certification allows trafficking victims to receive the same support services and benefits in the United States as refugees, including health care, housing, and employment assistance, financial support, and English-language training (Potocky, 2010). To be granted certification, trafficking victims must have been granted continued presence, completed a T-visa application or have been approved for a T-visa (Potocky, 2010). Research conducted over a decade ago on the services provided to victims under the TVPA found that victims had complex and significant needs and that there was a gap in service delivery to victims who were not yet certified (Clawson et al., 2003). In response, the U.S. Justice Department's Office for Victims of Crime introduced a discretionary grant program to fund services to these "precertified" trafficking victims (Caliber, 2007).

It is generally accepted that, to date, lawmakers and law enforcement in the United States have made strides in tackling the problem of human trafficking, yet there is much more work that needs to be done (U.S. Department of State, 2012). Further, while sex trafficking has received much more attention, particularly in the media, labor trafficking is the more prevalent form of trafficking in the United States and some other countries (Schaffner, 2014) and thus demands increased attention including in the areas of identifying and supporting labor-trafficking victims.

METHODOLOGY

The key questions that guided this study were the following: What are human-trafficking victims' support needs? What support services currently exist for trafficking victims and are they meeting victims' needs? What are the barriers to providing services to trafficking victims and the barriers to accessing services? The author conducted an extensive search for relevant literature on U.S.-based evaluations of support programs for human-trafficking victims and metaevaluations. The literature search was conducted for journal articles and reports published between 2000 and 2015 in the English language. The key search terms used were "human trafficking," "victim," "support," "services," "program," "evaluation," and "United States" and the exclusion criteria were "prevention" and "awareness-raising." The author excluded evaluations of human-trafficking programs that aim to prevent or combat human trafficking, such as evaluations of awareness-raising programs, as human-trafficking-prevention program evaluations were outside the scope of the study.

The search terms were applied to the search engine Google Scholar. Using the inclusion and exclusion criteria, four evaluation reports were identified as containing information relevant for the study. After a preliminary review of the content of the four publications, a study conducted by Jones and Yousefzadeh (2006) of a program serving trafficking victims in several Midwestern states in the United States was excluded from the shortlist as it did not provide an explanation of the methods of the program evaluation, and the discussion of client outcomes focused only on immigration outcomes, for example, the number of T-visas and orders of removal, rather than information on the client support services. Therefore, three evaluations were used as the basis for this study. The three evaluation reports were analyzed thematically. The major themes identified were trafficking victims' support needs, support services available, elements of effective service delivery, gaps in service provision, barriers to effective service provision, and outcomes for clients.

OVERVIEW OF THE THREE EVALUATIONS

The three program evaluations that were reviewed for the study are the following: (a) An evaluation by Potocky (2010) of the Florida Freedom Project (FFP); (b) an evaluation by Caliber (now Inner City Fund [ICF] International) (2007) of the Comprehensive Services for victims of human trafficking at three specific sites—Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) in Los Angeles; Asian Anti-Trafficking Collaborative (AATC) in San Francisco; and FFP in Miami and surrounding areas; and (c) an evaluation by Busch, Fong, Cook Heffron, Faulkner, and Mahapatra (2007) of the Central Texas Coalition Against Human Trafficking (CTCAHT) (see Table 1). For ease in referring to the three program evaluations, they will be known as the FFP (Potocky, 2010) evaluation, the Comprehensive Services (Caliber, 2007) evaluation, and the CTCAHT evaluation (Busch et al., 2007).

Evaluation of the Florida Freedom Project

The FFP is described by Potocky as providing a "rapid response, comprehensive support system for trafficked persons" (2010, p. 363). The program aims to combat human trafficking, offer case management and provide safe and appropriate housing, legal services, medical care, and

