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# Grooming Traffickers: Investigating the Techniques and Mechanisms for Seducing and Coercing New Traffickers

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# Executive Summary

## Purpose and Goals of This Study

In 2019, the National Institute of Justice funded the University of Massachusetts Lowell and Loyola University Chicago to understand how sex traffickers learn how to facilitate sex work. This study sought to address Priority Area 3 of the NIJ solicitation: Building Knowledge of the "Grooming" Process of Traffickers (i.e., how does one become a sex or labor trafficker?). Previous studies funded by NIJ examined "traffickers' decision-making and organizational processes"; however, much of how one becomes a sex trafficker and its processes remain unexplored. This study provides empirical data to address this critical gap in the knowledge.

We use the broader term of sex market facilitator (SMF) rather than sex trafficker as persons involved in facilitation change roles and jobs. Because of their varying roles and tasks, legally qualifying as a sex trafficker can change by day, week, month, or year and often change across the life course. Typically, individuals are involved in multiple roles in the sex trade; these roles can include sex work, recruitment, assisting sex workers or facilitators, and primary facilitation. Sex market facilitation can involve recruiting and scheduling clients for sex workers, protecting workers during interactions with clients, managing operations, and profiting from the sex workers' earnings. In this study, we use the broader term SMF because it includes those who legally qualify for pandering or sex trafficking. As previously mentioned, their legal designation can change quickly or over time. We use the term sex worker as a neutral and inclusive term and are not implying the voluntary or involuntary nature of selling sex. Individuals who sell sex can drift between voluntarily selling sex and being coercive or physically forced to sell sex.

The goals of this study were to 1) provide an understanding of the social learning process involved in sex market facilitation, such as who passed down those skills, what is passed down, and how this impacts their recruitment and management strategies 2) evaluate how these social

learning processes vary based on participants' prior traumatic experiences and master status designations.[1] and 3) establish how participants are socially and criminally networked and how this impacts facilitation. There have been many studies about how sex traffickers recruit sex workers. However, very few studies evaluated how sex traffickers are recruited and learn to recruit sex workers or sex trafficking victims or facilitate sex work, along with facilitation strategies, including interpersonal and economic coercion. This study aimed to close the gap in the literature by investigating the etiology of becoming a sex trafficker or a sex market facilitator and how this knowledge is transmitted across the generations.

## Research Questions

This study aimed to answer three research questions.

1) Are there patterned processes or mechanisms from which older/experienced traffickers teach or model these skills to the pimps[2], main sex workers[3], sex workers, or sex trafficking victims who, over time, recruit other trafficking victims?
    a) How do the early experiences of SMFs, particularly trauma, contribute to their social learning and recruitment into facilitation?
    b) Using an intersectional[4] lens, how does social learning explain the social processes of sex market facilitation, passing those skills to family,

[1] 'Master status designations' are demographic factors, such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, or other social structural positions that impact one's social interactions (see Messerschmidt, 1994, 2010) and social identity.

[2] A 'pimp' is someone who procured, facilitated, managed, or contributed to commercial sex transactions. We acknowledge that pimp is a contested, racialized term. However, it is the most recognizable term and used by many sex market facilitators in this sample, so we include this in the report but recognize and are sensitive to the ways that it is controversial.

[3] The 'main sex worker' or 'bottom' co-runs SMF operations by overseeing day-to-day operations and other sex workers (Dank et al., 2014; Horning & Sriken, 2017). 'Bottom' is a slang term used by lower socioeconomic status SMFs in the US to discuss their main sex worker. After this, we use the term main sex worker to avoid perpetuating a term that may be offensive or hurtful to sex worker populations.

[4] 'Intersectionality' is one's compilation of master status designations or demographic factors, such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, or other social structural positions that impact one's social interactions (see Messerschmidt, 1994, 2010) and social identity.

boyfriends/girlfriends, friends, sex workers, sex trafficking victims, or even other SMFs?

2) How do traffickers detect potential recruits' vulnerabilities, and what are the key individual and structural vulnerabilities they target? How is grooming similar and different in New York City and Chicago?
3) How are traffickers socially networked to other traffickers, pimps, and main sex workers, and how is grooming similar and different across social networks in New York City and Chicago?

## Methodology

This mixed methods study used qualitative and quantitative data collected from two urban areas, New York City and Chicago. Both cities have a long history of pimp culture, active sex work strolls, and the existence of many types of sex market facilitation, ranging from ancillary roles in sex market facilitation to sex trafficking. Qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviews with 183 sex market facilitators (New York City (n=84) and Chicago (n=99)). We collected quantifiable data about SMFs' social learning processes and social and criminal networks. Additionally, we collected rich qualitative narratives, revealing how they perceived themselves and their roles as mentors.

## Main Findings

We highlight main findings that are divided into four groups: 1) how trauma informs this social learning process, 2) how sex market facilitation is learned, 3) what management strategies, including recruitment, were learned, and 4) how social and criminal networks vary. These findings are analyzed based on participants' location and master status designations. These findings are based on our sample, which might not be generalizable; however, we have a robust sample from two urban areas, New York City and Chicago, known for sex market facilitation.

## How Trauma Informs this Social Learning Process. *Highlights from Chapter 3. Learning from Trauma and Narrating Self-Stories*

1. **In this sample of sex market facilitators, the majority experienced at least one traumatic event, such as sexual abuse or witnessing violence.** Most respondents (82.5%) mentioned at least one trauma in their self-narrative, the stories they shared about how they viewed themselves, and of these, 24.6% mentioned two types of traumas, and 13.7% mentioned three to six different types of traumas.
2. **Sex market facilitators recalled a range of adverse childhood events (ACEs) before entry and recalled traumatic events during involvement in the illicit sex trade and after exiting the trade.**
    a. **The most common type of participant trauma was witnessing the death of a loved one.** Death of a loved one was the most frequent, and of those mentioning death, 40% (n=30) mentioned it occurred before the entry into the sex trade, into the sex trade with ten persons making explicit links to their entry into the sex trade.
    b. **Abandonment or separation with significant other.** About 10% mentioned the trauma from losing a romantic partner or a child, and a little over half believed that the events contributed to their involvement in the illicit sex trade. These traumatic events involved primarily children being separated from or abandoned by their parents.
    c. **Non-sexual violent traumas.** While 20.8% mentioned non-sexual violent victimization, about two-thirds of these events occurred during involvement in the illicit sex trade and one-third before entry. Moreover, only 18.4% of those who described a non-sexual violent traumatic event connected it to their entry into the illicit sex trade.

d. **Sexual violence.** A little over one-fifth of the sample (N=39) mentioned sexual abuse, with most respondents (87.2%) who mentioned sexual abuse or assault describing an event that occurred in their childhood before they entered the illicit sex trade, and two-thirds explicitly linked their sexual violence trauma to entry.

e. **Witnessing violence.** Participants (11.5%) mentioned witnessing violence between parents or witnessing violence in the community. One participant witnessed sexual violence. Stories about domestic violence (n=14) were all before entry, primarily about their earliest important memory (n=13) or a defining moment (n=1), and 57.1% (n=9) were identified as a reason for entry into the sex trade.

f. **Trauma from neglect and basic needs insecurity.** Additionally, 14.2% mentioned the lack of shelter, food, or money for basic needs, which we called insecurity of necessities. Respondents often experienced other types of traumas, such as sexual abuse or non-violent victimization and the death of a loved one in addition to this trauma.

3. **The type of community impacts participants' trauma outside and inside of the commercial sex market.** The Chicago sample had a higher mean number of different types of traumas (M = 1.68) than the New York City (NYC) sample (M = 1.13), and 91.9% of the Chicago sample recalled at least one trauma compared to 71.2% of the NYC sample. The difference between sites is due to recollections about traumas that occurred during their involvement in the illicit sex trade, with 57.6% of the Chicago sample compared to 16.0% of the NYC sample recalling a traumatic experience that occurred only during their involvement in the sex trade. The Garfield Park area of Chicago is one of the highest gun violence areas in the city. One of the field sites in New York City, East Harlem, contained high violent crimes; however, NYC had multiple field sites and a more diverse sample.

4. **Heterosexual, cisgender women and LGBTQ+ participants were more likely to share traumatic experiences than were heterosexual, cisgender men**. Almost two-thirds of heterosexual, cisgender women and LGBTQ+ members recalled at least one trauma that occurred before entry, compared to 43.0% of heterosexual, cisgender men.
5. **Heterosexual, cisgender women and LGBTQ+ participants more often linked their early trauma as a reason they became involved in the illicit sex trade.** Over 40% of heterosexual, cisgender women and LGBTQ+ persons, compared to almost 20% of heterosexual, cisgender men, linked traumatic experiences, and they were more likely to connect sexual violence victimizations as a motivating factor for beginning their involvement in the illicit sex trade. Masculinity ideologies contribute to heterosexual men's reluctance to attribute traumatic events as a justification for becoming a sex market facilitator, whereas cultural stories of human trafficking support girls' vulnerability and potential to be seduced or forced into the illicit sex trade, including serving as a recruiter.
6. **Heterosexual, cisgender women and LGBTQ+ participants more often reported sexual abuse or sexual assault experiences as a reason for entering the illicit sex trade.** Heterosexual, cisgender women (39.6%) and LGBTQ+ members (29.5%), compared to only 5.8% of heterosexual, cisgender men. Masculinity ideologies contribute to heterosexual, cisgender men's reluctance to share childhood sexual victimization as it violates ideas of control and toughness.
7. **For some participants, these traumatic events were connected to lessons learned, such as learning to keep their trauma a secret, distrusting others, or hating men or women.** Some SMFs saw their coercive actions as justified due to prior victimization. Other SMFs created a narrative centered around their lack of agency and control in their lives and saw themselves primarily as victims. Others who recalled

traumatic experiences focused on their strength and surviving the trauma and emphasized their view of self as a caregiver for others who were in vulnerable positions.

8. **The findings show that the victim-offender line is blurred, with a substantial percentage of SMFs experiencing early traumatic events. Traumatic events can shape life trajectories and make individuals susceptible to repeat victimization and offending behavior. Individuals draw critical lessons about distrusting others and having feelings of disgust, anger, and hate.**

## How Sex Market Facilitation is Learned: A Comparison of New York City and Chicago. *Highlights from Chapter 4. Learning to Facilitate or Traffick Sex Workers: Comparisons Across Location*

1. **Most sex market facilitators learn by observing or being taught by another person.** Most SMFs learned how to facilitate through direct learning or observation from different people in their lives, with only 20.6% being self-taught. About one-fifth of SMFs learned how to facilitate from multiple sources (two or three), indicating that most SMFs learned from one source.
2. **The most common way sex market facilitation is learned is through modeling the behavior of a pimp.** The most common source of learning was through pimps (35%; n=64). Participants' learning from pimps occurred in multiple ways, including observation in the neighborhood, a close relationship with a pimp, or being a sex worker with a pimp. In scenarios where participants learned from a pimp, almost half of these occurred by watching pimps in the neighborhood (17.2%; n=31), demonstrating the power of passive, observational learning in communities.
3. **The second most common route to learning sex market facilitation was through family, particularly from the extended family network.** The most

common family mentors were extended, such as uncles, aunts, or cousins (26.9%; n=49), with only 5.6% learning from parents. Most of the mentoring took place in the extended family network.

The ecological sites, that is, different cities, such as Chicago and New York City, where participants were interviewed mattered in terms of how they tended to interact with sex workers and whom they learned how to facilitate. It is key to note that the differences may be due to the interview location sites rather than trends in these cities, as the samples were not representative. In either scenario, subcultural differences were shown based on the location sites of the interviews.

Social learning theory assumes that the learning process is similar across geographical locations (Aker, 2017; Skinner, 1988), but groups with different values, such as supporting or not supporting criminal activity, may acquire different knowledge and interpret messages differently (Aker, 2017; Giordano, 2020). The primary differences are listed below.

1. **SMFs in Chicago, as compared to NYC, admitted more behaviors typical of sex traffickers.** Over 69% of the Chicago sample used either physical violence tactics or economic coercion of taking at least 85% of sex workers' earnings, with over half reporting using the threat of violence or hitting their workers to obtain compliance. By contrast, only one-third of the NYC sample used either physically violent tactics or this degree of economic coercion.
2. **SMFs in Chicago, as compared to NYC, were more likely to learn facilitation from a pimp.** The presence of multiple gangs, drug trafficking, and violence in the primarily ecological site of Chicago provided more opportunities for facilitators to learn from other pimps. Almost half (45%) learned from pimps in Chicago compared to 25% in the NYC sample.
3. **It may be that learning directly from pimps produces more behaviors typical of sex traffickers, such as physical violence and economic coercion. The**

**Chicago Sample was more likely to mention learning a coercive strategy and how to evade arrest or detection of police officers whereas the NYC sample was more likely to mention how to sell sexual services or facilitate workers such as finding clients. As the sub-sample in Chicago was more likely to learn from pimps, this may have increased the proportion of sex traffickers in this sub-sample.**

4. **Across both locations, around over half used words to describe targeting individuals who were vulnerable due to their family or current environment or due to their traits such as naïve, low self-esteem, or fear.**
5. **There also were differences in the NYC and Chicago samples in the characteristics of potential recruits that they sought. The Chicago sample compared to the NYC sample were twice as likely to deflect responsibility of recruiting and claim to seek sex workers who approached them or were willing to sell sex and were more likely to seek sex workers who were loyal and willing to listen. The NYC sample compared to the Chicago sample were twice as likely to seek recruits who were using hard illicit drugs or using only alcohol and marijuana.**

## How Sex Market Facilitation is Learned: Using an Intersectional Lens. *Highlights from Chapter 5. Learning to be Sex Market Facilitators: Sources, Knowledge, and Organization through an Intersectional Lens*

1. **Master status designations mattered regarding what was learned and replicated. Heterosexual, cisgender men and women, as compared to the LGBTQ+ participants, statistically significantly differed in many of these learned recruitment and management behaviors.**

a. **Heterosexual, cisgender men and women, as compared to LGBTQ+ participants, were more likely to learn recruitment and coercive strategies.** In terms of master status designations, 22 (26.2%) heterosexual, cisgender men and 13 (26.5%) heterosexual, cisgender women learned how to recruit workers as compared to three (7.3%) LGBTQ+ participants. Twenty-four (27.9%) heterosexual, cisgender men and 23 (23.6%) heterosexual, cisgender women mentioned learning a coercive strategy as compared to two (4.4%) LGBTQ+ SMFs. The differences in learning coercive strategies are probably explained based on who they learned from and how the co-offending groups tended to form. Narratives showed that heterosexual, cisgender men and women often learned facilitation from heterosexual, cisgender men, mimicking this more dehumanizing style of facilitation.

b. **Heterosexual, cisgender men, as compared to heterosexual, cis-women, and LGBTQ+ participants, learned street safety and how to talk.** Fifteen (17.6%) heterosexual, cisgender men learned how to avoid street violence as compared to one (2.0%) heterosexual, cisgender woman and three (7.3%) LGBTQ+ participants. Also, eight (9.3%) heterosexual, cisgender men learned when and how to talk as compared to one (2.0%) heterosexual, cisgender women, and no (0.0%) LGBTQ+ SMFs. These differences may be due to heterosexual, cisgender men requiring or desiring masculine performativity.

c. **LGBTQ+ participants, as compared to heterosexual, cisgender men and women, learned how to do sex work and how to get the money.** Twelve (29.3%) LGBTQ+ participants were taught to "get the money" as compared to 11 (13.1%) heterosexual, cisgender men and three (6.0%) heterosexual, cisgender women. Thirty-two (16.9%) LGBTQ+ participants, as compared to eight (9.3%) heterosexual, cisgender men and seven (14.0%) heterosexual, cisgender

women, learned how to do the sex work part. The differences may be because LGBTQ+ participants often begin as sex workers who face a higher level of danger. LGBTQ+ participants as sexual minorities must learn the safety around money and doing sex work, especially in navigating safety practices around sexual encounters with clients, particularly for transgender women, and often, they teach other transgender women how to protect themselves from clients and other people on the streets.

2. **For some participants, facilitation was attached to their gender project, particularly for heterosexual, cisgender men and transgender women.**
    - **a.** Heterosexual, cisgender men, especially those with male mentors, often engaged in coming of age, masculinity tests, or strengthening street credibility through sex market facilitation. These were also survival strategies: learning to provide and make money as a man from male mentors.
    - **b.** Heterosexual, cisgender women sought to break the glass ceiling and move from sex work to facilitation. Some participants changed and developed more cooperative styles, while others mimicked the more coercive and dehumanizing style.
    - **c.** Alternatively, LGBTQ+ participants banded together and worked collectively to survive harassment and violence, especially those who were transgender women. Often, LGBTQ+ participants were expelled by their biological families, forming solvent pseudo-families and learning from one another. It could be argued that this rite of passage into the sex trade was part of 'doing queerness'[5] or 'doing transness.'[6] Their collective survival strategies allowed them to operate outside the

[5] 'Doing queerness' is similar to the concept of 'doing masculinity' in that one performs activities to accomplish a social identity, and in this case, that identity is 'queerness' or being LGBTQ+.

[6] 'Doing transness' is similar to the concept of 'doing masculinity' in that one performs activities to accomplish a social identity. In this case, that identity is 'transness' or being transgender.

mainstream and be protected from it. Also, LGBTQ+ participants often defended and supported one another within the commercial sex market.

3. **Heterosexual, cisgender men and women were more likely to describe those whom they recruited as vulnerable.** In terms of master status designations, 43 (59.7%) heterosexual, cisgender men and 24 (51.1%) heterosexual, cisgender women targeted a vulnerable recruit as compared to nine (37.5%) LGBTQ+ SMFs. Generally, heterosexual, cisgender men and women were more often taught to recruit, with many of these teachings likely centered around focusing on the vulnerable.
4. **Overall, these findings show that social learning is key to gaining knowledge about sex market facilitation and that gender and sexual orientation matter in terms of what is learned about sex market facilitation and how it is done.**

## How Sex Market Facilitators' Social and Criminal Networks Vary. *Highlights from Chapter 6. Social Support Networks: Variation in Attachment to Prosocial and Deviant Cultures*

1. **The mean density for the total sample of support networks was .41, suggesting that a little more than half of the persons in a social network did not socialize and were not emotionally close.**
2. **There was wide variation in density, gender identity, and sexual orientation; prior sex work or active or inactive involvement in the sex trade did not explain the variation.** About one-fifth had support networks where none of their support persons socialized or were close to each other, and one-fifth had highly dense networks where all persons spent time together and were emotionally close.
3. **For both prior sex workers and those who were not sex workers, heterosexual, cisgender women have a higher percentage of women in their**

**social support networks than do heterosexual, cisgender men or LGBTQ+ members.** Heterosexual, cisgender women and prior sex workers also have a greater number of persons in their support network than do their counterparts.

4. **Active and inactive facilitators were similar in having persons engage in deviant activities in their social support networks.** A similar percentage of active (32.7%) and inactive (37.3%) facilitators had social support circles composed of only persons who engaged in deviance, defined as having been arrested or involved in the illicit sex or drug trade.
5. **Almost half of active and inactive offenders had criminogenic social support networks (at least 60% of their network had been arrested).** Around one-third of active and inactive facilitators had social support circles composed of only persons who engaged in deviance, defined as having been arrested or involved in the illicit sex or drug trade.
6. **Using negative binomial regression predicting the number of support persons who sold illicit drugs, we found that coercive sex traffickers had a higher number of support persons who sold drugs than those who did not use violence toward their workers and did not take 85% of the workers' earnings.** Drug dealers were twice as likely to comprise at least 50% of the social networks of coercive sex traffickers (30%) than the social networks of all other facilitators.

## Practice and Policy Implications. *Highlights from Chapter 7.*

### *Conclusions and Recommendations*

Practice and policy implications about how persons learn or are stimulated to be involved in the illicit sex trade as sex market facilitators occur at multiple levels, as the Social Ecological Framework implies. We highlight a few of the critical recommendations in this executive summary.

1. **Treatment and Prevention across the Levels**
    a. **Most SMFs spontaneously recalled traumatic experiences as part of their critical life story, and these traumas occurred before, during, and after involvement in the illicit sex trade.**
    b. **We recommend trauma-informed prevention efforts, such as addressing childhood neglect and encouraging the reporting of sexual abuse to community leaders, such as teachers and other state employees, to address some of the vulnerabilities that are associated with involvement in the illicit sex trade.**
    c. **Trauma-informed treatment is recommended for SMFs of all gender identities and sexual orientations, even though LGBTQ+ and heterosexual, cisgender women reported higher levels of trauma. Masculine ideologies and gender stereotyping serve as inhibitors of men's reporting of trauma.** The White House Action Plan to address human trafficking recommends victim-centered, trauma-informed treatment (White House, 2021). Our findings suggest that the victim-offender overlap is quite prevalent among SMFs, including heterosexual, cisgender men. We recommend a more nuanced, inclusive, and compassionate assessment of which SMFs might benefit from trauma-informed treatment.
    d. **Gender identity and sexual orientation are related to what is learned and the strategies to facilitate sex work. The LGBTQ+ participants described more collaborative arrangements with sex workers, whereas heterosexual, cisgender men and women were more likely to use coercive strategies involving psychological tactics or physical force. We recommend that heterosexual, cisgender women who facilitated have separate treatment from persons who only sold sex.**

2. **Addressing Societal Discrimination**
    a. **Homophobia and transphobia bias against LGBTQ+ persons at the family and community level increase vulnerability to involvement in the illicit sex trade and heighten their risk of traumatic experiences before, during, and after exiting the illicit sex trade. Legal and community efforts to address these systemic biases must be prioritized.**
    b. **Masculine ideologies were also related to some of SMF's coercive facilitation strategies. Prevention campaigns in schools, social media, and other media sources are needed to provide a countering discourse of what it means to be a man.**

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# Chapter 1. Introduction and Theoretical Framework

Sex traffickers often target the most vulnerable strata of society, such as children who are runaways and from the foster care system, victims of sexual and physical abuse, the economically disadvantaged, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ+) youth, and others who are in desperate situations (e.g., Fong & Cardoso, 2010; Franchino-Olsen, 2021; Hogan & Roe-Sepowitz, 2023; Reid et al., 2019). Some studies show how traffickers groom trafficking victims (e.g., O'Brien & Li, 2020; Raphael et al., 2010; Winters et al., 2022), but there are few that address how traffickers become traffickers. Studies suggest that some would-be traffickers are similarly at risk (Horning, 2013; Miccio-Fonseca, 2017; Morselli & Savoie-Gargiso, 2014; Stalans & Finn, 2016); however, these studies have only begun to explore their constrained agency and the variation in who traffickers are. In this study, we propose to investigate how sex market facilitators (SMFs) are groomed or mentored, how they groom new facilitators, including traffickers, and how they are socially networked. It is crucial to understand the pathways to becoming a trafficker, including the social learning process of people engaging in various forms of sex market facilitation and passing on these teachings. A key focus of this study is how facilitation is learned. We use social learning theory (SLT) because it is the primary theory that explains the mechanisms and social processes of teaching and learning.

Due to the impact of intersectionality[7] on social learning and opportunities. We investigate differences in SMFs' trauma experiences and how this impacts learning, how SMFs learn to facilitate, how they are mentored to be SMFs, including traffickers, how they train new SMFs, and

[7] 'Intersectionality' is one's compilation of master status designations, or demographic factors, such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, or other social structural positions that impact one's social interactions (see Messerschmidt, 1994, 2010) and social identity.

how they are socially networked. Some studies show how SMFs train sex workers (e.g., Bruckert, 2018) or indoctrinate sex trafficking victims (e.g., Reid, 2024). However, few studies have examined how people learn techniques, including coercion, or how they move through the illicit sex trade to become facilitators (see Weitzer, 2015). Studies about the commercial sex market using social learning theory have shown that SMFs target and mentor family members, neighborhood kids or friends, or those working in the sex trade as drivers, pimps[8], or sex workers[9] (e.g., Broad, 2015; Horning, 2013; Horning et al., 2023; Miccio-Fonseca, 2017). SMFs also target recruiters and drivers through deceptive communication in online advertisements, forums, or social media apps (e.g., Stalans & Finn, 2016).

Certain social actors within the commercial sex market have been studied for decades, such as sex workers (e.g., Bernstein, 2007; Kempadoo & Doezema, 2018; Mai et al., 2022; Sanders et al., 2017) and more recently, sex trafficking victims (e.g., Dempsey, 2015; Hogan & Roe-Sepowitz, 2023; Twis, 2020; Reid et al., 2019). A few more recent studies have explored the lives of sex market facilitators and how they work within the commercial sex market (e.g., Dank et al., 2014; Horning et al., 2022; Korsby, 2023; Merodio et al., 2020; Raphael et al., 2010; Stalans & Finn, 2019) with some studies focusing on pimps, others on sex traffickers, and some on both.

The operational definition of sex market facilitator (SMF) must be addressed, particularly the recognition that roles change, and due to these changes, legally qualifying as a sex trafficker can change by day, week, month, or year and often change across the life course. Typically, individuals are involved in multiple roles in the sex trade; these roles can include sex work, recruiting, assisting, or primary facilitation. Some facilitation roles include scheduling clients,

[8] A 'pimp' is someone who procured, facilitated, managed, or contributed to commercial sex transactions. We acknowledge that pimp is a contested, racialized term. However, it is the most recognizable term and used by many sex market facilitators in this sample, so we include this in the report but recognize and are sensitive to the ways that it is controversial.

[9] We use the term 'sex worker' as a neutral, inclusive term that makes no assumptions about how voluntary the work is, especially since people drift between voluntary and involuntary sex work at different times. However, it is essential not to conflate the experiences of people who are and are not trafficking victims.

protecting workers during interactions with clients, and managing and profiting from sex workers' earnings. In this study, we use the broader term of sex market facilitator (SMF) because it includes those who legally qualify as pandering[10] and sex trafficking[11]. At some point in the lives of those in the commercial sex market, many, including pimps and even sex workers and ancillary players in the U.S. sex trade fall under the legal definition of sex traffickers per the Trafficking in Victims Protection Act (TVPA), 2000 (Horning & Stalans, 2022). The TVPA defined sex trafficking as the "recruitment, harboring, transporting, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act" when "induced to perform a sex act through force, fraud or coercion" (22 US Code 22 USC 7102(8)). The TVPA blurs pandering, pimping, and sex trafficking with a broad definition, including psychological coercion, such as declarations of false love, inducing drug dependence, or establishing economic control (Horning & Stalans, 2022).

The bright line rule that inducing anyone under the age of eighteen to perform a commercial sex act is legally sex trafficked greatly expands the scope of who is deemed a sex trafficker (Horning, 2013). In cases with the traditional dyads who sell sex, Farrell et al. (2014) found that half of the sex trafficking cases investigated by law enforcement involved a minor, and Lugo-Graulich et al.'s (2021) study found that states with Safe Harbor laws had more sex trafficking prosecutions. However, sex trafficking legislation, even with safe harbor laws, still results in the prosecution of teenagers as sex traffickers if they facilitate other teenagers who engage in sex for money or other valuables (s5988-B). Due to the TVPA's broad definition, SMFs who legally qualify as sex traffickers include teenage friends (except in New York, where the individual must be 21 or older to qualify as a sex trafficker), sexual or romantic partners where one partner benefits from the proceeds, and those with more peripheral roles, such as drivers and hotel owners. These incidental and sometimes oblivious traffickers are newly connected in the

[10] Pandering laws vary across states. Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Law defines pandering as "The act or crime of recruiting prostitutes or of arranging a situation for another to practice prostitution."

[11] The TVPA defined 'sex trafficking' as "a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to such an act has not attained 18 years of age."

legal and popular imagination to modern-day global slavery rings, yet they challenge these stereotypes (Horning & Stalans, 2022).

Certain disenfranchised community members are even more susceptible to the sex trafficker label at some point in their lives. Intersectionality, in particular sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation, will impact the parameters of becoming a sex market facilitator, including being a sex trafficker. For instance, the members of the LGBTQ+ community, particularly transgender women, have a high rate of being disowned and being unhoused during adolescence, particularly those who later engage in survival sex or sex work (Dank et al., 2015; Nadal et al., 2014). Often, groups of these young people band together and engage in survival sex, but if one of them turns eighteen years old (in most states) or twenty-one years old (in NY state) and assists younger friends with survival sex, they are legally sex traffickers. Therefore, we use SMFs whenever possible due to the changeability of roles and legal classifications of social actors in the commercial sex market and due to specific populations labeled as sex traffickers despite their intention to aid in the survival of fellow community members.

With the changeability in roles and the impact of intersectionality on social learning and opportunities, we investigate how SMFs learn to work, how they are mentored to be SMFs, including traffickers, how they train new SMFs, and how they are socially networked. Several studies show how SMFs train sex workers or sex trafficking victims. However, few have examined how people learn techniques, including coercion, and move through the illicit sex trade to become facilitators (see Weitzer, 2015). Some studies have shown that SMFs target and mentor family members, neighborhood kids or friends, or those working in the sex trade as drivers, pimps, or sex workers (e.g., Broad, 2015; Horning, 2013; Miccio-Fonseca, 2017). SMFs also target recruiters and assistant managers[12] through deceptive communication in online advertisements, forums, or social media applications (e.g., Stalans & Finn, 2016).

[12] 'Assistant managers' are those who help sex market facilitators with the day-to-day operations, such as recruitment, finding clients, protecting, and managing sex workers. They are not working alone or leading the operation. This term can include main sex workers.

Based on our prior extensive studies on sex market facilitators and other studies, we realized that very few scholars have answered the fundamental question of how one becomes a sex market facilitator. We aimed to investigate three broad research questions:

1) Are there patterned processes or mechanisms from which older/experienced traffickers teach or model these skills to the pimps, bottoms, sex workers, or sex trafficking victims who, over time, recruit other trafficking victims?
    a. How do the early experiences of SMFs, particularly trauma, contribute to their social learning and recruitment into facilitation?
    b. Using an intersectional lens, how does social learning explain the social process of sex market facilitators passing on those skills to family, boyfriends/girlfriends, friends, sex workers, sex trafficking victims, or even other SMFs?
2) How do traffickers detect potential recruits' vulnerabilities, and what are the key individual and structural vulnerabilities they target? How is grooming similar and different in New York City (NYC) and Chicago?
3) How are traffickers socially networked to other traffickers, pimps, and main sex workers[13] How are these networks similar or different in New York City and Chicago?

This chapter provides our theoretical framework for understanding the social learning dimensions of sex market facilitation. We begin with an overview of social learning theory. Next, we connect how structural disadvantage impacts systems and how marginalization facilitates traumatic experiences and survival strategies that contribute to intergenerational engagement in commercial sex markets.

[13] The 'main sex worker' or 'bottom' co-runs SMF operations by overseeing day-to-day operations and other sex workers 'Bottom' is a slang term used by lower socioeconomic status SMFs in the US to discuss their main sex worker. After this, we use the term main sex worker to avoid perpetuating a term that may be offensive or hurtful to sex worker populations.

## Social Learning Theory and Sex Market Facilitation

Social learning theories (SLT) have identified several processes through which children and adults learn behaviors, and in criminology, these behaviors focus on violations of criminal laws. Aker's (1998, 2017) SLT integrated many critical components from earlier SL theorists. The key components are observational learning (developed by Bandura), reinforcement (developed by Skinner, 1988), acquiring definitions favorable to crime learned through close associations (developed by Sutherland and Cressey, 1947), and social structural factors (developed by Akers (1998, 2017). Young people may be more motivated to reproduce the behavior when learning occurs with role models, such as family, pseudo-family, or other mentors, due to the magnitude and extensive duration of learning from close associates and mentors. We do not directly test these processes, but the qualitative interviews often identified these different learning modes.

Aker's social learning theory, consistent with the original psychological theories, assumes that individuals may imitate observed behaviors through a passive and non-emotional process. Indeed, the researchers highlight the potential for passive or unconscious effects in applying social learning to stalking perpetration and victimization: "Stalking victims may, knowingly or unknowingly, model and imitate fellow victims" (Fox et al., 2011, p. 42). Aker's social learning theory does not adequately capture the emotional responses to victimization experiences. It does not capture the active learning from traumatic experiences through reflection and drawing meanings about oneself and relationships with others from these events.

The view of a passive non-agentic learner has been challenged in the last two decades of research (e.g., Giordano, 2010; Mulvey & Schubert, 2012). Life course social learning theory assumes that individuals are active learners who react with emotions and reflect upon significant moments to draw meaning about trusting others and themselves and finding ways to survive and reach desired goals (Giordano, 2020). Life-course social learning theory recognizes that learning occurs in a social environment, and people, especially families, have 'linked lives,' which means

that parents and children may contribute to changes in attitudes, self-identity, and trust in each other. The difference between passive and active learning can be illustrated by examining the difference in the process of imitation and identification (Giordano, 2020). Committing a violent act that is learned from imitating a parent who modeled the behavior requires adopting the strategies without assessing the reasons for or against using violence; the learner passively accepts the direct modeling. The identification process uses emotional attachment to infer whether it is appropriate to commit a violent act (Giordano, 2022).

To understand who they are, people process critical moments or events in their lives, especially distressing and traumatic events, through narrating a story (e.g., McAdam & McLean, 2013; de Ven & Pemberton, 2022). Giordano (2020) highlights how others who react to disclosures about these victimizations carry lessons that may contribute to their involvement in criminal behavior. Emotional reactions are connected to how individuals form attitudes about these experiences and learn to cope with traumatic events. The creation of these stories serves many purposes, which include understanding an event's meaning, resolving ethical dilemmas, legitimating past actions, contemplating future actions, and assessing one's relationship with others and with society (McAdam, 1993; McLean et al., 2007; Presser & Sandberg, 2015).

A few studies of SMFs have focused on some of the processes through which individuals learn to use coercive and non-coercive strategies to recruit and manage sex workers. Stalans' and Finn's (2016) study of 44 SMFs found that neighborhood exposure to the market was often linked to SMFs' entrance. Dank et al. (2014) interviewed 73 SMFs. They found that 31.5% of their sample entered due to observing family members involved in facilitation and sex work, emphasizing that many SMFs described a critical factor in their entrance stories as "passive exposure rather than an active choice." Horning et al. (2023) evaluated intergenerational pimping within families, finding that SMFs' perceived the learning process involved in entering the family business as coercive to cooperative, with many participants having negative formulations of these early experiences. Early exposure to facilitation was associated with a myopic view of conventional

opportunities. SMFs' involvement was normalized and viewed as a "way to survive." In illicit trades, social networks play a role in persistence (Campbell & Hansen, 2012), and close associates may be expected to contribute. These studies rarely focused on what specifically was learned, how trauma impacted learning strategies, how they learned it, and how SMFs' gender identity and sexual orientation contributed to the learning process. Our findings begin to fill in this missing knowledge.

## Trauma and Victimization Experiences

Research consistently has found that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as physical and sexual abuse are related to an increased risk of minors exchanging sex for money or becoming sex-trafficking victims (Casassa et al., 2022; Castaner et al., 2021; Fedina et al., 2019; Franchino-Olsen, 2019; Franchino-Olsen et al., 2022; Franchino-Olsen & Martin, 2022; Hickle & Roe-Sepowitz, 2017; Naramore et al., 2017). Longitudinal research also has consistently associated ACEs with recidivism among juveniles (see Yohros, 2023) and with a higher risk of persistent juvenile and adult violent offending (e.g., Burke et al., 2023; Horan & Spatz Widom, 2015). One-third of 49 male persistent SMFs also performed sex work, and those with prior sex work experience compared to their counterparts were more likely to use coercive strategies toward their sex workers (Stalans & Finn, 2016). Though burgeoning literature exists on individuals who are both victims and perpetrators of crimes (see Berg & Mulford, 2020), empirical research on the victim-offender overlap of sex market facilitators is needed.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have a high potential to produce psychological trauma (e.g., Felitti et al., 1998). Psychological trauma is a negative emotional response to serious distressing events, such as sexual or physical victimization, resulting in long-lasting disruption in emotional, mental, or spiritual well-being and social relationships (Isobel et al., 2019; Walsh, 2020). Psychological trauma from ACEs occurs when individuals learn lessons from these experiences that have negative repercussions for their self-identities or bonds with others (Isobel

et al., 2019). Not all ACEs or violent victimizations may create conscious psychological trauma. For example, psychological trauma is absent when individuals express pride about surviving a violent assault from a rival gang member and describe their violent retaliation to obtain higher social standing in the subculture. Psychological trauma also does not occur from ACEs, where the person interprets the acts as unintentional or appropriate, as the victim does not perceive harm. While there might be unconscious and unrecognized harm, from the SMFs' point of view, it is not a critical part of their life story. Understanding the lessons learned from traumatic experiences is critical information about how sex market facilitators think and feel about their role, workers, and crime.

The limited research on gender and trauma of sex workers highlights more similarities than differences. A review of earlier research found that childhood physical and sexual abuse and family dysfunction were risk factors for sex work across all gender identities (Reid, 2012), and later research with anti-trafficking agencies also highlighted a history of sexual abuse among boys and men as a precursor to involvement in the illicit sex trade (Connella et al., 2023). Research on traumatic experiences of SMFs before, during, and after exiting the illicit sex trade is scant. The majority of 25 former persistent male SMFs (Raphael & Myers-Powell, 2010) reported physical and sexual abuse during childhood, and about 20% of 49 male persistent SMFs reported witnessing domestic violence toward a parent, sexual abuse, or physical abuse as a child (Stalans & Finn, 2016). Prior research has neglected the role of traumatic experiences, especially for male SMFs, even though these experiences might contribute to SMFs' persistence and coerciveness toward sex workers. We examine how SMFs vary in terms of experiencing traumatic events.

## Structural Disadvantage and Intergenerational Learning

Dank et al. (2014), Stalans and Finn (2016), and Horning et al. (2019) studied sex market facilitators and emphasized that many participants came from neighborhoods with lower socioeconomic status. Structural disadvantage concerns community and intergenerational risk

factors, such as poverty and drug abuse, contributing to the 'deprivation cycle' (Farrington, 2005). Structural disadvantages are a significant pull factor for facilitation, and SMFs described facilitation as a viable means of economic survival or status mobility (Dank et al., 2014; Raphael & Myers-Powell, 2010). The accumulation of structural disadvantages results in what Wacquant (2008) called 'advanced marginalization,' categorizing those experiencing new kinds of exclusion at the margins. Wacquant (2008) identified distinctive properties of advanced marginality in disadvantaged neighborhoods, including resocialization of wage labor, mass joblessness, and the alienation and deteriorating sense of community in spaces such as housing projects. The levels of deprivation experienced by those relegated to U.S. public housing, where many of the interviews for this current study took place, influenced participants' and their families' ideas of what is possible in the licit sector under capitalism and what is acceptable to survive. Sampson et al. (2018) discussed how structural conditions can contribute to shared beliefs about the role of legal institutions and shared norms about appropriate standards and expectations of conduct in geographical spaces (p. 16), emphasizing that working in the illicit economy can come to be expected to be part of daily life and all racial groups respond similarly under such structural disadvantage. Venkatesh (2006) discussed how those in lower SES communities can live "straight lives," can work in the illicit economy to support themselves and their families, and some individuals work in both, noting that the concept of choice should be conceptualized differently in these communities.

