Child Abuse Review(2014)
Published online in Wiley Online Library
(wileyonlinelibrary.com) DOI: 10.1002/car.2307

British Children Can Be Trafficked Too: Towards an Inclusive Definition of Internal Child Sex Trafficking

Helen Brayley*
Ella Cockbain
Department of Security and Crime Science, University College London, UK

In research, policy and practice, internal trafficking has been long overshadowed by its international counterpart. Despite the introduction of specific legislation against internal sex trafficking, confusion remains in Britain around how this crime is distinguished from other forms of sexual exploitation. In particular, there have been growing tensions around whether British children can be victims. The need for clarity and consistency has been highlighted by a series of high-profile cases involving British minors being moved within the UK for sexual exploitation. This article brings ongoing definitional debate into the academic arena, exploring the contents and validity of common arguments against accepting Britons as valid victims. It engages with academic studies, government and third-sector reports, parliamentary debate and legal statute. Additionally, it features arguments raised by practitioners and policy-makers at conferences, training and meetings. It proposes an inclusive and more clearly delineated definition of internal child sex trafficking. The acceptance and application of a standardised definition would facilitate more effective, transparent and consistent multi-agency interventions and data collection. The article will be of interest to practitioners, policy-makers and academics. It focuses on the UK but contributes to wider international discourse around internal trafficking.

KEY PRACTITIONER MESSAGES:

- Internal trafficking must be better understood and more clearly defined.
- In the UK, confusion has focused on whether Britons can be internally sex trafficked.
- Both internal sex trafficking law and associated legislative intent readily accommodate British victims.
- There are practical and theoretical flaws in the most common arguments against labelling Britons as trafficked.
- A new inclusive definition of internal child sex trafficking is proposed: its application could support more cohesive, consistent and transparent policy, practice and data monitoring.

KEY WORDS: trafficking; exploitation; definition; grooming

Correspondence to: Helen Brayley, Department of Security and Crime Science, University College London, 35 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9EZ, UK. E-mail: uctzhbr@ucl.ac.uk

‘There have been growing tensions around whether British children can be victims’

‘Both internal sex trafficking law and associated legislative intent readily accommodate British victims.’

Accepted: 20 July 2013

'The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons … for the purpose of exploitation'

'We aim to stimulate honest and open debate around conceptions and definitions of internal child sex trafficking'

'The issue of victims' nationality has proved contentious'

Human trafficking takes many forms, of which trafficking for sexual exploitation (sex trafficking) is the best understood (Laczko, 2005). Much national counter-trafficking legislation, Britain's included, draws upon the definition in the United Nations' (UN) (2000) Palermo Protocol: 'the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons … for the purpose of exploitation' (Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children, Supplement to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, p. 43). Yet, despite increased academic and policy interest in trafficking, the discourse has focused overwhelmingly on international trafficking, neglecting the 'unique characteristics and challenges' of internal, or domestic, trafficking (Laczko and Gozdziak, 2005; Winterdyk and Reichel, 2010, p. 9).

The Sexual Offences Act (SOA) 2003 introduced specific legislation against internal sex trafficking (section 58) which is formulated inclusively to accommodate all victims moved within the UK for the purposes of exploitation, regardless of their nationality. Nonetheless, there has been considerable disagreement around whether UK nationals can truly be trafficked internally. As this controversy has focused primarily on child victims, so do we in this article, although many aspects to the discussion are relevant to adult victims. Children are defined here as under-18-year olds, in accordance with international norms (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 1). With this article, we aim to stimulate honest and open debate around conceptions and definitions of internal child sex trafficking by exploring issues central to the labelling of this phenomenon. We will consider practitioners' (including children's services, third sector and law enforcement), policy-makers' and academics' conceptions of and responses to both internal child sex trafficking and child sexual exploitation (CSE) more broadly. We summarise the current response to internal child sex trafficking involving Britons before addressing four of the most commonly encountered arguments against labelling British children as trafficked: it misinterprets legal intent; the CSE label alone suffices; trafficking involves long-distance movement; and trafficking involves long-term confinement. We examine each contention, discussing its limitations and ramifications. Finally, we propose definitional parameters for internal child sex trafficking, which build upon legal criteria and accommodate all victims, regardless of nationality.

