

**From Victim to Survivor, to Prosocial Change Agent: Exploring the Contributions made by Survivors of Human Trafficking towards Fighting against Human Trafficking.**

**Keywords: Human trafficking, Victim, Survivor, Transitional journey, Prosocial agent**

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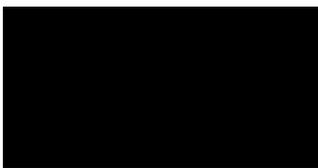
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## Declaration

I, Blessing Anya Hutchinson declare that

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## **Dedication**

I wish to wholeheartedly dedicate my work to the men and women survivors of human trafficking in Africa and the entire globe. I have to state that their unique and valuable experiences must be heard with attention if we are to heal the world from this form of modern slavery. I wish to state that their narratives as stated in my work are not to be prematurely judged, and should avoid causing stigmatization of these humans, but they should instead help communities deal with the existing gaps of dealing with human trafficking, as well as to rethink better ways of addressing the phenomenon such as inviting the same survivors to tell their stories again and again. I also wish to dedicate my work to all those state organs, non-governmental organisations and individuals that are making a difference in assisting in the recovery of victims of human trafficking, and sensitizing communities about the phenomenon. You that give them a peaceful environment and hope even when the world stigmatizes and judges them harshly, I make this research contribution in your honour.

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## **Abstract**

The study reported in this dissertation explores the transitional journeys of survivors of human trafficking in South Africa. There is a special focus on survivors of sex trafficking, and how they narrate their transition from victims, to survivors, to prosocial change agents. This study was conducted within an interpretivist paradigm with a qualitative research design. Through narrative inquiry, data was collected from the participants and transcribed verbatim. The study is unique in that it attempts to fill a gap in understanding about how survivors of human trafficking transition to become prosocial change agents while contributing to the fight against human trafficking in South Africa. Typically, research on human trafficking does not focus on the transition that trafficking survivors make to become prosocial change agents, but rather seems to focus on the tragedy and damaging effects of human trafficking. Findings from this study highlight participants' resilience in surviving the devastating physical and psychological abuse and severe traumatic experiences from traffickers, which they have had to live with and manage for years. The participants explained how they used their past traumatic stories to create awareness and sensitise South African communities about the dangers of human trafficking. The participants also highlighted how they used their past traumatic experiences to provide hope to those currently trapped in human trafficking - for example, when undertaking late night street outreach programmes. The participants explained how the criminalisation of prostitution and prosecuting sex buyers could help reduce human trafficking and as such help fight against the phenomenon. Lastly, this study recommends, First, joining existing efforts against human trafficking is an effective way to combat human trafficking. Second, the criminalisation of prostitution and prosecuting sex buyers would reduce the demand for human trafficking. Third, South African Government and individuals to give Survivors of human trafficking practical support to enable Survivors to continue to be prosocial change agents in the fight against human trafficking in South Africa. Fourth, an ongoing empowerment and psychosocial strategy should be provided to those who have served their conviction terms in prison for human trafficking related offenses.

## **Abbreviations**

<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
<b>CCARHT</b>	Cambridge Centre for Applied Research in Human Trafficking
<b>FOST</b>	A Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>MA</b>	Masters
<b>MeCAHT</b>	Media Campaign Against Human Trafficking
<b>NFA</b>	National Freedom Network
<b>NHTRL</b>	National Human Trafficking Resource
<b>NPO</b>	Non-Profit Organisation
<b>SABC</b>	The South African Broadcasting Corporation station
<b>SANHTRL</b>	South African National Human Trafficking Resource Line
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>STD</b>	Sexually Transmitted Disease
<b>TVPA</b>	Trafficking Victims Protection Act
<b>UDHR</b>	The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UNODOC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>YWAM</b>	Youth with a Mission

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## **Chapter One**

### **1.1. Introduction**

Chapter One provides an overview of this study and includes a brief discussion on the history of human trafficking. The chapter also briefly refers to how some survivors of human trafficking work to become prosocial change agents and leaders in the fight against human trafficking. The problem statement, study aims, and research objectives and questions are then explicitly identified.

### **1.2. Background to Human Trafficking**

Over 140 years after legally abolishing slavery, human trafficking emerged as a new form of modern slavery, enslaving humans into cheap labour and commercial sex through deception, threat, and force (Farrell & Fahv, 2009). The concept of “human trafficking” has been defined as an act of trading of people using deception for exploitation (Hodge, 2014). According to Cockbain and Bowers (2019), human trafficking is a criminal act of deception for purposes of exploitation of a person or persons. According to these authors, the heinous act is usually perpetuated through moving of trafficked personas within or between countries by use of various means of transportation on land, air and sea. Trafficked persons are normally engaged in extraneous activities comprising sexual exploitation, organ harvesting, domestic servitude, work in private households, and in numerous other illicit labour markets. However, the focus of the trafficking field has long been skewed towards sexual exploitation. As participants for this study, the researcher recruited survivors of human trafficking who had predominantly been trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation. As a result, the study focused on survivors of human trafficking who had been trafficked for purposes related to sexual exploitation.

In relation to the above, Chuang (2014) poignantly stated that out of the 27 million people trafficked globally, only 1% are estimated to have been rescued. The issue of human trafficking is further compounded by the finding that traffickers often go without being convicted. Chuang (2014) further estimated that the conviction rate of human traffickers is about 2%. Moreover, it was reported that, in Africa, four out of every hundred persons have been victims of human trafficking out of which 74% were adults while 26% were children (ibid.).

A ripple effect of the inability to prosecute traffickers connected with the widespread practice of human trafficking is underscored by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC, 2018) global report. This report indicated that the overall number of reported victims

of human trafficking has increased in 2016 with about 40% more victims were detected compared to 2011 (UNODC, 2018). Consistent with this report, the United Nations' International Labour Organisation, in collaboration with the Walk Free Foundation, estimated that at present, about 40 million people are trapped in modern slavery worldwide (ILO, 2017). The breakdown of these statistics brings to fore the estimation that women and girls are disproportionately affected by modern slavery resulting from human trafficking. In this circumstance, the number of women and girls affected accounts for almost 71% of the overall total of persons trafficked (ILO, 2017). Furthermore, it has been reported that, one in four victims of modern slavery, is children: and this amounts to about 10 million children (ibid). With respect to this, some 37% of the children, out of which one-third are underage girls, are forced into marriages.

In view of the above, human trafficking for sexual exploitation, such as prostitution and sex work, continues to increase at an alarming rate so much that it is becoming a global phenomenon (Ikeora, 2016. p.10). One of the reasons for this occurrence is the increase in demand for commercial sex workers which has propelled the growing sexual entertainment industry globally (Horne, 2014). Although there have been several legislations and initiatives put in place to mitigate against such, the growing number of women and children that are still trapped due to trafficking makes this issue especially relevant during the national and global campaign against gender-based violence. Two committees whose focus are on 'Elimination of Discrimination against 'Women' and 'Rights of the Child' have been at the forefront of making a case against detrimental cultural beliefs (IFES, 2011). These beliefs comprise ones which tend to consider women and girls as less valuable than boys; and those which make older men perpetuate forced marriages with underage brides (ibid.).

The issue of sex trafficking of minors within and outside of South Africa has raised much concern in all sectors of society and attracted the attention of scholars and activists (Bertone, 2004; Brennan, 2005). In South Africa, 30,000 children, of which 50% percent are under 14 years of age, are trafficked as sex slaves from its neighbouring countries (Wilkinson & Chiumia, 2017). However, Weitzer (2015) questioned the accuracy of human trafficking statistics, arguing that it is impossible to accurately account for the numbers of affected victims of human trafficking in the world. Notwithstanding this argument, the reality of human trafficking in South Africa remains factual. For example, in 2018, 46 female victims of human trafficking were rescued in a house that was raided in Johannesburg (Ramphela, 2018). Often,

in South Africa, poverty is said to undergird the nature and practice of the trafficking of women and girls, as most of these girls and women are from rural areas with little or no education (Ramphela, 2018). It is important to bear in mind that females are 75 times more likely to have been trafficked for sex than for any other types of trafficking (Cockbain & Bowers, 2019). Moreover, approximately one-third of children aged 5 to 17 engaged in child labour are outside the education system. More than just being victims of forced labour and forced marriages, and deprived of education, a hallmark of the negative effects of trafficking is that it often encompasses sexual exploitation and violence and other life-threatening consequences (Erulkar, 2013). The information on the background of human trafficking relates to the current topic of the study because it gives a background on the experiences of survivors of human trafficking.

### **1.3. Survivors of (and Subsequent Leaders against) Human Trafficking**

In some cases, survivors of human trafficking rise to be leaders in anti-trafficking movements (Eronen & Jones, 2017). According to these authors, some survivors engage in activities which include running organizations that fight against human trafficking; advocating before legislatures; training law enforcement officials; and educating the public about the dangers associated with the act. Other activities are in the form of collaborating with governments to improve domestic and foreign programmes against human trafficking. As survivors of human trafficking, such individuals know first-hand what governments at all levels need to do regarding anti-trafficking responses. Since survivors' perspectives reflect those with lived experiences of human trafficking, their input is key to ensuring the efficacy of government's policies in this direction (International Labour Organisation, 2019). Williams and Allen (2015) highlighted how leaders of (or activists for) prosocial change are sometimes propelled by their own traumatic experiences to lead and guide other sufferers to wholeness and to prevent future tragedies like their own. However, "though trauma survivors sometimes emerge as leaders in prosocial causes related to their previous negative or traumatic experiences, little is known about this transition, and limited guidance is available for survivors who hope to make prosocial contributions" (Williams & Allen, 2015, p. 86). This assertion points to the significance of considering how survivors of human trafficking become prosocial leaders and activists who contribute decisively in the fight against human trafficking.

Congruent with the above, some scholarly studies have attempted to explore the transitional processes individuals may undergo after experiencing traumatic events. For example, Bennis

and Thomas (2002) explained how a transition can be described by the concept of a "crucible". A crucible is a period in an individual's life characterised by difficult experiences, which require that specific decisions be made that arise out of one's areas of difficulties. Such periods of difficult experience and decision-making may shape crucible leaders of today and tomorrow. Bennis and Thomas (2002) explained how "a transformative experience through which an individual comes to a new or altered sense of identity" (p.6) may contribute to an individual developing into a leader. Similarly, Williams and Allen (2015) stated that difficult experiences can lead to the well-being of society through "crucible leadership". Moreover, different terms are used by other scholars to describe the concept of 'crucible'. For instance, Williams and Allen (2015) described 'post-traumatic leadership' as the derivation of leadership skills or techniques, which may emerge from an individual's traumatic experience (p.87). Williams and Allen (2015) conduct a study of how post-traumatic experiences empower people (both trauma sufferers and non-sufferers) in their workplaces and in the society at large and observed that literature seems scanty on the issue. They, Williams and Allen (2015), consequently, propose the need for more research into post-traumatic leadership experiences. Weitzer (2014) stated that although numerous research studies have been conducted on the physical, psychological, and emotional consequences associated with being a victim of human trafficking, little is researched on the contributions of survivors of human trafficking to society. Although understanding the consequences of human trafficking is important, new directions and approaches in research on human trafficking, especially on how to use the experiences of survivors to benefit society, is also crucial (Weitzer, 2014).

#### **1.4. Problem statement, study aims, objectives, and research questions**

As mentioned above, there is valuable scholarly work already in existence (Bennis & Thomas, 2002; Williams & Allen, 2015) on the topic of prosocial change agency, crucible leadership, and post-traumatic leadership. However, there seems to be a paucity of research on how survivors of human trafficking transition to become prosocial change agents in anti-trafficking efforts. Therefore, this study attempted to suggest answers to fill the above gap in the literature. This was achieved through exploring the personal narratives of survivors of human trafficking based on their lived experiences. In this regard, how their transitional journeys from victims to survivors can be inculcated to place them as impactful leaders in the fight against human trafficking, and as prosocial change agents, was germane.

The study examines how leaders of (or activists for) prosocial change in human trafficking used their "crucibles" of being trafficked to contribute to the fight against human trafficking as well as helped other victims of human trafficking. Hence, narrative accounts from women survivors are significant to supplement the available literature on human trafficking. How this abominable act can be prevented in South Africa premised on the constructs of crucible leadership and post-traumatic leadership is pertinent to my study.

The aim of the study was to understand and engage with the participants, and based on their experiences, to establish how they may assist in preventing human trafficking. The many contributions they make in helping victims of human trafficking are also significant to my study. The approach adopted in my study to address the problem of human trafficking is propitious because other strategies are devoid of details of transition from being a survivor to becoming a prosocial agent. Against this backdrop, this study focuses on understanding how former victims of trafficking can play a role as leaders of (or activists for) prosocial change in human trafficking. In this instance, the study seeks to understand the former victims' lived experiences and their transition from being trafficked to being a survivor, to becoming a prosocial change agent; and how these experiences can be deployed in the fight against trafficking in South Africa and beyond.

The main objective of this study was to explore the transitional narratives of survivors of human trafficking from victims to survivors, to prosocial change agents. The study also explores how the transition from victim to survivor to prosocial change agent brings about a new sense of identity, and what these individuals are doing as prosocial change agents. Most significantly, this study identified the transitional narration of trafficked survivors to prosocial change agents as a fundamentally important contribution that survivors of human trafficking make in the fight against human trafficking in South Africa and beyond.

The specific objectives of the study are:

- To explore the transitional narratives of survivors of human trafficking from victim to survivor to prosocial change agent.
- To explore how the transition from human trafficking victim to survivor to prosocial change agent brings about a new sense of identity, and what these individuals are doing as prosocial change agents in South Africa.

The study will engage with the following research questions to achieve its stated objectives:

- How do survivors of human trafficking, given their new sense of identity, narrate their transition from victims, to survivors, to prosocial change agents?
- What are the further contributions of the survivors of human trafficking, through their role as prosocial agents, in the fight against human trafficking in South Africa?

### 1.5. **Structure of the Dissertation**

Chapter one of the dissertations presents a brief overview of the history of human trafficking, its victims, and survivors of human trafficking and how some have transitioned to become prosocial agents in the South African context. Chapter Two presents a review of the relevant literature on the transition processes of those that have been previously subjected to incidents of human trafficking. Therefore, this chapter reviews existing literature on the experiences of victims and survivors of human trafficking considering the South African and global communities, and especially concerning the transition of such individuals to prosocial agents within the South African context. It further discusses previous attempts made to address, prevent and end human trafficking and sex slavery. Chapter Three outlines the qualitative methodological approaches used in the study. A narrative inquiry was used to understand, record, document and produce experiences of the transition of survivors of human trafficking, and their contributions to the fight against such occurrences in South Africa. The chapter outlines the research design, including sampling techniques and ethical procedures. Chapter Four presents emerging and relevant themes from the narrative analysis of the data collected for this study. The chapter discusses the findings relating to the transition of survivors of human trafficking from victims, to survivors and prosocial agents, as well as their contributions towards the fight against human trafficking in South Africa. The data were analysed in view of the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, and other relevant theories such as transitional narrative theories and theories of the prosocial agent. Verbatim quotations were derived from the data collected. Major themes of the narratives were sorted and codified into essential themes. Chapter Five presents a discussion of the findings in the study; the similarities and differences in the narratives of participants; and integrating the similarities and differences with theories. The chapter concludes on recommendations pertaining to how survivors may be supported through anti-trafficking prosocial agency in South Africa.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

### **1.6. Introduction**

To identify why a study on the narratives of human trafficking survivors is relevant, I firstly review in this chapter relevant literature on how and why human trafficking takes place. Secondly, my literature review identifies the typical effects of being trafficked on its victims. Thirdly, previous and current efforts to address, prevent and end human trafficking and sex slavery are presented. These attempts are concluded with a focus on the importance of including survivors of human trafficking in policy and practice pertaining to anti-trafficking efforts. The fourth part of Chapter Two explores the role of trauma, adversity and resilience in activating prosocial leadership in survivors, while the fifth part identifies the importance of telling the stories of survivors of human trafficking. This chapter is concluded with reference to the theoretical framework used in the study to explain the value of exploring and representing the transitional narratives of human trafficking survivors who have become prosocial change agents.

### **1.7. How and why human trafficking happens; The push/pull dynamics**

For many years, scholars have identified that two forces, namely, the push and pull factors, commonly drive human trafficking. According to Olaniyi (2003), a push factor is a situation caused by poverty such as financial hardship and the perceived financial gain which causes, forces or entices an individual who is in a poverty situation to engage in human trafficking. Similarly, Bales (2007) observed that corruption, poverty, conflict, and the 'pull' factor of opportunity are all significant predictors of human trafficking. Bales (2007) further added that "poverty and vulnerability represent 'push factors', while employment opportunity presents an important 'pull factor" (2007, p. 1). Fitzgibbon (2003) mentioned cultural beliefs as pull factors. For example, the belief that having sex with a virgin female child prevents the likelihood of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS, as well as having healing power over the AIDS pandemic. This form of belief puts a child's safety, health and wellbeing in danger.

According to Britton and La Dean (2014), the South African tourism industry serves as one of the pull factors that fuels child prostitution in South Africa. The issue of sex trafficking of

minors within and outside South Africa has naturally raised concerns in all sectors of society (Bertone, 2004; Brennan, 2005). Mayne (2016) also noted that in South Africa, the push factors of human trafficking are poverty, family abandonment, lack of employment and desperation to meet the demands of life such as food, clothing, and shelter amongst others. In other African countries, war has been noted as a significant pull factor on human trafficking. In many of these cases, unaccompanied minors are smuggled to Europe. Upon their arrival in Europe, these minors are trafficked for commercial sex including prostitution, and also for drug smuggling, weapons smuggling, or unpaid work (Schippers, 2014. p.11). Traffickers often use victims for prostitution and sex work in brothels, homes and hotels during which sex buyers show pornographic movies before sexual abuse takes place (Vucci, 2019). A previous study done by Zimmerman, Hossain, and Watts (2011) indicates that survivors of sex trafficking are subjected to sexual humiliation, forced nakedness, forced pornography and instructed to ask sex buyers to purchase alcohol for them.

Considering the above, Lederer and Wetzel (2014) addressed the issue of sexual exploitation and the abuse faced by victims of trafficking as they noted that some of these victims are sometimes used for pornographic films and firmly argued that the pornographic film industry not only uses victims of trafficking as forced subjects but that pornographers also use the images of those that have been trafficked as a tool to blackmail and keep their victims in bondage. To this end, Sarfi (2018), suggests that the pornography industry and the trafficking industry mutually reinforce each other. It is common that the torture and ill-treatment experienced by victims of human trafficking cause them severe psychological trauma (Oram et al, 2015). According to a study by Owasanoye and Nangle (2017), victims of human trafficking exhibit psychological disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, attention deficit disorder, attributed to the physical and mental abuse that they encounter as victims of trafficking. Occurrences of psychological and physical abuse cause further damage to trafficked survivors as they are linked to altering the psyche of victims, because there are "superstitious beliefs of victims that are imbued in their psyches as members of a certain society, community or culture" (Owasanoye & Nangle 2017, p.565).

The demand for commercial sex fuels sex trafficking to meet the demand of the sex entertainment industry in South Africa. Accordingly, Home (2014) reported that "the trafficking of women and children for commercial sexual purposes lies in the ever-growing sexual entertainment industry. He also posited that the sexual entertainment industry is in hot

demand in South Africa. However, there is some "obscurity regarding the extent and nature of the occurrences of human trafficking in South Africa" (Horne, 2014, p. 332). While 98% of trafficked female survivors are trafficked for commercial sex (Rafferty, 2013), notably males are also used for commercial sex in places like brothels especially for gay sex tourism (de Jesus, 2020). In the same vein, male survivors of commercial sex sell sex to female buyers (Berg, Molin & Nanavati, 2019). Alternatively, men who are trafficked may be coerced by pimps to sell female victims to men seeking to buy sex (Eronen & Jones, 2017). There are obviously a host of serious physical, social and psychological effects on victims of human trafficking and the second part of this chapter interrogates these.

### **1.8. Post-Trafficking Effects on Survivors**

Konstantopoulos (2016) described human trafficking as a form of modern slavery, an egregious violation of human rights with profound personal and public health implications. Victims of human trafficking are currently among the most abused and disenfranchised persons in society. Victims face a wide range of adverse health outcomes resulting from their subjugation and exploitation (Konstantopoulos, 2016). In a review study on aftercare for survivors of human trafficking, Johnson (2012) noted that trafficked survivors experience feelings of helplessness, confusion, and uncertainty between what is real or unreal in life. Johnson (2012) added that if no intervention is given, there is tendency for survivors go back to traffickers convinced that there is no help or hope for them in the larger society.

Further to the above, trafficked adults and children are prone to severe mental illness (Oram, et al., 2015).

