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Bridging the Gap Between Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Responses from Law Enforcement

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BRIDGING THE GAP
BETWEEN COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN
AND RESPONSES FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT

A Criminal Justice Policy Research Project
submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Criminal Justice
Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice at Kennesaw State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Science in Criminal Justice

By

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Abstract

Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) has become a growing crime in most cities in the United States, particularly Atlanta. There seems to be a gap between these types of crime and how law enforcement responds to them. This paper discussed why Atlanta has attracted such a crime and how local law enforcement is dealing with the issue, as well as current laws that are in place to combat this crime. In particular, this study will answer two main questions: (1) Why is Metro Atlanta a hotspot for CSEC? (2) How can local law enforcement better respond to CSEC? The study found that Atlanta's major airport and roadways make the city accessible to exploiters. CSEC is taking place at sporting events, trade shows and other such gatherings, which bring an influx of people to the city. The internet is another tool that exploiters are using to target vulnerable children. There is also CSEC activity happening in hotels and motels, and high crime areas. The study found that law enforcement desperately need more resources to effectively combat CSEC. Victims of CSEC are mistrusting of law enforcement, which hampers the effective treatment and delivery of services. The findings indicate that law enforcement rely on partnerships with social service providers to stop CSEC, and to ensure the safety of CSEC victims. This study also offers policy recommendations to law enforcement in an attempt to bridge the gap between CSEC and law enforcement responses.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this project to my many friends and family. A special feeling of gratitude to my late father, Amon Katongo Yasa. Thank you for inspiring me to dream big, to be fearless and see the world with a whole new set of eyes. To my mother, Macleana Mwale Yasa, thank you for being an outstanding example of hard work and perseverance. My brothers Katanga and Malumbe, for being my greatest motivators.

I also dedicate this project to my many friends who have served as sources of inspiration, motivation, and have been very supportive throughout my graduate academic career. Special thanks to my best friend Diana Bulimu, for always encouraging me to press on when the process got overwhelming.

Lastly, I dedicate this work to the millions of children who continue to suffer through this grave injustice of commercial sexual exploitation. May your spirits continue to shine as we fight to end this heinous crime.

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CHAPTER I

Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) has been going on in the United States and the world over for quite a while. Historically, much of the focus on CSEC has been on the international front under the guise of human trafficking. It is therefore imperative to mention human trafficking while discussing CSEC. Human trafficking is an umbrella term that encompasses a wide variety of crimes. Article 3, paragraph (a) of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons defines Trafficking in Persons, “as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring 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 or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.” (United Nations, 2000, p.2). This expansive definition includes two types of trafficking; a) labor and b) sex trafficking. Sex trafficking itself is broad term, under which commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) falls.

Over the years, the United States have seen a disturbing trend in the growth of this type of crime. This has led to the recognition of CSEC within U.S borders, which some now refer to as Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST). Although terms and names may vary, they all allude to the same crime. It is somewhat challenging to find a definition of what CSEC is, as this will vary depending on the context within which the term is used. However, for the purposes of this paper, I will focus on the general term CSEC. The standard definition of commercial sexual exploitation of children that will be used in this paper is that of the United Nations, which

defines it as “the use of a child for sexual purposes in exchange for cash or in-kind favors between the customer, intermediary or agent and others who profit from the trade in children for these purposes” (United Nations ESCAP, 1998). For the purpose of this paper, children are considered to be those under the age of eighteen. It is estimated that about 2 million children are exploited every year in the global commercial sex trade (UNICEF, 2005). In the United States, as many as 300,000 children may become victims of commercial sexual exploitation each year (Estes & Weiner, 2001).

In essence, the United States accounts for roughly 15% of the world’s children who are sexually exploited. While 15% may seem like a small figure, it paints a very grim picture of the extent of CSEC in the United States and the world in general. Atlanta has been dubbed as one of the major hubs for human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children. For the purposes of this paper Atlanta will be defined as the area including the following counties: Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale (Atlanta Regional Commission, 2014). The FBI cites Atlanta as one of 14 U.S. cities with the highest number of children exploited for prostitution each year (Moore, 2008). Atlanta is among 14 cities with the highest incidence of prostituted children (FBI Status Report, 2005). The other 13 High Intensity Child Prostitution Areas include: (1) Los Angeles, California; (2) Minneapolis, Minnesota; (3) Dallas, Texas; (4) Detroit, Michigan; (5) Tampa, Florida; (6) Chicago, Illinois; (7) San Francisco, California; (8) San Diego, California; (9) Miami, Florida; (10) New York City; (11) Washington, D.C.; (12) Las Vegas, Nevada; and (13) St. Louis, Missouri (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2005).

CSEC has been attributed to Atlanta due to the city being a transit point for most travelers as well as people flying in and out for business, among other reasons. Atlanta is home to the

world's busiest airport, Hartsfield Jackson International Airport. It is estimated that an average of 2,500 flights arrive and depart at the city's airport each day (Department of Aviation, 2014). The Shapiro Group (2010) estimates that 7,200 men knowingly or unknowingly pay for sex with adolescent females in Georgia each month. Every year, 28,000 men in the State of Georgia knowingly or unknowingly pay for sex with adolescent females — nearly 10,000 of them doing so numerous times per year (Shapiro Group, 2010). According to this study, the reasoning behind the difference in statistics between the per-month and per-year is because a substantial portion of men who buy sex in a given month are “repeat customers” who do so multiple times per year. The Shapiro Group (2010) found that over 400 girls are commercially sexually exploited in Georgia each month. The number of men purchasing sex from children is disproportionately higher than the number of girls who are being sexually exploited. This leads to the issue of supply and demand. There seems to be a very high demand for CSEC in Atlanta, as can be evidenced by the above mentioned statistics. The average age of a child used in prostitution is 11 to 14, with some being as young as 9 years old (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2005). The age of the children involved in CSEC is one of the reasons why this type of crime is problematic and concerning. Legally in the state of Georgia, a minor cannot consent to sexual intercourse until they are 16 years old. While 16 may be an acceptable and legal age of consent under Georgia law, a minor is still considered to be anyone under the age of 18 by most federal and international laws. Although CSEC affects both girls and boys, research shows that an overwhelming number of children involved are girls. About 68% of CSEC victims are female (youthSpark, 2012). Since girls are at a high risk for CSEC, this study will focus on this specific group of victims. CSEC has become an alarmingly widespread crime in the city of Atlanta. The severity of the situation is concerning going by the above mentioned statistics, yet

girls are sexually exploited in Georgia every day. The overwhelming nature of the statistics further proves the presence of CSEC in Atlanta.

The purpose of this research project is to discuss reasons why commercial sexual exploitation of children has become prevalent in the city of Atlanta. What is it about the city of Atlanta that makes it a hub for CSEC? This study will also suggest ways in which law enforcement can be more proactive in their responses to CSEC. By understanding issues such as, the risk factors for such a crime, where CSEC is taking place in Atlanta, and the demographics of the children and offenders involved in CSEC, law enforcement agencies can then be able to implement effective intervention and preventive measures. Understanding the role of law enforcement in dealing with CSEC will hopefully lead to solutions in bridging the gap between CSEC and responses from law enforcement. Research has shown that there is evidence of CSEC in Atlanta. The question then remains as to what law enforcement is doing to curb this problem, and whether the strategies and methods that are currently being used are effective or not. This study ultimately aims to answer two questions: (1) Why is Metro Atlanta a hotspot for CSEC? (2) How can local law enforcement better respond to CSEC? This research project is significant because it will provide law enforcement with information about the specific attributes about Atlanta that make it such an attractive place for CSEC. This project will also aim to further the discussion on effective strategies law enforcement can implement in order to curb CSEC in Atlanta.

This research is also significant and beneficial to the community of Atlanta in that it will provide law enforcement with academic research to help keep the city safe from individuals who seek to sexually exploit children for commercial reasons. The current study is different because it dispels some of the myths about commercial sexual exploitation of children. As this research

project will discuss at greater lengths in a later section, CSEC is not only an urban city problem. The statistics from Atlanta paint an entirely different picture. Therefore, this study will attempt to paint a more accurate picture of the nature of CSEC in Atlanta. This research project will hopefully be used as an educational tool for law enforcement as well social service providers in the fight against CSEC. Lastly, raising awareness on CSEC, even through an academic research project may be beneficial to future researchers who would like to expand or build upon the current research. The end goal is to have a city that is safe for young children (boys and girls) without the threat of them becoming sexual targets for exploitative reasons. This research project will also provide a unique perspective from law enforcement and social service providers about what can be done to curb this crime, and any improvements that can be made on the part of law enforcement with regard to dealing with CSEC.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Although CSEC is a relatively recent topic in academic research, there are still a number of research studies that have been conducted in this field. This chapter will examine literature as it relates to the prevalence of CSEC in Atlanta, as well as the United States in general. In understanding CSEC within the city of Atlanta, it is important to discuss risk factors that make children vulnerable to CSEC. The review of literature will include characteristics of the offenders of CSEC in order to identify who is committing these crimes against children. This chapter will also look at the role of law enforcement in their responses toward CSEC, and various legislation that has been passed in an effort to combat CSEC in Atlanta, and the United States respectively. The contributions of social service providers in their quest to end CSEC will be discussed in this chapter as well.

CSEC in the United States

Before looking at CSEC from a local (Atlanta) perspective, it is important to understand CSEC in the United States. There are approximately 300,000 children who are sexually exploited in the United States every year (Estes & Weiner, 2001). This particular statistic shows how widespread CSEC is. There is a general belief that CSEC does not happen in the United States, and that the children who are victims of these crimes are from other countries that happen to be trafficked into the United States.

Hepburn and Simon (2010) looked at the various environmental factors that contribute to human trafficking in various countries around the world. Hepburn and Simon (2010) discussed commercial sexual exploitation in the United States, which affects U.S citizens and legal residents. The authors also acknowledged the lack of academic research and accurate statistics on

CSEC. This is problematic in that it is difficult to get an accurate picture of how many children and adults are being trafficked in the United States. The authors alleged that most U.S citizens are far removed from the realities of CSEC, as they do not think of it as a domestic problem, but rather as an international problem mostly affecting immigrants. In an effort to highlight how domestic CSEC is, the authors discussed the plight of a 15 year old girl who runs away from home and ends up at the hands of a pimp in a Phoenix, Arizona apartment.

Barnitz (2001) looked at CSEC from an international and domestic perspective, citing figures and estimates about the number of children who are involved in this heinous crime. Barnitz (2001) stated that there are millions of children worldwide who are involved in CSEC, with thousands of them being right here in the United States. The author acknowledged the scarcity of research on CSEC, but agreed that CSEC is a problem to be reckoned with. Barnitz (2001) addressed the profitability aspect of CSEC and how innovative offenders of CSEC are. “Businesses that operate with both government and public sanction, such as bars, strip clubs, massage parlors, and escort services, also may facilitate the sexual abuse of children. When the abuse of children is recognized and establishments are forced to close in one locality, the same owners and operators often move to a new place and resume business”(Barnitz, 2001, pp.603-4). The increase of the use of the internet as a means to carry out CSEC is another growing concern that the author highlights. At the time of Barnitz’s (2001) research, Mexico was the only North Mexican country that had developed a national plan on CSEC. Canada and the United States had not done so yet, although the United States has made remarkable strides toward tackling CSEC in the past decade.

Rand (2009) discussed CSEC in the United States and the risk factors that are associated with the girls who end up in this crime. The author looked at the stages through which a child

ends up in CSEC, a process termed as “entering the life”. Rand (2009) focused on girl children as they are more likely to be victims of CSEC. The author also echoes Barnitz (2001) about the lack of research or methodologies available to quantify an exact figure of how many children are involved in CSEC. Rand (2009) also alluded to the gaps in research literature as being problematic in that it is challenging for service providers to understand how prevalent CSEC is, and the appropriate response to this type of problem. CSEC is a hidden crime, which makes it even more difficult to identify.

Kotrla (2010) discussed sex trafficking in the United States, and domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) as it has now come to be known. The author states that several children are at risk of becoming victims of DMST in the United States. Kotrla (2010) suggests that the high demand for CSEC is one of the reasons why this disturbing crime is prevalent in the United States. DMST is motivated by greed as explained by Lagon (2008). Lagon (2008) explained that pimps are fueled by their desire to make money by selling young girls. On the other hand, the consumers are fueled by their sexual desires to sexually exploit young girls. According to Kotrla (2010) another reason why DMST is prevalent in the United States is because of the culture of tolerance that seems to support the sex trafficking trade. The author states that the glamorization of pimping, prostitution and other commercial sex vices through music, pop culture and clothing, have contributed to the growth of DMST.

Clayton, Krugman, and Simon (2013) examined various aspects of CSEC in the United States. The authors state that CSEC is a prevalent problem in the United States, and that its hidden nature makes it hard to investigate. This is consistent with previous research (Estes & Weiner, 2001; Rand, 2009; and Hepburn & Simon, 2010) that indicate the challenges of understanding the scope of CSEC in the United States. Clayton et al., (2013) addressed the lack

of resources that are available to provide better assistance to victims of CSEC, and the need for stronger laws and legislation against CSEC offenders. The authors also looked at the treatment of victims by law enforcement, and various societal, community and individual risk factors that contribute to CSEC. The findings of this report are as a result of a committee of experts who were tasked with the responsibility of examining CSEC literature and research, with the purpose of informing policy makers on this particular topic. The committee also recommended the need to increase awareness on CSEC, the need for collaborations between law enforcement, social service providers and the various stakeholders in the fight against CSEC, as well as the need for more research on prevention and intervention strategies.