TABLE 1
Summary of Program Evaluation Questions, Approaches and Methodology

Report Title and Program Name	*Research Questions*	*Evaluation Approach*	*Evaluation Methodology*	*Use of Data*
"Effectiveness of services for victims of international human trafficking: An exploratory evaluation"	Do trafficking victim services programs improve clients' lives?	The approach described by the author is "pragmatic" and is not intended to test any theoretical framework.	Mixed qualitative-quantitative methodology.	From these data, the author measured client characteristics and needs (housing, food, immigration, mental health, health, legal, training, and life skills). Data are used to answer the key research question and to consider options for program improvements.
Florida Freedom Partnership (Potocky, 2010)		The author describes the research design as "exploratory" or "pre-experimental" as the research was conducted retrospectively.	The author used a logic model as a conceptual framework, and a pre-experimental, retrospective research design based on chart review and key informant interviews.	
"Evaluation of Comprehensive Services for victims of human trafficking: Key findings and lessons learned"	Planning: What (and who) was involved in the planning of the Comprehensive Services?	The report does not specify the evaluation approach but it appears that the evaluation involved an evaluability assessment and a process and outcome evaluation.	The 3-year study was conducted in three phases: (1) Evaluability assessment; (2) Planning, implementation, and outcome evaluation; (3) Case studies/ interviews with clients/survivors.	Data are used to show the percentage of key partner staff agreeing with statements related to collaboration, and impacts of the programs over time.
Comprehensive Services for victims of human trafficking (Caliber, 2007)	What did the Comprehensive Services initiatives look like? How were they similar? Different?			Data are used to descriptively explain the challenges, barriers, and elements of effectiveness of the Comprehensive Services.

(*Continued*)

TABLE 1
(*Continued*)

Report Title and Program Name	*Research Questions*	*Evaluation Approach*	*Evaluation Methodology*	*Use of Data*
	Implementation: How are clients identified as victims of human trafficking and how has this process changed over time? What outreach is being conducted to access trafficking victims? How has this changed over time? What networks of services were available for trafficking victims? What services were created or made available through collaboration? How were services delivered? Who was involved in the network? Was delivery of services coordinated and seamless? What needs were the agencies able to meet? What needs were difficult to meet? Outcomes: What were the outcomes of the Comprehensive Services?			

	What plans are in place for sustaining the initiatives beyond the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) grant? What were challenges/ barriers to success? What factors contributed to the success of the initiatives?			
"An evaluation of the Central Texas Coalition Against Human Trafficking"	What are the strengths of the project? How are agencies working together collaboratively?	The report does not specify the evaluation approach but it appears that the evaluation involved a process and outcome evaluation.	Interviews and one focus group conducted with social service providers, law enforcement professionals, and victims/ survivors of human trafficking.	Data were analyzed using a modification of the grounded theory method. Data are used to present findings from the interviews conducted with members of the coalition. The authors also present data collected during interviews with victims/survivors, focusing on services used and needed by victims.
Texas Coalition Against Human Trafficking (CTCAHT) (Busch et al., 2007)	What are the barriers to services for victims of human trafficking?			The report presents primary output data such as number and type of victim services, the coalition's partners, and training activities.
	What training is available to agency staff serving victims of human trafficking? How effective is this training?			

clinical intervention to trafficked persons in South Florida. Victims may be referred to the program by law enforcement, or alternately they are able to directly contact the FFP information line to request support. Other groups and individuals may also refer trafficking victims to the program, such as service providers, the U.S. Department of Justice, or members of the public (Potocky, 2010). The program has a Rapid Response Team, which includes a program specialist, a mental health advocate, and an interpreter, who respond directly to a case (Potocky, 2010). The role of the program specialist within FFP is to coordinate efforts, both within FFP and with other agencies, to support the diverse needs of program clients. Case management at FFP provides clients with rapid, on-site assessment and intake, an orientation of services available to them, transport passes, cash, services related to employment, referrals to other service providers, and individualized service plans (Potocky, 2010). Victims also receive assistance with securing housing, basic health care services, and access to mental health advocates who provide on-site crisis intervention and 25 hours of clinical intervention to help victims find relief from trauma and to achieve stability (Potocky, 2010). Legal assistance is also provided with lawyers and paralegals assisting victims with paperwork for employment authorization, and visas, and the pursuit of criminal charges at no cost to the victim (Potocky, 2010).

The evaluation methodology adopted by Potocky (2010) involved utilizing the FFP logic model as a guiding framework for the study. A mixed qualitative-quantitative methodology, consisting of a client chart review, goal attainment scaling, an outcome assessment, and key informant interviews with program staff, was adopted. Potocky (2010) emphasized that the research design was by nature exploratory or pre-experimental because the data collection methods were retrospective.

