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Abstract

Human trafficking victims are not well researched; this paper aims to research snakehead gang victims and the trends the gang uses to enhance their operations. Also, this research will help in providing significant information to the public and law enforcement agencies concerning human trafficking victims and thus influencing both political and policy legislation. Having accurate information about the snakehead gang will enable the easy formation of policies and strategies to fight against human trafficking. The questions under research include what impacts have the victims of human trafficking encountered in the snakehead gang? And what trends are utilized by snakehead gangs in attracting their victims? The research concludes that the victims of snakehead gangs are subjected to exploitation, such as sexual and labor. However, most of them died without being reported due to the harsh conditions they are subjected to. These actions are against human rights and thus law enforcement agencies need to combat the gang based on the trends they utilize, including WeChat and MoMo.

General Trends and Magnitude of the Problem

Human trafficking started many years ago; however, it was made illegal in the year 2000 when the Trafficking Victims and Protection act was passed. Nonetheless, despite the increase in global considerations as well as resources from the state and other private institutions, the number of victims of human trafficking continues to increase significantly. According to Sweileh (2018), between the years 2008 and 2019, the number of human trafficking victims intensified more than three times. The law enforcement agencies need to combat crime because it is among the most performed crime that can be prevented. The same source also argues that human trafficking results in different forms of exploitation to the victims, including labor, sexual and organ removal, hence referred to as modern slavery.

According to Greenbaum et al. (2017), victims of human trafficking worldwide range from twenty to forty million. However, he adds that evaluating the overall possibility of human trafficking victims is hard because of the high number of incidences not reported. Furthermore, having 71% of human trafficking victims being women and girls, sexual exploitations yield \$99 billion to the traffickers from the total annual revenues of about \$150 billion. Similarly, men and boys account for 29% of human trafficking victims. Greenbaum et al. (2017) argue that 50,000 human trafficking victims are taken in the United States every year, and most of them are from the Philippines and Mexico. Human trafficking criminals operate in gangs, thus forming complex structures that law enforcement will not easily realize. For example, the snakehead gang which has trafficked more than 200,000 people to the rich western countries, is currently using mobile applications and social media platforms to recruit their targets (You & Robinson, 2019).

The Present Study

Human trafficking incidences have increased significantly across the world. Although law enforcement agencies' efforts are not enough to reduce or stop the crime from happening, the impacts are still felt in the community, including increased organized crimes, creating opportunities that undermine public health and breakdown of families and communities. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to focus on snakehead gang victims and the trends utilized by the gang to enhance their operations to shed more light on the matter hence bringing up possible solutions. Furthermore, having limited studies on the topic, less information is available concerning the human trafficking victims. However, research plays a vital role in creating social and political change. Also, the objectives of the research are to research on how prevalent human trafficking has extended in causing harm to their victims, to explore the snakehead gang victims to understand how the gang operates, to identify the trends utilized by

the gangs to enhance their operations as well as to derive possible solutions based on information obtained. Human trafficking is referred to as modern slavery because it is against human rights for such activities to thrive. Therefore, this research will focus on answering the following questions:

What impacts have the victims of human trafficking encountered in the snakehead gang?

Which populations are more prone to be victims of human trafficking?

What trends are utilized by snakehead gangs in attracting their victims?

Are diplomatic solutions to human trafficking enough to affect change?

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