Horning et al. (2019) found that many SMFs had jobs in the licit and illicit sectors to maintain a living wage, maximizing their earning potential and providing for themselves and their families. Prior research has found that some persistent SMFs who are often also involved in drug dealing obtain a legal job to hide their illicit activities from law enforcement (Stalans & Finn, 2016), and other SMFs lead 'parallel lives' in the illicit sex trade and conventional work with the plan to quit facilitation in the future (Stalans & Finn, 2019). Persisters characterized conventional jobs to avoid detection. In contrast, those leading 'parallel lives' and preparing to desist

emphasized the reduced stress and steady income from legal work and often entered facilitation after losing a conventional job. For those experiencing structural disadvantage, drifting between illicit and licit work or working in both economies simultaneously is normalized and often part of economic, legal, and social survival strategies relayed across generations.

The family system is powerful, and many SMFs begin before age 18, sometimes in childhood and often in adolescence (Dank et al., 2014), limiting their choice for participation and creating a coercive entry through familial pressures and reinforcements. Compelling one to engage in criminal behavior through force, fraud, or coercion is also known as forced criminality, a newly recognized form of human trafficking, and it accounts for 10.5% of HT cases globally (US Department of State, 2022).

Prior studies have shown that at least a quarter of sex market facilitators learned within families, highlighting the presence of a victim-offender overlap (Dank et al., 2014; Horning et al., 2023). SMFs may recruit younger family members into the business, and scholars and policymakers have primarily ignored this phenomenon (Horning et al., 2023). Participants' evaluations of their early formative learning experiences may lead to innovative interventions and inform what experiences lead to continued intergenerational continuance. Within the family system, social learning theory is influential, with systemic pressures from capitalism creating strain or pressure in the community and school, impacting their interpersonal lives. A crucial point about family sex market facilitation is whether it started in the context of coercion where transgressors, especially minors, are less culpable. Additionally, studies have explored the familial sex trafficking of minors, with families trafficking their children for money or drugs (Heil & Nichols, 2015; Sprang & Cole, 2018). The scenarios of being taught to operate within commercial sex markets, whether it is pandering or prostitution, are direct learning experiences.

However, there is often continual observation and vicarious learning within families, so even seemingly passive watching is active (Horning et al., 2023). In addition, family members are instrumental in teaching behaviors, especially for children. Children and adolescents may be more

motivated to reproduce the behavior when learning occurs with role models, such as family, due to the magnitude and extensive duration of family learning. The family may positively reinforce young people to replicate behavior. Stalans and Finn (2019) found that 86% of the 14 SMFs who reported that being a pimp was an essential part of their identity indicated that their parents approved of their pimping. Of these 16, eight learned from family members, three from gang members, and three sought tutelage from pimps and sex workers in the illicit sex trade (Stalans & Finn, 2019). Some SMFs were exposed to conflicting messages where their fathers approved of pimping and their mothers led conventional lives and disapproved, and these SMFs, despite exposure to conventional lifestyles, including military school, identified and modeled their father's pimping (Stalans & Finn, 2019). As Stalans and Finn (2019) noted, "these persisters prioritized money over morals." (p. 660)

Those who have learned facilitation within the family system are usually under eighteen and must participate in school and attend middle or high school. SMFs working in high school hallways or community colleges may recruit similarly aged peers who are often friends or acquaintances, and these collaborations often center on survival (Dank, 2011; Horning, 2013). Recruiting the young is a common form of domestic sex trafficking, but the source of this activity can be from the young person's family (Horning, 2013; Horning et al., 2023).

Intergenerational continuance of illicit work has been explored by evaluating external factors (especially in quantitative studies), gender differences, and the extensiveness of the social learning process (e.g., Hjalmarsson & Lindquist, 2012; Kleemans & Van Koppen, 2020; van Dijk et al., 2022; Wisdom & Wilson, 2015).

## Intersectionality and Learning Sex Market Facilitation

Early experiences, including direct learning, modeling, and trauma, impact how gender identity and sexual orientation are expressed, and intersectionality may shape the ways that mentors teach facilitation and how those who are inexperienced perceive these teachings, learn,

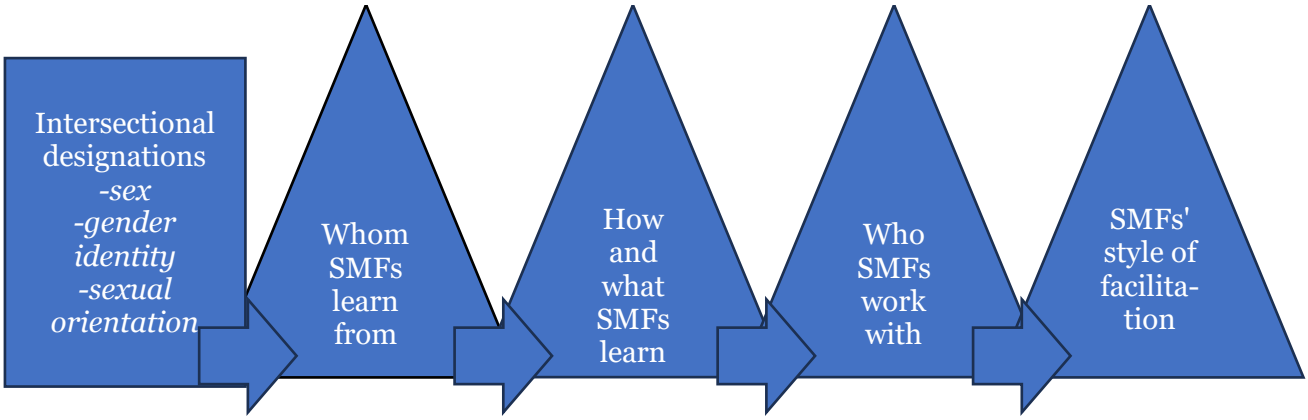
and then perform. Who SMFs learned from and how and what they learned may impact whether they facilitate alone or as part of a co-offending, organized, or collective group. For instance, if they learned within the family, they may continue with the family or create a co-offending group or collective. If they are part of a disenfranchised community, such as unhoused youth or LGBTQ+, they may engage in survival strategies with these groups.

Intersectionality and, in particular, sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation may impact not only the type of offending group whom they work with but also their role within the group. Little is known about how SMFs train, mentor, and coach main sex workers or other apprentices to develop such interpersonal skills, which, in turn, may deceive/coerce others into the sex trade. The main sex worker or 'bottom' co-runs SMF operations by overseeing day-to-day operations and other sex workers (Dank et al., 2014; Horning & Sriken, 2017). 'Bottom' is a slang term used by lower socioeconomic status SMFs in the US to discuss their main sex worker. After this, we use the term main sex worker to avoid perpetuating a term that may be offensive or hurtful to sex worker populations.

Understanding how SMFs acquire and develop their skills carries direct policy implications because such knowledge can inform law enforcement and social service agencies on devising countermeasures and intervention strategies. Law enforcement identified a trend where women facilitators or traffickers have become valuable as they may have easier access to other women traffickers are valuable as they may have easier access to other women. They may be able to manipulate juveniles more effectively (Kiensat et al., 2014). We acknowledge that not all women in the sex trade are victims of trafficking; however, minors (particularly unhoused minors) are more susceptible to deception or coercion into the sex trade. The circumstances and processes of how the recruitment of sex market facilitators occurs remain largely unknown to the research community.

Figure 1.1 shows how master status designations[14] such as sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation or intersectionality may impact whom SMFs learn from, how and what they learn, who they work with, and how they facilitate. We excluded race and socioeconomic status in this figure because the participants in this study were more homogenous, with more participants being black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) and from a lower socioeconomic status (SES).

*Figure 1.1. Intersectionality and Social Learning*




In Chapter 5, "*Learning to be Sex Market Facilitators: Sources, Knowledge and Organization through an Intersectional Lens*," we explore participants' social learning pathways and expect variation based on their intersectional designation. For instance, *who* the participants learned from and *how and what they learned* may vary based on their sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation. All children may learn from their parents involved in illicit trades, but their intersectional designation may shape what they learn and how they learn. For instance, van Dijk et al. (2019) researched 25 organized crime offenders and 48 of their children using crime scene files and other archival records like child protective services records. They found that continuation often occurred when there were inadequate parenting skills, the father had a "famous" reputation, and extensive deviant social learning within the family. When comparing male and female

[14] 'Master status designations' are demographic factors, such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, or other social structural positions that impact one's social interactions (see Messerschmidt, 1994, 2010) and social identity.

children within organized crime families, they found that sons were more apt to continue criminal activities due to more exposure to involved family associates, lending them to be viewed as trustworthy. Daughters had more protective factors, such as child protective services intervening, partially explaining less involvement or continuance. Some studies show that those who learned from family had more controlling and violent styles of sex market facilitation, even if they learned through modeling instead of direct learning (Horning et al., 2022).

*Figure 1.2. Who Sex Market Facilitators Learn From*

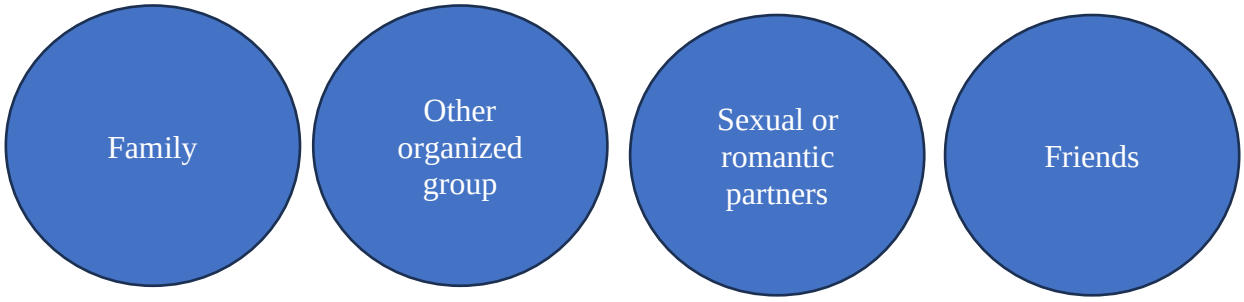



Figure 1.2 illustrates more common social learning sites, such as family, other organized groups, or sexual or romantic partners or friends. In terms of gender identity and sexual orientation, LGBTQ+ youth who are often kicked out of family homes may more readily learn from community members rather than family. It is common for unhoused youth to form collaborative survival networks as alternative kinship networks (Dank et al., 2011; Marcus et al., 2014), but qualitative differences exist in comparing a young transgender woman versus a cisgender woman's social learning experiences within the commercial sex market due to differences in intersectionality and community structure.

Figure 1.3 shows different types of facilitators' learned management strategies, which can include rules about danger and safety as they pertain to the sex workspace and the rules for sex workers or sex trafficking victims. How these strategies are transmitted can depend on the social processes underlying the learning process shaped by SMFs and workers' intersectionality and dynamics. For instance, women working as SMFs managing other women may require weapons

for protection as compared to men. The initial social learning process is a social interaction between two people, and this interactive process determines the contours of how facilitation is done.

*Figure 1.3. What Sex Market Facilitators Learn*

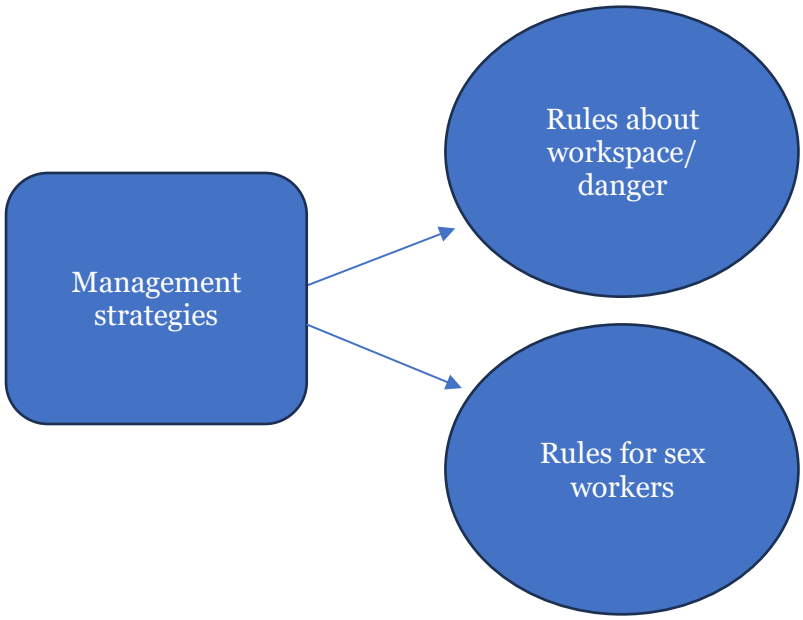



Figure 1.4 demonstrates the social interaction feedback loop during the social learning process. While this study does not account for the feedback loop directly, it is important to acknowledge that this occurs and shapes the social learning experience. In terms of learning sex market facilitation, some studies have identified that for heterosexual, cisgender men, this social learning process can be connected to 'doing masculinity' (Besbris, 2013; Horning et al., 2023; Merodio, 2020) or the avenues available based on intersectionality to accomplishing masculinity (Messerschmidt, 1994;2010). One example of the interaction feedback loop is doing masculinity. Based on prior studies of sex market facilitators, it is apparent that sex market facilitation can be connected to a masculine gender project, providing perceived avenues of enacting or accomplishing masculinity. However, few studies address if doing masculinity, doing femininity (accomplishing femininity), doing queerness (accomplishing queerness), or doing transness

(accomplishing transness) contribute to how persons are taught and learn to be recruiters or SMFs. Master status designations and intersectionality may contribute to how facilitation is done. Based on how sex market facilitation connects to participants' gender project, both the mentor and the mentee can impact what is taught and how these teachings are interpreted and replicated or used in participants' formulations of how to do sex market facilitation.

*Figure 1.4. The Mentor/Mentee Interaction Structure*

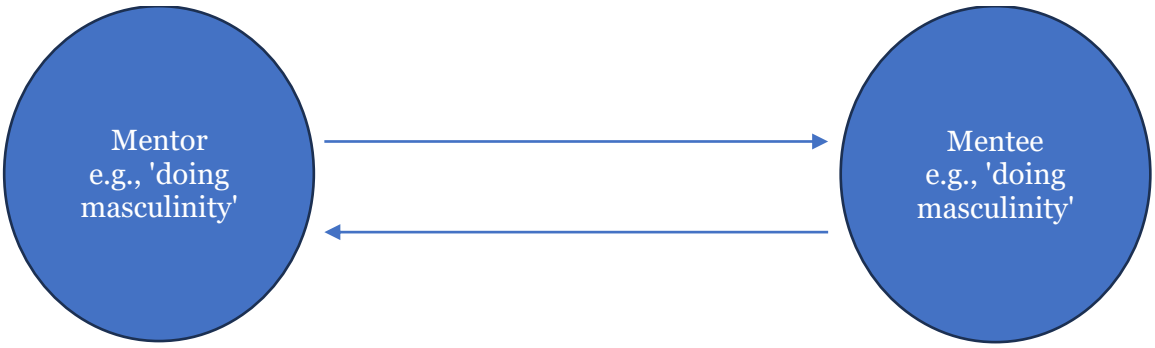
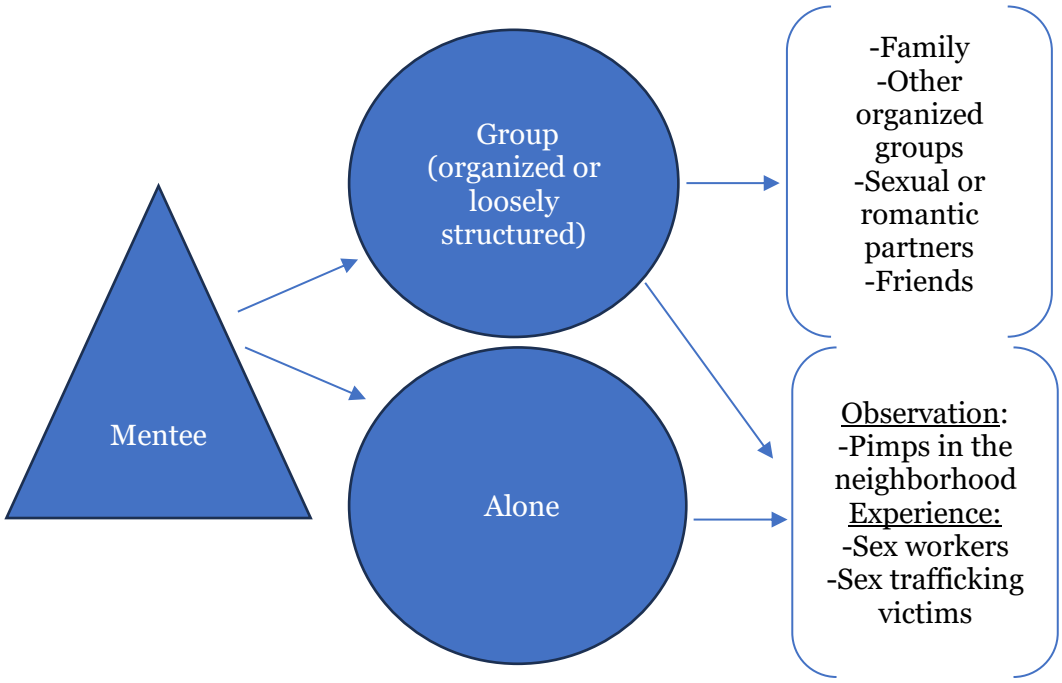



Figure 1.5 shows that this social learning process persists. The mentee can transmit their knowledge to different groups that can be more formally or loosely organized. The groups can be family, other organized groups, sexual or romantic partners, or friends. Sometimes, the mentee will work alone, but how they facilitate can be through observing facilitation in the neighborhood or public, or they can observe and experience how it is done as sex workers or sex trafficking victims. In these instances, social learning may not be replicated. When a group facilitates together, these strategies of sex market facilitation or sex trafficking are likely exchanged and have a good chance of being replicated.

Studies show a range of groups involved in human trafficking. Estes and Weiner (2001) found that single "amateur" traffickers, small groups of organized criminals, and national or international trafficking networks engaged in child sex trafficking. Bouche (2017) analyzed 862 U.S. human trafficking cases with 2,096 defendants from 2000-2015, finding that 58% were part of an organized criminal group. The most common groups were "mom and pop" organizations

(35%) and 'crime rings' (33%), and none were criminal syndicates, with all groups having less than 30 members. Carpenter and Gates (2016) studied SMFs and found that 80% were gang members compared to Bouche's (2017) study, where only 6% were part of gangs. The types of group composition and organization vary by sample.

*Figure 1.5. The Facilitation Structure of Sex Market Facilitators*




When studying street-based populations working in the commercial sex market, a common dyad is a main sex worker and a sex market facilitator. Despite the importance of main sex workers to SMFs in the sex trade, there is limited research about their roles. Roe-Sepowitz et al.'s (2015) study of women SMFs shows that main sex workers could be classified into three categories: the longest-serving sex worker, the highest earner, or the most trusted associate pimp. Studies show that often, women who are SMFs begin as sex workers and become main workers, with some moving onto facilitation only, especially if their SMF went to jail, retired, or could no longer do the work (Rapheal & Myers-Powell, 2010; Roe-Sepowitz et al., 2015). Main sex workers appear to be intermediaries or liaisons to the SMF, thus having agency. Whether the main sex

worker's role can indeed be agentive within the context of coercion has been debated. Some researchers argue that SMFs manipulate sex workers in higher-level positions within the sex trade into consenting players. The argument is that part of sex workers' victimization is where SMFs intentionally give them status because of the legally confusing distinction of simultaneously being victims and offenders, which lessens SMFs' legal and moral culpability (Crocker, 2017; Irvine, 2016). SMFs may view main sex workers as equal business partners, or SMFs may view them as pawns used to control the other workers (Horning & Sriken, 2017).

Scholars have studied the role of women in criminal networks, primarily in studies of street crimes like robbery and house burglary or in illicit drug markets. The common theme in these studies was that most criminal offending networks were sex-segregated by tasks and expected gender roles. The networks tended to be male-dominated when offenses were violent or involved strangers (Schwartz et al.,2015; Zhang et al.,2007). Decades ago, Steffensmeier (1986) surmised that women in organized crime had limited opportunities due to criminal groups relying on secrecy, trust, reliability, and sometimes muscle, which favored a homogenous, male-dominated structure, and later research showed that illicit markets were similarly stratified by gender (Schwartz & Steffensmeier, 2017). Women drug dealers faced more obstacles to success in a criminal enterprise, including the threat of violence from rivals and customers and greater visibility to law enforcement (Grundetjern & Sandberg, 2012). Hubschle (2014) surmised that women could be either foot soldiers, intermediaries, or powerful matriarchs within human and drug trafficking syndicates, indicating they are operating differently in illicit markets, especially in street-based enterprises that require control over territory and violence.

While heterosexual, cisgender women may be seen and treated differently than their heterosexual, cisgender male co-offenders, many have been able to "break the glass ceiling" particularly in the drug-dealing underworld (Fleetwood, 2014; Giacomello, 2013; Grundetjern & Miller, 2019); migrant smuggling (Shen & Antonopoulos, 2016; Zhang et al., 2007), and organized crime (Kleemens et al., 2014). However, in street-based pimping, Raphael and Myers-Powell's

(2010) study of ex-SMFs found that, in contrast to male SMFs, women SMFs had to employ gang members as enforcers to maintain control and protect themselves, an added expense and risk unique to their gender. Similarly, in a study of SMF women, McCarthy (2020) found that their gender roles disadvantaged them when engaging in actions involving "muscle." The differences in how heterosexual, cisgender men and women work in illicit markets may be explained by what strengths they derive from their "gender toolkit." Besbris (2016) conducted an ethnographic study of male SMFs and found that they often used 'revanchist masculinity' discourse when describing their work relationship with sex workers. Besbris defined 'revanchist masculinity' as "the way men lay claim to certain work practices while simultaneously denying women's abilities to perform such tasks at an equal level" (p. 714). The participants in his study often claimed that women were unequal and inferior to men in trustworthiness, intellect, and decision-making abilities. They described women workers as inherently devious to justify their role as decision-makers and explain why they controlled sex workers' earnings. Thus, sex workers' autonomy was a risk that needed to be monitored or controlled. If an SMF could not dominate his workers, other SMFs might view his masculinity as declining, leading to them poaching his workers. Horning et al. (2022) found that when SMFs worked with main sex workers, SMFs often viewed their main sex worker as an extension of control, and their approach was more controlling and violent towards sex workers as compared to those without main sex workers. These dyads were less cooperative than other co-offending groups, and they used a less egalitarian approach. Gender identity and dynamics fundamentally influenced critical factors in how sex work is facilitated, such as how they work in groups and their roles in the group, including how they treat sex workers, especially in the heterosexual, cisgender men and women dyads.

The current study provides a more thorough understanding of gender dynamics around sex market facilitation or recruiting workers in the illicit sex trade. Engaging in sex market facilitation can vary based on gender, and scholars have primarily evaluated this in terms of looking at the differences in women's roles as facilitators (e.g., Preble, 2019). Still, few studies

address how SMFs' master status designations or intersectionality impact their learning and performance in commercial sex markets.

*Figure 1.6. Management Strategies*

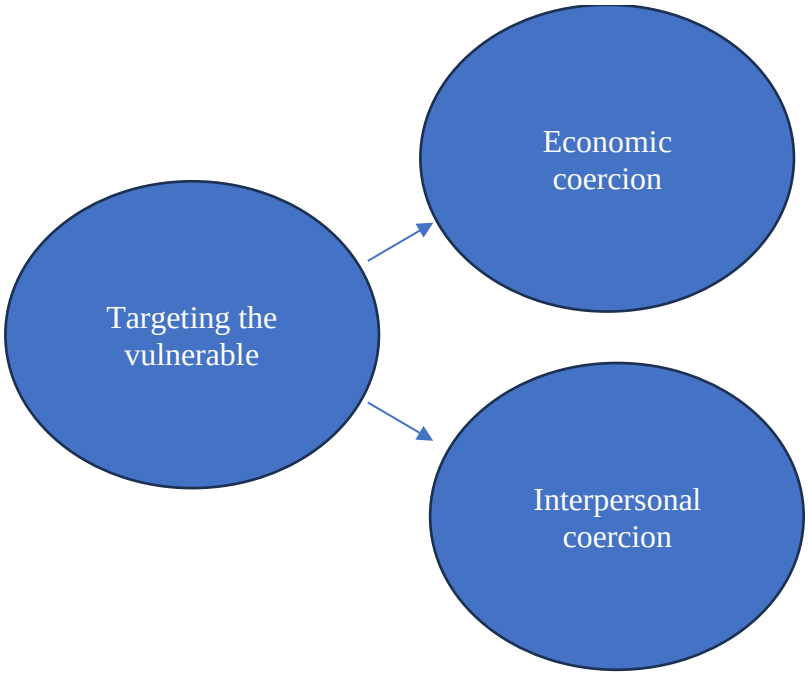



Figure 1.6 shows different aspects of SMFs management strategies. For instance, one can learn and replicate economic or interpersonal coercion. SMFs' level of coercion can be influenced based on who is targeted for recruitment. If vulnerable victims are targeted, then the facilitator's economic and interpersonal coercion may be high. While we do not test this directly, we include this information as it is the next step in understanding the social learning process and how interpersonal interactions and choices can impact one's sex market facilitation style.

The key features of learning and the reproduction of learning can determine if sex market facilitators are deemed sex traffickers or if they are working more collectively with sex workers. These components include economic and interpersonal coercion and targeting the marginalized. Suppose a sex markets facilitator learns to demonstrate less economic coercion or shares 50% or more of the profit with sex workers and shows little interpersonal coercion, including recruiting those on an equal playing field; then, they are more egalitarian and cooperative. Alternatively,

suppose a sex market facilitator is highly coercive, and this is pervasive, and they target marginalized groups, such as minors; they are not only authoritarian and abusive, but they more easily qualify as sex traffickers.

These aspects of sex market facilitation shape SMF/sex worker dynamics, the contours of dyads, triads, or larger groups working within the market, and can dictate the success or failure of the sex market facilitators' operations. The early social learning of sex market facilitators can impact their dynamics with sex workers and how they operate and influence others working within the commercial sex market community, including passing their learning down to mentees. For instance, if this learning occurs at fifteen years old, then the dynamics may occur between high schoolers who sell sex to other kids from school, the neighborhood, or at parties. Working with similarly aged friends would mean that they would legally be designated as sex traffickers as opposed to panderers or pimps in most U.S. states (with some exceptions) (Horning & Stalans, 2023).

## Social and Criminal Networks and the Learning Process

We aimed to understand participants' social and criminal networks and how networks varied by the proportion of women, someone who would have their back in a fight, and various deviant networks (#in drug trade, #in sex trade, # arrested, #overall deviant ties). We build from the work of social networks among active gun offenders (Papachristos et al., 2012). Prior sex trafficking research using electronic surveillance data (Morselli & Savoie-Gargiso, 2014) to examine the density and position of traffickers and apprentices (main sex workers and assistant managers) in their illicit and conventional networks and the quality of these relationships. Empirical studies have found that the nature of social networks contributed to immersion into a criminal subculture, such as the sex trade (e.g., Giordano, Cernkovich & Holland, 2006; Hagan, 1991; Papachristos et al., 2012; Young & Rees, 2013). McCarthy and Hagan (1995), conducting one of the few criminological-oriented studies on sex work, found that homeless youth who knew

other sex workers and received tutelage from sex workers were more likely to self-report involvement in sex work; moreover, peer influence was specific to the type of criminal activity, with tutelage in sex work more predictive of sex work than having friends who were drug dealing or stealing. The density of social networks, the proportion of members in a person's social network that know each other, is a critical measure of a deviant subculture, especially if they are involved in illicit activity. Offenders in denser (closely-knit) networks saturated with criminal peers were less favorable of the law (Papachristos et al., 2012).

Giordano and colleagues (2002) found that offenders more embedded in a criminal social network by having solely criminally involved peers were significantly more likely to persist in offending. In contrast, those with social networks containing both conventional and nonconventional peers were likelier to desist from crime. There are many players in the sex trade sharing similar social and criminal networks, with many participating on the continuum of pimping, with sex trafficking being the most extreme. These groups may learn from one another, and traffickers are likely to target people within their social networks to force or coerce victims into the sex trade. Including these networks and acknowledging these connections is paramount to investigating the typical patterns of recruiting and teaching sex market facilitators in the United States.

# Chapter 2. Methodology and Description of Samples

In this chapter, we provide a detailed description of our methodology. This chapter begins with an overview of the data collection procedures and the semi-structured qualitative interview schedule containing open-ended and closed-ended questions. We then describe how participants were recruited in New York City and Chicago. Lastly, we provide a detailed quantitative description of the demographics and background characteristics of the New York City (NYC) and Chicago subsamples, and the total sample across these sites.

## Overview of Methodology

Qualitative semi-structured interviews lasted one hour and were audio-recorded. A professional transcription company transcribed the audio recordings, which the research teams checked. Individuals were eligible for an interview if they were 18 years of age or older and had actively recruited or managed sex workers in the last ten years and received goods or money for recruitment or management. To be eligible, individuals could not be actively under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of the interview and had to be mentally competent enough to respond to questions. Eligible participants received $70 in cash or a gift card at the end of the interview.

The study was conducted in accordance with research ethics and received IRB approval from the University of Massachusetts at Lowell with a research IRB collaborative agreement with Loyola University Chicago. The National Institute of Justice also reviewed and approved the study. This study was conducted under a privacy certificate, which was regularly updated with the names of all research team members. Interviewees were asked to select a pseudonym that did not reveal their real or street names. The research team assigned a fake name to each participant

that was not the pseudonym that participants had chosen, which added additional confidentiality protection in case a respondent provided a street name. Contact information on interviewees was not collected or was erased after transferring compensation; these measures enhanced the protection of interviewees' confidentiality. Protecting confidentiality is critical in hidden active offender populations to reduce legal or social harms and to enhance the rapport and quality of interviewees' responses.

There were two locations for the interviews: New York City and Chicago. Dr. Horning oversaw the data collection in New York City, and Dr. Stalans oversaw the data collection in Chicago. Each site's sampling and recruitment of participants, training of interviewees, and final samples are described.

## Description of Ecological Sites and Sampling in Chicago

### i) Recruitment Strategies

The initial plan to recruit from internet sites that persons involved in the illicit sex trade advertised (e.g., obackpage, 1backpage, cityxguide.com) was attempted. Due to the pandemic, participant recruitment began one year later, in March of 2021. Prepaid phones were used for the project, and a specific email address was provided. We planned to recruit using websites where online prostitution was marketed so that our sample was more diverse in terms of socioeconomic status, race, and ethnicity. This approach was successful in Dr. Stalans' 2013-2014 data collection. Approved IRB ads were posted on sites, but no responses occurred (see Appendix A). Due to previous prosecution of the owners of Backpage.com and the pandemic, potential participants were more cautious in responding to advertisements. Moreover, it was discovered that the owner of cityxguide.com (who also bought sites of obackpage, 1backpage, and 2backpage) after the FBI seized backpage.com was indicted for aggravated violations under section 3 of the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act (i.e., FOSTA) in June of 2020 (GAO, 2021). We reconfigured our recruitment approach to include two strategies: a) attempting RDS at both sites;

and b) posting advertisements on social media group sites and using connections to advertise the study.

### ii) Site Location

Site location was determined through convenience of having connections to make introductions. The two areas in Chicago were: a) persons working in strip clubs and b) West Garfield Park in Chicago, particularly by the famous Cicero Avenue street-prostitution. Similar advertisements were created and posted on social media group sites. A connection spread the word about the research study to recruit persons who recruited or managed sex workers in strip clubs in the last ten years. Only four persons who recruited or managed workers in strip clubs were interviewed online through Zoom in April of 2021. One interviewee received a referral fee of $30 for referring two eligible interviewees who were outside of the West Garfield Park neighborhood and were actively involved in sex trafficking.

*Figure 2.1. West Garfield Park Site*


One of our consultants introduced us to a not-for-profit organization that provides social services in West Garfield Park near the street prostitution stroll on Cicero Avenue north of

Madison Street. Most interviews took place in an office located on Cicero Avenue or at a drop-in center for sex workers located further north on Cicero Avenue. The street-based prostitution on Cicero Avenue has existed for several decades, with outcries from the neighborhood to eliminate it. All interviews in West Garfield Park took place from April through June of 2021 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. to avoid the area during the night or evening hours. The study was advertised through flyers and word of mouth.

### iii) Ecological Site of West Garfield Park in Chicago

West Garfield Park is primarily an economically disadvantaged community consisting of primarily Black non-Latinx persons (92.4%), only 2.8% non-Latinx White persons, 3.5% Latinx persons of any race and 1.3% persons of multi-racial identities (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2022). The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning report (2022) provided the demographic information about persons living in West Garfield Park. Almost all persons residing in West Garfield are native-born (99.2%), and most only speak English (96.2%). About one-quarter of the population in West Garfield did not achieve a high school diploma, a little over one-third achieved a GED or HS degree (35.2%), one quarter (26.2) had some college, but no degree; 5.7% achieved an associate degree; and 7.0% achieved a bachelor's or graduate degree. Most occupied housing units are rented (73.3%), and 26.1% of all housing units in the area are vacant. Only 53.5% of residents in West Garfield Park are in the labor force; of these, 23.8% are unemployed, whereas Chicago City-wide has 67.2% in the labor force and only 8.1% unemployment. West Garfield Park is also known for gang related drug, guns, sex trafficking, and violent crime. In 2021, "With 38 killings and a population of just 17,433, West Garfield Park's murder rate was almost 218 per 100,000 residents - more than seven times the rate for the city as a whole" (Grimm & Schuba, 2022). Moreover, in 2021, West Garfield Park had 37 fatal and 188 non-fatal shooting victimizations, 156 robbery victimizations, and a total of 860 violent crime victimizations (Violence Reduction Dashboard, Home (chicago.gov) n.d.). Both drug selling and drug use are visible in the alleys near Cicero Avenue and at the intersecting corners. Syringes and

condoms are also visible in parking lots or alleys. Most businesses have bars on windows and doors to prevent break-ins. During data collection, the interviewer observed that former pimps and sex workers gathered in a parking lot to take pictures, reminisce, and socialize on two Saturday evenings. She also observed two persons being medically treated for overdose of heroin.

## Respondent-Driven Sampling

Respondent-driven sampling (RDS) was originally planned for both Chicago and New York City. It did not work well within Chicago's West Side Garfield Park neighborhood. Indeed, the one person who referred two additional persons lived outside of this neighborhood. RDS may have failed in this Chicago's neighborhood due to the power struggles and potential for conflict among active and retired gang members, the ambiguity in tightly connected social networks of who to claim as referring them, the norm to keep quiet about other people's activities, and the mix of recovering and active participants in the illicit sex trade. Younger gang members, for example, were unwilling to take a referral fee even if they spread the word, as claiming a referral might create social conflict and increase their risk. One third of the Chicago sample volunteered that they were former or active gang members. The West Garfield Park neighborhood has at least eight gangs: Black Souls, Four Corner Hustlers, Gangster Disciples, New Breeds, Conservative Vice Lords, Mafia Insane Vice Lords, Renegade Vice Lords, and Traveling Vice Lords (https://www.chicagoganghistory.com/neighborhood/west-garfield-park/). The presence of rival gangs violates the assumption of RDS that SMFs form single social networks, as subpopulations of persons may have no interaction or knowledge of SMFs in other gangs. Moreover, some participants who no longer were active as recruiters or SMFs had discontinued contact with active and inactive members of the illicit sex trade.

RDS sampling method requires a coupon system that tracks individuals through serial numbers and allows anonymity; it is used when no sampling frame exists and traditional random sampling techniques cannot be used (Heckathorn, 1997, 2002; Leon et al., 2016). It assumes that hidden populations, such as participants in the illicit sex trade, are socially networked in one large

network as either everyone is connected directly or indirectly through others in the network (Buchanan et al., 2022). Researchers select the initial participants who are allowed to refer up to three qualified persons and receive a nominal referral fee. The selection bias associated with the researchers who identified the 'seeds,' which are the participants selected to refer, is reduced as the number of waves increases (Buchanan et al., 2022). RDS may reduce the bias of referrals coming from the same participant through only allowing selected participants to refer one to three participants, if assumptions are met. This may be an improvement over a snowball sampling system if those who refer participants randomly select who they refer. Heckathorn and Cameron (2017) noted that random selection of potential participants from the referrer's social network is assumed and is "more plausible when members of the target population have easy and nonthreatening access to the research sites." (p. 107) Persons who are actively engaging in sex trafficking may perceive more risk of formal detection if they do not personally know the researchers; it is unlikely that referrals were randomly selected. Typically, RDS is used to assess population estimates; our proposal did not aim to estimate population estimates but to achieve more diverse samples. Thus, whether the samples from the two cities are similar on demographic characteristics, coerciveness of management styles and sources of learning will be assessed through statistical analyses. Theoretically, the nature of how people learn to facilitate sex workers would be the same across locations, though the knowledge about management tactics and strategies may differ. Two cities provide a more geographically diverse sample.

## Description of Ecological Sites and Sampling in New York City

The initial sampling strategy was identical for the New York City sample. Due to the crackdown on Backpage and similar sites, online recruitment was not ideal, so we had to revert to on-the-ground recruitment and traditional fieldwork strategies.

## i) Recruitment Strategies

The New York City field site was able to implement a respondent-driven sampling (RDS) strategy (see Heckathorn, 1997, 2002). The study participants were paid for an interview ($70 and for successful referrals of (up to three other participants) who are involved in trafficking from their networks ($15 for each). The incentivized recruitment developed from the first participants. The small number of original subjects become initial seeds. To improve heterogeneity, we strived for demographically and geographically varied seeds. Each person in a wave is considered a 'node' with 'edges' (relationships) to other nodes in previous or successive waves. We used RDS to diversify the sample and to understand how the sample was networked. We did not require a large sample size, typical of RDS used to derive population estimates.

