

Call for Research: Leveraging Social Networking for Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Awareness

POSTER #2

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References are listed in paper

40.3 Million people enslaved worldwide.

BACKGROUND

Slavery dates to very ancient times and has negatively impacted every culture. Article 4 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 states "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms." (United Nations, 1948, p. 2) However data from today shows that over 40 million people are in modern slavery throughout the world and generates an income of 150 billion.

Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking are very distinct from smuggling. Smuggling is a border crime with individuals agreeing to violate national laws to move from one place to another, but there is consent from both parties.

Human trafficking is non-consensual and does not require the movement of individuals across international, state, country, county or even city jurisdiction. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 breaks human trafficking into three parts: Action, Means, and Purpose. Trafficking is an issue that impacts global society across gender, age, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, culture, or immigration status.

Online traffickers identify potential victims and entrap victims for labor or sex. They lure victims through social media platforms such as Instagram and snapchat.

THE PROBLEM

Despite increased global efforts to combat human trafficking, a lack of awareness remains a significant challenge. Traditional awareness campaigns have limitations in reach and engagement. Leveraging social networking platforms offers a promising solution to amplify awareness efforts.

Developing effective strategies to utilize social networking for this purpose requires addressing issues such as information overload, skepticism, and platform algorithms that prioritize popular content over important but less sensational topics.

There is a need for innovative approaches that leverage the power of social networking to educate, engage, and mobilize individuals in the fight against human trafficking.

It's essential that information science researchers use their unique skills exploring and refining strategies for leveraging social networking platforms to raise awareness about human trafficking and helping in the exposure of modern slave traffickers.

"55% of victims of domestic minor sex trafficking say they first made contact with their trafficker online".

The Alliance to Counter Crime online, 2020, p. 1

Recruitment First Contact:

- Online Platforms: 30% - 55%
- Victims' Homes: 20% to 30%
- Public Spaces: 15% to 25%
- Agencies: 10% to 20%

Types of Trafficker/Exploiters

- Family Members: 35% - 40%
- Friends/Acquaintances: 30%-35%
- Romantic Partners: 10%-15%
- Fake Job Recruiters: 5%-15%

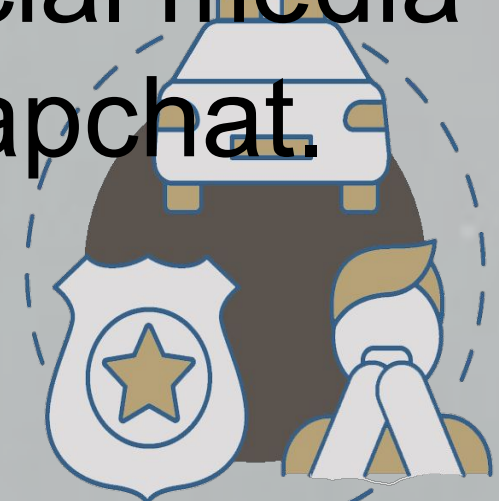
HOW DO WE START?

Human trafficking is a global problem. Social networking platforms are being used as tools by traffickers, but these same platforms can potentially be used to raise awareness about this critical issue. Social networking platforms have emerged as powerful tools for reaching a wide audience and engaging individuals in discussions about human trafficking.

However, the effectiveness of trafficker's campaigns on these platforms is influenced by various factors, including the content of the campaigns, the algorithms of the platforms, and the demographics of the target audience.

GUIDING RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What are the current levels of awareness about human trafficking among social networking platform users?
2. How do social networking platforms currently contribute to raising awareness about human trafficking, and what are the limitations of these efforts?
3. What are the key factors that influence individuals' engagement with human trafficking awareness content on social networking platforms?
4. How do different demographic groups perceive and respond to human trafficking awareness campaigns on social networking platforms?
5. What impact do human trafficking awareness campaigns on social networking platforms have on individuals' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to the issue?



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