According to Lederer and Wetzal (2014), findings from their study revealed that female victims and survivors of commercial sex trafficking in the United States were forced to take illegal drugs. Hence, such women and girls experience physical, mental, and emotional health consequences as reported by these authors. Oram et al (2015) added that this devastating experience leaves trafficked persons with injuries, illnesses, and impairments which last for decades. In his study, Baldwin (2015) mentioned that traffickers usually subject trafficked persons to psychological coercion through isolation, monopolisation of perception, induced debility or exhaustion. Other forms of coercion include threats, occasional indulgences, demonstrations of omnipotence, degradations, and enforcement of trivial demands. Psychological abuse creates extreme stress that can lead to acute, chronic, physical and mental

health problems (Baldwin, 2015). Reda (2018) noted that trafficked persons are often afraid to report traffickers for fear of their lives and those of their families.

### 1.9. **Previous and Current Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking**

There have been notable efforts in South Africa to ensure that human rights are protected through human trafficking eradication initiatives. In this regard, the most significant legislative effort against human trafficking gazetted as the 'Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Person's Bill' was specifically aimed to achieve the following:

- i. Give effect to South Africa's obligations concerning the trafficking of persons in terms of international agreements.
- ii. Provide for an offence of trafficking in persons and other offences associated with trafficking in persons; to provide for penalties that may be imposed in respect to the offences.
- iii. Provide for measures to protect and assist victims of trafficking in persons; to provide for the coordinated implementation, application and administration of this Act.
- iv. Prevent and combat trafficking in persons within or across the borders of the Republic; and to provide for matters connected in addition to that (Government Gazette, Act No 7 of 2013, p. 2).

Consequently, in 2016, the South African National Human Trafficking Multimodal Resource Line (NHTRL) was created to fight human trafficking and to protect victims of human trafficking. The NHTRL was launched as a 24-hour emergency operating helpline to deal with all matters related to human trafficking. The helpline was also meant to allow the public to report and respond to all matters relating to human trafficking and its eradication in South Africa. It is important to note that the NHTRL created opportunities as a referral line for training, awareness, and information. The Cambridge Centre for Applied Research in Human Trafficking reported that NHTRL was created with the expectation that it would work in liaison with various stakeholders in all nine South African provinces while making sure that all calls receive urgent responses (CCARHT, 2016). Also, in 2019, the South African Broadcasting

Corporation station 3 (SABC 3) introduced a real-life documentary on trafficking. This initiative is meant to educate and create awareness among South Africans and its residents alike; on human trafficking as well as to use the programme to fight the crime in the country (Bennis & Thomas, 2007).

The efforts put in place in South Africa to create awareness and combat human trafficking are commendable. This notwithstanding, recent studies show that more work still needs to be done. The Trafficking in Persons Report 20th Edition (DOS, 2020) reported that from 2018 South Africa did not reach the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) minimum standards guidelines to protect trafficked victims. This report highlights how South Africa fell under the Tier 2 watch list (see Table 2.1 below). This watch list contains countries whose governments have been unable to fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant progress in terms of compliance with those standards as seen below.

**Table 2.1: Tier Placements of Countries TVPA (TIP, 2020, p. 55)**

<b>Tier 1 countries</b>	Albania, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda , Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde , Central African Republic Congo, Republic of the Costa Rica, Cote D’ivoire, Croatia, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador Egypt, El Salvador Eswatini Ethiopia Gabon Germany Ghana ,Greece Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Italy Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kuwait, Laos, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, North Macedonia, Oman Palau ,Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent, Grenadines, Serbia, Sierra Leone, St. Maarten, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Suriname, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe
<b>Tier 2 countries on a watch list</b>	Armenia, Aruba, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Belize, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Curaçao , Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-bissau, Hong Kong, Ireland, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Macau, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall, Islands, Mauritania, Nigeria, Pakistan, Romania, Saudi Arabia , Senegal, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tanzania, Timor-leste, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Zambia
<b>Tier 3 countries</b>	Afghanistan, Algeria, Belarus, Burma, Burundi, China, Comoros, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran Korea, North, Lesotho, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, Russia, South Sudan, Syria, Turkmenistan and Venezuela

<b>Special countries</b>	<b>Case</b>	Libya, Somalia and Yemen
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The above table indicated the Trafficking in Persons Report 20th Edition (DOS, 2020). In this table Tier placement of countries were made.

Furthermore, efforts in South Africa to combat human trafficking resonate with those in the United States of America. In 2017, the President, Mr. Donald Trump declared that one of his missions was to end local and international human trafficking. The president urged the US Department of Justice, homeland security and other federal agencies, mandated to prevent human trafficking, to devote more time to the fight against human trafficking (Office of the Press Secretary, 2017). In the following year, 2018), President Trump signed into law the "FOSTA" (Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act). This bill enables States and victims to pursue and identify websites of traffickers in order to stop sex trafficking and to pursue and identify traffickers' websites (Jackman, 2018). Like South Africa and the USA, others in the global community have also responded to the issues of human trafficking with new policies in recent times. Scholars, however, observe that the global response has generally been completely unable to bring human trafficking under control (Orme & Ross-Sheriff, 2015). On a global scale, whereas 158 countries in the world have already criminalised human trafficking; 166 have further also adopted policies to criminalise and prosecute traffickers and buyers of sexual services (United Nations Organisations UNO, 2016). Nonetheless, conviction rates remain extremely low at 0.5% (Miles, 2016).

A notable recent development was the enactment of FOSTA-SESTA legislation specifically designed to tackle cybersex trafficking targeting the girl child and women for sex trafficking, prostitution and sex work by cyber recruiters. The acronyms stand respectively for Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act (FOSTA) and Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act (SESTA). However, it has been argued that the FOSTA-SESTA legislation of 2018 is overrated; and pushes sex traffickers further underground (Tan, Vergara, Phan, Khan, & Khan, 2020). This tends to inflict more harm to sex workers.

Based on the TVPA guidelines (2020, p. 55), African countries are categorised according to tiers to identify their position as follows.

**Tier 1:** Countries whose governments fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards.

**Tier 2:** Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.

**Tier 2 Watch List:** Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards, and:

- the absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing.
- there is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year.

or

- the determination that a country is making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with minimum standards was based on commitments by the country to take additional future steps over the next year.

**Tier 3:** Countries whose governments do not fully meet the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so.

**Special Cases:** These are countries reported to be the most active hosts of human trafficking and other exploitative practices.

The Trafficked in Persons (TIP) categorisation place South Africa under the Tier 2. This indicates that South Africa falls short of combating trafficking in persons; and as a result, has failed to meet the required global standard for the TIP (2019) for the past five years. The TIP reports further indicate that no African country is in Tier 1 category in 2019. Moreover, it has been reported that South Africa has been serving as a source, transit and destination country for men, women and children subjected to human trafficking for sexual exploitation and labour in the United States (DOD, 2017).

Consistent with the above, Davy (2016) stated that since 2012, there have been a significant number of programmes and policies developed and implemented to prevent and combat human trafficking in 135 countries. Developed nations of the world have instituted laws that help to prevent and put an end to modern slavery in form of human trafficking. For example, Norway and Sweden passed laws that criminalised buying sex support, with the possibility of reducing trafficking for sexual exploitation (Jakobsson & Kotsadam, 2013). The European Union in 2015 also documented into law the criminalisation of irregular migration in the European

Union. The document concluded that there " remained a vital role for public trust in immigration law compliance, not just in measures directed towards irregular migrants, but also towards those acting in solidarity with irregular migrants (Mark & Provera 2015, p.1). This law forms part of the efforts of the European Union to forestall the heinous acts of human trafficking.

Further, Potrafke (2016) undertook a study involving 175 countries' with respect to what roles religious circles and political institutions play in policies against human trafficking. Using the new 3P Anti-trafficking Policy Index, Potrafke (2016) found out that governments in countries with Christian majorities implemented stricter anti-trafficking policies in comparison to the government in countries with Muslim majorities.

#### *1.9.1. The Role of Survivors of Human Trafficking in Policy and Practice Pertaining to Anti-Trafficking Efforts.*

Prosocial interventions of human trafficking survivors in South Africa are at the forefront of using real-life stories, activism and books to create awareness and educate people on the reality and issues around human trafficking (Eronen & Jones, 2017; Grootboom, 2016). In this instance, similar moves have been made by anti-trafficking activists and prosocial change agents. A recent trafficking in-person report by the United States of America's Department of State (DOS, 2019) agreed that the input of survivors of human trafficking is key to establishing anti-trafficking strategies including prosecution, protection, and prevention efforts. The United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking, with survivors of human trafficking as members, was established to advise the executive arm of government on anti-trafficking policies. In its 2019 report, this body defined "survivor-informed" as "the incorporation of survivor expertise from inception through development and completion of efforts relating to all forms of anti-trafficking work" (USADS, 2019). This initiative aimed at giving survivors of human trafficking leadership roles within the policy-making processes and decisions of government. Hence this ensures that, in the USA, government-led campaigns against human trafficking respect and recognize the voices and experiences of victims and survivors. Expectedly, other countries will follow suit and set up similar advisory councils to include people who have personally survived human trafficking. Also, governments and civil society can prioritize all types of partnerships with survivors that reflect positive, meaningful engagement and that promote leadership. "Survivor voices should be at the core of any comprehensive response to combating human trafficking" (DOS, 2019.p.1).

According to the USADS (2019, p.1), the checklist for establishing a survivor-informed practice comprises the following: i) assess the extent to which an organization is survivor-informed; ii) identify gaps and opportunities for greater survivor involvement; iii) provide paid employment opportunities for survivors (administrative staff positions, consultants, counsellors, trainers, publicists, speakers, management, etc.; iv) seek input from a diverse community of survivors; v) include both sex and labour trafficking perspectives; vi) ensure diversity in age, gender, race, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, etc; and vii) plan for incorporating survivor input throughout all phases of a project including programme development and design, implementation, and evaluation.

#### **1.10. The Role of Trauma, Adversity and Resilience in Activating Prosocial Leadership in Survivors**

According to a study carried out by Kolind et al. (2017) on trauma and prosocial correlation in trauma survivors, trauma exposure has been associated with diminished social functioning. However, a recent study on trauma has been found to correspond with a small number of positive outcomes, including an increase in prosocial behaviour. Thus, how this heightened prosociality is maintained following the initial traumatic experience of survivors is pertinent. The above authors further argue that a redemptive narrative, wherein the tragedy experienced is framed as leading to the prosocial behaviour in question, is necessary to sustain this prosocial shift. In addition, constructing such a narrative infuses the resulting behavioural pattern with a sense of meaning and purpose for a survivor (Kolind et al., 2017, p.1). In this regard, a difficult, unpleasant life experience or event is considered to be adversity in a person's life (Weststrate & Glück, 2017). However, resilience is noted in the narratives and records of many trauma survivors as the backbone of their consistency throughout their transitional journeys. Resilience is thus described as a dynamic process of positive adaptation to significant adversity (Gatt, Alexander, Emon, Fosr, Hadfeld, Mason-Jones & Wu, 2020). As noted in the literature, adversity can serve to stimulate self enhancement, including an individual's ability to cope and create a resilient response. The literature also suggests that experiencing adversity can increase post-traumatic growth, improving personal attributes such as compassion, empathy and prosocial behaviour and leadership (Greenberg, et al., 2018). Despite the factual reports that "traumatic events increase the risk of depression", on the contrary another study finding noted that trauma "provides an opportunity for growth and transformation in a survivor, as a result, a trauma survivor can show positive psychological changes and personal improvements" (Greenberg et. al., 2018, p.1).

A similar study indicated that as a result of the numerous obstacles and traumatic experiences that survivors went through at the hands of their abusers, many develop a positive coping mechanism, and this in turn creates resilience, particularly in the areas of their trauma, that eventually ignite positivity that leads to the creation of a new identity: from survivor to agent of prosocial change (Williams & Allen, 2015).

Newsom & Myers-Bowman (2017) carried out a study aimed at understanding the positive aspects of coping and resilience in female survivors of child sexual abuse. The author reported that survivors recounted resilience as a process or journey of recovery from trauma.

Traumatic experiences are largely known and claimed to indicate for long-term negative effects for survivors, long after exposure to the traumatic incidence; however, in this respect, though “trauma exposure has been associated with a host of negative outcomes however, it has been found to correspond with positive outcomes, including an increase in prosocial behaviour and prosocial change agency” (Williams & Allen, 2015, p.1). Examples of trauma inspired prosocial leadership include books on anti-trafficking advocacy and accounts of surviving commercial sex (Handwatch, 2017) that abound within societies. These are written/presented by trafficked survivors who are currently contributing towards the fight against human trafficking in their communities and globally and also by miscellaneous authors and novelists. However, no research has specifically been done on the prosocial leadership activities of survivors of human trafficking apart from the accounts in such books either written by survivors themselves or by random authors. Due to the paucity of specific research materials on the topic, books and other general articles on trauma survivors’ prosocial change have been used in this study. Recent studies show that trauma may inspire and develop *prosociality* in trauma survivors. This gives rise to new perspectives in exploring the transition from trauma survivor to becoming a prosocial leader.

This exploratory perspective gives credence to the fact that survivors of traumatic experience, through prosocial change behaviour, transform as prosocial change agents in terms of both their traumatic experiences and post-traumatic experiences (Williams & Allen, 2015). An example of this was given in a case study of individuals who reported near-death experiences. This study indicated that those individuals believed that they became more prosocial as a result of their brushes with death. Meanwhile more systematic research also suggested a relationship between traumatic experiences and prosocial behaviour, showing that those who had suffered personal or collective harm reported greater volunteer efforts (Vollhardt & Stab, 2011).

In view of the above, it is evident that, despite the trauma of being trafficked, and the post trafficking experiences that follow, survivors engage in prosocial change agency activities. This is usually in the area of the individuals' crucible, as survivors choose not to be consumed by their traumatic past experiences but instead engage in prosocial behaviours that bring positive contributions to the community and society (Williams & Allen, 2015).

### 1.11. **Trafficked Victims' and Trafficked Survivors' Stories**

Individuals who have been exploited by human traffickers are regarded as victims of the crime of human trafficking; however, this does not make it their identity. On the contrary, the term "survivor" is an empowering term that honours an individual's traumatic experiences; and the strength, resilience and bravery that develops thereafter. The best way to utilize these terms is to think of the word "victim" when referring to the past and the term "survivor" as a present and future tense word. Grootboom (2016) in her book "Exit", explores the story of Grizelda, a South African survivor of human trafficking. In Grizelda's narration of her real-life experience of being trafficked, she described how she was sold into slavery by her eighteen-year-old friend. Grizelda did not incur any financial benefits from the transaction, but the proceeds of the transaction were instead used to settle her friend's school fees. In further narrating her story, Grizelda recounted her experiences of ill-treatment at the hands of her traffickers. These experiences included repeated rape, starvation, torture, drug abuse, and being forced into prostitution. In addition, Grizelda's traffickers further threatened her and her family with death if she attempted to escape. Deaton (2019), as a survivor, also narrated her life experiences of sex trade human trafficking while growing up in South Africa. She was held in sexual bondage for five years under the threat of death to her own life and the lives of her family members. The use of death threats by traffickers is not uncommon (Owasanoye & Nangle, 2017). These authors submit that traffickers also resort to blackmail by using superstition and witchcraft, voodoo, juju or occultism, or via an oath to a deity or pledge to a supernatural object for protection. These methods are deployed as a deterrent for would-be recalcitrant (or "stubborn") victims; and play a role in keeping victims in the trafficker's bondage. Traffickers also "keep" the passports and all forms of identity documentation of their victims, to prevent them from escaping.

Among other examples: Sophie Hayes transited from being a victim to a survivor of human trafficking and became a prosocial change agent - as a writer, campaigner and founder of the Sophie Hayes Foundation, she has contributed towards the fight against human trafficking

in South Africa through her a book detailing her experiences as a victim of trafficking (Hayes, 2013). In her book titled 'Stolen', Katariina explained how she studied up to PhD level in conflict analysis and resolution; and works closely with law enforcement agencies, such as the FBI and Homeland Security, to eliminate human slavery. In doing so, she founded '*There Is Hope for Me*', a non-profit organization dedicated to freeing victims of human trafficking (Rosenblatt & Murphey, 2014). Another book, titled "Girls Like Us" (Lloyd, 2012) captured the narration of a victim's escape from the commercial sex industry. Thereafter, the survivor founded the GEMS, New York City's Girls Education and Mentoring Service to help other young girls escape human trafficking. Despite these and many other books written on the transitional journeys of survivors who become advocates against human trafficking, very little research has been done in this field.

Further to the above, the role played by the plethora of psychological and physical abuses, including threats to their lives, and all the negative issues experienced by victims of human trafficking in quelling any attempt to escape are crucial. A finding in a study conducted by Ottisova, Hemmings, Howard, Zimmerman and Oram (2016) suggested that there is high significance in the ability of some victims to escape. According to these authors, the significance of escaping from a trafficker notwithstanding possible predicaments if caught, make survivors' stories invaluable in the fight against trafficking. The successful escape of trafficked victims results in them becoming survivors and agents of prosocial change and purveyors of hope for victims of human trafficking still in captivity. Mayne (2016) narrated the true-life transitional story of Grootboom from being a victim to her escape, survival, and role as a prosocial agent. This author used the story for creating awareness and combating human trafficking in South Africa and globally.

Nonetheless, the need to combat human trafficking as an illegal multi-million-dollar business that generates a huge amount of money to traffickers globally has been argued (Baldwin et al. 2011). Victims are lured into the business by traffickers with job offers and are exploited to accept minimally paying jobs, while others are coerced into commercial sex work to generate money for traffickers (Alaleeli, 2015). Notably, the vulnerability of victims of human trafficking is a consequence of the poor social and economic conditions of these individuals. Hence, traffickers take advantage of their victims by tricking, luring, grooming, brainwashing, abusing, exploiting and coercing them. . All these factors are said to negatively influence

victims, as they become afraid of leaving or seeking help (Alliance for Freedom, Restoration, and Justice Inc, 2018).

The commodification of the victims of trafficking is a grave cause for concern. Traffickers use victims as a commodity – to be traded, repackaged, and resold. In a documentary titled "The Traffickers" (SABC 3, 2019) a pimp describes human trafficking - particularly forced prostitution – in simple terms as a business, the only business where one can resell a product over and over again to as many buyers as possible and still have ownership of the 'commodity'. According to him, this business is unlike selling other products like guns, that once sold, are gone forever to the buyer and cannot be returned to the seller for reuse.

Given the persistent and pervasive nature of human trafficking in the face of policies and legislation for prevention, there is a need to incorporate all stakeholders in developing efficient solutions. It is important to state that sex trafficking (and all forms of sexual exploitation) violate the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Decker et al. 2015). In line with the declaration, some efforts have been made to bring an end to sex slavery. Nevertheless, survivors of trafficking have an important role to play as prosocial agents (as viewed in this study). This view resonates with the story in a book titled 'Buttercup' (Eronen & Jones, 2017). In the book, Buttercup uses her story to create awareness of the reality of human trafficking and offers insights into how to address the issue.

#### 1.12. **Theoretical framework**

This study adopted narrative theory as a theoretical framework for understanding and explaining the transition of victims and survivors of human trafficking to become prosocial agents of change in the fight against trafficking in persons. The major proponent of narrative theory were Michael White and David Epston (Gallant, 2008). The idea and tenets of narrative theory are that through storytelling, people can express the identity, relationships, and emotions that may shape their future Riessman (2008) stated that "individuals construct who they are and how they want to be known (p.7)". Their stories can persuade and mobilise others (listeners) to action, through the use of such narratives. Narration does not only dwell on the experiences of the narrator but also creates experiences for the listeners (Riessman, 2008). In narrative research, storytelling is used as a means of understanding the participants' points of view and individual experiences (Lawlor, 2000). Also, such narratives play a unique role in the reconstructions of the participants and their identities. Narrative theory as described by Polkinghorne (1995) is appropriate for this study, as the study adopts a qualitative approach to

research. Danieli (1998, p.22) noted that when narrating their stories, survivors attempt to balance "the compulsions to remember and to know trauma with the equally urgent needs to forget and not to know about it".

Kolind, Søggaard, Hunt, and Thylstrup (2017) suggest that narratives are not only representations of past experiences but may influence future behaviour and future interpretations of behaviours and events. The authors add that theory on desistance narratives and new understandings of oneself can achieve transformative power and facilitate change in individuals. This is because narratives are not solely individualistic but instead linked to more general societal or subcultural scripts in which the individual is placed. That is to say, narrative is the language, while symbolism and scripts are used to mediate individual experiences. Such experiences are taken from and describe a larger cultural and social context (Sandberg, 2010b, p. 455).

A prosocial change agent within the purview of this study is someone who makes a positive contribution to society in an area (Fazio, 2009; Frazier et al., 2012). Denton (2019) recalled her experience of trauma being a victim of human trafficking. As a survivor, she is now a counsellor for sexually abused women and a public speaker against sex trafficking. This is all part of her effort to bring positive change to the lives of others who may also be survivors of human trafficking themselves. In her narrative, Maya Angelou states "if you want to know me, then, you must know my story, my story defines who I am. And if I want to know myself, to gain insight into the meaning of my own life, then, I too, must come to know my own story. I must come to see in all it's the narrative of the self – the personal myth that I have tacitly, even unconsciously, composed over my years. It is a story I continue to revise and tell myself (and sometimes to others) as I go on living" (quoted in McAdams, 1993, p. 11).