The chart review included all clients who were victims of human trafficking, were precertified at the time of intake, were served during the 5-year period of 2003–2007, and whose cases were closed during that period. This figure involved 43 clients. The client charts consisted of an intake form, which included information on the client's needs, a service plan with client goals, and narrative case notes describing the progress of the client. Potocky (2010) analyzed client outcomes in two ways based on the client chart review: Goal Attainment Scaling and outcome assessment. Through the Goal Attainment Scaling method, client goals were developed across the categories of housing, food, immigration, mental health, health, legal (nonimmigration related), and training. Potocky documented each of the clients' goals and coded the narrative case notes to assess the degree of goal attainment using the Goal Attainment Scaling method (Kiresuk, Smith, & Cardillo, 1994), which involves rating goals on a 5-point scale. The outcome assessment consisted of an instrument that examined client outcomes in several categories, which were similar to those used in the goal attainment scaling method: shelter/food; medical; social and emotional health; employment/education; literacy; legal issues; and life skills. Within each category, the client status was assessed using five levels—1 (in crisis), 2 (vulnerable), 3 (safe), 4 (stable), and 5 (thriving) (Potocky, 2010). Using the narrative case notes, Potocky determined the client's status in each category at program intake and at the closure of the case then computed a change score by subtracting the intake score from the case closing score.

Potocky (2010) provides some basic information (see Table 2) about the client cohort, including the region of origin, sex, and type of trafficking of the clients engaged in the program between 2003 and 2007. Beyond some basic information on the number of program staff (see Table 2), no information is provided about program funding or the provision of services by volunteers.

TABLE 2
Information on Program Staff and Clients

Program Evaluation	*Program Staff*	*Client Demographic Information (Region/ Country of Origin) (Percentage or Number [N])*	*Client Demographic Information (Sex) (Percentage or Number [N])*	*Sector of Trafficking (Percentage or Number [N])*
Florida Freedom Partnership (Potocky, 2010)	Between 2003 and 2007, the program employed nine full time employees, and 31 part-time staff	Central America: 31% Mexico: 26% South America: 19% Caribbean: 7% Europe: 7% Asia: 5% Africa: 5% Middle East: 2%	Female: 86% Male: 14%	Sex trafficking: 37% Labor trafficking: 30% Domestic servitude: 14% Missing: 19%
Comprehensive Services for victims of human trafficking (Caliber, 2007)	Not addressed	Asia and the East Indies: $N = 24$ Latin America: $N = 7$ Africa: $N = 2$ Caribbean: $N = 1$	Female: $N = 32$ Male: $N = 2$	Labor trafficking: $N = 17$ Sex trafficking: $N = 14$ Servile marriage: $N = 1$ Unknown: $N = 2$
Texas Coalition Against Human Trafficking (CTCAHT) (Busch et al., 2007)	Not addressed	El Salvador: $N = 12$ Honduras: $N = 3$ Mexico: $N = 7$ Nigeria: $N = 1$ South Africa: $N = 2$	Female: $N = 21$ Male: $N = 3$	Sex trafficking: $N = 15$ Labor trafficking: $N = 9$

Evaluation of Comprehensive Services for Victims of Human Trafficking

This evaluation, conducted by Caliber (2007) and funded by the National Institute of Justice, examined three human-trafficking-victim support programs of which FFP, also evaluated by Potocky (2010), was one site. The two other program sites were Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) in Los Angeles and the Asian Anti-Trafficking Collaborative in San Francisco (AATC). The three sites (FFP, CAST, and AATC) conduct similar work that involves providing comprehensive support services to victims of trafficking. The three programs administer the U.S. Department of Justice's "Services for Trafficking Victims Discretionary Grant Program—Comprehensive Services Sites (Comprehensive Services)" (Caliber, 2007). The programs provide direct services such as shelter, medical care, crisis counseling, legal assistance,

and advocacy to assist victims between the time that they are identified by law enforcement, other agencies or individuals until they are "certified" as victims of human trafficking and eligible to receive benefits from the U.S. government, a period generally referred to as the "precertification period" (Caliber, 2007). Recipients of this government funding are required to coordinate their services with other grantees in order to ensure a continuum of care throughout both precertification and the certification phases (Caliber, 2007). From the Comprehensive Service initiatives, multiple agencies have evolved and formed service networks to provide wide-ranging care to victims (Caliber, 2007). Core services include intensive case management, legal services, health services, mental health support, housing assistance, and language services (Caliber, 2007).