We wanted a diverse sample in terms of gender identity and sexual orientation and recruited the initial seeds from two pools of participants. We had two advertisers from the LGBTQ+ community, and one advertiser was from Dr. Horning's data collection on sex market facilitators from 2011 in Harlem, NY. Dr. Horning and her lead fieldworker and interviewer, Sara Jordenö, are LGBTQ+ and had existing contacts with the community in New York City. The RDS from Harlem eventually led us to communities living in the shelter system in Jamaica, NY, close to LaGuardia Airport. During the COVID-19 pandemic, NY authorities moved those in the shelter system into hotels in Manhattan and the outer boroughs. We will describe the contours of the three communities where we obtained seeds.

## ii) Site Locations

### A) LGBTQ+ Community:

Most participants were LGBTQ+ Black and Latinx people from low-income inner-city families. The House and Ballroom Scene, and its younger scene, the Kiki Scene, provide an alternative family and support system for marginalized LGBTQ+ youth, who sometimes experienced rejection from their biological families. Members, especially transgender women, enter the scene as young as 13-14 and, through a mentoring system provided by older members,

get initiated into sex work. As these youths grow up, they sometimes become mentors. Further, often participants described "sharing a date." A common practice was to travel together for sex work, and this is important to note. We began with four seeds as we understood this community was harder to reach as they needed to protect each other due to their double and often triple marginalization. These four seeds yielded 13 referrals. As interviews waned, we recruited two more seeds from different segments of the community, one older transgender woman and a young 'butch queen' (i.e., a gay man who presents himself as gay and not as transgender or as a heteronormative male). We tried to diversify the sample through the RDS system. However, these seeds only produced one more referral. The total number of participants from this subsample was 19. There were other members of the LGBTQ+ community in our other two subsamples, but they were not connected to this group.

This community was much more reluctant to do interviews, and advertisers were key to recruiting seeds. There were far too many seeds for an effective RDS, but it is telling in terms of the privacy of this community. Also, being LGBTQ+, we had to modify parts of the interview and provide extensive explanations as the interview guide was piloted on cisgender men and women working in the sex trade. It is crucial to note that the LGBTQ+ community supports one another and provides each other with resources, making them more empowered and protective of their community members than heterosexual subcultures.

Most interviews with the LGBTQ+ community were via Zoom (n=17), with only two in-person interviews. This may be because this subsample was younger and more comfortable with online platforms. Alternatively, the LGBTQ+ community is well versed in communicable diseases due to the AIDS crisis and Monkeypox and they have been conditioned to protect themselves. Therefore, the insistence on Zoom meetings may be due to the community's cautiousness regarding COVID-19. These interviews took place from April 2021 to February 2022. Again, this study was advertised through word of mouth, and the referral system was built into the RDS procedure. Advertisers who obtained seeds were paid $30 per referral.

**B) East Harlem, NY:**

Advertisers spread the word about the study and how to contact the researchers; they were not interviewees but knew persons who facilitated or trafficked sex workers. Advertisers obtained the initial seeds and were paid $30 per referral. We began interviewing shelter system participants in Jamaica, NY, and hotels through this sampling strategy. We began with three interviewees who were asked to refer up to three qualifying persons in their social networks; these interviewees in the RDS system are called seeds. The 'seeds' generated 25 referrals in Harlem and one in Jamaica, NY. As interviews waned, we recruited two more seeds that generated some more referrals. The fifth seed, as a butch queen, meaning a gay man who displays both feminine and masculine characteristics, was distinct from the other four but did not yield subsequent interviews. All the interviews with participants from Harlem, NY, were in person and took place in public settings. While we gave participants a Zoom option, they either needed access to this technology, were uncomfortable using it, or did not trust it for various reasons. Two participants opted for Zoom interviews, but they did not show up. These interviews took place from April 2021 to May 2021. Again, this study was advertised through word of mouth, and the referral system was built into the RDS procedure.

The first location selected for interviews was near public housing projects in East Harlem. East Harlem has high crime rates that include widespread gang- and drug-related activity (Bourgois, 2002; Horning et al., 2023). In 2022, the overall serious crime rate in East Harlem was 22.3 per 1,000 people, much higher than the overall serious crime rate across NYC of 14.1 per 1,000 people. This trend is also present when viewing violent and property crime rates separately. The violent crime rate in East Harlem was 9.2 per 1,000 people, compared to the violent crime rate across the city of 5.1 per 1,000 people. The property crime rates for East Harlem and citywide were 12.4 and 9.0 per 1,000 people, respectively (NYU Furman Center, n.d.).

Many people living in the housing projects in East Harlem are at high risk for family poverty (Officer of the New York Comptroller, 2017). In East Harlem, almost one-third of all

households had incomes below the federal poverty levels, almost half of the children lived in poverty and almost one-third of housing types are housing projects (Office of the New York Comptroller, 2017).

The median household annual income in East Harlem was $43,860 in 2021, the year of data collection – approximately 39% of the median income of $72,150 in NYC (NYU Furman Center, n.d.). However, the percentage of households in East Harlem with an income of >$20,000 was 33.1%, the largest share of households (NYU Furman Center). That same year, the poverty rate in East Harlem was 31.2%, substantially higher than the poverty rate of 18% across the city (NYU Furman Center). However, the dynamics of the gentrification of Harlem combined with the extremely high local cost of living means that "relatively low median household income underestimates the economic challenges" experienced by many living in this community (Bourgois, 2002; Goodman, 2013; Horning et al., 2023). Overall, certain residents experience extremely high levels of deprivation, as East Harlem is an area of concentrated disadvantage.

*Figure 2.2. East Harlem Site Location*

*Note*: Photo by Sara Jordenö

### C) Shelters in Jamaica, NY:

The second and primary location for the project interviews was a shelter system in Jamaica, New York. The shelter system consisted of three modest hotels just outside JFK airport, each housing a different group of shelter residents. One location provided shelter services to residents who identified as male, while another focused on providing services to residents who identified as female. The final shelter location was designed to provide services to families. The surrounding area has no nearby food markets, which means that fresh, quality, affordable food is difficult to buy and Burger King is the only nearby food emporium.

Individuals living in these shelters are at risk for a multitude of disadvantages. For instance, prior research has shown that those experiencing a lack of housing are at higher risk for mortality, which decreases the life span by around 20 years (Nielson et al., 2011). Additionally, unhoused individuals are also at higher risk for victimization, which contributes to other issues such as physical and mental health issues, a reduction in quality of life, and increased social service needs (Montgomory et al., 2016).

The RDS tree in Harlem, NY, led us to this community. While we informed participants of the parameters of the RDS system, some participants had larger networks and informed many community members. Rather than turn away participants, we interviewed them and labeled them as seeds instead of referrals—well-networked participants who recruited over three participants. Allowing more than three referrals from one seed violated the assumptions of RDS; these extra referred participants were also allowed to refer up to three participants. As obtaining interviews for this hidden population of serious offenders was difficult, we did not want to lose any potential interview and did not want to potentially have negative messages spread about the researchers. Often, these participants were relatively close but were able to recruit due to the close quarters of the shelter system.

All the interviews with participants from Jamaica, NY, were in person and took place in public settings. While participants were given Zoom options, they either needed access to this

technology, were uncomfortable using it, or did not trust it for various reasons. Participants often had roommates in these scenarios, and the interviews would lack the confidentiality needed. These interviews took place in June 2021. Advertisers (who obtained seeds) were paid $30 per referral, and the RDS payments system is outlined above.

It is crucial to point out that although interviews took place in East Harlem and Jamaica, New York, SMFs may have operated in other parts of New York City and the surrounding boroughs. Based on prior work of SMFs in New York City, SMFs can work on well-known strolls, in their neighborhoods, or both, and multiple sex work hot spots. Horning et al. (2024) have analyzed how sex market facilitators use the urban landscape and geography in New York City and how this has changed over time. Additionally, where they work may change over time and their original sites of learning could be in other cities or states.

*Figure 2.3. NYC Field Site*


*Note*: Photo by Sara Jordenö

### Advisory Board Role

The advisory board consisted of three persons from agencies that assisted sex trafficking victims or sex workers. The members of the advisory board were Bella Robinson at COYOTE RI, Brenda Myer-Powells at Ernestine's Daughter, and Kaethe Morris Hoffer at Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation. We met with members before the project launch who assisted us in modifying questions, the structure of the interview, and how to recruit. One provided a critical connection that assisted with recruitment issues. Board members also assisted in understanding the implications of key findings.

## Interviews and Analysis Methods

The semi-structured interview schedule was tested and modified to improve organization and remove redundancies. Before potential participants were interviewed, we assessed their eligibility with screening questions about their age, whether they have recruited or managed in the illicit sex trade in the last ten years in (NYC, Chicago), and whether they lived in (NYC, Chicago). Eligible participants consented to the interviews being audio-recorded. Participants were asked open-ended questions to understand: a) their self-narratives and key life events; b) the mentoring, grooming, and learning of the skills, attitudes, and knowledge to manage and recruit sex workers successfully in the illicit sex trade; c) the knowledge that they were willing to share with other aspiring third-party facilitators; and d) their views on passing along knowledge or support if their children became involved in the illicit sex trade. Participants also were asked closed-ended questions to assess their roles in the illicit sex trade, management tactics, and strategies, and prior exposure to being forced or deceived into performing sex work. Finally, we asked a series of closed-ended questions to assess the characteristics of their social support networks. Appendix B shows the consent form and Appendix C provides the finalized semi-structured interview schedule.

## Assessing Trauma in Life Stories

The interview began with questions that established rapport and allowed participants to discuss their life history and self-narratives. Specifically, interviewees were asked a set of questions to assess self-narratives in previous research on minors involved in serious delinquency (McClean et al., 2013; McClean, 2015). Interviewees were told that they would be reflecting on their life as if the interviewer were creating a movie of their life, and as icebreaker questions were asked what type of movie it would be (e.g., romance, comedy, drama, horror, action) and what actor would play them as well as whether their character would be a good person, villain, or both. Using McClean's self-narrative open-ended questions, interviewees provided detailed accounts of an important early childhood memory, a time when they were happy, a time when they were sad or angry, and an event where they learned something about themselves (called 'self-defining moments'). These narratives often provided sources of learning from trauma, their views of self, and their struggles and relationships with significant others. These questions were framed as understanding the interviewee as a person, and the interviewee was free to talk about any part of their life, whether it was connected to the illicit sex trade or not. To obtain critical stories of how they see themselves, participants were told,

> "I want you to tell me about the defining moments or events in your life. Think of the most important stories that relate to how you see yourself. I will ask you to describe four key events: a) your earliest important memory; b) a high point in your life when you experienced joy or happiness; c) a low point in your life when you felt sad, angry or disgusted; and a self-defining event."

Interviewers emphasized that it was interviewees' choice of the stories that they told about themselves and used probes to clarify aspects of the story. Later, a self-defining event was defined as one where the person learned something about themselves. From cognitive transformation theory of desistance (Giordano, Cernkovich, & Rudolph, 2002), individuals also were asked about their plans for any changes in their life in the next five years. From self-identity transformation

theory of desistance (Paternoster & Bushway, 2009), individuals also were asked about what fears they have about their life in the future.

In Chapter 3, "Learning from Trauma," we discuss how interviewees made sense of childhood and young adulthood traumas, including the extent to which they perceived traumatic events as an impetus for their entry into the illicit sex trade. The coding of responses to these questions assessed the extent to which traumatic events occurring before entry, during involvement, or after exiting the illicit sex trade were prominent in their self-narratives and the lessons that they learned from these traumatic events. The paragraphs below describe the coding process, concepts, and variables.

## Coding Traumatic Events

One of the Co-PIs trained three research assistants to code narratives about trauma, capture the types of traumas mentioned, and answer questions to clarify coding of specific examples. The types of traumas were drawn from prior research (e.g., Felitti et al., 1998; Franchino-Olsen, 2021; Franchino-Olsen et al., 2022; Fritzon et al., 2021) and included: a) physical violence; b) sexual abuse or sexual assault; c) death of a closed friend or family member; d) witnessing violence; e) entered sex work through force or coercion; f) emotional abuse; g) lost of a child; h) witnessing domestic violence between parents; i) medical trauma from a medical procedure or health issue; and j) having food or shelter insecurity because parents' neglected, abandoned them, or forced them out of the house.

The coding form was initially developed and applied to the Chicago narratives. A small subset of disagreements was resolved through discussion with the Co-PI. There were no disagreements on most categories. Two disagreements occurred with sexual abuse or assault (e.g., an older woman who approached and seduced a young adolescent male and an adult pimp getting a sex worker who was a minor pregnant); these were labeled sexual assaults. Two cases were not coded as sex work trauma (e.g., an adolescent who bought sex). All excerpts about trauma were categorized and organized into different types, and an excerpt could be in two categories (e.g., a

story of witnessing domestic violence against a parent and being physically harmed as a child). In keeping with the definition of psychological trauma as having negative repercussions from the interviewees' perspective or their relationships or self-identity (Isobel et al., 2019), we coded stories about sex work as trauma if individuals indicated they were forced, tricked, or coerced into doing the work and did not code if it individuals expressed these stories to demonstrate their competence, pride or satisfaction with their work. Natural deaths of loved ones were coded as traumatic events.

For Chapter 3, we also did not calculate being arrested or drug addiction as traumas as we did not want to confound the definition of psychological trauma with criminal behavior. Moreover, drug use and addiction are part of the deviant culture of the illicit sex trade, and are negative strategies to cope with traumatic events (Caparros & Masferrer, 2021; Pierce et al., 2019; Robertson et al., 2010). Only 34 (18.6%) of the participants mentioned drug addiction and of these only six participants mentioned addiction in their life story and did not mention any of the psychological traumas in the quantitative measures. These six individuals had participated in drug treatment programs and were no longer addicted to drugs. In the sample, 29.5% mentioned in their life stories that they were arrested, with about 80% of the arrests occurring during their involvement in the illicit sex trade.

The research assistant who coded Chicago and another research assistant independently coded the NYC narratives and a third research assistant compiled the disagreements in a word document. The third research assistant and one of the Co-PI reached an agreement on how the excerpt should be coded. Overall, 12 of the cases had a disagreement (93.4% overall agreement). The following categories had no disagreements: physical violence, sexual abuse, arrested, emotional abuse, witness domestic violence between parents, medical trauma and loss of children. One coder missed coding a food and shelter insecurity trauma and missed coding one drug addiction. All other 10 disagreements occurred between the categories of death of a loved one and witnessing community violence, which required that the SMF actually saw the violence

occurring. One research assistant coded these cases as only trauma from death of a loved one as the other coded them as witnessing community violence. Seven of these cases were resolved as death of a loved one and three were resolved as both death of a loved one and witnessing community violence as the SMF was at the place when their loved one was shot. Appendix D provides the definitions of each of the trauma categories.

For each narrative where trauma was described, when it occurred relative to their involvement in the illicit sex trade also was classified into one of these categories: a) before entry, b) before and during entry, c) only during, d) only after, and e) during and after entry. The two coders used context to assess the time frame if it was missing from the narrative, such as comparing the date of the trauma and when the age of entering the illicit sex trade or comparing the year they left the sex trade and the date of the trauma.

### Motivated Entry

The coders also categorized whether, from the interviewee's perspective, the trauma affected their participation (entry or exit) in the illicit sex trade. Five categories were developed: a) motivated entry in that the traumatic event stimulated, contributed, or motivated participant to participate in the illicit sex trade; b) motivated exit; c) unconnected as there was no explicit connection or reasonable implied connection to their entry or reduction in participation in the illicit sex trade; d) partial desistance was coded if the trauma occurred after the person was involved and contributed to a reduction in their involvement; and e) bilateral or indirect connection was coded if participants indicated it changed their beliefs through learning how to avoid police, through relocating the business, through changing their management style and other ways of resolving problems associated with involvement in the illicit sex trade or bilateral connection as the trauma occurred due to work in the sex trade and affected related beliefs or behaviors. This coding recognizes that narratives contain "linking statements", where interviewees attribute an event or learning as connected to their behavior, (Giordano, 2020) between trauma and behavior related to the illicit sex trade. This report focuses on whether

statements that trauma contributed to their entry into the illicit sex trade were made. A dichotomous variable called motivated entry was created with 0 equal to no statements connecting their trauma to their entry were made (71.0%; n = 130) and 1 equal to make a statement that suggested their trauma contributed to their entry into the illicit sex trade (26.0%; n = 53). Two coders coded all of the NYC sample and the inter-rater reliability for motivated entry was good (linear weighted Kappa = .84). Appendix D provides the definitions for participants' connection between their traumatic event and their involvement in the illicit sex trade.

## Coding of Lessons Learned from Trauma

Participants were not routinely asked about the effect of traumatic events, so this coding represents only the coding of narratives where explicit learning was articulated. One of the Co-PIs and a research assistant developed a preliminary code sheet including concepts from psychological research on trauma such as distrust of people, hatred or distrust of women or men, being disbelieved or rejected after disclosing the trauma, surviving trauma through relying on themselves or working in illicit trades for food and shelter, and views of self (Isobel et al., 2019; Walsh, 2020; Elliot et al., 2022). We then used grounded theory to add additional categories until all excerpts about lessons from trauma were categorized. A category was added to capture responses where respondents stated it had an impact or was traumatizing or mentioned mental health struggles without providing more specific beliefs. A sample of 52 cases were randomly selected and coded by a second coder and weighted linear Kappas were calculated for the conceptual categories. The linear weighted Kappas indicated that the coding had high inter-rater reliability across all categories: a) loss of trust in general (Kappa = .94); b) anger because their disclosure of abuse was not believed (Kappa = 1.0); c) hatred or loss of trust for a specific gender (Kappa = .92); d) trauma led to a positive or negative self-image (Kappa = .81); e) Use or abuse of drugs to cope with the trauma (Kappa = .88); f) mentioned trauma had an unspecified impact or a mental health effect (Kappa = 1.0); mentioned trauma led to survival response or a need to enter

illicit trades for food and shelter (Kappa = 1.0). Appendix E provides the definitions of the different lessons learned from their traumatic events.

## Learning about Recruiting, Managing or Trafficking

Chapters 4 and 5 cover interviewees' recall of how they learned to recruit or manage. Interviewees were first asked to describe their tasks and what they provided to their sex workers, as well as the label they used to describe what they did. Participants also were asked at what age and how many years they began managing, pimping, recruiting, or brokering, using the interviewee's labels for assigned their role. Two open-ended questions were asked to assess how they learned to recruit and develop strategies to manage or facilitate sex workers: "How did you start managing/recruiting sex workers? " and "How did you know what to do? ". Interviewers used several probes to elicit additional information about the sources and what was learned.

Interviewees were asked separate questions about how they found sex workers to recruit, what they told potential workers, and what characteristics participants looked for when recruiting sex workers; these questions also often revealed that they learned recruitment from observing other third-party facilitators or being told how to target persons as potential sex workers.

To assess the themes about lessons learned about recruiting, a coding form was initially created from prior research (Horning & Sviken, 2017; Horning, Thomas & Jordeno, 2019; Stalans & Finn, 2016; Stalans & Finn, 2018; Stalans & Finn, 2019). The coding focused on what respondents explicitly stated that they learned from their sources. One of the Co-PIs trained two experienced research assistants to code narratives about learning to facilitate and to answer questions to clarify coding of specific examples. A sample of 25 excerpts were coded by two independent coders to assess inter-rater reliability and weighted linear Kappas were computed. The main concepts were: a) understands women and how they think and what they want (Kappa = .82); b) how to recruit (Kappa = .84); c) avoid police detection or evade arrest (Kappa = .90); d) persuasive strategies (Kappa =1.0); e) manipulation and deceiving workers or potential recruits (Kappa =1.0); and f) coercive strategies (Kappa = .91) and g) effective sex work (Kappa = .87).

Some respondents mentioned how to steal or to keep the workers looking attractive and sexy. Appendix F provides the coding definition of each of these categories.

## Identifying Characteristics of an Easy Target

To address characteristics that SMFs targeted to recruit sex workers, interviewees were asked, "What characteristics do you look for when recruiting sex workers and why? " As a probe or alternative phrasing, interviewers asked, "What makes someone an easy recruit?" The open-ended responses were coded into categories using grounded theory. Initially, one research assistant coded responses from NYC and one research assistant coded responses from Chicago with the Co-PI checking the coding. A third research assistant coded 140 participants' excerpts and searched for any who were missing the question. Of the 183 respondents, 39 were not asked this question. Linear weighted Kappas were computed to assess inter-rater reliability between the third coder and the two original coders. Conceptual categories capturing characteristics related to attractiveness or sexy and personality traits of low self-esteem, needy, fearful, fearless, and willing to listen or loyalty had very high linear weighted kappas ranging from .95 to 1.00, $p < .001$. Conceptual category of vulnerability consisting of several separately coded concepts had a strong kappa of .83, $p < .001$. The vulnerability separately coded concepts had the following significant kappas: stated vulnerable or target (.88), young (.82), needy (.95), low self-esteem (.94), homeless (.67), fearful (1.00) and dysfunction family or previous trauma (.90). The Easy to Manage category had an overall kappa of (.98) and consisted of loyalty or willing to listen (.97), sexy or attractive (.97) and fearless (1.0). The Drug User category had an overall kappa of .83 and consisted of using or addicted to hard illicit drugs (.83) and not using hard illicit drugs (.79). The Willing Workers category had an overall kappa of .79 and consisted of two categories: Willing to work (.94) and approached the facilitator (.78). Appendix G provides a description of these categories.

## Social Support Networks

We assessed each interviewee's social support network by expanding upon questions used in previous social network studies (e.g., Papachristos et al., 2012). To preserve anonymity,

interviewees provided nicknames for persons in their social network. Specifically, individual nicknames were used for each person they had gone out with socially to dinners, movies at home, or just for fun activities (not for work) or for people in these roles: a) whom they discussed important matters with or changes in their life; b) whom they would ask to borrow a large sum of money; c) who they would ask for help in finding a legal job; d) who they could count on to have their back in a fight. The interviewers wrote these names on a diagram and then explained that we wanted to know how connected each person you mentioned is to each other. Interviewees used a four-point scale: 1 = stranger; 2 = not strangers but do not hang out with you socially; 3 = hang out with you socially, but not emotionally close; and 4 = hang out with you and are close and supportive. participants first rated their relationship to each person in their social network and then rated each person's relationship to all other persons in their social network. Interviewees also indicated whether the named persons were involved in deviant activities of drug selling or the illicit sex trade. Other characteristics were also collected, including the gender of each person and whether they had ever been arrested.

We had four measures of the number of prosocial or deviant persons in their social networks: 1) persons who were involved in the illicit sex trade (M = 1.60; SD = 1.50; zero = 25.0%); 2) persons who were involved in the illicit drug trade (M = 1.51; SD = 1.73; zero = 38.5%); 3) persons who had been arrested (M = 2.81; SD = 1.94; zero = 15.8%). The count of the number of persons for each of these categories were skewed, and to pull in outliers six or greater was equal to six. A summary dichotomous measure of whether their support persons were all involved in some deviant activity (drug or sex trade or been arrested) was created with 0 = not all (64.2%, n=104) and 1 = all persons in the network are deviant (35.8%, n=35.8%). There were 21 participants missing information on the deviance of their social networks.

For all proportion measures, except the family member measure, four categories of proportions were created based on sufficient N in the distributions and to provide more information than simple means, medians, or standard deviations from continuous measures.

These categories were none, 1 to 25%, 26% to 59%, and 60% or more of their support network. For the proportion of family members in their social network, the categories were none, less than half, or half or greater, as the distributions were more negatively skewed. All proportion measures were created by dividing the number in their support network that served a particular function (e.g., had their back in a fight) or had a specific characteristic (e.g., been arrested) by the total number in their support network.

## Creating Measures of Coercive Sex Traffickers

Facilitators of sex workers can vary in the strategies that they use from accepting only those sex workers who come to them and want to work to committing physical violence or taking most of their economic earnings to keep them dependent on them. Sex trafficking laws prohibit the use of force and coercion and those who use physical violence or take 85% or more of their earnings are committing the most severe forms of sex trafficking. We created a dichotomous measure to identify participants who were coercive sex traffickers through combining the two questions asked about threatening to use or using physical violence on sex workers and the percentage of money that they took. If they had either of these characteristics, they were labeled a coercive sex trafficker: 0 = not physically violent or economically coercive (46.2%; n = 78) and 1 = physically violent or economically coercive (53.8%; n = 91). Fourteen were missing information on these coercive strategies.

## Training of Interviewers

For both sites, each interviewer received training using Respondent Driven Sampling. The initial interviews were discussed across the sites and some changes to the interview schedule were made based on these observations. Some questions had been used in previous studies (Horning, 2011; Stalans & Finn, 2016, 2019).

Two interviewers for the Chicago study were Dr. Stalans and Milan Tvardek, a research assistant with a master's degree in social psychology from Loyola University Chicago. Dr. Stalans trained Milan, and before interviewing any participants, Milan practiced her skills by interviewing

Dr. Stalans, who provided hypothetical information. Milan Tvardek interviewed 24 participants, and Dr. Stalans interviewed 76 participants. Dr. Stalans has much experience with qualitative interviewing, including interviewing 49 pimps and 22 sex workers in Chicago in 2013-2014 who were recruited from Backpage, Craigslist, and other social media sites.

There were three primary interviewers for the New York City study: Dr. Horning, Sara Jordenö, and research assistant Daria Paterson. The interview guide was thoroughly explained, and we practiced interviewing each other to hone the interview guide and practice. Dr. Horning and Sara Jordenö both had extensive experience with qualitative interviewing and had previously interviewed 85 participants in Harlem, NY, in 2011-2012.

## Description of Samples

Overall, there were 84 eligible interviewees in NYC and 99 in Chicago, for a total sample size of 183. The Chicago site completed interviews in June of 2021, and the New York City site was closed to interviews on August 31, 2022. Two interviews, one from each site, were completed but were beyond the ten-year timeframe; these two interviews provide diversity (LGBTQ+ or Native American) and a critical perspective on some issues. Two individuals in Chicago initially passed the pre-screening, but when an open-ended question was asked, it became clear that they were under the influence of illicit drugs, and the interviews were terminated.

Table 2.1 describes the demographics of each sample and the total sample. The samples are diverse regarding relationship status, education, current employment in a legal job, and gender but more homogenous in race and sexual orientation. For the total sample across both sites, 48.9% are single, 24.5% are in a relationship, 12.5% are married, and the rest have other statuses. Educational achievement has good diversity across both sites with the total sample: 28.3% did not achieve a high school diploma, 42.9% achieved a GED or HS diploma, 17.4% reported some college, and 11% received a college degree. Across the sites, gender identity is diverse: 40.8% female, 51.1% male, and 8.1% identified as a transgender woman. Most participants are

heterosexual (79.9%), and 21.1% of the LGBTQ+ community includes gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, and asexual. Race is predominately Black (77.1%), with 4.3% White and 17.9% as other races. Overall, 20.7% identified as Latino, with 41.2% of the NYC sample identifying as Latino and only 3.0% of the Chicago sample reporting this ethnic identity. For each site and the total sample, there was good diversity on whether participants reported holding a current legal job, with 46.2% of the total sample having a current legal job.

## Sample Experience in the Illicit Sex Trade

The current age for the total sample ranged from 18 to 69, with a mean age of 46.7 (SD = 11.9; Median = 49). Thus, our sample does not provide a good representation of young persons who are recruiters or third-party facilitators in the illicit sex trade. Moreover, the New York City sample was younger (M = 41.16) than the Chicago sample (M = 51.4), t (156.3) = 6.31, p < .001. The Chicago sample also had 47.5% of people with at least 24 years of experience as third-party facilitators or recruiters compared to the 23% of the NYC sample with this much experience. In contrast, only 6.1% of the Chicago sample compared to 21.3% of the New York City sample had between less than one to three years of experience, $X^2$ (6) = 18.65, p < .005, eta = .33. The average number of years as recruiters or sex market facilitators was significantly higher in the Chicago sample (M = 23.1) compared to the New York City sample (M = 13.62), t (158) = -4.57, p < .001. The two sites, however, did not differ on age at the time they started recruiting or facilitating sex workers in the illicit sex trade, with both the Chicago sample and the New York sample having a starting age of 20.7, t (167) = -.08, p < .93.

**Table 2.1.** *Demographics for New York City and Chicago Samples*

| Demographics | NYC (n=84) % (n) | Chicago (n=99) % (n) | Total (N=183) % (n) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Current Relationship Status | | | |
| Single | 58.0% (47) | 44.3% (43) | 50.6% (90) |
| In a Relationship | 14.8% (12) | 34.0% (33) | 25.3% (45) |
| Married | 14.8% (12) | 10.3% (10) | 12.4% (22) |
| Separated/Divorced | 6.1% (5) | 9.3% (9) | 7.8% (14) |
| Other | 6.2% (5) | 2.1% (2) | 3.9% (7) |
| Missing | 3.6% (3) | 2.0% (2) | 2.7% (5) |
| Education Level | | | |
| Did not graduate HS | 26.4% (22) | 30.4% (30) | 28.4% (52) |
| GED or HS Diploma | 41.0% (34) | 45.4% (45) | 43.4% (79) |
| Some College | 18.1% (15) | 17.2% (17) | 17.6% (32) |
| 2 year degree | 3.6% (3) | 4.0% (4) | 3.8% (7) |
| B.A./B.S./M.A. Degree | 10.8% (9) | 3.0% (3) | 6.5% (12) |
| Missing | 1.2% (1) | 0% (0) | 0.5% (1) |
| Sexual Orientation | | | |
| Heterosexual | 73.8% (62) | 83.8% (83) | 79.2% (145) |
| Gay or Lesbian | 9.5% (8) | 2.0% (2) | 5.5% (10) |
| Bisexual | 4.8% (4) | 13.1% (13) | 9.3% (17) |
| Pansexual | 8.3% (7) | 1.0% (1) | 4.4% (8) |
| Asexual | 1.2% (1) | 0% (0) | .5% (1) |
| Other | 2.4% (1) | 0% (0) | 1.1% (2) |
| Missing | 0% (0) | 0% (0) | 0% (0) |
| Gender Identity | | | |
| Female | 29.8% (25) | 49.5% (49) | 40.4% (74) |
| Male | 52.4% (44) | 50.5% (50) | 51.4% (94) |
| Transgender woman/Nonbinary | 17.9% (15) | 0% (0) | 8.2% (15) |
| Race | | | |
| Black | 69.5% (50) | 92.9% (92) | 77.6% (142) |
| White | 3.6% (3) | 5.1% (5) | 4.4% (8) |
| Other | 36.9% (31) | 2.0% (2) | 18.0% (33) |
| Has a legal job now? | | | |
| No | 39.3% (33) | 40.4% (40) | 39.9% (73) |
| Yes | 33.3% (28) | 56.6% (56) | 45.9% (84) |
| Missing | 27.4% (23) | 3.0% (3) | 14.2% (26) |
| Identified as Latino | 40.5% (34) | 3.0% (3) | 20.2% (37) |
| Was Born in USA | 92.9% (78) | 100.0% (99) | 96.7% (177) |

Table 2.2 provides the frequency distributions for the age at which interviewees began facilitating or recruiting sex workers, years of experience, whether currently facilitating, and childhood exposure to others in the illicit sex trade. Interviewees were almost evenly split on whether they were currently facilitating or recruiting in the illicit sex industry, with 45.1% of the

sample active at the time of the interview and 54.3% having stopped sometime within the last ten years. There was no statistically significant difference in whether interviewees were active. For those with information, most of the Chicago and NYC samples were raised in neighborhoods where street prostitution was visible. Similarly, 64.5% of NYC interviewees (40 of 62) and 68.4% of Chicago interviewees knew of 47) NYC and 53.6% (52 of 97) Chicago interviewees had family members who participated in the illicit sex trade as sex workers or sex market facilitators.

**Table 2.2.** *Description of Participants' Exposure to Illicit Sex Trade*

| | NYC (n=84) % (n) | Chicago (n=99) % (n) | Total (N=183) % (n) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Active facilitator at time of interview | | | |
| No | 57.8% (48) | 51.5% (51) | 54.4% (99) |
| Yes | 42.2% (35) | 48.5% (48) | 45.6% (83) |
| Missing | 1.2% (1) | 0% (0) | .5% (1) |
| Grew up in a neighborhood with visible prostitution? | | | |
| No | 25.8% (16) | 9.4% (9) | 15.8% (25) |
| Yes | 74.2% (46) | 90.6% (87) | 84.2% (133) |
| Missing | 26.2% (22) | 3.0% (3) | 13.7% (25) |
| As a child, knew persons involved in the illicit sex trade | | | |
| No | 34.4% (21) | 31.6% (30) | 32.7% (51) |
| Yes | 65.6% (40) | 68.4% (65) | 67.3% (105) |
| Missing | 27.4% (23) | 4.0% (4) | 14.8% (27) |
| Age started in the illicit sex trade | | | |
| 8 to 15 | 24.3% (17) | 21.2% (21) | 22.5% (38) |
| 16 to 19 | 32.9% (23) | 36.4% (36) | 34.9% (59) |
| 20 thru 24 | 18.6% (13) | 17.2% (17) | 17.8% (30) |
| 25 thru 30 | 11.4% (8) | 15.2% (15) | 13.6% (23) |
| 31 thru highest | 12.9% (9) | 10.1% (10) | 11.2% (19) |
| Missing | 16.7% (14) | 0% (0) | 7.7% (14) |
| Number of Years in the Illicit Sex Trade | | | |
| 0 to 9 years | 47.5% (29) | 17.2% (17) | 28.7% (46) |
| 10 to 19 years | 21.3% (13) | 23.2% (23) | 22.5% (36) |
| 20 to 29 years | 19.7% (12) | 20.2% (20) | 20.0% (32) |
| 30 or greater number of years | 11.5% (7) | 39.4% (39) | 28.7% (46) |
| Missing | 27.4% (23) | 0% (0) | 12.6% (23) |

## Analysis Plan

We used several different analyses to assess the patterns and mechanisms of how SMFs learned to facilitate or recruit and the characteristics of those in their social support networks.

Our research is informed through a mixed-method approach. The philosophy of science associated with the mixed method approach is pragmatism, which challenges the beliefs that qualitative and quantitative analyses are incompatible (Brent & Kraska, 2010). The type of qualitative analyses is covered for several measures in the above description; in Chapter 5, a sensitizing qualitative analysis (see Blumer, 1954; Bowen, 2006) is undertaken to identify the differences and similarities across three groups of gender identities: heterosexual, cisgender men; heterosexual cisgender women; and LGBTQ+ participants. The quantitative statistical tools include appropriate bivariate statistics such as t-test or chi-squares, depending on the measurement level, as well as multivariate analyses such as negative binomial regressions for counts. As the tools vary across the chapters, each chapter contains an analysis plan before describing the findings. We removed from respondents' quotes repetitive words and filler phrases (um, uh, you know, know what I mean?, etc), which are represented with (---). We also removed from the quotes any interviewer response where it simply attempted to repeat a word to have the respondent continue the story; we kept in any substantive questions or questions that provided context to the respondents' response so that the reader could assess for themselves the context of the narrative. All names associated with quotes are pseudonyms that the authors selected. They are not the pseudonyms that respondents selected to further protect participants' anonymity in case they provided street names. The selected names are consistently associated with the same respondent through creating an Excel file that contains their random ID and the selected name.

## Conclusion

This study provides the largest sample of qualitative interviews with third-party facilitators and draws upon those currently active or quitting within the last ten years. The total sample comprises African-Am1erican and Latinx samples from economically challenged neighborhoods and backgrounds. About forty percent reported holding a legal job, and the sample was diverse in educational achievement, relationship status, and gender identities. Most

individuals had heterosexual orientations, with 21% belonging to the LGBTQ+ community. Half of the sample were currently active offenders with no differences across the two sites. The New York City sample was younger and more diverse on racial identity and gender identity than the Chicago sample. Though the average age of starting as a recruiter or sex market facilitator was 20.7 across the two sites, the Chicago sample had a higher proportion of persons who had been recruiting or facilitating for at least 24 years in the illicit sex trade. The samples were similar on sexual orientation, legal employment, and other background characteristics. The next chapter compares the Chicago and New York samples on roles, management tactics, sources from which they learned, and the nature of what they learned. Appendix H contains the current list of Artifacts, the presentations, and archived datasets. This list will continue to expand as articles are submitted for publication in refereed academic journals.

# Chapter 3. Learning from Trauma and Narrating Self-Stories

Psychological trauma is a negative emotional response to serious distressing events such as sexual or physical victimization, resulting in long-lasting disruption in emotional, mental, or spiritual well-being and social relationships (Isobel et al., 2019; Walsh, 2020). Psychological trauma from adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) occurs when individuals learn lessons from these experiences that have negative repercussions for their self-identities or bonds with others (Isobel et al., 2019). Understanding the lessons learned from traumatic experiences is critical information about how sex market facilitators (SMFs)/sex traffickers (ST) think and feel about their self-identity (i.e., self-narrative), role, sex workers, and criminal acts. To understand how prior traumatic experiences become connected to one's view of self (i.e., self-narratives), we connect life course social learning theory (Giordano, 2020) and narrative criminology (Presser & Sandberg, 2015).

Life course social learning theory assumes that individuals are active learners who react with emotions and reflect upon significant moments to draw meaning about trusting others and self and finding ways to survive and reach desired goals (Giordano, 2020). People create stories about critical moments or events in their lives, especially distressing and traumatic events. The creation of these stories serves many purposes, which include understanding an event's meaning, resolving ethical dilemmas, legitimating past actions, contemplating future actions, and assessing one's relationship with others and with society (McAdam, 1993; McLean et al., 2007; Presser & Sandberg, 2015). Self-narratives are a constellation of stories about experiences that convey meaning about how they see their former, current, and future selves. These self-narratives are evolving and have a reciprocal and embedded relationship with the self, as accessible self-narratives contribute to the emotional and cognitive processes that create and edit stories of self (McAdams, 1993; McLean et al., 2007).