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Atlanta

Boxill and Richardson (2007) discussed some of the key issues of understanding CSEC, particularly in the city of Atlanta. The authors highlighted some of the risk factors associated with CSEC. It is important to understand what the risk factors are in order to understand the problem of CSEC, and how to effectively reach out to the children involved in this crime. Some of the risk factors mentioned include, abuse, negative peer relations, emotional distress, sexual abuse, and negative family interactions. Risk factors such as these contribute to the vulnerability of children, who are later commercially sexually exploited. Boxill and Richardson (2007) stated that the city of Atlanta seems to be a hotspot for commercial exploitation of children due to the city's hosting of conventions and sporting events, business travelers, an international airport and major roadways that make it attractive to men who prey on young girls. Atlanta is home to the Georgia International Conference Center (GICC), Philips Arena, Turner Field, Georgia Dome and other large venues that are responsible for hosting a wide variety of entertainment, business and sporting events. With such venues and events in place, it is only expected that there is an

influx of people coming in and out of the city. It is usually at such events that vulnerable children are sold to individuals who sexually exploit them.

The presence of Hartsfield Jackson International Airport, the world's busiest airport, and major highways such as I-85, I-20, and I-75 make Atlanta a convenient and accessible location for pimps and offenders of CSEC. Atlanta's main airport services about 2,500 arrival and departure flights on any given day. This means that about 250,000 people are flying into and out of the city each day. The airport also serves 150 domestic destinations and 75 international destinations in 50 countries. Perhaps, the most compelling fact is that Atlanta is within a 2-hour flight of 80% of the United States population (Department of Aviation, 2014). The above statistics indicate that Atlanta's children are easily accessible for CSEC purposes. The major roadways also contribute to CSEC in Atlanta, because they link Atlanta to other neighboring states such as Alabama, Florida, North and South Carolina, Tennessee. This makes it easier for offenders to drive into the city and leave at their own convenience due to how easily accessible Atlanta is. The prevalence of adult clubs in the city also contributes to the commercial sexual exploitation of children, as children may be recruited by their pimps to work in such clubs. Atlanta has a significant number of adult entertainment businesses, although official statistics remain vague.

Boxill and Richardson (2007) also discuss the impact that community coalitions can have on curbing CSEC. The authors suggest that more must be done to raise awareness about CSEC, especially by community organizations and juvenile justice agencies. The Atlanta Women's Foundation (of which both Boxill and Richardson are members) was instrumental in the passing of the Child Sexual Commerce Act in March, 2001 in the Georgia Legislature. This specific law stiffened punishment for CSEC offenders by elevating the crime to felony status and making it

punishable by up to 20 years in prison, coupled with a \$20,000 fine. This is important because the stiffening of laws somewhat serves as a deterrent to would be pimps and offenders. Although the achievements of the Atlanta Women’s Foundation (AWF) are remarkable, the current research project would like to examine the various legislation that have been passed since the Child Sexual Commerce Act in 2001. The current study will also examine the suggestions of the AWF on the importance of community coalitions, and whether those have been beneficial to law enforcement in curbing CSEC.

YouthSpark, formerly known as “A Future. Not a Past” (AFNAP), is a Georgia based nonprofit organization, which focuses on helping children who have been sexually exploited. YouthSpark commissioned a study through the Shapiro Group (2010) called the Georgia Demand Study. This study is significant because it is the first study of this kind that has ever been conducted with regard to CSEC. Despite the Georgia Demand Study by the Shapiro Group (2010) being independent research, the figures are the closest estimates available to detailing the prevalence of CSEC in Atlanta. As previously stated, the lack of academic literature on CSEC in the United States, let alone Atlanta, makes it incredibly challenging to understand the scope of the problem at hand. Therefore, data from the Shapiro Group (2010) offers insight on key statistics on CSEC in Atlanta. The goal of the study was to understand the extent of CSEC in Georgia.

These objectives were achieved through an innovative survey methodology that yielded 218 completed useable surveys over a 2-month period in fall 2009. While most survey methodologies involve the surveyor selecting and contacting prospective interviewees, we felt that any methodology using this basic approach would be flawed because the participant would always know — or at least suspect — he is being surveyed. This was

done due to the sensitive nature of CSEC and the inability by participants to divulge information if they knew about the motive of the survey. Instead, we decided to develop a methodological approach where participants would voluntarily contact us *without suspecting that they are participating in a research study*. Advertisements were placed on Craigslist.com, Backpage.com, and other Internet sites commonly used for advertising paid sex services. Our advertisements mimicked other ads on these sites; the text content crudely described paid sex services with a young female for anyone who called the advertised phone number. In addition, we included a picture of a young female in the advertisement — just as nearly all other internet advertisements do. The respondents were given 3 escalated warnings about the age of the girl they were trying to purchase for sex. The three warnings issued by the operator, in order, are as follows:

1. We're talking about the really young girl, right?
2. She doesn't look like she's 18.
3. I don't believe this girl is actually 18, and I have no reason to believe she is. (Shapiro Group, 2010)

The study found that 47% of the men were willing to go through with the purchase of sex from a young girl despite all three warnings. In looking at the demographics of the potential buyers, it was discovered that younger men were more likely to go ahead with the purchase of sex from a minor, than the older men. The study looked at the percentages and ages of the men who responded to advertisements for sex with young females in Georgia. Like with most crimes, the age range of men who engage in CSEC is broad. The Shapiro Group (2010) discovered that 44% of these men were between the ages 30-39, with the next largest group (34%) being men under age 30 and the last group (22%) being men aged 40 or over.

The study also looked at the geographical locations of men who responded to advertisements for sex with young children. As the study found, 42% of men who responded to advertisements to buy sex from young females did so in and around suburban metro Atlanta, which is the area north of the perimeter (I-285). The study also found that 26 % of the men were located inside the perimeter or the urban core, 23 % were located south of the perimeter and only 9% were located in the airport area. The results of this study (Shapiro Group, 2010) contradict the widely held belief that CSEC only occurs in urban cities.

The study also provides valuable information about the demographics of the men who buy sex from children. However, studies have not explicitly detailed the socio- economic status, race and educational level of men who do these criminal acts. These factors vary from case to case. The data from this study is important because it shows the different types of offenders that are likely to engage in CSEC. Since there is not a monolithic group of CSEC offenders, the diversity of men who engage in CSEC presents an added challenge for law enforcement. The study also found that 7,200 men knowingly or unknowingly pay for sex with adolescent females in Georgia each month. Annually, 28,000 men statewide knowingly or unknowingly pay for sex with adolescent females — nearly 10,000 of them doing so multiple times per year. These figures contextualize the extent of CSEC in Atlanta and show that this is a crime that must be dealt with accordingly. Although this is not academic search, by looking at studies such as these, law enforcement can formulate policies and strategies that help them narrow down these offenders. For instance, instead of solely focusing on urban areas where CSEC is likely to occur, law enforcement can extend their efforts to places such as hotels, massage parlors and other places masquerading as businesses where CSEC is actually going on.

Trends in CSEC

Over the years, there has been a rise in internet facilitated crimes. CSEC has not been an exception to this wave of crimes. In fact, according to a study conducted by the Governor's Office of Children and Families (2011), the internet has played a significant role in the growth of CSEC in Atlanta. Internet activity still remains the dominant way through which adolescent girls are commercially sexually exploited in Georgia. Mitchell, Jones, Finkelhor, and Wolak (2011) discussed the role that the internet plays in the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The data used in the study was obtained from the National Juvenile Online Victimization (N-JOV) study. The study included a nationally representative sample of 2500 state, local and county law enforcement agencies. "The N-JOV study is the first national research project to systematically collect data about the number and characteristics of arrests for Internet sex crimes against minors at two separate time points (years 2000 and 2006) within the same agencies" (Mitchell et al., 2011, p.48).

The study found that there were 569 internet- facilitated commercial sexual exploitation of children (IFSEC) crimes in the United States in 2006. The offenders were divided into two categories; the first group were offenders who used the Internet to purchase or sell access to identified children for sexual purposes including child pornography (CP) production, and these accounted for 36% of the cases. The second group were offenders who used the Internet to purchase or sell CP images they possessed but did not produce, and these accounted for 64% of the cases (Mitchell et al., 2011)

Studies like the N-JOV are important because they focus on a particular type of crime and provide useful information that can be beneficial to law enforcement, in as far as knowing the demographics of the offenders. However, the study only provides information dating back to

2006. Since technology has evolved from when the study was last conducted, it would be interesting to note what trends have changed, and whether law enforcement approaches have evolved as well. Due to advances in technology, sexual predators (pimps and johns) have resorted to more manipulative ways to target their victims. Websites such as Backpage and Craigslist have been known to promote CSEC by hosting men and pimps on their sites. By all indicators, it is evident that the internet has contributed to the accessibility of CSEC. With this information readily available, the current study will attempt to understand how law enforcement is dealing with CSEC as it pertains to the internet. With the internet being relatively less difficult to govern or police, the current study will attempt to address some of the challenges that law enforcement face. The current study will build on existing research regarding CSEC on the internet and how law enforcement can effectively deal with it.

The Atlanta Governor's Office of Children and Families began a statewide initiative to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children, in response to the overwhelming growth of the problem in Atlanta. The Governor's Office of Children and Families published four quarterly reports in 2011 detailing trends in CSEC in Atlanta. The most notable form through which adolescent girls are being lured into CSEC is through the internet. All four reports indicate a spike in internet activity as the main avenue through which predators gain access to vulnerable adolescent girls. These quarterly reports are very important because, even though they only published data from a single year, they revealed the widespread problem of CSEC in Atlanta. Judging by these reports, it is safe to assume that technology, particularly the internet has a significant role to play in the way CSEC is happening in the state of Georgia.

The reports also include useful warning signs that may alert the public in identifying children who may be sexually exploited or under the control of a pimp. Some of the warning

signs include branding or tattooing on arms, legs, chest with symbols, initials or names signifying ownership by a pimp, girls who are withdrawn and uncommunicative, girls who are accompanied by an older male, friend or relative, girls who are in possession of large amounts of money, girls who are inappropriately dressed and girls who appear to be runaways or lack adult supervision (Governor's Children and Families, 2011). These reports are significant to this study because they address CSEC in Atlanta, albeit through independent research. The recognition of the growth of CSEC via internet activity, as found in the study, is beneficial to law enforcement in the formulation of strategies to combat CSEC through this particular medium.

Although the internet remains the dominant trend in the sexual exploitation of children, pimps have still maintained the more traditional ways of recruiting girls into CSEC. Rand (2009) stated that initiating a girl into CSEC is usually a matter left up to the pimp. The pimp will only put the girl on the 'market' after establishing the amount of control they have over the victim, and when the girl can start making money. The pimp will use tactics such as having sex with the girl, intimidation, emotional and financial dependence all in an effort to have absolute control over the girl. A girl is expected to make a certain amount of money within a certain time period. It is also not uncommon for girls to be branded or tattooed by the pimp as a symbol of ownership. Girls are also coached on how to lie to law enforcement if they are approached and are expected to assume a fake identity by bearing a fake name and carrying fake identification. Failure to adhere to the rules results in punishment to be handed out by the pimp. The pimp's main priority is to make as much money as they possibly can at the expense of the girls who are forced into CSEC. According to Rand (2009) "the ethnicity of the girls also tends to vary depending on the racial composition of the community the girls are from" (as cited in Boxill & Richardson, 2007, p.140). Despite the popular myth that CSEC only occurs in urban areas, it is

in fact likely to happen anywhere in the United States, without much regard to age, race, geographic location and socio-economic status (Rand, 2009).

YouthSpark (2012) published a community accountability infographic which can be used to explain some of the factors that contribute to CSEC in Atlanta. The presence of strip clubs in the city has been known to be a breeding ground for CSEC related activities. It is at these establishments that pimps force young girls to work. Even though most strip clubs enforce an age limit of 21 for one to work there, it is relatively easy for pimps to gain access to fake identity cards. These identity cards are later given to young girls as proof of their “fake age”, which they can show to ascertain their presence in the strip clubs. It is possible that there are girls who are forced to work in strip clubs despite them being underage.

According to youthSpark (2012), another possible reason for CSEC in Atlanta can be attributed to the overtly sexual music lyrics and the sexually televised content. It is no surprise that there are a lot of sexualized messages through various forms of media, and there is no telling just how damaging these can be. The more such content is made readily available, the more it makes it tolerable for unhealthy and often times criminal behavior to be perpetrated. Other factors listed in the info graphic include pornography, cultural messages in raising boys and provocative clothing made for young children, all of which contribute to CSEC in some way, shape or form. These contributing factors are consistent with Kotrla (2010).

Risk Factors of CSEC

Another relatively less talked about issue are the consequences associated with CSEC. There are immediate risks and long-term damages associated with CSEC. The immediate risks include beatings, rape, torture, and murder. The long-term damage includes potential drug addiction, acquisition of sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV), mental illness, a range of

self-destructive behaviors, and ostracism by society (Barnitz, 2001). Aside from CSEC, the aforementioned risks present a set of unique challenges to law enforcement and social service providers. It is particularly important for law enforcement to understand these risk factors for effective service delivery.

There are several factors that contribute to girls entering a life of CSEC. Rand (2009) stated that children who have experienced sexual abuse in the past are more likely to become victims of CSEC. These children develop emotional and psychological problems that make them easy targets for pimps to prey upon. Rand (2009) stated that negative family interactions, poor school performance, history of sexual abuse, low socio-economic status are some of the factors that put children at a heightened risk for sexual exploitation. The consequences of CSEC can be rather damaging to the victims. Some of the consequences of CSEC are post traumatic stress disorder, low self esteem, and disassociation during sex, and nightmares among others (Rand, 2009). Therefore, efforts should be made by social service providers to address the consequences of CSEC. Rand (2009) states that more needs to be done in terms of research and providing victims to services. The author attributed the inadequate response to CSEC to the lack of knowledge about the causes and dynamics of CSEC by law enforcement, social service providers and the community in general.

Coy (2009) discussed how local authority care in the United Kingdom, which is the equivalent of child protective services here in the United States, can impact young girls who are placed under such care. The author conducted a study on 14 girls who were selling sex. Coy found that girls who are in local authority care are more likely to enter in sexually exploitative networks. This is because they are unable to form bonds with well meaning elders and lack stability. Since they have no social bonds with well-meaning adults, they resort to other ways to

form their own bonds. Coupled with the fact that they come from abusive homes and have less parental structure, this makes girls under local authority care more vulnerable to prostitution and other sexually exploitative vices. This study is relevant to the current study because it discusses the risk factors that make young girls vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation of children, which in some cases develops into prostitution.