Recent years have seen new impetus to improve policy and practice around internal sex trafficking (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), 2010; Trafficking Victims Protection Act 2006). Once thought of as largely confined to developing nations, such as Haiti, Cambodia and the Philippines (Skinner, 2008), Western countries increasingly acknowledge internal sex trafficking within their own borders (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes, 2008). Europe, Austria, Latvia, The Netherlands, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden and the UK all explicitly legislate against some form of internal sex trafficking (FRA, 2009). In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, this takes the form of the criminal offence of 'trafficking within the UK for sexual exploitation', proscribed under section 58 of the SOA 2003 (hereafter section 58). The issue of victims' nationality has proved contentious. In theory, at least, internal child sex trafficking can take two forms. First, individuals who have been trafficked *into* a country can then be re-trafficked *within* its borders. Second, individuals

DOI: 10.1002/car

can be trafficked within their own country of origin. Section 58 does not discriminate between these two cases: an offence is made out when someone intentionally arranges or facilitates another's travel within the UK with the intent that they, or a third party, commit a relevant sexual offence. The law makes no distinction by victims' gender, age or nationality; in simple legal terms, therefore, British minors *can* be internally sex trafficked.

In practice, however, internal child sex trafficking is rarely a stand-alone offence, but rather part of a broader range of criminal activity, encompassing offences from rape to child pornography to false imprisonment (Brayley *et al*., 2011). Cases can be large and complex: the biggest internal child sex trafficking investigation to date, Operation Retriever, involved 13 defendants and 26 complainants. Several internal child sex trafficking investigations have highlighted commercial exploitation, whereby victims have been routinely sold for as little as £10 for penetrative sex. In many cases, however, there is no financial dimension to the exploitation: victims are simply shared around between co-offenders at parties or other social gatherings (Brayley *et al*., 2011; Cockbain *et al*., 2011). Offenders' motivations in such cases may include a desire to increase their status or gain kudos within the offending group.

'In many cases… there is no financial dimension to the exploitation'

At present, there is no clear and consensual definition of internal child sex trafficking distinguishing it from other forms of CSE. At a practitioner level, there is considerable inconsistency around the interpretation of 'internal trafficking'. A UK-based study into professionals' responses to child trafficking found that British children were mentioned as victims only by those who did not work near international hubs (e.g. airports) and by implication did not routinely encounter victims from abroad (Pearce, 2011). This suggests an implicit hierarchy about 'real' trafficking.

The UK government's *Action Plan on Tackling Human Trafficking* (Home Office, 2007) highlighted concerns about British children being sex trafficked within the UK. Nonetheless, tensions persist around the application of the internal child sex trafficking label to Britons. This has been most pronounced in disagreements between the UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) and the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP), both affiliates of the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) and, until recently, the respective UK leads on trafficking and CSE. The UKHTC recognises British children as trafficking victims: their most recent statistics showed British to be the most common nationality among children trafficked into, within and from the UK (SOCA, 2011). The proportion of British nationals is striking given that they may be less likely to be reported to the UKHTC, due to confusion about whether they qualify as trafficked, than victims who are foreign nationals. CEOP, meanwhile, seems unconvinced of the trafficking label as applied to Britons; inconsistencies are apparent between their formal stance and working practices. Thus, although Britons are included in some, but not all, written assessments of child trafficking (CEOP, 2007, 2011a), the label has been avoided where possible (e.g. CEOP, 2011b, 2012). As CEOP has recently assumed the lead on child trafficking in the UK, it is all the more pressing that the confusion around Britons' status is resolved.

'The proportion of British nationals is striking given that they may be less likely to be reported'

The labels given to a phenomenon have far-reaching implications, affecting not least responses from policy-makers, statutory agencies and the third sector (CEOP, 2011b; Jago and Pearce, 2008). From a tactical perspective, a common

DOI: 10.1002/car

frame of reference is crucial in supporting information collection and retrieval, partnership working and establishing and sharing 'best practice'. Strategically, how issues are framed affects resource allocation, prioritisation and monitoring: clear, consensual definitions are the cornerstone of systematic data collection, analysis and dissemination. The efficacy of child protection processes is, therefore, inhibited by the lack of a clear, consensual definition of internal child sex trafficking.

The perspectives explored here will prove valuable to policy-makers, practitioners and academics in the UK and internationally who seek to consolidate their understanding of internal child sex trafficking, internal sex trafficking and internal trafficking more generally. The issues discussed have clear implications for the development and provision of effective policy, victim support services, policing models and data collection systems. We endeavour throughout to situate this debate within the wider discourse around CSE and trafficking, referencing academic and other published reports and records (e.g. from Hansard) where possible. Where published material such as this is unavailable, due to the topic's relative novelty, we reference instead perspectives voiced at diverse conferences, training days and meetings.