Crites (1986) elaborated on how narratives tie together the past and the future. This author contended that the "present is the pivotal point out of which the 'I' who recollects retrieves itself. However the present is not a static point or some measurable duration because the present is always leaning into that vast unknown that we call the future, projecting itself into the future, and that project in which it is engaged determines the way it is present" (p.163). To capture the actual life experiences of survivors of human trafficking and give interpretations based on their stories a qualitative approach for data collection is implored in this study (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013; Lee, 1993)

According to Duff and Bell (2002, p.1) narrative inquiry rests on the epistemological assumption that we as human beings make sense of random experience by the imposition of story structures. That is, "we select those elements of experience to which we would attend, and we pattern those chosen elements in ways that reflect the stories available to us" (p.1). Duff and Bell (ibid.) accordingly state the advantages and disadvantages of a narrative approach. Advantages include flexibility and specificity. Flexibility allows a researcher to construct a study according to the circumstances of an event or fact that is appropriate to the participant's personal story. Flexibility also enables a researcher to be specific on what narrative will be used for the study and specificity means being peculiar to an individual or group of people (ibid.). In terms of disadvantages, narrative theory relies on the abilities of a participant to remember their stories over the entire period that it occurred; and to summarise events, sometimes years after the facts of the story being told. Meanwhile, the disadvantage of the narrative approach pertains to the accuracy (or lack thereof) of the summaries of participants' stories. This is likely to create friction between the narratives and the interpretive study (ibid.). Overall, the flexibility of narratives is exceedingly useful and outweighs the perceived weaknesses. This is because a researcher can select those elements of experiences s/he wishes to attend to, and pattern those chosen elements in a study. However, if a researcher cannot successfully sift through the data and write clearly and concisely, the narrative method may prove ineffective (Duff & Bell, 2002).

In view of the above, narratives of individuals who have transited from being victims of human trafficking to survivors were regarded as being relevant and therefore focussed on in this study. Narrative is relevant and important because it extends the connection between the researcher and the field. Also, collaborations between the interviewer and the participants emerge from their interaction, out of the exchange and the dialogue between interviewer and participants. A significant concept that underpins the theoretical framework of this research is the notion of a transitional narrative (Grimmell, 2015). Transitional narratives involve reflections on shifts in identity. This study was also influenced by the narrative theory phrase "Looking Back, Looking Forward" (Riessman, 2008, p.1) which is related to a transitional narrative, which requires a person to reflect both "backward and forward" on their lives and about their stories.

According to Crites (1986) narration is a method that has been viewed as an effective way of engaging and holding the attention of the audience, who could either be readers or listeners. This method, which predates the age of printing, has been used by humans to bring the listener

into the narrator's world of experience. Besides, storytelling brings a better understanding of the story to the listener. The understanding therefrom has the potential to lead to a positive change of behaviour (Crites, 1986). Sometimes stories of a person's experience, once shared, connect the past, present, and future to inscribe new meaning, taking on a new form whereby the narrative is not alone but carries the listener or reader into the narrator's world. As a result, a story can change the world for the better. Crites (1986) elaborates on how narratives can tie the past and future together.

Yet, Bruner (2002) sought to know the reason why people use a story as a way of narrating what happens in life, as compared to using images, lists of dates, places, and the names and qualities of friends and enemies. In this regard, he asked the question "Why this seemingly innate addiction to the story?" (p. 27). Kearney (2002) takes this idea of meaning in human life very seriously: According to Kearney (2002), "telling stories is as basic to human beings as eating. More so, for while food makes us live, stories are what make our lives worth living. Stories are that which form and mould our condition human" (p. 3).

Returning to the real-life story of a survivor of human trafficking by Eronen and Jones (2017) in their book *Buttercup*, for example, a powerfully narrated story of how a human trafficking survivor was targeted as prey for exploitation due to her vulnerability, coming from a poor family, a broken home, and stemming from the desire to meet her needs and that of her children. Narrating her journey from victimhood, *Buttercup* was rescued by the Media Campaign Against Human Trafficking (MeCAHT), and she rose from a victim to a survivor of human trafficking and currently has transitioned to a prosocial change agent contributing towards the fight against human trafficking in South Africa. According to Grimmell (2015), in a transitional journey, a new concept of who a person is, is found in their stories. He further asserted that such "transition introduces new concepts of who they are, into the personal narrative, and the self thus may affect the dialogue of the self, as new and old I-positions do not necessarily share the same desires and needs" (p. 135). This approach is therefore thought to be able to assist the researcher to explore the participants' transitional narratives from victim to survivor and prosocial change agent. The approach further reveals what motivates the old self of participants to journey to its new identity; and how the two dialogue with each other.

Congruent with the above, Maya Angelou stated that "there is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside of you" (Marzec, 2007, p. 1). This sentiment also underpins the conceptual and theoretical principles that inform this study. Maya Angelou's affirmation attests

to the importance of providing opportunities for people to tell their stories. A way in which the stories of people can be obtained and communicated to the broader society is through undertaking narrative research. The importance of narratives was emphasised many years ago by known scholars on storytelling. One of these scholars is MacIntyre (1984) who stated that “there is no way to understand any society including our own, except through stories that constitute its initial dramatic resources” (p. 215). Similarly, Smith and Anderson (2004) stated that people's lives, both individual and social, consist of narratives of their experiences. Thus, if our stories are coherent, plausible and have continuity, they will help us to understand who we are in the society, why we are who we are, what we need to pay attention to; and what we may ignore. This is because a story provides structure for our perceptions; and “only through stories do facts assume any meaning whatsoever” (Smith & Anderson, 2004, p. 1). The constructs of victim, survivor and prosocial change agent, and how the three states relate together are better explained by the narrated experiences collected in this study.

Moreover, certain studies which review the journey from being a victim to survivor and advocate, reported that some victims of violence rise to advocate in the areas where they were violated. Hoff (2016) narrated how battered women survivors with traumatic experiences of violence rebuilt their lives in violent-free environments. Similarly, Natasha Alexenko, a rape survivor whose prosocial agency activity is a quest for justice for herself and others, became a spokeswoman and an advocate against the injustice that sexual survivors experienced across America. Natasha's Justice Project was created as part of her determination to raise awareness around the trauma of rape that she herself survived. Her work continues to pave the path toward justice for survivors of sexual assaults and advocates for safety for society at large. Additionally, she wrote a book for fellow survivors, their families, law enforcement, and anyone impacted by rape. Her deeply communicated personal story is a testament to the power of one person's tenacity and ability to make a profound change (Alexenko, 2018).

In the context of South Africa, specifically around human trafficking, Betty and Grizzelda have been examples of prosocial agents advocating against human trafficking in the nation (Eronen & Jones, 2017; Grootboom, 2016).

### 1.13. **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I reviewed existing literature on why and how human trafficking still exists in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the typical effects on victims being trafficked. I also discussed previous efforts made to address, prevent and end human trafficking and sex slavery. The high

importance of including survivors of human trafficking in policy and practice around anti-trafficking measures is discussed. Notably, the power of the stories that survivors of human trafficking tell form a compelling part of the reasons for including them in anti-trafficking efforts. Finally, the chapter ends with reference to the theoretical framework used to conceptualise and frame the study in terms of narrative theory.

### **Chapter Three: Research Methodology**

#### **1.14. Introduction**

Chapter Three outlines the qualitative methodological approaches of narrative analysis adopted to understand interpret and produce the transition of survivors of human trafficking. The contributions of survivors to the fight against human trafficking in South Africa are also examined. In this chapter, I describe the research design, research process, sample description and method of data collection employed in my study. In addition, the method of data analysis, its application as well as in field experience, reflexivity and positionality are discussed using the narrative inquiry. Polkinghorne (1995), one of the scholars who used narrative inquiry extensively described it as "the subset of qualitative research designs in which stories are used to describe human action" (p. 5).

#### **1.15. Research Design**

Research design aids in the systematic and logical completion of a research study within a stipulated budget and time frame. In addition, research design is the bedrock upon which any research is anchored. It serves as a guide for the completion of the entire research study. Research design is a procedural blue-print or detailed plan that is adopted by researchers to answer questions in an objective, accurate, and economical manner which ensures the validity of the research work (Kumar, 2011) and guides them in the operationalisation of variables for measurement, selecting a sample, collecting data and analysing the results and testing the research hypotheses (Thyer, 1993, as cited in Kumar, 2011).

Notwithstanding the differences in philosophical perspectives in quantitative and qualitative research designs, Kumar (2011) noted that the aims of a study largely determine the focus, approach and mode of enquiry. Consequently, this invariably, determines the structural aspects

of a study design. Therefore, qualitative research focuses essentially on understanding, explaining, exploring, discovering and clarifying situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people. Considering this, Kumar (2011) stated that qualitative design or approach is typically based on deductive reasoning. Moreover, it is flexible, occurring in nature, non-linear and non-sequential in its operationalization. Additionally, information or data are obtained from a selection of people through an open frame of enquiry (Kumar, 2011).

Further, Kumar (2011) pointed out that a researcher is guided by research design to do a couple of important things. These include, issues pertaining: i) the research design to be adopted for a study and communicating same to others; ii) the process for the selection of respondents for a study; iii) the procedures for information or data collection from respondents, and iv) the method of data analysis and how to communicate the findings of the study.

In short, through their research design, the researcher is expected to provide in detailed explanation the rationale and justification for each step regarding the “how” of the research process by critically drawing on the literature reviewed.

In accordance with Mohajan (2018), research must involve an explicit, disciplined, systematic approach to find out the most appropriate result. In the same vein, qualitative research is an inductive approach employed by a researcher to generally explore meanings and insights in a given situation (Strauss & Corbin, 2008); Levitt et al., 2017; Dudwick et al., 2006; Gopaldas, 2016). Qualitative research also involves data collection and analysis techniques that employ purposive sampling and semi-structured, open-ended interviews, to arrive at a scientific and logical conclusion (Mohajan, 2018). Moreover, Cibangu (2012, as cited in Mohajan, 2018), observed that the qualitative research approach has several components which include: logic, ethnography, discourse analysis, case study, open-ended interview, participant observation, counseling, therapy and grounded theory. Others comprise biography, comparative method, introspection, casuistry, focus group, literary criticism, meditation practice and historical research. Researchers usually adopt one or a combination of any of the above to collect data for the research study.

Mohajan (ibid.) averred that qualitative research, being a form of social action, emphasises the way and manner individuals interpret and make sense of their experiences. This leads to understanding their social reality. Additionally, qualitative research is people-centred, as the

researcher's interests' rests in the people's belief, experience, and systems of meaning emanating from the people's perspective and peculiar situations. Thus, this type of research does not typically use statistical analysis and empirical calculation common to quantitative research (Brink, 1993; Mohajan, 2018). The overall goal of qualitative research, therefore, is to "describe and interpret issues or phenomena systematically from the point of view of the individual or population being studied, and to generate new concepts and theories," (Viswambharan & Priya, 2016, as cited in Mohajan, 2018).

In this regard, the research questions raised in a study guides its methodology.

Furthermore, Kumar (2011) asserted that data generated through narrative interviews become qualitative research. Thus, according to him, "data generated by focus groups, oral histories, narratives, group interviews is always qualitative in nature" (Kumar, 2011). Also, in qualitative studies, in-depth interviewing is a design as well as a method of data collection just as oral history and participant observation are.

In-depth interviews stand out from among other designs, such as participant observation and oral history, because there is usually adherence to the concept of respondent concordance. This relates with every effort made by a researcher to seek agreement of respondents with respect to "interpretation, presentation of the situations, experiences, perceptions and conclusions" (p. 104).

Qualitative research design has an added advantage of allowing a researcher to better understand the feelings and emotions of research participants. This is because the researcher could listen for themselves the verbal narratives of the respondents, as well as their non-verbal clues.

Nevertheless, qualitative design has some disadvantages. According to Kumar (2011), firstly, qualitative design pays little attention to the other structural aspects of a study such as the sample size (which quantitative study usually underscores). Hence this makes it difficult to replicate a particular study design; consequently leading to the inability of the qualitative designs to produce findings worth replicating in another study by another researcher. Secondly, there is the possibility of research bias, due in part to the closeness of the researcher to the research participants in which case the researcher can be swayed by emotions of empathy.

Similar to the approach in this present study, Kolinda, Sogaarda, Huntab and Thylstrupa (2017) adopted qualitative interviews with 23 young men in a rehabilitation centre for criminal offenders in Denmark. Their study was also based on a narrative approach which explored how survivors were able to move or transit from collective to more individualistic self-narratives. Relatedly, the current study employed a qualitative interview method and narrative approach to investigate individual personal experiences of survivors of human trafficking who currently serve as prosocial change agents in anti-trafficking efforts.

Taking into cognisance the above postulations on research design, the current study adopted a qualitative approach to make meaning of the phenomenon I investigated in this study. That is the experiences of victims and survivors of human trafficking in the context of South Africa, and how these experiences have helped to shape their general outlook of life. How these experiences propelled them into becoming prosocial change agents in combating the menace of human trafficking particularly in South Africa was also examined. As the section on data collection depicts, this researcher employed the open-ended interview method to generate data on the lived experiences of victims and survivors of human trafficking. Data with respect to how they transited from this state or position to prosocial agents of change in the fight against trafficking in persons were collected as well.

Seidman (2006) and Neuman (2011) observed that a qualitative approach involves the use of cases and the context in which it occurs in a specific setting of people, in this case, the survivors of human trafficking in South Africa. This research seeks to gain understanding of the underlying meanings, reasons, opinions, and motivations; and other subjective experiences of participants bound by time and context in which it occurred (Wyse, 2011). The current study explored the narratives of survivors as they transited from victims of human trafficking to survivors and to prosocial change agents. Further, it examined the self-reported explanations and motivations behind such transition, hence, the suitability of qualitative approaches for this study. Data was collected from survivors of human trafficking based on their transition from victims to survivors and to prosocial change agents, and their contributions towards the fight against human trafficking in South Africa. Moreover, data were collected from four of the research participants at the reintegration Centre of the Media Campaign Against Human Trafficking (MeCAHT), situated in Cape Town, South Africa. Nonetheless, one of the research participants located at the MeCAHT center in Jos (Nigeria) was interviewed via telephone call and WhatsApp video call.

In view of the above, this study was conducted within the interpretivist paradigm and narrative approach as the two are congruent. Snape and Spencer (2003) defined interpretivism as the philosophy that focuses on interpretation and observation. Thus, the goal of the interpretive paradigm includes, among others, the interpretation of the actions of individuals, their expressions, shared experiences; and understanding of actions that are meaningful to people, and expressed or signified by facts (Diesing, 1999; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; TerreBlache & Durrheim, 2006; Munyua & Stilwell, 2012).

Interpretive methods have some shortcomings, which comprise the likelihood of bias on the part of the investigator or researcher. It has been argued that the approach does not use objective scientific procedures but instead focuses on people's perceptions while ignoring the power of external structural forces in shaping events and behaviour (Munyua & Stilwell, 2012). However, as Cohen, et al. (2007) noted, the interpretive paradigm has an advantage, as it allows for the generation of theory through grounded data collection from specific life situations (Munyua & Stilwell, 2012).

The interpretivist paradigm has been an underpinning paradigm for many scientific researchers using the narrative approach. This is because it is concerned with understanding the life experiences of individuals and takes individual interpretation of lived experiences as its starting point. According to Thanh and Thanh (2015), the interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods often seek experiences, understandings, and perceptions of individuals for their data to uncover reality rather than rely on statistics. Willis (2007, p.90) asserted that "interpretivism tends to favour qualitative methods such as case studies and ethnography". Willis (2007) added that qualitative approaches often give rich reports that are necessary for interpretivists to fully understand contexts. Similarly, Thomas (2003) maintained that qualitative methods are usually supported by interpretivists, because the interpretive paradigm "portrays a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex, and ever-changing" (p.6).

Thanh and Thanh (2015) noted the interconnection between an interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods. In this regard, researchers are enabled to seek an in-depth understanding of human relationship to their environment; and the part people play in creating the social fabric of which they are a part of. An interpretivist prefers using the methods that offer a subjective view of the world through a series of individual eyes, also, participants who have their interpretations of reality encompass a worldview that gives them insight and in-depth information are usually chosen (McQueen, 2002).

So ultimately, participants' transitional narratives were examined based on the understandings and experiences of one cohort through a series of interviews carried out in a natural setting. With respect to this, research questions designed to explore, interpret and understand the narratives of survivors of human trafficking were formulated (Marguerite, Dean & Katherine 2006). In my study, I worked within the interpretivist paradigm and narrative approach to give me an understanding of my participants' stories and experiences (Cohen & Manion, 1994; Cresswell, 2003; Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2011).

#### 1.16. **Sampling Design**

A sample is a small number of representatives of a unit from a population of interest, which is studied for collecting information for a study (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). There are two types of sampling techniques, based on the mode of selection of the research samples, namely probability and non-probability sampling. On the one hand, probability sampling is a technique that gives research participants an equal chance of selection. On the other hand, non-probability sampling is a technique that does not give participants an equal chance of being selected (Mkandawire et al., 2016). According to Neuman (2014), purposive sampling is a type of non-probability that involves selecting samples based on their characteristics. It is a subjective technique which necessitates prior knowledge of the samples before selecting whom to interview, in tandem with what the researcher intends to find out. The purposive sampling method, used to pre-identify the characteristics of a population, assists a researcher in understanding the true life experience of participants instead of generalising to a large population.

The samples for this study were sourced from Media Campaign Against Human Trafficking (MeCAHT) headquarters in Cape Town, Western Cape in South Africa. MeCAHT is an international organisation working with victims and survivors of human trafficking in South Africa. During the research, MeCAHT allowed me to interview one participant who met the following two criteria of my selection for this study:

- A participant must be a confirmed survivor of human trafficking.
- A survivor must be an adult between 18 to 60 years old and presently a prosocial change agent working with MeCAHT or any NGO that is involved in the fight against human trafficking in Cape Town. In addition, participants should be willing to narrate their contributions to the fight against human trafficking in South Africa.

- A participant must be willing to narrate his or her transition from victim to survivor, and to being a prosocial change agent combating human trafficking in South Africa.

To have access to the first participant and further referrals from MeCAHT, Anne Abok, the founder and international director of MeCAHT, who provided the gatekeeper's permission for the study (see Appendix 1, Gatekeepers Permission), referred me to the first potential participant. (The gatekeepers of MeCAHT provided permission for me to recruit potential participants.) I was also referred to other potential participants by the gatekeepers. In total, five participants between ages 33 to 38 with different religious belief, race, and economic status were recruited using the purposive sampling method.

Purposive sampling technique relates to the collection of data in which participants or respondents are drawn from the population of study. This is usually done by a deliberate and intentional approach to arrive at the required number of respondents for the study, usually a representative of the general population. It is a non-probability sampling technique employed by researchers to ensure equal participation and representation in each study. It is worthwhile to elaborate on what purposive sampling technique entails in research methodology.

Purposive sampling is a qualitative data collection technique involving the identification and selection of information-loaded cases for enhancing effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002). Further, Patton (2002) noted that purposive sampling involves the identification and selection of individuals or group of individuals who have knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2001; Bernard, 2002; Spradley, 1979; Patton, et al., 2002). Availability and willingness to participate, as well as the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner are all paramount features of purposive sampling technique (Patton, 2002). Regardless of the use to which purposive sampling can be put, it differs from probabilistic or random sampling technique that is used to ensure generalisation of findings to reduce the likelihood of bias in selection. In purposive sampling, this is likely because the researcher is purposeful and deliberate in the selection of participants for the study. It is difficult to identify and apply the appropriate purposeful sampling strategy in any study because of the difficulty involved in knowing the range of variation in a sample from which purposive sample is to be drawn (Patton, et al., 2002).

Applying the purposive technique, one female participant was recruited from the MeCAHT reintegration Centre in Cape Town. Three of the research participants were recruited through snowball sampling by referrals from MeCAHT leaders. One female participant was recruited through referral by the National Freedom Network (NFA), an organization in partnership with MeCAHT in the fight against human trafficking in South Africa. Table 3 below shows the profile of the five research participants involved in this study indicating two female survivors of human trafficking from South Africa, one male from Cameroon and two males from Nigeria. All the participants were persons who have gone through pre-trafficking, trafficking, and post-trafficking stages of human trafficking locally and internationally.

**Table 3.1:** Demographic Profile of Participants

Pseudonym	Age	Race	Sex	Country
Bongani	37	Black	Female	South Africa
Betty	33	Black	Female	South Africa
Calvin	35	Black	Male	Cameroon
Ronald	35	Black	Male	Nigeria
Michael	38	Black	Male	Nigeria

The ages of the participants ranged from 33 to 38 years. At the time of the study, four participants were residing in Cape Town. One of the research participants was on a missionary trip outside of South Africa at the time of the study and could not participate in the interview.

