

Trafficking: Invisibilized slavery in Costa Rica. A study of five cases

Human Trafficking: Hidden Slavery in Costa Rica. Five Case Studies

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Summary

Human trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation is a hidden problem in Costa Rica. It is necessary to know this phenomenon, since every day more and more citizens are trapped and subjected to a form of slavery, which denigrates their physical, psychological, social and spiritual integrity. From the experiences lived as a professional in a non-profit organization (NGO) with a program for this population, it became evident the lack of knowledge and excessive prejudices about the victims in society. It explores the fact that information on this phenomenon in Costa Rica is scarce and the psychological approach is even scarcer. The research is based on descriptive qualitative methodology; a phenomenological design is proposed based on the humanistic theory of Transactional Analysis of Berne (1976) to carry out a multiple case study. The sample consisted of a group of five women, who were in the process of restoration in the NGO under the categories of analysis "Trafficking in persons for the purpose of national commercial sexual exploitation" (within Costa Rica), "Assaults" and "Personal development". The results identified subjugations, to which the women in this sample were subjected, before, during and after being trafficked. It also analyzes how the development of the trafficked women in this study was hindered by these assaults and how some managed to achieve personal growth in spite of what happened.

Keywords: Trafficking in persons, domestic commercial sexual exploitation, Transactional Analysis, Costa Rica

Abstract

Human Trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation is a hidden problem in Costa Rica. It becomes necessary to understand this phenomenon as more and more citizens are snared and subjected to a form of slavery, which denigrates their physical, psychological, social and spiritual integrity. From a professional experience in a non-profit organization (NGO) with a program for this population, the author experienced society's excessive ignorance and prejudice towards the victims. This article explores the fact that there is meager information on this phenomenon in Costa Rica and this is even more the case regarding a psychological approach to it. This research has its basis in descriptive qualitative methodology, with a phenomenological design based on Berne's humanistic theory of Transactional Analysis, to conduct a multiple case study. The sample consisted of a group of five women who were in the process of recovery in the NGO, under the analytical categories of "Human Trafficking for national commercial sexual exploitation" (inside Costa Rica), "Subjugation", and "Personal Development". The results identified the subjugations that these women underwent before, during and after being snared by trafficking. The paper analyzes how the personal development of trafficked women in this study is hampered by these subjugations and how some manage to achieve personal growth despite what happened.

Keywords: Human trafficking, national commercial sexual exploitation, Transactional analysis, Costa Rica

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It is surprising how humanity has advanced in aspects such as science and technology, but continues to be stuck for thousands of years in the practice of slavery, because, from ancient times to the present, human trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation continues to be carried out under the slogan of capture, subjugation and exploitation. One of the circumstances that hinder the eradication of this nefarious practice are the clandestine scenarios at national (internal) and international (external) levels in which it is established, because they cause confusion between what is commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking in persons and trafficking in persons for commercial sexual exploitation as such.

Therefore, "trafficking in persons for the purpose of national commercial sexual exploitation" shall be understood as the enslavement of a human being through deception, where, in addition to stealing his/her freedom, he/she is transferred from his/her place of origin to another place within the territory, in our case Costa Rica, to be sold as merchandise for the purpose of performing sex work; be it prostitution, pornography, sex tourism or other forms of commercial sexual exploitation (see Appendix A for comparative tables on differences and similarities).

The International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2006b) estimates that the global economic gains from human trafficking in 2006 were approximately US\$32 million. Of this, the IOM states that more than 85% came from human trafficking for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation, which makes this scourge function as an industry, making it the third most lucrative illegal business worldwide after drug trafficking and arms trafficking.

Human trafficking is a social problem that is on the rise, according to the "Trafficking in Persons Report 2011" of the U.S. Department of State (2011). In 2007 alone, more than 800,000 people were trafficked internationally. This number does not include persons trafficked domestically or nationally.

The IOM report (2006b) concludes that.

In Latin America, transnational criminal organizations and internal networks involved in human trafficking have found an ideal scenario for development, given how little is known about its dynamics. The lack of knowledge not only makes trafficking imperceptible as a problem for citizens, but also makes it invisible at the institutional level, leading to high rates of impunity, since what is not known, is not seen, cannot be prosecuted or punished, because it simply does not exist (p. 2).

It is important to note that in several Latin American countries this issue has been fought for years. Colombia, according to Cardozo Lozano (2010), undertook since 1996 a series of actions to curb and prevent this crime. According to Cuevas Pratelli (2011), Argentina pursued this problem more formally until the 1994 reform, when it incorporated the International Conventions on Humanitarian Law.

In Costa Rica, the "Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime" (United Nations, 2004) was adopted only in 2003 (three years after its opening). With the opening of the Human Trafficking and Smuggling Unit in the Judicial Investigation Agency (OIJ) in September 2011, this phenomenon has been taken more formally to be prosecuted and criminalized. In 2012, according to personnel working in this unit, 32 reports of human trafficking were received. This data reflects that formality at the judicial level is necessary to stop promoting the imperceptibility of criminal networks and ignorance about the issue in the population.

Cuevas Pratelli (2011) states that trafficking constitutes one of the existing practices of gender-based violence and estimates that 90% of the victims are women (girls, adolescents and adults).

Transactional analysis - dramatic triangle

Gender-based violence reinforces the consolidation of the victim's position in people's psyche and by consolidating it in the victims, it becomes difficult for them to see beyond the problem and to think about their personal development, which becomes an impossible dream to realize.

This paper approaches the problem of victims from the perspective of intervention based on transactional analysis (Berne, 1976) and proposes that if there is a process of internal change with support and accompaniment by organizations and competent, sensitive and dedicated professional staff; in our case it is directed to the victims of trafficking so that they can free themselves from the constraints that limit them. Intervention from this model includes outlining life goals and consolidating internal resources that enable them to live an autonomous life in which they can establish healthy and enriching relationships, as proposed by the fundamental principles of transactional analysis. This humanistic model analyzes people from their individual and social side and, by means of it, tries to provide them with psychological tools so that they can grow and develop fully by freeing themselves from ties and argumentative commitments. The present research is fully based on this theory.