Narrative criminology (Presser & Sandberg, 2015) focuses on analyzing narratives from offenders as such stories contribute to future actions and provide insights into the offenders' relationships with significant others and conventional society. Indeed, research suggests that self-narratives contribute to desistance and persistence of serious offending (e.g., Giordano et al., 2007; Paternoster & Bushway, 2009; Presser & Sandberg, 2015). This chapter examines the stories that SMFs told to represent who they are (self-narratives) during the interview, the extent to which stories about traumatic events are told, and what lessons are learned. This chapter addresses some of the patterned processes in the overarching research question: Are there patterned processes or mechanisms from which older/experienced traffickers teach or model these skills to the pimps, sex workers, or sex trafficking victims who, over time, recruit other trafficking victims. Specifically, this chapter focuses on SMFs'/traffickers' spontaneous discussion of important events in their lives to assess from their perspective the extent to which trauma contributed to their entry and was part of their experiences before, during, and after exiting the illicit sex trade. Psychological trauma may have indirectly contributed to their interest in the

facilitation of sex workers through the lessons that they learned from the trauma. The following three specific research questions are addressed:

1. When SMFs are asked about critical memories of events in their life, how prevalent will traumatic events be in their self-narratives, and at what stage of their involvement (before, during, or after exiting) in the illicit sex trade did these events occur?
2. What meaning and lessons are learned from traumatic experiences to inform their self-identity and their involvement in the illicit sex trade?
3. Will the types and frequency of traumas categories be similar or different across Chicago and NYC samples and across heterosexual, cisgender men, heterosexual, cisgender women, and the LGBTQ+ community?

## Analysis Plan

A mixed-method approach is used to address these questions. As the methodology chapter noted, the questions about critical stories in their lives were coded for the type of traumatic events, whether these events occurred before, during involvement, or after leaving the illicit sex trade, and whether participants attributed the traumatic event as an impetus for their entry into the illicit sex trade. Quantitative totals were calculated across the different types of trauma, and t-tests were performed to assess differences in location, gender identity, and sexual orientation. Chi-square analyses to assess whether the types of traumas in SMFs' life stories and attributing trauma as a contributor to their initial involvement in the illicit sex trade are similar or different across Chicago and NYC samples and across heterosexual, cisgender men, heterosexual, cisgender women, and LGBTQ+ participants. The strength of the relationship is assessed with the Phi correlation for location and with Cramer's V for the three groups of gender identity and sexual orientation.

# Results

## Types of Traumas and Variation Across Sites

Most participants (82.5%) mentioned at least one trauma in their self-narrative, and of these, 24.6% mentioned two types of traumas, and 13.7% mentioned three to six different types of traumas. Some of these traumatic events, especially sexual abuse or witnessing violence, contained multiple incidents across the life course. Table 3.1 presents the total number of traumatic events before entry, during involvement, and after exiting the illicit sex trade. Traumatic events classified as before entry into the illicit sex trade included traumas that occurred before entry, but some may have continued during their involvement in the illicit sex trade. These means represent the number of different types of traumas (e.g., physical childhood abuse, rape as an adult, witnessing domestic violence as a child, witnessing community violence); the number of incidences were not coded.

Table 3.1. *Average Number of Types of Traumas Mentioned Before, During and After Exiting the Illicit Sex Trade for Each Site*

| Total Number of Traumas Mentioned | NYC (n=84) Mean (SD) | Chicago (n=99) Mean (SD) |
|---|---|---|
| Total number of different trauma types | 1.13 (98) | 1.68** (1.20) |
| Before entry into illicit sex trade | .81 (.87) | .80 (.94) |
| Attributed a trauma as motivating entry | .37 (.69) | .60 (1.00) |
| Only during involvement in illicit sex trade | .21 (.47) | .73***(.79) |
| After exiting illicit sex trade | .59 (.66) | .70 (.84) |

*Note*:* < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001.

Table 3.1 presents the mean number of different types of traumas recalled before, during, and after involvement in the illicit sex trade for the Chicago and NYC samples. The Chicago sample had a higher total mean number of different types of traumas (M = 1.68) than the NYC sample (M

= 1.13), which was due to the traumatic events that occurred during their involvement in the illicit sex trade. The Chicago and NYC samples recalled a similar number of traumas before entry and after exiting the illicit sex trade. They were similar in attributing a traumatic event as a motivator for their entry.

**Table 3.2.** *Percentage of Chicago and NYC Samples Who Recalled at Least One Traumatic Event in their Life Stories*

| | NYC (n=84) % (n) | Chicago (n=99) % (n) |
|---|---|---|
| At least one trauma before, during, or after involvement | 71.2% (60) | 91.9%*** (91) |
| Attributed a trauma as a motivating entry | 26.2% (22) | 37.4% (37) |
| At least one trauma before entry into illicit sex trade | 56.0% (47) | 53.5% (53) |
| Mentioned at least two traumas before entry | 51.2% (43) | 49.5% (49) |
| Only during involvement in illicit sex trade | 16.0% (19) | 57.6%*** (57) |
| After exiting illicit sex trade | 51.2% (43) | 49.5% (43) |

*Note:* * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

Table 3.2 presents the percentage of each sample that recalled traumatic events before, during, and after their involvement in the illicit sex trade. Most of both samples recalled at least one traumatic event in their life story. However, the Chicago sample had a higher incorporation of trauma in their life stories (91.9%) than the NYC sample (71.2%). The Chicago and NYC samples had similar incorporation of trauma in their life stories that occurred before they entered into the illicit sex trade, with about half of each sample recalling childhood trauma and mentioning two different types of traumas before they entered into the illicit sex trade. The Chicago and NYC samples were also similar in attributing childhood trauma as a contributor to why they became involved in the illicit sex trade. The difference between sites is due to recollections about traumas that occurred during their involvement in the illicit sex trade. As shown in Table 3.2, 57.6% of the

Chicago sample, compared to 16.0% of the NYC sample, recalled a traumatic experience that occurred only during their involvement in the sex trade.

The Garfield Park area of Chicago is one of the highest gun violence areas in the city. We further examined the type of trauma recalled for those who recalled any traumatic event during involvement in the sex trade; almost 44% (n=25) of the Chicago sample reported non-sexual violence victimization during their involvement in the sex trade compared to only 12.5% (n=2) of the NYC sample, $X^2(1) = 5.27$, $p < .02$. This difference suggests that the street-based illicit sex trade of this Chicago neighborhood was more dangerous than the NYC samples. The samples had similar rates of recalling other types of traumas.

### *Variations across Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation*

Participants' gender identity and sexual orientation were grouped into three groups: heterosexual, cisgender men, heterosexual, cisgender women, and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Table 3.3 presents chi-square analyses of these gender identities and sexual orientations with whether recalled traumas occurred before entry, during involvement, or after exiting the illicit sex trade and the type of trauma recalled. Cramer's V correlations show the strength of the association, with correlations under .25 considered small, .25 to .49 considered moderate, and .50 or higher considered strong relationships. As shown, almost two-thirds of heterosexual women and LGBTQ+ members recalled at least one trauma that occurred before entry compared to 43.0% of heterosexual, cisgender men. Similarly, a little over 60% of the LGBTQ+ members and heterosexual, cisgender women recalled a traumatic event that occurred after exiting the illicit sex trade compared to 43% of heterosexual, cisgender men. A little over one-third of members in each of these identities recalled a traumatic event that occurred during their involvement in the illicit sex trade. Heterosexual, cisgender women (39.6%) and LGBTQ+ members (29.5%), compared to only 5.8% of heterosexual, cisgender men, were more likely to recall a traumatic event involving sexual abuse or sexual assault. These percentages might not

represent differences in experiences of different traumatic events. However, some are consistent with an earlier meta-analysis of gender differences in heterosexual populations where women were more likely than male participants to report experiences of sexual assault and child sexual abuse. In contrast, men were more likely to witness death or injury (Tolin & Foa, 2006). Reporting biases due to the performance of masculinity, however, also may contribute to these differences in the disclosure of traumatic events as part of the interviewees' life stories. Prior meta-analysis of disclosures of childhood sexual abuse victimization during forensic interviews found that about a third of children do not disclose when interviewed, and girls are more likely to disclose than boys (Azzopardi et al., 2019). Heterosexual, cisgender men may be more reluctant to discuss sexual abuse or assault as it is contradictory to stereotyped masculinity beliefs (e.g., Easton et al., 2014).

**Table 3.3.** *Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation and Trauma Experienced in the Illicit Sex Trade*

| | Heterosexual, Cisgender Men (n=86) | Heterosexual, Cisgender Women (n=53) | LGBTQ+ Participants (n=44) | Cramer's V |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| % with trauma before entry or before and during | 43.0% | 64.2% | 65.9% | .22** |
| % with trauma during | 38.4% | 43.4% | 38.6% | .05 |
| % with trauma after exiting | 37.2% | 60.4% | 63.6% | .25** |
| Non-sexual violence | 14.0% | 26.4% | 27.3% | .16 |
| Sexual abuse | 5.8% | 39.6% | 29.5% | .37*** |
| Witnessing violence | 16.3% | 11.3% | 11.4% | .07 |
| Death of a loved one | 43.0% | 39.6% | 38.6% | .04 |
| Basic necessity insecurity | 11.6% | 9.4% | 25.0% | .18 |

*Note:* * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

Table 3.4 presents chi-square analyses and Cramer's V correlations examining the relationship between gender identity and sexual orientation and the likelihood of attributing a specific type of trauma as a reason for why they entered the illicit sex trade.

**Table 3.4.** *Trauma Types Attributed to Contributing to their Entry into the Illicit Sex Trade: Percentages Within Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation*

| | Heterosexual, Cisgender Men (n=86) | Heterosexual, Cisgender Women (n=53) | LGBTQ+ Participants (n=44) | Cramer's V |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 19.8% | 41.5% | 45.5% | .25** |
| Violent non-sexual abuse | 5.8% | 9.4% | 6.8% | .06 |
| Sexual abuse | 5.8% | 30.2% | 29.5% | .31*** |
| Witnessing violence | 11.6% | 11.3% | 11.4% | .01 |
| Death of loved one | 14.0% | 15.1% | 22.7% | .10 |
| Basic necessity insecurity | 3.5% | 7.5% | 15.9% | .19* |

*Note:* * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

Overall, as shown in Table 3.4, over 40% of heterosexual, cisgender women and LGBTQ+ persons, compared to almost 20% of heterosexual, cisgender men, connected traumatic experiences as a motivating factor contributing to their entry into the illicit sex trade. Moreover, they were more likely to connect sexual violence victimizations as a motivating factor for beginning their involvement in the illicit sex trade. LGBTQ+ members had a higher likelihood of justifying that they needed food and shelter as a motivation factor for entering the illicit sex trade. Interviewees across the three groups of gender identity and sexual orientation had similar and lower propensities of attributing physical violence, witnessing violence, or the death of a loved one as a justification for entering the illicit sex trade. In the following paragraphs, the types of traumatic events recalled are described. Excerpts of interviewees' narratives are provided to describe how participants linked traumatic events to their entry into the sex trade, and the

number and percentages of interviewees for the entire sample are mentioned. All names mentioned in this chapter and subsequent chapters are pseudonyms, which protects participants' anonymity.

### *Death of a Loved One*

Death of a loved one was the most frequent, and of those mentioning death, 40% (n=30) mentioned it occurred before the entry into the sex trade, into the sex trade with ten persons making explicit links to their entry into the sex trade. For example, Curtis (N1000) stated:

> My earliest important memory would have to be my grandmother dying. I think that would be the most that would be the core of the story. That would be where you really seen things swiftly change in my life. (---) My grandmother died. I wound up losing my apartment that I was gonna have with my cousin. I wound up moving downstairs to my house 'cause we had two apartments and a single one. Now, we get into the trauma. I go to Philadelphia for a ball, and it's a blizzard. (---) when I got back to New York, I had to go (---) I was kicked out.

Curtis then went to his mom's house, then court, and a group home. He described crying during this first night and then going to school and requesting information on how he could get out of school. Curtis passed the GED in the middle of 10$^{th}$ grade and then began to travel throughout the United States in the illicit sex trade as a gay man. Similarly, Jabari (N1009), a heterosexual, cisgender male, was 15 years old when his mother died, and as the oldest of eight siblings, he tried to care for them. Jabari noted: "It seemed like when she passed away, that's when all hell broke loose. That's when we became all rebellious and started doin' all types of crazy. (---) After that, everything I did was self-destructive."

### *Abandonment or Separation with Significant Other*

About 10% mentioned the trauma from losing a romantic partner or a child, and a little over half believed that the events contributed to their involvement in the illicit sex trade. These traumatic events involved primarily children being separated from or abandoned by their parents.

In three cases, the father left the home, and in four cases, the interviewees as children were put in foster care due to neglect or abandonment. Two cases involved the dissolution of a romantic relationship, such as a divorce or breakup from a serious relationship.

Finally, one case involved separation from a sibling. Michael (C013) noted that when his father left, his mother started performing sex work for survival, and that is how he learned to be a SMF. Jackie (C141) lived with a foster mother due to her mother's drug addiction, but before this, they were homeless. When she was returned to her mother, Jackie recalled:

> I went to her boyfriend's house. He raped me. (---) It's a hard childhood. (---) My mother, she had drugs, and my brothers and sisters all used drugs, too. (Interviewer: What age did you get drug addicted?) (---) Probably, like, 12. (---) I turned to the streets for food and shelter and stuff (---) Then the street introduced me.

### *Sexual Violence*

A little over one-fifth of the sample (n=39) mentioned sexual abuse, with most participants (87.2%) who mentioned sexual abuse or assault describing an event that occurred in their childhood before they entered the illicit sex trade, and two-thirds explicitly linked their sexual violence trauma to entry. For example, Martin (C168), a heterosexual, cisgender male, was accosted by a 26-year-old sex worker at the age of 13, and within two weeks, he moved in with her. Though he was already committing other types of crimes, he began pimping and drug dealing to support the children:

> She became my baby mother. She had two kids by her, two girls. And then went further to the street because now I needed money to support the children. (---) So, I turned to selling drugs and pimping women.

Sexual abuse was often horrendous. Participants made the connection between their sexual violence victimization and their entry to sex work by noting one of these conditions: running from

home at an early age, being kicked out after disclosing or being exposed to the sex trade or drugs in their home.

### *Non-sexual Violent Traumas*

While 20.8% mentioned non-sexual violent victimization, about two-thirds of these events occurred during involvement in the illicit sex trade and one-third before entry. Moreover, only 18.4% of those who described a non-sexual violent traumatic event connected it to their entry into the illicit sex trade. Some sex workers and recruiters described physical harm from clients and pimps. For example, Angela (C146) left her pimp for another pimp and recalled:

> He came in the house with a sawed-off shotgun. Laid everybody down in the house and came back and got me. He beat me so bad, I, I think that was, like, half to death because he beat me till I started throwing up.

Other violence occurred due to the neighborhood level of violence as Damon (C122) was shot at age 18 and joined a gang at age 22, Malika (N1216), a transgender woman, was shot by a boy she had been dating at age 12, Lisa (C129) was shot twice in the arm for trying to steal to support her drug habit, and Selma (C131) was shot over a territory dispute by childhood friends at the age of 19 while working in the sex trade. Tyrell (C138) noted, "I was scumbagging, and, you know, I've been shot three times on three different occasions." Parents or guardians physically assaulted a few interviewees.

### *Witnessing Violence*

Participants (11.5%) mentioned witnessing violence between parents or witnessing violence in the community. One participant witnessed sexual violence. Stories about domestic violence (n=14) were all before entry, primarily about their earliest important memory (n=13) or a defining moment (n=1), and 57.1% (n=9) were identified as a reason for entry into the sex trade. A couple of examples of motivated entry are provided to highlight the connection that SMFs made between witnessing domestic violence and starting in the illicit sex trade. Kara (N1018), a heterosexual, cisgender woman, explained her earliest important memory:

> When I was 15 years old, and I seen my mom getting beat up by my pops all the time. I couldn't take that shit no more, and I left my house. (---) I was basically sleeping in the street. (---) I had met this Pretty George, and he taught me the ropes. From there, I started out with one girl, and wow. Then it was on a ride, a fucked-up ride, but it wasn't no more sleeping in the subway. (---) It was a totally different game from there.

Women primarily linked witnessing domestic violence and their entry as sex workers through their parent modeling behavior or through running away from home and needing to survive.

Of the ten persons who witnessed community violence, all, except one, an asexual woman, were heterosexual, cisgender men. Consistent with masculinity stereotypes, most accounts were given without expressing any emotion, though one indicated that he made a change because he was afraid of dying. Benny (C014) suggested that the lack of emotional response indicated that there might be something wrong with him; he recounted:

> I witnessed my first loss of life at 11 years old. That was a pretty pivotal moment. My dad shot a guy 14 times in the chest in front of me. It was a neighbor. (Interviewer: What do you remember feeling after that, or how did that affect you?) I remember feeling apathy. (---) And that that kind of made me feel like maybe there was something wrong, you know, the lack of feeling.

### *Trauma from Neglect and Basic Needs Insecurity*

Additionally, 14.2% mentioned the lack of shelter, food, or money for basic needs, which we called insecurity of necessities. Participants often experienced other types of traumas, such as sexual abuse or non-violent victimization and the death of a loved one in addition to this trauma. For example, Aaron (C173), a gay White man in Chicago, was kicked out of his home at seventeen and was forcefully raped and forced to inhale crack cocaine by a man who became his first pimp. Aaron stated, "When he got me high enough on the crack, he took me over to a bed, and then

multiple men were paying to have sex with me." Billy (C018) connected to lack of food as a child as the reason he became a SMF; he recollected:

> My mother didn't have money, you know, to feed us sometimes. We had to go outside and do whatever we could do to get some food in the house if it meant stealing. (---) I had younger siblings that, you know, needed attention. So, I had to get out there and do something. And I chose, you know what I'm saying, to (---) have women help me get what I needed because (---) I don't care what people think, but I know women are (---) the most important part of our livelihood.

He describes getting caught at a store shoplifting a pizza at the age of seven, and when the store called his grandmother, she pretended to be in their life and whooped him. He described that his grandmother knew his mom was gone for weeks and that there was no food in the house, and never offered to feed them. Billy noted his grandmother's false pretense to the store owner:

> I was hurt because she came to the store acting like she didn't know that kind of stuff that was going on with us or acting as though she didn't know we didn't have things. We didn't have nothing but each other.

Participants in situations involving neglect, abandonment, or death of a parent voiced that they learned to survive, become strong, and be independent. For example, Lena (N1044) experienced the death of her mother at the age of 12 and recalled:

> I remember my mom always telling me your education is very important. Don't depend on nobody but what you have in your pocket. Don't trust nobody. Don't think that you're better than anybody, and if you need help, you always ask for help.

Participants learned to be strong but also were cautious about trusting other people.

### What Lessons were learned from these traumatic experiences?

Many participants mentioned a lack of trust, having hate for a specific gender, or coping with their trauma through using drugs to escape the pain. Escaping the emotional pain of trauma was a coping strategy that 16.4% of participants mentioned. The lessons about trauma disclosure

were connected to a loss of attachment and learning that their mothers would not protect or support them. Some traumatic events, especially sexual violence, created feelings of hate toward the gender that abused them. Supporting the psychological research (Isobel et al., 2019), participants also concluded their self-identity. In the following paragraphs, we draw upon interview excerpts to discuss these lessons.

### *Lessons from Trauma Disclosure*

Sexual abuse victims are often reluctant to disclose to others, with empirical research showing that between 20% and 48% do not disclose or delay disclosure to friends, family, or significant others (see Ullman et al., 2020). Shame, fear of negative reactions, and threats from the abusers if they disclose contribute to this reluctance (Ullman et al., 2020). Research on intrafamilial child sexual assault victims has found that 73 percent of support persons' responses to disclosure from child sexual assault victims were negative, including not believing the victim, dismissing the seriousness of the victimization, or retaliating or responding violently (Elliott et al., 2022; Isobel et al., 2019; Walsh, 2020). A meta-analysis of prior research further shows that negative reactions about sexual assault disclosures for heterosexual victims (Dworkin et al., 2019) were related to poor mental health outcomes. Ten participants disclosed the abuse to their mother and were not believed and were met with severe negative repercussions such as being kicked out of the house or physically assaulted. Monica (C147) described how at the age of 11, her alcoholic grandmother beat her and sent her to live with her mother after an older man was caught molesting her, and then her father raped her, and her mother did not believe her. She stated:

> And I end up in the bed with my father, and he raped me pretty much. And my mother, I told her, and she told me (name redacted), that's all you do is lie. Stop lying on that man like that. You just sit around here and lie like that." After this lack of support, most participants turned to substance abuse, ran away, and turned to sex work or other crimes to survive as they learned that their mothers did not care and would not support them.

### *Learning to Distrust*

Other participants (8.7%, n=16) learned from their traumatic experiences to distrust people in general. For example, Tamika (N1255), at the age of five, witnessed his uncle murdered by a gunshot at the dinner table and became "scared of people." Jackie (C006) developed severe anxiety after the natural death of their great-grandpa, as he was the person who raised her. Larissa (N1012) was sexually abused by her grandfather from the age of 5 to the age of 10 and has carried that distrust throughout her life; she stated:

> I worry about my children. I worry about my grandchildren. I don't want nobody touching them. I don't want nobody taking care of them. If my daughters are going out and I'm going out and they want me to babysit, I will not go out. I'll stay with my friends cause I don't want nobody touching them. (---) Look at my grandfather did to me. I won't leave them. I won't leave my grandkids.

### *Parental Facilitated Harm and Developing Gender Bias*

Other participants (n=14) developed gender bias or hatred toward the gender of the parent or abuser who facilitated or committed the harm. For example, Darcy (C016) revealed: "So when she got married with my father, she would put me in a room with my brother to get raped. So, I hold resentment for a long time." Lamonica (C169) described working two regular jobs at the age of 17 and selling dope to support her school activities and upcoming prom. She explained that her mom's friends tried to rob her and cut her face, and she believed her mom was behind the robbery. She also recounted the physical abuse and emotional abuse from her mom, who claimed that she was a baby from a rape and was nothing but a bitch. She claimed:

> They cornered me, jumped on me, I got cut. They didn't get nothing. I fought back, and that's when everything went downhill because I'm a girl. Who wants a girl with a cut on their face? (---) Because my mom had something to do with it. Like, hate me like that. She always was abusive to me, but I know she hate me like that.

Participants in these stories lacked a positive attachment to their parents, and some generalized their treatment to hate all persons of the gender of their abuser.

### *Hate of Women*

Some heterosexual, cisgender men (n=6) who experienced traumatic sexual or non-sexual violence expressed their hatred toward women. A male SMF described losing his wife to liver cancer as the low point in his life, and when asked what effect it had, Miles (C012) replied: "It started me to hustling, it started me to pimping because I didn't really like women no more too much after that. … I only care for my sisters; that was it." Terrance (C120), at the age of 17, became an emotionally cold person after experiencing a near-death violent attack as a robbery victim, having 386 stitches in and out of his neck from being cut with a straight razor. He shared the impact of this attack:

> And for like maybe two, three years, I wouldn't let nobody get close to me, touch me, talk to me from a distance. (---) It was a real bag impact on my life. Even now (---) I think about that moment. (---) And I met this lady. She was 41 at the time. She's the one who taught me the game. About how she'd get women with low self-esteem, how to portray being somebody that I'm not, and I did that for a lot of years. Even when I was in prison, I will write the women, and I would tell them and let them know I'm coming home to them. But it, my soul, I didn't have no feelings for nothing.

### *Hate of Men*

Sexual assaults also led six SMFs to distrust men or to make them pay for sexual interactions. A sex worker and SMF woman articulated that the traumatic gang rape led to her use of drugs and entry in sex work so that the men she did not trust would have to pay her for the sex. Rhonda (C143) stated:

> After what they did, they all ran a train on me. They took it, they tied me down, they made me suck their penis. They got me (---) they had sex in my rectum,

> everything. So, I knew my behavior had changed toward men. Now, if you want this, you're going to pay me for this thing because I know what you like.

Georgia (N1219), identified as a pansexual woman from NYC, also suffered multiple sexual assaults, including being raped by five gang members at 15 and raped by a stepfather from the age of seven to 13. She also had a stillborn child at the age of 13. When asked what effect it had on her life? Georgia noted, "It made me wary of men. I didn't start dating the opposite sex until I was like twenty. Like, I didn't, wouldn't give myself to somebody until I was like 19 years old.

### *Lessons about Self-Identity*

About one-quarter of participants drew conclusions about how they saw themselves from the traumatic events, with 9.8% seeing themselves as bad and 14.8% seeing themselves as having good characteristics. For example, Alisha (C127), a heterosexual, cisgender woman, revealed,

> I thought I knew everything, but when I got gang-raped, that's when I was sad, and I went into a long depression. (---) And (---) then after that, that made me stronger. I started robbing them and kicking their asses, sticking them up.

Other participants attempted suicide, as Khalil (C007) noted, "I overdosed on purpose, yeah. " (Interviewer: Okay. How old were you then?) "I think I was 22." Other participants understood later that the traumatic abuse was not their fault and learned to like themselves. For example, Pearl (C107) was emotionally abused by her grandfather, who treated her siblings well but did not show care or love toward her. She explained:

> As a child, you didn't understand why someone wouldn't love you the way you're supposed to be loved, so you fought to get that love from someone, and you never got it. So, any man that I would meet that I love, and maybe they didn't love me the way that I felt that they should, I try to do more to get them to love me.

She later had to take care of him and her grandmother and shared, "I had to forgive him for me, not for him so that I could be a better person."

## Conclusion

Our analyses highlight that traumatic experiences are pivotal moments in the lives of sex market facilitators (SMFs) during their childhood before entry, during involvement in the illicit sex trade, and after exiting the sex trade. While the loss of loved ones was the most frequently recalled experience, these losses were traumatic as interviewees felt the loss of support, especially if parents died during their childhood. Adult SMFs who experienced the deaths of parents, family members, children, and friends also experienced grief from the loss of social support, unresolved psychological conflicts, and regrets of estrangement. The Chicago and NYC samples were similar in their incorporation of traumatic childhood events before they entered into the illicit sex trade and had a similar propensity to attribute traumatic events, especially sexual abuse, as a contributor to their initial involvement in the illicit sex trade.

Gender identity and sexual orientation informed the meanings that participants drew from traumatic experiences and the traumatic experiences they chose to incorporate into their self-identity. Heterosexual, cisgender men were less likely to attribute traumatic experiences to their entry into the sex trade and less likely to incorporate sexual violence victimizations as part of their critical life stories. Moreover, the few men who did recall childhood sexual abuse generalized the abuse to hate women and used gangster discourse in their life stories. While a few heterosexual, cisgender women also reported becoming more aggressive and less concerned about harming others, heterosexual, cisgender women and LGBTQ+ were more likely to attribute traumatic experiences, especially sexual abuse and assaults, as a contributor to their entry. These experiences contributed in that some mothers discounted, rejected, or attacked them when they disclosed the sexual abuse experiences, which led to running away and being vulnerable to persons who were looking to manipulate and exploit them. Consistent with prior research (Cassass et al., 2022; Franchino-Olsen et al., 2022; Tolin & Foa, 2006), individuals learned to be less trusting of people, but their survival needs to obtain food and shelter or to address their need

to obtain social support and emotional connections with others overshadowed their distrust, making them vulnerable to repeated victimizations. These victimizations also made them more vulnerable to recruiting others as sex workers and becoming non-coercive or coercive facilitators/traffickers.

# Chapter 4. Learning to Facilitate or Traffick Sex Workers: Comparisons Across Location

The illicit sex trade comprises many different markets ranging from sex workers who want to sell sex to workers who are physically forced or coerced to sell sex and are victims of sex trafficking (see Weitzer, 2009; 2015). All SMFs are often assumed to fit the media image of sex traffickers who, through physical violence or economic coercion, take most of their earnings, thereby forcing sex workers to sell sex (Bruckert, 2018). However, SMFs vary from using non-exploit tactics like managers of law-abiding trades to those who are sex traffickers using violent tactics and economic coercion (Bruckert, 2018; Corriveau & Parent, 2018; Stalans & Finn, 2016). Social learning theory assumes that the learning process is similar across geographical locations (Aker, 2017; Skinner, 1988), but groups with different values, such as supporting or not supporting criminal activity, may acquire different knowledge and interpret messages differently (Aker, 2017; Giordano, 2020). Thus, variations in the subcultural of the illicit sex trade may result in differences across samples drawn from the two geographical locations.

The two samples from Chicago and New York City allow us to examine whether the sources of information and lessons learned about recruiting and managing sex workers are similar or different. Prior qualitative interview studies on SMFs have identified neighborhood observation of experienced pimps, direct mentoring from experienced pimps, family members, and sex workers as the sources from which people learn coercive, manipulative, or non-coercive strategies to recruit and facilitate sex workers (Dank et al., 2014; Horning et al., 2018; Raphael & Myers-

Powell, 2010; Stalans & Finn, 2018). Some research has found that at some point in their careers, SMFs reported consistent contact with older, more experienced facilitators who provided them with guidance, advice, and insights into the business (Dank et al., 2015; Davis, 2014; Horning, 2013; Milner & Milner, 1972). The nature of what knowledge is passed along is limited.

Through grooming and identification, sex trafficking victims of sex traffickers may become recruiters or assistant managers and use the violent tactics that they experienced (Elliot, 2017). Prior research using small samples of pimps has found that pimps target women who are economically disadvantaged, drug-dependent, previous sexual abuse victims, or lacking in emotional support (Dank et al., 2014; Raphael & Myers-Powell, 2009; Raymond et al., 2001; Wilson & Dalton, 2007). Sex workers who are managed and become recruiters may be groomed to accept this role through tactics similar to those used by sex offenders who groom child sexual abuse victims. These tactics include rapport building, positive and negative inducements to increase a target's motivation, training to lower inhibitions of performing the task, mentoring, projecting a positive image, and assessing the risk of disclosures (Elliot, 2017).

Whether through fortuitous encounters or deliberate recruitment activities, we know little about how SMFs develop and hone their skills in recruiting would-be facilitators. SMFs also may have learned to deceive others through committing other criminal activities such as drug trafficking, stealing, or fraud. While it is not surprising that criminals target vulnerable people, we know little about the attributes that make SMFs/traffickers identify someone as vulnerable.

Chapter 4 addressed the following two primary questions: 1) Does grooming or learning to be a sex market facilitator/trafficker differ across New York City and Chicago social networks? 2) How do traffickers detect vulnerabilities of potential recruits, and what are the key individual and structural vulnerabilities they target? Critical to both questions is the extent to which the Chicago and New York City samples have participants who report tactics associated with sex trafficking, such as using violence or the threat of violence and using economic coercion.

## Analysis Plan

We first compared the two samples on their roles in the illicit sex trade and management tactics. We then examined whether the two samples differ in their sources of learning about how to facilitate and the nature of the lessons learned from these sources. For all these comparisons, chi-square analyses tested whether the samples differ statistically on each measure, and the appropriate correlation for nominal measures, either Phi or Cramer's V, provides the strength of the relationship. Small significant correlations are those under .25, moderate relationships are between .25 and .49, and strong relationships are .50 or higher. Correlations range from 0 to 1.0, with 1 indicating that the two variables are perfectly correlated. We then examine from SMFs' perspective the key structural and individual characteristics that identify individuals as easy targets to recruit for recruiting or facilitating sex workers or for selling sex. Sex workers are often also encouraged or required to recruit other workers for the SMFs'/traffickers' business.

## Results

### Comparison of Roles and Management Tactics

Table 4.1 presents the Chi-square analyses and Phi correlations comparing the two samples on roles in the sex trade as well as interviewees' experience with sex market facilitators if they sold sexual services. The second and third columns present the count and valid percentage (with not applicable and missing removed), and the last column presents the total percentages, including missing/not applicable, so that the reader can easily assess the number who answered the question. Overall, 23 in the NYC sample and six in the Chicago sample had either collaborative exchanges or were primarily performing sex work with occasional referrals or recruitment of other sex workers but were not in a position of authority over the sex workers. Thus, these participants were not asked about the management tactics. The Chicago and NYC samples were similar in having fired workers (60%), having trained workers to sell sex (53.9%), and having a recruiter in

their business (40%). Of those asked, the NYC sample had a significantly higher rate of being recruited to manage a sex worker's earnings (82.8%) than the Chicago sample (59.8%).

**Table 4.1.** *Description of Participants' Roles in the Illicit Sex Trade*

| | NYC (n=84) % (n) | Chicago (n=99) % (n) | Total (N=183) % (n) | Correlation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ever fired a sex worker? | | | | Phi = .03 |
| No | 37.8% (17) | 41.3% (33) | 40.0% (50) | |
| Yes | 62.2% (28) | 58.8% (47) | 60.0% (75) | |
| Missing/NA | (38) | (19) | (57) | |
| Train workers to sell sex? | | | | Phi = .14 |
| No | 56.8% (21) | 41.8% (38) | 46.1% (59) | |
| Yes | 43.2% (16) | 58.2% (53) | 53.9% (69) | |
| Missing/NA | (47) | (8) | (59) | |
| Have recruiter? | | | | Phi= .027 |
| No | 60.0% (30) | 57.1% (56) | 58.1% (86) | |
| Yes | 40.0% (20) | 42.9% (42) | 42.0% (62) | |
| Missing/NA | (34) | (1) | (35) | |
| Been recruited to manage sex workers? | | | | Phi= .21* |
| No | 17.2% (5) | 40.2% (35) | 34.5% (40) | |
| Yes | 82.8% (24) | 59.8% (52) | 65.5% (76) | |
| Missing/NA | (52) | (12) | (64) | |
| Ever sell sex? | | | | Phi = .26*** |
| No | 45.7% (37) | 21.6% (21) | 32.6% (58) | |
| Yes | 54.3% (44) | 78.4% (76) | 67.4% (120) | |
| Missing | (3) | (2) | (5) | |
| Did another person manage or assist the interviewee? | | | | Phi = -.30** |
| No | 21.6% (8) | 52.9% (37) | 42.1% (45) | |
| Yes | 78.4% (29) | 47.1% (33) | 57.9% (70) | |
| Missing/NA | (47) | (29) | (76) | |
| Of those who sold sex: | | | | |
| Were deceived to sell sex | (n=42) 31.0% (13) | (n=68) 35.3% (24) | (n=110) 58.5% (62) | Phi = .05 |
| Were forced to sell sex | (n=41) 19.5% (8) | (n=69) 43.5% (30) | (n=110) 34.5% (38) | Phi = .24** |

*Note:* * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

Interviewees also were asked about whether they had previously sold sexual services. Over three-quarters of the Chicago sample had sold sexual services compared to a little over half of the

NYC sample, Phi = .26, $p < .001$. Of those asked, the NYC sample was more likely to be managed, though 47.1% of the Chicago sample who sold sex were managed. Interviewers were less likely to ask heterosexual, cisgender men about being managed. Of those who sold sex and were managed, the Chicago sample was more likely to report being forced to sell sex (43.5%) than the NYC sample (19.5%). Overall, these findings suggest that the neighborhood from which the Chicago sample was recruited is more deeply enmeshed in the sex trafficking part, that is, the force and coercion elements of the illicit sex trade. Further analyses are needed to assess what management tactics are used to have more confidence in this inference.

Table 4.2 describes the percentage of respondents in each sample and the total sample who used three management tactics with their sex workers. Overall, the samples in NYC and Chicago differed on whether information about each management tactic was asked for or was applicable based on the interviewees' roles. Information about these tactics was missing or not applicable for one-quarter to one-half of the NYC sample and about 10% of the Chicago sample, and one-quarter of the sample was not asked about benefits provided to workers. Table 4.2 shows that the Chicago and NYC sample were similar in having sex with workers (59.9%) and providing benefits (68.5%).

Prosecutors typically prosecute SMFs for violating sex trafficking laws when physical force or economic coercion is used (Kim, 2011). Economic coercion is taking most of the sex workers' earnings so that they are dependent on the facilitator (Stalans & Finn, 2016). Table 4.2 shows that Chicago (54.7%) compared to NYC (33.3%) had a higher percentage of interviewees who used tactics of physical violence and economic coercion. Interviewees who reported taking 85 to 100% of sex workers' earnings comprised a greater percentage of the Chicago sample (47.3%) than the NYC sample (29.5%). When these two forms of coercive tactics are combined, 91 (53.8%) of the total sample used at least either a violent tactic or economic coercion, and about 69% of the Chicago sample committed this form of sex trafficking compared to only 34% of the NYC sample. Conversely, two-thirds of the NYC sample, compared to about one-third of the Chicago sample,

reported that they did not threaten or use physical violence and took less than 85% of sex workers' earnings.

**Table 4.2.** *Management Experiences and Tactics: Comparison of Chicago and NYC Samples*

| | NYC (n=84) % (n) | Chicago (n=99) % (n) | Total Sample (N=183) % (n) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Have sex with workers? | | | Phi = .05 |
| No | 44.2% (19) | 39.2% (35) | 40.1% (54) |
| Yes | 55.8% (24) | 60.7% (54) | 59.9% (78) |
| NA/Missing | (41) | (10) | (51) |
| Ever lied to their sex workers? | | | Phi = .29*** |
| No | 56.0% (28) | 26.3% (25) | 36.6% (53) |
| Yes | 44.0% (22) | 73.7% (70) | 63.4% (92) |
| NA/Missing | (34) | (4) | (38) |
| Any benefits given? | | | Phi = .10 |
| No | 37.8% (14) | 28.2% (20) | 31.5% (34) |
| Yes | 62.2% (23) | 71.8% (51) | 68.5% (74) |
| NA/Missing | (47) | (28) | (75) |
| Used violence or threatened violence against sex workers? | | | Phi = .32*** |
| No | 66.7% (36) | 45.3% (39) | 53.6% (75) |
| Yes | 33.3% (18) | 54.7% (47) | 46.4% (65) |
| NA/Missing | (30) | (13) | (43) |
| % of money taken from sex workers' earnings | | | Cramer's V = .29*** |
| 0 to 20% | 31.0% (18) | 17.2% (16) | 22.5% (34) |
| 25 to 50% | 31.0% (18) | 15.1% (14) | 21.2% (32) |
| 60 to 80% | 12.1% (7) | 20.4% (19) | 17.2% (26) |
| 85 to 100% | 29.5% (15) | 47.3% (44) | 39.1 (59) |
| NA/Missing | (26) | (6) | (32) |
| Have either violent tactic or take 85% of the money | | | Phi = .34*** |
| No | 65.3% (49) | 30.9% (29) | 46.2% (78) |
| Yes | 34.7% (26) | 69.1% (65) | 53.8% (91) |
| Missing | (9) | (5) | (14) |

*Note:* * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

## Sources of Learning

Table 4.3 presents the sources of learning for each location and the total sample. About one-fifth of SMFs' learned how to facilitate from multiple sources (2 or 3), indicating that most SMFs learned from one source. The Chicago sample was more likely to learn from multiple

sources. Most SMFs learned how to facilitate through direct learning or observation from different people in their lives, with only 20.6% describing themselves as "self-taught."