YouthSpark (2012) has compiled a list of some of the warning signs of youth who may be vulnerable to CSEC. They are divided into four categories. The educational red flags include not being on the correct grade level, behavior issues at school and sleeping in class. Personal red flags are inappropriate dress (tight clothing), history of STDs or STIs. Family red flags include runaway/throwaway/castaway children, parental substance abuse and domestic violence. Legal issues include giving false name, financial transaction fraud and shoplifting. However, this list does not necessarily mean that there is evidence of CSEC. It is used as a guide to determine factors that could indicate the existence of sexual exploitation. This is consistent with previous research (Rand, 2009; Coy, 2009).

Clayton et al. (2013) discussed the societal, individual, relationship and community risk factors that make young girls vulnerable to CSEC. The societal risk factors include lack of resources, lack of awareness on CSEC and sex trafficking, and the sexualization of children. The sexualization of children has been happening in the United States due in part to the culture of glamorizing pimping, the culture of tolerance and the infiltration of sexualized pop culture (Kottra, 2010; Todres 2012). According to Clayton et al. (2013) the community risk factors include gang involvement, peer pressure and under-resourced neighborhoods, schools and communities. Family risk factors include family dysfunction or conflict. When children do not have a stable home environment or any form of community structure, they become vulnerable to

CSEC and other types of crime. The individual risk factors include history of child abuse, neglect or maltreatment. Children who are homeless, runaways, or throwaways are also at risk of CSEC. Another population that is hardly mentioned in CSEC literature is the LGBT youth, who are also at risk of CSEC. Children who have history of being in the juvenile system, foster care system or criminal justice system are also more likely to become victims of CSEC.

Law Enforcement and CSEC

There has been much debate about the treatment of minors involved in commercial sexual exploitation as victims versus delinquents. Halter (2010) conducted a study that focused on factors that influence police conceptualizations of girls involved in prostitution in 6 U.S cities. The author conducted a content analysis of 126 files of juveniles who were involved in prostitution in 6 U.S cities, with an indentified problem of child prostitution, and who were responding to this social problem (Halter, 2010). The juveniles' ages in the study ranged from 12 and 17. All the juveniles were females except one who was male. The study found that 60% of the juveniles were conceptualized as victims, while the remaining 40% were conceptualized as offenders. The study also found that the police were more likely to perceive juveniles as offenders if they were cooperative with the police, and whether the juveniles were discovered by the police through a report. On the other hand, the police were more likely to perceive a juvenile as an offender if the juvenile was not corporative with them, and also whether the juvenile was discovered through some type of action by the police versus a report.

While the study paints a favorable picture of how law enforcement view juveniles involved in CSEC, research has shown that the police are more likely to view juveniles as offenders than victims (Dysart, 2013; Clayton et al., 2013). This of course, has been problematic because it hinders the extent to which law enforcement can be of service to CSEC victims. CSEC

is a very complex crime and any resistance on the part of law enforcement to perceive a juvenile as an offender, hampers any efforts to curb the crime. CSEC is a sensitive crime and the treatment of CSEC victims should be highly prioritized, for both the welfare of the child/children involved and the wealth of information that can lead to the potential arrest of the people perpetrating this crime. Therefore, law enforcement can potentially benefit from the better treatment of CSEC victims. When CSEC victims are perceived as delinquents, it only further alienates the children from law enforcement, who are supposed to be helping them. It also does not do any good for the welfare of the children who believe that law enforcement look at them in a negative light. Children who are sexually exploited are vulnerable and need to feel protected and trusted by law enforcement. The current study will suggest ways in which law enforcement can effectively treat children who are victims of CSEC.

Dysart (2013) stated that sex trafficking of minors within the United States borders is often a matter left up to state and local law enforcement, unlike international human trafficking which tends to involve federal agencies. The author suggested that local law enforcement play a critical role in pursuing these types of crime as well as providing restorative justice to the victims. Dysart (2013) discussed some of the difficulties that law enforcement encounter in trying to curb CSEC. The author stated that federal agencies do not have sufficient resources to deal with this particular crime. Therefore, state and local law enforcement are better equipped to deal with CSEC. The two reasons given are that (1) local and state law enforcement have more officers, thereby making it possible for them to assign officers to CSEC crimes, and (2) local and state law enforcement officers are more likely to come in contact with CSEC victims and offenders during the course of their duties. This could be through a traffic stop, drug bust, domestic violence situations etc.

However, even though local and state law enforcement are more likely to come into contact with prostituted children, it is not always that they will be treated as victims. In fact, the treatment of prostituted children as juveniles versus victims still remains a strong point of contention. Dysart (2013) argues that “in fact, hundreds of minors are being arrested for prostitution every year. In 2010, according to the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reports, 804 minors were arrested for prostitution and commercialized vice, including 91 persons under the age of fifteen. Of this number, 656 were females, including 69 girls under the age of fifteen” (as cited in FBI, 2010). Dysart (2013) asserted that the above statistics point to a bigger problem and that is that law enforcement lack the proper training to effectively deal with victims with CSEC. This study is important because it discusses key aspects of law enforcement and the treatment of prostituted children. The current study will seek to build upon the role of local law enforcement and what they can do to improve their relationship between and treatment of victims.

Todres (2010) stated that law enforcement has taken a reactive approach to CSEC by prosecuting pimps and men as well as by setting up victim assistance programs, but argues that these efforts fall short as they are only effective after the fact. The author suggested that law enforcement employ a child centered approach; “I submit that to prevent trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children, we need to adopt a child-centered approach. A child-centered approach would mean considering all children, not just victims, and accounting for the needs and rights of all children. It recognizes that all children are vulnerable, though some might be at heightened risk of exploitation” (p.7). The author also argued that the despite the stern criminal-law approach and focus on prosecuting offenders, arrests and convictions have been low at best.

However, the low rates of convictions and arrests are not entirely due to the inadequacy of law enforcement, but largely due to the complex nature of CSEC, and how challenging the crime is. Todres (2010) argued that while these approaches are welcome, more pressure needs to be exerted on preventive measures by governments, law enforcement, and social service providers with regard to CSEC, to ensure that children are protected. In summary, Todres (2010) advocates for a proactive approach, to get rid of the root cause of the problem before it occurs. This study is significant because it points out the flaws of a criminal-law centered approach on CSEC, and suggests ways in which this can be remedied. The current study will contribute to the discussion on how law enforcement can develop strategies that are child centered and yield better results when it comes to curbing CSEC.

Barnitz (2001) stated that the role of law enforcement is crucial in stopping CSEC. However, law enforcement has not been proactive in responding to CSEC because CSEC is not necessarily a pressing issue in comparison to other crimes. The author alleged that “Because law enforcement agencies are dependent on public funding, administrators are more interested in the pursuit of issues that receive more public attention and funding, such as the sale of drugs. Even conscientious law enforcement officers are confounded, both by children and youths (who may not cooperate with investigations due to fear and intimidation) and by the lack of services (such as housing, legal assistance, and mental and physical health care) needed to help children and youth escape from sex trade businesses” (pp.603-4). This study, although not recent, highlights some of the challenges that law enforcement may be facing when it comes to CSEC. From dealing with unique risks that victims may suffer from to funding for CSEC, law enforcement need to implement ways in which they can deal with these unique challenges. The author also calls for more participation on CSEC from social service providers and the youth. The current

study will examine the progression of legislation and law enforcement efforts that have occurred since the time this study was published.

U.S Legislation on CSEC

There have been a number of CSEC and human trafficking related legislation that have been passed in the United States. According to Rand (2009), the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) is an important piece of legislation that was formulated to offer benefits and services to victims of human trafficking and pushes for the prosecution of CSEC offenders. The TVPA defines sex trafficking as “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act” (p. 8) and a commercial sex act as “any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by an person” (p. 7). This standard definition applies to both international and U.S citizens who are children under the age of eighteen. On the other hand, domestic trafficking is “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act” where the person is a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident under the age of eighteen years” (p. 8).

Dysart (2013) discussed the TVPA 2000, which establishes that the prostitution of a child under the age of eighteen constitutes the crime of human trafficking. The author also discussed what is known as domestic minor sex trafficking (DMST) which is defined as “the commercial sexual exploitation of American children within U.S. borders and is synonymous with child sex slavery, child sex trafficking, prostitution of children, and commercial sexual exploitation of children.” (as cited in Shared Hope International, 2011). The introduction of the TVPA 2000 has been instrumental in ensuring that prostituted children are not seen as criminals or delinquents but rather as victims of these horrible crimes. Dysart (2013) looked at that the passing of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (TVPRA) by

President George W. Bush .This Act was signed into law on January 10, 2006 and it directly addressed domestic minor sex trafficking (as cited in TVPRA, 2005). The Act provided \$15 million dollars to the FBI to be used on human trafficking efforts. The FBI in collaboration with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) and the Department of Justice formed the Innocence Project with the intention of creating task forces all across the United States. The task forces were a great way of bringing local, state and federal law enforcement with the collaborative effort of rescuing prostituted children and arresting those involved in exploiting the children. Dysart (2013) emphasized the importance of the Innocence Project Initiative, which was founded for the purpose of formulating policies that would establish an environment safe for children (as cited in Shared Hope International, 2011).

Todres (2010) discussed the current framework within which the United States responds to human trafficking. Todres stated that “the modern response to human trafficking, including child trafficking, was launched formally in 2000, with the United Nations' adoption of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime ("Trafficking Protocol")' and the passage in the United States of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act” (as cited in TVPA 2000). Todres (2010) stated that the three pronged approach of these laws is to punish perpetrators, protect victims and prevent trafficking (as cited in U.S Department of State, 2009).

The author explained that while these mandates are sensible enough, studying human trafficking is challenging because there is no sufficient data on the subject. There are no real figures as everything is based on estimates. It is rather challenging to find data and measure the prevalence of human trafficking. Todres (2010) argues that human trafficking has been

criminalized by governments, taking on a criminal law centered approach which is problematic. It is problematic in the sense that perpetrators are sought after rather than focusing on the root cause of the problem. This approach has also affected the lack of services and resources given to victims of human trafficking.

Dess (2013) discussed the treatment of underage victims of CSEC and how legislation can be helpful in the perception of victims. The author particularly looked at the passing of House Bill 3808, which is an Act Relative to the Commercial Exploitation of People. This piece of legislation was signed by Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick on November 21, 2011. The significance of this legislation is to ensure that children who are commercially and sexually exploited are seen as victims and not as criminals. The Act also called for discretionary training of law enforcement so that they could better treat victims of CSEC. The treatment of children as victims is still a very important aspect of dealing with CSEC, yet several studies have shown that there still remains a problem in this area.

Moser (2012) examined the current legislation against CSEC. The TVPA 2000 and its subsequent reauthorizations are the main legislation geared toward human trafficking and CSEC in the United States. The author also highlighted an important discussion in the implementation of these pieces of legislation, agreeing with Todres (2010), that the current laws have a three pronged approach which is to prevent exploitation, prosecute offenders, and protect victims. According to Moser (2012), these laws have been focused on prosecuting the offenders while little attention is given to preventative and victim assistance measures.

Moser (2012) looked at the language used to define CSEC and how this can be problematic. Moser stated that the advocates in the Urban Institute noted there was a difference in the way international and domestic prostituted children were perceived. The author stated that

foreign national children are more likely to be seen as victims, while their domestic counterparts are more likely to be seen as prostitutes. Labeling children with terms such as criminal or victim influences the way those children perceive themselves. It is therefore imperative that those trying to combat human trafficking, should differentiate between prostitutes and child victims, for the effective delivery of care and services to exist. Moser stated that “the TVPA makes no difference between foreign national and domestic victims and therefore neither should practitioner involved in caring for human trafficking victims. Advocates also suggested that pimps ‘be referred to as sex traffickers’ because a trafficker seems to imply that a person was coerced and controlled and thus a victim, not a criminal” (as cited in Smith et al., 2008).

Georgia Legislation on CSEC

To date, there have been various pieces of legislation that have been passed in Georgia with regard to human trafficking and CSEC. Georgia has some of the nation’s toughest laws to punish criminals convicted of the prostitution of children and human trafficking. Under Georgia law, those convicted of soliciting sex from or pimping a child younger than 18 can be sentenced to 5 to 20 years in prison plus asset forfeiture under state pandering statutes-or 10 to 20years in prison under the state’s human trafficking laws (O.C.G.A. § 16-6-11). In April 2011, HB 200 was passed by the Georgia legislature to improve the lives of trafficking victims and their families and to improve accountability of people who engage in trafficking. The law ultimately seeks to stiffen punishments for the (johns) men who engage in CSEC because in the past, punishments were not as strict. The law also seeks to be victim-oriented to better help the girls that are found in such awful circumstances. It is laws like these that help protect young girls from men who may be trying to exploit them. YouthSpark (2014) offer the following breakdown of the significance of HB 200:

- Recognized that victims of forced sexual servitude should not be treated as criminals and provides an affirmative defense to such victims for sexual crimes
- Allowed human trafficking victims to receive Crime Victims Compensation Funds to reimburse them for medical bills and counseling expenses
- Required training for law enforcement on addressing human trafficking, appropriate detention for victims, and assistance available to victims
- Increased penalties for trafficking, including 10-20 years in prison where the victim is over 18 years old and 25-50 years or life in prison in cases involving victims under 18 years of age; a fine up to \$100,00 may also be imposed in all trafficking cases
- Allowed the property of traffickers to be forfeited under Georgia's RICO statute
- Changed penalties for pimping, pandering, and keeping a place of prostitution if the victim is a minor; for cases involving a 16 or 17 year old, the crime is a felony punishable by 5-10 years in prison and a fine of \$2,500 to \$10,000; if the victim is under 16, the crime is a felony punishable by 10-30 years in prison and a fine of up to \$100,000
- Struck a balance between the need to treat victims of human trafficking as victims, rather than criminals, and the criminal justice system's need to maintain a tool to address prostitution. (youthSpark, 2012).