'We endeavour throughout to situate this debate within the wider discourse around CSE and trafficking'

Current Responses to Internal Child Sex Trafficking with British Victims

Numerous government reports and third-sector studies have highlighted concerns around the internal trafficking of British children for sexual exploitation (CEOP, 2007; Home Office, 2007; Barnardo's, 2009, 2011; Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), 2009). The National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People, a large collective of child protection practitioners and researchers, has called for a better understanding of internal child sex trafficking involving British victims. This phenomenon has also been explored within a broader CSE framework, often without being explicitly identified as trafficking (e.g. CEOP, 2011b). Within the media, internal child sex trafficking cases are frequently referred to by the recent coinage 'on-street grooming'. This is an ill-defined term often conflated with so-called 'Asian sex gangs' (see Cockbain, 2013a).

The first academic research to explore internal child sex trafficking in the UK analysed police data from two of the earliest and largest investigations into the systematic recruitment, grooming, movement and exploitation of British children (Brayley *et al*., 2011; Cockbain *et al*., 2011). Together these operations involved 25 offenders, 36 victims and many hundreds of instances of abuse. Offenders operated in loose networks comprising pre-existing social bonds, far from the stereotype of sexual predators joined by a furtive interest in children (Cockbain *et al*., 2011). As part of respective doctoral projects (Brayley, 2013; Cockbain, 2013), we have since analysed four further major police operations, finding that offenders were almost exclusively male, ranging in age from late teens to early sixties and victims were all female, typically aged 12–17-years old. Research into 'localised grooming', which includes but is not limited to internal child sex trafficking, reiterated the predominance, although not exclusivity, of the male perpetrator/female victim model. Consequently, this phenomenon deserves recognition within the Home Office Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (Home Office, 2011).

'This phenomenon deserves recognition within the Home Office Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy'

DOI: 10.1002/car

In these six operations (Brayley, 2013; Cockbain, 2013b), the trafficking element was evident in the way that offenders transported victims to abuse locations to exploit them themselves or deliver them to waiting clients. The movements varied greatly, including short distances within a single town, mid-length distances to isolated places such as parklands or local beauty spots and longer trips between towns and cities. While most victims in these six operations were moved in such a way on at least one occasion, not every exploitation incident involved such movement. When an abuser, for example, travels to their victim who remains static, this does not qualify as trafficking under section 58. Investigations may, therefore, involve both trafficking and non-trafficking elements of exploitation.

'Offenders transported victims to abuse locations to exploit them themselves or deliver them to waiting clients'

Compared to static CSE incidents, the movement element of internal child sex trafficking can create additional challenges to prevention, detection and investigation. Transportation to unfamiliar locations, for example, increases the victims' reliance on their abusers to get home: this can encourage compliance with sexual demands and later impede the identification of crime scenes and criminals. Moreover, if exploitation spans different administrative areas, this can frustrate effective multi-agency collaboration and information sharing. While there are no doubt particular challenges unique to victims of internal child sex trafficking who are foreign nationals, such as language barriers or fear of deportation, there are also many characteristics common to victims who are both British and non-British nationals.

'Many characteristics common to victims who are both British and non-British nationals'

Neither internal trafficking in general nor internal child sex trafficking in particular appears to be well known or well understood among statutory or third-sector practitioners. Consequently, there has been little consistency as to when police and children's services, among others, have identified issues as internal child sex trafficking. Individual agents' familiarity with the concept of internal child sex trafficking and local precedent appear as important as the actual behaviour involved in determining whether cases are investigated and/or prosecuted as trafficking. From a policing angle, near-identical criminal behaviour has been construed as internal child sex trafficking in one force and CSE alone in another. Similarly, the Crown Prosecution Service's willingness to charge cases under section 58 has not appeared directly related to the extent and function of the movement involved. It remains unclear whether this is due to a lack of awareness of section 58, disbelief that Britons can be internally trafficked or concerns around the section's formulation, for example, the 'double intent' requirement (intentional movement *and* intentional exploitation). In 2012, the situation changed when eight offenders across two investigations were convicted of section 58 offences against British children. These landmark cases may affect future policing and prosecution. As a result of the limited sample, however, it has not yet been possible to assess the benefits, if any, of charging under section 58. In future, simple guidelines based on an agreed definition, as proposed here, could ensure more consistent multi-agency responses and establish a clearer national standard.

'These landmark cases may affect future policing and prosecution'

Arguments Against Accepting Britons as Internal Child Sex Trafficking Victims

It has been argued by practitioners, policy-makers and academics that British children are not true trafficking victims and that internal child sex trafficking is a

DOI: 10.1002/car

'Surprisingly there have been no publications elucidating why Britons should not be considered as trafficked'

label best reserved for foreign nationals. Explanation and evidence for such contentions have rarely been forthcoming and surprisingly there have been no publications elucidating why Britons should not be considered as trafficked. This section introduces four of the most commonly encountered arguments against considering Britons as legitimate internal child sex trafficking victims. The problematic implications of accepting these arguments wholesale are explored and in each case counter-arguments are offered. In doing so, we consider diverse sources, including academic, government, law enforcement and third-sector publications, utilising anecdotal references only where published references do not exist.