**Table 4.3.** *Sources of Learning for Each Site and the Total Sample*

| | NYC (n=84) % (n) | Chicago (n=99) % (n) | Total (N=183) % (n) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Any pimp (from the neighborhood, close friend, gang member, their former or current pimp) | 25.0% (21) | 45.5%** (45) | 36.1% (66) |
| Any family member (including parents and other family) | 20.2% (17) | 22.2% (22) | 21.2% (39) |
| Self-taught | 23.2% (19) | 18.4% (18) | 20.6% (37) |
| Observation of 'pimps' in the neighborhood | 13.4% (11) | 20.4% (20) | 17.2% (31) |
| Sex worker | 12.2% (10) | 20.4% (20) | 16.7% (30) |
| Other family (not parents) | 15.9% (13) | 16.3% (16) | 16.1% (29) |
| Friend | 18.3% (15) | 13.3% (13) | 15.6% (28) |
| 'Pimp' (close relationship) | 7.3% (6) | 17.3%* (17) | 12.8% (23) |
| Their current/former 'pimp' | 6.1% (5) | 10.2% (10) | 8.3% (15) |
| Parent | 4.9% (4) | 6.1% (6) | 5.6% (10) |
| Gang member | 0% (0) | 3.1% (3) | 1.7% (3) |
| Learned from two or three sources | 13.1% (11) | 27.3%* (27) | 20.7% (38) |

*Note:* * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

The most common source of learning was through pimps (36.1%; n=66). Participants' learning from pimps occurred in multiple ways, including observation in the neighborhood, a close relationship with a pimp, being in a gang, or being a sex worker with a pimp. In scenarios

where participants learned from a pimp, almost half of these occurred by watching pimps in the neighborhood (17.2%; n=31), demonstrating the power of observational learning in communities.

Site location mattered in learning from pimps. Over 45% of the Chicago sample learned from a pimp compared to only 25% of the NYC sample. The West Garfield Park neighborhood, as described in the methodology section, is known for having a history of renowned pimps such as Don "Magic" Juan, multiple gangs, high rates of violence and drug as well as sex trafficking, so this ecological space may offer more opportunities to meet pimps. In the heterosexual pimp culture, mentorship from an experienced high-status pimp provides social status and respect. In Chicago in 1974, the famous pimp, Don Magic Juan, started Players Balls to celebrate pimp lifestyles; these annual social events, which continue today, are an occasion to socialize and elevate social status, with several awards given, including best dress and hustler of the year (Cohen, 2017; Hoekstra, 2000). Player's balls are social events that SMFs, predominantly heterosexual, cisgender men, attend with their sex workers to demonstrate their success in facilitating sex in the illicit sex trade and provide a chance to connect and increase social standing with other pimps (Hoekstra, 2000). A few sex traffickers in the Chicago sample attended Player's Balls (C013, C106, C132, C174) and met high-status pimps who later mentored them. Player's Balls served as a way to vet persons who were actually facilitators from undercover officers, creating trustworthiness to receive tutelage from high-status pimps. Silas (C174), who is an active, persistent pimp, is quite popular, being named as a successful pimp by several interviewees. He described being mentored by a very high-status pimp. He stated:

> They turned me out to pimp. His name was Willie Cage. He was a popular pimp. He was more popular than Don Juan. (Interviewer: Oh really?) Yeah, around Cicero. He turned me out at 16. He taught me how to pimp and what to do, where to put my woman at, all that. (---) Well, the girl I had was a prostitute already. She had come from Minnesota. (Interviewer: Did you find her, or she find you?) Well, I found her. That was my first one. This first one bought me a Cadillac.

He later noted that his first sex worker, who was 17 years old, bought him three or four cars at a young age as she had doctors and lawyers as clients. Silas' brother was a pimp that Don Juan mentored, and Silas, who was a gang member, also rode around with his brother before taking on pimping on his own. Silas gained access to pimps through his brother's reputation. He was proud of all his women and showed several pictures of the workers. He also contrasted playing as a pimp and being a real pimp and considered himself a "real pimp."

Very few of either sample learned from family members who also were pimps (14.3% (n= 3) for NYC and 13.3% (n=6) for Chicago). Though only three individuals indicated they learned from a gang member, interviewees may have identified their mentor by their master status of pimp rather than their gang membership. Indeed, of the 35 interviewees in Chicago who volunteered that they were in a gang, 21 (60.0%) indicated that they learned from a pimp.

Learning from family was the second most common source of learning facilitation (21.3%). Most of these learning experiences were from their extended family members, such as uncles, cousins, and aunts (16%), and only 5.6% learned from parents. Additionally, 15.6% (n=30) of SMFs learned facilitation from sex workers, sometimes as fellow sex workers, and 16% (n=28) learned from friends.

## Knowledge Learned from Sources

Table 4.4 presents the overall and specific types of knowledge learned from sources for each sample and the total sample. Overall, controlling workspace was the most frequent topic taught, with 36.3% of the total sample mentioning at least one aspect of controlling workspace. Table 4.4 shows how to get the money (14.4%) and how to avoid the police (16.0%), the two topics covered the most under how to control the workspace. For example, Billy (C018) learned from his mom to get the money first, stating: "My mom always told (---) my sisters (---) don't ever lay down with a person if they ain't got nothing to give you. Get your money first." Consistent with the greater prevalence of sex trafficking occurring in Chicago, Chicago facilitators were more likely to report learning how to avoid the police (29.0%) than NYC facilitators (1.2%). Khalil (COO7)

learned from family members who were police officers not to stay in one place, "Move and shuffle and a lot of sign language (---) we would use cues." Khalil noted: "When you're out there in the streets, you can't do a whole lot of communicating, (---) because you got the johns, and you're looking out for the police." Marshall (C017) also noted using special codes and words to avoid arrest: "We have certain codes and different things like that when we know a police officer was coming down the street." Breanna (C031) learned her approach from a police detective: "He told me how that smart talking shit is just gonna piss us off, so just be chill."

Others learned to watch the environment for officers or undercover officers and hide their deviant behavior by blending into the environment and appearing law-abiding (Stalans & Finn, 2019). Martin (C168) worked as the leader of the peewee division, 21 and younger, for the Black Souls and later was chief security of one team of seven teams of sex trafficking in the Black Souls gang. He learned from his five support persons, who were also gang members and pimps, how to avoid arrests. As chief security, he took care of situations before the police knew what was happening, suggesting that having more eyes in the neighborhood enabled him to avoid arrest. Martin stated: "Trying to sell more security, better security so they can be aware of what's going on in the neighborhood before the police get up on it." For example, Lucille (C020) learned from her pimp: "don't be with a crowd of women," and when the police arrive, "Just go sit down for a minute. (---) Go sit at the bus stop, just act like you're not doing nothing." Shirley (C022) learned from her sister to avoid the streets on the day the police come and arrest for soliciting prostitution. Shirley stated:

> We know that the police do a sweep every, it is Tuesday or Thursday? I think it's Thursday, every Thursday. You can't come out to a certain time of the day when they're doing their sweep. They do a sweep and arrest all the prostitutes.

**Table 4.4.** *Knowledge Learned from Sources: Comparison of Site Locations*

| | New York City (n=83) % (n) | Chicago (n=99) % (n) | Total Sample (n=183) % (n) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Controlling Workspaces | 9.8% (25) | 41.4% (41) | 36.1% (66) |
| Always "get the money" | 18.3% (15) | 10.9% (10) | 14.4% (25) |
| How to avoid the police | 1.2% (1) | 29.0%*** (27) | 16.0% (28) |
| How to avoid street violence | 12.2% (10) | 9.7% (9) | 10.9% (19) |
| Avoid drug use for self and workers | 0.0% (0) | 4.3% (4) | 2.3% (4) |
| Management Strategies | | | |
| Mentioned a coercive strategy | 11.1% (10) | 29.3%** (29) | 21.3% (39) |
| Mentioned a persuasive strategy | 6.0% (5) | 14.1% (14) | 10.4% (19) |
| Mentioned either a coercive or persuasive strategy | 16.7% (14) | 38.4%*** (38) | 28.4% (52) |
| Recruiting Workers | 16.7% (14) | 30.3%* (30) | 24.0% (44) |
| Other | | | |
| Know how to do sex work | 34.1% (28) | 3.2%*** (3) | 17.5% (31) |
| How to steal | 0.0% (0) | 9.8%** (9) | 5.2% (9) |

*Note:* * < .05; ** < .01;*** p<.001

## Coercive and Persuasive Strategies

Table 4.4 also shows that overall, 28.4% mentioned learning either a persuasive strategy or coercive strategy to manage their sex workers, and the Chicago sample was more likely to mention at least one coercive strategy. Coercive strategies were humiliating or dehumanizing them, having firm control through punitive violent discipline if necessary, and using lies to manipulate and control them. Ekon (C171) describes the necessity of dehumanizing the sex workers:

> You go to dehumanize somebody to even go that way. (---) You can't see them as a person because you're going to have them do some of the most dastardly shit ever. (---) You got men that's defecating on them, urinating on them, beating them, strangling them. I mean, like (---) you can't see them as human. (Interviewer: So, you just thought of them as product?) Exactly. (Interviewer: And how did you dehumanize them?) Well, by way of, um, psychologically, (---) made them feel like they wasn't shit.

Seventeen sex traffickers in Chicago and four in the NYC sample learned how to be firm and use violence to keep their sex workers following their orders. Her pimp urged Nia (N1275) to use violence against the sex workers when he promoted her to madam. Nia stated:

> I met the pimp in 2014 through A.M. When I met him, ehh, it was okay at first, but then, like I say, he started making me wanting to do other stuff like he started wanting me to beat the girls and do other things to the girls. That's how I became managing them because he was, "All right, it's time." We started getting more girls. "It's time for you to be the madam" because I was the first girl that he had.

Brian (C154) learned from his uncle and provided a specific example: "Never abused the face (---) because no motherfucker want no woman with black eyes (---) "They used to whoop them with a clothes hanger and shit. (---) I learned that at an early age." Uri's uncle (C133) passed along the message that "A woman should take care of men, uh, they weak. You can manipulate them." Uri described one incident where he used too much violence:

> It was the way the girl was crying and, you know, it was bloody. It was just too many whips on her body, you know, and she couldn't go out and perform because I accidentally hit her in the face. So, it was just a little bit too much, you know.

Jabari (N1009) learned how to be a violent pimp from a pimp who was in prison for soliciting sex. Jabari reported:

> I chose. I certainly weren't raised and ran with that. (---) He forced the women to be his bitches, if she somehow don't do it or rebel against it, smack them, take them upstairs, beat them. Shit can be gritty. (---) But that's what we did. And then they were acting; they were straightened up; they were going out there to just take care of business.

The persuasive strategies were not abusing the workers, keeping your promises, and buying them gifts. Barry (N1246) learned not to abuse his workers by watching his brother, who was a pimp. Barry stated: "He never put his hands on his girls, which they came running to him from other pimps." LaMonica (C169) used gifts to get more money from the sex workers: "Sometimes you play other women like you give her things. (---) So they would worry about giving me back (---) more than what I gave them. (---) They loved me." Weston (C110) gave gifts to get more money and recruit more women: "Get that money. You dig, and then you take (---) and spend it on her. (---) And show her that you care about her, and she'd see that. That's what draws other females."

### Recruiting Workers

SMFs reported several aspects of recruiting, from the characteristics of targets to how to persuade and manipulate the targets. Some learned to tell individuals about the positive side of sex work. For example, Bryon (C001) learned from a sex worker how to talk to women and stated: "I learned like how to speak to them and the things they want to hear (---) Safety, money." Several learned how to lie and sell false hope. Jayce (C130) declared: "It's all manipulation and (---) selling false hope, and I became a good liar". Sex workers who were recruiters also lied about their pimp. Felicia (C102) would recruit from the bullpen of jail; she would lie to a sex worker who complained that their pimp beat them and say "My pimp is not like that. My pimp don't do that. And he'll get you more money. Plus, he buys clothes." She justified her lies by stating: "That would take the pressure off of you, right." Felicia went on to describe these recruits who were new to sex work and having a pimp, stating:

> They can't figure out what's going on. You could see it. And they look scared. It's like now they're in the cage with a whole bunch of girls. They hear hookers talking. They're the ones that have been on the street for a while. They know everything that's going on in the streets. And vulnerable ones in, shaking, scared, and not so much one of us that had been out there for a long time.

Many main sex workers were taught to target vulnerable people as they are easy targets. Finding easy targets can happen in any setting, such as on the streets, near bus stations, or in shelters, but Felicia chose a more stressful and chaotic setting where these recruits would be the most vulnerable: a jail cell. Domica (C137) would tell would-be-recruits: "We're not going to hurt no one. We're just going to hustle together." Ethan (C144) learned from a pimp how to voice the appeal, noting, "It's a tone you have to use." For example, Terrance (C120) learned recruiting from a madam and reported this knowledge transmission:

> How to manipulate women, how to sell drugs, how to go out there and find women with low self-esteem and bring them to her. How to go around and talk to people. Never ask questions; just do your business and move on. She taught me to have killer instincts.

Selma (C131) learned "how to trick a female into coming with us" and described the ride-along technique:

> A lot of them were square girls, but they was passive, and, you know, you could mold them easy into coming with you because they wanted to be like you. Well, what are you all doing? Come on, ride with me. And they ride with me. Then, if I make some money, (---) they wanted some money, so they start.

Recruiters looked for vulnerability. Adrian (N1079) learned who to recruit from their uncle and described the targets as homeless and poor:

> Been out there for days with no food, no shelter, no shower, and they looked like they need saving. If they up to it, they wanna make some money where they don't

> gotta be in the street all; they don't gotta be out here trying to panhandle and sit here trying to make money from nothing if you wanna work for a couple of dollars, sure. If they for it, they for it. If they're not, on to the next one.

Some recruiters recognized that they had been manipulated. Imani (N1170) stated:

> I think (name redacted) kind of manipulated me into it. They kind of put it in my mind how to go about it without me knowing that he was doing that. (Interviewer: So he was grooming you?) Yeah, yeah. That's actually a perfect way; he was grooming me. See, what he'd say is that you see? If they look like they're on drugs, they probably are on drugs. That's the way you get stuff. If they look like they like attention from men, that's how you get to them. Stroke their ego. Like there were certain ways that you would approach certain type of people.

### SMFs'/Traffickers' Perspectives of Easy Targets for Recruits

Interviewees were asked what makes someone an easy recruit. Of the total sample, 39 persons were not asked this question. Table 4.5 presents the conceptual categories reliably coded from their open-ended responses. Across the sample, over half used words to describe targeting individuals who were vulnerable due to their family or current environment or due to their traits such as naïve, low self-esteem, or fear. Indeed, 9.8% of the sample used the term, vulnerable, or "target," suggesting their intentions to use manipulation and deceive potential targets and having specific knowledge about potential easy recruits. Barb (C008), for example, stated: "Someone that was young, alone (---) that they were vulnerable. That didn't have a lot of family or friends." Don (C162) described the vulnerability as a signal for an easy recruit:

> They're really vulnerable (---) going through some stuff. I seen that type of weakness in a woman that's given my cue to move in. She probably (---) needs somebody to talk to (---) I just try to get in her head and ease her mind. You need

something to eat, something to drink. I try to make her feel comfortable around me.

**Table 4.5.** *SMFs' Discussing Characteristics of Recruits*

| | % | N=143 n |
|---|---|---|
| **Vulnerable Discourse –** words indicating that they are recruiting those with vulnerabilities | 53.1% | 76 |
| Used words "needy," "lost," "going through things" | 19.6% | 28 |
| Used words that described trauma, runaway or family issues | 8.4% | 12 |
| Used words “naïve” or “young" | 14.0% | 20 |
| Used words “homeless” | 14.0% | 20 |
| Used words “target” or “vulnerable” | 9.8% | 14 |
| Used words “low self-esteem” | 6.3% | 9 |
| Used words "fearful," "shy," or "scared | 2.7% | 5 |
| **Drug Use Discourse – words describing recruits' drug use** | 21.0% | 30 |
| Used words “drug addict” | 16.1% | 23 |
| Used words “not on hard drugs” | 6.3% | 9 |
| **Willing Workers Discourse** | 21.0% | 30 |
| Was approached by workers to join the illicit sex trade | 13.3% | 19 |
| Used words "willing" or "wants money" | 9.8% | 14 |
| **Easy to Manage Discourse** | 27.3% | 39 |
| Used words "attractive," "sexy" | 14.0% | 20 |
| Used words to describe manageable personality traits, such as "listens," "loyal," "nice" | 13.3% | 19 |
| Used words "fearless," "strong," "courageous" | 5.6% | 8 |

Other SMFs used language that focused on specific traits such as low self-esteem (6.3%), being naïve or young (14%), or being afraid (2.7%). As shown in Table 4.5, 14% were unsheltered and vulnerable to SMFs who offered a place to stay. Ridge (C134) declared: "Vulnerable is being homeless, been beat down many times. (---) You take a ho, and (---) you build her up, then you drop her back down."

The type of language used by participants who described their recruits as vulnerable often focused on emotional vulnerability due to their situation, with 19.6% describing persons going through struggles and 8.4% describing prior traumatic events or destructive family situations. Jayce (C130) stated, "I’m looking for somebody (--) that the family is torn away. (---) They got to

be damaged, okay (---) so that I can get, um, get an illusion that I'm going to build them up." Carl (N1017) also echoed the ability to manipulate those who have dysfunctional families. Carl stated:

> If she has daddy issues, she isn't right because she's looking for a father figure. She's looking for somebody who can make her feel good about herself and give her some knowledge on how to make the money, manage the work. You know? And steer her in the right direction to get the money. And if you already have issues, you'll play the fool for me; I'll eat you up.

These vulnerabilities were assessed in conversations with potential targets to assess their situation and gain their trust by providing false care and hope. As Denzel (C101) explained:

> You have to listen to her. You know what I mean? You listen to her. Then you know, okay, like I told you, the drugs make the women weak. You know what I mean? You know drugs make them weak. And maybe some of them are going through gruesome relationship, or they were dealing with someone that, you know, maybe want to whoop them and beat them all the time, you know. So that makes a woman real vulnerable.

Denzel provided both a vulnerability discourse and a drug use discourse. Some SMFs (21%) discussed recruits' drug use, describing them as "drug addicts" or "using drugs, not on hard drugs." Describing recruits who are using drugs can relate to them targeting vulnerable people but also may reflect the nexus of drug and sex markets, with some SMFs selling both or other types of overlap with drug markets. Drug addiction is a vulnerability, but we separated this from other vulnerabilities because we wanted to tease out the overlap of the drug and sex markets and those targeting vulnerable people who were not necessarily already involved in deviant networks.

Another type of discourse was used to shift responsibility to the recruits by noting that the workers were willing and wanted money or approached them. About one-fifth

(21%) of SMFs' voiced this willingness work discourse. Paula (C155) deflected active recruiting and noted:

> They got to be willing because it's not easy. But if they come to you with it, then you got to have an open mind. (Interviewer: So you never went out looking?) I didn't look for nobody, no. They always came to me.

Uri (C133) placed the responsibility on the women for choosing him to manage their sex work:

> Um, if they had a broken home, uh, wasn't in school, uh, was just trying to be fast, wanted to be in the street. (---) Most women when I was coming up they was (---) they liked it guys like us. (---) They was appealing for them, nice dress, look nice, you know what I'm saying?

Over a quarter of the SMFs (27.3%) looked for workers who were easy to manage. Loyalty, willingness to listen, or being fearless were critical personality traits, and attractive, sexy workers were more valuable to attract higher-paying clients. Javil (C106) asserted that the women come to him, and he chooses based on how easy they are to manage. Javil revealed:

> Conversation is the key to everything. (---) The ones that pay attention. One that listens. Because if they pay attention and listen, (---) you're gonna have to tell them too much about what they need to do because they're already doing it.

Quincy (N1183) worked in Hunt's Point with 15 sex workers. The sex workers worked with him and had varied roles. The first sex worker he described was his baby mama. She met him when she was a minor, and he fell in love with her when she taught him how to read (he had a learning disability). Quincy viewed her as "loyal" and "kind." Also, Quincy worked with a sex worker named Monica, who acted as the 'main sex worker' and counted the money and reported back to him at the end of the evening. Quincy and Monica mainly recruited. When asked how he recruited sex workers, he explained: "How I found them, they're homeless, cheap (---) or drugs, they wanted drugs. But, after they got hooked, I'm like hell, they'll do anything to get that next fix." He used both the drug

user discourse as well as the easily managed discourse, promoting Monica for her loyalty and kindness.

## Comparing Locations on Discourses about Recruiting

When SMFs were asked what made someone an easy target to recruit, four types of discourses emerged: vulnerability, drug users, willing sex workers, and easily managed sex workers. Thirty-two respondents used at least two of these discourses. Table 4.6 presents the chi-square analyses of location with each of these discourses. The NYC and Chicago samples used the terms vulnerable or target and vulnerability discourse similarly. As described earlier, the vulnerability discourse was the most prevalent, with over half articulating some aspects of it.

Table 4.6 also shows differences in NYC and Chicago SMFs' perceptions of what makes an easy recruit. The NYC sample was twice as likely to use a drug user discourse (31.3%) than the Chicago sample (15.8%). The Chicago sample (25.3%) compared to the NYC sample (12.5%) was twice as likely to deflect responsibility and blame on the recruits by using a discourse suggesting that the workers were willing. The Chicago sample was about three times more likely to use a discourse that focused on selecting easily managed recruits than the NYC sample.

**Tale 4.6.** *Comparison of Site Locations with Four Discourses About What Makes Someone Easy to Recruit*

| | NYC (n=48) % (n) | Chicago (n=95) % (n) | Total (N=143) % (n) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mentioned: target or vulnerable | 8.3% (4) | 10.5% (10) | 9.8% (14) |
| Discourses mentioned | | | |
| Vulnerable | 47.9% (23) | 55.8% (53) | 53.1% (76) |
| Drug use | 31.3% (15) | 15.8%* (15) | 21.0% (30) |
| Willing sex worker | 12.5% (6) | 25.3%*** (24) | 21.0% (30) |
| Easily managed worker | 10.4% (5) | 35.8%*** (34) | 27.3% (39) |
| Two or more discourses | 18.8% (9) | 33.7% (32) | 28.7% (41) |

*Note:* * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

## Conclusion

Facilitators of sex workers vary in the degree to which they use deception, physical force, and economic coercion (Bruckert, 2018; Corriveau & Parent, 2018; Stalans & Finn, 2016). Within the Chicago and NYC samples and across these samples, facilitators varied in reporting using deception, physical violence, and economic coercion. Over 69% of the Chicago sample used either physical violence tactics or economic coercion of taking at least 85% of sex workers' earnings, with over half reporting using the threat of violence or hitting their workers to obtain compliance. By contrast, only one-third of the NYC sample used either physically violent tactics or this degree of economic coercion. Thus, the Chicago sample as compared to the NYC sample, was composed of a higher proportion of sex traffickers. These subcultural differences in the illicit sex trade were also related to having different sources for learning how to be an SMF/trafficker.

Pimps were the primary source of learning for over one-third of the total sample and were a more critical source for the Chicago sample. The presence of multiple gangs, drug trafficking, and violence in the primarily ecological site of Chicago provided more opportunities for facilitators to learn from other pimps. Almost half (45%) learned from pimps in Chicago compared to 25% in the NYC sample. They met pimps who were on the street in the neighborhood, were already managing them, were gang members, and a few were family members. Pimps often had more experience and higher status and were not friends of the participants. The SMFs had to demonstrate trustworthiness before they received mentoring from other pimps, which is consistent with other research (e.g., Stalans & Finn, 2019). Trustworthiness was established through a trusted source of a pimp vouching for them, through performing low-level jobs such as watching their car or getting food for the workers, through performing other illicit jobs such as buying drugs, or through belonging to the same gang or family. Mentees generally adopted the management strategies of their mentor. Thus, the SMFs from Chicago were more likely to mention learning coercive strategies and how to avoid police detection than the NYC sample.

About one-fifth learned from family members, including uncles, brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, and cousins. The intergenerational transmission of knowledge about how to become a facilitator has been supported by previous research (Horning et al., 2023; Stalans & Finn, 2016). In previous research, pimps who reported that their parents would approve of their facilitation of sex workers were more likely to use severe coercive management strategies such as violence than were those who reported that their parents would disapprove (Stalans & Finn, 2016). In this sample, SMFs were less likely to learn from parents and more likely to be mentored by uncles, brothers, sisters, or cousins. Friends were less prevalent as a source of learning, with about 15% identifying this source. Previous research with younger SMFs were more likely to identify friends as a source (Dank et al., 2014; Horning et al., 2020). Our sample is an older age group than the samples in previous research, which might reflect a change across generations in how facilitation is learned.

Another one-fifth reported that they were self–taught, looking at movies or YouTube videos, watching neighborhood pimps, and reading social media or books on pimping or sex work. Some individuals are self-motivated and drawn to the lifestyle to address needs such as shelter and food or to obtain money at a higher rate than the available law-abiding jobs. For many, one critical source of knowledge is learning to obtain money before services are performed and learning to be firm in getting money from their workers.

# Chapter 5. Learning to be Sex Market Facilitators: Sources, Knowledge, and Organization through an Intersectional Lens

Performing sex market facilitation based on master status designations (see Messerschmidt, 1994/2010) has been evaluated by scholars in terms of gender differences, focused on the gender binary. For instance, Preble (2019) evaluated women's roles as facilitators (e.g., Preble, 2019). Several studies have found that some cisgender men facilitate sex work as a part of what Messerschmidt (1994, 2010) called 'doing masculinity'; that is, facilitation is an avenue to perform masculinity (Besbris, 2013; Horning et al., 2023; Merodio, 2020). Based on those prior studies, it is apparent that facilitation is connected to a masculine gender project, providing perceived avenues of accomplishing masculinity. However, few studies have evaluated facilitation through a broader gender or sexuality spectrum, that is, how does 'doing masculinity,' 'doing femininity,' [15] (accomplishing femininity) 'doing queerness' (accomplishing queerness), or 'doing transness' (accomplishing transness) contribute to how persons are taught

[15] 'Doing femininity' is like 'doing masculinity' or the avenues available based on intersectionality to accomplishing masculinity (Messerschmidt, 1994;2010), except that it is about accomplishing femininity.

and learn to be facilitators. These master status designations contribute to how these social actors facilitate sex work.

It is crucial to remember that social learning often occurs in intimate groups and is part of a communication process; therefore, it is almost always an interpersonal social exchange. The magnitude of social learning can depend upon the level of intimacy between those in the dyad, the learner's emotional reaction to the experience, and their motivation to reproduce those behaviors. We will outline examples of different relationships between instructors and learners, keeping in mind the instructor and the learners' gender identity and sexual orientation. Our findings are based on participants' past recollections of the learning events, as it is nearly impossible to witness social learning taking place, which is a primary critique of social learning theory. However, participants' perspectives on their social learning experiences can reveal the contours of these exchanges and how participants practically and emotionally processed their experiences. These factors may impact SMFs' interpersonal styles during sex market facilitation.

In this chapter, we first outline examples of SMFs' social learning processes in different intimate groups, showing how gender identity and sexual orientation may play a role in the functionality of the social learning exchange. How do the participants frame the interpersonal exchange regarding gender identity or sexual orientation? What is their perspective on the function of the interpersonal exchange? Then, we show the patterns in the data about the social learning experience, such as what they learned and if and how these connect to their sex market facilitation strategies.

Our research aims for this chapter are:

1) To evaluate the contours of social learning, such as who sex market facilitators learned from and what they learned based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

2) To illustrate how participants describe this learning process as part of a gender project (i.e., doing masculinity, doing femininity, doing queerness, doing transness).

## Analysis Plan

A mixed-method approach is used to address these questions. As the methodology chapter noted, the questions about whom they learned from and the learned management strategies were coded. The coding definitions can be found in Appendix F. Quantitative totals are calculated across the different sources of learning and management strategies learned, and Chi-square analyses are used to assess if sources of learning and management strategies significantly vary across master status designations, that is, heterosexual, cisgender men, heterosexual, cisgender women, and LGBTQ+ participants. The strength of the relationship is assessed with the Phi correlation for intersectionality. The qualitative analysis assesses how intersectionality shapes participants' social learning processes. This is assessed using the sensitizing concepts (see Blumer, 1954; Bowen, 2006) of doing masculinity, doing femininity, and doing queerness. Cases are separated based on these sensitizing concepts and coded based on functionality or how participants were practically and emotionally accessing these concepts within accounts.

## Results

Table 5.1 shows Chi-square analyses of heterosexual, cisgender men, heterosexual, cisgender women, and LGBTQ+ SMFs' sources of learning. In terms of master status designations, 19 (22.4%) heterosexual, cisgender men learned from pimps they were close to as compared to 3 (5.9%) heterosexual, cisgender women and 1 (2.3%) LGBTQ+ participants (Pearson $X^2$ =13.53, p < .001). Conversely, 11 (21.6%) heterosexual, cisgender women learned from their current or former pimp as compared to one (1.2%) heterosexual, cisgender man and 3 (6.8%) LGBTQ+ participants (Pearson $X^2$ =17.52, p <.001). The variation in pimp learning sources based on master

**Table 5.1.** *Who SMFs Learned from Split by Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation*

| | Heterosexual, Cisgender Men (n=86) % (n) | Heterosexual, Cisgender Women (n=53) % (n) | LGBTQ+ Participants (n=44) % (n) | Total (N=183) % (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Learning from any pimp | 38.4% (33) | 39.6% (21) | 22.7% (10) | 35.0% (64) |
| Learning from any family member | 25.6% (22) | 9.4% (5) | 27.3% (12) | 21.3%* (39) |
| Self-taught | 23.5% (10) | 17.6% (9) | 18.2% (8) | 20.6% (37) |
| Observation of pimps in the neighborhood | 20.0% (17) | 15.7% (8) | 13.6% (6) | 17.2% (31) |
| Sex worker | 18.8% (16) | 17.6% (9) | 11.4% (5) | 16.7% (30) |
| Other family (not parents) | 21.2% (18) | 7.8% (4) | 15.9% (7) | 16.1% (29) |
| Friend | 10.6% (9) | 19.6% (10) | 20.5% (9) | 15.6% (28) |
| Pimp (close relationship) | 22.4% (19) | 5.9% (3) | 2.3% (1) | 12.8%** (23) |
| Their current/former pimp | 1.2% (1) | 21.6% (11) | 6.8% (3) | 8.3%** (15) |
| Parent | 4.7% (4) | 2.0% (1) | 11.4% (5) | 5.6% (10) |
| Gang member | 3.5% (3) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 1.7% (3) |

*Note*: * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

status designations may be explained based on differences in how heterosexual, cisgender people learn versus those in the LGBTQ+ community. The main sex worker in sex worker/pimp' dyads most commonly include a heterosexual, cisgender woman who is taught by her pimp to facilitate while doing sex work. Outside of these dyad scenarios, pimps may be more apt to train other heterosexual, cisgender men. These relationships within the commercial sex market adhere to the traditional gender binary and can include aspects of 'revanchist masculinity' or "the way men lay

claim to certain work practices while simultaneously denying women's abilities to perform such tasks at an equal level" (Besbris, 2015, p. 714). LGBTQ+ participants rarely learn from pimps, and the main sex worker/ pimp paradigm does not appear to be common when LGBTQ+ participants work together. However, learning from pimps in the neighborhood was not statistically significant, indicating that observational learning from pimps in the neighborhood may occur similarly despite participants' gender or sexual orientation designations.

A little over one-quarter of LGBTQ+ participants and heterosexual, cisgender men, compared to less than ten percent of heterosexual, cisgender women, learned from family members (Pearson $X^2 = 6.33$, $p < .042$). It appears that heterosexual, cisgender women are more protected from learning facilitation within families, or they are not viewed as appropriate learners based on family members' traditional views of gender roles. Heterosexual, cisgender men often mentor boys or men in their families. However, why LGBTQ+ participants are comparatively more likely to be instructed by family is unexpected, especially considering the high levels of early family rejection and expulsion. In this sample, many LGBTQ+ participants were transgender women. If these teachings had occurred early on, family members might not have understood the participant's gender identity. The prevalence may be similar among these two groups because they were both often born biologically male. Alternatively, the LGBTQ+ participants may interpret the term 'family' differently as they form pseudo-families and, therefore, when they reflect on learning to facilitate, they may think of their gay families, such as their transgender mothers, or their butch or butch queen fathers, or brothers, and transgender sisters.

Finally, while the other sources of learning were not statistically significant based on participants' gender identity or sexual orientation, the quality of the learning experience may vary greatly.

## The Interpersonal Exchange of Teaching Sex Market Facilitation through the Gender Prism

Early learning experiences of sex market facilitation, more often occurring within families, are inherently coercive and can profoundly impact children and adolescents (Horning et al., 2023). When social learning occurs between cisgender male family members, they are often engaged in an exercise that is a part of their doing masculinity that includes how to treat women or sex workers and how to recruit them. There can be multiple functions involved in this type of masculine interpersonal exchange. For instance, the function of the lesson can be about how to engage with sex workers but also how to make money in the US capitalist system, and both can be part of how a father shows his son how to be a man. There can be multiple functions involved in this type of masculine interpersonal exchange.

## The Functions of Doing Masculinity for Heterosexual Cisgender Men

At the time of the interview, Calvin (N1271) was a 48-year-old who identified as heterosexual. As a boy, he learned various types of crime from his father, describing his dad as a "mack." Mack is a slang term for a pimp who is skilled in the art of seduction using verbal skills. Calvin framed this social learning exchange as positive and informative in terms of shaping his trajectory and style as a sex market facilitator. Calvin stated:

> I had to watch him see what he used to do. I got to the point where he would take me out, and I wondered what he'd do. Went to go see women, and he used to take me with him, and he'd use me as an excuse, "Me and him goin' over here..."

Calvin looked up to his father, who engaged in various criminal enterprises. One event Calvin noted was when his father robbed a bookmaker and was not arrested. His father getting away with a daring financial crime is something that Calvin still views as impressive, indicating that the function of these teachings included a money-making element and a display of masculine performativity. Indeed, Calvin reproduced a similar robbery, where he robbed a check cashing business, categorizing this event as a "high point" in his life. This one-off event was emotional as he directly mimicked his father's robbery, with the event being so significant that he defined it as a "high point." However, his father provided him with more extensive teaching in another arena,

and Calvin's steadier income came from interacting with women and profiting from these facilitation relationships.

Calvin discussed learning how to treat women to recruit them, describing how his father was skilled enough to "turn" a housewife. Calvin stated:

> Yeah, he showed me how to treat women, how to be able to turn 'em. I watched my father turn somebody's wife into a ho. Because he wasn't supportive givin' her no money or nothin'. Then he turned her to a ho just doin' his thing.

Calvin modeled his father's behaviors, showing him how to commit crimes. This father-son dyad is not uncommon and can be part of the process of a father showing a son how to be a "man." Often, participants frame these learning experiences within families or close intimate groups as positive male bonding experiences, as part of their coming-of-age experiences, or as both. A father and son, an uncle and son, or some other significant male figure and a young boy can share these interpersonal exchanges.

However, participants can negatively frame these early experiences with male family members. What remains constant is the attempt at doing masculinity or male family members attempting to teach a boy how to be a man, making facilitation part of their masculine gender project.

## The Functions of Doing Feminity for Cisgender Women

First, the more common scenario of heterosexual, cisgender women learning sex market facilitation occurs when the main sex workers manage other sex workers or groups of sex workers work collectively. Sex market facilitation can be a way out of sex work or an attempt to break the glass ceiling.

In terms of cisgender women, like LGBTQ+ populations, they may leave family homes due to maltreatment or physical or sexual harassment or abuse. While the family does not outright reject them similarly, they leave their homes due to extreme conditions. In the case of Etta (C030), her mother's boyfriend was sexually harassing her, and she decided to leave that dangerous

situation at sixteen years old. Etta reflected on meeting other women like herself and surviving in a collective of sex workers. When asked about a 'high point' in her life, Etta stated, "Taking care of myself at an early age and to meet other women that were like me, I would say, doing the thing that I did. Shit." Etta discussed this further:

> Because the place that had me and my other two girlfriends, we were able to manage it just by sucking dicks, selling drugs. We did a number of things. So, as long as I saw that that was manageable for me to do to keep that, that made me feel good about myself. It really did. I loved it.

Etta moved into sex market facilitation, having engaged in survival sex since she was 16 years old, learning how to facilitate based on first-hand knowledge about being a sex worker. She worked in a collective with two best friends and fellow sex workers whom she knew from her entrance into the commercial sex market. Etta discussed how they started "recruiting bitches" and working as SMFs.

Dahlia (C103) learned facilitation as a main sex worker. In one year, she claimed she would recruit as many as 20 women for her pimp. In this scenario, there were six main sex workers, which is a less common scenario in this sample. These women would organize the house and work collectively. In terms of how the main sex workers, regular sex workers, and pimps interacted, was that they were all sexually active with each other. Dahlia stated, "We all slept together and performed sexual, yes, and we did sexual acts with each other. And we all were with one guy." In their business model, they used drugs to induce coercion as a recruitment strategy. Dahlia reflected. "As a bottom, you get the girls to come and stay with you. You turn them out. You get them on drugs, and you teach them how to get out here and get money." Main sex workers learn by working with their pimps. Still, they are often working, managing, socializing, and sometimes having intimate relationships with the other sex workers and sometimes other main sex workers.

## The Functions of Doing Queerness or Doing Transness for LGBTQ+ SMFs

The learning function differs in other cases due to the participant's LGBTQ+ status. Tamika (N1255) is a 63-year-old woman who identifies as "gay." At a young age, Tamika started working for a couple. She described herself as their "assistant" (like a main sex worker). Tamika was doing sex work, getting drugs for everyone, monitoring the business on the street, and receiving room and board in exchange. Tamika carried out tasks typical of a main sex worker. When asked about her tasks, Tamika stated:

> Making sure that they were safe in the street, making sure different things in the house was available to them. However, she embodied masculinity on the streets. Well, yes, always, always. I have the duty to step in if I see an altercation or she just say, "Help." I have to step in and act as though I was a man because back then, I wear my cap backwards and coats. They didn't know what I was, and I resolved the problem because they got scared. I had a gun.

Tamika's sex market facilitators and co-workers gave her the tasks of nurturing and protecting, as these were some of the roles of an assistant. Notably, she does not refer to herself as a main sex worker, even though she worked for the couple as a sex worker and managed the sex workers. Her gender project as an assistant required dual roles, embodying femininity and masculinity and passing as a man on the street to ensure that her role as the enforcer was effective. Due to Tamika's intersectionality, she has queered the manifestation of a main sex worker through the creation of the fluid gender assistant.