House Bill 141:*Human Trafficking Hotline Number Posting*, effective as of July 1,2013, was signed into law by Georgia Governor Nathan Deal on May 6, 2013 (Georgia General Assembly, 2013).It requires businesses and establishments (including adult entertainment clubs) to post a notice of the NHTRC hotline number which is supposed to help victims of human trafficking obtain assistance and services. Businesses that do not comply with this law may be subject to a \$5000 fine. This is a step forward in the right direction, as far as extending assistance

to victims who may not easily have access to the help they need, due to their circumstances. The information on the notice can also be used by concerned members of the public who can call the NHTRC, when they observe unusual behavior mirroring that of a trafficked individual.

With the rise in internet -related crimes against children. Georgia passed HB 156: *Keeping Children Safe from Online Predators* which has been effective since July 1, 2013. The premise of this law is to protect children from electronic pornography and child sexual exploitation. The law also specifies which acts constitute unlawful seducing, enticing, luring and soliciting of a child using the internet or any form of an online service. This particular law is very important, considering that the internet now plays a significant role in the way predators gain access to children. The lack of governance of the internet makes it easy for crime to occur. Laws like this one will hopefully serve a deterrent to offenders.

HB 242 is the *Juvenile Code Rewrite* and has been affective as of January 1, 2014. This law basically modernized the juvenile system of Georgia and offers an alternative to detention, and includes early intervention methods. It also includes Children in Need Services (CHINS) a service to protect children who are victims of sexual exploitation, whose parents still have custody of their children but do not have the financial means to pay for care or services. This law also seeks to seal records for juvenile who have prostitution related charges (youthSpark, 2012). SB 169: *Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting* has been effective since July 1, 2009. This legislation included child sex trafficking in the definition of reported child abuse. It also requires mandatory child abuse reporting of all child sexual exploitation.

Shared Hope International is a nonprofit organization which publishes report cards and grade states on how well they are responding to CSEC through their legislation. Georgia has been graded for three consecutive years from 2011 through 2013. In Georgia's first ever report

card, the state received a grade of 75 which equates to a C. In 2012, Georgia's grade improved from a C to a B, with a score of 80. The score has since gone on to improve again with a grade of 82. By all indications, this means that the state's legislative response is indeed improving. Most of the significant legislation has been passed within the last 5 years (2009 through 2014). This speaks volumes about the prevalence of CSEC in Georgia, and the need to curb it by enacting legislation. Despite tremendous progress in passing significant legislation, Shared Hope International states that Georgia does not require sex traffickers to register as sex offenders, which in turn causes vulnerability for at risk children (Shared Hope International, 2013).

In addition to all the relevant legislation that has specifically been passed on CSEC in Georgia in the last five years, there are still a host of both state and federal legislation that apply to CSEC. The Barton Child Law and Policy Center at Emory University School of Law has compiled a list of all the federal and state legislation that relates to CSEC. The list is divided into two: Georgia offenses and federal offenses. Each offense includes a detailed description of the offense as well as the prescribed punishment. The list of Georgia offenses that apply to CSEC are divided into the following: pimping, trafficking and pandering offenses, sexual offenses, child-specific offenses, kidnapping offenses, violent offenses, offenses depicting pornography and other sexually explicit depictions etc. The list of federal offenses that apply to CSEC are also divided into similar categories as those mentioned above.

This review of state and federal legislation is significant to this study because it serves as a reference guide and resource tool. Lynch and Widner (2012) suggest that the comprehensive list can be used for the investigation and prosecution of CSEC cases by district attorneys, law enforcement officers, forensic interviewers, academics, legislators, and judges. The list can be beneficial for soliciting multiple-count CSEC prosecutions, building and trying stronger cases,

and understanding and improving existing laws, among other reasons. The review of various legislation can also be useful for educating the child advocacy community about the multiple offenses in CSEC, for the purposes of assisting victims and sharing information with other groups to help their constituents (Lynch & Winder, 2012).

Another reason why the list of offenses is beneficial is that it can be used to educate vulnerable and victimized children. The authors suggest that such information should be placed in shelters, hotels, bus terminals, or doctor's offices where children can have access to it in the form of cards and pamphlets. These can be used as great resource tool for children who are sexually exploited to reach out for assistance. Lastly, the list of federal and state offenses relating to CSEC can be used to educate the public and raise awareness about CSEC. Pamphlets and cards can be placed in businesses, hotels, bus terminals and other public places. The goal is to raise awareness about these offenses to the general public, and to serve as a reminder to would-be offenders that engaging in CSEC has consequences, in the form of punishment, fines and forfeiture.

Social Service Providers and Organizations Dealing with CSEC

Todres (2010) suggested that a public health approach must be adopted in order to prevent human trafficking and sexual exploitation effectively. The first strategy is evidence based research. The author suggested that more evidence based research needs to be done especially with regard to risk factors that make children vulnerable to human trafficking and sexual exploitation. The second strategy is focus on prevention. According to Todres (2010), a more proactive approach through preventative measures must be taken to combat human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Such a prevention program would look at the following: (1) individual risk factors; (2) relationships that might increase the risk of harm in the home and in

the community, including those with peer groups; (3) the role of community settings, such as schools and neighborhoods; and (4) societal factors, including social and cultural norms. The third strategy is changing attitudes and behaviors. This translates to creating positive and wholesome environments for children. The United States has glamorized violence and exploitation of children through pop culture, and this has negatively impacted young children. Todres explained that “ the field of public health has extensive experience that offers key insights on harm reduction strategies, developing culturally competent messages, and reaching target populations effectively” (as cited in Mercy et al., 1993).

The fourth strategy focuses on the partners and stakeholders. This simply means that all parties involved in the fight against human trafficking and sexual exploitation must work together with mutual understanding and respect. Finally, the interconnected nature of harm towards children must be addressed. There are several factors that need to be looked at in order to understand the complexities of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. It is only when these complexities are understood in their entirety that meaningful action can be achieved. This study is important because it provides an alternative approach to dealing with CSEC, rather than the criminal law model that is currently in place. The public health model can be a beneficial tool to law enforcement, social service providers and the community in general when it comes to preventing CSEC.

Todres (2010) stated that more needs to be done when it comes to prevention of human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children. The author stated that efforts focused on the prosecution of the offender have somewhat undermined the need to target preventative strategies. Todres (2010) argued that besides states and government adopting legislations and convention to combat human trafficking and sexual exploitation, very little can be seen as far as how effective

they have been. According to Todres (2010) “while prevention has taken a backseat, governments have attempted to combat trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children by passing laws prohibiting these abuses and increasing sentences for perpetrators” (p.4). Todres’s (2010) article “provides an overview of how certain critical issues—(1) research/data; (2) program design; (3) the dominant principle guiding state responses; (4) stakeholder coordination; and (5) the interrelationship among rights—have been largely ignored in developing responses to the trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children” (p.7). Much of the emphasis on prevention mirrors Todres’s subsequent study on how a public health model (2012) could be beneficial in curbing human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Moser (2012) discusses the importance of collaborative efforts between law enforcement and social service providers in the fight against CSEC. There have been collaborations among various governmental agencies such as the U.S Department of justice, Department of Labor and U.S Department of Homeland Security to combat human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Moser (2012) also reviewed data from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), the Polaris Project and the Sold Project. These are organizations which focus on trafficking and sexual exploitation by looking at the trends, policies and legislation in place and raising awareness about CSEC. This study is important because it highlights a reoccurring theme, which is that while law enforcement is focusing on a criminal law approach by prosecuting offenders, they are in a way sidelining the victims who need their protection. The goal of the study is to contribute to the discussion on effective methods and strategies, through which law enforcement can better serve the victims of CSEC, and also prosecute the offenders.

In addition to commissioning the *Georgia Demand Study*, youthSpark also serves as a resource hub for law enforcement, social service providers and anyone interested in CSEC. The organization is one of the few locally based, that has been instrumental in the fight against CSEC. They have often partnered with the Fulton County Juvenile Court, law enforcement, and other social service providers such as Wellspring Living and Street Grace, both of which are actively combating CSEC through advocacy and victim assistance. YouthSpark also conducts training sessions for community members and law enforcement:

Through our A Future. Not A Past. Campaign, we offered free, two hour POST-certified training courses for law enforcement that covered the scope of the problem, how it relates to human trafficking, federal and state laws, techniques for interviewing these young and scared victims, and connecting victims to resources available through the statewide System of Care (Georgia Care Connection Office). This training was done in partnership with the Georgia Governor's Office for Children and Families. (youthSpark, 2012).

A total of 3,400 officers have received training on CSEC, in 51 counties across the state of Georgia. YouthSpark has also created an online training model for all new officers at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center. Currently, training on CSEC is conducted by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI). A detailed description of the training offered reads as follows:

This specific training is intended for professionals within the law enforcement field to raise awareness and skill in working with victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC). Police officers and law enforcement personnel will be trained on how to recognize and intervene with CSEC victims and their abusers through a curriculum that allows them to learn about applicable state and federal laws related to CSEC.

Participants will also learn the CSEC risk factors, pathways to entry, how CSEC impacts

victims, the prevalence of CSEC, and the best practices for investigating CSEC.

Participants will be educated on the available resources in Georgia and how to connect victims with services so they receive the treatment and legal advocacy they need.

Furthermore, these trainings highlight the critical role that law enforcement plays when it comes to combating CSEC, protecting victims, and bringing their abusers to justice.

Trainings are offered free of charge to participants. As approved by the Prosecuting Attorney's Council of Georgia, P.O.S.T. Credits will be provided free of charge to participants. (Governor's Office of Children and Families).

YouthSpark has also been instrumental in implementing and developing various initiatives that are aimed at either providing assistance to victims or preventing the risk of CSEC occurring within certain populations. On the service provider front, YouthSpark can be credited with opening Angela House, a safe house that provided accommodation and services to victims of CSEC. Angela House was the first safe house in Southeast. Although it is no longer in existence, there are currently two safe houses in Georgia, which account for more than half of the bed space in the country (youthSpark, 2012). On the prevention front, YouthSpark started an initiative called Project Benchmark in collaboration with CherryLion Sculpture Studios. The main aim of this initiative is to encourage and empower youth from the Fulton Juvenile Court with art, technology and business. This allows children to have positive interactions and creative outlets that could possibly deter them from risky behaviors. YouthSpark has also participated in a number of PSA's aimed at raising awareness about CSEC. An example of such a PSA is the "Take A Stand Against Demand" in which a survivor advocate encourages the public to take a stand against CSEC.

Georgia Cares, formerly known as Georgia Care Connection Office (GCCO) was created in 2009 as an initiative through the Governor's Office of Children and Families. Georgia Cares currently operates as a nonprofit organization as of 2013. The organization serves as a statewide coordinating agency to connect services and treatment care for victims (Georgia Cares). The organization's mission is to ensure that child sex trafficking receive quality care and service in the state of Georgia. As a resource, Georgia Cares maintains a 24-hour hotline through which victims and other concerned parties can contact the organization. They also ensure placement in emergency bed for the victims and access to forensic interviews. Georgia cares also works in collaboration with the Department of Children and Family Service, Department of Juvenile Justice, and the child's family, to determine the best placement for the children. The organization meets the costs necessary for the wellbeing of the victims. In addition to these service, Georgia Cares also provides training to communities and professionals to raise awareness about CSEC and resources that are available for child sex trafficking victims.

According to a 2nd year evaluation of Georgia Cares Fiscal Year 2011, conducted by EMSTAR research, the organization received 141 referrals during their second year of operation. There was a 40% increase in referrals from the previous year. For the 141 referrals received during FY2011; 100% were female. 64 % of the girls lived in Fulton and DeKalb counties, and 47% were referred by law enforcement. Georgia Cares carried assessments of 104 girls, and of those; 90% reported running away an average of 5 times each, for an average of 27 days (this was higher in the second year as compared to the first year); 48% reported experiencing sexual abuse and 23.5% reported experiencing physical abuse (these reported rates were also higher in the second year than the first); and 51% reported previous or current DFCS involvement.” (Governor's Office of Children & Families, 2011, p.2). This evaluation is significant because it

provides useful geographical information of where victims are based. It also highlights some of the risk factors that make girls susceptible to CSEC, most of which have been confirmed in other research studies (Rand, 2009).

Ferguson, Soydan, Lee, Yamanaka, Freer and Xie (2009) discussed the importance of collaborations between social service providers, law enforcement officials and community members in the treatment of CSEC victims. The authors conducted a study in 5 U.S cities (Chicago, Atlantic City, Denver, Washington, D.C., and San Diego) which have adopted a CSEC Community Intervention Program (CCIP). “From 2006 to 2008, the CCIP sought to train NGO representatives, law enforcement officials and prosecutors in five U.S. cities on CSEC-related issues and to build the capacity of local officials working to eliminate CSEC. A total of 230 participants from Chicago (n - 54), Atlantic City (n - 40), Denver (n - 42), Washington, D.C. (n - 40), and San Diego (n - 54) attended a 3-day CCIP training institute in each city.

Following attendance at the institutes, participants returned to their respective agencies to conduct community-based CSEC trainings for their colleagues and local community members, as well as to develop and implement a CSEC community response plan in each city” (Ferguson et al., 2009). The 5 cities were selected through convenience sampling on the basis of having an identified CSEC problem, and an ability to respond to the CSEC problem in the community. There were roughly 50 participants from NGOs, law enforcement agencies, and prosecution offices in each city were invited to attend the CCIP Training institutes. 54 participants attended in Chicago; 40 attended in Atlantic City; 42 attended in Denver; 40 attended in Washington, D.C; 54 attended in San Diego. Among the 230 attendees, 211 participants completed the pre- and posttest surveys for a response rate of 92%.

The quantitative findings of the study were that there was an increase in knowledge and skills on CSEC by the various participants. This was attributed to the structure of the curriculum which was developed by professionals already working in the field of CSEC, as well experience of the instructors who provided training to the participants. Another reason was that the CCIP training participants who attend the training already had some knowledge of CSEC, and were keen to learn more about CSEC, which made them more receptive to the program.