Caliber (2007), with assistance from the Urban Institute, conducted a multiphased evaluation of the Comprehensive Services at three sites using multiple approaches, both qualitative and quantitative, to obtain information from a range of stakeholders, including trafficking victims. The evaluation sought to determine the effectiveness of the three programs in helping victims to access appropriate and adequate services and to describe the development and implementation of coordinated service delivery networks so that others could learn from the experiences and could implement similar programs (Caliber, 2007). The 3-year study was conducted in three phases. The first phase was an evaluability assessment in which eight initial program sites were assessed to determine whether their goals and objectives were well specified and measurable and whether their service models were clearly defined (Caliber, 2007). As a result of this assessment, the three sites (FFP, CAST, and AATC) were selected for further evaluation (Caliber, 2007). Phase 2 consisted of planning, implementing, and conducting the evaluation. This phase described how the three programs were planned and implemented, and what their impacts were in the areas of system changes, community changes, and client changes (Caliber, 2007). The third phase involved intensive case studies with the clients (Caliber, 2007). Methods included a key partner survey, a network survey, interviews with key partners and trafficking victims, and analysis of core performance measures. Table 2 provides some basic demographic information on the interview participants, such as sex, region of origin, and the sector of trafficking. A limitation of the Caliber evaluation of the Comprehensive Services is that the evaluation presents results across the three sites and does not distinguish between the sites.

Evaluation of the Central Texas Coalition Against Human Trafficking

The CTCAHT was founded in the summer of 2003 in response to Austin's first case of human trafficking (Busch et al., 2007). The CTCAHT consists of members representing law enforcement and social services from the local, state, and federal levels of the United States (Busch et al., 2007). It provides a number of victim services including the following: victim needs assessments; immediate and ongoing medical attention; immediate and more permanent housing; mental health assessment and referral to counseling services; referral for legal representation and immigration assistance; assistance with job preparation; financial assistance and guidance with budgeting; cultural, city, and public transportation system orientation; assistance applying to public benefit programs; and interpretation services (Busch et al., 2007).

The evaluation of the CTCAHT was conducted over a period of 18 months and sought to evaluate several components of the CTCAHT program, including network and collaboration between service providers and law enforcement, identification of victims, adequacy of

community services, and achievement of program objectives (Busch et al., 2007). The evaluation focused on several groups including service providers, law enforcement personnel, and victims of human trafficking. The evaluators used several instruments for study, including a semi-structured questionnaire with 18 open-ended questions for coalition member interviews, a semi-structured questionnaire with 10 opened-ended questions for victims, and a client satisfaction survey (Busch et al., 2007).

FINDINGS

The major themes identified through the thematic analysis of the evaluation reports were trafficking victims' support needs, support services provided, elements of effective service delivery, gaps in service provision, and barriers to effective service provision. The themes are discussed in this section of the article to elucidate the links, and gaps, between victims' support needs and the services provided.

Victims' Support Needs

A common thread across the evaluations was that victims' needs change over time with basic survival needs coming first followed later by needs in the areas of mental health, housing, education, job training, and employment. In the immediate period after escaping the trafficking situation, victims require the following: emergency accommodation; food, clothing, and other personal necessities; mental and dental care; and safety from traffickers. As basic survival needs are met, the focus shifts toward recovering from the trafficking experience and beginning to build autonomous lives. In this phase, transitional or permanent housing becomes a priority for victims, as well as obtaining education or job training and work permits so that victims can seek legal employment.

The evaluations determined that clients' needs did not differ in regard to their trafficking experience, age, country of origin, or mode of entry into the program. The evaluations also found that victims generally did not want to return to their home country after the trafficking experience. Instead of repatriation, clients wanted immigration issues to be resolved so that they could obtain permanent resident status or citizenship in the United States, long-term, legal employment, independent and permanent housing, language competency, and, for some, reunification with family members by bringing them to the United States. In the longer term, while some victims still remained dependent on their service providers several years after the trafficking experience ended, others expressed a desire to reject the "victim" label and to put their experience behind them. For those who remained involved in drawn out criminal cases or appeals processes, there were obvious barriers to achieving this goal.