Families rejected many of the LGBTQ+ participants; that is, they were kicked out or ran away at young ages; this is particularly the case for the transgender participants. Members of the LGBTQ+ community who are already working in the commercial sex market can assist fellow LGBTQ+ members who are at risk of exclusion from licit work, harassment, violence, sexual assault, homicide, and arrest. Due to the level of risk, LGBTQ+ community members form protective collectives and teach one another how to survive, how to do sex work on the streets,

and how to stay safe based on their master status designations. This example is illustrated in the case of Misha (N1121); she stated:

> I started at 15; I left home because my father did not agree with my lifestyle. At 15, I came out of the closet, and I told them I was gay, that I really wasn't gay, I was trans, but I didn't know how to describe at the time what was trans. I took the train, and I don't know where the hell I was going. I ended up on 14th street, and some girl named Lulu, which may she rest in peace, she met me. She saw me as a young boy, and at the time, I was 15, not telling her I was homeless and had no money. I couldn't be home, and she was okay. What do you do? I'm like, what do you mean? She basically told me I need to grow up fast if I'm gonna survive out here. I was like, okay.

Fleeing their homes due to family rejection and violence, members of the LGBTQ+ community are often unhoused, making them targets (Dank et al., 2015; Hogan & Roe-Sepowitz, 2023), but they often meet other LGBTQ+ sex workers who seek to protect them (Chateauvert, 2015). Briana (N1054) described how she learned sex work from a fellow transgender woman and good friend. Many transgender women only facilitate intermittently or are engaged more peripherally, such as sharing dates and gaining a small profit. While this is sex market facilitation, it can be legally sex trafficking. For instance, if the sex worker is underage, the transmother who tries to help by sharing dates for a small profit is legally a sex trafficker. As compared to scenarios with heterosexual, cisgender men or women, the transgender community involved in the sex trade tends to be more collaborative in this sample. Both parties in the dyad are extremely vulnerable in mainstream society and the community, and due to this high level of danger, exchanges and money-making are more often collaborative and cooperative. Many LGBTQ+ groups travel to different cities and rent out hotel rooms where they spend time together, engage in sex work, share dates, and protect each other. Briana stated:

We would share experiences. Teach each other, no, I would just tell 'em, okay, this is where you post. You should want to set your rates, these prices, to weed out all the little lowballers or something like that. It would just be little tips because out of all my friends, I've been in there the longest and I traveled the most. I would just share tips like okay, this is how you screen someone.

These anecdotal experiences highlight some interpersonal dynamics and how social learning occurs through gender and sexuality prisms.

**Table 5.2.** *What Participants Learnt Split By Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation*

| | Heterosexual, Cisgender Men (n=86) % (n) | Heterosexual, Cisgender Women (n=53) % (n) | LGBTQ+ Participants (n=44) % (n) | Total (N=183) % (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Recruiting Workers | 26.2% (22) | 26.5% (12) | 7.3% (3) | 21.8%* (38) |
| Treatment of Sex Workers | | | | |
| Know what sex workers want | 17.9% (15) | 11.8% (6) | 2.4% (1) | 12.5%** (22) |
| Coercive strategy | 27.9% (24) | 24.5% (13) | 4.5% (2) | 21.3%** (39) |
| Persuasive strategy | 12.8% (11) | 13.2% (7) | 2.3% (1) | 10.4% (19) |
| Controlling Workspaces | | | | |
| Always "get the money" | 13.1% (11) | 4.1% (2) | 29.3% (12) | 14.4%** (25) |
| Avoid the police | 20.0% (17) | 20.4% (10) | 2.4% (1) | 16.0%* (28) |
| Avoid street violence | 17.6% (15) | 2.0% (1) | .3% (3) | 10.9%* (19) |
| Avoid drug use for self and workers | 3.6% (3) | 0.0% (0) | 2.4% (1) | 2.3% (4) |
| When and how to talk | 9.3% (8) | 2.0% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 5.1%* (9) |
| Other | | | | |
| Know how to do the sex work part | 9.3% (8) | 12.2% (6) | 40.5% (17) | 17.5%*** (31) |
| How to steal | 3.6% (3) | 6.1% (3) | 7.3% (3) | 5.2% (9) |

*Note:* * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

For the data in Table 5.2, we asked participants questions about what they learned in these interpersonal exchanges regarding recruiting workers, treatment of workers, controlling workspaces, and other aspects of facilitation.

Table 5.2 shows several quantitative differences between what heterosexual, cisgender men, heterosexual, cisgender women, and LGBTQ+ SMFs learned. The Chi-Square test found a statistically significant difference between the actual and expected counts of these groups in terms of learning from pimps. In terms of master status designations, 22 (26.2%) of heterosexual, cisgender men and 13 (26.5%) heterosexual, cisgender women learned how to recruit workers as compared to three (7.3%) LGBTQ+ participants. Twenty-four (27.9%) heterosexual, cisgender men and 23 (23.6%) heterosexual, cisgender women mentioned learning a coercive strategy as compared to two (4.5%) LGBTQ+ SMFs. The differences in learning coercive strategies are probably explained based on who they learned from and how the co-offending groups tended to form. In some previously mentioned scenarios, heterosexual, cisgender men and women learned from pimps who may pass on more coercive approaches. Also, many heterosexual, cisgender women SMFs are working with or for pimps. Within the heteronormative paradigm of sex market facilitation and sex work, recruitment styles appear to be more coercive. Alternatively, the LGBTQ+ SMFs in this sample often begin as sex workers without a pimp, or if they had one, they left them. When the work is through a queer or transgender lens as opposed to through a heterosexual one, these workgroups appear to be more cooperative and protective rather than duplicitous or otherwise manipulative with sex workers. Additionally, some of the transgender women are using the work to pay for expensive medical treatment, and they are doing transness with their transgender mothers and sisters within and outside of the commercial sex market.

Another area of difference in terms of controlling workspace was that 15 (17.6%) heterosexual, cisgender men learned how to avoid street violence as compared to one (2.0%) heterosexual, cisgender women and three (7.3%) LGBTQ+ participants. Heterosexual, cisgender male SMFs may be more engaged in street-based work and subject to masculine performativity

and other strategies to diffuse violence. Also, eight (9.3%) heterosexual, cisgender men learned when and how to talk as compared to one (2.0%) heterosexual, cisgender woman and 0 (0.0%) LGBTQ+ SMFs. This difference may be due to more interactive street-based work, which can be more chaotic and require reducing violence through communication as a problem-solving strategy.

There was some variation in learning how to control the workspace based on participants' master status designations. First, 12 (29.3%) LGBTQ+ participants were taught to 'get the money' as compared to 11 (13.1%) heterosexual, cisgender men and three (6.0%) heterosexual, cisgender women. The LGBTQ+ SMFs are more likely to learn to 'get the money,' and this variation may be due to almost all of them beginning as sex workers and engaging in lower-level facilitation. Also, due to their marginalized status, clients may view them as easy targets to cheat of payment. Second, 32 (16.9%) LGBTQ+ participants, as compared to eight (9.3%) heterosexual, cisgender men and seven (14.0%) heterosexual, cisgender women, learned how to do the sex work part. The differences in learning the sex work part may also be because LGBTQ+ participants often begin as sex workers; however, it is also due to learning safety practices around sexual encounters with clients, particularly for transgender women, and teaching other transgender women how to protect themselves from clients and other people on the streets.

### How does social learning relate to facilitation style?

Jade (N1015) identifies as a heterosexual, cisgender woman. She learned from her pimp, who used drugs and was abusive toward the sex workers. Jade had her pimp arrested for abusing a sex worker, then took over his business. However, Jade took her experience and facilitated sex work more humanely. Jade stated:

> He was horrible. I was not like that at all. I would never hit any of them. I would never think to do something crazy like that. Sometimes, it happens; you can't make the quota, sometimes, it's very hard.

In addition to avoiding violence and abuse, Jade also avoided using a coercive facilitation style like her pimp, instead choosing to run her business more humanely. For instance, when an interviewer asked if she ever forced workers to do something they did not want to do, Jade stated:

> No, no, there was some days where they were like, look, I can't go out tonight. Okay, no problem. You know what I mean. And I think because I was the way that I was, they did not give me a hard time. Some of them -I never made them work seven days a week. It was five days a week; you had two days off. I never knew it was like a job, a regular full-time job.

In an extreme case, Nina (N1088) is a 41-year-old cisgender female, and she identifies as pansexual. As a child, she is a survivor of extreme sexual abuse by her father. Her father was a pimp and abused and trafficked her as a young child. Her uncle and father trafficked women from Trinidad (where they are originally from). When her father died, she took over his business. Nina stated:

> Did I ever beat them? Yes. Have I ever gotten them raped? Yes, 'cause I don't have a penis. I wanted to break them in; they had to be raped, yes. Had to be beaten, yes. To break them down.

Through a combination of surviving extreme abuse and observing what participants called a "guerilla-style." or violent style of pimping, Nina repeated this cycle of violence by dehumanizing sex workers physically, sexually, and psychologically. Nina's biggest fear is that she will turn out just like her father, and she breaks down during the interview thinking about this. Nina stated:

> I'm just like my dad. (---) He's one mean mother fucker. God rest his soul. And I do the same that he did to me. So, I think I'm just like, just like the female version.

The interviewer tried to comfort Nina as she was visibly upset by pointing out that she had not sexually molested children. She replied:

> Never would, in Jesus' name. (Interviewer: No, so you're not like him, you're not, okay? Okay. (Interviewer: You're not like him.) Don't make me cry. Every day I

> say that. I say that every day. You have no idea what I've done to people. (Interviewer: Well, I want to hear about it, and you've had a very difficult life, and that was his fault, not yours.) I have taken little girls, 17-year-olds, when I was in my 20s. Tellin' them, we was goin' for a walk. Let's walk and talk. The next thing that you know, they're being trafficked to another State, and they don't know nothin'.

Nina is visibly shaken at the idea that she is like her father. While she has not sexually assaulted minors, she does admit to targeting young people and moving them across state lines without their consent and sex trafficking these minors. Nina's case is atypical, but it highlights how the victim-offender line is often blurred and how early learning experiences of victimization and offending can be repeated regardless of gender identity or LGBTQ+ status. Heterosexual, cisgender women and LGBTQ+ individuals can replicate coercive and violent styles of sex market facilitation. Gender and sexual orientation do not always influence learning outcomes.

There are a few cases where heterosexual, cisgender women and LGBTQ+ participants describe learning sex market facilitation within families. Still, unlike their heterosexual, cisgender male counterparts, this form of doing femininity, doing queerness, or doing queerness can revolve around surviving trauma experienced due to their gender identity or sexuality.

Marlow (N1052) identifies as a butch queen. Marlow goes on tours or travels to different cities with friends who are also sex workers, and his level of facilitation involves collecting a finder's fee for connecting sex workers and clients. After a series of the standard questions, Marlow became frustrated, stating:

> No one's being pimped or hoed with us really in the gay community. Anybody who's really in the gay/trans community, and I'm kinda generalizing, and it's kinda my experience, but it kinda is a visual experience, they're mostly on drugs, and secretly, they're with trade pimps. Not even. There's no gay pimps. They're a trade

> who turn out trans and cunt hoes. There's really no gay pimp. Even gay pimps pimp cunt hoes. They don't pimp gays.

Marlow kept returning to the fact that heterosexual-style pimp/sex worker dyads did not apply to the LGBTQ+ community, and this sentiment was echoed by most of the LGBTQ+ participants. Legally, Marlow could have been charged with pandering and even sex trafficking if one of his friends was below the age of 18. The style of facilitation was so different, and the LGBTQ+ community's style of sex work and facilitating and organizing how they sold sex was often not rooted in coercion or manipulating one another in the same way as the heterosexual, cisgender participants. Throughout the interview, Marlow made sure to clarify his position. Toward the end of the interview, the interviewer apologized as he was upset, and he elaborated on his response:

> Not like I'm sitting here and I'm organizing, no, I don't. A finder's fee at best, but I'm not running a whore house. I didn't train, no he. I ain't teach no ho the ropes. If anything, the ho's taught me.

Unlike some LGBTQ+ participants who learned from family members at a young age, other LGBTQ+ participants began work within the community to survive through collective engagement in the commercial sex market. Some of these participants were offended that how they facilitated could be even remotely like how heterosexuals interact in the commercial sex market, viewing the term pimp as the most denigrating insult. For them, learning the sex trade from heterosexuals was generally coercive and involved toxic gender dynamics. Some of the transgender women participants were previously involved in coercive dynamics with heterosexual, cisgender men who pimped or trafficked them, but they rarely repeated these styles. Many of the transgender women participants had broken free from these dyads and worked on their own or in groups.

SMFs' view of sex workers sometimes included targeting vulnerable people but also looking for positive attributes that would make them an asset in the commercial sex market. SMFs looking for positive attributes often described scenarios where their interpersonal dynamics with

sex workers were intimate, such as in the case of Quincy, or if the sex worker was a main sex worker, as she often needed to be "trustworthy," "reliable," and "loyal." For heterosexual, cisgender SMFs, knowledge about who to recruit is passed down, such as who is an easy mark. There was no variation in SMFs learning to seek out positive attributes in recruits, and this is probably because some facilitators look for competent workers or those who will appeal to customers or those who seek out the work. LGBTQ+ participants may seek out these same positive attributes when sizing up other sex workers as potential co-workers. Some facilitators and facilitators who also engage in sex work want to work with competent people who require less care and attention and want to work; therefore, they do not seek out vulnerable people.

**Table 5.3.** *Participant's View of Recruits Split by Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation*

| | Heterosexual, Cisgender Men (n=72) % (n) | Heterosexual, Cisgender Women (n=47) % (n) | LGBTQ+ Participants (n=24) % (n) | Total Sample (N=143) % (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mentioned word: target or vulnerable | 9.7% (7) | 10.6% (5) | 8.3% (2) | 9.8% (14) |
| Discourses mentioned: | | | | |
| Vulnerable | 59.7% (43) | 51.1% (24) | 37.5% (9) | 53.1% (76) |
| Drug use | 19.4% (14) | 125.5% (12) | 16.7% (4) | 21.0% (30) |
| Willing workers | 20.8% (15) | 19.1% (9) | 25.0% (6) | 21.0% (30) |
| Easily managed workers | 29.2% (21) | 25.5% (12) | 25.0% (6) | 27.3% (39) |
| Two or more discourses | 36.1% (26) | 23.4% (11) | 16.7% (4) | 28.7%* (41) |

*Note:* * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

Table 5.3 shows that there are few significant quantitative differences between heterosexual, cisgender men, heterosexual, cisgender women, and LGBTQ+ SMFs' views of

recruits based on the types of discourse selected for this study. First, very few participants directly mentioned the words "target" or "vulnerable" (n=14; 9.8%). Instead, participants described vulnerable people or used language indicating recruits' vulnerability. In terms of master status designations, 43 (59.7%) heterosexual, cisgender men and 24 (51.1%) heterosexual, cisgender women targeted a vulnerable recruit as compared to nine (37.5%) LGBTQ+ SMFs. Overall, framing recruits as vulnerable was used in over half of the sample, making it the most popular discourse. The LGBTQ+ participants technically had a lot of missing data in this area. Often, they framed their facilitation relationships as cooperative, so interviewers reframed questions, eliminating words such as "targeting" as it was outside of the parameters of how they perceived these relationships. Due to this missing data, this variable is not statistically significant. However, from a qualitative perspective - there are major differences in how LGBTQ+ and heterosexual, cisgender participants connect in the commercial sex market. Almost half of the heterosexual, cisgender men in the sample mentioned recruiting vulnerable people, and this may be due to how they are learning to facilitate and its connection to doing masculinity; however, heterosexual, cisgender women are doing the same, but this is likely due to them often learning through sex work or through being a main sex worker and being responsible for recruitment, but still accountable to a pimp. Even if they were working independently, they often learned from a pimp. According to social learning principles, they will likely replicate these styles. However, their motivation may diverge, and many heterosexual, cisgender women probably do not replicate their SMF's coercive approaches.

Thirty participants (21%) discussed focusing on recruits' drug use. There were no statistically significant differences between the three groups. 30 (21.0%) participants described recruits as sex workers who want to work, and there were no significant differences between groups—over a quarter of participants focused on recruiting easily managed sex workers in the recruitment process with no significant differences between groups.

The only statistically significant difference was using two or more types of discourse to describe recruits, with 26 (36.1%) heterosexual, cisgender men using multiple types as compared to 11 (23.4%) heterosexual, cisgender women and four (16.7%) LGBTQ+ participants. This difference may indicate that heterosexual, cisgender men have more elaborate discourse surrounding recruitment, or at least they were more willing to vocalize their multiple reasons for targeting recruits.

## Conclusion

In terms of functionality, many of these narratives are about individuals struggling to survive for food, shelter, and drug habits. However, participants' master status designations dictated how they learned and enacted their facilitation. Many heterosexual, cisgender male participants' learned how to do masculinity, focusing on making money in the illicit market as a man or accomplishing manhood through either making false promises and using threats or actual physical violence or coercive acts. In terms of the heterosexual, cisgender women, they sometimes worked collectively with other sex workers, but often the original learning directives came from heterosexual, cisgender male pimps. Main sex workers sometimes had agency, but as both a sex worker and facilitator, the interpersonal dynamics varied from cooperative to coercive. Even those who ultimately facilitated independently from their SMFs had a range of styles, with some replicating styles and other heterosexual, cisgender women in main sex worker roles finding more cooperative and humane facilitation styles. Last, members of the LGBTQ+ community may have similar early learning experiences to heterosexual, cisgender people. However, many engage in survival sex due to being kicked out of family homes, responding by forming protective groups and engaging in more collective collaborative strategies to navigate the illicit sex market. LGBTQ+ BIPOC participants' need for survival is rooted in their intersectionality, making them the most vulnerable group working in the commercial sex market. Therefore, the meaning of sex market facilitation and the interpersonal dynamics involved differ greatly for this group.

# Chapter 6. Social Support Networks: Variation in Attachment to Prosocial and Deviant Cultures

Close, supportive relationships contribute to decisions to obey or disobey criminal laws (e.g., Giordano, 2020; Papachristos et al., 2012). Prior studies have shown that individuals become more persistent offenders as their social networks shift from more quality time spent with law-abiding friends and family to those committing crimes (Giordano et al., 2006; Hagan, 1991; Meares & Fagan, 2012; Young & Rees, 2013). This shift is also associated with perceptions of the law as supportive of continual criminal behavior (Papachristos et al., 2012). There have been some studies evaluating sex traffickers' social networks, focusing on the sex trafficking criminal group or analysis of case studies used to improve investigative strategies (Cockbain et al., 2011; Mancus, 2014). Leukfeldt et al. (2017) highlighted the importance of social support networks; they stated, "Social ties provide access to criminal opportunities, and the social network is an opportunity structure that facilitates various types of crime" (p. 705). In this study, we focused on the participant's support networks. Our study is the first to evaluate sex market facilitators' social support networks to determine how these networks are related to how SMFs teach facilitation, how they interact with sex workers, and how they facilitate sex work.

Another key factor in the composition of social support is the participants' gender identity and sexual orientation. Prior research on criminal networks in street crimes, such as residential burglaries, has found that the primarily male-dominant networks expressed and reinforced gender stereotypes (Mullins & Wright, 2003). In previous chapters, we have established variations based on SMFs' master status designations in how they recruit, learn facilitation, and transmit this knowledge. Therefore, we examine if the composition of their support networks varies based on participants' gender identity and sexual orientation.

Studies show that gender can matter in social support. For instance, Rountree and Warner (1999) examined informal social control in Seattle through social network analysis. They found that having social ties to cisgender women was more effective in controlling crime and in communities with fewer female-headed households.

This chapter addresses the question: "How are traffickers socially networked?" We relied on survey questions from prior research (Papachristos et al., 2012) to address the closeness of persons in each SMFs social network and assess the extent to which SMFs' social networks were composed of persons involved in criminal activity. This chapter provides descriptive information and Chi-square analyses based on participants' social network composition and their networks' density. While SNs may mediate many of the differences in SMFs' styles, we report on descriptive distinctions and variation based on three factors: a) participants' gender identity and sexual orientation; b) whether they are currently facilitating or have stopped facilitation; and c) whether they were ever sex workers. We examine whether they were sex workers to assess whether gender identity or the role of sex workers are related to differences in the composition of their social support networks.

## Analysis Plan

We assessed each interviewee's support network by expanding upon questions from previous social network studies described in Chapter 2 (e.g., Papachristos et al., 2012). From these survey data, we created several measures to assess the composition of their social network. To protect the confidentiality of participants, interviewees used nicknames when identifying the persons in their networks; given their serious criminal activity and active offending, confidentiality is a critical ethical principle to uphold. Thus, SMFs may have overlap in their social networks but our survey data cannot assess the overlap across SMFs' networks. As the focus is on ego-centric social networks, visualizations typically used to show the overlap across networks are

not included, as prior research on ego-centric social networks also did not show such visualization (Papachristos et al., 2012).

We focus on several descriptive measures of their social networks. The total number of persons in their social support network indicates how connected they are to other people, which is called degree centrality in social network analysis. The average rating of closeness with the persons in their social support network provided information about their closeness to everyone in their social network.

We also assessed the density of the social support network. Density means the degree to which the people in their network are connected. It was calculated using the formula (actual number of close ties / possible number of close ties).[16] The density measure ranges from zero to one, where one indicates that none of the 'alters' or how each person named in their network are connected to each other, and one indicates that all alters have a close tie. A close tie was defined as a rating of three, hanging out but not emotionally close, or four, hanging out and being emotionally close and supportive. Thus, as the density measure approaches one, the support networks are very connected with each other, and as it nears zero, people in a participants' network do not hang out or are not close to each other.

Negative binomial regressions were conducted on the count measures that served as outcomes, due to the fact that the variances were greater than the mean These outcomes assessed aspects of their social network, including the total number of persons, the number of support persons involved in the illicit sex trade, the number of support persons involved in selling illicit drugs and the number of persons who have been arrested.

Chi-square analyses were conducted to assess how specific characteristics such as gender and active or inactive facilitation were associated with the outcome measures that were

[16] The number of possible close ties is calculated with the formula: (((number of support persons) * (number of support persons -1)) / 2). In social network analysis, an edge signifies that two persons in a network are connected. In this analysis, a connection was defined as at least hanging out compared to complete strangers or knowing the person but not interacting socially.

categorical. We reported Cramer's V in these tables as these correlations, which are appropriate for nominal level data, provide a measure of the strength of the association.

# Results

## Overall Descriptives of Participants' Social Networks

For the entire sample, the median number of persons in the participants' social network was 5, with a mean of 5.42 and a standard deviation of 2.33. The number of persons in their support network ranged from one to 16. The mean density across the total sample was .41, suggesting that a little more than half of the persons in a social support network were not close to each other (median = .33, sd = .37). A little over one-fifth of the support networks consisted of persons that were not close to each other (21.3%, n=37). At the other end, 32 (18.4) participants had social support networks where all their alters hung out and/or were emotionally close and supportive. The average closeness rating across each participant's support persons was 3.40 (median = 3.5, sd = .58).

Nearly half (41.5%) were not socially close with their family, and over one-fifth were heavily networked with family. Notably, almost 30% had an almost all-women network, and nearly a fifth did not have a single woman in their network. Most participants could trust someone to have their back in a fight, with almost half having a few people in their network with this capability.

We explored the compositions of deviant ties in participants' social networks. About 16% of SMFs had only support persons without arrests, and almost half had social support networks largely composed of persons with arrest records. These highly criminogenic networks are similar to the social networks of those who work in illicit economies (Bright et al., 2019; Leukefeldt et al., 2017). Notably, over one-third of the sample had no one from the illicit drug trade in their social network, whereas about 20% of participants' social support network included a majority of

persons who sold drugs. However, well over half had at least one person in their social network from the illicit drug trade, indicating a nexus between the drug and sex markets or that participants' communities are heavily drug-involved. Three-quarters of the sample had someone in their network who worked in the sex trade. However, one-quarter of the sample had no one in their social network in the sex trade, indicating that certain SMFs do not form deep connections with coworkers or employees, or they have left the sex trade and disconnected from friends who were involved in it. In terms of the overall sample having a deviant social tie, i.e., those with arrests, involved in the drug trade, or involved in the sex trade, 34.8% (n=46) had all deviant ties in their social network. We refer to this group as 'hardcore' or those participants who are heavily involved with those engaged in illicit markets and engaged in other crimes.

## Predicting the Number of Support Persons in their Network

A negative binomial regression examined whether gender, prior sex work, whether a coercive sex trafficker, and currently active facilitation were related to the total number of people named in their support networks. As shown in Table 6.1, LGBTQ+ participants identified significantly fewer persons for their support network than did heterosexual, cisgender participants, and this remained significant if we controlled for the location of the interview. Heterosexual, cisgender men did not differ from heterosexual, cisgender women in the number of support persons in their network. Conversely, participants who had sold sex had a significantly higher number of support persons in their network than those who had not sold sex. These characteristics, however, were not significantly related to the average rating of closeness across the persons they named as part of their support network or the density of their networks. LGBTQ+ and whether sold sex remained significant predictors in separate negative binomial regressions for inactive and active SMFs.

**Table 6.1.** *Predicting Total Number of Persons in their Social Network*

| | b | Odds Ratio | SE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intercept | 4.69*** | 4.76 | .086 |
| Coercive Sex Trafficker | .072 | 1.07 | .063 |
| Heterosexual, Cisgender Men | -.02 | .98 | .073 |
| LGBTQ+ | -.18* | .84 | .086 |
| Has sold sex | .18** | 1.20 | .069 |
| Currently active in the illicit sex trade | .04 | 1.04 | .060 |
| Likelihood Ratio Chi-square | 14.35* | | |
| Deviance (value/df) | .12 | | |
| N | 163 | | |

*Note*: * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

## Comparing Currently Active Facilitators and Inactive Facilitators

Desistance research (e.g., Giordano, 2020) suggests that the social networks of inactive SMFs may have fewer persons who have been involved in the illicit sex trade, sold drugs, or been arrested. Table 6.2 presents the Chi-square analyses and Cramer's V correlations of active or inactive involvement in the illicit sex trade and deviance of their social support networks. Active and inactive facilitators were similar in having persons engage in deviant activities in their social support networks, and the correlations were small and not statistically significant. A similar percentage of active (32.7%) and inactive (37.3%) facilitators had social support circles composed of only persons who engaged in deviance, defined as having been arrested or involved in the illicit sex or drug trade. Active and inactive facilitators did not differ on any of the four measures of social support persons involved in deviance. About 20% had social support networks consisting of at least 60% of their network involved in drug dealing, and around 35% had social networks where none of their support persons dealt drugs.

**Table 6.2.** *Social Network Deviances and Involvement in the Illicit Sex Trade*

| | Inactive Facilitators (n=99) % (n) | Active Facilitators (n=83) % (n) | Total (N=182) % (n) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Whether the Support network consists of all deviant persons | | | Cramer's V = 0.04 |
| No | 67.3% (33) | 62.7% (69) | 64.2% (102) |
| All deviant | 32.7% (16) | 37.3% (41) | 35.8% (54) |
| % in the illicit drug trade | | | Cramer's V = 0.16 |
| None | 42.5% (34) | 34.8% (24) | 38.9% (58) |
| 1% to 25% | 20.0% (16) | 33.3% (23) | 26.2% (39) |
| 26% to 59% | 17.5% (14) | 13.0% (9) | 15.4% (23) |
| 60% to 100% | 20.0% (16) | 18.8% (13) | 19.5% (29) |
| % in the illicit sex trade | | | Cramer's V = 0.13 |
| None | 24.1% (20) | 26.0% (19) | 25.0% (39) |
| 1% to 25% | 36.1% (30) | 30.1% (22) | 33.3% (52) |
| 26% to 59% | 24.1% (20) | 19.2% (14) | 21.8% (34) |
| 60% to 100% | 15.7% (13) | 24.7% (18) | 19.9% (31) |
| % who were arrested | | | Cramer's V = 0.18 |
| None | 10.3% (8) | 22.2% (16) | 16.0% (24) |
| 1% to 25% | 17.9% (14) | 11.1% (8) | 14.7% (22) |
| 26% to 59% | 20.5% (16) | 22.2% (16) | 21.3% (32) |
| 60% to 100% | 51.3% (40) | 44.4% (32) | 48.0% (72) |

*Note superscripts indicate p-values from Chi-square analyses and the correlation analysis, Cramer's V, to assess strength of the relationship*: $^{*} < .05$; $^{**} < .01$; $^{***} < .001$

About a quarter had social support networks where no one was involved in the illicit sex trade, and about 20% had social support networks where at least 60% of the persons in their network were involved in the illicit sex trade. About 48% of active and inactive facilitators had social support networks where at least 60% of their people had been arrested.

These findings suggest that those who are inactive have not changed their support networks to stay away from persons who may continue to engage in deviance. However, the questions about deviance did not specify whether persons were currently involved in the illicit sex trade, so those who are inactive may be associating with others who have stopped their engagement in the illicit sex trade. The socio-ecological characteristics of the neighborhoods also contribute to the difficulty of finding support persons who have never engaged in the illicit sex or drug trade. A more refined analysis will be conducted in the future to assess whether those who had taken specific steps toward changing their lifestyle or who participated in treatment had different networks. These more refined analyses will be closer to the comparison of those who have desisted and those who have embraced sex facilitation as a criminal career.

Active and inactive facilitators also did not have statistically significant differences in their proportion of women in participants' social networks. Further, about 40% of active and inactive facilitators did not have family members in their support networks, indicating that engaging in crime in the life course may impact close family ties. Only six inactive and six active facilitators had no one in their network who would have their back in a fight.

## Predicting Number of Social Network Persons Involved in Deviance

**Separately for Inactive or Active Facilitators.** Although active and inactive facilitators have a similar composition on the proportion of persons involved in illicit sex trades and illicit drug trade, the social networks of inactive facilitators may be more influx as persons decide whether to distance themselves from those who are actively involved in drug selling or facilitation of sex work. This influx may create more randomness in the social network data; thus, it is important to conduct separate negative binomial regressions to avoid Simpson's Paradox,

where subsamples have different predictors for outcomes (Norton & Divine, 2015). With the potential randomness and influx of social networks for those who are inactive, we expected that only the social networks of active facilitators would show differences for coercive sex traffickers compared to other SMFs, gender identity, sexual orientation, and previous sex work.

Negative binomial regressions predicting the deviance of their social network were performed on two outcomes: a) the number of support persons involved in the illicit sex trade; and b) number of support persons involved in selling illicit drugs. Separate regressions were conducted for SMFs who were not currently facilitating sex workers and for those who were still actively facilitating sex workers. The models predicting the number of support persons in the illicit sex trade were not significant for inactive or active SMFs.

Table 6.3 presents the two negative binomial regressions for inactive and active SMFs predicting number of support persons involved in selling illicit drugs. As shown, active coercive sex traffickers had a significantly higher number of support persons who sold drugs than those who did not use violence toward their workers and did not take 85% of the workers' earnings. No other predictors were significant, and the model approached significance ($p < .09$). A negative binomial regression with only coercive sex trafficker in the model for active SMFs was significant, (Likelihood Ratio Chi-square = 9.47, $p < .002$), and indicated that coercive sex traffickers were 6.8 times more likely to have a higher number of support persons who sold illicit drugs than were SMFs using less coercive management strategies, $p < .001$.

**Table 6.3.** *Predictors of Deviance of Social Network: Frequency of Support Persons Selling Illicit Drugs*

| | Inactive SMFs | | | Active SMFs | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | b | Odds Ratio | SE | b | Odds Ratio | SE |
| Intercept | .02 | 1.02 | .42 | -.43 | .65 | .50 |
| Is/Was Coercive Sex Trafficker | .55 | 1.74 | .35 | .87** | 2.38 | .33 |
| Heterosexual Cisgender Men | .32 | 1.37 | .37 | .19 | 1.21 | .40 |
| LGBTQ+ | .12 | 1.13 | .52 | .27 | 1.30 | .43 |
| Has sold sex | -.26 | .77 | .34 | .10 | 1.10 | .40 |
| Likelihood Ratio $X^2$ | | 4.48 | | | 8.12 | |
| Deviance (value/df) | | 1.08 | | | .79 | |
| n | | 75 | | | 62 | |

*Note*: * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

Table 6.4 presents negative binomial regressions predicting the number of persons in their social networks who had been arrested. The second column shows that the predictors and model were not significant for SMFs who were inactive at the time of the interview. The third column presents the results of the negative binomial regression for active SMFs. Coercive sex traffickers' social networks were more 1.88 times more likely to consist of a greater number of persons who had been arrested than other SMFs' networks. The type of facilitator was the only predictor of the number of social network persons arrested, and the model was significant.

A Chi-square analysis compared coercive sex traffickers or other SMFs on the proportion who had only support persons who had been arrested, involved in selling drugs, or involved in facilitation. For inactive facilitators, a similar percentage of the coercive sex traffickers (62.0%, n = 31) and other SMFs (53.8%, n = 14) had only persons involved in illicit activities in their support networks, $X^2$ (1) = .47, p < .49. For active facilitators, coercive sex traffickers (73.0%, n = 27) were

more likely to have support networks of only persons involved in illicit activities than were other SMFs (30.0%, n = 9), $X^2$ (1) = 12.31, p < .001, Phi = .43.

**Table 6.4.** *Predictors of Deviance of Social Network: Frequency of Persons Who Have Been Arrested*

| | Inactive SMFs | | | Active SMFs | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | b | Odds Ratio | SE | b | Odds Ratio | SE |
| Intercept | .62* | 1.86 | .28 | .32 | 1.38 | .40 |
| Is/Was Coercive Sex Trafficker | .33 | 1.38 | .20 | .63** | 1.88 | .24 |
| Heterosexual Cisgender Men | .20 | 1.22 | .24 | .10 | 1.10 | .32 |
| LGBTQ+ | .16 | 1.17 | .29 | -.53 | .59 | .34 |
| Has sold sex | .19 | 1.21 | .22 | .41 | 1.51 | .31 |
| Likelihood Ratio $X^2$ | | 4.20 | | | 12.2* | |
| Deviance (value/df) | | .48 | | | .64 | |
| n | | 76 | | | 66 | |

*Note*: * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

## Variations across Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

Columns two, three, and four of Table 6.5 present the Chi-square analyses and Cramer's V correlations of gender identity and sexual orientation with the proportion of women, families, and those who would have their backs in a fight. Gender identity and sexual orientation and the proportion of women in participants' social networks were moderately related (Cramer's V=.32, p < .001).

All heterosexual, cisgender women had at least one woman as part of their social support. In contrast, about 24% of the social support networks of heterosexual, cisgender men and LGBTQ+ participants did not include any women. Over half (52.3%) of heterosexual, cisgender women had 60 to 100% support networks of women compared to only 27.3% of LGBTQ+ participants and 17.7% of heterosexual, cisgender men. Thus, heterosexual, cisgender women

always had at least one woman in their network, with over half having nearly all women in the social networks.

**Table 6.5.** *Social Network Characteristics with Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation*

| Characteristics of Social Network | Heterosexual, Cisgender Men (n=86) % (n) | Heterosexual, Cisgender Women (n=53) % (n) | LGBTQ+ Participants (n=44) % (n) | Total Sample (N=183) % (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| % with family | | | | Cramer's V = 0.11 |
| None | 39.0% (30) | 50.0% (24) | 35.9% (14) | 41.5% (68) |
| Less than half | 36.4% (28) | 37.5% (18) | 41.0% (16) | 37.8% (62) |
| At least half | 24.7% (19) | 12.5% (6) | 23.1% (9) | 20.7% (34) |
| % of women | | | | Cramer's V = 0.32*** |
| None | 24.1% (19) | 0% (0) | 24.2% (8) | 17.3% (27) |
| 1% to 25% | 24.1% (19) | 4.5% (2) | 6.1% (2) | 14.7% (23) |
| 26% to 59% | 34.2% (27) | 43.2% (19) | 42.4% (14) | 38.5% (60) |
| 60% to 100% | 17.7% (14) | 52.3% (23) | 27.3% (9) | 29.5% (46) |
| % who would have their back in a fight | | | | Cramer's V = 0.15 |
| None | 6.5% (5) | 8.2% (4) | 7.3% (3) | 7.2% (12) |
| 1% to 25% | 50.6% (39) | 57.1% (28) | 31.7% (13) | 47.9% (80) |
| 26% to 59% | 19.5% (15) | 16.3% (8) | 24.4% (10) | 19.8% (33) |
| 60% to 100% | 23.4% (18) | 18.4% (9) | 36.6% (15) | 25.1% (42) |

*Note superscripts indicate p-values from Chi-square analyses and the correlation analysis, Cramer's V, to assess strength of the relationship*: * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

Table 6.6 presents the Chi-square analyses of gender identity and sexual orientation with the four measures of the deviance of persons in their social support network. Gender identity and sexual orientation and the proportion of their social network in the illicit sex market were statistically associated (Cramer's V=.24, p < .001). Social support networks containing between 1% to 25% of friends involved in the illicit sex trade were twice as common among heterosexual,

cisgender women (52.2%) compared to heterosexual, cisgender men (28.0%), and LGBTQ+ participants (20%). However, networks involving the majority (60 to 100%) of persons involved in the illicit sex trade were more prevalent among LGBTQ+ participants (31.4%) than among heterosexual, cisgender women (19.6%) or heterosexual. cisgender men (14.7%).