#### 1.17. **Data collection**

Human trafficking involves many forms of exploitation, but the current study interviewed participants who were young ladies and men recruited, trafficked and sexually exploited. These people also traded their bodies as well as sold drugs to buyers of sex who were interested in both buying sex and drugs. The data for this study was generated through face-to-face interviews, with open-ended questions (see Appendix 1.2 Interview Schedule). Nevertheless, one of the participants was interviewed via phone because he had travelled out of the country before the interview sessions were conducted. A face-to-face interview is said to be the most

suitable method for producing narrative data in social sciences research (Holt, 2010). According to Silverman (2015), narrative stories provide an in-depth perspective of a study and allow the researcher to engage in the participants' stories using open-ended questions as a guide for interaction. In the same vein, Legard, Keegan, and Ward (2003) stated that the narrative interview process is very similar to the human daily natural conversation, indeed the narrative interview appears as a form of conversation.

My study made use of a semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix 1.2). The guide contained questions which changed and took a new focus depending on what emerged during the discussion (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). During the interview, although none of the questions changed, some probing questions came up to have clarity of participants' narratives.

The interviews which were conducted in English were audio-recorded, with the participants' consent (see Appendix 1.3) and later transcribed into textual forms for analysis. Notably, all the participants were conversant with the English language.

Before starting the interview, the researcher went through the information sheet (see Appendix 1.4) with each research participant. At the beginning of each interview, I invited each participant to narrate their transitional journeys. All the research participants spoke for at least 45 minutes during one or two sessions of interviews as they narrated their transition journeys from victimisation to survival and to prosocial agents of change.

The focus of the interviews was on the narrated transition that the participants reported going through and their current work with MeCAHT or any other NGO campaigning against human trafficking in Cape Town. Therefore, the interviews were not intended to explore the research participants' actual traumatic experiences associated with being trafficked. However, all participants briefly discussed their traumatic experiences as victims of human trafficking. After the interviews, the participants were reminded of the South African National Human Trafficking Resource Line (SANHTRL) 24 hours free call contact: 0800 222 777 (see Appendix 1.6) for counselling in case the need arose. It is important to note that SANHTRL does not offer direct counselling but normally refers victims and survivors to appropriate counselling centres.

Before the interview, Rene Hanekom, the Resource Line Manager in Cape Town was contacted. She verified and confirmed over the telephone that SANHTRL worked strictly with an experienced and registered counselling psychologist. This information was explained to the

participants during the informed consent process. The research study is meant to benefit the participants directly, as it aimed at creating a safe space for participants to narrate their stories of transition from the victim, to becoming survivors and prosocial change agents. It also gave them a platform to share their contributions towards the fight against human trafficking in South Africa.

Furthermore, KwaZulu Natal and Cape Town were initially the two places proposed as study areas. However, I was unable to find any survivors of human trafficking in KwaZulu Natal who already transitioned to a prosocial change agent as I initially proposed. Tyldum (2010) argued that a "clear understanding of what the target population is, is a prerequisite for any production of primary data, whether qualitative or quantitative and the target population is the group of people (or other units under study) that we want to say something about, and that we collect data from." (Tyldum, 2010, p.1). Hence, Cape Town became the only location for data collection with the help of my position as volunteer staff with MeCAHT (Gauteng branch).

MeCAHT gave me no direct knowledge of participants before the commencement of this research. In addition, the data collection is meant for academic purposes, thus they helped in managing bias during this study. I was referred to five participants out of whom four were residing in Cape Town, while the other had travelled out of Cape Town but accepted to be interviewed through telephone call and WhatsApp video call. The call was recorded, with consent. All participants did not report significant discomfort or psychological side effects as a result of the interview. Data was collected between August and December 2018. The data were initially planned to be collected in June; however, due to the researcher's financial constraints, the data collection was delayed until August.

#### 1.18. **Method of Data analysis**

This study adopted the narrative methodology in analysing the data obtained from the field. That is, the interviews carried out among four participants at the MeCAHT Centre in Cape Town, South Africa and one in MeCAHT in Nigeria. This type of data analysis was chosen with a view to determine the lived experiences of the participants who are resident in South Africa and are victims and survivors of human trafficking. More specifically, aside from being victims and survivors of human trafficking, they are also persons who have put their negative traumatic experiences into productive use by becoming prosocial change agents in the fight against human trafficking.

Before delving into details on the method of data analysis, I will examine what constitutes narrative methodology or the narrative approach. Butina (2015) noted that the narrative approach takes its root from the social sciences, including anthropology and sociology. The approach continues to grow in use and relevance, extending into education, healthcare, and humanities, in an inter-disciplinary environment. The narrative enquiry has the advantage of making it easy to elicit stories from humans who are natural storytellers. It also makes the gathering of in-depth data easily achievable because narratives usually provide thick descriptions. Narratives allow for gathering of in-depth meaning since participants reveal themselves in their stories (Butina, 2015), and in their own language within their socio-cultural milieu.

Congruent with the above, Mitchell and Egudo (2003), stated that narrative is inherently multidisciplinary, and it extends from the interpretive approaches in social sciences. It can be applied in a qualitative study thereby making it possible for acquiring the rich data within stories. While quantitative approach involves the use of surveys and questionnaires, quantitative analyses of behaviour may not be enough to understand the complexity of meaning inherent in stories. The above authors maintained that in narrative analysis the story itself becomes the object of study. Rather than seeing the participants as the only objects of study, their stories become the objects of study as well. The authors, aligning with Riessman (1993), concluded that in narrative analysis, the “focus (is) on how individuals or groups make sense of events and actions in their lives through examining the story, and the linguistic and structural properties” (as cited in Mitchell & Egudo, 2003, p. 1).

Enunciating further, Mitchell and Egudo (*ibid.*) argued that it has long been the practice among social science practitioners to deal with people’s stories in the course of learning about their behaviours and life experiences. They argued that the application of narrative methods in social science studies point to the usefulness of the approach in providing insights into a research paradigm currently gaining recognition among academics. It is in view of this that this study also adopted such narrative methods in relation to the social and culture milieu of participants.

Additionally, several scholars including Mitchell and Egudo (2003), argue that the narrative approach of analysing interviews has some advantages. These include its ability to capture social representation processes such as feeling, images and time. This offers the potential to address ambiguity, uncertainty, complexity and dynamics of individual, group, and organisational phenomena. Interestingly too, narrative analysis is useful in recording different

viewpoints and interpreting collected data to identify similarities and differences in people's lived experiences and behaviours.

Some scholars, also, have raised questions in relation to narrative methodology that may indicate the challenges involved in using the approach. For example, Molly Andrews, of the *Centre for Narrative Research*, raised a few pertinent questions bordering on narrative interviews, such as: i) How are stories structured? Who produces them and by what means? ii) What are the mechanisms by which they are consumed? iii) How are narratives silenced, contested or accepted? iv) What are the stories which give this story its meaning (counternarratives)? (Andrews, n.d).

Specifically, Andrews reiterated some challenges inherent in the ethical procedures or strategies. They include implicit exploitation of research enterprise; unrealisability of informed consent; questioning the questions; unanticipated emotional impact or research; negotiating interpretation, and listening (Andrews, n.d).

Although it may prove difficult, to conduct an interview with participants and analyse the information they provide; the researcher or interviewer must take care not to impose their meaning to avoid bias.

Notwithstanding the differences in the manner researchers employ narratives, Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) identified four themes involved in the use of narrative inquiry. These include narrative as data and as methodology in which the participants' story generates data, and the narrative approach is used as the method by which data is generated. The four themes are: (i) a change in the relationship between the person conducting the research and the person participating as the subject (the relationship between the researcher and the researched), (ii) a move from the use of number toward the use of words as data, (iii) a change from a focus on the general and universal toward the local and specific; and (iv) a widening in acceptance of alternative epistemologies or ways of knowing (as cited in Callary, 2013). The authors emphasised that the four themes together enforce the importance of research ethics.

Moreover, data for the current study was obtained from face-to-face as well as telephonic interviews of five male and female survivors of human trafficking. After the interviews, the participants' responses during the interview were read and transcribed to develop an understanding of the content of the data set. This process was coined as immersion in data by Bless et al. (2013) as the putting together of similar texts. The data were coded and re-coded

to bring out themes that relate to the research questions. This was followed by a thematic content analysis to analyse the topics that relate to the transition from victim to survivor, to prosocial agent and contributions towards the fight against human trafficking in South Africa. These were based on the narratives of the participants as reflected in the transcripts of the interviews. The thematic analysis involved categorising data collected into themes to identify, analyse, and report on patterns/themes in the data. Also, it offered an accessible and theoretically flexible approach to examine qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Further to the above, the use of thematic analysis in this study did not undermine or contradict narrative analysis. Narrative analysis is a fundamental way to understand the world of participants using data collected during the interview (Polkinghorne, 1988). The narrative analysis gave understanding of how identities of my participants were constructed while sharing accounts of their life (Shukla, Wilson & Boddy, 2014). This perspective necessitates minute analysis of the 'told' and the 'telling' – how language is used, by (and to) whom, and in what context as well as looking for additional patterns in constructions of agency or positioning of characters. This understanding can be achieved logically with the use of themes; hence, the incorporation of both thematic and narrative analysis into this study. The thematic analysis allowed for the generated themes to be discussed in answering the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The themes that emerged are discussed in the next chapter. The narrative data analysis process in this study, as Butina (2015) recommended, was selected based on the objectives and research questions of the study.

#### 1.19. **Reflexivity and Positionality**

There seems to be a consensus among scholars on the importance of reflexivity in qualitative narrative research. Reflexivity continues to be recognised as a pivotal component in the process of generating knowledge through qualitative research (Berger, 2013). In view of this, Berger (2013) noted several things that researchers engaged in qualitative and narrative research, as of necessity, need to concentrate on. These comprise a) self-knowledge and sensitivity; b) better understand the role of the self in the creation of knowledge; c) carefully self-monitor the impact of their biases, beliefs, and personal experiences on their research; and c) maintain the balance between the personal and the universal (Berger, 2019). The application of this important element of reflexivity in qualitative research by researchers, inevitably gives credence and credibility to research outcomes utilising qualitative narrative methods. It is the hope of this researcher, too, that, having applied the aforementioned here, the findings of this

study would meet the acceptable standard practice and generate knowledge needed in the domain of human trafficking generally.

Duff and Bell (2002) discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a narrative approach. They argued that the benefits of the narrative approach are flexibility and specificity. Flexibility allows a researcher to construct a study, according to the circumstances of an event or facts that are appropriate to the participant's personal story (Duff & Bell, 2002). Commenting on ethical considerations in narrative research, Andrews (n.d), quoted Ken Plummer (2001), who stated that:

What reflexivity ultimately means to me is a much greater social and self-awareness/consciousness of the whole intellectual/research process: of a) the subject of the research along with b) the social spaces in which the research knowledge is produced, as well as c) a much fuller sense of the spaces/locations – personal, cultural, academic, intellectual, historical – of the researcher in actually building the research knowledge....'research knowledge' only makes sense if we can acquire understanding about the active process through which such knowledge becomes produced.

Implicit in the above statement is the need to harness the entire gamut of narrative research in order to arrive at an objective production of knowledge in regard to a particular phenomenon.

Narrative theory depends on the abilities of a participant to remember their stories over the entire period that it occurred. This is because to summarise a year's events sometime after the facts is a disadvantage. Moreover, summaries are often inaccurate, still subjective, and likely to create friction between the narrative and the study (Duff & Bell, 2002). Specifically, at this juncture I would like to briefly state my relationship with MeCAHT and how it helped in recruiting participants for this study. I am volunteering with MeCAHT in the campaign and fight against human trafficking in South Africa. However, there was neither bias nor coercion because I volunteer in the MeCAHT Gauteng not Cape Town and hence do not know the participants. Moreover, I had stated in my proposal that my participants would be in Cape Town and Kwa-Zulu Natal. However, my data collection and participants were in Cape Town only because I could not secure participants in Kwa-Zulu Natal.

In an essay on the “Importance of Researcher Reflexivity and Positionality in the Qualitative Research Process” (Researcher Reflexivity and Positionality, May 18, 2020) sourced online, one university student explains the relationship between reflexivity and positionality in qualitative narrative research. According to the author, reflexivity is a vital part that ensures

quality control in qualitative research. Also, a basic understanding of how the characteristics and knowledge of the researcher can influence the findings of the research conducted was paramount. The above author stated that it is common for many people to use the concept of reflexivity together with related concepts such as reflectivity and critical reflection. In the same vein, critical reflection has been used interchangeably with reflexivity by different researchers. It is also noted that while it is common for many people to interchange the concept of reflexivity with related concepts such as reflectivity and critical reflection, others consider these terms as being separate entities (D’Cruz et al., 2007, as cited in *Researcher Reflexivity and Positionality*, May 18, 2020). Juxtaposing this with the nature of qualitative research that most certainly sets the researcher as a data collection instrument, it is safe to argue that certain notable variables such as the researcher’s ideology, cultural background, gender, socio-economic status, and educational achievements could have significant impact during the research. Consequently, Hooks (1990) and Bourke (2014) concluded that a researcher needs to take cognizance of the likelihood of marginalising some of the research participants in a research involving cultural differences (as cited in *Researcher Reflexivity and Positionality*, May 18, 2020).

Further, in attempts to describe the link between reflexivity and positionality, Burke (2014), recalled that qualitative research aims at gaining an understanding of a phenomenon through the lived experiences of participants. Thus, the strength of the research is anchored on the success of the relationship between the researcher and their participants. The researcher is required to position themselves firmly for the message they communicate to be heard. Invariably, a dialectical relationship is established between the researcher and the study participants, consequently leading to an intersection of objectivism and subjectivism, which amounts to positionality in qualitative narrative research such as the current one (*Researcher Reflexivity and Positionality*, May 18, 2020).

Overall, “reflecting on one’s positionality concerning a proposed research topic can facilitate a deeper level of reflexivity, which in turn enables engagement with the research process on a deeper level” (*Researcher Reflexivity and Positionality*, May 18, 2020). However, the researcher must be careful not to, in a subjective manner, view the participants’ responses through their own “judgement” because doing so may in the final analysis result in the misinterpretation of the participants’ lived experiences.

The above position led Cohen, Manion and Morrison (as cited in Munyua & Stilwell, 2012) to remind researchers of the risk of having to interpret the perceptions of an individual a world “outside the participant’s theatre of activity (p.1)”.

Still, the authors note that the interpretive approach helps to generate theory through the collection of data that is grounded, and from which theory may very well emerge in specific situations (Munyua & Stilwell, 2012). This is also an ethical issue that the next section focuses on, and there is a need to further explicate the positionality of a researcher in relation to reflexivity. Berger (2013) noted that relevant researcher’s positioning includes personal characteristics, such as gender, race, affiliation, age, sexual orientation, immigration status, personal experiences, linguistic traditional, beliefs, biases, preferences, theoretical, political, and ideological stances, and emotional responses to participant. Berger (2013) further noted that the researchers’ positions or positioning may likely impact on a study in three major important ways namely: i) they can affect access to the ‘field’ because respondents may be more willing to share their experiences with a researcher whom they perceive as sympathetic to their situation, and the researcher may be more knowledgeable about potentially helpful and informative resources; ii) they may shape the nature of researcher-researched relationship, which, in turn, affects the information that participants are willing to share. For instance, a woman may feel more at ease to discuss sexual experiences with another woman than with a man because the researcher is a woman like her and is believed would be more sympathetic to her ordeal; iii) the worldview and background of the researcher affects the way in which he or she constructs the world, uses language, poses questions, and chooses the lens for filtering the information gathered from participants and making meaning of it. This may likely determine the findings and conclusions of the study.

An example would be an interviewer who lost their father and draws on this experience to make meaning of narratives of bereaved individuals being interviewed.

Berger (2013) emphasized that qualitative researchers, notably practitioner researchers, tend to recognise that all types of research have some shortcomings.

While they address these as parts and parcel of the research, they use reflexivity as a measure to monitor the tension between the involvement and detachment of the researcher and the researched. This is used to buttress thoroughness of the study and its ethics. Considering this and relative to rigour, Horsburgh (2003, p. 309, as cited in Berger, 2013), asserted that

Given that the researcher is intimately involved in both the process and product of the research enterprise, it is necessary for the reader to evaluate the extent to which an author identifies and explicates their involvement and its potential or actual effect upon the findings.

Accordingly, Kacen and Chaitin (2006, p. 215, as cited in Berger, 2013), pointed out that the significance of reflexivity and its associated components (roles, purposes, and strategies) have received maximum attention. These authors affirmed that the relationship between reflexivity and the position of the researcher against the background of the phenomenon under investigation has been inadequately addressed. Consequently, they argued that the “implications of theoretical and philosophical discussions about reflexivity, epistemology, and the construction of knowledge for empirical research remain undeveloped” (p. ).

#### 1.20. **Ethical Procedures**

Ethics for research remains a fundamental component of the research process or design. It is, therefore, incumbent on every researcher to ensure that the research is designed within the bounds of acceptable research ethical practices.

De Vos et al. (2005, p. 57) define ethics of research as:

"a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or a group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students."

This study adhered to standard research ethical considerations, including confidentiality; anonymity, non-maleficence, and beneficence (see information sheet and informed consent form in Appendices 1.3 and 1.4). The information sheet and informed consent procedures highlighted the study content and option to refuse or interrupt participation without consequences to the service provider. Ethical clearance for the study was granted by the Human and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) of the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal Research department (see Appendix 1.5). Written consent was obtained from all participants as well. According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006), the four basic standard principles that apply to social science research are stated below:

- Autonomy and respect for the dignity of a person(s) that form the participants in scientific research.
- Beneficence - the research should be for the benefit of the participants.

- Nonmaleficence - the research should not be done in a way that will cause avoidable or intentional harm to the participant.
- Justice – involves fairness regarding the treatment of participants.

Plummer (2001) stated that “to live an ethical life is a process of decision making in situation, drawing from culture and history, and not a pattern of just following rules” (as cited in Andrews, n.d). Moreover, justice, fair distribution of risk and benefits are given to participants for participating in the research. In the same vein, Gillon (1994) revealed that the ethical approach to scientific research was developed in the United States and it is based on four common, basic prima facie moral commitments, namely respect for autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice. Gillon (1994) added that this ethical approach in scientific research is for planning, preparation of documentation and in adherence to independent review processes to ensure that research meets the required ethical standards.

Further to the above, Ebberson and Jensen (2006) mentioned that two of the most fundamental ethical principles applicable to research are beneficence and nonmaleficence. They further elaborated that beneficence implies that the research is done for the benefit of the participants. In this case, the beneficence towards participants of this study is the opportunity given to them to tell their transitional stories from victims to survivors and prosocial change agents. Meanwhile, non-maleficence means no harm (Jensen, 2006), that is, the research intended to do no physical or psychological harm to the participants. Therefore, in order to ensure the safety of participants in my study, interviews were conducted at locations chosen by the participants, which included the MeCAHT Reintegration Centre and on Skype to give flexibility to the participants (Lee, 1993; Seidman, 2006).

Participants' anonymity and confidentiality of data are important aspects of qualitative research. According to King and Horrocks (2010), researchers can offer anonymity to protect the participant's identity and treat all participants' information with respect and discretion. Accordingly, participants in my study were asked for their permission to use anonymous quotes in reporting the findings of the study.

As much as possible, according to ethical practices, participants should not be deceived about the true intention of the researcher and the nature of the research in terms of what use the outcomes would be put to. Deception has to do with how a researcher could mislead or wrongly inform the participants about the aims of the research (McLeod, 2015). Types of deception

include: (i) deliberate misleading, e.g., using confederates, staged manipulations in field settings, and deceptive instructions; and (ii) deception by omission, e.g., failure to disclose full information about the study, or creating ambiguity (McLeod, 2015). In this study, the researcher, having already established a cordial relationship with the participants, did not see any need to deceive or misinform them in any way whatsoever regarding the actual purpose of the study. Consequently, to protect the participants' identity, those interviewed were given pseudonyms, and this supported the norm for participants' anonymity (King & Horrocks, 2010). Also, following acceptable ethical norms, any information that is likely to reveal a participant's identity was expunged to ensure that identification of the respondents was difficult (PLAN International, 2019).

As recommended by Clandinin (2006), as cited in Callary (2013), there is need for researchers engaged in narrative inquiry to “understand that the treatment of data entails researcher and participant negotiation, respect, mutuality, and openness,” (p.1). In this respect, the contents of the participants' interviews, in the current study, were only shared with the supervisor at a discussion level. To further protect participants' confidentiality, while transcribing the data, the researcher anonymised certain aspect of participants' stories. Also, the data was cleaned by removing important personal information that could be traced to the participants. Such information included names, participants who were trafficked and their current residential areas (Bless et al., 2013). In harmony with standard ethical practice, the researcher delayed the interview where a participant showed signs of distress associated with the recall of unpleasant episodes of experience of trafficking (PLAN International, 2019). This step ensured a respectful and open relationship with the research participants. Callary (2013) noted that ethical issues are bound to narrative research. This means ethical issues cannot be wished away or ignored if the results of the research or study would be anything to reckon with within the academic community.