Support Services Provided to Victims

The review of the three evaluation reports determined that the three programs provided similar support services to human-trafficking victims across the various sites. These services included legal services, case management, housing, interpretation/translation, medical and mental health support, and employment training. Across the three evaluations, intensive one-on-one case

management was identified as central for supporting victims. Such intensive case management included but was not limited to conducting intake and assessments, educating clients about their rights as victims of human trafficking, explaining social service benefits to clients, establishing safety plans, providing emotional support and crisis intervention, advocating for clients with other service providers and law enforcement, assisting with transportation needs, making referrals and appointments on behalf of clients, coordinating services, and following up on services provided by other organizations.

The evaluations determined that case managers need to be realistic in regard to what can be achieved with victims in the precertification period, which is dominated by the need to meet basic safety, housing, and food needs. A key task of case managers is to help clients understand the importance of achieving access to essential services in the precertification period, as clients frequently want to quickly progress to concentrating on longer term goals such as sorting out their legal status and securing employment.

An Ecological Perspective of Elements of Effective Service Delivery

The information presented in the three evaluations suggests that the programs were providing comprehensive support services for human-trafficking victims across the various sites. Each of the evaluation reports discusses the various elements of effective service delivery that were identified by the researchers. The reports identify that case managers are at the forefront of effective service delivery for human-trafficking victims.

Social work ecological theory serves as a relevant theoretical framework for understanding the approach embedded in the support services provided to trafficking victims. Bronfenbrenner described the ecological perspective as human beings "nestled" in a set of influential structures (1979, p. 3). In a social work setting, this implies that individuals and systems are in continuous interaction with each other and that this interaction is either overtly or more clandestinely understood by clients and systems (Busch-Armendariz, Busch Nsonwu, & Heffron, 2014). Current thinking on the ecological perspective provides practitioners with an integrative approach to service delivery that allows for new ways of assessing and overcoming problems (Pardeck, 2015). Social workers and others working in the support services space can now conceptualize the problems confronting their clients in such a way that effective support involves working with the client and also the systems that facilitate social functioning such as the community (Pardeck, 2015). Six professional roles have evolved from the ecological framework. These six professional roles allow the practitioner to work effectively with five basic client systems—the individual, the family, the small group, the organization, and the community. The six professional roles are the following: (a) The conferee, who focuses on actions that are taken when the practitioner serves as the primary source of assistance to the client in problem solving; (b) the enabler, who focuses on actions taken when the practitioner arranges and manipulates events to facilitate and enhance system functioning; (c) the broker, who links the client with goods and services; (d) the mediator, whose objective is to reconcile opposing points of view and to bring stakeholders together; (e) the advocate, who secures services or resources on behalf of the client; and (f) the guardian, who takes protective action when the client's competency level is deemed inadequate (Pardeck, 2015). According to Pardeck, in the ecological perspective there is a blurring of roles and a tendency to cluster responsibilities rather than to treat them as distinct. The ecological perspective provides a useful framework for understanding the support

needs of trafficking victims and the activities of the professionals that provide services to victims, as it seeks to analyze partnership structures and to increase understanding and coordination among service-provider network partners and between victims and service providers. Central to the ecological perspective is the social worker or case manager, who sits in a strategic position to observe, to coordinate, and to manipulate the actions and activities of service providers to improve streamlined service provision to trafficking victims. From this strategic position, the case manager is able to see how a victim's experiences and needs may be affected by the criminal justice system, service providers, and other agencies and individuals and to subsequently plan for and to manage such events.

The most critical element of effective service delivery to victims of human trafficking is the appointment of a single point-of-contact person to support and to coordinate service delivery across multiple organizations to victims. This single point-of-contact person is the case manager. The case manager serves an important role as a social worker and also the point of contact for coordinating various professionals to provide support services to clients. Thus, the case-manager position demands that this person must possess knowledge and expertise about the range of services required by and available to trafficking victims. Case managers are not only the trafficking victims' first point of contact for receiving services and being referred to various support services but also the person who must learn about the background and context of each client, must establish trust, and must ensure that clients become autonomous. Case managers are seen by clients as persons who need to teach clients skills rather than simply performing tasks on behalf of clients. In this regard, case managers take on a more significant role than might be initially expected. The evaluations determined that case-manager qualifications and skills that are necessary for working effectively with trafficking victims include being culturally sensitive and having prior experience working with trafficking victims. Case managers must have knowledge of the overall "context" of each client so that case managers do not set clients up for failure with goals that are not achievable, which is important as the service eligibility timeframe is limited.