**Table 6.6.** *Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation and the Deviance of Persons in their Social Support Networks*

| | Heterosexual, Cisgender Men (n=86) % (n) | Heterosexual, Cisgender Women (n=53) % (n) | LGBTQ+ Participants (n=44) % (n) | Total (N=183) % (n) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Whether all support persons engaged in some deviance? | | | | Cramer's V = 0.11 |
| Not all deviant | 65.1% (56) | 75.5% (40) | 75.0% (33) | 70.5% (129) |
| All deviant | 34.9% (30) | 24.5% (13) | 25.0% (11) | 29.5% (54) |
| % in the illicit drug trade | | | | Cramer's V = 0.18 |
| None | 30.6% (22) | 43.8% (21) | 51.7% (15) | 38.9% (58) |
| 1% to 25% | 25.0% (18) | 33.3% (16) | 17.2% (5) | 26.2% (39) |
| 26% to 59% | 19.4% (14) | 12.5% (6) | 10.3% (3) | 15.4% (23) |
| 60% to 100% | 25.0% (18) | 10.4% (5) | 20.7% (6) | 19.5% (29) |
| % in the illicit sex trade | | | | Cramer's V = .24** |
| None | 30.7% (23) | 19.6% (9) | 20.0% (7) | 25.0% (39) |
| 1% to 25% | 28.0% (21) | 52.2% (24) | 20.0% (7) | 33.3% (52) |
| 26% to 59% | 26.7% (20) | 8.7% (4) | 28.6% (10) | 21.8% (34) |
| 60% to 100% | 14.7% (11) | 19.6% (9) | 31.4% (11) | 19.9% (31) |
| % who were arrested | | | | Cramer's V = .18 |
| None | 14.9% (11) | 11.1% (5) | 25.8% (8) | 16.0% (24) |
| 1% to 25% | 12.2% (9) | 17.8% (8) | 16.1% (5) | 14.7% (22) |
| 26% to 59% | 16.2% (12) | 33.3% (15) | 16.1% (5) | 21.3% (32) |
| 60% to 100% | 56.8% (42) | 37.8% (17) | 41.9% (13) | 48.0% (72) |

*Note superscripts indicate p-values from Chi-square analyses and the correlation analysis, Cramer's V, to assess strength of the relationship*: * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

Many LGBTQ+ participants were currently engaged in sex work and facilitating, or they had engaged in sex work in the past, so their higher likelihood of having many people in the sex

trade in their social network is not surprising. Additionally, many transgender women engage in sex work to avoid discrimination, harassment, and violence in licit markets, and they continue to rely on these networks even if they quit the sex trade (Shircliff et al., 2023).

Table 6.7 presents Chi-square analyses and Cramer's V correlations of those who were previously sex workers with proportions of women, family, those who would have their backs in a fight, and those with different types of deviant networks. Persons who had sold sex and never sold sex had similar support networks involving persons who were involved in the illicit sex or drug trades or had been arrested. A similar percentage of persons who sold (40.3%) and never sold sex (31.8%) were enmeshed in social networks composed of only deviant persons (Cramer's V = .09, $p > .05$). Only one difference in social support networks emerged for those who never sold sex and those who have sold sex: the proportion of women in their networks. Prior sex workers and the proportion of women in participants' social networks were statistically significant (Cramer's $V=0.23$, $p < .05$). Those who never sold sex (30.7%) were more likely to have no women in their support networks compared to those who sold sex (11.7%).

Social support networks, including over one-quarter with all women, were more prevalent among those who sold sex (72.8%) than those who never sold sex (56.0%). Prior sex workers and the proportion of women in participants' social networks were statistically significant (Cramer's $V=0.23$, $p < .05$). Those who never sold sex (30.7%) were more likely to have no women in their support networks compared to those who sold sex (11.7%). Social support networks, including over one-quarter with all women, were more prevalent among those who sold sex (72.8%) than those who never sold sex (56.0%). The previous findings suggest that being a sex worker and the gender identity and sexual orientation of participants were both related to the proportion of women in one's support network.

**Table 6.7.** *Prior Role as a Sex Worker and Social Network Characteristics*

| | Has Sold Sex | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | No (n=58) % (n) | Yes (n=120) % (n) | N=178 % (n) |
| % of women | | | Cramer's V = 0.23* |
| None | 30.0% (15) | 11.7% (12) | 17.6% (27) |
| 1% to 25% | 14.0% (7) | 15.5% (16) | 15.0% (23) |
| 26% to 59% | 30.0% (15) | 41.7% (43) | 37.9% (58) |
| 60% to 100% | 26.0% (13) | 31.1% (32) | 29.4% (45) |
| % who were arrested | | | Cramer's V = 0.16 |
| None | 23.4% (11) | 12.0% (12) | 15.6% (23) |
| 1% to 25% | 14.9% (7) | 15.0% (15) | 15.0% (22) |
| 26% to 59% | 14.9% (7) | 24.0% (24) | 21.1% (31) |
| 60% to 100% | 46.8% (22) | 49.0% (49) | 48.3% (71) |
| % who would have their back in a fight | | | Cramer's V = 0.05 |
| None | 7.8% (4) | 7.1% (8) | 7.3% (12) |
| 1% to 25% | 51.0% (26) | 46.0% (52) | 47.6% (78) |
| 26% to 59% | 17.6% (9) | 20.4% (23) | 19.5% (32) |
| 60% to 100% | 23.5% (12) | 26.5% (30) | 25.6% (42) |
| % with family | | | Cramer's V = 0.19* |
| None | 40.0% (20) | 41.4% (46) | 41.0% (66) |
| Less than half | 28.0% (14) | 42.3% (47) | 37.9% (61) |
| At least half | 32.0% (16) | 16.2% (18) | 21.1% (34) |
| % compromised of all persons who engage in deviance have been arrested, drug dealing or illicit sex trade | | | Cramer's V = 0.09 |
| Not all deviant | 68.2% (58) | 59.7% (46) | 64.2% (104) |
| All deviant | 31.8% (27) | 40.3% (31) | 35.8% (58) |
| % in the illicit drug trade | | | Cramer's V = 0.13 |
| None | 30.4% (14) | 43.0% (43) | 39.0% (57) |
| 1% to 25% | 28.3% (13) | 25.0% (25) | 26.0% (38) |
| 26% to 59% | 17.4% (8) | 15.0% (15) | 15.8% (23) |
| 60% to 100% | 23.9% (11) | 17.0% (17) | 19.2% (28) |
| % in the illicit sex trade | | | Cramer's V = 0.17 |
| None | 30.6% (15) | 21.2% (22) | 24.2% (37) |
| 1% to 25% | 30.6% (15) | 35.6% (37) | 34.0% (52) |
| 26% to 59% | 26.5% (13) | 19.2% (20) | 21.6% (33) |
| 60% to 100% | 12.2% (6) | 24.0% (25) | 20.3% (31) |

*Note superscripts indicate p-values*: * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

We conducted separate Chi-squares for the relationship between gender identity and sexual orientation with the proportion of women in their support network within whether participants had ever been sex workers. Table 6.8 presents this analysis.

**Table 6.8.** *Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation with % of Women in Social Support Network Within Sex Worker Role*

| | No Women (n=27) % (n) | | 1% to 25% Women (n=23) % (n) | | 25% to 59% Women (n=58) % (n) | | 60% to 100% Women (n=45) % (n) | | Cramer's V (n=153) % (n) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | Y | N | Y | N | Y | N | Y | N | Y |
| Hetero-cisgender men | 36.6% (15) | 11.4 (4) | 17.1% (7) | 34.3% (12) | 29.3% (12) | 37.1% (13) | 17.1% (7) | 17.1% (6) | .39 ** | .37* * |
| Hetero-cisgender women | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 5.3% (2) | 16.7% (1) | 47.4 % (18) | 83.3% (5) | 47.4% (18) | | |
| LGBTQ+ | 0.0% (0) | 26.7% (8) | 0.0% (0) | 6.7% (2) | 66.7% (2) | 40.0% (12) | 33.3% (1) | 26.7% (8) | | |
| Total | 30.0 % (15) | 11.7% (12) | 14.0% (7) | 15.5% (16) | 30.0% (15) | 41.7% (43) | 26.0% (13) | 31.1% (32) | | |

*Note:* N = Never been a sex worker. Y = Has been a sex worker. * < .05; ** < .01; *** < .001

The key finding from Table 6.8 is that heterosexual, cisgender women have a higher percentage of women in their social support networks than do heterosexual men or LGBTQ+ participants for both those who were never sex workers and those who have been sex workers. Only six heterosexual, cisgender women were never sex workers, and 83.3% have at least 60% women in their support networks. For those who have been sex workers, heterosexual, cisgender

women had a higher percentage of women in their social support networks than their counterparts.

## Conclusion

Those who sold sex had larger support networks, whereas LGBTQ+ had smaller support networks than heterosexual, cisgender persons. Sex workers, gender identity, sexual orientation, and active or inactive involvement in the illicit sex trade did not predict the density of their social networks. The statistically significant findings centered around homophily or those having similarities being socially connected. Heterosexual, cisgender women always had other women in their social network, with some having 60-100% in their social network. When being a former sex worker was added to gender identity and sexual orientation and the percentage of women in their SNs, these findings remained stable. Historically, sex work has been gendered with the idea that a higher percentage of women identify with that designation. The idea of adding whether someone was a former sex worker was to see if exposure to women through sex work would increase the number of women in the social networks of LGBTQ+ and heterosexual, cisgender men; however, this was not the case. For heterosexual, cisgender women as compared to heterosexual, cisgender men and LGBTQ+ participants, gender homophily was present in terms of the likelihood of SN composition and proportion, and this occurred across contexts. Sisterhood seemed key for heterosexual, cisgender women in the sex trade.

Inactive and active facilitators had little variation in their social networks. What was particularly surprising was that there were no statistically significant findings in terms of their deviant networks overall, including their connections to those in the illicit drug or sex trade. It may be a difference in measurement as desistance and inactivity are conceptually different. Our future research will examine how cognitive desistance (i.e., taking actual steps toward leading a prosocial life overlaps with inactivity) may further refine the meaning of inactive and whether the composition of persons involved in deviance differs for those who have taken active steps. Some

of our participants may have temporarily stopped due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These further analyses will clarify the difference between inactivity and cognitive desistance, as desistance is a process where many inactive facilitators have not disconnected from persons who have formerly or currently committed crimes. Our questions about the deviance of persons in their networks also did not specify whether support persons' involvement in illicit sex or drug trades was current or in the past. Additionally, it may be that in advanced marginalized communities, it is difficult to have support persons who have only been prosocial as engagement in the illicit economy or involvement in other crimes is normalized. So, some people's likelihood of deviant behavior in one's network may be high.

Although inactive and active facilitators had similar compositions of social networks on persons involved in deviance, these social networks may differ in the degree of influx. Generally, gender and sexual orientation, whether a coercive sex trafficker or not, and whether having sold sexual services did not predict the number of support persons in inactive SMFs' social networks who had been arrested, involved in selling drugs, or involved in the facilitator of sex workers. For those currently facilitating sex workers, coercive sex traffickers' social networks had a higher number of drug dealers, those who had been arrested and were more likely to have support networks of only persons involved in illicit activities. This finding highlights the overlap between the illicit drug trade and the illicit sex trade and the potential that serious perpetrators are involved in organized criminal activity through gangs. Further research is needed to assess the involvement of gangs, and the structure of gang operations involved in the illicit sex trade. Coercive sex traffickers, compared to other SMFs, did not differ in the number of support persons involved in the illicit sex trade, and gender identity groups or prior sex worker experience did not predict the number of support persons who had been involved in the illicit sex trade.

# Chapter 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

The goals of this study were to 1) provide an understanding of the social learning process involved in sex market facilitation, such as who passed down those skills, what is passed down, and what is learned from traumatic experiences, 2) evaluate how these social learning processes vary based on participants' demographics, especially gender identity and sexual orientation and are related to management strategies, and 3) establish how participants are socially and criminally networked. There have been many studies about how sex traffickers recruit sex workers. However, very few studies evaluated how sex traffickers are recruited and learn to recruit sex workers or sex trafficking victims or facilitate sex work, along with facilitation strategies, including interpersonal and economic coercion. This study aimed to close the gap in the literature by investigating the etiology of becoming a sex trafficker or a sex market facilitator and how this knowledge is transmitted across the generations.

This concluding chapter highlights the study's main findings, organized into individual, family, community, and legal tier risks. We outline the issues within each category. We follow this overview with the overarching issues of sex policy solutions to reduce harm. Lastly, we offer suggestions for future research directions.

## Practice and Policy Implications Through a Social-Ecological Lens: Risks Incurred at Different Ecological Levels

### Individual-level Risks

**In our study, most SMFs experienced trauma, and practitioners and policymakers should aid those with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) or traumatic experiences occurring during their involvement or after exiting the illicit sex trade.**

Most participants in this sample recalled at least one traumatic event as part of their critical life story. The rates of witnessing violence and experiencing the death of a loved one were quite prevalent. Additionally, the rates of sexual abuse and violence were high for heterosexual, cisgender women and LGBTQ+ participants.

ACEs are a risk factor for entrance into the sex market (Reid, 2019), as these traumas can have a profound impact on how one perceives the world and the opportunities available, including conceptions of the self (Isobel et al., 2019; Walsh, 2020). Our finding of high trauma rates among SMFs confirms that many have victim-offender profiles, illustrating that this blurring may be common. Shared Hope International (2020) had similar findings showing that many SMFs have experienced victimization, but our study also shows that they have also experienced other types of profound traumatic events.

There should be intensive programs dedicated to reducing or treating trauma targeting lower socioeconomic areas, especially those known for pimping with nearby strolls. Additionally, since some participants linked these traumas directly to their entrance into the commercial sex market, practitioners working with those who wish to desist from the sex trade should focus on how facilitators incorporate trauma as part of their self-identities. While cognitive transformation is not required for desistance (Maruna & Roy, 2007), an understanding of these traumas, especially ACEs, should be explored in-depth along with trauma-informed treatment.

While participants' trauma is at the individual level, many of the communities where participants grew up were in lower socioeconomic areas with high rates of poverty and crime (i.e., East Harlem, NY; Garfield Park, Chicago, IL). Some of the traumatic events occurred within the family setting, such as sexual abuse, assault, and family neglect. Participants also experienced other traumatic events, such as witnessing the death of a loved one, which connected to community gun violence and other types of community-level violence. Community programming to reduce community violence may have unexpected health and life trajectory results, with residents turning to more prosocial avenues in these neighborhoods.

**Exposure to pimps or sex workers may make one more prone to sex market facilitation; communities and professionals need to address this risk.**

More social exposure to pimps or sex workers enables social learning through observation or more direct learning and possible replication of behaviors. These exposures may be of higher magnitude as the outcomes involve monetary reward in areas with structural disadvantages. Several studies suggest that socializing with those involved in deviant behavior increases the likelihood (Vishner, 2017). Practitioners interfacing with young people in lower socioeconomic neighborhoods or at-risk youth should expect a fair amount of socializing with offending peers; however, if these groups are social actors in their commercial sex market networks, some amount of social learning may occur. Based on the findings in this study and in Dank et al.'s (2014), young people who observe pimping on the street can replicate it due to the basic principles of observational learning. Therefore, communities that provide alternative places besides the street to socialize with peers and devise methods to reduce the visibility of the illicit sex trade might reduce the risk of entrance into the commercial sex market.

**Gender identity and sexual orientation matter in terms of what is learned about facilitation, yet despite the commonality of changing roles and differences in facilitation styles, many participants still learned how to facilitate and profit from other sex workers.**

Based on gender identity and sexual orientation, participants varied in the facilitation skills acquired with heterosexual, cisgender men and women more apt to learn recruitment and how to use coercive strategies with sex workers. These groups often learn from heterosexual, cisgender men who are more prone to targeting vulnerable victims, and it appears that they teach how to recruit and use coercive strategies and teaching this type of facilitation can be replicated. In those cases, it may be more likely to lead to sex trafficking with a focus on the vulnerable, including youth, and emphasizing manipulative strategies that constitute sex trafficking. Practitioners who are involved in desistance programs for sex workers or SMFs should be aware

that if their clients were main sex workers, they may be more prone to this style of recruitment. Perhaps they should not be in the same treatment program as someone who only sold sex and did not facilitate other workers. Main sex workers should be made aware that they can face sex trafficking charges, particularly if they are prone to replicating their pimps' styles of coercive facilitation. Additionally, if practitioners are engaging with youth or people with other vulnerable designations, they should know they are potential targets for SMFs.

In terms of the LGBTQ+ population, some of these facilitators could be charged with sex trafficking. In this study, the reason is not often coercion or recruitment techniques but rather the trend of LGBTQ+ mentors helping people who, like them, are vulnerable. The majority of LGBTQ+ participants were expelled from family homes at very young ages and sought the assistance of older mentors, such as transgender mothers or fathers, to help them. Due to their disenfranchised status and rejection from the mainstream, one survival strategy for this group is sex work, and for many in this sample, the facilitation is more akin to assistance. However, due to the age differentials, many of these participants could fall into the sex trafficker net. These groups should be provided more resources and assistance, especially LGBTQ+ youth, who are often disowned or are runways, and they are often unhoused for permanent or temporary periods of time.

## Family-Level Risks

**Those who are born biologically male are at higher risk of family indoctrination, and providers should be aware of these risks.**

Children in lower socioeconomic areas may be at higher risk from extended families for the social learning of sex market facilitation. Based on this robust sample, indoctrination from parents was a much lower risk. Extended family networks engaged in crime are not akin to organized crime families. However, due to extreme poverty, they may pass down their survival strategies to family members. Suppose young people report having family members involved in sex market facilitation. In that case, practitioners should be aware that this is a high-risk situation,

as mentoring from extended family was prevalent in this sample. Heterosexual, cisgender women are at much lower risk from family indoctrination as compared to heterosexual, cisgender men and LGBTQ+ participants.

Similarly, van Dink et al. (2019) found that girls in organized crime families had the protective factor of being born female. This is also consistent with many studies about girls' protection from learning offending behaviors (Giordano & Copp, 2019). The LGBTQ+ participants also faced a higher risk of indoctrination from their family network. This may be because many of the LGBTQ+ subsamples were transgender women who were born biologically male, and families may not have recognized their true gender identity or refused to acknowledge their identification. Those born biologically male appear to be at the most risk for indoctrination from extended family.

**The LGBTQ+ population faced necessity insecurity, likely due to LGBTQ+ individuals' extraordinarily high rate of family rejection or expulsion.**

Those who interact with LGBTQ+ sex trade-involved individuals should be aware that they face the profound trauma of family rejection and expulsion, which makes them susceptible to joining pseudo-family networks in the commercial sex market. Other studies have similar findings in terms of the LGBTQ+ population experiencing high rates of being kicked out or running away and being unhoused due to family rejection (Dank, 2015). Family and community awareness programs should be created to educate parents about their LGBTQ+ children, with a focus on acceptance and protection. This finding can also be categorized within the family and community-level risk sections.

## Community-Level Risks

**The ecological sites where SMFs were interviewed showed variation in who they learned from and the proportion of those admitting to sex trafficking behaviors.**

SMFs from the ecological zone in Chicago where the majority of those interviews took place, had higher rates of learning from pimps and higher rates of learning physical violence and economic coercion. Subcultural differences were shown based on the location sites of the interviews. This finding supports the idea that social learning theory assumes that the process of learning is similar across geographical locations (Aker, 2017; Skinner, 1988) but groups that hold different values such as supporting or not supporting criminal activity may acquire different knowledge and interpret messages differently (Aker, 2017; Giordano, 2020). It might be that SMFs in Chicago are more prone to sex trafficking behaviors, but these sub-samples were not representative. A more likely alternative explanation is that those learning directly from pimps produce more coercive behaviors typical of sex trafficking, such as physical violence and economic coercion and that pimps were more visible and accessible in the Chicago sub-sample.

**Lower socioeconomic and high poverty and crime neighborhoods should reduce observable participation in the commercial sex market.**

At the community level, our study provides key findings about observational learning leading to SMFs' entrance and the role of social networks in lower socioeconomic and high-crime neighborhoods. In terms of social learning, our study found that the most common source of learning sex market facilitation was from pimps, with the more frequent route being passively observing pimps in the neighborhood. Young people are observing sex market facilitation or pimps in action in their neighborhoods. The passive observation involved through the mere visibility of pimping has a great impact on social learning and replication of this behavior.

Community policing strategies could be useful to ensure that pimping is less visible, particularly in areas where there are a lot of young people. The other routes to learning often involve social actors already involved with pimps' that is, working for them as main sex workers or being friends with them. The susceptibility to learning from passive observation of pimps did not significantly vary based on master status designations.

**LGBTQ+ survival within the commercial sex market is tenuous but social networks engaged in sex work are lasting.**

Additionally, our study showed that LGBTQ+ sex workers and facilitators are at high risk for family expulsion. Therefore, they band together to support one another, which is particularly necessary with harassment and violence when working in lower socioeconomic, high-crime areas. While they are using the commercial sex market to survive, their visibility during street work can be met with community resistance, putting them at high risk for harassment, violence, and even death (Dank et al, 2015, Lyons et al., 2017; Raine, 2021).

One of the differences in analyzing active and inactive facilitators was that heterosexual, cisgender men and LGBTQ+ participants had a significantly higher number of social network persons who were involved in the illicit sex trade compared to heterosexual, cisgender women. Participants who previously sold sex had a higher number of support persons involved in the illicit sex trade than did those who had not previously sold sex. Having social support from only persons involved in the illicit sex or drug trade or other criminal activity did not differ for participants who were currently actively or inactively facilitating. This indicates that these social support networks are lasting, particularly for the LGBTQ+ community indicating that they have more difficulty forming other networks, that this type of work is common in the LGBTQ+ community and/or that the environment is supportive enough to maintain these social support networks.

**Having social support from only persons involved in the illicit sex or drug trade or other criminal activity mostly did not differ for participants who were currently active or inactive as sex market facilitators.**

Many studies have explored inactive, quitters or desisters from sex market facilitation (e.g., Davis, 2017; Horning et al, 2021); however, none have explicitly researched how social networks connect to desistance. Several studies have found that social connections to deviant friends increase the probability of offending (Kranenbarg et al., 2021; Rokven et al., 2016; Rokven et al., 2017; Weaver, 2012; Vishner, 2017). We suspected that those in lower socioeconomic status

(SES), high-crime areas may have ties to both prosocial and deviant ties. Deviant ties are likely normalized and stronger in lower socioeconomic neighborhoods (see Granovetter, 1973), thereby normalizing the risk. Research has shown that risky lifestyles explain why people select offenders as friends and that offenders terminate friendships more often than non-offenders (Rokven et al., 2016). In terms of treatment or re-entry strategies, many practitioners advocate for people to change their social networks or environment. Are friends with former deviant histories or places where drug use, drug dealing, and illicit prostitution or trafficking occur both necessary for desistance? Our future, more refined analyses will assess whether deviant friends have less bearing on persistence or desistance for those leaving the sex trade in advanced marginalized areas.

**Drug and sex market social support networks overlap and may create dangerous environments for vulnerable persons, exposing them to persons who use coercive strategies to facilitate and who seek persons who have mental and situational vulnerabilities.**

There has been research on the social networks of those in drug markets (e.g., Bright et al. 2018; Malm & Bichler, 2011), of those gangs involved sex trafficking (e.g., Lugo-Graulich, 2016), but few studies explicitly explore the overlap of social networks or social support networks in sex and drug markets. In terms of social support networks, we found that coercive sex traffickers had a higher number of support persons who sold illicit drugs than those facilitators who did not use violence or take over 85% of sex workers earnings. This may indicate that when drug and sex markets overlap, especially in terms of social support networks, more dangerous situations for sex workers may arise and that the drug and sex trafficking nexus is connected to more violent or economically coercive sex trafficking. However, additional research exploring these overlapping networks and what this nexus creates is needed.

**Legal-Level Risks**

**Community receptiveness and responsiveness to adverse childhood experiences such as sexual abuse, witnessing community violence, and violent victimization are needed. The majority of SMFs of all gender identities and sexual orientations recalled childhood trauma. Many SMFs recalled stories where parents did not support or actively attacked them for disclosing their sexual victimization, leaving them with nowhere to turn for protection.**

SMFs learned from traumatic experiences, especially sexual abuse, that their parents discredited and attacked them, especially if the perpetrator was a parent, boyfriend, or family member. Community outreach, through schools, park districts, and community centers, needs to encourage children to share their traumatic experiences and provide mental health treatment. Training for K to 12th-grade teachers and awareness campaigns for students to reduce shame and encourage disclosures is critically needed.

**Forced criminality may be a risk to those born biologically male as they are indoctrinated through extended families working in the commercial sex market.**

The term forced criminality pertains to those who, through "force, fraud, or coercion, are compelled by others to engage in illegal activities" and was first mentioned by the US Department of State in 2014. There are many types of forced criminality, such as fraud, selling drugs, and sex trafficking. Minors with families involved or from lower socioeconomic status are particularly at risk for forced criminality (Heys et al., 2022; Stone, 2018). This was illustrated by the number of those who learned from extended family within our sample. As they were minors, this constitutes forced criminality, and force, fraud, or coercion are not necessary, although, within the family system, coercion may be present. Local jurisdictions must develop and implement policies in identifying human trafficking survivors who are forced to participate in criminal activity and provide them with appropriate victim-centered protective and supportive services. As forced criminality is a relatively new concept in the US, this legislation should be applied to families who

pressure or force their children into engaging in crime, including working in the commercial sex market.

## Policy Implications to Reduce Harm

Addressing sex trafficking and pimping, like other crimes occurring in illicit markets, most focus on the social processes involved at different ecological tiers, such as individual, family, social networks, community, and policy/legislation. How and why someone learns sex market facilitation and how they pass this on can vary based on master status designations.

The causes of sex trafficking are likely rooted in structural inequality, poverty, corrupt governments, biases, and cultural attitudes (Shelley, 2010), and other problems that require extensive and expensive interventions. Harm reduction approaches can address individual risk factors, such as early trauma or family issues. However, it will be more effective to address the systemic vulnerability of victims, including homelessness, poverty, racism, homophobia, transphobia, and being stigmatized or invisible due to differences.

### Systemic Racism

Our NYC and Chicago samples were predominantly BIPOC and had lower SES, coming from some of the poorest urban areas in the United States (East Harlem, NY, and Garfield Park, IL). A greater number of people may become vulnerable to sex trafficking during economic downturns, social instability, or other states of normlessness (Kara, 2011). Due to structural inequalities, people in lower SES groups may become involved in the sex trade to survive or make ends meet. These people are more susceptible to becoming trafficking victims or being recruited to traffic in persons.

Marginalized communities, especially the BIPOC community, are overrepresented in the domestic sex trade (Cook & Garcia, 2022; Phillips, 2015; Walker et al., 2022). Historically, Harlem and Chicago have long histories of having local 'strolls' or active sex work zones and active pimping sub-cultures. Naturally, in lower SES areas, many people rely on informal or illicit

economies for survival. These survival scripts are passed down within communities or from family members. Based on our social network support analysis, both desisters and persisters had deviant and prosocial ties in their social networks, with few significant differences, indicating how normalized engaging in crime and working in illicit markets is in disenfranchised communities.

In lower SES communities, harm can be reduced by addressing the themes in sex workers' and sex market facilitators' survival scripts, such as lack of education, job opportunities, housing, and health care. Mitigating supply is possible through stabilizing economies, providing opportunities to those in lower SES groups, and providing support to communities during states of normlessness, such as major economic downturns and environmental disasters.

## Systemic Misogyny

Chesney-Lind (1989), the founder of feminist criminology, critiqued existing criminological theories for not including women's lived experiences, rendering their motivations and risk factors for engaging in crime largely invisible. Almost half of our sample were cisgender women with many surviving early traumas, such as physical and sexual abuse, and they were more likely to link these traumas to their entrance stories. The systemic lack of protection for women (young and old) still exists, with young women disproportionately being charged with status offenses and the criminal justice system punishing young women's survival strategies (Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2012; Goodmark, 2023).

There has been an upsurge in woman-based programming for those exiting the sex trade, including sex trafficking victims. For instance, there also are diversion programs designed to reduce harm, such as Human Trafficking Intervention Courts (HTIC). The HTICs are designed to identify those arrested for prostitution and help them find ways out of the sex trade, and upon completion of these programs, their criminal records are vacated. There have been some issues with these courts, especially focused on insensitivity and extensive rules that many participants find impossible to follow, including requiring them to testify against their traffickers (Kendis,

2018; Lumanais et al., 2019). Additionally, there is a lack of programming for women who become sex market facilitators (especially for those who work with their pimps or traffickers). Instead, they are punished by the criminal justice system (Serie et al., 2018). The conflicting frameworks of victim and offender must be reconciled within a harm-reduction approach that recognizes the individual's agency to make choices to enhance their survival.

### Systemic Homophobia/Transphobia:

Over one-fifth of our sample were LGBTQ+, with many experiencing double and triple marginalization, including also being racial or ethnic minorities. The level of family and community harassment, discrimination, and violence towards the LGBTQ+ population is well-known (Clark et al., 2017). This group was disproportionately expelled from their family homes, forcing them to be unhoused at very young ages, and to survive, they engaged in survival sex in groups, and many ultimately facilitated sex as well (Dank et al., 2017; Walls & Bell, 2011). The LGBTQ+ community, particularly transgender women, is at high risk for violence, including homicide (Westbrook, 2023). This group is in constant survival mode, fighting for their lives daily.

It is pertinent to have vital dialogues about lack of opportunities, insufficient access to resources, and the reasons why people engage in survival sex and facilitation. Such dialogues and awareness might stimulate future research to assess whether the public supports the broad definition of sex trafficking which widening the net or prefers resources to be directed toward prevention efforts that address societal barriers contributing to the involvement in the illicit sex trade.

Educating the public to be anti-racist, anti-misogynist, anti-homophobic, and anti-transphobic may reduce biases and increase inclusion by increasing allies and educating families and communities. For instance, many LGBTQ+ youth are dispelled from family homes, and to survive on the streets, they resort to survival sex. If families were educated and biases were reduced, fewer children would be left to their own devices, making them vulnerable to engaging in survival sex and being trafficked. Systemic inequity needs to be addressed by non-profit

agencies and government assistance as these systems contribute to physical and sexual childhood maltreatment, abuse, and poverty, which are all risk factors for becoming involved in the commercial sex market.

Awareness campaigns are needed to inform the public, including those who might become involved in the illicit sex trade, about how sex trafficking is legally defined, the potential prison terms, and the range of persons labeled as sex traffickers. HT funds are spent depicting trafficking victims and raising support for the anti-trafficking movement with little focus on educating or reaching would-be traffickers or potential jurors. Warning messages could be effective, especially on social media and platforms where sex is commonly sold. These could be especially effective for young people who may be less aware of the legal ramifications of their actions. These types of awareness campaigns would not necessarily deter all would-be traffickers, but they could at least alert those oblivious sex market facilitators at risk (Horning & Stalans, 2023).

Awareness and treatment programming mostly addresses sex trafficking victims. However, based on our findings about SMFs, many had histories of early victimization and trauma and of coercively being recruited into the sex trade or starting as minors. SMFs histories are largely unknown, with a few exceptions (i.e., Shared Hope International, 2020; Miccio-Fonseca, 2017; Morselli & Savoie-Gargiso, 2014) and with an understanding of their complex risk and trauma profiles, extensive harm reduction programs could be developed in at-risk communities.

## Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. First, this study occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. While data were collected after vaccines were available, illicit street markets may have been altered due to the prolonged lockdown, followed by social distancing restrictions, continued public fear, and curfews. Also, in-person interviews required different dynamics, involving wearing masks and not getting too close. This could have altered the typical interpersonal

dynamics in the interviews. While COVID-19 subsided as time passed, the initial interviews occurred just shortly after vaccinations were made available to most of the public.

Second, the sample was mostly limited to participants who were BIPOC and from lower SES groups. Both snowball sampling and RDS rely on initial seeds or participants making it difficult to diversify the sample. We tried to reach a more diverse participant grouping by advertising online; however, we received no response. The lack of response was probably due to the 2018 Backpage shutdown that caused a fear of sting operations in online commercial sex spaces. Also, the lack of response could have been influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Qualitative samples often rely on convenience samples and so this limitation is standard for qualitative work. Similarly, the results might not be generalizable due to the sampling procedures. However, this study represents one of the largest samples of SMFs in two locations, providing critical information beyond smaller samples in previous research.

Additionally, the Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS) technique was unsuccessful in Chicago and New York City. Therefore, the findings of this study might not be generalizable. RDS did allow for initial sample diversity with seeds from different communities being selected at the NYC site. However, these seeds did not expand according to the necessary parameters to conduct an RDS. This may be because, unlike sex work communities, sex market facilitator communities are not well-networked. Additionally, social networks were likely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, at some of the public housing projects the community spaces where people congregate had been closed for over a year. COVID-19 likely fractured or disrupted social networks, including those in illicit networks.

The purpose of the social network component was to assess participants' social support networks to ascertain their deviant networks or other social factors. This type of social network research does not assess the participant's current criminal network. As mentioned in Chapter 6, there are some groundbreaking studies in this area. As far as we know this is the first study to

assess SMFs' social support networks. However, this study does not provide a traditional social network analysis (SNA) on sex traffickers' criminal groups.

Another limitation is that trafficking survivors and independent sex workers who had not switched roles and facilitated or trafficked were not interviewed to provide a robustness check of some of the SMF interview statements (e.g., sex worker recruitment and management). Nonetheless, many of the participants were formerly sex workers and some of them were trafficking victims before, after, and simultaneously while facilitating.

## Future Research

This study has created rich, authentic qualitative and quantitative data on background and facilitation characteristics. The cross-sectional nature of our qualitative data does not allow for causal inferences but allows for discovering critical relationships between concepts. We plan to continue analyzing the data to understand the circumstances, context, and implications of the findings in this report.

One area of our future research will be understanding what roles, prior experiences, and self-identities are connected to SMFs using more coercive and violent management strategies. In narrative criminology (e.g., Presser & Sandberg, 2015), self-narratives stimulate actions. We will examine how self-narratives are connected to coerciveness and violent management strategies and whether this connection differs across gender identities and sexual orientation, age, and the desistance or persistence of facilitation.

Our analyses for social support networks were primarily descriptive, and future research will use more sophisticated analyses to examine how social networks' composition and functionality are related to using coercive and violent management strategies. We will also examine whether social support networks differ based on SMFs' frequency and longevity of recruiting sex workers and their age. A more detailed measurement of desistance involving steps taken toward a prosocial life will be coded to assess whether those who have desisted with

cognitive transformations have different social networks than inactive facilitators without cognitive or law-abiding behaviors or those who have aged out after a long criminal career or are currently facilitating.

Additional data will also be analyzed to assess further the disincentive to collaborate with other SMFs or to mentor aspiring novices, particularly among heterosexual, cisgender men who are involved in serious sex trafficking involving violent tactics. More contextualized analyses of the social networks of 'pimp buddies,' or acquaintances who are also pimps but are not close friends or in their support network, and the gang hierarchy in the Chicago sample will provide critical information about the density and closeness of SMFs support networks compared to their pimp buddy circles. This analysis will provide data on how connected pimp buddies are and the extent to which SMFs perceive them as less close than their social support network.

Our findings show the importance of socialization from extended family members and, less often, parents. Future analysis of the qualitative data can assess whether those who actively received tutelage from family members differ in what they learned, their self-identities, and attitudes toward the illicit sex trade compared to those who had family members as facilitators or sex workers but did not receive active mentoring. This analysis will be critical in adding data to the policy implications around parenting and child neglect.

Due to the overt importance of race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, and engagement in the commercial sex market, more studies should be conducted investigating these structural factors. Some more recent studies are investigating the overrepresentation of young, black women who are domestically sex trafficked or otherwise involved in the sex trade (see Cook & Garcia, 2022; Phillips, 2015; Walker et al., 2022), and the same should be done when exploring BIPOC men in the US. Using a critical race lens to investigate the overrepresentation of those who are BIPOC in US commercial sex markets should be explored in more depth.

There have been some key studies exploring LGBTQ+ people engaged in the sex markets (see Dank et al., 2017; Orchard et al., 2022; Walls & Bell, 2011). Queer theory can be applied to

understand how structures create risk and how taking those risks can be about doing gender or doing queerness. In a few studies, the meaning of the queer collective through sex work and facilitation has been explored (e.g., Lyons et al., 2017). The changeable and flexible roles of the LGBTQ+ people involved in sex markets and their mobility (traveling or touring different cities to sell sex in groups) or migrating to other countries and engaging in sex markets (see Mai et al., 2022) should be explored in more depth.

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# Appendix A

**Advertisement to Recruit Participants either online or as a flyer**

**University of Massachusetts-Lowell/Loyola University Chicago Research Study on Illicit Sex Trade**

Researchers seek facilitators/managers/recruiters/brokers to interview. Must be 18 years or older and live or work in New York City or Chicago (this includes the surrounding suburbs). *Will pay $70 for *Confidential* and Anonymous interview, lasting bout about one hour *Convenient location or online interview*For more information to see if you qualify and live or work in New York City, call (718) 775-6132 or email nycproject21@gmail.com If you live or work in Chicago, call (872) 240-7962, or email.

If you would like to do your interview in Spanish and you live or work in New York City or Chicago, please call (917) 574-4286 or email SWProject_Interview@protonmail.com.

# Appendix B

College of Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
113 Wilder Street, Suite 400 General Inquires (978) 934-4139
Lowell, Massachusetts 01854-3060 Graduate Inquires (978) 934-4106
Fax (978) 934-3077

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT**
**Consent for Interview**

Principal Investigator: Amber Horning Ruf, PhD
Department: School of Criminology and Justice Studies
Contact: amber_ruf@uml.edu 978-934-2219

**SUMMARY STATEMENT:** This is an hour-long interview with people who manage sex workers. The interview has many open-ended questions and we will have a dialogue about your work and life. You can stop the interview at any time. You will receive a stipend of $70 for participation $15 incentives for referrals (we accept up to three referrals). There is a risk of stress. We protect of your identity by not asking your name so there is no link between your name and your activities. Your answers are kept private and confidential. There are no benefits to you from participating. However, by participating in this research you help people learn more about your life and your job.

## A. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

You are invited to help us do a research study of people who manage sex workers and make a profit. We are interviewing 200 people involved in this kind of work. The information I will give you can help you make a good choice about joining or not joining the study. We hope that the information we collect will help people understand more about your job.

You are invited to be part of this study because you said that you manage sex workers and profit from this and you are 18 years of age or older. This study is being done by researchers from University of Massachusetts, Lowell and Loyola University, Chicago.

This study is funded by the National Institute of Justice.