Karpman (1968) extended transactional analysis by the model of the dramatic triangle (Victim, Executioner, Savior) which is generally appreciated in all the themes developed here. I broadly describe the definition of "Life Argument" as a subjugation (dominance, submission to obedience), which, according to Berne (1976), is nothing more than the result of beliefs or patterns that fix and self-limit people to achieve personal development. According to the author, these accompany human beings from the moment of their birth and guide them throughout life. In addition, he emphasizes the social interferences that play an essential role as intrusions committed by society and ~~the~~ individuals. The present work also exposes the elements of "Redecision", "Life Goals" to reach the "Personal Development" postulated by transactional analysis. All the postulates taken from this theory are considered the most fundamental for the research.

Karpman (1968) describes that during childhood, people learn roles or positions in different situations and when relating to others. According to Karpman, initially, these positions arise naturally, but after several submissions there is a learning process in which, in similar situations where a position was assumed, it continues to be adopted unconsciously. This reflects the influence that relationships with others have on the decisions adopted by human beings and, in turn, leads to observe the formation of social phenomena such as human trafficking.

Method

The research was carried out through a case study based on a group of five women in the process of restoration of their experiences of human trafficking in a non-profit organization specialized in the subject, with the main objective of finding out what causes human trafficking for internal commercial sexual exploitation to develop in an invisible way in Costa Rica.

The research approach was qualitative. The purpose of the research was to describe how the phenomenon of human trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation (recruitment, transfer, subjugation and exploitation) that emerges domestically is a form of modern and underhanded slavery in Costa Rica, despite having ideologies of freedom. To achieve this, bibliographic information on the subject was compiled. Based on the theoretical contribution of transactional analysis, the phenomenological design was applied, so that the information provided by the participants about their experiences is what is relevant in the construction of the research.

Participants

The five participants were chosen according to criteria designed by the researcher to ensure that data collection was feasible and sufficient to respond to the research problem. The inclusion criteria were the following: (a) belonging to the female gender, (b) having been recruited for domestic trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation (within Costa Rica), (c) being in a process of restoration in the NGO during the months of May to August 2012 and (d) being able to read and write. The exclusion criteria were the following: (a) having been a victim of human trafficking for exclusively international commercial sexual exploitation, (b) present psychiatric disorders duly diagnosed by a professional and (c) current consumption of psychoactive substances.

Categories of analysis

Three categories were analyzed: "Trafficking in persons for the purpose of domestic commercial sexual exploitation", "Abuses" and "Personal development".

Indicators were assigned to the three categories of analysis: the first category "Trafficking in persons for the purpose of domestic commercial sexual exploitation" was assigned the indicators mode of recruitment, exploiters, transfer, forms of exploitation and barriers to escape. To the last category "Personal development" were assigned the indicators redecision, life goals and scope (autonomy, self-awareness, spontaneity and proximity, according to Berne).

Instruments

Data collection was done individually through a structured interview guide and a questionnaire (Appendices B and C) prepared by the researcher to be applied to the five women, who share similar experiences in terms of the assaults suffered. For the case study, the structured interview was used in all categories of analysis, providing information through the words or phrases, gestures and behaviors exhibited by the participants in their narratives. The questionnaire was used only in the second category of analysis, called "Abuses", to extract information relevant to the "Arguments of life" established by the parental figures.

The first category "Trafficking in persons for the purpose of domestic commercial sexual exploitation" was addressed in the guide through questions 10-19, the category "Assaults" through questions 1-29 of the guide and questions 1-11 of the guide.

questionnaire and to the last category "Personal Development" by means of questions 30-47 of the guide.

Data triangulation

When a research process has a qualitative approach it is necessary to take into account that the data collected must be analyzed efficiently, because human beings in their interactions build conceptual resources and meanings of the circumstances experienced, so we proceeded with a triangulation of the data to amalgamate the information collected with the instruments, as experienced by the selected population with the perception of the researcher and the theoretical resources.

To carry out the triangulation of the data, a table was made by categories, where the indicators, instruments (interview and questionnaire), participants' responses and theory were coded. Under each of the categories of analysis, the results were contrasted and analyzed more broadly by converging the information provided by the women.

The names of the participants were kept secret, under a confidentiality contract that they agreed with the researcher, so they are mentioned as Case 1, Case 2, Case 3, Case 4 and Case 5. In addition, as a way to protect the identity of the participants, the treatment of the information is not completely described textually after being codified. Only brief testimonies are given according to the indicators, so some answers about places, events, during and after being trapped in this scourge, cannot be revealed, because they endanger the lives of the participants, family members and people involved in the process of rescuing from human trafficking and of the researcher. Traffickers are extremely dangerous criminals who are also linked to drug trafficking, contract killings and criminal networks, in addition to the fact that some are at large without being punished, either because they escaped, are in judicial proceedings or are still committing crimes in hiding.

Results

The results are broken down according to the following indicators: (a) mode of recruitment, (b) transfer and forms of exploitation, (c) barriers to escape, (d) girls and adolescents in situations of vulnerability to human trafficking (this indicator was not sought, but was important to mention), (e) life arguments, (f) exploiters, (g) judicial system, (h) social interference and (i) personal development (for a summary of results by category and indicators, see Appendix D).

Capture mode

The victims of the social problem of trafficking in persons for the purpose of national commercial sexual exploitation say that most of the way traffickers recruited them was by deceiving them with work: *"I was 13 years old when she told me to go with her, that she had a job for me where I could earn a lot of money"* (Case 4).

"He told me that he had a lot of contacts and that he had a job for me where all I had to do was model in front of a camera in my underwear while having my picture taken... First, he told me that the salary was ¢600,000¹ and, then, from ¢5,000,000 per session..." (Case 1).

"That girl invited me and the black woman to a party at a friends' house in [city x]... They started giving us guaro until we were, even my face hurts... I don't remember much, but while we were in the living room, they started groping us and made me sleep with three or four guys that same night" (Case 2).