Human-trafficking victim support programs frequently work in networks with service-provider agencies such as education, employment, and health service agencies. The role of the case manager is to identify each victim's support needs and, in cases where those needs cannot be immediately provided by the program, refer the client to a network partner or other service provider that can provide the required support. Some of these networks have become formalized arrangements and aim to provide streamlined and effective service delivery to trafficking victims within short time frames. Therefore, central to effective service delivery is the commitment of key partners involved in service delivery networks. Embracing a shared vision for the collaborative initiative, working from a mutual definition of who is a trafficking victim and working collaboratively to accomplish identified goals are all critical factors for success. Another important element for effective service delivery is coordination with federal and local law enforcement. Other elements of effective service delivery include the following: consistency of membership and meetings; effective communication and trust building among members; service coordination; support partners' motivation; policy support; and service/resource availability. Aspects of the programs that enhance effective identification and service delivery in human-trafficking cases include the institution of a single point of contact, the relationship building process among key stakeholders and service-provider partners, and relationship building between victims and providers of service.

Because the Comprehensive Services evaluation (Caliber, 2007) was conducted over a 3-year period, that evaluation was able to track improvements in service delivery at the target sites over the 3 years. The evaluation found that clients had their basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter met and the majority of clients felt comfortable and safe working with the various service providers (Caliber, 2007). Over the 3-year period, the evaluators found that with more staff training, greater case management experience, and ongoing communication about the challenges associated with service delivery, the entire process from intake through to referral and follow up became significantly more coordinated at the three sites (Caliber, 2007). During interviews for the evaluation, program staff indicated that clients often did not know which agency was responsible for the services they were receiving or were unable to link the services that they were receiving to the initiative, which interview participants suggested was a possible indicator of seamless service delivery and a focus on services provided rather than the provider of services (Caliber, 2007).

Gaps in Service Provision and Barriers to Effective Service Provision

In addition to identifying the elements of effective service delivery, the three evaluations also identified gaps in service provision and barriers to effective, streamlined victim support service provision. Identified challenges and barriers to effective service provision included the following: insufficient organizational capacity and resources; funding constraints regarding victim eligibility; service needs extending beyond the providers' expertise; difficulty identifying victims; clients not wanting to work with law enforcement; confidentiality concerns; and difficulties liaising with law enforcement. With regards to program staff, limitations were identified as the lack of training among key staff in identifying and supporting trafficking victims and the inability to provide multilingual program staff and translation services. Further, some clients did not perceive that the coalition agencies were working together effectively. Service delivery was not as coordinated or seamless as partners had anticipated; referrals were sometimes not followed up and thus clients sometimes fell through the cracks. Also, information was not always communicated between service providers in a timely manner and therefore clients were left without answers and important information regarding their cases.

The evaluations identified two external barriers that create ongoing challenges for the case managers' ability to provide streamlined victim support services—access to appropriate and affordable housing and access to health services. Housing was identified as a significant problem for many clients across the various sites. Locating housing was considered extremely difficult, particularly transitional and permanent housing and housing for male clients, children, and families. Case managers spent a great amount of time searching for independent housing and, when an apartment was eventually found, they often encountered difficulty with the property owners and disputes about appliances and utilities. Another housing issue was that clients often encountered problems in shelters, where they were placed together as roommates. Housing situations were generally unstable with clients moving frequently and periods of semi-homelessness involving living with friends or acquaintances. Some clients were unable to achieve self-sufficiency because they were waiting for employment authorization documents and were living in shelters or transitional housing. Case managers found it difficult to change the situation due to insufficient program funding to provide acceptable and safe housing.