Calling Britons Trafficking Victims Misinterprets the Law on Internal Sex Trafficking

During a recent police training day focusing on CSE investigations and at numerous conferences aimed at victim support professionals, it has been argued that applying the internal trafficking label to British children deliberately misinterprets the legislative intent behind section 58. According to this contention, this offence was designed to relate solely to foreign nationals moved within the UK.

This matter can be easily settled by reviewing documentation pertinent to the changes in legislation. The explanatory notes to the Sexual Offences Bill state that section 58

> 'is intended to apply both to UK nationals who are moved from one place to another in the UK to be sexually exploited as well as to others, including foreign nationals' (House of Lords, 2003, para 49).

'Human Trafficking Bill 2010 made no attempt to narrow the definition of internal sex trafficking to exclude British nationals'

Speaking in the House of Lords, the then Home Secretary David Blunkett emphasised that the new sex trafficking offences should be applied 'to persons trafficked in the UK, whether they are British citizens or foreign nationals' (Hansard HL Deb 19 November 2002, col 878). Importantly, the recent Human Trafficking (Further Provisions and Support for Victims) HL Bill 2010 made no attempt to narrow the definition of internal sex trafficking to exclude British nationals. Conversely, the internal trafficking of British citizens is specifically covered in the *UK Action Plan on Tackling Human Trafficking* and has been actively pursued by the UKHTC (Home Office, 2007).

When British Children are Involved, It is 'Just' CSE, Not Trafficking

Despite calling for a 'holistic, inclusive understanding' of internal trafficking, Pearce (2011, p. 13) appears sceptical as to the value and validity of including Britons. Pearce infers that 'confusions over the definitions of internal trafficking could create an 'attention hierarchy" (p. 12), disadvantaging foreign nationals, and may legitimise an 'othering' of offenders (see Cockbain, 2013a). Anecdotal arguments against considering Britons as trafficked have often claimed that they do not *need* the label, as their requirements are already met under existing CSE provisions. Below, we argue why this is an inaccurate representation of British victims' reality.

DOI: 10.1002/car

The standard definition of CSE set out in the DCSF (2009) guidance states:

> 'Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities' (p. 9)

Not only is this definition so broad that it could arguably be applied to almost any form of child sexual abuse (CSA), but it also clearly encompasses a huge range of behaviour. To illustrate, consider the differences between the characteristics and challenges in two cases. First, a lone offender befriends a runaway child, offering them accommodation in exchange for sex. Second, a trafficker recruits 30 children and forces them to have sex with them, their friends and paying clients numerous times over a period of months. Both these cases constitute CSE. Yet, they clearly require different responses, including in terms of victim support. CSE has only recently become more widely recognised as a distinct type of CSA, something noted years earlier by certain researchers (e.g. Itzin, 2000). Now this progress has been consolidated, it is important to further distinguish between CSE's component sub-types.

'Both these cases constitute CSE. Yet, they clearly require different responses'

Internal child sex trafficking, for example, is distinguished from other forms of CSE by certain idiosyncrasies, in the main associated with the movement that it entails. It is misleading, however, to see CSE and internal child sex trafficking as conflicting entities. By definition all sex trafficking involves sexual exploitation, consequently all child sex trafficking involves CSE but not all CSE is child sex trafficking. To argue that Britons should be dealt with only as victims of CSE and not internal child sex trafficking is to suggest that responses should be framed to the overarching crime type rather than the specific sub-type. Should this be true, it would then be illogical to contend that victims who are foreign nationals should be dealt with as trafficked. Nonetheless, this is exactly the approach often encountered in the UK. It is only rational to treat internal child sex trafficking victims consistently as either trafficking victims *or* as general CSE victims, irrespective of nationality. While we appreciate that internal child sex trafficking victims who are foreign nationals, already a marginalised population (Kelly *et al*., 2012), may be more disadvantaged than their British equivalents, this in itself is no reason not to recognise British victims as internally trafficked.