"After I separated, I started going often to the bar to have a drink... The owner of the bar hired me to help him serve drinks, but that's where my hell with the Devil began... He sold us, first, to the bar's clients and, later, he went around almost the whole country bitching at us" (Case 3).

"I had a friend who was always well dressed, I was poor, but she was poorer than me, so she always had new things... I asked her how she had all those things and she told me that she worked in a place where they paid very well. I told her that I wanted to work to have the little things she had, so she took me to some drug dealers... I didn't know what they were about, or what kind of people they were... These masters started to prostitute me... They gave me drugs so I could put up with being with the clients..." (Case 5).

The majority of the participants investigated reported that they were trapped by means of work deception, which the International Organization for Migration (2006a) refers to as the poverty that fosters a position of vulnerability that makes them look for jobs, where they are lured by the illusion of salaries that never arrive, because their freedom is stolen.

All of the above is part of the social problems the country faces in terms of poverty, school dropouts, lack of jobs and high crime rates,

¹ Approximately 500 colones (¢) is equivalent to US\$1. The Costa Rican Ministry of Labor establishes for 2012 the minimum wage for a university graduate as ¢562 375.83.

These people, in their ignorance and eagerness to earn money, believe in the promises of criminals who only seek to exploit them in a way they never imagined.

Relocation and forms of operation

Criminals engaged in human trafficking do not always recruit the victim indirectly as stated by the IOM (2006a), on the contrary, sometimes they may be friends, relatives, neighbors or people very close to them who operate alone. Case 1 mentions the following:

"I was living in [city x]... He came to my house to talk to my mom, telling her that we were boyfriend and girlfriend and that we had made the decision to go live together... He took me to live in [city y]... He put a gun to my head, made me desching me to take pictures... Then he raped me... He took video of all that."

The transfer may be a way of operating used by traffickers to distance the victim from support figures. It may also happen that the transfer takes place only to sexually exploit the victim, as Case 2 says: *"Diay, I lived in [city x]... and the girl picked us up to go to the party in [city x]..."*.

According to the experience of the women participating in this study, it could be said that in internal (national) human trafficking, sometimes the affected women are only moved from one canton to another, within the same province, or they are taken to places in different provinces. In addition, the places where these women are most often taken are the provinces of Guanacaste, Puntarenas and Limón, which indicates that the coastal areas of the country are being subjected to this social problem even more than in the Greater Metropolitan Area of Costa Rica.

Regarding travel from one province to another, some participants in the investigation indicated that the criminals, in order to cross some provinces, made them walk through the bush so that they would not be recognized at police posts by security officers because they were wanted for other crimes. They also mentioned that public buses, cars, cabs and private buses were the most common means used to take them to the places where they were sexually exploited.

Although the research participants did not say so, the possibility that they could use fishing boats or launches to transport them by sea should not be excluded.

Some reported that, after some time of being exploited in Costa Rica, they became victims of human trafficking for international commercial sexual exploitation in the country.

where they were made to cross borders illegally with false passports and others through mountainous areas.

The most common types of work they are forced to perform in the places to which they are transferred within the country are prostitution, followed by pornography, sex tourism and public and private shows.

Barriers to escape

Human trafficking is a form of modern slavery. Those who are trafficked share a set of fears and apprehensions founded by their captors that do not allow them to escape, even if they wish to or are presented with an opportunity to do so, because they are self-limiting. Participants expressed this issue over and over again, and the factor they reiterated most often was the fear that traffickers would carry out threats to kill them or harm their family members.

According to Duguay, Doyle and Dominik (2005), these are psychological barriers based on intimidation through beatings, rape, threats and physical punishment that bind or condition them to continue to be subjugated over and over again. The aforementioned is supported by the population that experienced such subjugations:

"When he came to talk to my mother, I could not deny what he said, I was afraid, because I knew that just as he had beaten and raped me, he was capable of many more things" (Case 1).

Another relevant aspect related by the women about their captors is that they addicted them to drugs as a way to keep them and sexually exploit them: *"They forced us to take drugs to keep us until we became addicted..." (Case 4).*

"They gave me so much marijuana and heroin, so that I would get over the bitter pill... That's what we call opening your legs and letting them do whatever they want... I spent my time drugged, so they did with me whatever they wanted" (Case 5).

Similarly, one of the victims investigated confessed to having had the unpleasant experience of seeing other young women who were also being exploited being killed. They indicated that the traffickers killed them because they tried to rebel against the subjugation or because they knew too much about the business they were in and needed to be silenced.

These testimonies are only a small reflection of the fact that going through this scourge is not the same as entering the sex trade by giving consent to it. While it is true that both groups may engage in prostitution, pornography, sex tourism, or public or private shows, the difference lies in the deception and subjugation,

dehumanizing transfer and treatment that the captured women receive. In addition, slavery may begin when the person is used as merchandise, but later it could happen that they are only taken for sexual servitude for one or more subjects.

This is the situation experienced by Case 1 and Case 5, who, although they were caught to enter the sex trade, in the end, their captors forced them to have sex only with them.

Sexual servitude is part of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, but not of commercial trafficking, since in the former, the person must only be at the service of exclusive subjects without being a commercial object, while in human trafficking for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation, profit is made at the expense of the lives of human beings.

Girls and adolescents in vulnerable situations

As recorded by the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2003):

The growing demand for children to be exploited in the sex trade can be attributed, among other reasons, to the growth of the sex industry on a national and international scale. Several studies have shown that employing children is not necessarily cheaper than employing adults. They may be paid less than adults (if they are paid at all), but they also tend to be less productive. The misconception that child labor is cheap persists to a large extent, because it is simply easier to abuse minors than adults: they are less self-confident and less able to assert their rights, and can be made to work longer hours per day with less food, poor accommodation and no benefits. In fact, it is these abuses that allow the employer to keep costs down (p. 27).

In this sense, most of the women in the study were minors when they were recruited. Due to the lack of protection inherent in the weaknesses of the educational system, adolescents who could be in the classrooms of educational centers were subjected to human trafficking and, from an early age, are being subjugated in such a way that their dreams and desires are truncated by criminals.