The qualitative findings of the study found that despite CCIP training participants having differing professional roles, their assessment of the models were similar (Ferguson et al., 2009). This is important because it allows different disciplines to learn from each other with regard to preventing CSEC, and providing treatment and services to victims. Such training environments encourage cross-disciplinary collaborative efforts to better understand CSEC, preventive measure and, how to understand and treat victims. Collaborations between law enforcement and social service providers are also beneficial in that resources can better be allotted to implement more effective measure and strategies for the benefit of the victims. The current study seeks to expand on the current discussion on the importance of collaborative efforts between law enforcement and social service providers.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

Research Framework

This research project seeks to answer two questions: (1) Why is Metro Atlanta a hotspot for CSEC? (2) How can local law enforcement better respond to CSEC? The first question looks at the factors that make Atlanta a hotspot for CSEC. Atlanta has been dubbed as one of the top 14 cities with the highest prevalence of human trafficking (FBI, 2005). Atlanta is a large metropolitan city with a diverse population. Due to its large city status, Atlanta hosts a good amount of sporting events and conventions which attract visitors to the city. It is at such events and conventions that young girls are sexually exploited for monetary reasons. Atlanta is also home to the world's busiest airport. With such an airport, there is no telling about the nature and types of the people travelling through the city. Unfortunately, most male travelers have been known to come to Atlanta to purchase young girls for sexual purposes, and then head back to the airport to leave for their respective destinations. Convenience and accessibility make it easy for the offender to engage in such a crime.

Another reason why Atlanta is a hotspot for CSEC is because of the major roadways and highways such as (I-75, I-85 and I-20) that the city has. This makes it easier for girls to be transported to neighboring states for CSEC purposes. Also, men who engage in CSEC can easily come into the city for these purposes using these major roadways. There seems to be a high demand for sexual exploitation of girls in Atlanta, which further solidifies the city's presence on the FBI human trafficking hotspot list. Statistics show that about 400 girls are commercially sexually exploited by 7200 men in Georgia each month (Shapiro Group, 2010). These numbers

paint a dark picture of the prevalence and severity of the crime that the city of Atlanta has to deal with.

The second question of the project focuses on responses from law enforcement. The specific questions states; how can local law enforcement better respond to CSEC? There are various responses by law enforcement, but they all allude to the fact that CSEC can be a rather challenging crime to deal with. The nature of the crime itself is complex making it difficult for law enforcement to actively seek out this type of crime. For example, it is not easy for a police officer to know about a pimp who may be commercially sexually exploiting children, unless someone calls the police to tip them off about the alleged criminal activity. This leads to the next point which is that the general response from law enforcement tends to be more reactive than proactive. Because most CSEC related crimes do not happen out in the open, it makes it difficult for law enforcement to deal with these crimes. Law enforcement will have to rely on a tip-off by a concerned citizen or even a victim of CSEC about any alleged CSEC related criminal activity.

There has been some controversy about the way law enforcement deal and treat victims of CSEC. Even though CSEC victims may be minors, sometimes law enforcement cannot exclude them from criminal behavior. There have been debates about the treatment of children involved in CSEC as delinquents versus victims. CSEC is a sensitive crime and the treatment of CSEC victims should be highly prioritized, for both the welfare of the child/children involved and the wealth of information that can lead to the potential arrest of the people involved in CSEC. Therefore, law enforcement can potentially benefit from the better treatment of CSEC victims. When CSEC victims are perceived as delinquents, it only further alienates the children from law enforcement, who are supposed to be helping them. It also does not do any good for the welfare of the children who believe that law enforcement look at them in a negative light.

Law enforcement typically depends on public funding to carry out their duties and functions. CSEC operations can be costly to investigate and prosecute. Also, because CSEC crimes are complex, it makes it increasingly difficult for law enforcement to allocate resources to deal with this crime. Resources can be in the form of manpower, vehicles, computer technology among other things that law enforcement can employ to combat CSEC. If these kinds of resources are not available or are limited due to lack of public funding, then law enforcement cannot actively pursue CSEC. It also limits the scope through which law enforcement can investigate and deal with CSEC. Due to the complex nature of CSEC, law enforcement may not be privy to all the information regarding this type of crime. Law enforcement already have to retain a wealth of information in order to carry out their duties on a daily basis. Therefore, it is imperative that law enforcement have all the available knowledge about the general nature of the crime, and how to deal with the victims and offenders. Law enforcement can have workshops with other agencies and social service providers on how to expand enhance and learn more information about CSEC. Collaborative efforts between law enforcement and other stakeholders can be beneficial in combating CSEC.

Research Design

Commercial sexual exploitation is not an easy topic to study, which has been evidenced by the lack of academic research in this area. However, the purpose of this research project is to attempt to answer the following questions: (1) Why is Metro Atlanta a hotspot for CSEC? (2) How can local law enforcement better respond to CSEC? In order to achieve this, I designed a variation of 8 open- ended questions based on the two main questions. The first three questions attempted to answer why metro Atlanta is a hotspot for CSEC. The last five questions attempted

to answer how law enforcement can better respond to CSEC. These research questions were sent to the participants as a survey questionnaire via email.

Sample

For the purposes of this project, I targeted 8 (N=5 law enforcement agencies, N=3 social service providers or organizations) individuals from law enforcement agencies and organizations dealing with CSEC in the Metro Atlanta area using purposive sampling. I contacted the sample I intended to interview either via email or phone to let them know about my project, and to obtain permission to interview the respondents for the research project. For the law enforcement portion of the interviews, I focused on five agencies (Cobb, Gwinnett, Fulton, DeKalb and Cherokee) in the Metro Atlanta area. The specific police departments were; Marietta, Gwinnett, Atlanta, DeKalb, and Canton. The preference for this particular geographical location is essential because the current study is concerned with CSEC in the Metro Atlanta area.

Most police departments have a department or a particular officer dealing with CSEC. In the case of some departments, this department was either the Crimes against Children Unit or the Criminal Investigations department. After getting in touch with the relevant person, I would then email them my questionnaire. For the part of the organizations dealing with CSEC, I contacted the following: Youth Spark, Not For Sale Georgia, and WellSpring Living. It was fairly easy to get in touch with a contact person from an organization dealing with CSEC because they primarily dealt with this issue, as opposed to the law enforcement who deal with various issues and crimes in the course of their duties. Once I established who would be able to participate in the study, I emailed them the survey questionnaire. This study relied heavily on the law enforcement portion of the interviews, because of the focus on law enforcement responses to

CSEC. The interviews from the organizations dealing with CSEC were necessary to provide supplemental and potentially beneficial information to the responses from law enforcement.

It took me about 2 months (January and February, 2014) to contact the relevant purposive sample and to collect the responses from the participants. Out of the 8 participants who were recruited to participate in the study, only 3 responded in time for the writing of this paper. The responses were all from law enforcement officers. I did not receive any responses from social service providers in time to write this paper, even though follow-up emails and phone calls were made to the sample that did not respond to the questionnaire. The response rate for this study was about 38%.

Procedure

Maintaining confidentiality was of the utmost importance in this project. All correspondence was only accessible to the researcher. I downloaded and printed all the responses to the survey questionnaire in order for me to have access to physical copies. This was done in the event that if I had any technological issues with my laptop computer which I primarily used throughout the research project, I would still have physical copies of the participants' responses. All materials will be destroyed within the next 6 months in compliance with research confidentiality guidelines and regulations. The Kennesaw State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved this project.

Evidently, law enforcement and social service organizations operate within different parameters and view CSEC through different lenses. It is important to note those differences in perspective as well as the impact of collaborations between the two worlds (social services and law enforcement). The current study also attempted to find out the extent of the crime, data available on the crime, resources used, and strengths and weaknesses in responses to CSEC

through the interviews as well as by examining various literature related to CSEC. While the interview responses served as a primary source of information for this study for this study, equal attention was given to the numerous secondary information that are available. I examined previous studies and analyzed data on CSEC in Atlanta. I focused on data from the following secondary source;

1. I looked at annual reports from the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) which is managed by the Polaris Project. These reports were helpful because they included figures on human trafficking in each state. I focused on sex trafficking results for the state of Georgia, which I borrowed to make graphs to show the progression and various trends of CSEC from the years 2009 through 2013.

The reason why I focused on borrowed data from the Polaris Project is because of the lack of data and academic research on CSEC. The Polaris Project has been collecting human trafficking data across the United States, and this would be useful to observe the extent of human trafficking in Georgia.

The Polaris Project is a Washington; D.C based nonprofit organization that aims to fight human trafficking and modern day slavery. The organization was founded in 2002, initially with the goal of ending domestic violence against women and children. The organization has since grown and serves as a resource hub for victims, service providers and law enforcement. It provides resources such as how to deal with child victims of human trafficking, assessment tools for law enforcement and healthcare professionals, information on sex trafficking networks, and human trafficking training for service providers among other things. The Polaris Project runs the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC), which provides a national hotline and

other services aimed at stopping modern-day slavery. The Polaris Project has been instrumental in the passing of landmark anti- human trafficking legislation in 48 states, to protect victims and punish offenders. While the organization deals with the umbrella of human trafficking, they have been consistent in monitoring trends in sub-groups of human trafficking such as sex trafficking of children. The NHTRC collects data via phone calls which they use to track human trafficking within the United States.

A quick glance at the human trafficking map on the Polaris Project website shows the concentration of places where it is taking place. The state of Georgia and most of the continental southeast is highlighted, indicating the presence of some form of human trafficking. This further proves how prevalent human trafficking is in this particular region of the country. The NHTRC has compiled data from the periods between 2007 and 2012. This borrowed data is significant to the current study because it will shed more light on the prevalence of human trafficking, in this case sex trafficking in the Georgia. It will also be beneficial to look at the trends of the crime, as well as the areas where it is taking place. I focused on data from sex trafficking calls and how knowledge of this information can be of better assistance to law enforcement in their pursuit of offenders. I also looked at why there seems to be a concentration of hotline calls coming from the Southeast region, which includes Atlanta, GA.

CHAPTER IV

Findings

The following section discusses the findings of the present study. For the purposes of this study, I reported the findings in two separate sub-sections. The first section reported the findings from the interviews conducted with law enforcement and social service providers. The second section reported findings based on the results from the borrowed data from the National Human trafficking Resource Centre (NHTRC).

Responses to Survey Questionnaire

As mentioned in the methods section, a questionnaire was sent out to 8 representatives of law enforcement (N=5) and social service providers (N=3). However, only 3 law enforcement officers from Marietta, Gwinnett and DeKalb police departments responded to the questionnaire, in time for this study to be completed. It is these responses from the 3 participants that I reported on. The survey questionnaire consisted of 8 questions. The first question asked for the professional opinion of the participants on how prevalent CSEC is in Atlanta. The overwhelming consensus was that CSEC is very prevalent in Atlanta. The law enforcement official from Marietta Police department explained that runaways and abused children become easy targets for CSEC. The officer also stated that exploiters look for children needing identity or someone to care for them. The officer stated that while the exploiters may approach the child under the assumption of protecting them, they soon change and resort to manipulative and abusive behaviors. This usually involves forcing the child to perform sex or prostitution to reciprocate for the generosity of the exploiter. The officer also pointed out that there may be threats of violence to children and their loved ones. The officer also stated that children who are abused while young may resort to abusing others later in life.

The second question asked the participants based on their professional opinion where CSEC occurs in Atlanta. The responses were of the general opinion that CSEC occurs mostly in hotels. There were other opinions that were expressed, in addition to hotels being the place where CSEC occurs the most in the city. The Cobb law enforcement officer added that according to their experience, CSEC will occur in low- income or high- crime areas where exploiters can easily blend in. The officer also added that CSEC is most likely to happen at large events such as sporting events. The Gwinnett law enforcement officer expressed that there were several brothels in the metro Atlanta area where CSEC was taking place. The officer also added that there were many runaway children who were recruited into prostitution or victimized by immigrant smugglers. Another issue that the officer brought up was that children were advertised on internet based escort sites.

The third question asked about the factors that enable or contribute to CSEC in Atlanta. The overwhelming theme in response to this question was the mobility and accessibility of CSEC. All the officers agreed that CSEC in Atlanta is very mobile. The DeKalb police officer added that there is a constant market of customers seeking sex with minors. The law enforcement officer from DeKalb was of the opinion that Hartsfield Jackson International airport and the interstate make it easy for exploiters to move around. The officer also added that Atlanta's large urban population has a high percentage of runaway children which could be a contributing factor to CSEC. The officer also cited sporting events and trade shows hosted in the city as factors that contribute to CSEC. The Cobb law enforcement officer added that most jurisdictions are unaware of what is occurring from one place to another. The officer also stated that social media and sites such as Backpage and other posting sites for services contribute to CSEC. The officer

explained that in addition to exploiters being mobile, they set up appointments with potential clients prior to arrival.

The fourth question asked how local law enforcement were tackling the issue of CSEC. The responses to this question were varied. The Cobb law enforcement officer stated that local law enforcement is directly attempting to address this issue through patrols, stings, details and joining task forces. The Gwinnett law enforcement officer stated that it was very difficult for law enforcement to investigate CSEC, because CSEC operators are very careful to stay away from the attention of law enforcement. The officer also stated that while many victims were compliant, most are often protective of the perpetrators. Many of the victims fear deportation back to their home countries, or a return to the abusive home they originally fled from. The officer also stated that law enforcement interview at-risk runaways and the Cobb (Marietta) Vice Unit works it from the prostitution aspect. The officer stated that the most effective way of tackling CSEC is the collaborative task forces made up of local, state and federal law enforcement. The DeKalb law enforcement officer stated that training to raise awareness within law enforcement and applying a multi-disciplinary approach were crucial in combating CSEC.