Although definitional theory should not perhaps be shaped by practical concerns, it is worth noting here that arguments that British children gain little from the trafficking label are ill-founded. Given widely publicised flaws in local safeguarding children boards' responses to CSE, it is doubtful that British children's needs are fully met within traditional CSE frameworks (Jago *et al*., 2011). In contrast, where a case is seen as involving internal child sex trafficking, the police and other statutory agencies have been able to seek additional support from the UKHTC, with whom British victims can be registered through the UK's National Referral Mechanism (NRM). The UKHTC and SOCA more generally have been able to offer strategic and tactical guidance to these cases, including the provision of vulnerable person's teams to assist with interviewing. Registering Britons with the NRM helps build up the national picture on internal child sex trafficking, especially important given the difficulties in establishing the scale of CSE (see, for

'Arguments that British children gain little from the trafficking label are ill-founded'

DOI: 10.1002/car

example, CEOP, 2011b). Similarly, as trafficking is considered organised crime, which in itself can be disorganised (Reuter, 1983), framing a case as such can help the police and others win resources for what can be very expensive interventions. Thus, for example, Derbyshire Constabulary profiled a group that they believed was sex trafficking British children through the force's Organised Crime Group Matrix. The resultant risk assessment helped secure extensive resources for one of the largest such investigations to date, Operation Retriever. As internal child sex trafficking operations are complex and resource-intensive, the practical importance of this approach cannot be underestimated.

'The practical importance of this approach cannot be underestimated'

Trafficking is About Long-Distance Movements

One of the most common objections to considering Britons as internal child sex trafficking victims has been the misconception that trafficking involves long-distance movement (Taylor, 2009). This statement implicitly judges distances involved in *internal* trafficking against those in *international* trafficking. The two are clearly not comparable: as the real argument is whether Britons are eligible as internal child sex trafficking victims, a more appropriate comparison would be between distances covered by British and non-British victims within the UK. Unfortunately, these data do not exist. Focusing on British victims alone, however, it becomes clear that there is considerable variation in the distances travelled: some are moved within a single locality, others between towns or cities or across the country (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2009).

There is, however, no simple linear relationship between distance trafficked and harm accrued. Even short distances can have considerable effects on victims involved. Transporting someone to unfamiliar surroundings serves to disorientate them and increase their dependency on their trafficker (OSCE, 2010). People tend be most aware of the spaces within which they work or socialise or through which they routinely travel: consequently, even close spaces can be unfamiliar (Brantingham and Brantingham, 1981). Moreover, what may seem a trivial distance to an adult may be significant to a child, especially one whose perception is constrained by the effects of alcohol, drugs and/or fear.

'What may seem a trivial distance to an adult may be significant to a child'

Not only would any minimum distance requirements for internal child sex trafficking be arbitrary and misleading but their application would create numerous difficulties. First, how exactly should this distance be measured? Consider, for example, a victim who has been driven around aimlessly for 90 minutes, covering a total of 50 miles, before being raped two miles from where they were picked up. Have they been trafficked two or 50 miles? Second, does a boundary need to be crossed? In the UK, a county-based approach to judging eligibility for internal trafficking status would favour those victims living in small counties and/or close to county boundaries. Third, what would be an adequate distance? Perceptions of distance vary according to urban and rural locations. Yet, it would be impractical to have a minimum distance for each, since victims can be moved between the two environments. A requirement of being trafficked to a new town or city would be similarly impractical as the relative closeness of urban areas varies considerably across the country.

DOI: 10.1002/car

In order for a case to qualify as internal child sex trafficking, the movement involved should be, we argue, integral to the exploitation. We define an 'integral' movement as one which is both deliberate and directly necessary in order for exploitation to occur. This typically involves a victim being transported to reach a specific location for exploitation, to reach people waiting to abuse them, or both. We believe that the actual distance involved is less relevant than the function that the movement plays in facilitating exploitation. Nonetheless, even with the best intentions it is impossible to cover every eventuality and an element of discretion remains in judging whether a movement is integral.

'The actual distance involved is less relevant than the function that the movement plays in facilitating exploitation'

Trafficking Involves Long-Term Confinement at a Destination

The bulk of resistance to labelling Britons as internal child sex trafficking victims has focused on one or more of the previous three arguments. Less commonly encountered but equally worthy of discussion is the contention, raised in informal discussions by a few practitioners and academics, that British children are subject to insufficient duration of confinement to constitute trafficking.

The typical conception of trafficking is a linear model (Aronowitz, 2001), as shown in Figure 1: a victim is recruited, moved to a new destination and kept there and exploited.

The problem with the notion that victims remain at the destination for a prolonged period is that this is a simplification based on typical sequences of *international* trafficking. Essentially, this conception interprets the destination in a broad sense, as a country rather than a particular location. At a crude level, this model accommodates the internal child sex trafficking of internationally sex-trafficked children once they are in the UK, for example, to meet clients' demand for a fresh supply of children. In fact, their situation is more accurately described in the looped model shown in Figure 2. The issue at stake here, as in the previous discussion around distance, is that those who emphasise the impermanency of British internal child sex trafficking victims' movement implicitly judge them against an *international* trafficking model. Just as minimal distances may strongly influence a victim's perceptions and reactions, so too can short confinements. It is important to remember that during the exploitation the victim may not *know* that their exploiter intends to hold them for a short time only.