The anticipated need for professional counselling for some of the participants, in case the need for trauma counselling arose, was solicited from the South African National Human Trafficking Resource Line. However, during the interviews, none of the participants solicited help from the South African Human Trafficking Resource Line. During the interview, I was able to meet and interview face to face the five participants from Cape Town and Western Cape Province. All interviews were recorded, as consented by all the participants while I took some notes after the interviews. Participants were selected by the MeCAHT Re-integration Centre's

staff and invited to participate. They were informed of the nature and purpose of the study, and of the sensitive nature of some of the questions. The participants received the assurances of the researcher that they could decline to participate and, if they agreed to participate, they could delay or opt out at any point during the interview. They were also made to realise that refusal to participate attracts no cost nor does it have any impact on the outcome of the study. However, none of the participants withdrew from the study, as they had been informed that their confidentiality and anonymity would be guaranteed through the use of pseudonyms.

The participants were also informed that the research data would be securely stored by the researcher's supervisor and would be destroyed after about a period of five years. To ensure on-going respect for the participants' dignity, all data was entrusted to the research supervisor. The data was stored in a secure Dropbox folder that can only be accessed by the researcher and the supervisor. .

Therefore, in line with the ethical strategy and standard norms, all the participants were given consent forms to sign, after they had read and understood the guidelines, including the use of personal data for research purposes. However, McLeod (2015), recommend that aside the expected "Yes" reply from respondents, as mark of their agreement or consent, potential participants also need to be informed of what it is that they are agreeing to. The researcher, should, therefore take their time to explain what the entire research process entails, what is required of them (the participants) before obtaining their informed consent. This researcher took cognisance of these ethical practices, rules and regulations, and ensured that both researcher and participants were on the same page throughout the research process.

#### 1.21. **Conclusion**

Qualitative research methods were used in this study to gain an in-depth understanding of the underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations for the transition of human trafficking victims from survivors to prosocial change agents. The method shaped the exploratory design of this study, as the personal experiences of the research participants were narrated. Purposive sampling was used to identify the research participants. Ethical procedures were adhered to during the undertaking of this research. Research participants were granted confidentiality and had the option to remain anonymous. Interviews were conducted in person, as well as via telephone. The interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent. The study made use of a thematic analysis.

This chapter presented the stages of the qualitative methodology that has been employed in this study. The stages discussed were the research design, sampling, data collection procedures, data collection methods, field experience, reflexivity and positionality, and ethical procedures. The instruments used, the process of data analysis, and the profile of participants was also discussed.

## **Chapter Four: Presentation of Findings (Five Transitional Narratives)**

### **1.22. Introduction**

This chapter presents the transitional narratives extracted from the analysis of the interviews with five survivors of human trafficking in MeCAHT. Each participant's transitional narrative is clustered according to four themes in their lives. First, the participant's journey as a victim of human trafficking is presented, and then their journey as a survivor of human trafficking is narrated. The third theme of the narrative explains the participant's prosocial change activities and efforts to combat human trafficking. The narratives end with a closing theme (i.e., an "epilogue for now") for each participant. Importantly, in this chapter, most of the themes from the narratives rely directly on the words used by the participants (i.e., paragraphs in italics), all participants used pseudonym to protect their identity and observe ethical consideration meanwhile the researcher also adds selected words, phrases, and paragraphs to tie each participant's narrative into a coherent story.

### **1.23. Transitional narratives: From Victim to Survivor and Prosocial Change Agent.**

A transitional narrative is the narration of the process of change in the lives of a person. For instance, in this study, participants explained their experience of the process of change that took place in their lives in relation to their experience of being trafficked and surviving.

#### *1.23.1. Betty*

Betty, a female South African citizen survivor of human trafficking was 32 years old at the time of this study. She was trafficked several times within South Africa, first by her female friends and later by male pimps for the purposes of commercial sex. Her narrative is reported below.

- **My journey as victim of human trafficking**

*My journey as a victim started when I began to search for a better living to make money to look after my children. I was also looking for love. Without realizing, I was looking for it from the wrong group of three female friends who firstly, introduced me to a wealthy prominent white man in Cape Town who had group sex with three of us simultaneously. He paid us for*

*our services but paid my friends extra for bringing me and my service. Several months after that incident, the same friends took me to a club and disappeared on me from the club. As I was looking for my missing friends, I met a man on the Long Street, and he promised me that he loved me, and he will take care of me. He offered to take me to his place since it was late. Since my friends were nowhere to be found. I accepted his offer.*

*We started having [an] affair and he was caring and provided for me just as he promised. Little did I know he was grooming me for human trafficking. After some time, he started telling me that there was no money to look after me and us. That was when he told me to start selling drugs in the house. I felt sorry for him that he had no money. I asked him, “what we should do?” He told me the only option was for me to help him sell his drugs. He told me one of his clients liked me and just wanted to see me naked, but that was not true. His friend had sex with me and paid my boyfriend for my sex service. It was from this time that my boyfriend continued to traffic me for five years to several men for commercial sex and trafficking and illicit drugs. Meanwhile, they paid him. Under the influence of drug[s] and not knowing what I was doing, my boyfriend manipulatively married me and took me to home affairs to register for a fake marriage. At Home Affairs, I believe they didn't notice any awkwardness during the registration of the marriage. Soon we got married which made him my legal husband. He soon sold me to his brother in the North West Province.*

*My second journey as a victim of human trafficking was in North West was not an easy one for me. I was treated so poorly, starved most of the time and I was crying every day. My heart was very sore. I later had an argument with his brother and his brother chased me out of the house. From there I came back to Cape Town.*

*It was not an easy journey to transit from victim to survivor of human trafficking. I survived traumatic experiences such as physical, emotional, and psychological abuse and trauma. I had survived a stroke and heart attack which has affected my speech to date; that is why I am speaking the way I am right without a proper coordination and flow in my communication. I had to pose in between words unlike before I had the stroke when my speech flows naturally. From the time that I decided I couldn't continue such a life; I was taken to the safe house by those Christian people [YWAM]. I was at the safe house in Muizenberg, Cape Town for three years giving counseling by psychologist due to the trauma and depression I experience while I was trafficked. In 2017, during my service as a survivor leader at the safe house, a book of my true life story as a victim of human trafficking was written by Maarit Eronen and Julie Jones,*

*and the book was titled “Buttercup” I told the authors to name it “Buttercup” because that was the first I was able to say after my recovery from stroke that made me lost my speech. Later on, I then went back and reconnected with the Youth with A Mission (YWAM). This was when I began the fight against human trafficking in South Africa. I have been there before, I know the pains, and that is why I want to fight it. Now I go on outreaches to reach out to those men and women to tell them that there is hope for them.*

- **My journey as a survivor of human trafficking**

*My story in a book, Buttercup is a tool that I used to educate people that human trafficking in every part of this world and to anyone, either married or not. Human trafficking can happen right under our nose without us realising. I might not go [to] all the nations, but I hope the book written about me “Buttercup” will impact the lives that are still trapped in the bondage of modern slavery. This book aims to give hope to other victims of human trafficking through my story of hope and restoration.*

- **My journey as a prosocial change agent**

*As a prosocial agent of change I also go back to the same place that I was rescued to reach out to other victims of human trafficking, can get them help and put them in the safe place and from there they go through the processes in the safe house. After the process they come back to meet me again in the MeCAHT rehabilitation centre and eventually reintegrate the survivors back to their communities and family. My volunteer work with MeCAHT, as a survivor leader gives me the opportunity to support other recovering victims of human trafficking by showing them unconditional love because I can predict how they feel. Sometimes people think the girls who are on the street need money only but then am telling you if ever you will come closer to them you get to know it's not the money but love and acceptance that they need. My role is to support them because I can relate to their needs.*

*I have a dream to become a leader to those who are victimised of which now it is happening in MeCAHT. My big dream is to open a safe house for the souls that are crying for help.*

- **My epilogue for now**

*A continual support and love for survivors of human trafficking is needed, so they don't throw themselves back to the perpetrator. Our stories and books should also be used in schools to educate pupils and students on human trafficking. To those who have read my book, I will plead with you to talk about it so that we can make a difference and bring change in our country and*

*to prevent human trafficking. I realised that even at schools and our communities human trafficking is taking place. So, when you get to know me through my book that is when you will understand what is happening in my life.*

Betty's narrative reiterates how traffickers recruit their victims through the means of deception followed by compelling victims to serve the interests of traffickers through the application of physical and psychological coercion (Hodge, 2014). Betty survived being a victim of human trafficking and is currently a prosocial change agent as a survivor leader, volunteering staff with MeCAHT's Cape Town branches in South Africa. In the book "Buttercup" by Eronen and Jones (2017) the actual life story of Betty's transition from being a victim of human trafficking started when a man she met at the club promised to take care of her if she agreed to be his girlfriend. Later the same man introduced Betty into prostitution and sex slavery. How she survived the ordeal of victimisation and health complications (heart attack, stroke, memory loss and speech difficulties) and her transition to a prosocial change agent is narrated in the Book "Buttercup". Her book is a tool to prevent and combat trafficking in South Africa (2017). Despite the tragic nature of Betty's story, it remains inspiring to remain resilient in times of adversity as experienced by her. She recognised and accepted without any form of denial that she had suffered grievously at the hands of her traffickers (abusers). However, her survival encouraged her to fight the scourge of human trafficking and also prevent prospective victims from the scourge. Moreover, she wanted to encourage and inspire survivors to become prosocial agents of change in their own rights.

#### *1.23.2. Michael*

At the time of being interviewed, Michael was a 38-year-old man from Nigeria (Anambra State) who was deceived with a false promise of an opportunity to play for an international soccer club. Michael ended up being trafficked into South Africa and he narrated his transition from victim to survivor to prosocial change agent in South Africa

- **My journey as victim of human trafficking**

*These are my experiences as a victim. I was into a business before. I later joined a soccer club. In 2012 my team had a problem. I told my brother about it and my intention to go to Thailand or Asia to continue my soccer career. My brother now told me he already had a club in South Africa and promised that I would manage the club. I did not manage any club. Instead, I found myself doing this kind of business. He trafficked me and [I] wasn't aware of it. On arriving [in] South Africa, he seized my biological younger brothers' international passport,*

*introduced, and trained me for three months into drugs, prostitution, drugging female victims, selling drugs and girls to clients and stealing from sex buyers.*

- **My journey as a survivor of human trafficking**

*As a survivor, I can say that I have suffered depression and traumatic experiences in the form of abuse, control, bullying and threats, yet I survive. Practically, I have been able to leave selling drugs and forced prostitute. Emotionally, it was overwhelming. It wasn't a good feeling. It reduces your self-esteem and, there's a lot of psychological trauma. I used to always feel anxious if I don't make enough money for my pimp because he will physically beat me up. After I was rescued, MeCAHT provided psychological counselling to me and well as Spiritual counselling through church leaders in Cape Town.*

- **My journey as a prosocial change agent**

*I have now become a better person who encourages the fights against human trafficking. I support other trafficked victims through my soccer club, mission field works and outreach programmes. I am now involved in the fight against human trafficking through MeCAHT. At MeCAHT, I serve as a survivor leader and an outreach leader whereby I go to the street in the late night to reach out to victims of human trafficking and commercial sex workers. We distribute toiletries to the victims after which I pray for them, share my story on how I was rescued and I also tell them there is help for them too.*

*I have a football team in Cape Town for survivors of human trafficking who wish to be soccer players. Even though now I travel out of the country, the team still exist until I am back to continue training them. This was my initial intention before I was trafficked. Also, I went to YWAM: Youth with A Mission and acquired leadership skills which I am using in my fight against human trafficking.*

- **My epilogue for now**

*It makes me thank God for my new identity. Being able to reach out to other victims makes me feel fulfilled. I will never go back again. This is my call now; to rescue God's treasures as I was rescued by God's people. I am very happy that I was rescued, and I have been given a new identity too.*

Michael's story depicts courage, resilience, mission and vision that never died regardless of the twists and turns experienced. At the end of the day, he came out successful by fulfilling his

initial dream of becoming a soccer star, with an added advantage of owning and managing his own soccer club.

### *1.23.3. Bongani*

Bongani is a black South African female from Western Cape. Bongani was lured by her friend's offer of a good job opportunity in Johannesburg. Upon arrival in Johannesburg, Bongani realised that the job was prostitution. She became trapped into selling sex to truck drivers in Johannesburg. During the interview Bongani mentioned that she was traumatised but she chose not to disclose much detail about the kind of traumatic experiences she suffered. Nonetheless, she did explain that she was young and naive at the time of being trafficked. Similar to the two interviewees before her, she was a victim who survived and turned her life around by engaging in a meaningful and life-saving venture as an advocate of anti-trafficking in persons.

- **My journey as victim of human trafficking**

*I was so young and naive in my early twenties I joined her in Johannesburg. In Johannesburg I started selling sex to truck drivers. I was later taken from the street by one organisation that advocates for full decriminalisation of prostitution and its recognition as well which is "Sex workers education and advocacy taskforce (Sweat)". I am now able to call myself a survivor; after all, I have seen I am still standing today. It means that I have survived but am also doing the work that I am doing because, first, I am passionate about women's rights. I also want to make sure that we save our country, we save the young girls from perpetrators of human trafficking, from the pimps and brothel owners.*

- **My journey as a survivor of human trafficking**

*I experienced trauma, depression and posttraumatic disorder, the flashbacks, and shocks but right now I am coping well because of the psychological and spiritual counselling I receive from Embrace Dignity and Church leaders. For me, now it is a healing journey and the fact that I am doing something and being able to look myself in the mirror and feel that I conquered because I am doing something. I am standing up against what I have survived. It makes me feel good, but I also think that I'm encouraged, and my self-esteem is built by the fact that daily when I go to bed, I have people thanking me for just giving them hope. It's not much that is At Kwanele and Embrace Dignity, I support survivors of human trafficking. When we have financial support or school scholarships coming in, we support by encouraging people to apply for it. We also have advocacy groups that comes here to empower people. They make people now know their rights; they have taken us through the bill of rights. They know what can be*

*done and what cannot be done. I think that this form of empowerment is good. At MEPTOW (Men Against Prostitution and Trafficking of Women) I educate men around the societal harms and dangers that are caused by prostitution because by virtue of men purchasing sex they are perpetuating sex trafficking, perpetuating pimping and all that. Since it is their demand that causes and pushes supply. So technically, I advise these men because they are dealing with issues around women. It is a growing movement too.*

- **My journey as a prosocial change agent**

*I became a prosocial change agent, after being rescued. At Sweat, I started learning a lot about advocacy, the different laws and everything. I realized that after a couple of years of being there that actually decriminalization will not benefit the people, it would not stop human trafficking. Decriminalisation doesn't basically deal with anything. I decided to approach Embrace Dignity, a non-profit organisation supporting women in Cape Town and I received a support from the organisation to convoy thirty women. We had a conversation for three days about things that had happened to us. We decided that it was enough, and we formed a group called "Kwanele" which means "enough" in isiXhosa.*

*Embrace Dignity gave me support to go to Limpopo and Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal to speak to survivors of human trafficking. I found out that people were very interested in this so much and had a demonstration consisting of about two hundred women from seven different provinces coming and going to the Union building to demand our right. Also, I have travelled within South Africa and overseas using my story to educate people and campaign against human trafficking and the legalisation of prostitution which feeds the occurrence of human trafficking.*

- **My epilogue for now**

*Prostitution should not be legalised in South Africa because the government cannot be fighting human trafficking and on the other hand it's fuelling human trafficking. Prostitution feeds on human trafficking. I was a prostitute; it is not a sex work but sex slavery. The major challenge I am facing is while we are fighting against sexual exploitation and enforced prostitution, the government is talking about legalisation of prostitution. This means that there is no support from the government in the effort to criminalise prostitution in South Africa. The primary challenge is when people do not agree with you, and when you have no resources. Also, the law is contradictory to human trafficking law.*

#### 1.23.4. Calvin

At the time of participating in the study, Calvin was a 35-year-old male Cameroonian who was deceived by a friend who told him of a great business opportunity in Cape Town. Upon arrival in Cape Town, he was trapped and used to traffic drugs and women to sex buyers. Calvin had this to say about his transitional narrative.

- **My journey as victim of human trafficking**

*The whole journey started with a friend I met in Durban. I asked the friend how he was doing. He said he was flourishing in his business without stating the type of business. I innocently told him that I was not doing well financially and asked if I could come over to him to work with him. I then bought my own bus ticket and travelled to Cape Town., The guy, my friend, received me and even introduced me to another man that ended up being my godfather or master. He trained me in the society, brought me to the streets and trained me how to identify different types of drugs, their prices. He also taught me how and when to hide from the police before delivering drugs safely to clients. He taught me how to survive.*

*This job goes with drugs, prostitution because you take a woman and give her drugs to sell to make money for you. He trained me on how to steal phones and laptops from sex buyers or other customers and how to know how and when to hide from the police. We would stand on the street because we were many in the camp from different nationalities, and you would find many people. I was hooked and threatened with my life if I ever left or tried to escape. That was my journey as a victim.*

- **My journey as a survivor of human trafficking**

*As a survivor, it wasn't easy because the first attempt, I left and I came back and the second attempt I said no, because it's like dropping everything where you cannot fend for your own life. Secondly, this kind of episode was shameful because doing this kind of thing is like saying you're a real man. But I had to decide that even if I had to sleep hungry or lose my life, I would go through with it. Honestly, in the beginning, it was not easy to remove the urge, you know. Before I got my present job, I spent two months without working after I got out of human trafficking. This was challenging for me. Even though you get out because when I get out of human trafficking, I didn't completely get away from those people because I was still living with them. The difficulty is the urge; sometimes you question yourself why I even left. It takes courage, hope and motivation to escape human trafficking and find yourself at the other side of life. You know your past will always catch up with you because I always meet some of the*

*police officers that have arrested me. When I meet some of them or when they see me in uniform, for example, one saw me at the place I was working and had to report me to my boss, that maybe I was undercover to sell drugs. Even some of your old customers, when they see you, they will say my man are you still selling drugs, so you need courage and positive mind to say no matter what is happening, let me continue my journey and focus on what I want to do.*

*The emotional part is that first your people reject you. As an escapee of human trafficking, you see others like friends and family, however, they see you as an enemy. It was like just as I told you, even though I left human trafficking, I was still living with them, for over a year. We live in the same room, same compound. When they do their human trafficking, I say I am going to work. So even to have a conversation with them is difficult, because when they see you, everybody, goes their way, so you feel rejected, abandoned. It's like you betray them, for them they see you as a betrayer because it's like a society, they say why you are leaving, because you have customers, you have money, a place to sleep, so why are you leaving us. Emotionally you feel rejected, abandoned and alone and it takes time to make a new family. It takes God, if you're not emotionally stable, you will go back to please them because you don't want to be rejected. You know the life of human trafficking entails attending clubs, drinking smoking and you see by leaving human I have been drinking, smoking, so I have to neglect everything including my spiritual life. I was feeling lonely and rejected because at that time I was all by myself, talking to myself and encouraging myself on how to get out and start a new life. I went through starvation as I couldn't afford food. I couldn't pay for my rent. I had to beg people to survive but as time went by, I was employed and now I can provide for myself with money from my decent job as chief security. Through all my survivor journey, I receive support from MeCAHT such as counselling and prayers and that really help me to keep strong.*

- **My journey as a prosocial change agent**

*As a prosocial change agent, I go to the street and reach out to victims of human trafficking, encouraging them to leave the risky lifestyle of selling drugs and sex as well as educating them that there is help there and encourage them to contact MeCAHT for support. At my current place of work, during my breaks, I go around teaching people on human trafficking and its dangers on victims and to our society.*

*In 2017 I started a little project in Heiberg which has some shipment coming in. They usually prostitute the girls and there is a high risk of trafficking. So, I started working with these girls by creating awareness of the decriminalization of prostitution. Sex trafficking exists because*

*of prostitution and prostitution exist because of patriarchy. We need to make sure that we break the cycle so that it does not continue. I started awareness with the girls in that area and found out that now that I speak a lot on Facebook a lot of awareness has been raised for people. I also find out that before people were not bold enough to come out and speak. Since I began speaking and have taken this position against legalizing prostitution, against human trafficking, a lot of survivors have come forward to speak and to find out that generally, I encourage people to start speaking.*

- **My epilogue for now**

*I am the happiest person in the world because I am free from being a victim of human trafficking, you're lost you don't even know who you are anymore because you are being controlled. Physically, emotionally, spiritually I am a free man, I am happy. I can move freely, and I can speak freely. I am not being controlled anymore. There's a big difference. It's like day and night. Am now in the daylight, I can make plans, I can make programs. I can speak to people, and I am happy with the person that I have become. I feel pity for those that are still engaging in drugs because I know, physically, and spiritually why they are into it. As a human being with sisters, I cannot count the number of ladies that have been destroyed just within one year. Many times, I see the ladies under very heavy cold. You know as prostitutes, they wear small coats, it pains me as a human being, also as a father. It's painful.*

#### *1.23.5. Ronald*

Ronald is a Nigerian and was 35 years old during this study. He initially came to South Africa in pursue of better life but was later deceived and recruited as a victim of human trafficking.