The fifth question asked what resources were being used by law enforcement to combat CSEC. In response to this, the DeKalb law enforcement officer stated that online investigations, multi disciplinary approaches that include law enforcement, prosecutors and child protection services are being utilized. The Gwinnett law enforcement officer asserted that apart from traditional law enforcement resources, local law enforcement rely heavily on non-governmental groups working with high risk children. The officer explained that the reason for this is that high risk children do not trust the police, and that it is easier for them to disclose CSEC activities to a nonprofit group or advocacy center. The officer also expressed that once a CSEC ring is

discovered, law enforcement or a taskforce use a combination of high and low tech surveillance. This is done to gather enough evidence about these activities in preparation for a successful prosecution. The Cobb law enforcement officer did not respond to this question due to the undercover nature of the resources utilized.

The sixth question asked what law enforcement can do better in response to combating CSEC. The majority response was the need for more economic and budgeting resources. The Cobb law enforcement expressed that money and tangible resources were needed to address CSEC. The officer also cited economic issues faced by local law enforcement, as the reason why it is difficult to allocate resources into CSEC and other required programs. The DeKalb law enforcement officer suggested the need for a task force to consistently, actively investigate and run sting operations to identify the mid-level supervisors and leaders of these operations in order to build cases that would result in jail time. The officer also suggested that a long-term program to rehabilitate CSEC victims, be put into place to avoid returning to the CSEC life. The Gwinnett officer expressed that more resources needed to be dedicated to combating CSEC. The officer cited low staffing levels, budgeting constraints and high case loads from other crimes as reason that affected law enforcement response to CSEC. The officer stated that it was a constant balancing act to shift resources around to cover as much as possible.

The seventh question asked what challenges law enforcement face when dealing with CSEC. The majority response was that working with victimized children was difficult because they were loyal to their perpetrators and did not want to talk to law enforcement. The DeKalb law enforcement officer added that this was because the children's basic needs for love, attention, food, and clothing are being met by the perpetrators. The officer also stated that the mobility of CSEC operations create jurisdictional issues, which make it hard for law enforcement

to consistently locate, investigate and prosecute the leaders. The Cobb law enforcement officer expressed the need for more resources and other programs available to assist in combating CSEC.

The eight and last question asked how important it is for law enforcement agencies and social service providers to collaborate when it comes to combating CSEC. The overwhelming response was that it was very important for law enforcement and social service providers to work together to combat CSEC. The Cobb law enforcement officer added that both law enforcement and social services deal with the child at one point or another. The officer also stated that social service providers generally have programs or the means to get assistance for the children through the court system. The DeKalb law enforcement officer stated that removing a child from their current situation is just the beginning. The children need a sense of belonging when their need for family and care are not being met, in order to prevent them from returning to a CSEC life out of fear. The Gwinnett officer expressed that even though CSEC victims will not cooperate with law enforcement, the ultimate goal is the safety of the child. The officer stated that sometimes, a criminal case must be sacrificed in order to achieve this goal. The officer also stated that there needs to be better cooperation between law enforcement and non-law enforcement groups, as this could benefit prosecutorial efforts without detracting from the overall benefits that social service agencies provide for CSEC victims.

Results from Borrowed Data from the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC)

This sub-section will look at the results from borrowed data to illustrate the prevalence of CSEC in the metro Atlanta area. Data was borrowed from the National Human Trafficking

Resource Center. All data is based on the number of calls made to the NHTRC from Georgia, with regard to human trafficking which includes sex and labor trafficking.

Figure 1: Number of Sex Trafficking Calls in Georgia

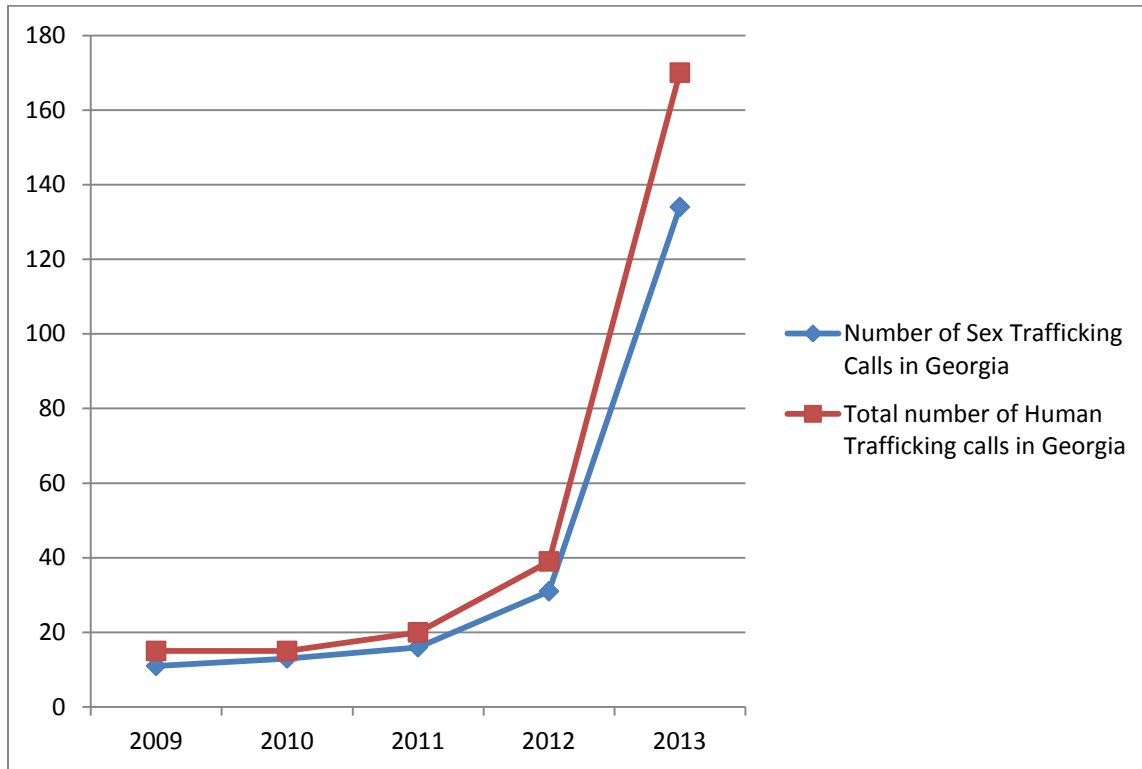


Figure 1 shows the number of sex trafficking calls made in Georgia from the period between 2009 and 2013. For the year 2009, there were a total of 11 sex trafficking made, out of the 15 total human trafficking calls made to the NHTRC. The number of calls made with regard to sex trafficking and human trafficking in general is small because the NHTRC was in its infancy stage. In 2010, there were a total of 13 sex trafficking related calls made out of a total of 15 human trafficking calls. In 2011, there were 16 sex trafficking related calls from Georgia, out of the total 20 human trafficking calls. In 2012, there were 31 sex trafficking calls made out the

NHTRC out of the total 39 human trafficking calls. For the year 2013, data were only available for the first six months (January - June). In order to achieve yearly figures, the numbers were multiplied by two. Therefore, data from 2013 has been extrapolated for the purposes of this paper. The initial number of sex trafficking calls made during the sixth month period was 67 out of a total of 85 human trafficking calls. The extrapolated figures translate to 134 sex trafficking calls out of 170 human trafficking calls. This explains why there seems to be a dramatic increase in CSEC in 2013 on the graph. However, the data show that human sex trafficking is happening in Georgia, and that it accounts for a significant portion of human trafficking cases. The noticeable growth of sex trafficking in Atlanta is between the 2011 and 2013.

Figure 2: Percentage of Sex Trafficking Calls in Georgia

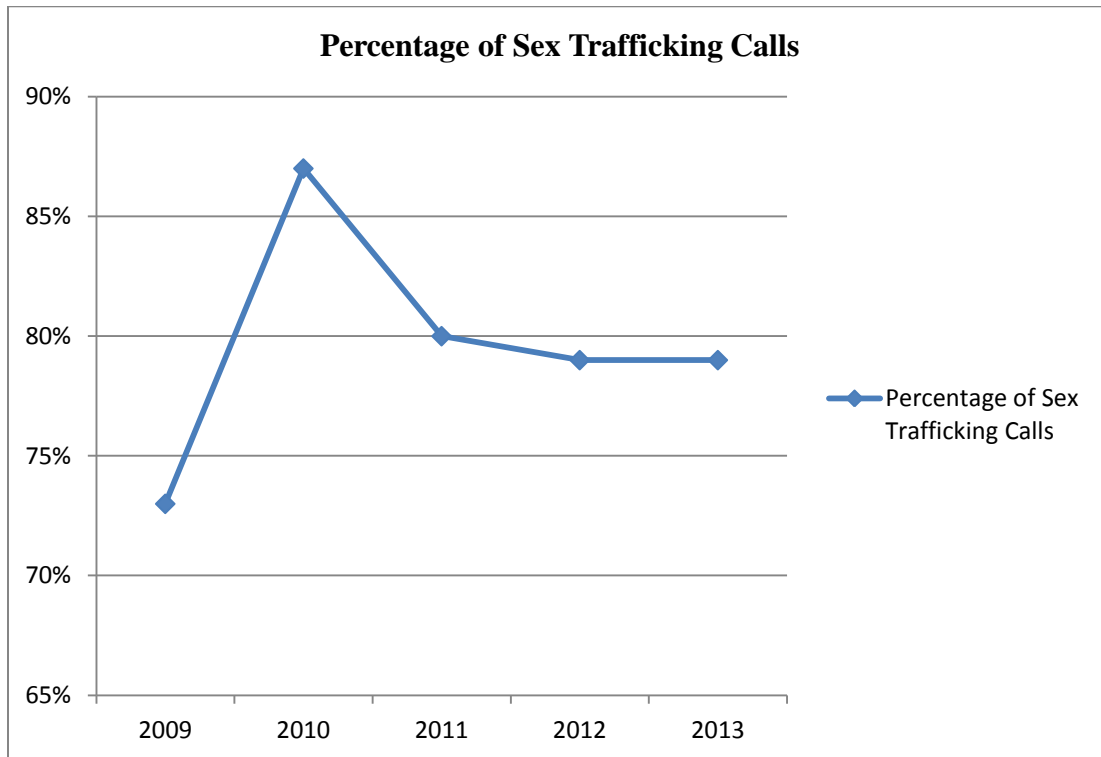


Figure 2 looks at the percentages of sex trafficking calls made in Georgia. For the year 2009, 73% of the human trafficking calls made from Georgia were sex trafficking calls. The

following year in 2010, 87% of the calls accounted for the sex trafficking calls made in this year. In 2012, there was a decrease in percentage of calls made to the NHTRC. This year accounted for 80% of the total number of sex trafficking calls. The years 2012 and 2013 both accounted for 79% of all sex trafficking calls made from the state of Georgia. It is important to note that while Figure 1 showed the growth of CSEC, Figure 2 shows the decrease of sex trafficking based on the percentage of calls made in Georgia. The years 2009 to 2011 had a disproportionately higher number of sex trafficking calls made in comparison to the number of human trafficking calls. From 2011 through 2013, the gap widens between the number of sex trafficking and human trafficking calls. The disparity in types of calls can account for the decrease in percentages of sex trafficking calls in Georgia.

Figure 3: Number of Human Trafficking Calls from Atlanta

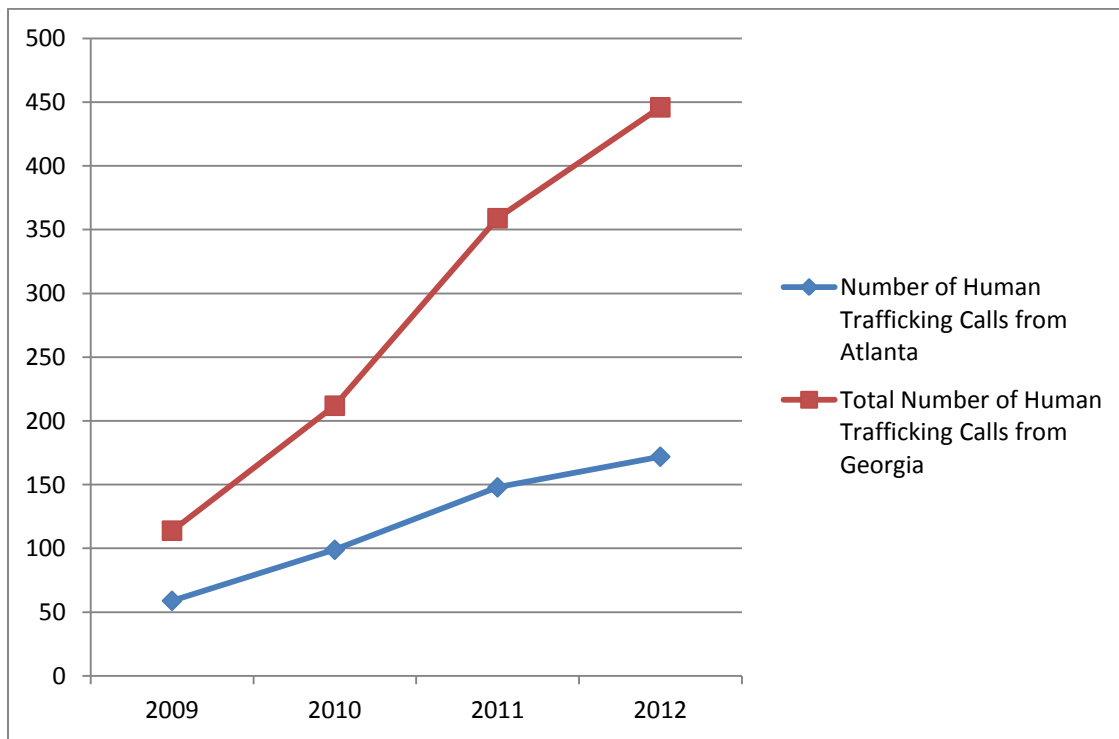


Figure 3 shows the number of human trafficking calls made from the city of Atlanta from 2009 to 2012. The NHTRC data does not categorize the number of calls for by the type of human trafficking. However, Figure 3 indicates that there is a significant number of calls made from Georgia with regard to sex trafficking. For the year 2009, there were 59 human trafficking calls made from the city of Atlanta out of the 114 calls made to the NHTRC from the entire state. In 2010, there were 99 calls made from Atlanta from the total 212 human trafficking calls made from Georgia. In 2011, there were 148 human trafficking calls made from Atlanta from a total of 359 calls from the entire state. In 2012, there were 172 calls made from Atlanta out of 446 human trafficking calls in Georgia. There was no data on the total number of calls by city for the 2013. As Figure 3 shows, a majority of the total human trafficking calls come from Atlanta indicating a presence of either labor or sex trafficking. Since sex trafficking accounts for 79 calls made between 2009 and 2012, it is safe to assume that the majority of these calls are coming from Atlanta, which is the city that has the highest number of calls made to the NHTRC.