It is hard to believe that in the educational centers of a nation of peace, as Costa Rica declares itself to be, where slavery was abolished long ago, recruitments for modern slavery are taking place. This referred to Case 2:

"A friend from school invited me and the black girl to a party at the house of some friends of hers... When we arrived at the place, the owner of the house started to offer us guaro until we got drunk and, from there, the only thing I remember is that they grabbed us.

They locked us in a room and that's where the clients arrived, after they paid the owner of the house..."

What these women suffered, while still adolescents, is not only exploitation, but also physical and psychological torture which, according to Castro Cabezas and Chávez Mata (2002), are generators of learned hopelessness that accumulates along with distrust, isolation from the community and family members due to relocations and the denial of being able to make their own decisions. Because of this, it is not uncommon to hear from survivors: *"I felt and thought as if I were on a roller coaster, that thing you say, what time did I get on here, I want to get off, I want to get off..."* (Case 1); *"...I want to die..."* (Case 2); *"...I'm only good for a whore..... This life is worthless"* (Case 3); *"I'm going to die here"* (Case 4); *"I hated myself and even though I knew I was pretty, I tried to hurt myself, I hit my head against the walls, I cut my veins..."* (Case 5).

Life arguments

According to the transactional analysis, these feelings and thoughts narrated by the victims are propitiators of the "adapted girl's" learned "scavenging" to the position of being bad. The "types of scavenging" and "existential positions" are not data that were analyzed in this research, however, the participants let them emerge in their narratives. The subjugations are capable of annihilating aspirations and dreams, because the will to free action is broken over time.

The life stories told by these women seem like fantasy or horror stories in which a series of outrages are repeated over and over again by people close to them in whom they place their trust. In this context, the victimizers are not only the exploiters who subjugate them to sell them as merchandise or the clients who reduce them to the status of sexual objects, but also the judicial system that hinders them from obtaining justice and the society that mercilessly singles them out for the sexual work they perform. Thus, Berne (1974) refers to the following:

The Argument of Life corresponds to the automatic manifestation of behavioral responses and reactions, crystallized since childhood, and which substitutes the need to think about oneself, and to assume the fundamental responsibility that is incumbent upon each person as the architect of his or her own existence or lifestyle (p. 228).

The way in which "life scripts" are established in the minds of individuals is through parental mandates and models that are taught through verbal and nonverbal manifestations. For example, the study population expressed that their parents issued messages such as: *"I wish you didn't exist", "don't express your emotions", "don't think",*

"hurry up and grow up so you can help me", "don't be selfish, think of others", "don't even try, you'll fail" and "stay alone, you'll get hurt".

The parental message "hurry up and grow up, so you can help me" prompted these women to seek jobs to support themselves or help with expenses in their homes, who dropped out of school or settled in an ambulatory state on the streets as minors.

In addition, they all reported that, when they were trafficked, they had suicidal thoughts and actions, which means that their mothers' or fathers' command to "wish you didn't exist", when reinforced again by the traffickers, promoted the loss of the desire to want to live. The messages of not expressing their emotions, not thinking, not acting, not being able to achieve and failing, were learned early on through the expression of their parents and revived during the situation of slavery to which they were subjected by the exploiters.

What is striking is how the command "don't be selfish, think of others" led these women to agree to all physical despotism and even to cover up for their exploiters so that they would not carry out their threats to harm their relatives. This is evidence that, under some circumstances, parental mandates received in childhood can, on the one hand, cause conflicts and, on the other hand, in contrast, help to survive themselves and to guarantee the well-being and life of other people.

In some of the participants of this study, the words received in their childhood: "you won't make it", "don't even try, because you will fail" and "stay alone, they will hurt you", emphasized that they did not intend to have a life project or personal growth, after having suffered human trafficking. While others managed to get rid of this structure and achieved autonomy, became self-aware and managed to have "Spontaneity" and "Proximity", which imply being flexible but not disinterested, natural and free of their conditioning ("Arguments of life" and "Submissions"), but not impulsive; this in order to learn to face and explore new situations that lead to discover and evolve in the ability to establish healthy relationships ("Proximity").

These messages are part of the "Argumentary" structure that these women internalized within themselves from a very early age, to the point that they came to believe them and act in accordance with them. This situation provoked a state of vulnerability that cut short their childhood and adolescence.

According to Cuevas Pratelli (2011), the vulnerability factors of this population are risk conditions that propitiate the process of control, domination and extermination of the personality to facilitate subjugation in the recruitment. The "Argumentary" structure is formed since childhood, according to the goals set by parental figures regarding success, mandates and models, which creates possibilities for the subjects to place themselves in a

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"submissive" situation.

condition of vulnerability. The people selected for the research reported the following about the people who raised them: *"My father was an alcoholic..., that's why my mother separated from him"* (Case 2); *"the model I received from my mother is to be a whore like her"* (Case 3); *"... I left home when I was about twelve, because my tata was a despiche; when he drank, he gave that mae very ugly..., in my house, aggression was the usual"* (Case 4); *"... we suffered domestic violence"* (Case 5).

Exploiters

The worst part of all this is the misfortune of being enslaved in one's own home (country), in the view of one's own people, by one's own brothers (Costa Rican criminals) or strangers (foreign criminals). Regarding the exploiters, Montiel Torres (2007) says that, before starting this type of illegal business, they become desensitized in their handling of the victims until they reach the point where they only see them as merchandise, where the only value they have is what the clients pay them for having sex with them.

Thus, as the captors become desensitized, they also seek to desensitize the victims in order to dominate and sexually exploit them. In order to manage them as they please, as soon as they catch them, they carry out a series of intimidations, of which those who have suffered human trafficking expressed it as follows: *"... he said that I was his, that I belonged to him and therefore he could do whatever he wanted to me..."* (Case 1); *"... better not think, you are only good for a whore..."* (Case 3); *"sometimes, when they saw me playing, they told me that, why was I playing as a pretty girl if I was a little whore"* (Case 4);

"I had never been with a man and to teach me, they made me watch how they had sex with other girls... They never assaulted me, they just gave me all the drugs I wanted and threatened to kill my family and me if I ran away" (Case 5).