'During the exploitation the victim may not *know* that their exploiter intends to hold them for a short time only'

According to our ongoing research (Brayley, 2013; Cockbain, 2013b) into the experiences of British internal child sex trafficking victims, their documented confinements at a trafficking destination have ranged from a few minutes to ten days. As a rule, their exploitation follows a cyclical model, as shown in Figure 3, whereby they are recruited, moved, exploited and then released, only to be picked up again, re-moved and re-exploited on subsequent occasions. Re-victimisation amongst British victims of internal child sex

Figure 1. Linear model of sex trafficking.

DOI: 10.1002/car

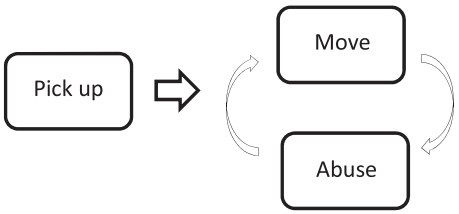

Figure 2. Looped model of sex trafficking.

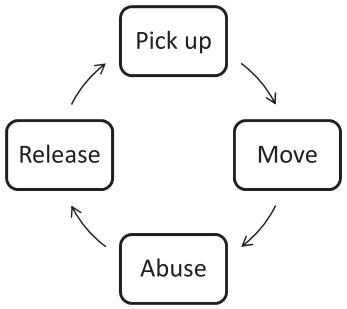

Figure 3. Cyclic model of sex trafficking.

trafficking can be very high, reaching into the tens or even hundreds of instances per victim (Brayley *et al*., 2011).

These findings suggest that we may need to reconsider the meaning of confinement. While it is traditionally understood as a form of physical entrapment it can also encompass psychological entrapment. For British victims, the grooming process plays a critical role in the cycle of exploitation: fear of, attachment to, or love for, their abusers may all prevent victims from leaving (Barnardo's, 2011; Brayley *et al*., 2011). In the international trafficking field, there has been increased impetus towards recognising the power of psychological pressures in controlling victims, even when they might appear free to leave (Motus, 2004). The weeks, months and even years that many British internal child sex trafficking victims spend embroiled in cycles of movement, exploitation and release could be argued to be protracted periods of trafficking. Moreover, those who exploit Britons are in a sense at a great economic advantage over those who deal in victims who are foreign nationals, as they have no extra pressures to house or feed their victims.

'From a legal perspective, the time spent at a trafficking location has never been a factor'

From a legal perspective, the time spent at a trafficking location has never been a factor. Neither national law nor international conventions stipulate that trafficking should involve a minimum confinement or exploitation period. We believe that attempts to impose a minimum time spent at the trafficking destination would be as misguided and fraught with difficulties as the minimum distance requirement discussed above. Once again, there would be important practical and conceptual considerations to resolve. Should, for example, this minimum confinement be a one-off or a cumulative count, calculated across all instances of movement and exploitation? In any case, to meet the legal requirement of section 58 no exploitation need occur: it suffices that movement be arranged or facilitated with intent to exploit. This formulation accommodates cases where victims are identified pre-exploitation: consequently, a minimum time requirement would directly conflict with the law in such instances.

DOI: 10.1002/car

Towards an Inclusive Definition

Much of the disagreement around what constitutes internal child sex trafficking has focused upon the difficulties in distinguishing trafficking from other forms of CSE, particularly where British victims are concerned. Now we attempt to formulate a workable inclusive definition of internal child sex trafficking which we hope will be a starting point for wider debate. Until the UN (2000) Palermo Protocol was introduced, there was no internationally agreed definition of human trafficking. While this definition has its detractors, it, nonetheless, provided some basis for consensus and formed the conceptual basis for most national legislation. Its breadth can, however, limit its practical value. From an international perspective, the crossing of international borders and the victims' status as a foreign national serve as clear markers of an international trafficking case. Internal trafficking, however, has no such obvious indicators, internal child sex trafficking included.

'Internal trafficking, however, has no such obvious indicators'

The definition that we propose builds upon and adheres to the requirements of both section 58 and the Palermo Protocol. We attempt to balance the twin imperatives of inclusivity and specificity. A definition of internal child sex trafficking is only useful if it distinguishes this phenomenon from other forms of CSE. That said, in such a complex area few things are entirely straightforward and we acknowledge that some degree of interpretative discretion is still necessary. We have already discussed the majority of the components to this in the counter-arguments above. There are three factors, however, which we have not pre-empted and should therefore discuss here. First, our definition requires that two or more offenders be involved. Trafficking is almost always understood as a form of organised crime, and one commonality of almost every definition of organised crime is that it involves a minimum of two, if not three, offenders. We subscribe, however, to the notion that much organised crime is in fact rather disorganised (Reuter, 1983) and so this criterion is meant to include the full spectrum of internal child sex trafficking offending. Second, we require that this be part of a wider pattern of exploitation. We measure this by the fact that the victim, or at least one of a group of victims, must have been exploited on more than one occasion. This is necessary to delineate internal child sex trafficking from other forms of CSA which involve a movement component, such as abduction and rape. Third, we specifically state that any form of transport is acceptable. The