- **My journey as victim of human trafficking**

*Back home in Nigeria I'm a music marketer and a songwriter. I'm also a scriptwriter. A time came when I was invited to South Africa by a friend. I know coming to South Africa introduced me to trafficking, though I never liked it, it's a means of stepping over. When I came to South Africa, I was introduced to people that knew all about trafficking. So, I went through training, psychologically because of the police as well, their work, psychologically because to beat them, you have to think the way they think. The only solution to get a criminal is to think like a criminal.*

- **My journey as a survivor of human trafficking**

*As a survivor, well, the experience is not something I can finish. I have been through so many horrible experiences. When I finally left, I suffered attacks from other traffickers who were angry. I left. The experience is tough and hard. I have been in it, with gunshots, with friends, suddenly gunshot was opened, but I survived it by the grace of God. I wasn't touched by the bullets. Many times, I saw my friends being killed. This cause me sleepless nights and all else but with lots of counselling and prayers I felt better. I survived and will not go back no matter the threats against my life. I also survived prison life which in a way corrected my behaviour. I completed my prison term after I was caught by the police for illegal drug peddling.*

- **My journey as a prosocial change agent**

*As a prosocial change agent, I am reaching out to other human trafficking victims that are still on the street selling sex. Through them the victims indoors are reached as they take my message of change for a better life than selling their body, sex for money and substance abuse. Talking to victims is a significant way to tell them there is help available. I tell victims about hope and refer them MeCAHT who assist them because most of them want to escape, but don't know how. Now I volunteer with MeCAHT as well.*

*Communication is essential, so sharing my story will make other people know about it, with my neighbours to my colleagues and everyone I meet. I talk to them whenever I have the opportunity or when I see them which often happens as I work for them as well by mending their clothes, watering their flowers and all like that. When they need me, they call me on the phone to sew their clothes, to reshape it, and I've got access to go in and out, without. I don't involve myself in what they are doing because I have got a new identity. I would say the challenges I face as a survivor leader is lack of support from the government. We as survivors of human trafficking we need support from the government and other agencies to empower us more in the prosocial leadership in fighting against human trafficking.*

*First, the people already have it at the back of their minds that to change is not possible. So, when you preach to them, it's like you think you're a pastor. When you tell them you're a security guard, they say we know you are going to come back. You see, as human beings, they will not accept what you're telling them to their face. When they later think about it, some of them even come to me and say it seems the way you're living now is better. Some even ask if they can get the connections for security jobs. Even when my words are not effective with them, my life experience has proven useful in telling them that there is a better life out there.*

*Shortly after being trafficked, I went through severe trauma with a flashback of many traumatic experiences before, during and after being trafficked. From when I was chased out of my grandmother's house with my toddler to when I was sold by my trafficker boyfriend. I suffered a stroke at the age of twenty-nine; as a result, I lost my memory. I couldn't write or talk and lost my speech to date. I still struggle with expressing myself well with words. That's when I realized this stroke had affected me so severely. I couldn't explain who I am and so I requested for pen and paper from the nurse to write my name. It was then that I discovered I couldn't write. It was so bad. My first word was "betty" when the psychologist asks me to say a difficult word which is playing with my vocal cords.*

*It is a difficult path because sometimes you go on for days with only fifty Rands to spend on food. Most times, it's tempting to go back, to be honest like just these few days now since this month, it got to the point that I begin to ask myself if I took the right decision. Though I know the decision I made was right. Those are the kind of challenges, but it is the most peaceful and happiest path I took yet it is not an easy path without having something in place that gives you a daily income. Although the money is not coming regularly, I can sleep now peacefully. I can be walking around with no money in my pocket, but I know I don't have to be watching my back.*

- **My epilogue for now**

*My thought on the impact is that you can't force anyone, you can talk, but it's based on the person to accept and to leave it. Mostly all of them are indoors; they don't go out; when it's time for them to eat, they eat. When it's time to go to work, they go to work with strict instructions. These people are living worse than in the days of slavery. Some of them are scared of losing their lives; as I said before, the day you sign it, you sign death, you're ready to die anytime, and you're prepared to go to prison at any time, you're prepared to make it at any time because that's what you sign and you register them in your heart. That's why anyone that is into it, the way they live their lives is different from the way you live your life. They are always watching over their shoulders any time, any moment. So, for those, the people they work for, when they see that they are no more useful, they are kicked out. Those are the people that no longer able to bring them an income.*

For Ronald, peer pressure and the unbridled desire to make quick money, led to his being trafficked at the age of 23. His experience as a trafficked victim was gruelling and life-threatening, but somehow by sheer luck, "grace" according to him, he survived and came out

unscratched and became a promoter of anti-sex selling and anti-trafficking in persons generally.

#### 1.24. **Conclusion**

Chapter Four presented the transitional narratives of the five research participants from this study, all of whom had been victims of human trafficking. However, these participants were selected for inclusion in the study not only because they were victims, but because they survived trafficking ordeals, thrived, and then became prosocial change agents in the fight against human trafficking. Each participant's transitional narrative was clustered according to their journey as a victim of human trafficking, survivor of human trafficking, experience of prosocial change agency; and efforts to combat human trafficking. In addition, during the interview it was noted by the researcher that all participants experience trauma leading to anxiety and depression. The importance of counselling support played a great role in their journey as survivors and pro-social agents. Finally, I included an "epilogue for now" summary for each of the participants.

## **Chapter Five: Discussion of Findings**

### **1.25. Introduction**

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings in my study. It discusses the similarities and differences in the themes from the participants' transitional narratives, as constructed by the researcher. Chapter Five also explores narratives as an empowerment strategy for trafficked survivors' prosocial agency, the transition from victim to survivor, and the role of resilience in this transition. Finally, the complications and challenges from the main findings of the study are discussed.

### **1.26. Similarities and Differences in the Themes from the Participants' Transitional Narratives**

All participants involved in the study were active prosocial agents of change who were contributing to the fight against human trafficking in South Africa. They achieved this by reaching out to young people, parents, victims of human trafficking who are still on the street as prostitutes, or pimps, and other organisations. Participants in this study use their true-life experiences and stories to educate people through creating awareness campaigns on human trafficking and the abuse of human rights committed by the perpetrators of human trafficking. While sharing their stories, participants use the opportunity to inform those who are still victims about the rescue opportunities and safe homes that are available in Cape Town for victims and survivors of human trafficking. Most participants share their positive personal stories quite naturally yet are reluctant to share their failures for fear of being misperceived, judged or vulnerable. Gabriel (2014) identified how it takes courage to share your leadership journey, and this is attested to by some of the participants in this study.

Sharing an adversity experience and how they bounced back from the traumatic experiences during trafficked times can be regarded as acts of resilience (Pooley & Cohen, 2010). These acts of resilience facilitate the creation of new identities as prosocial change agents.

None of the five participants went through all three processes recruiting of trafficking victims which are; first, the country of source, second, transit countries and third, destination countries (James, 2020). The three non-South African survivors came directly from two main source countries (i.e. Nigeria and Cameroon) straight to the destination country (i.e. South Africa).

The South African participants were trafficked within South African provinces and finally settled in Cape Town until their rescue by the Cape Town branch of MeCAHT. On arrival of the non-South Africans in South Africa, they were trafficked within South African provinces until they were rescued during one of the MeCAHT outreaches to trafficked victims on different streets in Western Cape, South Africa.

Nevertheless, participants in this study mentioned that they were not aware that the jobs they were promised involved human trafficking. Neither were they aware that they were not being lied to, nor of the danger behind the jobs they were promised. This scenario resonates with all trafficking syndicates, who lure their unsuspecting and often naive victims, with promises of a better life outside of the victim's home country (or province). For example, one of the respondents, Betty, recounted how she became a victim of human trafficking due to her poverty and emotional deprivation, stating, "My journey as a victim started when I began to search for better living to make money to look after my children, I was also looking for love". Findings by the Alliance for Freedom, Restoration and Justice (AFRJ, 2018) study revealed that among the numerous factors, such as violence, family background, and poverty, responsible for global trafficking in persons, the desire and the need for "love" by victims remains paramount.

Furthermore, Miller-Perrin and Wurtele (2017) noted in their studies that severely limited educational and employment opportunities for girls, boys and women led them into sex traffickers' traps. Moreover, traffickers use recruitment strategies to offer survivors false job opportunities, guaranteeing them high and attractive payments. The human traffickers have the tendency to exploit the aspirations of the victims towards a particular opportunity in the initial recruitment stage. Michael's transitional narrative typified this trafficking strategy. He stated that he was lured into being trafficked with a promise from his trafficker, to help him to actualise his long-time ambition of having his own soccer club. It turned out, however, that his breakthrough came not from the trafficker(s), but from good spirited anti-trafficking organisations such as MeCAHT, that provided him a platform to play soccer and to start his own soccer club. The main attraction by which the victims of human trafficking in this study were lured was employment opportunity. The experiences of 35-year-old Calvin exemplify this assertion. Calvin had been told or rather deceived by his friend to come to Cape Town, South Africa, where there was apparently a great business opportunity waiting for him to tap into. It dawned on him that the Cape Town's streets were not "paved with gold" after all. He then found himself peddling drugs and having to constantly be on the run from security agents. In

his words: “I asked the friend how he was doing. He said he was flourishing in his business without stating the type of business. I innocently told him that I was not doing well financially and asked if I could come over to him to work with him.”

In most cases there is a huge wage differential between the country of origin and the destination country. Hence, the destination country usually attracts labour force due to higher wages (IOM, 2008). The trafficked persons normally have the perceptions that their country of destination holds promising opportunities unlike their original country, where life can best be described as being cruel to them. This is a realistic situation that traffickers capitalise on in scouting for prospective candidates or victims. The Alliance for Freedom, Restoration and Justice (AFRJ, 2018) note that traffickers prey on victims’ naivety, vulnerability and desperation for an improved life, to recruit potential victims. Several studies (Olaniyi, 2003; Bales, 2007) show that two primary factors predispose people to being trafficked, that is, push and pull factors. These factors indicate the poor socio-economic variables of the country of origin, and improved conditions of living in the country of destination respectively. The ‘push and pull’ factors have been canvassed by Olaniyan (2003), who averred that financial hardships and perceived financial gains force or entice persons entangled by poverty to engage in trafficking or become victims of trafficking. Bales (2007) agreed with Olaniyi, that corruption, poverty, conflict and the “pull” factor of better opportunity elsewhere predispose an individual to being trafficked. Similarly, the ‘push’ factor of poverty and vulnerability may inadvertently lead to an individual’s victimisation. The findings of the current study clearly corroborate Olaniyi’s (2003) and Bales’ (2007) position on the reasons why people engage in trafficking and how others are falling victim to the phenomenon.

Interestingly, all the victim-survivors in this study, acknowledged their painful transition into prosocial agents of change. Nonetheless, they were happy that they summoned sufficient courage to embark on the transition journey. In this regard, they were able to assist in exposing human traffickers, along with helping to counsel other victims; and also to prevent people, both young and old, from falling prey to trafficking syndicates. This corroborates the narrative by Deaton (2019), herself a victim and survivor of human trafficking, who transited into a leader and a counsellor for sexually abused women, and an advocate of anti-trafficking. The findings of this study further align with previous studies (Owasanoye & Nangle, 2017; Ottisova, Hemmings, Howard, Zimmerman and Oram, 2016; Vollhardt & Stab, 2011; Williams & Allen, 2015; Newsom & Myers-Bowman, 2017). These studies emphasise the importance of the

narrative approach in disclosing negative experiences that serve as the force that propel an individual into becoming a prosocial change agent. The stories of the five participants in the study attest to the point being made by scholars such as Williams and Allen (2015) who posited that despite the trauma of being trafficked and the post trafficked trauma, survivors can manage to consciously put behind them their painful experiences to become prosocial change agent engaged in life-transforming ventures.

Further to the above, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) of abuse, physical neglect by biological parents, emotional and sexual abuse as a child (Felitti, Anda, Nordenberg, Williamson, Spitz, Edwards, & Marks 2019) were noted in the participants' narratives as examples of their households' dysfunction and abuse. According to Reid, Baglivio, Piquero, Greenwald and Epps (2017), in a family setting maltreated youths are more susceptible to exploitation in human trafficking and gender-based violence because they are lured into finding alternative opportunities through an organised syndicate, and in most African societies females earning lower wages are undervalued compared to males due to the patriarchal system. Thus there is more prevalence of human trafficking of the aforementioned persons. ACEs were also observed in all narratives of the survivors. These included being raised in a home where issues such as abuse, gender inequality, family disruption, instability, lack of safety, divorce of parents and poverty were experienced. As a result, such participants were susceptible to being trafficked, as traffickers prey on vulnerable individuals (Klein & Leonard, 2020; APA, 2020). ACEs are defined as a negative or potentially traumatic event that occurs before a person reaches 18 years of age which has the potential of damaging a child's sense of safety, stability, or bonding. Examples may include abuse (emotional or physical), domestic violence, substance misuse by a member of the household, divorce or separation of parents or caregivers, mental illness of a member of the household, and having a member of the household go to prison. The associated risk factors for ACE include living in under-resourced or racially segregated neighbourhoods, frequently moving to new homes or areas, and food insecurity (Klein & Leonard 2020)

Congruent with the above, sexual abuse in connection with high risk for ACE may serve as a key predictor of exploitation in human trafficking for both boys and girls. These make victims vulnerable to being preyed on as they seek love, acceptance, and a better life out of poverty. All survivors in this study are originally from Africa and fell prey to perpetrators of human trafficking residing in South Africa. Abuse is seen as one of the similar experiences all

survivors in this study experienced. These abuses are not limited to physical abuse by their traffickers, but include emotional and psychological abuse residue of the experiences faced during and after being trafficked. Wilson and Butler (2014) reviewed some adverse experiences commonly noted in survivors of human trafficking such as victimization and violence in the pre-entry, post-entry, and peri-/post-exit periods of commercial sexual exploitation, and psychological trauma. All the five participants in my study exhibited crucible leadership in form of prosocial agency. Ben (2002) asserted that crucible activities include helping other victims after being victimised in a similar way. Such activities also include promotion of prosocial behaviour such as acting to maintain well-developed prosocial tendencies or to raise the level of such tendencies among others who have not yet acquired strong prosocial proclivities. In this case it speaks to the survivors of human trafficking who were examined in this study and noticed to have been prosocial agents of human trafficking.

Additionally, prosocial agents show crucible leader characteristics which is defined as leading in the area where they were being victimised. In their studies on crucible leadership Basile, DeGue, Jones, Freire, Dills, Smith, and Raiford (2016) stated that crucible leadership provides a more radical view of responsible leadership that may be better placed to meet contextual challenges. In this case, the contextual challenge is human trafficking in which the participants were involved. Hemington (2018, p. 876) added that crucible leaders are seen in persons who have “self-transcendent personal values concerned with the welfare and interests of others”. He further described crucible leadership as a life course event purporting to impact on individual development, including leadership development. This may occur in various ways, from life formative experiences that lead an individual to redefine the sense of self and in some way, completely transform their self-identity as leaders (Hemingway, 2018), just as is the case for all survivors of human trafficking in this study. All the participants in my study redefined themselves as prosocial agents and started leading in contributing to the fight against human trafficking in Africa and at large. Their prosocial agency is seen in their commitment to the fight against human trafficking in South Africa through advocating against human trafficking publicly. They have been doing this by educating the society, and working to support other victims of human trafficking in South Africa and beyond.

Two participants were recruited from Nigeria by traffickers in South Africa as they were lied to with the false promise of a good job. Nevertheless, on arriving in South Africa, their passports were seized, and they were trained and recruited into trafficking illicit substances,

trafficking females for commercial sex, and stealing from clients who came to buy sex. Traffickers lured poor, uneducated and unemployed young people through false job promises outside of their home country using fake documents and on arrival in a new country, victims were used by traffickers for human trafficking activities (Burke, 2017; Graycar, 2017).

Myth has it that only men are traffickers, however, this study has demonstrated how young female friends of Betty and Grizelda (Grootboom, 2016) recruited them into human trafficking through deception and false promises of a better life (Eronen & Jones, 2017). On the one hand, the female survivors in this study were recruited for commercial sex trafficking and forced prostitution. On the other hand, the males were not recruited for commercial sex or for forced prostitution but rather for pimping the females to the sex buyers. McAlpine et., al (2016) claimed that females are more likely than males to be victims of sexual exploitation and sex trafficking. Another study by Shandro et., al (2016) noted that women are mostly trafficked for commercial sex act through forced prostitution. Such women are coerced to work for long hours, have sex with high numbers of clients; and undergo sexual risks to meet a financial standard set by traffickers.

Consistent with the above, there have been government initiatives pertaining to anti-human trafficking law in 2013 and subsequent campaigns taking place thereafter, However, despite these initiatives to reduce the incidences of human trafficking in South Africa, a study done by Van der Watt (2018) showed that the South African government does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. Although the South African government falls short in several key areas, they are trying to make a significant effort to eradicate human trafficking. However, trafficking syndicates are well organised and attempts to overcome them will only be successful if relevant officials work in a very open, efficient network (Van der Watt, 2018, p.14).

#### **1.27. Narratives as an Empowerment Strategy for Trafficked Survivors' Prosocial Agency**

The rationale for narration of stories is not only meant to inform and entertain the audience but to teach society and inform people about particular behaviours. The narration of stories is an empowerment strategy that helps the survivors move from their previous stigma and participate in prosocial behaviours. Guiterrez (1990) defined empowerment as a process that increases personal, interpersonal, or political power in order to better our lives and those of others. Gueterrez (1990) opined that the victims of human trafficking lose self-esteem as they are

broken and wounded. As a result, they continue to be stigmatized by the society in which they live. Thus, telling their own story rebuilds their self-esteem and dignity.

In the narratives of the survivors of human trafficking on their transition from victim to survivor and prosocial change agent, they presented similarities concerning how the recruitment methods were done. In this instance, deception was the means of recruitment. In accordance with Balwin (2015) most victims, both female and male that were recruited, usually came from previously disadvantaged backgrounds, and countries. Such contexts have high rate of poverty and psychological coercion such isolation, monopolization of perception, induced debility or exhaustion, and threats.

In south Eastern Europe for instance, Omelaniuk (2005) noted that the victims of human trafficking originated from poorer nations. This, however, does not imply that those from high class backgrounds and developed nations are exempted from traffickers' recruitment. Any person is at a risk of human trafficking because there is no fixed mode of selection that fits the victim. Traffickers do not discriminate persons on their ethnicity, race, age, immigration status or economic background (Toney-Buttler, 2018). A recent study by McBane (2019) showed there was high rise in the number of women becoming traffickers. An example given in this study is the experience of Betty whose first recruitment was initiated by female South Africans and second recruitment by a Nigerian boyfriend she met at the night club in Cape Town. In the case of this study, the women were first trafficked and introduced into the sex trafficking by other females. In the same vein, men were usually trafficked by men. Moreover, women were used for commercial sex purposes and the men were used for trafficking women into forced prostitution and drugging them, selling drugs, and stealing.

Further to the above, traffickers recruit their victims through the means of deception followed by compelling victims to serve the interests of traffickers through the application of physical and psychological coercion (Hodge, 2014). Betty survived being a victim of human trafficking and is currently a prosocial change agent as a survivor leader, volunteering staff with the Cape Town branches of MeCAHT in South Africa. In the book "Buttercup", the actual life story of Betty's transition from a victim of human trafficking started with a man she met at the club (Eronen & Jones 2017). The man promised to take care of her if she agreed to be his girlfriend. Later the same man introduced Betty into prostitution and sex slavery. How she survived the ordeal of victimisation and health complications (heart attack, stroke, memory loss and speech difficulties) and her transition to a prosocial change agent is narrated in the Book "Buttercup".

The book is a tool to prevent and combat trafficking in South Africa (2017). The study was anchored on the transitional narrative theory (Grimmell, 2015; Reissman, 2008). The theory emphasises storytelling from the perspective of a victim and/or survivor of any traumatic experience in which case they recount their traumatic and post-traumatic experiences. Many a times, this involves painful occurrences from their past and details how they struggled to cope in the present. Thus, the findings of this study hinges on the narrative strategy of “Looking Back, Looking Forward” as elaborated by Riessma (2008).

In view of the above, the participants in the study, through their transitional narratives, reflected on both lives before and after trafficking. They loath their past, while grateful for their present and looked forward to a post-traumatic future life lived in the service of humanity. For example, Ronald narrowly escaped being killed severally by the police as well as the traffickers, served prison term, but was grateful to have survived it all and is now contributing his quota to the noble cause of fighting human trafficking. A significant concept that underpins the theoretical framework of this research is the notion of a transitional narrative (Grimmell, 2015). Transitional narratives involve reflections on shifts in identity. As mentioned, this study was also influenced by the narrative theory phrase "Looking Back, Looking Forward" (Riessman, 2008, p.1) which is related to a transitional narrative.