The words with which these "Executioners" address the women they capture are psychological aggressions that become the prelude to physical despotism; and although some report that they were not assaulted, because the traffickers did not beat them, nevertheless, the verbal manifestations were a method of psychic coercion that originated the slavery thinking that was consolidated over time, which caused havoc in them even more serious than the physical aggressions.

The participants in this investigation indicated that the physical despotism that these delinquents exercised over them was such that they caused abortions, unwanted pregnancies, the acquisition of sexually transmitted diseases, psychological disorders and neurological damage, and addictions to alcohol and drugs in an attempt to avoid the feelings caused by physical punishment and confinement. In addition, the denial of food, the conditions

The poor sanitary conditions in which they were held also constituted a form of aggression.

The judicial system

Another of the harassment received by the victims, once they escaped or when they were released, were the omissions of the judicial system in terms of penalties.

Unfortunately, the lack of legislation on the subject has not allowed for the correct classification of the crime of trafficking at the domestic level, because it tends to be punished with penalties for crimes such as pimping, among others, without carrying out investigations related to trafficking and forced migration or movements (Chávez Mata and Muñoz Flores, 2009, p. 44).

From the transactional analysis, it is assumed that the judicial system, together with other agencies responsible for safeguarding the rights of victims, have a role as "Saviors". However, their position was sometimes not assumed as such and they became the "Executioners" of the "Victims" by subjugating them with omissions regarding the criminalization of the crime of trafficking in persons for the purpose of national commercial sexual exploitation. In this sense, regarding the role assumed by the "Saviors", Thomas Claudet (1985) points out that, after a certain number of frustrating failures, because the "Victim" continues in that position, the "Savior" becomes jaded and switches to the role of the "Persecutor" with omissions, accusations, insults, belittling or punishments.

The women victims of human trafficking who participated in this research reported the following: *"Yes, I was afraid to denounce, because maybe they would not believe me..."* (Case 4).

"The prosecutor who took my complaint did not even know what the case was about, he took the complaint badly..., the only thing they could accuse him of was mistreatment of the woman..., and he even escaped, because he is running away..." (Case 1).

"They are corrupt, some policemen and politicians would come to the bar to sleep with us, with big gorillas guarding them..., when they took us in raids even the policemen themselves would lend themselves..., when they locked us up, we would roll around with them so that they would release us quickly..." (Case 3).

Only Case 2 indicated that the agencies in charge of justice intervened in a satisfactory manner. She says: *"They treated me well..., I did not file a complaint, the OIJ looked for me..."*.

In addition to the testimonies of the participants, the judicial system violates the human rights of those who are trafficked for the purpose of national commercial sexual exploitation, because it does not typify the crime as such and punishes criminals with ridiculous penalties that do not punish all the atrocious subjugation suffered by this population. Likewise, it is important to highlight that there are people committed to bring justice to the victims who seek to prosecute and make this social problem visible.

Social interference

Society exercises gender-based violence towards those who have experienced human trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation. For this reason, it is not surprising that the most sought after for the sex trade are women, because machismo and the position of power in which men are placed in relation to women in society is one of the causes of this.

In the transactional analysis, the discriminatory and prejudicial assaults constitute a double message sent to the "Victims" and are called "subsequent transactions". In other words, society, in its ignorance of the scourge and the social stigma attached to women who engage in sex work, on the one hand, harasses them with prejudicial messages to stop this lifestyle and, on the other hand, reinforces them to continue working solely and exclusively in sexual activities when they try to better themselves.

Personal development

"Personal development", according to the theory of transactional analysis, implies leaving behind self-limiting subjugations through "Redecision" and the establishment of "Life Objectives" that will lead first to internal and then external change in order to achieve autonomy, self-awareness, "Spontaneity" and "Proximity".

Some of the answers given by these women regarding the "Redecision" to get rid of a lifestyle full of subjugations implanted since childhood were the following: *"I am in a process of change, not because I want to, but to avoid problems with my partner because of my depression"* (Case 1); *"Nothing motivates me to change... it was me who was sent here"* (Case 2); *"Getting pregnant changed my life... I myself, by my own decision and without anyone helping me, stopped consuming the junk I was taking"* (Case 4);

"Even the psychologists had already discharged me from the IAFA, because I would not change my addiction, but God rescued me and gave me the strength to do what was not possible for me - nor for anyone else - but for Him, yes, it was possible..." (Case 5).

Once freed from human trafficking, the victim has the ability to make a new decision, to set "life goals" that will propel her to personal growth. However, there were those who were self-limited and although they were no longer under the oppression of their captors, they continued to be enslaved in their minds, so they hesitated in relation to their destiny. While deciding relates to the power to change some things in one's lifestyle in terms of circumstances and people, there were those who persisted in maintaining their lifestyles in other environments and with different individuals.

Two of the participants (Case 1 and Case 2) referred to being under the decision of a "Victim" position that is conditioned by the outrages suffered. This is not a strange circumstance, because their emotions and their search were in a process of assimilation of their living situation, in which to set "Life Goals" for personal development that would empower them towards the achievement of autonomy, self-awareness, "Spontaneity" and "Proximity", was hindered. However, the possibility that they may become aware of the lifestyle they are leading and decide for personal growth should not be ruled out.

The stories of those who chose not to continue as the object of harassment were a manifestation of commitment, first of all, to themselves and to the people they love (children). They expressed how, through patience and time, they managed to emerge and although what they had lived through was not forgotten, life had to go on. The "life goals" they set for themselves were: *"To leave the street... and stop using alcohol and drugs, stop prostituting myself, heal my heart, graduate from sixth grade, look for an honest job, prepare myself with the courses given by the foundation to give quality of life to my son"* (Case 4); *"To lean on God, seek professional help to get off drugs; psychological help, because I was really messed up, study, raise a family and get a decent and honest job..."* (Case 5).

According to Caso 3, of all the goals she had set for herself, only one had not been achieved, and that was to start her own business, which she had set for next year when she finishes the advanced sewing course. This woman said that, thanks to the "Redecision" she made, *"I am now in charge of my life... I have discovered that all the dreams that my mother cut short, today, I can make them come true... I never get tired of telling my testimony... Now I try to share as much as I can with my children"*.