'There are three factors, however, which we have not pre-empted and should therefore discuss here'

Table 1. Criteria for inclusion in the proposed internal child sex trafficking definition

Category	Criteria for inclusion	Purpose of criteria
Victim	Child, aged 17-years old or younger	To meet national and international definitions of a child
Offenders	Adult, aged 18 years or older	To exclude peer-on-peer offending
	Two or more offenders involved	To ensure consistency with the UK definition of organised crime
Transportation	Any mode of transport	To include all forms of movement
Movement	No minimum distance required	To ensure victims are not arbitrarily excluded from the definition
	'Integral' to the abuse process	To emphasise that this is deliberate movement without which the abuse cannot occur. Defined as movement to an abuse location, to offenders awaiting sex, Defined as movement to a location where the sexual abuse will take place
Abuse pattern	At least one victim must be abused more than once	To distinguish internal child sex trafficking from other forms of child sexual abuse

DOI: 10.1002/car

'In theory a trip by train, bus or even on foot might play the same role'

type of movement involved in trafficking is often a function of the local area and while cars have featured prominently in cases to date, in theory a trip by train, bus or even on foot might play the same role.

Our proposed definition for internal child sex trafficking can be summarised as: *A repeated process involving two or more adults in which a child is recruited and transferred to a location in order to be sexually exploited*. The specific details of this are outlined in Table 1.

Conclusion

In this article, we have demonstrated that there is evident confusion around the concept of internal sex trafficking, which has been most pronounced where child victims have been involved (i.e. internal child sex trafficking). This has not been helped by the formulation of section 58: while for legal reasons it may need to be broad, more specific inclusion criteria would assist practitioners and policy-makers in establishing what constitutes internal child sex trafficking. In light of the dearth of knowledge around internal sex trafficking, there has been a tendency to rely too heavily on the international sex trafficking paradigm. The experience of foreign nationals internally sex trafficked within the UK fits more neatly with this established concept and so is rarely challenged. With British children, the patterns observed are less familiar. As a consequence, it has perhaps been easier to dismiss British victims' experience as not true internal sex trafficking than to broaden notions to accommodate a different but, we believe, equally valid interpretation of the internal child sex trafficking phenomenon. A standardised definition with distinct criteria to differentiate internal child sex trafficking from other forms of CSE could support more effective and consistent responses and the development and dissemination of best practice. It could also enable the collection and collation of consistent and comparable data, which in turn could allow a better national intelligence picture to be established.

'There has been a tendency to rely too heavily on the international sex trafficking paradigm'

Our proposed definition for internal child sex trafficking may not be perfect and we acknowledge that it excludes instances where an offence was intended but never occurred. Nonetheless, we hope that it will start a concerted debate around the interpretation of and parameters for this phenomenon. We encourage others to respond to this definition with amendments and suggestions, so that we can start to work towards a unified definition. Long-standing tensions around whether British children can be internally sex trafficked must be resolved through open and critical discussion, or risk impeding effective policy and practice. Moreover, within a broad and varied problem space such as CSA, it is vital to identify distinct types such as CSE, while appreciating their interconnectedness. Having made progress in this area, it is now critical to disentangle the component sub-types of CSE, such as internal child sex trafficking. While broad definitions such as CSE are undoubtedly useful at a macro-level, on the ground it is imperative to be working with more specific sub-categories. These sub-categories can have a tighter definition and allow for specialist support services to be offered to those who need them. Identifying an issue as internal child sex trafficking could help practitioners understand its idiosyncrasies and mitigate common challenges in

'We encourage others to respond to this definition with amendments and suggestions'

DOI: 10.1002/car

responses. Failing to differentiate between different types of CSE may lead to clumsy, one-size-fits-all responses that actually fit no-one.

'Failing to differentiate between different types of CSE may lead to clumsy, one-size-fits-all responses that actually fit no-one'

Acknowledgements

This research was funded by the Engineering and Physical Science Research Council (EPSRC) via the Security Science Doctoral Training Centre at University College London. Special thanks to all of the practitioners and academics who supported this article and to the reviewers for their insightful comments.

References

Aronowitz A. 2001. Smuggling and trafficking in human beings: the phenomenon, the markets that drive it and the organizations that promote it. *European Journal of Criminal Policy and Research* **9**(2): 163–195.