#### **1.28. Transition from Victim to Survivor**

The participants’ stories of their transition from victim to survivor were similar as they all survived devastating physical and psychological abuse and severely traumatic experiences from traffickers. Also, they have had to live with and manage these experiences for years after transitioning to survivors. One of the critical elements during transition from being a trafficked victim to being a survivor and prosocial agent is the resilience of the survivors. Mental health practitioners frequently define resilience as a survivor's individual characteristic ability to work through the trauma of their experience and overcome hardship (Bonanno, 2004, Iacoviello & Charney, 2014).

All the five participants rose to the level of being prosocial change agents and continue to make their unique and significant contributions towards the fight against human trafficking in South Africa. Their contribution to the fight against human trafficking is using their own personal stories and life experiences to help other victims. This is to prevent and fight against human

trafficking in South Africa and society at large. In the narratives of survivors of human trafficking they indicated the need for more studies of their contributions on a global level. The results of such studies may be used to create a strategy to combat and reduce the alarming global increase of human trafficking incidences using survivors' narratives and suggestions.

All five participants of this study stated that the major push and pull factors are contributing factors of being trafficked. Participants emphasised looking forward for better lives and continued commitment to prevent and fight against human trafficking. It is important to note that participants stated that their journeys as trafficked survivors started by being recruited as victims of human trafficking especially for commercial sex. They were then moved from one place to another followed by being introduced to consuming and selling illicit drugs to sex buyers. As a result, as trafficked persons, they became perpetrators of selling illegal drugs to clients, stealing from clients, consuming illicit drugs, and selling sex. These are all considered as criminal acts by law.

Furthermore, as a first point, although the participants of this study have different nationalities and genders, their experiences as victims and survivors have previously been studied (Van der Watt, 2018). Nevertheless, this present study added the perspective of prosocial change agency and contributions of survivors of human trafficking towards the fight against human trafficking in South Africa. Secondly, the results indicated that previous research had not been done on the contributions of survivors of human trafficking towards the fight against human trafficking in South Africa, through their prosocial change agency. Thirdly, all participants are from lower class categories. One participant suffered a stroke due to severe stress and the substance abuse forced on her by her pimp in order to enable her to gratify the desires of her many clients. As a result, she struggled with coordinating her thoughts and speech. However, none of the participants had to deal with severe health challenges, side effects of drug abuse or aftermath of health complications from being trafficked. The participants stated that they were coping well except for regrets over all the harrowing activities they were coerced into by their pimps.

Survivors' additional comments suggested that for effective prevention and combating of human trafficking, there is the need to involve and support survivors who are using their experiences as a tool to prevent and combat human trafficking. This is because survivors can identify traffickers due to their experiences better than those who have no experience of being trafficked. The findings indicate that, while prior research around the experiences of victims and survivors of human trafficking has been done, there is not much research on their transition

from survivors to prosocial change agents. Also, not much work has yet been done to study their contributions towards the fight against human trafficking.

In view of the above, the current study has contributed significantly to extant literature on human trafficking on the one hand, and post-trafficking experiences of victims on the other hand. In addition to their ability to transit from victim-survivor to prosocial agents of change in countering human trafficking particularly in South Africa and globally, some of the participants have been able to document their lived experiences as victims of human trafficking. Others have been engaging in humanitarian services including setting up rehabilitation and counselling centres and providing victim support services. Moreover, they have all been generally involved in other anti-trafficking campaigns involving the promotion of human rights, advocacy against the decriminalisation of prostitution, and legislation against human trafficking.

#### 1.29. **Resilience**

Resilience is gathered from participants' narratives as a vital element that propelled them to continue their journey of freedom from being victims of human trafficking. According to Windle (2011) resilience is defined as the process of effectively negotiating, adapting to, or managing significant sources of stress or trauma. It also deals with how to manage assets and resources within the individual, their life and environment. Hence, resilience facilitates the capacity for adaptation and 'bouncing back' in the face of adversity. To best describe the participants' resilience, all types such as mental, emotional, psychological, physical, social, and spiritual were deduced through their narratives. For example, emotional resilience indicates participants' past mindset of being slaves to their traffickers now renewed to a mindset of being free. It also deals with working on their hurt feelings to avoid transfer of aggression. Moreover, psychological resilience indicates seeking psychological support from professionals which empowers them to channel their thoughts and actions in a healthy way. For physical resilience, this played out as engaging in soccer as a form of physical activity that helps to release unwanted tension in the body. Social resilience concerns choosing social circles that influences them positively, for example working with MeCAHT and other anti-human trafficking advocates to create awareness against human trafficking. Finally, spiritual resilience, comprising of praying and trusting the supreme being for strength whenever they felt the need for greater strength to continue.

Indeed, transiting from victim to survivor has its own challenges as narrated by the fourth respondent (Calvin). Essentially upon exit from whatever form of trafficking activities, a trafficked person needs to fend for themselves, and obviously this is very demanding. As a result it is very likely for any survivor of human trafficking to relapse into the above activities in order to keep body and soul together. Another thread in Calvin's transition narrative is a feeling of pride, of having to admit weakness, hopelessness; and expressing the need of help to pull out and pull through the post-transition stage. During the interviews, the researcher observed that almost all the participants exhibited a very high sense of responsibility. This was filled with great enthusiasm for the opportunity to have a new lease on life. Basically, this includes being able and allowed to play their different roles in the life of other individuals especially those suffering from traumatic and post-traumatic syndromes arising from their experiences with traffickers. That the above was observed in the participants was noticeable in their tone of voice including other non-verbal expressions or gestures such as smiles, laughter, and movements of the hands. It is, therefore, important that researchers pay closer and deliberate attention to these non-verbal clues. Such non-verbal clues may facilitate better understanding and comprehension of peoples' travails, particularly those who have suffered some form of psychological and emotional trauma. In this instance, such people sometimes find it difficult to concretely and vividly describe or recount their traumatic experiences.

When probed for more explanations, some of the participants generally highlighted some relevant issues concerning the narratives around human trafficking. The first participant, Betty, suggested that human trafficking survivors deserve continuous support and love to prevent a repeat of their former experiences with their traffickers. She added that the books that they have written could be used in primary and post-primary schools to educate and enlighten young people on the dangers of human trafficking. Reason being that Betty believed that human trafficking is prevalent in schools.

The feeling of taking up a new and re-invigorated identity resonated with the participants. For example, one of them, Michael, enthused: "I am very happy that I was rescued, and I have been given a new identity too". There is no doubt that being a trafficked person and used as a prostitute, pimp, drug peddler, thief, domestic servant, among others, connotes a sense of worthlessness. Hence, transiting from such a condition to becoming a more useful and dignified individual is something to be proud of and to celebrate with every sense of joy and gratitude. In this respect, Ronald happily stated "I can sleep now peacefully. I can be walking around

with no money in my pocket, but I know I don't have to be watching my back". Similarly, another respondent, Bongani, declared "It makes me feel good...and my self-esteem is built for the fact that daily when I go to bed, I have people thanking me for just giving them hope."

### 1.30. **Complications and Challenges from the Main Findings of the Study**

There have been several studies done on the experiences of victims and traffickers; and the consequences of human trafficking on victims and survivors. These studies include the pre-trafficking experiences where before getting trafficked, persons get moved around, go through a series of threats, coercion, and manipulation. Meanwhile, during trafficking, severe physical violence such as hitting and beating, overtime standard legal working time, restricted freedom, low wages, poor living conditions, and sexual violence happens prior to migration. According to Wilson and Butler (2014), post-trafficking studies reveal that trafficked persons suffer guilt, shame, fear of traffickers, concern for what the future holds; and concern for being stigmatised, rejected and judged by families, friends and the society. In addition, these kinds of occurrences make trafficked persons reluctant to seek help or to exit the cycle of being victims of human trafficking and perpetuating the victimhood of others. As a result, traffickers and pimps take advantage of victims' fears to increase compliance (Wilson & Butler, 2014). Like the aforementioned predicaments, Wann (2016) contended that human trafficking victims are normally marginalised by systems that ought to bring justice to them; and are also underserved by social systems that ought to provide services to improve their welfare.

While some nations are passing laws against sex trafficking, other European countries, such as Holland and Germany, legalize prostitution. Thus, traffickers take advantage of such situations to force sex trafficked victims to procure licenses to enable them to become legal prostitutes under the control of their pimp (SABC 3, 2019). This automatically transforms a victim trafficked for sexual exploitation to a legal prostitute with a licence. Therefore, legalising prostitution fuels human trafficking for commercial sex purposes. The contributions of the research participants in terms of the complications they experienced, and resilience in overcoming these experiences in South Africa are narrated in their face-to-face interviews.

Although all the participants were between ages 33 and 38 at the time of conducting the study, it is not known at what age they were first trafficked (this is outside the purview of this study). Notwithstanding this, all the five participants displayed a great sense of maturity and

responsibility in the way and manner that they responded to the questions posed to them from the interview schedule. Ultimately, reflexivity and the positionality strategy of narrative research ensured a cordial relationship between the participants and researcher. Furthermore, the research design strengthened and empowered the participants to provide answers to the questions asked. As a result, comprehension, easy interpretation and clear analysis by the researcher was enhanced.

### 1.31. **Conclusion**

Chapter Five discussed the findings of the study along the lines of the similarities and differences in the self-disclosures of the five participants interviewed. The chapter integrated these similarities and differences with the theory upon which the study was anchored, and the literature reviewed. Complications and challenges in the main findings of the study were presented. Using narratives as an empowerment strategy for prosocial agency of trafficked survivors and their transition from victim to survivor through sheer resilience was also discussed in the chapter.

## **Chapter Six: Recommendations and conclusion**

### **1.32. Introduction**

Chapter Six brings the dissertation to a close by first providing a summative reflection on the study's main findings in relation to the research aims, objectives and research questions. Second, the chapter makes recommendations for the fight against human trafficking as specifically informed by the role that survivors' narratives can play in this fight. The last two sections of the chapter explore the strengths and limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

### **1.33. Summative reflection on the significance of the study findings with links to the research aims, objectives and questions**

The study is significant as it contributes to the fight against human trafficking by engaging with the experiences of trafficked victims who have become prosocial agents of change in the society. Prosocial agency denotes actions that benefit or improve the lives of those caught in a phenomenon such as human trafficking (Moreira & Telzerders, 2017). Consistent with the views of Moreira and Telzerders (2017), Ewest (2018) claimed that prosocial leaders can take responsibility to lead others, direct change in their communities and lead global change. The survivors of human trafficking in the context of this research eschew certain social problems (Grootboom, 2016); and act as agents of support to those going through predicaments such as theirs. Taking cognisance of the rarity of such knowledge, the study also adds to the literature based on the use of narratives as a tool for survivors of human trafficking to share their stories. In addition, it provides a tool for creating awareness and to address the illicit industry of human trafficking with practical solutions. The work further provides fresh accounts of experiences of victims of this violence in the transnational space and within the South African context.

Moreover, this study offers an insight for the survivors of human trafficking to narrate their stories of transition from victims, to survivors, to prosocial change agents, and the vital contribution of such in the fight against human trafficking in South Africa and globally. Thus, the research aligns with the fifth goal of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Buse & Hawkes, 2015) which aims at "eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spaces, including human trafficking and other forms of human exploitation" (2015, p.1). From the purview of policies and initiatives against trafficking, the

study is seminal as its findings and recommendations are derived from the lived experiences of trafficked victims shared through their narratives.

The qualitative interview method described above is effective in allowing for detailed self-disclosure by the participants. The method allowed the participants to freely express themselves in a manner devoid of shame. This is because they have become prosocial agents of change in the fight against human trafficking not only in South Africa, but globally. Arguably, a qualitative approach involving the use of interview allows for a vivid description or narration of any given or experienced phenomenon because it is done in the very words and language of the narrator or agent. Similarly, the findings of the current study are congruent with the research objectives and research questions identified in chapters one and three respectively. It identified how survivors of human trafficking were able, through sheer determination and strong will, to transit from victims, to survivors, to prosocial change agents. In this regard, they were able to play roles as fighters against human trafficking in South Africa in their different capacities.

The findings of this study reveal that the victims-survivors had excruciating experiences throughout the periods of being trafficked. They suffered emotional and psychological trauma so much so that some lost their cognitive and motor abilities due to the physical abuse they suffered after being trafficked. This kind of effect is consistent with the study conducted by Owasanoye and Nangle (2017). The study revealed that victims of human trafficking suffer psychological disorders, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, and attention deficit disorder, among others, occasioned by physical and mental abuses that meted out to the victims of trafficking. However, by sheer strong will, the survivors in this study became prosocial agents of change, contributing their quota to the ongoing fight against human trafficking and its related implications. A study conducted by Mayne (2016) corroborated this point. Mayne narrated a story of female victim of human trafficking, who transited to survivor, to becoming a prosocial change agent involved in the fight against human trafficking in South Africa, and across other lands. Most importantly, the participants survived amidst all the challenges and trials, the humiliations and deprivations, to now become agents of change and anti-trafficking ambassadors and promoters of fundamental human rights. For example, Bongani continues to champion the cause of women's rights and freedom from sexual abuse,

including working to de-legalise prostitution, despite the sheer terror of her experience of being trafficked from a young age.

Patterns of surviving trauma clearly played out in the study by Klein (2018) on Nazi holocaust survivors. The survivors recalled how they underwent both physical and emotional tortures at the oppressors' hands, including the terrible loneliness they felt during and after their release. In the section on "Narrative Disclosure", the above author observed how one of three survivors, Jean Amery, tenaciously stuck to his past experiences in Nazi Germany, recounting resentful feelings towards the Nazi-era crimes (ibid.). This present study did not find any such resentful emotions in the narratives of the participants. Could it be that they repressed or hid their resentments, or that they chose consciously not to recount such emotions? Additionally, have they rather concentrated on forging a more liberating and fruitful future life for themselves and for other victims and survivors of human trafficking, than remained stuck in reliving the past?

These questions, perhaps, form the topic for future research. Although the participants in this study did not display any visible resentments while narrating their ordeals as victims of human trafficking in South Africa, they did allude to episodes of torture and other psychological and emotional trauma and torment. From the foregoing, individual narratives of the victims and survivors of human trafficking in South Africa are an indication that the menace is endemic in the country. Hence, urgent steps are needed to arrest the trend. Considering this circumstance, the next section suggests some salient recommendations on how to tackle human trafficking in South Africa. These include ways to rescue the victims of the ugly phenomenon, who comprise men and women from underdeveloped countries and places. These are persons, who in many cases, under normal circumstances would not want to leave their homes to seek better life in strange lands. However, when forced or tricked to do so, are exposed to inhuman treatments of all sorts.

The current study, aside from investigating the phenomenon of human trafficking; and its impacts on victims and survivors, through qualitative narrative research, also generated new ideas and knowledge in relation to the use of storytelling in the very words of the victims. For instance, the study shows that when people can tell their own stories, they stand better chances of being understood. This is called hearing from the "horse's mouth" as opposed to the "grape vine". Besides, one can well understand that whatever negative or other experiences one might have had, they are very well appreciated by people who listen to one's stories. This forms the

basis for the application and understanding of narrative, and showcases the social and cultural nature of narrative discourse which is gaining traction in social science research.

In this way, the voices of the survivors are heard, while their experiences and recommendations may be incorporated into policies, services and programmes designed for victims of human trafficking, irrespective of their cultural backgrounds and demographic variables.

#### **1.34. Recommendations for the fight against human trafficking, as informed by Survivors' narratives**

The topic of human trafficking remains very urgent as a significant percentage of women, children and men remain in the bondage of the heinous phenomenon. In the context of Africa, it has been reported that out of every hundred persons who are victims of human trafficking, 74% are adults, 26% being children (Chuang, 2014) . Thus, it is important to accentuate efforts to stop human trafficking not only as a phenomenon for adults but for all groups of persons. Notably, female child victims normally suffer double jeopardy of human trafficking due to gender and age factors. Although statistics may not accurately depict the actual number of those that remain victims to human trafficking, it is apparent that these figures give an idea of the severity of the issue worldwide. This study contributes to the gap that exists in the dearth of social research regarding the transition of survivors, their impact on reaching out to other trafficked victims; and their contributions towards the fight against human trafficking in South Africa and elsewhere.

In addition, this study has presented narratives of how victims transitioned to survivors, and later prosocial agents, situated in Cape Town, South Africa. Both female and male survivors were included in the sample. Participants in this study were from three countries, namely, South Africa, Nigeria, and Cameroon. The study focused on understanding how leaders of (or activists for) prosocial change in human trafficking continued to use their experiences of being trafficked to contribute to the fight against the act. Invariably, this adds to existing knowledge about survivors' prosocial agency; as well as suggests how such could be used to fight against human trafficking in South Africa particularly.

Human trafficking is an illegal act and has emerged as the new form of modern slavery. Victims are enslaved and forced into cheap labour and commercial sex and drug trafficking. The issue of human trafficking has proven to be a prevalent problem worldwide. Moreover, sex trafficking of minors within and outside South Africa has raised much concern in all sectors of society. This has further been sparked by a recent incident in Johannesburg where 46 victims

of human trafficking were rescued in a house raid. Notwithstanding, an occurrence like this, trafficking of adults has been prevalent when issues of trafficking are discussed. However, factual evidence revealed that almost two million children are exploited each year for sex trafficking worldwide. The gaps and limitations found in current studies revealed that there has not been any study done specifically regarding the contributions of survivors of human trafficking as prosocial change agents in South Africa or any other nation.

Further to the above, participants in this study suggested that empowerment should be given to survivors of human trafficking in order to continue as prosocial change agents in their contributions towards the fight against human trafficking in South Africa. All participants stated that for the fight against human trafficking to be successful the following suggestions, stated below, should be considered. This is with the hope that future and upcoming researchers would further fulfil the need to listen to survivors of human trafficking and thus potentially contribute to an academic database on the phenomenon.

Firstly, joining existing efforts against human trafficking is an effective way to combat human trafficking. This means government and all other organisations fighting the crime should actively involve survivors of human trafficking by giving them a platform to speak and narrate their experiences. Survivors of human trafficking can give tips from their personal experience on how to track traffickers and rescue victims; and how to support survivors as prosocial change agents. According to Van der Watt (2018), we need to work as a syndicate ourselves in order to be successful in the fight against human trafficking syndicates.

Secondly, criminalisation of prostitution and prosecuting sex buyers would reduce the demand for human trafficking; and as such will help in the fight against human trafficking.

Thirdly, participants in this study called upon government and individuals to give them practical support to enable them to continue to be prosocial change agents in the fight against human trafficking in South Africa.

Finally, an ongoing empowerment and psychosocial strategy should be provided to those who have served their conviction terms in prison for human trafficking related offenses. This should also include those who have learned hand skills at correctional service centres; and are willing to make a difference as prosocial change agents for the fight against human trafficking.

Pertinent to the above, the phenomenon of human trafficking is not uniquely South African but is a global issue that must be handled transnationally. The South African government and other African governments should work more collaboratively with other nations to counter increasing cases of human trafficking. Reviews of how far international laws pertaining to human trafficking have been implemented should be discussed during international meetings. In the same breath, such meetings should be used to engage organisations that deal with victims and survivors of human trafficking who should be given a platform to tell their stories as well.

Fighting human trafficking is not ‘one man’s job’, but an issue that must be handled holistically by different stakeholders. The government should work closely with civil society organisations and religious institutions to find a long-lasting remedy for the disgrace of human trafficking. This is because the aforementioned institutions are more in touch with the victims, with an objective of helping these persons to live with dignity. There is a huge population of persons trafficked from Africa with little resultant publicity. This reveals that more efforts should be put into publicising the issue in the mainstream media. This will go a long way to creating greater vigilance for the general population to be more aware of people that may attempt to lure them into human trafficking under the guise of promising them better lives. Mainstream media and social media are two powerful tools that could be adopted in revolutionizing the way anti-trafficking activities are engaged. For instance, rather than just pointing out that the crime is persistent in society, the media can organise several debates, even in the local stations, to discuss how to deal with the menace; and thereby raise awareness that human trafficking is a reality, and something to be fought against.

Specifically, and most importantly, based on the objectives of this study, the following policy implications are, among others, recommended:

- i. Survivors of human trafficking should be encouraged, during counselling sessions, to recount both the negative and positive experiences encountered in light of transiting from victim to survivor to prosocial agent of change. In this way, it is believed, they would experience holistic healing and obtain a balanced outlook on life, their society and the world at large. They would also stand a better chance of making meaningful and lasting positive contributions in their chosen area of interest after the experiences of trafficking.

- ii. Similarly, research questions and discussions around issues of human trafficking experiences by victim-survivors should centre on the need to seek justice for them. In this way, trafficked persons who have escaped from their traffickers or have been rescued by relevant government authorities and/or non-profit organisations can be rehabilitated. Also, those contemplating escape from their trafficker's den can be encouraged to do so and to come forward to report the nefarious illegal activities of the traffickers to security agencies. A focus on justice for victim-survivors of human trafficking gives them the hope that perpetrators would be investigated, arrested and prosecuted within the ambit of the law, when exposed.
- iii. Having escaped or being rescued and now as prosocial change agents, victims-survivors can play a vital role in combating trafficking of persons and other social vices in society. Since they are willing and have chosen to turn over a new leaf, without any duress or coercion whatsoever, survivors can play these roles within their immediate society or community and also globally. They can be drafted into the police force or similar security outfits and given requisite training. In this regard, they can serve as undercover agents in tracking, monitoring and effecting arrest of traffickers who of course are adept in perpetuating their repugnant business.