According to the testimony of Case 3, it can be appreciated as the scope of autonomy, self-awareness, "Spontaneity" and "Proximity", which indicates the humanistic theory of transactional analysis as personal development or growth.

In providing this information, Case 3, Case 4 and Case 5 highlighted how the approach to spirituality had helped them in the "Redecision" transition process. What

mentioned them, according to Thomas Claudet (1985) is considered as the "spiritual revival" that, regardless of age, sex or race, is necessary in people.

These points highlight the importance of spirituality in the process of internal change of those who were trafficked for domestic commercial sexual exploitation.

Discussion

Women trapped in human trafficking for the purpose of national commercial sexual exploitation have experienced a series of subjugations that are invisible to the Costa Rican population because they are unaware of this social problem. However, for the victims, the first shackle that chains and subjugates them is structured by their parental figures and the context in which they spent most of their childhood. The second and cruelest is elaborated by the traffickers, who, in addition to deceiving them, subjugate them through physical despotism and psychological aggression and exploit them in the sex trade. The third is made by the clients with their dehumanizing treatment. Then, fourthly, when they are released, the judicial system joins in the outrages by depriving them of their right to have the criminals who coerced them receive a dignified punishment for it. Finally, when they try to restore their lives, society places the heaviest shackle with its discriminatory acts.

From transactional analysis, parental figures and the context in which they spend most of their childhood, establish the "Arguments of life" that create a psychic structure in which the mandates and models received, guide them to live highly calamitous "Tragic" and "Banal" misfortunes, through which the goals they try to fulfill are followed according to a script that harms them. The above arises as an apprenticeship where a life pattern is determined in which they are subjected to a state of vulnerability, which favors the capture of the victims.

So the traffickers learned to assume this role, after several situations where they were subjected to "Executioners" who subjugated their physical, psychological, social and spiritual state and the "Victims" were conditioned in the same way by the "Persecutors" from a very early age. The difference between these two is due to the psychic structuring they had in the teaching-learning process of these positions.

The ways used by traffickers to recruit victims are proposals in which any person with an "argumentative" structure, as described above, could be trapped. Therefore, modern slavery in Costa Rica does not distinguish race, nationality, creed, social class or age. Although it should be noted that the most

vulnerable to deception are underage women and those who are offered well-paying jobs.

The psychological aggressions experienced over a prolonged period of time facilitate the subjugation of the victims, as they create the slave-like thinking that forces them to position themselves and adapt to the condition of human trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation in the interior of the country. Likewise, the physical despotism with which the traffickers subjugate the victims is done underhandedly until they stop trying to escape or denounce and agree to commercial sexual exploitation. However, the deception, transfer and exploitation is carried out in full view of society, but since society is unaware or thinks that there is no relationship of domination by the exploiters, the problem persists by omitting this situation.

By not punishing traffickers due to the lack of criminalization of human trafficking within the 51,000 km² of Costa Rican territory, the judicial system also subjugates the victims, as it does not fully comply with its role as an entity, stripping them of their rights to justice for what they have suffered and forcing them to live with the uncertainty that, at any moment, these criminals may attempt against them or their loved ones, because some are left free due to omissions of collaborators at the time the complaint is established. Corruption on the part of some public officials means that those who experience this scourge do not even report it, as some are linked to these organized crime networks and, rather, collaborate with them. For this reason, perhaps the exact figures of how many human beings may have been victims of human trafficking for the purpose of national commercial sexual exploitation have not been established.

When victims seek psychological assistance from certain public agencies, they are met with professionals who, instead of providing support, judge them for the sex work they have performed, when in fact they were lured by deception and forced to perform these activities with rape, drugs, beatings, death threats and physical and psychological torture.

The social interference with which women who have experienced modern slavery are referred to are psychological aggressions manifested through subsequent transactions (double discourse), since, on the one hand, they are induced to stop engaging in sex work and, on the other, they are reinforced to continue working as such by labeling them as "whores", "sluts", "women of the easy life". In general terms, it can be said that most of Costa Rican society is unaware of the problem of human trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation, but that does not give them the right to once again subjugate the women who are trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation.

the victims. The fact of not knowing does not give them the power to trample and deny a dignified life to these human beings who seek restoration of their condition.

The subjugation of gender-based violence against women in Costa Rica leads to the invisibility of human trafficking for internal commercial sexual exploitation, which is why this population is seen as a sexual object.

The way in which recruiters usually deceive is with promises of high-paying jobs. This type of deception could be one of the consequences of social problems such as poverty, domestic violence, school dropouts, high crime rates and corruption of public officials.

Setting goals, when the messages and models of the people who are in charge of the upbringing generate these outrages, becomes difficult; however, it is not impossible, because every human being has a potential.

Similarly, it is demonstrated that it is possible to have a personal growth despite all the negative experiences, so most of the protagonists of this research show it. The achievement of this is reflected in the awareness of their own condition where, from this, they take responsibility for their existence by deciding on a process of internal change in which they set and fulfill their "Life Goals".

Spiritual resurgence is indicated as the key to overcome all these assaults and to achieve personal growth. However, those who escaped on their own indicated that this was the moment when they had an approach to the spiritual and, based on this, they saw it as an incentive that motivated them to move forward.

Acknowledgments

To the designer and creator of all that exists, of course, the one and only wise God, who has taught me that life is a continuous learning process.

To the woman who taught me to forge my path and to fight for my dreams, the one who gave me life and taught me to live it.

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Received August 02, 2013

Revision received November 19, 2013

Accepted December 11, 2013

Author's review

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Available online: December 25, 2013

Appendix A

Similarities and differences between trafficking, sexual exploitation and smuggling

Similarities between trafficking, human smuggling and commercial sexual exploitation

Similarities	
Trafficking and	humansmuggling
are illegal businesses with high objects	Traffickingand commercial sexual exploitation economicprofits. Human beings are used as
They constitute crimes under Costa Rican law.	These are commercial activities.
Usually, those involved in the execution of the crime are linked to criminal networks.	People suffer physical, psychological, social and spiritual damage. The fundamental rights of individuals are violated. Forms of abuse are given to ensure the pleasure of another.