Barnardo's. 2009. Whose Child Now? Fifteen Years of Working to Prevent the Sexual Exploitation of Children in the UK. Barnardo's: Ilford, Essex.

Barnardo's. 2011. Puppet on a String: The urgent need to cut children free from sexual exploitation. Barnardo's: Ilford, Essex.

Brantingham P, Brantingham P. 1981. Notes on the geometry of crime. In Environmental Criminology, Brantingham P, Brantingham P (eds). Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, USA, 144–157.

Brayley H. 2013. Designing police investigation strategies to tackle child sex offending groups. Doctoral research thesis.

Brayley H, Cockbain E, Laycock G. 2011. The value of crime scripting: deconstructing internal child sex trafficking. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* **5**(2): 132–143. DOI: 10.1093/police/par024

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre. 2007. A Scoping Project on Child Trafficking in the UK. CEOP: London, UK.

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre. 2011a. Child Trafficking Update. CEOP: London, UK.

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre. 2011b. Out of mind, out of sight: Breaking down the barriers to understanding child sexual exploitation. CEOP: London, UK.

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre. 2012. Threat Assessment of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. CEOP: London, UK.

Cockbain E. 2013a. Grooming and the 'Asian sex gang predator': the construction of a racial crime threat. *Race and Class* **54**(4): 22–32. DOI: 10.1177/0306396813475983

Cockbain E. 2013b. A situational analysis of the internal sex trafficking of British children. Doctoral research thesis.

Cockbain E, Brayley H, Laycock G. 2011. Exploring internal child sex trafficking using social network analysis. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* **5**(2): 144–157. DOI:10.1093/police/par025

Department of Children, Schools and Families. 2009. Safeguarding sexually exploited children and young people: supplementary guidance to working together. DCSF-00689-2009. HM Government.

End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes. 2008. Child Trafficking for Sexual Purposes. A contribution by ECPAT International to the World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 25–28 November 2008.

FRA. 2009. Child trafficking in the European Union: challenges, perspectives and good practices. European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights: Luxembourg. DOI: 10.2811/12279

Hansard HL Deb 19 November 2002, col 507.

Home Affairs Select Committee. 2009. The trade in human beings: human trafficking in the UK. Sixth report. The House of Commons: London, UK.

Home Office. 2007. UK action plan on tackling human trafficking. Home Office: London, UK.

Home Office. 2011. United Nations convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (cedaw): United Kingdom's seventh periodic report. Home Office: London, UK.

House of Lords. 2003. Explanatory notes to the sexual offences bill. Session 2002-2003. House of Lords: London, UK.

Itzin C (ed.). 2000. Home truths about child sexual abuse. Routledge: London, UK.

Jago S, Pearce J. 2008. Gathering evidence of the sexual exploitation of children and young people: a scoping exercise. University of Bedfordshire: Luton, UK.

Jago S, Arocha L, Brodie I, Melrose M, Pearce J, Warrington C. 2011. What's going on to Safeguard Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation? How local partnerships respond to child sexual exploitation. University of Bedfordshire: Luton, UK

Laczko F, Gozdziak E. 2005. Data and research on human trafficking: a global survey. International Organization for Migration: Geneva, Switzerland.

Motus N. 2004. The trafficking process from the perspective of trafficked persons. In The Mental Health Aspects of Trafficking in Human Beings – Training Manual. International Organisation of Migration; 15–30.

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. 2010. Analysing the business model of trafficking in human beings to better prevent the crime. OSCE Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings: Vienna, Austria.

Pearce J. 2011. Working with trafficked children and young people: complexities in practice. *British Journal of Social Work* **41**(8): 1424–1441. DOI: 10.1093/bjsw/bcr029

Reuter P. 1983. Disorganized crime: illegal markets and the mafia. MIT Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA.

Skinner B. 2008. A Crime So Monstrous: A shocking exposé of modern-day sex slavery, human trafficking and urban child markets. Mainstream Publishing: Edinburgh, UK.

Serious Organised Crime Agency. 2011. NRM Statistical Data April 2009 to June 2011. National Referral Mechanism Data. SOCA: London, UK.

Serious Organised Crime Agency. n.d. Human Trafficking. SOCA: London, UK.

Taylor S. 2009. A contribution by Sheila to the Tackling Child Trafficking and Exploitation in the European Union conference, Brussels, 2 December 2009.

United Nations. 2000. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children, Supplement to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Winterdyk J, Reichel P. 2010. Introduction. *European Journal of Criminology*, Special Issue: Human Trafficking: Issues and Perspectives **7**(1): 5–10. DOI: 10.1177/1477370809347894