## B. PROCEDURES

If you agree to take part, you will participate in a 60-minute interview about your work. For instance, you may be asked questions such as "How do you manage workers?" or "What other kinds of work have you done?" Some of the questions may stress, such as "Did you ever personally work as a sex worker?" We will ask you if you are willing to have your interview audio recorded. Once you have agreed to the interview, you may refuse to answer any questions at any time for

IRB Approval Period: 2/1/2022 to 1/31/2023

# Appendix C

**Perspectives on Managing Sex Workers**

| INTRODUCTION |
|---|

Hello, my name is__, and I am working for____(University of Massachusetts Lowell/Loyola University Chicago) to conduct a survey on the sex work industry in this area. We want to learn from you about the management of sex work. Your opinions and experiences are important to us. This interview is confidential. We will not ask for your real name. There is no harm in taking the interview and we have an official document called the Privacy Certificate that prevents the government and other parties from seeking our data. You can stop the interview at any time or refuse to answer questions that do not make you feel comfortable. Please note that the information you provide will be stored safely and only accessible to the research team.

| SECTION A: ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS |
|---|

**A1. Date of Interview:**
**(**mm/dd/year**)**

**A2. Interview Location:**

**A3. Questionnaire #:**
**(**C+ numeric = Chicago; N + numeric = New York City; numeric + E = English; numeric + S=Spanish**)**
**A4. Interviewer's Initials:**

| SECTION AA: SCREENING QUESTIONS & REFERRAL SOURCE |
|---|

**AA1. What is your age?**
**(**If younger than 18 years old, stop interview immediately.**)**

**AA1a. What is the highest level of education you completed? ____**

**AA1b. (If applicable) What year did you graduate from high school? __**
(If did not attend high school or obtained GED, ask what year they graduated from middle school. If the answer is off by a 5-year margin, stop the interview. The participant may be under the age of 18.)

AA2. Have you previously spoken to someone on our team?

1. Yes (If yes, check the coupon manager for referral number)

2. No

**A3. If you were referred by someone who completed the interview, what is your coupon #?**
**(**If seed, use pre-determined numbering system.**)**

**AA4. Where does the person who referred you live? _**

**AA5. What is the age of the person who referred you?**

**AA6. What is the gender of the person who referred you?**

SECTION AB: ELIGIBILITY AND INFORMED CONSENT

(Eligibility for study: Participant must currently or in the last 10 years organized, assisted, or recruited others, directly, to trade sex for food, shelter, money, or other valuables and favors)

**AB1. Recording the conversation will allow me to consider everything you say since there's so much I can write down. It will also help in comparing information across respondents. The recording will be used strictly for research purposes and only accessible to the research team. Are you willing to allow me to record this interview?**

1. Yes
2. No (If no go to AC)

**AB2. Have you organized, assisted, or recruited others who sell sex in the last ten years and received any food, shelter, money, or other valuables and favors for your service?**

1. Yes (Continue Interview)
2. No (Discontinue Interview)

**AB3. Do you currently organize or assist others, directly, to trade sex for food, shelter, money or other valuables and receive any food, shelter, money, or other valuables and favors for your service?**

1. Yes (If Yes, skip to AB3)
2. No (If No, go to Ab2a)

**AB3a. What year did you stop?**

**AB3b. Can you describe why you quit?**

**AB4. Would you be willing to participate in this research and answer some more questions about your involvement in this type of work?**

1. Yes (Attain Informed Consent and Skip to Section B: Key Aspects of Respondent's Life)
2. No (Skip to Section AC: Refusal)

SECTION AC: REFUSAL

**(**If the person refuses or does not want to participate in the interview, write down the reason for refusal below, as well as on your team's refusal list for each location.**)**

**AC1. Reason(s) for refusal:**

SECTION B: KEY ASPECT OF RESPONDANT'S LIFE

**I will be asking you to tell me about key aspects of your life as if you were reading me the story of your life. So, we will imagine that your life is a movie. I can't paint a picture of your life without your help, so please try to be as thorough as possible. (**Give participant a couple of minutes to reflect.**) Are you ready?**

**B1. If your life were a movie, what kind of movie would it be (**Examples: romance, comedy, thriller, action film, horror film, or a drama**)?**

**B2. If you were in charge of casting, who would have played you?**

**B3. Would that character be the protagonist "good person" or antagonist "villain" in the movie?**
**(**Follow up with why?**)**

**B3a. Protagonist: Why?**
**Antagonist: Why?**

**I want you to tell me about the defining moments or events in *your* life. Try to think of the most important stories that relate to how you see yourself. I will ask you to describe four key events: (a) your earliest important memory, (b) a high point in your life, (c) a low point, and (d) a self-defining** event. (Give participant a couple of minutes to reflect.)

**B4. An earliest important memory is one that you feel had a big effect on your life. What occurred in your earliest important memory?**

**B5. A high point would include an experience in which you felt joy, excitement, happiness, or some other positive emotions. What would you say was a high point in your life?**

**B6. A low point would be an experience in which you felt anger, sadness, disgust, or some other negative emotions. What would you say was a low point in your life?**

**B7. Tell me about an experience you had in which you learned something about yourself.**
(If participants do not provide details, use probes: (a) what specifically happened (b) who was involved in the event and witnessed the event? (c) how do you feel about this event now? (d) what did you learn, if anything, from this event?)

**B8. What changes, if any, do you think you will make in the future?**
(Probe with: (a) what are your plans for the future? (b) when do you anticipate entering this next part of your life—if changes are made?)

**B8a. What current circumstances would you like to change?**
(Probe with: (a) what are your plans for the future? (b) when do you anticipate entering this next part of your life—if changes are made? (c) What obstacles would make it difficult for you to realize this future self? (d) What actual steps have you taken or are taking now to make this plan a reality?)

**B8b. Have you ever discussed your view of your future self with anyone? (**Probe: If yes, how did you describe your future self?**)**

**B9. What fears do you have about your life?**

SECTION C: SOCIAL NETWORKS

**Next, I will ask you some questions about the people you interact with in various ways. This information is to assess your social network and support. Please understand I do not want their full names or real names because I will not be contacting them. Some respondents just provide a nickname or a first name when referring to others.** (Write down the nick names to make it easy to probe responses.) **For each of these questions, provide as many people as you like, but please use a nickname or first name.** (Give participant a couple of minutes to reflect.) **Are you ready?** _

**C1. Who have you gone out with socially (not for work) in the past six months? For example, to dinner, movies at home?** (Probes: Make sure respondent uses nicknames. Ask them to list a few COVID-19 activities such as Face Timing.**)**

**C2. Suppose you have an important matter to discuss with someone, such as a change in your life, problems with a loved one, or let's say you're**

**feeling down or depressed. Looking back over the last six months, who are the people with whom you discussed these matters?**

**C3. Suppose you needed to borrow a large sum of money, who would you turn to for help?**

**C4. If you need help finding a job, who would you ask?**

**C4a. Have you ever asked this person for help?**
(Probe: If yes, what was that experience like?)

**C5. Who could you count on to have your back in a fight?**

**C6. Which of these people you mentioned work for you?**

**C6a. Of these individuals, who are women?**

**C6b. Are any of these women trans?**

**C7. Which of these individuals would you consider a close friend?**

**C8. An associate in the sex industry?**

**C9. Family member?**

**C10. An acquaintance?**

**C11. Of the people you named, who have you told about your work in the illicit sex trade?**

**C12. Do any of these people also work in the sex trade?**

**C13. Do any of these people sell drugs?**

**C14. Do you know if any of these people have been arrested?**

**C15. Is there anyone else you haven't mentioned who manages or assists sex workers?**

**C15a. How many of these individuals do you know personally?**

**C15b. How many of these individuals work in NYC/Chicago?**

**C15c. Do any of them work in other states?**

**C15d. If so, what states?**

**C16. Since you started working in the sex trade, how many people you once considered close friends, or family members, have you stopped interacting with?**

**C16a. Why did you stop interacting with them?**

**Now I would like to know how connected each person you mentioned is in your social network. I have written the names of each person on this sheet of paper. In thinking about the relationship between these people, some of them might be strangers who do not know each other at all. Others might be especially close, as close or closer to each other than they are to you. I will be asking how well each person knows each other person in your social network. For these questions, please indicate whether they are (1) strangers (2) not strangers but do not hang out with you socially (3) hang out with you socially, but are not emotionally close, or (4) hang out with you and are close and supportive. (**Give participant a couple of minutes to reflect.**) Are you ready?**

**C17. Now we're going to do a visual picture of how everyone you've mentioned is socially networked.**

**C17a. How well do [insert names] know each other? _**
(Note: This refers to people listed as social network. Establish relationship between each of them. Visual aid will make these questions easier to answer and the average number of persons that people name in prior research is 5.)

SECTION D: ENTRY INTO ELICIT SEX TRADE AND EXIT

**Now I am going to ask you questions about the sex trade, specifically entering and leaving it.** (Give participant a couple of minutes to reflect.)

**D1. In your role as __, what are your tasks/duties and what do you provide your sex workers?** (Probes: Do you protect sex workers, and if so how?; how do you manage the risk of clients' robbing or physically harming your workers?; do you negotiate with clients?; do you communicate with clients?; advertise?)

**D2. What label do you use to describe what you do? _**
(Probes: a friend, manager, bodyguard, third party, pimp, madam, mentor, etc.)

**D2a. Is being a [insert labels] an important part of how you see yourself?**

1. Yes (If yes, ask why_____)
2. No (If no, ask why not___)

**D3. About what age (year) did you first begin (____) ? use language that person uses (pimping, recruiting, managing, brokering) as part of the illicit sex trade?**

**D4. How many years have you been managing/recruiting?**

**D5. How did you start managing/recruiting sex workers?**
(Probe: What events, people, experiences and/or situations led you to start managing sex workers?)

**D6. How did you know what to do?**
(Probe: (a) How did you learn about where to go and how to go about it? (b) who were your sources of information? (c) did you watch others who were pimping? (d) did you talk to other managers? (d) were you a client of sex workers before facilitating sex work?)

**D7. Did the neighborhood you grew up in have sex workers or managers?**

**D8. Growing up, did you know sex workers, managers, or clients?**
(Probe: (a) Were they family members, acquaintances, or close friends?; How many family members are involved in the trade?; How many close friends were in the trade when you entered?)

**D9. How often do you assist or manage sex workers?**

**D10. Do you have any other conventional jobs?**
**No D11.**
**Yes D10a. (If yes), What are your other conventional jobs?**

**D11. How many sex workers did you manage in the last year or the last year you managed?**

**D12. How many sex workers work in your group now (Or the last year you worked)?**
(Enter "0" for none, clarify if a range is provided, and enter a single number)

**D13. How many sex workers did you recruit into the sex industry in the last year (or the last year you were in the business)?**

**D14. How many sex workers did you transport during the last year (or the last year you were in the business?**

**D15. How many sex workers did you protect during the last year (or the last year you were in the business)?**

**D16. How many sex workers did you assist during the past 12 months? By assisting, I mean helping out but not being their manager:**

**D16a. How did you assist them?**

**D17. Of the people who you assist, recruit, or manage, how many of them sold sexual services before?**

**D18. How many did you introduce to the illicit sex trade? _**

**D19. Do you have a person who assists in recruiting or managing sex workers? A person could be a friend, partner, "bottom" or employee.**

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

**D20. Does this person also sell sexual services?**
(If "No", ask if they ever sold sexual services, worked for the respondent or someone else)

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

SECTION E: RECRUITING WORKERS AND MANAGERS

**E1. Now I'm going to ask you some questions about how you find people to work for and/or with you.**
**How do you go about finding a sex worker to manage?**
**(**Probe: Is that how you found sex workers to manage or assist?**)**

**E3. What do you tell potential workers to get them interested or motivated to do the work?**

**E4. What characteristics do you look for when recruiting sex workers and why?**
**(**Probes: What makes someone an easy recruit? Why?**)**

**E4a. How do you use technology, websites, social media, and apps in recruiting or managing sex workers?**
**(**Probes: What sites have you gone on? How do you talk to them? Do you use Facebook or Instagram? If both, what are the different ways they are used? How do you use these sites to contact or scheduleclients or recruit new clients?**)**

**E4b. What do you tell potential workers to get them interested or motivated to do the work?**

**E5. Do you find people to help you recruit sex workers (If no, skip to E6)?**

**E5a. How do you go about finding somebody to recruit sex workers for you?**
(Probes: How do you train recruiters?**)**

**E6. Do you train your workers to sell sexual services?**
**(**Probe: How do you train them? Do they practice on you? Do you tell those you manage/assist to perform sex acts they do not want to perform? Do they have a choice if they work for you?**)**

**E7. What would be the critical knowledge you would want to pass along to others who would like to become a manager?**

**E8. Does anyone in your family sell sex or manage/assist sex workers?**
**(**Probes: (a) how do you feel about this? (b) did they train you? (c) did you work collectively?**)**

**E9. Have you ever trained a family member to manage/assist sex workers?**
**(**Probes If yes, can you tell me about this?)

**E10. Do you have children?**

**E10a How old are they?**

**E10b. What are their genders (count)?**

**E10c. Did you tell them what you do?**
**(**Probe: How did you tell them? What do you think they have learned about this role you play in the sex industry?**)**

**E11. Would you support your child(ren)'s decision to become a manager in the sex trade, why or why not?**

**E12. Has anyone ever *recruited* you to manage their money or assist them in selling sexual services?**
**(**Probe: Can you describe these people? What did you think when they asked you or indicated they wanted you to manage them? What was your response? What do you think made them think that you would be willing to manage them?**)**

SECTION F: MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

**Let's now talk about your sex trade business and how you keep it successful.**
**(**Give participant a couple of minutes to reflect.**)**

**F1. What percentage of the earnings do you get from those you manage/assist?**

**F2. What do you make weekly, on average? _**
**(**Probe: How much do you charge? How much does each worker make per week?**)**

**F3. Can you explain how everything works in terms of money?**
(Probe: Do the clients pay *you* or the sex worker who service them? Do sex workers you manage/assist get any of this money?)

**F4. Do you manage/assist only women, or women and men?**
**(**Probe: Do you manage/assist trans people? Why or Why not?**)**

**F5. What is the age range of the sex workers you manage/assist?**
(Probe: Have you managed people under the age of 18?**)**

**F6. Describe what makes a good sex worker? (Probe: Can you tell me a little about your best worker?)**

**F7. Are there any rewards or benefits you provide to those you manage/assist?**
**(**Probe: When do you give these rewards/benefits? Do you give a bonus? Vacations? Extra privileges? Drugs? Money in their pockets?**)**

**F8. How do you think the people you manage/assist think about you?**
**(**Probe: Do you think they love you? Do you think they want to have sex with you? Are there any other specific ways you take care of your sex workers?**)**

**F9. What is the nature of your relationship with your sex workers? Do you see the sex workers you manage/assist as employees, business partners, or associates?**
**(**Probe: How well do you get along with them? Are you closer to some workers more than others? Do you see the sex workers you manage/assist as employees, business partners, or associates? If none of those, do you consider them property? If yes, what would leaving your business look like? How would they go about doing that?**)**

**F9a. Do you have sex with your workers?**
**(**Probe: Do you request the sex or do they? Do you consider having sex with you a privilege or reward? Have you ever used sex as a reward?**)**

**F9b. Are you affectionate with the sex workers you manage?**
**(**Probe: Define affection. Do you tell them you love them? Do you tell them you'll take care of them and their needs?**)**

**F9c. Did you date sex worker before you started this work?**

**(**Probe: Were they selling sex before, during, or after they dated you? Did you ever manage/assist them? Did you manage other workers while seeing them? How did they feel about this?**)**

**F9e. Do you lie to the sex workers you manage/assist?**
**(**Probe: What do you lie to them about?**)**

**F11. What do you expect from the sex workers you manage/assist?**
**(**Probe: Do they do this voluntarily or do you have any rules as their manager/assistant?**;** Are they allowed to drink on the job? Use drugs on the jobs? Use condoms or not? Required to get STD testing? Required to carry mace? A knife?; Not allowed to look at other managers in their eyes? What are the behaviors and characteristics of when sex workers are not living up to your expectations? Can you tell me about one of the worst sex workers you ever had?**)**

**F11a. Are there consequences when they do not behave or perform to your expectations?**
**(**Probe: What are they? Do you discipline them and if so how? Dock their pay or take their cut? Exclude them from parties?**)**

**F11b. Was there ever a time that you thought the sex workers you manage/assist felt humiliated because of how you treated them?**
**(**Probe: When was that? Did you put them down, in front of others?**)**

**F12. Have you ever threatened a sex worker you managed/assisted with physical harm?**
**(**Probe: What are your thoughts on making such threats? What are your thoughts on being violent?**)**

**F12a. Have you ever hit a sex worker you managed/assisted?**
**(**Probe: If yes, how did you hit them? How did you feel about doing that? How often have you done this?**)**

**F13. Has a sex worker ever told you they wanted to quit?**
**(**Probe: If no, what would "quitting" look like? If yes, did they quit? What were the consequences, if any?**)**

**F13a. Have you ever fired a sex worker?**
**(**Probe: If no, what would "quitting" look like? If yes, did you see it as you firing them? What were the consequences, if any?**)**

**F14. Do you lie to the sex workers you manage/assist? (Probe: What do you lie to them about?)**

**F15. Do you have rules or principles that you follow in this line of work?**
**(**Probe: What are they?**)**

**F16. How has the pandemic changed the way you do business or your management style?**

**F16a. What changes do you anticipate in your work post-COVID?**

**F16b. Has the COVID pandemic slowed your business, not affected it or increased the number of clients?**

SECTION G: PERSONAL EXPERIENCE PART I

**G1. I'm going to now ask you some questions about other roles you may have potentially had in the sex trade. Were you ever a client?**
**(**If Yes, probe: (a) can you tell me about it? (b) did you ever purchase sex through a pimp, other sex market facilitator, or anyone else? (c) did you purchase sex before you started working in the sex trade?**)**

**G1a. Have you ever recruited anyone after you purchased their sexual services?**

**G2. Did you ever work as a sex worker, meaning engage in sexual activities for money, goods, or anything else?**

1. Yes
2. No **(**If no, skip to Section H: Personal Experience Part II**)**

**G2a. What were the circumstances that led you to sell sexual services?**
**(**Probe: Was it your own decision?)

**G2b. When did you sell sexual services (years)?**
**(**Probe: Did you stop? If so, when and why?**)**

**G2c. How many times have you done this?**
**(**Probe: About how many hours per week do/did you sell sexual services?)

**G2d. Did someone ever manage or assist you? (**Probe: How would you describe e that relationship? How long did it last?**)**

**G2e. How did this experience influence how you manage sex workers?**

**G3. Were you ever deceived into selling sex?**
**(**Probe: Was the person who deceived you a client, manager, or someone else? Can you explain what happened? Would you call this person a pimp? Did the deception entail being tricked into selling sex? Did they tell you that you would be doing something else? What did they tell you that you would be doing?**)**

**G4. Were you ever forced to sell sex? __**

**(**Probe: Can you explain what happened?**)**

**G4a. What would have happened to you if you had refused at the time?**

1. Physical violence (including being punched, kicked, dragged, beaten up, threatened with a gun, confiscation of savings or other valuables, knife or other weapons)
2. Physically restrained (including being tied up or locked in a room)
3. Deprived of food, water and/or sleep
4. Too far from home and nowhere to go
5. Sexual violence (any act that is including physical contact, being photographed or forced to watch other sexual acts)
6. Emotional violence (including belittling or ostracizing a person in front of their peers)/verbal abuse
7. Harm to family or someone you care about
8. Legal action (including being arrested)
9. Withholding of ID cards
10. Financial loss (including loss of wages)
11. Kept drunk/drugged
12. No better job options
13. Withhold love

77. Refused to answer
88. Other (specify):
99. Don't know

SECTION H: PERSONAL EXPERIENCE PART II

**Now I would like to ask you questions about your preferences. For each item, please answer on a 1 to 5 scale where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Please provide the number that represents your view. (**Note: a visual aid will be used that shows the scale**)**.

**H1. I do not devote time and effort to preparing for the future.**

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

**H2. I act on the spur of the moment without stopping to think.**

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

**H3. I do things that bring me pleasure here and now, even at the cost of future goals.**

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

**H4. I base my decisions on what will happen to me in the short run rather than the long run.**

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

**H5. I feel ashamed about being involved in the illicit sex trade.**

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

**H6. I feel I cannot make new friends who are not involved in the sex trade.**

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

**H7. My work in the sex industry keeps me from being emotionally close to other people.**

1 2 3 4 5
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

SECTION I: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

**I1. What is your relationship status?**
**(**Probe: are you or have you ever been married?**)**

1. Single
2. In a Relationship
3. Married
4. Widowed
5. Separated
6. Divorced

88. Other (specify):

**I2. How would you describe your race?**

1. Black
2. White
3. Asian

88. Other (specify):

**I3. Are you Hispanic or Latino?**

1. Yes

2. No

**I4. What is your sexual orientation?**

1. Heterosexual
2. Homosexual
3. Bisexual
4. Pansexual
5. Asexual

88. Other(specify):

**I5. With what gender do you identify?**

1. Female
2. Male
3. Transman
4. Transwoman
5. Nonbinary

88. Other (specify):

**I6. Where were you born?**
**(**City and Country**)**

**If born outside the U.S. (territories), what is your residency status?**

1. Citizen
2. Permanent Resident
3. Student/Work visa
4. Asylum seeker
5. Undocumented

88. Other (specify):

**16b. What year did you move to the US?**

**16c. Did you manage sex workers and/or sell sex in your native country?**

**17. We're now at the end of the interview. Is there any question that you thought I would ask you but didn't?**

SECTION J: REFERRALS

**J1. How many sex market facilitators/bottoms do you <u>personally know by name</u> who are active in the sex trade in the last 12 months (get a number)?**

**J1a. Of all these sex market facilitators/bottoms, how many sex workers would you say they actively manage?**

**J2. Can you nominate 5 of your sex market facilitator/bottom friends, including those who have interviewed by us before? _ (**Approach 3 for interview**)**

| **Name** (Alias) | **Gender** (female, male, transgender, non-binary) | **Where from** (City/State/Country) | **Current Location** | **Coupon Number** | **Other Attributes** (To Know Recruits Better) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | |
| 5. | | | | | |

SECTION K: INTERVIEWER'S REFLECTIONS

**(**Do not ask the respondent these questions, please complete based on your observations only**)**

**K1. Finish Time of Survey** (24-hour format):

**K2. Were you able to complete the interview?**

1. Yes, interview was completed
2. Yes, interview was completed but in the presence of other people
3. No, interview was not completed because the respondent refused to answer all the questions
4. No, interview was not completed because interrupted
5. No, other (specify):

**K3. Was the interview influenced by any observer (anyone else present besides the interviewer)**

1. Yes
2. No

# Appendix D

**Coding Definitions of Traumatic Events in their Life Story**
**The coding of trauma is from the participant's conscious point of view not from the coder's point of view.** Psychological trauma is a negative emotional response to serious distressing events, such as sexual or physical victimization, resulting in long-lasting disruption in emotional, mental, or spiritual well-being and social relationships. Participants must express that the traumatic event had a negative effect on their emotional, mental or spiritual self or their relationships. The traumatic event occurs from another person or a natural environmental cause (medical or environmental). Stories of bravo where participants are proud and discuss how their social standing increased are not seen as traumatic events from their point of view and stories under making them feel happy, joyful or proud need to have also a negative emotional or perceptual point of view.
**Participants can describe an event that can be categorized into multiple categories.**
**Category A. Violent Victimization (Physical or Weapons – Not Sexual Abuse)** This category includes any physical injuries due to another person that is perceived as intentional. Some examples are: Armed or unarmed robbery, gunshot wounds, being physically beaten or child abuse.
**Category B. Sexual Assault or Sexual Abuse Victimization**
This category includes sexual contact that adults had with them when they were children, including fondling, molestation, penetration, an adult exposing their genitalia to them as a child, or any consensual sexual contact where they were an adolescent, and the adult is at least 5 years older.
**Category C. Death of a Significant Person in their Life**
This category includes deaths that had a negative mental impact on them, and may be loss of parents, spouses, intimate partners, close friends, grandparents, uncles, mentors or other significant persons where they described a closeness and personal loss.
**Category D. Arrested or Convicted of a Crime or Been to Prison, Or perpetrated a violent crime and viewed negatively**
This category is coded when the arrest, conviction of a crime, being in prison or perpetrating a violent crime is within a story where the person feels anger, sadness, guilt, or other negative emotions and noted that it had a negative impact on their life.
**Category E. Witness Community Violence or Gang Violence**
This category is coded when the story involves community violence or gang violence that they witnessed (saw with their own eyes) and does not include hearing or reading about the story. Community violence can include stranger to stranger violence or acquaintance violence; It can occur in the street and in business establishments. It will not include intimate partner violence, parental violence toward each other. (Examples: My dad shot a guy 14 times in the chest in front of the house. It was a neighbor; I seen people get killed)
**Category F. Entered Sex Trade**
This category is coded when the story of entering the sex trade involved either force, coercion or deception or the person was a minor.
**Category G. Emotional/ Psychological Abuse (Called Names)**

This category is coded when the story describes that another person was repeatedly verbally abusive, or a parent, intimate partner or significant other did actions that made them feel unloved or very negative (e.g., made them sleep on the back porch, eat from the floor).

**Category H. Miscarriage or Children were injured or removed from the home (Indicate if respondent injured children in heading)**

This category is coded when the participant had a miscarriage or lost custody of their children, and they were distressed. Code when they wanted custody and felt sad or angry about DCFS taking custody. This category is not coded when they mention their children were raised by someone else and they have no regrets, sadness, guilt or other negative emotions.

**Category I. Witnessed Domestic Violence Toward Parent as a Child**

This category is coded when the participant describes a story where their parent is physically abused by another intimate partner, sibling or someone living in the home and they saw it happen.

**Category H. Drug Addiction Seen as a Negative**

This category is coded when the participant describes a story where substance abuse or addiction is seen as a low point in their life or having a negative impact on their life. Drugs can include any type of illicit drugs or alcohol.

**Category I. Medical Trauma**

This category is coded when the participant feels afraid or traumatized by a medical procedure or hospital procedure or a serious illness. (Examples: I was very afraid when they put me under if I would live or walk again; Respondent felt deceived when placed in a padded room at a mental hospital.)

**Category J. Loss of significant relationship (E.g. Break up, taken away from parents).**

This category is coded when the story is about being removed from their parents, losing a caregiver, an intimate partner or a meaningful relationship from their perspective.

**Category K. Witness Sexual Assault or Abuse**

This category is coded when the participant describes a story where they saw a sexual assault or molestation occurred to another person (e.g., saw a gang rape of a friend, saw a sibling molested by a stepfather). It is not coded if the participated in sex work with another person.

**Category L. Category Loss of legal job, homelessness, food insecurity**

This category is coded when the story centers around negative emotions and trauma due to homelessness, food insecurity, or an inability to keep a legal job. It may be due to parents who kick them out of the house, drug addiction, or other circumstances, and it is not a long-term situation. Homelessness is indicated through living on the street, in abandonment buildings, couch surfing, and means unstable shelter. Food insecurity involves being hungry for a period of times (e.g., as a child not having food in the home).

**Coding Definitions for Connection Between Trauma and Work in the Illicit Sex Trade**

**II. From Interviewee's perspective, did it affect their participation (entry or exit) in the illicit sex trade?**

**A) Motivated Entry into the Illicit Sex Trade:** Motivated entry means that the trauma contributed, stimulated, or motivated the respondent to enter the sex trade or to recruit or manage persons in the sex trade. The Trauma must occur before their involvement in the sex trade. Participant explicitly links the trauma and their entry into the illicit sex trade. Examples of Linking Statements: "Like me not wanting to be with a man is normal for me to be like that. But me being raped for all those years made me an easy target."; 2) "when I started prostituting it was out of anger and I want to say being spiteful. Have you ever heard the term cut your nose off, slide your face?"
**B) Motivated Exit from the Sex Trade:** Motivated exit means that the trauma contributed, stimulated, or motivated the respondent to leave the sex trade or to recruit or manage persons in the sex trade. That exit can be temporary – as in the person has a relapse and enters again.
**C) Unconnected:** There is no explicit connection or reasonable implied connection to their entry, exit or continuation or reduction of behavior in the illicit sex trade.
**D) Partial Desistance:** The trauma occurs after the person is involved in the sex trade, and it contributes to a reduction of their involvement in the illicit sex trade. If they completely stop even if temporary, it should be coded as motivated exit.
**E) Bilateral or Indirect Connection:** The trauma and participation in sex work are associated such that participation in sex work relates to the trauma, and the trauma might continue the sex work through changing beliefs in women, through learning how to avoid police, through relocating business, through removing problem, and so forth. Indirect connection between trauma and work in illicit sex trade or pimping/managing/recruiting means that the trauma affects a related belief or behavior, and the illicit sex trade involvement contributed to the trauma. This category can only be coded for "During" or "Before and During."

# Appendix E

**Definitions of Concepts in Lessons Learned from Trauma**

**Category 1. Loss of Trust in people**

This category when participants' narratives indicates that they do not trust or are afraid people in general due to their trauma.

**Category 2. Disclosure is Disbelieved**

This category is coded when respondents disclosed their trauma to someone, and the person rejected or disbelieved their story. This includes those who disclose trauma and the person (parent, authority) does not believe them or because they discover that someone usually a family member is not what they are pretending to be.
(Example: Mom did not believe daughter was raped.)

**Category 3. Lack of Trust or Hate of Specific Gender**

This category has two subcategories with the definitions described under the subcategories.

**Subcategory 3.2 Lack of Trust or Hate of Women/mother due to Trauma**

This category is coded if respondents state that the lack trust or feels disgust or hate toward women due to their trauma. It is also coded if respondents infer that their mother's neglect or abuse had a negative impact on their life and contributed to committing crimes (e.g., "turning to the streets", "selling sex or drugs").

**Subcategory 3.2 Lack of trust or Hatred of men/father**

This category is coded if respondents state that the lack trust or feels disgust or hate toward men due to their trauma (e.g., not trusting men due to a rape).. It is also coded if respondents infer that their father's neglect or abuse had a negative impact on their life and contributed to committing crimes (e.g., "turning to the streets", "selling sex or drugs").

**Category 4. Learned Something About Themselves Due to the Trauma**

This category has two subcategories with the definitions described under the subcategories.

**Category 4.1. Trauma led to seeing themselves as having negative qualities**

This category is coded if respondents connect the traumatic event to revealing some characteristic about themselves that they see as negative (e.g., hated themselves, considered suicide, see self as a villain or bad person, developed low self-esteem)

**Category 4.2 Trauma led to seeing themselves as having good qualities.**

This category is coded if respondents connect the traumatic event to revealing some characteristic about themselves that they see as positive (e.g., strong, survivor, developed empathy, became generous and wanted to help others, proud of self, learned they could do something other than sex work after a trauma)

**Category 5. Trauma led to coping or escape through drug use.**

This category is coded if respondents connect the use of drugs or alcohol to cope with a traumatic event. Respondents may note that the drug addiction took up a large amount of their life, that they attempted to forget the abuse through using substances, that substance use or abuse was a way to cope with their past traumatic experiences, that drugs led them to make bad decisions, or that the trauma led to drug use.

**Category 6. Trauma taught them to seek revenge or to not seek revenge**

This category has two subcategories with the definitions described under the subcategories.

**Subcategory 6a: Learned to seek Revenge**

This category is coded when respondents provide stories describing taking revenge on individuals like those who abused them (e.g., When I was gang raped, I went into a long depression. After that, I started robbing them and beating them up.)

**Subcategory 6b: Learned to not seek revenge**

This category is coded when respondents provide stories that describe becoming more empathic toward those who are struggling, changing their coercive strategies to more protective strategies, or learning from seeing the harm that they should not be physically or sexually violent toward other people.

**Category 7. Mental Health or Unspecified Effect due to Trauma**

This category is coded when respondents state that it had an effect but does not mention the nature of the effect or only mentions the effect on their mental health. (Examples: "I didn't have no feelings for nothing."; "made me have a different perspective about life."; "messed me up"; "I just went on a downward spiral.").

**Category 8: Learned how to survive and Obtain Basic Necessities**

This category is coded if respondents indicated that the trauma resulted in learning how to survive or how to continue in the illicit sex trade or in other ways to obtain food and/or shelter. Parents who abandoned or neglected them as children or kicked them out of the house and they stole food or started sex work or facilitation to obtain food and shelter. Respondents also may describe traumas that occurred during their involvement in the sex trade such as physical or sexual violence and they continued to obtain food and shelter.

# Appendix F

**Definitions of Categories of Learning to Facilitate**
**Responses are coded for what did they learn about how to facilitate or recruit from the specific sources that they identified.**

**Category 1: Know how women think and what they want**
This category is coded if respondents learned how to talk to women or understood what they wanted such as respect, gifts and safety. This category is coded if respondents indicate that they know how to control a woman's mind or can get to know a woman's soul. It is also coded if they describe learning how to say and do the correct actions to obtain the trust of women or learning how to assess the personality of a woman.
**Category 2. How to recruit**
This category is coded if respondents discuss learning aspects of how to recruit potential workers, including how to talk as well as the type of characteristics to look for in potential recruits.
**Category 3. How to Avoid Police Detection or Evade Arrest**
This category is coded if respondents describe that they learned how to evade arrest, detect undercover officers, or avoid encounters with law enforcement. Aspects of the learning could include moving to different locations, being aware when the police show up in the neighborhood, how to talk to police officers or not to talk to them, using code words or hand signals to communicate with workers or to tell them that the police are coming, and how to appear to be engaged in law-abiding activities (e.g., sitting at a bus stop while the police are in the neighborhood).
**Category 4. Persuasive Strategies to manage Sex Workers**
This category includes four subcategories, which are defined below.
**Subcategory 4.1: Buy them gifts and give them compliments**
Respondent indicates that they buy gifts beyond basic food, shelter or clothing to make workers feel good toward them and/or they communicate flattery or compliments.
**Subcategory 4.2: Keep your promises to them/keep it real**
Respondents indicate that they learned to do what they promise so that workers can trust them and know what to expect. This category is coded if respondents learned to provide consistent expectations, so the workers know what is expected of them, or to provide benefits if they were promised. For example, if they promise to take them on a vacation, they take them on a vacation. So, respondents learned to keep their word and not make false promises.
**Subcategory 4.3: Do not abuse them**
This category is coded if respondents indicate that they learned to treat respondents without using or threatening violence and to treat respondents with respect.
**Subcategory 4.4: Lie to them and manipulate them**
This category is coded if respondents indicate that they told women they loved them when they did not or made statements that they did not mean to get them to do what they wanted them to do. It is also coded if they learned to see women or workers as weak and easily manipulated. Respondents may use the terms, trick, manipulate, make them feel comfortable, pretend, or lie, to indicate that they made statements to workers that

they did not mean. Respondent needs to acknowledge that they are manipulating or making false statements.

**Category 5: Coercive Strategies**

**This category consists of two subcategories, which are defined below.**

**Subcategory 5.1: Be firm and control them**

This category is coded if respondents learned how to use violence or the threat of violence or other coercive measures to control their workers. Respondents may learn where to hit women to avoid reducing their attractiveness, how to discipline them through spankings or beatings, to never accept excuses for not wanting to do something, or ways to punish them such as not allowing them to sleep or isolating them.

**Subcategory 5.2: Dehumanize the women**

This category is coded if respondents learned to use derogatory language toward sex workers or to call them names of animals such as horse, chick, etc. It is also coded if respondents learned to use humiliation as a tactic or to manipulate women into perceiving their body as a product to sell.

**Category 6. Conduct effective sex work**

This category is coded if respondents learned to get the money first from the client or the workers, learned how to talk to clients, where to advertise, how to perform sexual services, how to negotiate with the client, or to not do drugs or allow their workers to do hard drugs.

# Appendix G

## Definitions of Concepts of Easy to Recruit

### Category 1. Vulnerability

There are several concepts to code to assess whether respondents identify potential workers who are easy to recruit because they have vulnerable behaviors or beliefs. Additionally, this overarching category is coded if respondents use the term, target or vulnerable. These subcategories are defined below.

A. Uses words "target" or "vulnerable" - respondent must explicitly use one of the terms, target or vulnerable.
B. Naïve, young – respondents describes that they look for naïve or young people to recruit.
C. Low self-esteem – respondents through conversation assesses whether they have low self-esteem and will attempt to recruit those with low self-esteem.
D. Prior trauma – respondents through conversation assesses whether potential recruits have had prior trauma, family issues, ran away from home or were neglected by their parents or caregivers.
E. Homelessness, poverty – respondents looked for potential recruits in locations where persons who are unhoused or struggling financially or they ask potential recruits about their housing or economic situation.
F. Going through some stuff
G. Fearful, shy – respondents look for persons who look fearful or act shy and try to offer a sense of safety and protection

### Category 2. Drug Use is a Criteria

This category has two subcategories, which are defined below.

A. On drugs – respondents indicate that they seek to recruit those who use or abuse drugs. Examples of words included: drug addicts, specific types of drug users (e.g., crackheads, heroin users), and dope fiends.
B. Not on hard drugs – respondents indicate that they recruit only persons who do not use hard drugs, though potential recruits could use alcohol or marijuana.

### Category 3. Willingness to do sex work

A. Willingness - Respondents indicate that sex workers were willing to do sex work and wanted the money.
B. Recruiter Approached by Potential Sex worker – Respondents indicate that persons sought out them to manage their sex work.

### Category 4. Easily Managed Sex Workers

This category contains characteristics that respondents identify as making good sex workers such as loyalty, being nice, being honest, willing to listen, not creating drama, being strong, fearless or courageous.

# Appendix H

## Artifacts

### Presentations

Horning, A., Stalans, L., & Whalen, M. (2024, September) Sex market facilitators' social networks: Description and relationship to coercive tactics. European Society of Criminology, Bucharest, Romania.

Horning, A., Jordenö, S., Stalans, L., & Stevens, C. (2024, February). LGBTQAI+ Third-party facilitation in a necropolitical landscape. Western Division of Criminology, Long Beach,CA.

Horning, A., Stalans, A., *Poirier, M., & *Vitorino, A. (2023, November). Third-party Facilitation and the gender prism: Different Learning and Opportunities impacting Role switching, Staying or Quitting. American Society of Criminology. Philadelphia, PA.

Stalans, L. & Horning, A. (2023, November). Mentoring Aspiring Novices: Variations i Third-party Facilitators' Shared Knowledge across Experience and Deviant Networks. American Society of Criminology. Philadelphia, PA.

Horning, A., Stalans, L., Jordeno, S., & *Stevens, C. (2023, November). Necropolitics and LGBTQAI+ Third Parties' Resistance. American Society of Criminology. Philadelphia, PA.

Stalans, L. & Horning, A. (2022, November) Social Learning From Trauma: Third-party Facilitators' Perspective on Entering the Illicit Sex Trade. American Society of Criminology. Altanta, GA.

*Multiple papers are in progress and will be submitted to peer-reviewed journals.

### Dataset

Patterns and Characteristics of Sex Market Facilitation in Chicago and New York City (NIJ Project: Grooming Traffickers: Investigating the Techniques and Mechanisms for Seducing and Coercing New Traffickers; Federal Award No. 2019-R2-CX-0067)

a. SPSS dataset
b. Codebook