The second key external barrier to effective service provision was that of service access such as access to health care. The evaluations found that case managers frequently took clients to health clinics and found that the clinics had been closed, they did not take appointments, or clients had to wait to get a number and, by the time they got it, the clinic would not see any more clients that day. In addition, some clinics required a special clinic identification card that could only be obtained at a different location, they did not accept the client's identification, there were problems with referrals and paperwork, or they demanded payment on the spot, amongst other barriers. Affordable medical care was difficult to find as "free" clinics were not always cost free and, in some cases, clients were not eligible to receive free medical care because they were undocumented. In other cases, the waiting list was weeks or even months long. Other identified issues were agencies not accepting clients' documents or understanding their situation, even when those agencies were members of the support networks and their staff had received training on human trafficking. The evaluations found that those partners who could provide medical care often found themselves stretched to capacity. The evaluations identified the need for more partners from among housing providers, medical and dental care, and also education and job-training programs.

While housing and medical needs were identified as two areas in which case managers were likely to experience difficulty meeting client needs, other needs that were difficult to meet included dental care, job placement, and translation services for certain dialects. Meeting some needs was considered difficult because some clients were located a significant distance from the key partners. Other unmet needs identified by clients included needs related to sourcing culturally appropriate food. Obtaining culturally appropriate food for clients was particularly a struggle during the early days following rescue. Cultural barriers faced by participants also included discomfort with individual and group counseling services and language barriers. The evaluations also identified the lack of strategic planning for large groups of victims, lack of encouragement of aggressive prosecution of cases, and the waiting period before issuance of work authorization as major barriers to program success.

DISCUSSION

The review of the program evaluations determines that the programs experienced a certain level of success in terms of their ability to provide both emergency and longer term support for trafficking victims. Across all the evaluations, the institution of a single point of contact—the case manager—is central to program success. Areas of success include the collaborative approach to service delivery across agencies. Necessary to this collaboration is an agreed vision of the programs' goals, trust among partner agencies and their representatives, and rapport between victims and case managers and other program staff. All three evaluations concluded that the programs were relatively successful at meeting the core needs of victims and, despite the various barriers, in supporting the clients with accessing appropriate housing, medical, and employment services.

The evaluations also highlight some gaps in service provision and barriers that create obstacles to effective service delivery. These include the need for ongoing, appropriate referrals to, in particular, medical centers where victims can access free medical services. Trafficking victims' medical needs often require more than a simple check-up and the evaluations highlight

that accessing free-of-charge medical services is extremely challenging for case managers. Case managers also experience ongoing issues with locating affordable housing for victims. Further, a lack of funding is considered a constant threat to effective service provision. To an extent these barriers can be considered external barriers in that the ability of case managers to overcome the barriers is limited. Furthermore, they are issues that are not limited to human-trafficking support programs and are, in fact, problems experienced by nongovernment agencies across the United States. Funding cuts are a problem experienced by a significant number of nongovernment agencies that are in constant competition over scarce private and government funding. The evaluations also highlight a number of internal barriers and gaps in service provision. These include a lack of training among key staff in identifying and supporting trafficking victims, inadequate outreach to victims, particularly those living at a distance from the service providers, and the inability to provide multilingual program staff and translation services.

Beyond the discussion of the highlights of service delivery and gaps in service provision, the review of the evaluations also uncovered some other interesting findings regarding human-trafficking victims' support needs. For example, the evaluations all determined that no matter what kind of exploitation or trafficking victims have experienced or where they are from, their support needs are similar. Victims all require assistance with securing housing, medical, and legal support in the immediate period after the trafficking experience, and, in the medium term, all victims require access to education and employment support, language support, ongoing support during the criminal justice process, and, for some, support to reunite with families. Another key finding is that working in coalitions is essential for effective service provision to human-trafficking victims. No single organization working alone is able to support the complex needs of trafficking victims. Therefore, working in coalitions is central to effective service provision. The evaluations identified that working in partnerships with government and non-government organizations that have expertise in identifying victims and supporting victims' legal, housing, medical, and education needs is crucial for streamlined service provision. Central to the partnerships is the case manager who is responsible for keeping abreast of the activities of each partner agency and for performing the multiple roles of conferee, enabler, broker, mediator, advocate, and guardian. The case manager anticipates clients' needs and swiftly and adeptly refers clients to various partners in order to access a variety of services and support.