  - As part of their role in combating human trafficking, victims-survivors of human trafficking can be contracted to serve as resource persons for training of police officers and/or other security personnel. These survivors who have a wealth of experiences, first as victims and then as survivors, fit perfectly into the role of resource persons and consultants in the area of human trafficking and its associated ills.

Families of survivors should be, where possible, included in the counselling process for the victims and survivors of human trafficking. This is because, in some instances, people searching for greener pastures, with the hope of making life better for their family members, fall into the hands of human traffickers. Hence, the involvement or inclusion, even though in part, of family members and relatives, would facilitate mutual understanding of the traumatic human trafficking experiences of their loved ones. In addition, the following points present tangible ways in which human trafficking can be combatted:

- Raising public awareness of the existence of slavery in the global economy by, for example, listing products or services derived from forced labour.

- Pressing for national laws and local statutes that make human trafficking a separate and distinct crime.
- Reducing demand for commercial sex by increasing liabilities for those who purchase sex. It is crystal clear that there cannot be human trafficking without the aspect of demand. Human traffickers will go on with their usual business of maintaining the syndicate of human trafficking until we arrest the element of demand. The demand side has not been keenly considered in most nations (Wann, 2016) and the focus is heavily centred on fighting the crime through awareness campaigns and law enforcement on the traffickers. By reducing the demand for exploited humans, meant for drug or sexual exploitation, the supply of victims will be limited equivalently. The demand for sexual exploitation of human beings, for sexual gratifications and the consumption of drugs in this illicit industry, is highly connected to pornography, sex tourism and strip clubs. The afore-mentioned are major consumers of the services of victims trafficked for commercial sex. Thus, if there were to be any meaningful fight against human trafficking, the need to focus on the source of the problem inextricably tied to the demand factor, must be addressed.
- Enforcing existing national prohibitions against slavery and human trafficking through increased reliance on transnational investigational work and data collection and sharing.

According to Johnson (2012) when survivors of human trafficking are rescued, the next step should be a referral to aftercare services in a trauma-sensitive way. This encourages all involved in service provision to understand victims "complex trauma symptoms and behaviours; possible outcomes; reasons for silence; as well as their thoughts, beliefs, and feelings". The above author further added that breadths of knowledge and sensitivity are needed in the provision of aftercare services for those exiting a life of victimization. Similarly, Metal (2015) mentioned that follow-up care is needed to help victims on their journey towards recovery and restoration, and the focus of aftercare should aim at providing practical help, as well as hope and healing, to those devastated by traumatic experiences.

As noted in the findings, mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety prevalent in survivors of human trafficking needs to be studied further. Similarly, an urgent effective and appropriate intervention and support system for the mental health of trafficked persons is required (Ottava

et al., 2016). Educating and training health care providers can assist in recognizing the signs and symptoms of the mental health needs of survivors; and how to provide appropriate trauma-informed care for survivor's health. Health care providers will be empowered in this way with the ability to respond to exploited persons who are interested and ready to receive assistance (Konstantopoulos, 2016).

Congruent with the above, studies done by Alpert, Purcell, Konstantopoulos, McGaha, Cafferty and Burke (2013) suggested that "a robust healthcare response requires a healthcare workforce that is aware of the health impact of human trafficking on its victims" (p. 1). Being educated on how to identify and treat affected individuals in a compassionate, culturally informed, and trauma-informed manner is very vital. Additionally, healthcare providers should be trained on how to collaborate efficiently with law enforcement, case management, and advocacy partners. Furthermore, there is a clear need to develop, implement, and evaluate high-quality education and training programs that focus on human trafficking for healthcare providers (Alpert et al., 2013). Also, other scholars specifically suggested that an effective way to combat human trafficking in South Africa is through community policing whereby communities are involved in the fight against human trafficking (Olusola & Bello, 2016). Nonetheless Bello (2016) argued that, for community policing to effectively bear the desired results, there should be a complete review of how community-based counter-trafficking is done. Reason being that this kind of effort may have lost its face value and proved unconvincing, especially in fighting the pernicious menace of human trafficking.

Ultimately, Hodge (2014) stated that social workers need to be trained how to assist victims of human trafficking through creating strategies to facilitate identification of traffickers, facilitate exits from trafficking, and to restore the wellness of trafficked victims.

### 1.35. **Strengths and Limitations of the Study**

This study focused on two objectives, namely: (i) To explore the transitional narratives of survivors of human trafficking from victim to survivor to prosocial change agents, and (ii) To explore how the transition from victims of human trafficking to survivors to prosocial change agents brings about a new sense of identity, and what these individuals are doing as prosocial change agents in South Africa. Previous studies focused simply on the narratives of victims pertaining to their traumatic experiences; and how they were able, through positive introspective and subjective self-examination, to make sense of their situations by converting to prosocial change agents. Nevertheless, the current study specifically focused on victims and

survivors of human trafficking in the context of South Africa. These comprised people who were able to willingly and freely make the transition from victims and survivors to becoming conscious positive agents of change by contributing to the fight against human trafficking.

In this study, the traumatic events of the trafficked victims and survivors produced positive outcomes. These were exemplified in their ability to transit and transform into persons of influence and empathy in understanding the plight of other victims and survivors, including their mental and emotional states. Several studies, including that of Greenberg, Baron-Cohen, Rosenberg, Fonagy & Rentfrow (2018, p. 1), on the “Elevated Empathy in Adults Following Childhood Trauma” corroborated this position.

This study negated the plethora of studies that hitherto focused on the negative outcomes of trauma, noting that current evidence points to the fact that an individual who had experienced some form of misfortune in the past could as well have post-traumatic growth. This includes compassion and prosocial behaviour leading to engagement in humanistic and life-changing activities as the findings of this study indicate.

The current study employed the qualitative research approach which agrees with the theoretical underpinning upon which the study is anchored. That is, the narrative theory of human prosocial behaviour. Therefore, this study is aligned with previous studies, in that, it conducted interviews with persons who went through painful traumatic experiences as trafficked victims for various purposes.

However, such people overcame their situations by identifying with and empathising with persons who might be in the same situation they were in previously. The victim-survivors tell the story of how they transited from being victims to survivors and prosocial agents of change with a humanistic worldview and positive outlook on life generally, and subsequently are helping to fight human trafficking.

Kolind, Søgaaard, Hunt, and Thylstrup (2017) suggest that narratives are not only representations of past experiences but may influence future behaviours and future interpretations of behaviours and events. The above authors add that theory on desistance narratives and new understandings of oneself can achieve transformative power and facilitate change in individuals. This is because narratives are not solely individualistic but instead linked to more general societal or subcultural scripts in which the individual is placed. That is to say,

narrative is the language, symbolism and scripts used to mediate individual experiences; and they are taken from and describe a larger cultural and social context (Sandberg, 2010b, p. 455).

Considering the above, the present study encountered certain limitations. Particularly, the researcher was only able to interview five survivors of human trafficking, and out of this number one was interviewed telephonically instead of face-to-face as the preferred interview method because he travelled out of South Africa at the time of this study. This was not the original plan of the researcher, but the method had to be adapted because the one concerned respondent was out of the country at the time of the field work. Also, the data was carried out in Cape Town only because the researcher could not secure participants in Kwa-Zulu Natal as earlier proposed.

### 1.36. **Suggestions for Future Research**

The few number of participants or rather the small data utilised in relation to the findings that emerged from the study; may not be representative of the general population in South Africa, where the study was conducted. Therefore, there is the need to embark on further research, with the use of elaborate data that would be more representative of the situation of human trafficking and the plight of victims-survivors in the country. Also, a cross-cultural and comparative study should be done to ascertain the global impact of human trafficking in relation to victim-survivor transition to prosocial change agents. A collaborative and interdisciplinary mixed-methods (quantitative-qualitative) study(s) should be done by scholars, to examine the following: the social, economic, political, geographical or environmental, educational, and cultural implications of human trafficking on a country and individual's development.

### 1.37. **Conclusion**

The recommendations based on the findings of this study with respect to gaps and limitations found in current research have been stated above. This is with the hope that future upcoming researchers would engage studies that will further interrogate these gaps and limitations. It is assumed that such future research activities could contribute to combating human trafficking as well as aid the healing of victims and survivors. Through this, academic literature that deals with the topic of human trafficking may be expanded. In this instance, trafficking of persons, both locally and internationally may reduce. In the same vein, more survivors of human trafficking will be empowered to rise up to become prosocial agents of change. Consequently,

such persons will contribute to the fight against human trafficking in South Africa and other nations of the world.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1.1 Gatekeeper's permission



[www.mecahtinternational.org](http://www.mecahtinternational.org) Email: [mecahtfricas@gmail.com](mailto:mecahtfricas@gmail.com) Phone: +27845792280

21/02/2017

School of Applied Human Sciences  
Discipline of Psychology  
University of KwaZulu-Natal  
Pietermaritzburg

Dear Supervisor,

#### Research Assistance

MeCAHT (Media Coalition & Awareness to Halt Trafficking) is an international faith-based, media-driven, coalition working to halt the incidences of human trafficking among vulnerable groups in South Africa and Nigeria.

MeCAHT hereby state her support for Ms. Blessing Anya Hutchinson as she researches the topic: Life and Contributions of survivors of human trafficking in South Africa. MeCAHT will assist in providing Ms. Hutchinson with possible participants. Further, MeCAHT will serve as a gate keeper of participants during the research process, making sure that all participants under MeCAHT are protected, treated fairly and humanly.

We appreciate your interest to work with us and promise to give all the support needed during this data collection meanwhile protecting the interests of all participants through MeCAHT.

Signed:



Anne Abok

Int'l Executive Director

1

## Appendix 1.2 Interview schedule

Phase 1: The warm up.

Introduction to research and opening prompts such as:

- Can you please tell me a bit about yourself, such as what you are doing now, and how you transitioned from the journey of victim to survivor and to prosocial change agent?

Follow up areas of questioning may involve questions around:

- How is your new identity as prosocial agent play a role in MeCAHT?
- Can you share how being prosocial change agent has contributed to the fight against human trafficking in general?

Phase 2: Core discussion (focus on contributions around prevention, assisting other victims, and transition from victim to survivor)

- Please elaborate on the role that you currently playing in (or out of) MeCAHT, specifically in relation to your transitioning from survivor to prosocial change agent in regards human trafficking prevention efforts and activities you are involved in.

Follow up areas of questioning could include:

- What human trafficking prevention activities have you organized?
  - What has the nature of these human trafficking prevention activities been?
- What are your thoughts on the impact of these human trafficking prevention activities?
  - How does your involvement in these human trafficking prevention activities influence how you think/feel about yourself and your own experience of being trafficked?
- Please elaborate on the role that you currently play in (or out of) MeCAHT, specifically in relation to supporting/assisting victims of human trafficking.

Follow up areas of questioning could include:

  - What kind of support do you offer victims of human trafficking?
    - What role do you play in this support?
    - How does this support help/not help victims?
  - What are some of the complications/challenges associated in being a prosocial change agent?

## **Appendix 1.3 Informed consent**

### **Informed Consent for participation in the study**

#### **Who I am and what I'm doing.**

Hello, my name is Blessing Anya Hutchinson, I am a Masters student involved in a study investigating the present life and contributions of survivors of human trafficking in South Africa. This study is designed to help inform researchers identify the contributions of survivors of human trafficking to other survivors. This information will help understand why and how survivors of traumatic experiences (such as being trafficked) use these experiences to help others. In addition, the research may help generate guidelines for helping other survivors overcome their traumatic experiences through serving others. This information can be used to improve research on these issues as well contribute towards designing intervention and prevention programs.

The research will be conducted using one on one interview sessions. This will focus on the contributions of survivors of human trafficking in South Africa.

#### **Invitation to participate and implications of participation**

I invite you to participate in this research study where you and I will openly discuss the topic. I will be asking leading questions pertaining to the topic, but the core focus of the interviews will be determined by you. Please note that you do not need to disclose any personal details or past experiences about being a victim of human trafficking. Although you may choose to discuss the experiences should you wish to, the focus of this research is on your present life experience and the contributions you make to other survivors of human trafficking in South Africa.

Should you decide to participate, you may withdraw participation in the study at any time without any consequence.

Anything you say in the interview discussion will remain confidential, and I will protect your anonymity by using a pseudonym and changing any potentially identifiable personal information upon reporting on the study. You may consent to the interviews being audio recorded, however, it will not be possible to link your responses to your personal identity, as your pseudonym will be used when reporting on the study. Before the commencement of the interview you will be invited to sign a consent form indicating your informed consent to participate.

**How your data will be used.**

If you consent to interview being audio recorded, the audio recording will then be transcribed and analysed. The analysis process will be used to identify and explain the contributions of survivors of human trafficking in South Africa, primarily in the form of a Masters dissertation. The data may also be presented at conferences or be published.

**How you are protected.**

It will not be possible to identify the personal details of any participant so your participation and your responses will be protected and confidential. This will be achieved by allocating each participant with a pseudonym throughout the research process, from the interview to the analysed transcription. The audio recordings will be permanently deleted after transcription. The transcribed documents will be safely secured by my supervisor for 5 years after which it will be destroyed.

In the unlikely event that participation causes you any personal discomfort or distress, you may contact the South African National resource line 0800 222 777 for evaluation and counselling services.

If you have complaints or concerns about the study, you may contact my supervisor Nicholas Munro, ([MunroN@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:MunroN@ukzn.ac.za)) or the Chairperson of the UKZN Social Science research Ethics Committee through the secretary Ms. P. Ximba ([ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)).

**Consent**

Prior to your participation, I ask that you indicate your consent to participate in this research, having read and understood the information sheet, by signing the attached consent form. The signed consent form will be kept separate from the audio recordings and the transcriptions and there will be no way to identify any individual participant with any of the content due to the use of pseudonyms.

**Thank you for your willingness to consider this and for your participation.**

**Researchers and Contact Details for concerns and questions**

Course	Name	Email	Cell:
--------	------	-------	-------

Masters:	Blessing Anya Hutchinson	<a href="mailto:213535839@stu.ukzn.ac.za">213535839@stu.ukzn.ac.za</a> <a href="mailto:bscentworld@gmail.com">bscentworld@gmail.com</a>	074 352 1088
Supervisor	Nicholas Munro	MunroN@ukzn.ac.za	033 260 5371
HSSREC Administrator	Ms. P. Ximba	<a href="mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za">ximbap@ukzn.ac.za</a>	031 280 3587/8350/455 7

### Declaration of Informed Consent

I ..... (Full names of participant) hereby declare that I have read and understood the nature and requirements of the study. I have been given adequate information to make an informed **decision** to consent to participate in the study. **I hereby give my informed consent to participate in this research.**

**Also, I hereby consent / do not (Please circle) consent to have the interview recorded.**

**I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time without consequence, should I so desire.**

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT ..... Date: .....

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT CONSENTING TO AUDIO RECORDING.....

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER..... Date.....

**Please complete this if you wish to be invited to the voluntary feedback session. I do wish to be invited to the voluntary feedback session.**

**I wish to be contacted by:**

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

SMS –Cellphone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 1.4 Information sheet

Information sheet



UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL  
INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

Who I am and what I'm doing.

Hello, my name is Blessing Anya Hutchinson, I am a Masters student involved in a study investigating the present life and contributions of survivors of human trafficking in South Africa. This study is designed to help inform researchers identify the contributions of survivors of human trafficking to other survivors, in an attempt to further use the information gathered to draw a guideline for other survivors who intend to do the same to follow and for use by the South African society and global society at large. This information can be used to improve research on these issues as well contribute towards designing intervention and prevention programs to address them.

The research will be conducted through the use of one on one interview session comprised of individuals from different ethnicities, genders. However, age is restricted to twenty five to fifty five years old only. During the one on one interview, I will facilitate discussion around the contributions of survivors of human trafficking in South Africa.

Invitation to participate and implications of participation

I invite you to participate in this research study where you and I will openly discuss the topic. I will be asking leading questions pertaining to the topic but the core nature of the interview will be you as a participant to produce a discussion around the topic. Please note that I am not requesting that you disclose any personal details or past experiences about being victim of human trafficking, but rather your present life experience and contributions to other survivors of human trafficking in South Africa and your knowledge about the topic.

Should you decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequence.

Anything you say in the interview discussion will remain completely anonymous and confidential. Although the discussion will be audio recorded, it will not be possible to link your responses to your personal identity, as you will be requested not use your real name, but to use a 'fake' name instead. Before the commencement of the interview you will be asked to sign a consent form indicating your informed consent to participate as well as to complete the attached

demographics form which will encompass details such as your age, race, gender and year of study. The focus group discussion should last no more than 45 minutes.

How your data will be used.

During the course of the interview, the entire discussion will be audio recorded. Thereafter, the recordings will be transcribed and analysed. This will be used to identify and analyse the contributions of survivors of human trafficking in South Africa. The data may also be presented at conferences or be published. The data will also be written up as part of my Masters dissertation.

How you are protected.

It will not be possible to identify personal details of any participant so your participation and your responses will be entirely protected and confidential. This will be achieved by allocating each participant with a pseudonym throughout the research process, from the interview to the analysed transcription.

The audio recordings will be permanently deleted after transcription. The transcribed documents will be safely secured by my supervisor for 5 years after which it will be destroyed.

You may withdraw at any time without any consequence.

In the unlikely event that participation causes you any personal discomfort or distress, you may contact the South African National resource line 0800 222 777 for evaluation and counselling services.

If you have complaints or concerns about the study, you may contact Nicholas Munro, ([MunroN@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:MunroN@ukzn.ac.za)) or the Chairperson of the UKZN Social Science research Ethics Committee through the secretary Ms. P. Ximba ([ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)).

Consent

Prior to your participation, I ask that you indicate your consent to participate in this research, having read and understood the information sheet, by signing the attached consent form and by filling in the attached demographics section. The signed consent form will be kept separate from the audio recordings and the transcriptions and there will be no way to identify any individual participant with any of the content due to the use of pseudonyms.

Thank you for your willingness to consider this and for your participation. Researchers and Contact Details for concerns and questions

<b>Course</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Cell:</b>
Masters:	Blessing Anya Hutchinson	<a href="mailto:213535839@stu.ukzn.ac.za">213535839@stu.ukzn.ac.za</a>	074 2521 088
Supervisor	Nicholas Munro	<a href="mailto:bscentworld@gmail.com">bscentworld@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:MunroN@ukzn.ac.za">MunroN@ukzn.ac.za</a>	033 260 5371
HSSREC Administrator	Ms. P. Ximba	<a href="mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za">ximbap@ukzn.ac.za</a>	031 280 3587/83 50/4557

## Appendix 1.5 Ethical clearance



26 June 2018

Ms Blessing A Hutchinson 213535839  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Ms Hutchinson

**Protocol reference number: HSS/0223/018M**

**Project title:** From victim to survivor to prosocial change agent: Exploring the contributions made by survivors of Human trafficking towards fighting against human trafficking.

### Full Approval – Full Committee Reviewed Application

With regards to your response received on 12 June 2018 to our letter of 11 April 2018, the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/pk

cc Supervisor: Dr Nicholas Munro  
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr Maud Mthembu  
cc School Administrator: Ms Priya Konan

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Professor Shenuka Singh (Chair)  
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building  
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4030

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 300/03504007 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 9944 Email: [shsac@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:shsac@ukzn.ac.za) / [svymerr@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:svymerr@ukzn.ac.za) / [mthembu@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mthembu@ukzn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

## Appendix 1.6 Participant referral

**SOUTH AFRICA**  
NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESOURCE LINE

 **0800 222 777**

Date: 29/03/2017

Dear Blessing Anya Hutchinson,

This letter serves as confirmation that you may refer participants in your research to the South African National Human Trafficking Resource Line (NHTRL).

Please note that the NHTRL does not offer counseling services, we would assess the participant's needs and should counseling, psychological and psycho-social therapy be identified as needs, we would refer callers to service providers who offer those services.

The participants can contact us on the NHTRL number, 0800 222 777 which operates 24/7 and a call specialist will then aim to determine their needs in terms of further counselling, psychological and/or psychosocial therapy.

The call specialist will then look at possible referral options to those services and connect the participant with the needed services in their area.

We thank you for contacting us in this regard, we look forward to potentially assisting your participants should the need be there.

Kind regards, Rene Hanekom

Resource Line Manager

South African National Human Trafficking Resource Line

[www.0800222777.org.za](http://www.0800222777.org.za)  
[info@0800222777.org.za](mailto:info@0800222777.org.za)

## Appendix 1.7

### Blessing Hutchinson final dissertation

#### ORIGINALITY REPORT

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STUDENT PAPERS

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