Figure 4: Percentage of Human Trafficking Calls from Atlanta

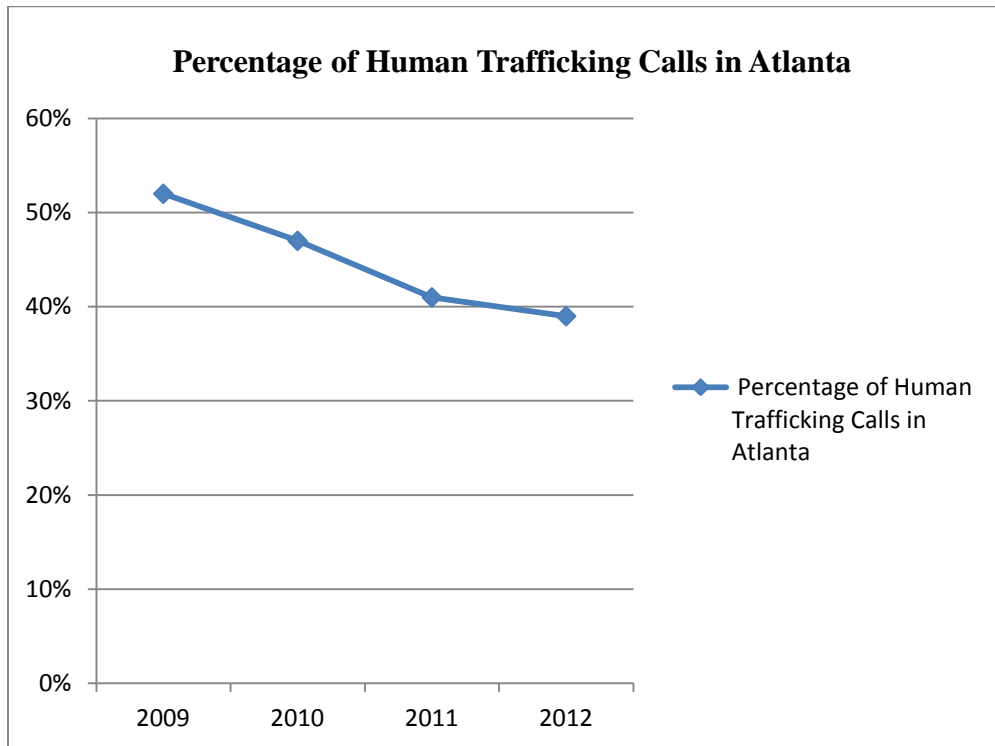


Figure 4 shows the percentages of human trafficking calls made from the city of Atlanta between 2009 and 2013. Data from the 2013 are not available by city, thus, they have been excluded. In 2008, human trafficking calls made from Atlanta accounted for 52% of the calls made from Georgia. In 2009, 47% of the human trafficking calls were made from Atlanta. For the year 2010, 41% of the human trafficking calls were made from Atlanta. In 2013, 39% of the human trafficking calls were made from Atlanta. As the graph shows, there is a decline in the percentages made during this four year period. The steepest decline occurs between 2009 and 2010 from 47% to 41%. However, the decline in percentages may not necessarily be indicative of the decline in sex trafficking in Georgia.

Figure 5: U.S Citizens who are Victims of Human Trafficking

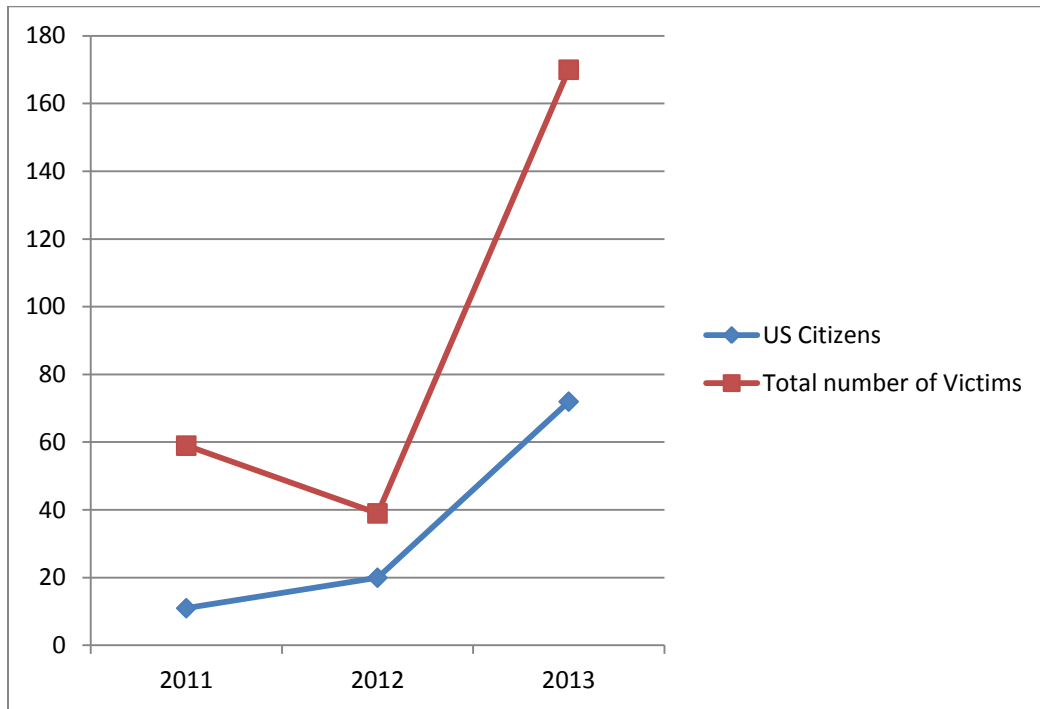


Figure 5 shows the number of human trafficking victims who are U.S citizens in Georgia. Data on the nationality of the citizens was only available from 2011 to 2013. Since data from 2013 covers a period of 6 months, I extrapolated to have a general idea of annual figures. In 2011, there were 11 U.S citizens who were victims of human trafficking out of 59 total victims. In 2012, there were a total of 20 U.S citizens who were victims of human trafficking from a total of 39 victims. In 2013, from January to June, there were a total of 36 U.S citizens who were victims of human trafficking out of 85. With extrapolation, these figures translate to 72 U.S citizens as victims of human trafficking out of 170 total victims. As the graph shows, there is a yearly increase in the number of U.S citizens who are trafficked. Although U.S citizens can be victims of labor trafficking, there is an even greater likelihood that these figures represent victims who are sex trafficked in Georgia.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

This section addresses the results of the study, as well as the results from the borrowed data from the NHTRC, as it relates to the previous research on CSEC. This section also addresses the implications of the current study. I will address the responses from the survey questionnaire first.

Survey Questionnaire

The purpose of this study was to answer two main questions: (1) Why is Metro Atlanta a hotspot for CSEC? (2) How can local law enforcement better respond to CSEC? For the survey questionnaire, these two main questions were broken down into 8 sub - questions to get an in-depth perspective on what the current study was trying to answer. The 3 sub-questions of why metro Atlanta is a hotspot for CSEC were: (1) In your professional opinion, how prevalent is CSEC in Atlanta? (2) In your professional opinion, where does CSEC occur the most in Atlanta? (3) What factors enable or contribute to CSEC in Atlanta? The other 5 sub-questions of how can local law enforcement better respond to CSEC were: (1) How is local law enforcement tackling the issue of CSEC? (2) What resources are being used by law enforcement to combat CSEC? (3) What can law enforcement do better in response to combating CSEC? (4) What challenges do law enforcement face when dealing with CSEC? (5) How important is it for law enforcement agencies and social service providers to collaborate when it comes to combating CSEC?

Why is Atlanta a Hotspot for CSEC?

In response to why Atlanta is a hotspot for CSEC, a myriad of reasons were given by the law enforcement officers who participated in this study. The study found that CSEC was very prevalent in the metro Atlanta area and happened in various locations around the city. The

officers listed Atlanta's Hartsfield Jackson Airport and the major roadways and interstates as one of the many reasons why CSEC is prevalent in Atlanta. The findings of this study are consistent with Boxill and Richardson (2007) who stated that the city's large airport and major roadways make it relatively easy for exploiters to come into and get out of the city. The ease of accessibility means that more men can come into the city and exploit children.

As shown by research conducted by the Shapiro Group (2010), it is estimated that there are 7,200 men who knowingly or unknowingly pay for sex with adolescent girls every month in the state of Georgia. The high number of men who exploit children can be attributed to the city's accessibility. Atlanta's main airport services about 2,500 arrival and departure flights on any given day. This means that about 250,000 people are flying into and out of the city each day. The airport also serves 150 domestic destinations and 75 international destinations in 50 countries. Perhaps, the most compelling fact is that Atlanta is within a 2-hour flight of 80% of the United States population (Department of Aviation, 2014). A high demand for CSEC (Lagon, 2008) coupled with easy accessibility make Atlanta an attractive destination for exploiters. The study also found that most CSEC networks tend to be very mobile in nature.

Exploiters have been known to set up clients prior to arrival to a city. This is done by posting advertisements on websites such as Backpage, Craigslist and other internet based sites for such services. Exploiters also try to be one step ahead of law enforcement by deleting CSEC related posts, and being able to operate under the radar from any given location. Due to the crime's hidden nature, it is challenging for law enforcement to actively go after CSEC offenders (Hepburn & Simon, 2010). The internet is still one of the dominant ways through which exploiters have access to children. This is consistent with Mitchell et al. (2011), who found that 36% of internet-facilitated commercial sexual exploitation of children (IFSEC) was to purchase

or sell access to identified children for sexual purposes including pornography. A study conducted by the Governor's Office for Children and Families (2011) also shows that internet activity accounted for the largest fraction, for where CSEC was most likely to occur in Atlanta. There is legislation that has been passed in response to the IFSEC. Georgia passed HB 156: *Keeping Children Safe from Online Predators* which has been effective since July 1, 2013. The premise of this law is to protect children from electronic pornography and child sexual exploitation. This law should serve as a deterrent to potential offenders in the hopes of combating CSEC in Atlanta, and Georgia in general.

The study also found that in addition to the city being easily accessible, exploiters have found a way to sell girls for sex at sporting events, conventions and other large events that are hosted in the city. It is at such events where there is an influx of people, coming from both within and out the state that CSEC occurs. Recently, there was a sex trafficking ring that was busted at the last Super Bowl held in New Jersey, this past February. A total of 16 children were rescued, while 45 pimps and their associates were arrested (FBI, 2014). It was also reported that some of the men flew into New Jersey from other states with the sole purpose of exploiting children. Although this did not happen in Atlanta, it lends credence to the mobility of CSEC. With Atlanta being easily accessible, we can deduce that exploiters are not only flying into the city from various locations for sporting and other events, but also for the purpose of exploiting children. The study also found that CSEC occurs the most in hotels and motels. This can be attributed to the mobile nature of CSEC. Exploiters will usually move from one place to another in order to look for new clients, or move children around to meet men who buy sex at sporting events, trade shows and other such events.

The study also found that runaways and abused children in the city are more likely to be exploited due to their vulnerability issues. This in turn contributes to why CSEC is prevalent in Atlanta. Runaways and abused children are vulnerable in the sense that they are seeking love, attention, and acceptance that is often lacking in their own life. Pimps prey upon this weakness and manipulate the runaways and abused children by making them believe that they care about them. They shower them with praise and gifts as a means to make them entirely dependent on the pimp. These findings are consistent with (Coy, 2009; Clayton et al., 2013; Rand 2009). Rand (2009) also cited poor school performance, dysfunctional family interaction, low socioeconomic status, negative or limited peer relations, and repeated family abuse or neglect as risk factors that increased the likelihood of children being sexually victimized on the street.

How Can Local Law Enforcement Better Respond to CSEC?

In order to address CSEC, the study found that law enforcement officers employed a diverse set of resources. The participants of the current study stated that online investigations were important to combat CSEC. The internet is definitely a tool that law enforcement should utilize in their investigations, given that technology has advanced. It also makes sense for law enforcement to use online investigation because the majority of sex trafficking and CSEC is taking place online (Governors Office for Children and Families, 2011). Exploiters are using the internet to find sell girls, now more than ever before. The study also found that law enforcement are using multi-disciplinary approaches which include a combination of law enforcement, prosecutors and child services in order to combat CSEC.

The study found that law enforcement need task forces that are active and consistently investigating CSEC. Task forces are important for targeting active sting operations to identify the leaders of these operations, in order to build case that will result in jail or prison time. Dysart

(2013) stated that task forces were a great way of bringing local, state and federal law enforcement with the collaborative effort of rescuing prostituted children, and arresting those involved in exploiting children. The study also found that there was a need for long-term programs to rehabilitate children who have been exploited. This is consistent with Todres (2010) who advocates for more proactive measures and strategies to be employed by law enforcement in order to fight CSEC. The participants also stated that law enforcement rely heavily on non-governmental organizations. This is because these organizations have access to better services that can be beneficial to victims of CSEC. Also, victims of CSEC are more comfortable with a social service advocate and are more likely to divulge information to them, rather than to a law enforcement officer they do not trust.