It would be remiss to not also consider whether the evaluations were successful in answering their own key research questions, particularly the questions regarding the outcomes of the programs on the clients. The three evaluation reports provide solid answers to questions regarding the strengths of the programs, the effectiveness of the partner agencies at working collaboratively, and the barriers to program success. The reports all present positive information about the programs' processes and the services provided to trafficking victims. All three evaluations suggest that the various programs had fulfilled their objective of providing relatively streamlined services to human-trafficking victims. The evaluation reports do well to highlight the external barriers that render the provision of support services complex and somewhat cumbersome, such as lack of funding, lack of free medical services, lack of health and mental health services, long waiting times to receive "free" services, and a lack of appropriate and affordable housing. These are all important barriers that the case managers are unlikely, in the near future at least, to be able to overcome themselves. Rather, it will probably remain the case that case managers will be obliged to do their best with limited funds and in a services-poor environment.

What the three reports lack is an intricate discussion of the impact of the programs on the lives of the clients. Potocky's (2010) study is the only evaluation of the three reviewed that considers the key question of how the program (FFP) improved the clients' lives. Based on Goal Attainment Scaling and an outcome assessment, Potocky presents a fairly mixed bag of results with some clients (49%) experiencing improvements in their immigration status while others (51%) experiencing no change. With regards to improvements in health, Potocky found that about a third (37%) of clients experienced an improvement in health status, while a third experienced no change whatsoever, and 2% actually experienced deterioration in health. While this information is useful and goes some way towards answering the question of whether the support programs improved clients' lives, the readers are only given a small snapshot of the outcomes for clients in the immediate to short term, and there is no information about whether the program improved the clients' lives in the longer term. Thus, a limitation of all three evaluations is that the evaluators did not give sufficient consideration to how the programs have improved clients' lives and what the outcomes for clients were in the long term.

Any attempt to understand whether support programs have improved clients' lives should ask the question of the clients themselves to gather firsthand information, which is something the Potocky (2010) evaluation failed to do. Potocky explains that the evaluation of the FFP was conducted five years after the program was implemented and, thus, the findings of the evaluation are "suggestive only, not conclusive" (2010, p. 380). Program evaluations must consider the perspectives of the clients and this may primarily be achieved through interviews with program clients. Further, any attempt to measure the success or impact of a human-trafficking support program must consider the impact of the program on the lives of victims beyond the first few months of support and must consider whether victims' medium-to-long-term needs have been met by the programs.

CONCLUSION

As this article explored human-trafficking victims' support needs and the services provided by support programs, it is important to conclude with some reflections on areas where improvements could be made in improving the provision of support for trafficking victims. First, institutionalized protocols would be helpful in formalizing interagency human-trafficking support networks. Such protocols could provide clarity to agencies participating in the networks about their core responsibilities to victims and to the partnerships. Second, communication should be enhanced between the key agencies to ensure streamlined service provision. This includes communication between service providers and also with the trafficking victims. Third, expanding funding sources is crucial to effective victim service provision. Agencies that support victims are constantly chasing narrowing funding windows. Fourth, efforts should be made to work collaboratively with key government agencies that work on issues associated with housing and medical care, and to identify new partners that can assist with locating appropriate and affordable housing and medical care.

An important final note is that, while the three evaluations reviewed for this study provide valuable information about human-trafficking victims' support needs, there is still a long way to go in human trafficking research and evaluation. There have no doubt been more human-trafficking support program evaluations in the past several years but few are publicly available

and even fewer have been through a peer-review process and published in academic journals. To better understand the effectiveness of support programs for human-trafficking victims, more quality evaluations need to be conducted. Longitudinal studies of human-trafficking support programs are important for determining the effectiveness of support programs and the positive outcomes of the programs on clients. In the future, metaevaluations should also be conducted to assess the impact and effectiveness of human-trafficking support services in the United States and other countries. It is also recommended that studies be conducted on client attrition levels, that is, a study of the number of support program clients and what happens to those clients who, for various known and unknown reasons, exit the support programs.

While the United States appears to be taking the lead on the evaluation of human-trafficking support programs, similar evaluations need to be conducted in other countries. For example, to date an evaluation of Australia's Support for Trafficked Persons program has not been conducted despite the program running for a number of years. Considering the complex, critical support needs of human-trafficking victims, the seriousness of the crime of human trafficking, and the volume of funding that has poured into human-trafficking programs, the current dearth of program evaluations is concerning. This study concludes there is a need to conduct more quality program evaluations that consider the question of how the programs have improved clients' lives and to make the evaluation reports available for other service providers, practitioners, and scholars so that valuable lessons learned may be shared and services to victims improved.

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