Source: Rahab Foundation/IOM (n.d.).

Differences between human trafficking and human smuggling

Differences		
	Trafficking in	personsTrafficking
Relationship with and the	victimIt endswhen the borders are crossed The dealer receives the money agreed upon. PurposeObtainprofit from irregularborder crossings DisplacementAlwaysoccurs	Continues upon arrival at the destination. Exploitation. irregularlySometimes, it only occurs within a country. or crossing international borders may be regular.
Border crossing consent.	TradeIrregularborder crossing service is traded It is always given	The person is traded. voluntarily. can begiven involuntarily.

Source: Rahab Foundation/IOM (n.d.).

Differences between commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking

Differences		
	Commercialsexual	exploitationTrafficking
take place	IntermediaryMaythe mercantile exchange	

Source: Rahab Foundation/IOM (n.d.).

directly between client and victim.

PurposesProstitution,pornography, sex tourism, child sex work.

There is an intermediary (between client-victim) who would be the trafficker in charge of the commercial exchange.

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It has several purposes, which may include labor, false adoptions, servitude, military, organ, drug and arms trafficking and slavery-like practices.

Appendix B

Case Study Guide

Name: _____ Age: _____ Nationality: _____
 Marital status: Number of Academic level: Occupation: _____
 children: _____ Address: _____

1. What do you know about your parents' expectations before you were born?
2. What do you know about the conditions of your birth?
3. Who raised her? What was that upbringing like?
4. What was he like as a child?
5. What was the family environment like in your childhood?
6. When you were a child, what did your relatives say about you?
7. What messages do you think they were giving you with this?
8. What feelings and thoughts did this generate for them?
9. What kind of role model were your parental figures?
10. What was your adolescence like?
11. When you were a teenager, what did your relatives say about you?
12. How is your relationship with your mother?
13. How is your relationship with your father?
14. How many siblings do you have? What number do you occupy among them?
15. Do you have a partner? How have your relationships been?
16. What was her life like before she was captured for treatment?
17. What types of deception did the traffickers use to capture her?
18. To which parts of the country was she transferred to perform sex work?
19. What kind of sex work was she forced to perform?
20. What were the ways the traffickers used to force her to obey?
21. What kept her from escaping trafficking?
22. How long was it captured for?
23. What was going through your mind at the time of executing sex work?
24. What does your family say about your trafficking experience?
25. After being freed from trafficking, what did you do?
26. How were you treated by customers?
27. What type of physical harm did you suffer during the trafficking?
28. Did you contract any sexually transmitted disease? Which one?
29. Were you ever forced by traffickers to use any type of drug? Which one?
30. What does society say about people who are trafficked for domestic ESC purposes?
31. What are the prejudices that Costa Rican society has about victims of trafficking?
32. What obstacles do you think Costa Rican society imposes on trafficked women to achieve personal development?
33. When you filed the complaint, how was it handled?
34. How did the Costa Rican judicial system intervene?
35. What are the failures of the judicial system?
36. In what ways do you consider that being trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation impacted your life?
37. What drives or motivates you to seek recovery from the aftermath of human trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation?
38. How long have you been in this organization's restoration program?
39. To learn other trades, what courses are you taking?
40. What type of employment do you currently work in? How long have you been working there?
41. What is your opinion about spiritual groups? Do you attend any?
42. How has the approach to the spiritual dimension benefited you?
43. What lifestyle changes did you make to support the rededication you made?
44. What are your thoughts and feelings about the changes made to your lifestyle?
45. Who determines the direction of your life today?
46. What are your current life goals?
47. What have you discovered with this new lifestyle?

Appendix C

Questionnaire

Name: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

General Instructions: The following is a series of questions. There are no right or wrong answers, so feel free to answer according to your life experience. At the end of the questionnaire, make sure you have not left any questions unanswered.

1. Which of your family members do you think you most resemble? Why?
2. Which of your family members do your relatives say you most resemble? Why?
3. What life story or characteristic does your family share with you?
4. According to the following expressions, which one(s) did your family say to you when you were a child and describe, according to your recollection, what they said it for?
 - I wish you didn't exist, you'd better not have been born, fuck you.
 - Don't express your emotions, don't cry, don't laugh.
 - Don't think, how can you think such stupidity, what you think, you have no brain.
 - Don't grow up, you will always be a child or hurry up and grow up to help me, behave like an adult.
 - Don't outdo me, you're going to be worse than me, if I didn't do it you won't either.
 - Be like so-and-so, don't be selfish you have to think of others, don't be yourself.
 - Don't do it, because you can't, what you think and say you will never carry out, those are just inventions, you can't make it come true.
 - You won't make it, you're going to fail, don't even try because that could be for anyone but you.
 - Don't enjoy it because it will soon be over, why be happy about it if it doesn't do much good, don't be so happy because it's not important.
 - Be wary of everyone and don't go near them, they will hurt you, stay alone.
5. Which of these options does your life story resemble? Explain why?
 - A fairy tale
 - The struggle for survival
 - A melodrama
 - A tragedy
 - A repetitive pattern of life
 - Others
6. What happens when you decide something? Why?
 - In time he renounces it.
 - He stands by his decision to the last consequences.
 - He gives up because he thinks he is not going to make it.
7. Do you find it difficult to defend your rights? Why?
8. How do you feel about standing up for your rights?
9. How do you behave when confronting others about something inappropriate?
10. What do you think and feel when you achieve something in your life?
11. When you help others, are you able to give up your desires? Why?

Appendix D

Summary of responses to the category of analysis "Trafficking in persons for domestic commercial sexual exploitation".