The study found that law enforcement face a number of challenges when it comes to dealing with CSEC. CSEC is a challenging and complex crime to identify, investigate and prosecute. The participants stated that the CSEC operators are very careful to stay away from the attention of law enforcement. One of the biggest problems law enforcement face when dealing with CSEC is the lack of cooperation from the victims. As discussed earlier, the relationship between law enforcement and CSEC victims has been fraught with tension and controversy. The participants stated that victims are usually very loyal to their perpetrators and will not divulge any information or cooperate with law enforcement. It is very difficult for law enforcement to gain trust from the victims.

These findings are consistent with research that suggests that the perceptions of children as victims versus juveniles or prostitutes is crucial in combating CSEC (Dysart, 2013; Clayton et al., 2013). Todres (2010) states that a child-centered approach can be beneficial in preventing CSEC when children are recognized as vulnerable. However, according to a study conducted by

Halter (2010) on police conceptualization of girls involved in prostitution, the police were more likely to perceive juveniles as offenders if they were cooperative with the police, and whether the juveniles were discovered by the police through a report. On the other hand, the police were more likely to perceive a juvenile as an offender if the juvenile was not cooperative with them, and also whether the juvenile was discovered through some type of action by the police versus a report.

The study found that collaborations between law enforcement and social service providers were very important in the fight against CSEC. This finding is consistent with (Ferguson et.al, 2009; Moser, 2012; and Dysart 2013). These collaborative efforts could be beneficial in identifying victims of sex trafficking and removing them from exploitative situations. The study also found that in some cases law enforcement may have to sacrifice a criminal case in order to ensure the safety of a child. However, the participants stated that law enforcement and non-law enforcement groups can benefit from prosecutorial efforts without detracting from the overall benefits social service agencies provide for CSEC victims. Additionally, social service providers have programs or the means to get assistance through the court system to help victims of CSEC. This finding is consistent with previous studies (Moser, 2012; Ferguson et al., 2009; and Boxill & Richardson, 2007) which have advocated for law enforcement and social service providers to work together. There are local nonprofit organizations and social service providers in Atlanta such as youthSpark and Georgia Cares that work with law enforcement, by providing resources for victims and training of law enforcement officials. Law enforcement need to be aware of CSEC trends, and how to identify and treat victims.

Another challenge that local law enforcement have is the lack of resources available to deal with CSEC. These resources could be in the form of equipment, man power or budget allocations. The study found that budget and financial constraints affect the way in which law enforcement approach CSEC. Oftentimes, there is a lack of resources which means that agencies have to make the best of what they have. There are also other crimes that are prioritized over CSEC, so it is being pushed to the back burner so to speak. These findings are consistent with Bartnitz (2001), “Because law enforcement agencies are dependent on public funding, administrators are more interested in the pursuit of issues that receive more public attention and funding, such as the sale of drugs. Even conscientious law enforcement officers are confounded, both by children and youths (who may not cooperate with investigations due to fear and intimidation) and by the lack of services (such as housing, legal assistance, and mental and physical health care) needed to help children and youth escape from sex trade businesses” (Barnitz, 2001, pp.603-4).The participants also stated that law enforcement need more programs and resources in order to assist victims of CSEC.

Results from NHTRC Borrowed Data

I reported on the results from borrowed data from the NHTRC. This data was based on annual reports from 2009- 2013 on human trafficking calls made from the state of Georgia. Since there is limited data on CSEC available, I particularly focused on sex trafficking, which is a type of human trafficking. Data for 2013 was only available for the months January through June; therefore I extrapolated the data to give me an estimate of annual figures. The borrowed data was used to create graphs to show the prevalence of CSEC in Atlanta. I will also discuss the results of the borrowed data in three sections; number and percentage of sex trafficking calls from Georgia,

number and percentage of human trafficking calls in Atlanta, and nationality of human trafficking victims in Georgia.

Number and Percentage of Sex Trafficking Calls from Georgia

There were a total of 205 sex trafficking calls out of 259 sex trafficking calls made from the state of the Georgia between 2009 and 2013. The sex trafficking calls account for 79% of the total human trafficking calls made. Figure 1 shows an increase in sex trafficking calls particularly from 2011. The rise in the number of calls can be used to speculate on the growth of CSEC in Georgia. This is consistent with FBI (2005) that lists Atlanta as one of the top 14 hubs for human trafficking in the United States. However, Figure 2 shows the percentages of the sex trafficking calls decreasing, even though they are still generally high, averaging out at 79%. It should be also noted that the decline in percentage could also be attributed the fact that sex trafficking is usually a complex and hidden crime, making it difficult to report (Rand, 2009). It is much easier for people to report labor trafficking than sex trafficking due to its complex nature. The graph shows a huge spike between 2009 and 2010; from 73% to 87%. This is consistent with factors that make Atlanta a hotspot for CSEC, such as easy accessibility through the city's international airport and major roadways, and hosting of conventions and sporting events (Boxill & Richadson, 2007).

Number and Percentage of Human Trafficking Calls in Atlanta

There were a total of 478 human trafficking calls made from Atlanta out of 1,131 human trafficking calls made from the state of Georgia from 2009-2012. Data for the 2013 were not available by city, and were therefore excluded from Figures 3 and 4. The number of human trafficking calls made from Atlanta accounted for 42% of all the calls made from Georgia. Although these data include labor and sex trafficking, it is important to note that almost half of

the state's human trafficking calls were coming from Atlanta. Figure 4 shows a decrease in the percentage of human trafficking calls made from Atlanta. There is a significant decrease between 2010 and 2011, from 47% to 41%. The general decline of calls from Atlanta could be attributed to increased awareness on human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children. It could also be attributed to the passing of HB 200 in 2011, which stiffened punishments for offenders of CSEC and human trafficking.

Nationality of Human Trafficking Victims in Georgia

There were a total of 103 U.S citizens who were victims of human trafficking, from a total of 268 victims in the state of Georgia. Data were only available from 2011-2013. Data from 2013 was only available for the period between January and June. Therefore, I extrapolated data to achieve annual figures. The number of U.S citizens who were victims of human trafficking over this three year period accounted for 38% of the total number of human trafficking victims. I speculate that while it is possible for U.S citizens to be victims of labor trafficking, they are more likely to be victims of sex trafficking. It is also possible that this figure may include adults, but research has shown that children are more likely to be victims of CSEC and human trafficking. There are more vulnerable and can easily be persuaded by a pimp (Barnitz, 2001). This number of U.S victims is also consistent with the Georgia Demand Study (Shapiro Group, 2010) which found that 400 girls were exploited in Georgia each month.

Policy Implications

The purpose of this study is to bridge the gap between CSEC and responses from law enforcement. In doing so, it is also the intention of this study to suggest ways in which law enforcement can effectively deal with CSEC. The current study would like to offer a few policy implications to law enforcement.

The findings show that there is a need for more resources by law enforcement when it comes to dealing with CSEC related crimes. I would like to suggest that local law enforcement agencies allocate more resources to this particular crime. These could be in the form of CSEC task forces, more man power, vehicles and investigative software and tools. CSEC is a difficult crime to identify, investigate and prosecute, therefore law enforcement need all the resources they can get to combat it. Exploiters are very smart and will always look for manipulative ways to remain undetected by law enforcement. It is imperative that law enforcement have better resources to keep up with exploiters of children and offenders of CSEC.

The second recommendation is that law enforcement should engage in more proactive approaches to combat CSEC. This could be done through undercover stings and active operations in places where CSEC is most likely to occur. These could be adult entertainment clubs, hotels and other lodging facilities, high-crime neighborhoods, massage parlors, escort services, sporting venues, trade shows etc. This is why it is important for law enforcement to have access to resources. There should be focus on preventing CSEC rather than reacting to it after it happens. Granted, CSEC does not usually happen in plain sight, law enforcement could employ some preventive measures and strategies.

The third recommendation is that law enforcement should find ways to improve their relationship with victims of CSEC. The findings indicate that victims of CSEC dislike and do not trust the police. There needs to be way to rectify this issue. Victims of CSEC are conditioned to distrust and lie to the police, therefore law enforcement must be more empathetic to the state of victims who are just coming out of a life of manipulation, abuse and exploitation. The findings also show that victims are more likely to be comfortable with an advocate of a social service

provider, perhaps law enforcement officers can undergo sensitivity training to break the wall of mistrust that exists between them and victims of CSEC.

The fourth recommendation is that collaborative partnerships between law enforcement and social service providers must be encouraged. Both law enforcement and social service providers have unique roles in the fight against CSEC. As stated in the findings, law enforcement rely on social service providers to provide or access services to victims of CSEC. They can also learn from each other through workshops and training, to ensure the ultimate goal of stopping CSEC in Georgia is achieved. It is important for this partnership to succeed as there are hundreds of children who depend on it.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

CSEC is a disturbing crime that has inundated the city of Atlanta. The statistics of this crime are appalling and above anything else, a violation of human rights. An estimated 400 girls are sexually exploited in Georgia Shapiro Group (2010). The current study is significant because it address two very important questions: (1) Why is Metro Atlanta a hotspot for CSEC? (2) How can local law enforcement better respond to CSEC? The findings only further confirm the presence and prevalence of CSEC in Atlanta. This crime is happening in hotels and motels, as well as high crime neighborhoods. Atlanta attracts CSEC because it has a major airport and roadways that make it extremely accessible to exploiters. The advancement of technology has also contributed to another avenue, through which exploiters can have access to vulnerable children.

Law enforcement desperately need more resources to fight CSEC effectively. Budget constraints in agencies put a hamper on what law enforcement can do and how they respond to CSEC. The mistrust of the police by victims of CSEC affects the way in which these two groups interact, which in turn affects the way an investigation could turn out, and the effective delivery of services. Law enforcement rely on social service providers for a host of resources. This validates the beneficial nature of collaborative partnerships. The ultimate goal of these efforts is to ensure the safety of the child/children and to provide them with resources that will not make them a target for exploiters in the future.

Limitations

The current study had some limitations that I wish to address. First, the sample size of the study was significantly small which makes it difficult to get a larger perspective of CSEC in the

metro Atlanta are. Only 3 out of 5 law enforcement officers responded to the questionnaire. None of the social service providers responded to the questionnaire. Although the current study focused on CSEC and responses from local law enforcement, I was interested in studying the opinions of social service providers, as they play a significant role in the fight against CSEC. The second limitation is that the data from the NHTRC was not complete. For instance, I had to extrapolate the results from the borrowed data for the year 2013 to achieve annual figures. This is because figures for this particular year were only available from January to June. Additionally, there were some figures missing for a few years which made it difficult to see the progression of human trafficking in Georgia. It should also be noted that the data was inclusive of both labor and sex trafficking. This may be responsible for the decline in the percentage of human trafficking calls from Atlanta and Georgia (see *Figures 2 and 4*). The final limitation is that there is minimal academic literature and research conducted on CSEC in Georgia. Therefore, it is rather difficult to get information on this particular topic. Despite the above mentioned limitations, the current study should be seen a contribution to academic research on CSEC in Georgia.

Future Research

There is a need for more research on CSEC particularly in Georgia, where it is occurring at alarming rates. Future researchers should build on this study by conducting comparative studies on CSEC between different states, perhaps, even the United States and other developed countries. The sample size used in this study was small at best, therefore future researchers are encouraged to include a larger sample in their research. Future researchers should also look at complete data sets. Since human trafficking is a broad term, researchers are encouraged to focus on CSEC to expand the amount of literature and research available.

Appendix A

Informed Consent Statement

Title of Research Study: Bridging the Gap between Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and Responses from Law Enforcement.

Researcher's Contact Information: Ruth Kasalwe, rkasalwe@students.kennesaw.edu

Introduction

You are being invited to take part in a research study conducted by Ruth Kasalwe of Kennesaw State University. Before you decide to participate in this study, you should read this form and ask questions about anything that you do not understand.

Description of Project

This research will discuss why Atlanta has attracted commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) and how local law enforcement is dealing with this crime. In particular, this study will answer two main questions: (1) Why is Metro Atlanta a hotspot for CSEC? (2) How can local law enforcement better respond to CSEC?

Explanation of Procedures

You will be asked to give opinions about why the thing Atlanta attracts the commercial sexual exploitation of children, and how law enforcement can better respond to this type of crime.

Time Required

You will spend approximately 15 to 30 minutes completing a questionnaire.

Risks or Discomforts

There are no known risks anticipated because of taking part in this study. The survey will not ask any questions that cause any physical risks or long term discomforts.

Benefits

This research seeks to ultimately provide information that will be helpful to law enforcement and social service providers, in curbing commercial sexual exploitation of children in Atlanta. This in turn will make the city safer for our children.

Confidentiality

The results of this participation will be anonymous. Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of the study records. Files will be kept in secure cabinets, flash drives and computers to which only the investigator has access.

Inclusion Criteria for Participation

All participants are 18 years or older.

Statement of Understanding

The purpose of this research has been explained and my participation is voluntary. I have the right to stop participation at any time without penalty. I understand that the research has no known risks, and I will not be identified. By completing this survey, I am agreeing to participate in this research project.

THIS PAGE MAY BE REMOVED AND KEPT BY EACH PARTICIPANT

Research at Kennesaw State University that involves human participants is carried out under the oversight of an Institutional Review Board. Questions or problems regarding these activities should be addressed to the Institutional Review Board, Kennesaw State University, 1000 Chastain Road, #0112, Kennesaw, GA 30144-5591, (678) 797-2268.

Appendix B

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Questionnaire

Please answer the following open-ended questions.

- 1. In your professional opinion, how prevalent is CSEC in Atlanta?**
- 2. In your professional opinion, where does CSEC occur the most in Atlanta?**
- 3. What factors enable or contribute to CSEC in Atlanta?**
- 4. How is local law enforcement tackling the issue of CSEC?**
- 5. What resources are being used by law enforcement to combat CSEC?**
- 6. What can law enforcement do better in response to combating CSEC?**
- 7. What challenges do law enforcement face when dealing with CSEC?**
- 8. How important is it for law enforcement agencies and social service providers to collaborate when it comes to combating CSEC?**

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