Category: Trafficking in persons for the purpose of domestic commercial sexual exploitation					
Indicator	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5
Mode of capture	Cheating with work as underwear model by photographs. Profits pledged: ₡600,000-5,000,000.	Invited by in classes (school) by a "friend" to a party in a house of room.	I work in a bar.	Work deception: Recruited at age 13 from age.	Captured at age 10 by a playmate.
Dealers	A single foreign dealer, who engages in hired assassinations and drug trafficking, carries out the capture, transfer, submission and exploitation.	A teenage recruit and moves. The owner of the house subjugates and exploits them.	Owner of the bar was is in charge of catchment, transfer and operation. Submission is employees of the captor.	Adolescent recruits and moves. Several drug traffickers foreigners and nationals are and the other two were in charge of subduing and exploit it.	Crime network dedicated to the drug trafficking and smuggling people inside and outside the country. Adolescent girls captured are used for recruit.
Transfer	From San Jose to Guanacaste. Then all over Centro-America.	From one canton to another in the Province of San José.	San José, Guanacaste, Limón and Puntarenas.	San José to Limón.	San José, Alajuela, Guanacaste, Limón and Puntarenas. And at the international level.
Forms of exploitation	Pornography. Sexual servitude (constituted as trafficking in persons for the purposes of sexual exploitation only).	Prostitution.	Prostitution. Pornography. Public and private shows. Sex tourism.	Prostitution.	Prostitution. Pornography. Public and private shows. Sexual tourism. Sexual servitude.

Summary of responses to the analysis category "Encroachments".

Category: Encroachments								
			Indicators	Case1	Case2	Case3	Case4	Case5
Life Arguments	Tragic and Banal	Tragic	Tragic and Banal	Tragic and Banal	Tragic and Banal	Tragic and Banal	Tragic and Banal	Tragic and Banal
Mandates	Die, don't feel, don't think, don't grow, don't surpass me, fail, don't enjoy it.	Don't grow up, don't be selfish.	Die, don't feel, don't feel, don't think, hurry to grow, don't surpass me, don't be selfish, don't do, fail, don't enjoy.	Die, don't feel, don't think, hurry to grow, don't surpass me, don't be selfish, fail,	Die, don't feel, don't think, hurry to grow, don't surpass me, don't be selfish, fail,	Die, don't feel, don't think, hurry to grow, don't surpass me, don't be selfish, fail,	Don't feel, don't grow, don't surpass me, be like so-and-so, don't be selfish, fail.	Don't feel, don't grow, don't surpass me, be like so-and-so, don't be selfish, fail.
Models	"Of starting something and not finishing things."	Alcoholism	Alcoholism Prostitution Detachment from children	Alcoholism Aggression Domestic Violence	Alcoholism Aggression Domestic Violence	Alcoholism Aggression Domestic Violence	Domestic violence	Domestic violence
Physical despotism	Threats to kill her and her family. Rape. Forced to consume alcohol. Forced pregnancy.	Threats to kill family members. Rape. Forced to consume alcohol. Strokes. Insomnia.	Threats to kill children. Rape. Forced to consume alcohol. Blows. Contagion of sexual diseases. Food deprivation. Induced abortion.	Threats to kill children. Rape. Forced to consume alcohol. Blows. Contagion of sexual diseases. Food deprivation. Induced abortion.	Threats to kill children. Rape. Forced to consume alcohol. Blows. Contagion of sexual diseases. Food deprivation. Induced abortion.	Threats to kill children. Rape. Forced to consume alcohol. Blows. Contagion of sexual diseases. Food deprivation. Induced abortion.	Death threats. Sexual assault. Forced to take drugs until she became addicted. Blows. Contagion of sexual diseases.	Threats to kill her and family members. Sexual assault. Drug addiction.
Judicial system	Prosecutor provides deficient attention and is unaware of the crime. Failures in trafficker capture and penalization.	Failures in criminalization of crime.	He never filed a complaint, but he believes that: "the police, politicians, all these people lend themselves to this... I say this because some of them were my clients".	He never filed a complaint, but he believes that: "the police, politicians, all these people lend themselves to this... I say this because some of them were my clients".	He never filed a complaint, but he believes that: "the police, politicians, all these people lend themselves to this... I say this because some of them were my clients".	He never filed a complaint, but he believes that: "the police, politicians, all these people lend themselves to this... I say this because some of them were my clients".	He never filed a complaint and indicates that: "I was afraid to report it, because maybe they wouldn't believe me...".	"Lawyers, judges, deputies, policemen and even the OIJ are macho men who believe that you were there because you wanted to be, but the reality is different".
Social interference		Indifference Expressions of pity and contempt. Prejudice: "They asked for it, they are stupid".	Contempt. Discrimination in health centers and when seeking employment. "The whore, the slut, the filthy, the filthy, the bitch."	Contempt. Discrimination in health centers and when seeking employment. "The whore, the slut, the filthy, the filthy, the bitch."	Contempt. Discrimination in health centers and when seeking employment. "The whore, the slut, the filthy, the filthy, the bitch."	Contempt. Discrimination in health centers and when seeking employment. "The whore, the slut, the filthy, the filthy, the bitch."	Contempt. Criticism. "Look there goes the whore."	"They see us as the dregs of society... People think a drug addict or an alcoholic can change, but a prostitute can never change."

Summary of responses to the analysis category "Personal development".

Category: Personal development					
Indicators	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3	Case 4	Case 5
Redecision	"I am in a process of change, not because I want to, but to avoid problems with my partner because of my depression."	"Nothing motivates me to change... Me, it was that I was sent here."	"Hitting rock bottom made me change."	"Getting pregnant changed my life... I myself, by my own decision, and without anyone's help, stopped taking the junk I was taking."	"Imagine getting tired of that life; being grabbed like a rubber doll and used as an object."
Objectives of life	"Get everything off my back this I feel". Study. Job search.	Emotional. To take a beauty course. "Set a good example for my sisters."	Spiritual. Emotional. Study. Work. Stop consuming alcohol. Be a better mother. Setting up your own company.	Emotional. Work. Graduating from sixth grade.	Seek psychological help. Study. Lean on God. Starting a family. Work.
Scopes	Self-awareness. Proximity.	Self-awareness.	Autonomy. Self-awareness. Spontaneity.	Autonomy. Self-awareness. Spontaneity. Proximity.	Autonomy. Self-awareness. Spontaneity. Proximity.

