

FEAR AND HOPELESSNESS IN TWO TYPES OF  
SEXUALLY EXPLOITED WOMEN

by

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Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of  
The University of Texas at Arlington in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN SOCIAL WORK

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

May 2012

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my family for their incredible support through my educational process. Thanks to my husband, Kirk, for being a never-ending well of love and support. I give thanks to my parents for their love and compassion. They taught me to care for those that cannot care for themselves. Thanks to my brother, Aaron, for making me laugh and reminding me not to take life so seriously! I give thanks for my friends who believed in me and kept my spirits high. I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Danis, Dr. Cobb, and Dr. Kitzman-Ulrich, for their participation in this process. Thank you Dr. Beverly Black for your patience and guidance - I certainly would not have done this without you!

April 10, 2012

ABSTRACT

FEAR AND HOPELESSNESS IN TWO TYPES OF  
SEXUALLY EXPLOITED WOMEN

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Thirty-four women self-identified as engaging in prostitution and were sampled from two prostitution intervention agencies over a 6 month period. Participants ranged in age from 22 to 55 years old ( $M = 37.40$ ,  $SD = 8.43$ ), over half the women had been sexually exploited through pimp-control, and over half the women had been sexually exploited under the age of eighteen. Participants completed a survey related to questions about levels of fear and hopelessness at the time of the sexual exploitation experience.

Significant differences were found between women exploited through pimp controlled prostitution versus women exploited through survival sex. Women who had been sexually exploited through pimp control showed higher levels of overall fear, fear of harm, and fear of loss of social supports when exchanging sex for various items than women who were sexually exploited via exchange sex alone.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
ABSTRACT .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES .....	viii
Chapter	Page
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Social Implications of Sexual Exploitation.....	2
1.1.1 Community Health Risks.....	3
1.1.2 Costs to Social Services .....	4
1.1.3 Growing Criminal Enterprise .....	5
1.2 Purpose Statement .....	5
2. LITERATURE REVIEW .....	7
2.1 Factors Preceding Youth Entering Prostitution .....	7
2.1.1 Familial Factors.....	7
2.1.1.1 Sexual Abuse .....	8
2.1.1.2 Physical Violence .....	8
2.1.1.3 Foster Care .....	9
2.1.1.4 Parental Substance Abuse .....	10
2.1.2 Personal Factors .....	10
2.1.2.1 Poor Psychological Health .....	10
2.1.2.2 Discontinuous Education .....	11
2.1.3 Social Factors .....	11
2.1.3.1 Homelessness.....	12
2.2 Impact of Sexual Exploitation.....	12

2.2.1 Physical Harm .....	13
2.2.2 Psychological Harm .....	14
2.3 Types of Juvenile Sexual Exploitation .....	15
2.3.1 Motivations for Remaining in Prostitution: Survival Sex .....	17
2.3.1.1 Need for Basic Resources .....	18
2.3.1.2 Need for Emotional Support.....	18
2.3.2 Motivations for Remaining in Prostitution: Pimp-Control .....	18
2.3.2.1 Feelings of Hopelessness.....	19
2.3.2.2 Fear of Physical Harm.....	19
2.4 Conclusion of Literature Review .....	20
3. SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY .....	22
4. METHODS .....	27
4.1 Introduction.....	27
4.2 Research Question and Hypothesis .....	27
4.2.1 Independent Variables .....	28
4.2.2 Dependent Variables.....	29
4.3 Procedure.....	29
4.4 Measurement .....	30
4.4.1 Type of Sexual Exploitation .....	30
4.4.2 Hopelessness.....	32
4.5 Sampling. ....	32
4.6 Data Analysis .....	33
5. RESULTS.....	34
5.1 Frequency Scores on Fear and Hopelessness Scales.....	35
5.2 Hypothesis Testing.....	35
5.2.1. Hopelessness.....	35

5.2.2. Fear .....	36
5.2.2.1. Overall Fear .....	37
5.2.2.2. Fear of Loss of Basic Resources.....	38
5.2.2.3. Fear of Harm.....	40
5.2.2.4. Fear of Loss of Social Supports .....	41
6. DISCUSSION.....	43
6.1. Social Exchange Theory .....	46
6.2. Limitations.....	47
6.3. Implications for Future Social Work Practice .....	49
6.4. Implications for Future Social Work Research.....	49
6.5. Policy Implications .....	50
6.6. Conclusion.....	51
APPENDIX	
A. HIGH RISK VICTIM SURVEY .....	53
B. BECK HOPLESSNESS SCALE .....	58
C. FLYER .....	60
D. HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL LETTER .....	62
REFERENCES.....	66
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION .....	73

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1 Demographic Information .....	33
2 Summary of Sexual Exploitation Categories.....	34
3 Summary Fear Scores for All Participants .....	35
4 Hopelessness Scale Scores for Women Exploited through Pimp-Control and Women Exploited through Survival Sex .....	36
5 'Overall Fear' Scores for Women Exploited through Pimp-Control and Women Exploited through Survival Sex .....	38
6 'Fear of Loss of Basic Resources' Scores for Women Exploited through Pimp-Control and Women Exploited through Survival Sex .....	39
7 'Fear of Harm' Scores for Women Exploited through Pimp-Control and Women Exploited through Survival Sex .....	41
8 'Fear of Loss of Social Supports' Harm' Scores for Women Exploited through Pimp-Control and Women Exploited through Survival Sex.....	42



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Juvenile prostitution is a “high-risk, world-wide phenomenon, which is estimated to be in escalation” (Robinson & Paramo, 2007, p. 237). Over two million children are sexually exploited around the world (U.S. Department of State, 2008) and over 300,000 American children and adolescents are victims of sexual exploitation and prostitution each year (Willis & Levy, 2002). Although juvenile prostitution crosses all racial and ethnic boundaries, a disproportionate number of female children of color are represented in the sex industry (Heilemann, 2008). An FBI report of crime in the United States (USJD, FBI, 2007d, 2007e) found that 53.9% of juveniles arrested for prostitution were African American, 44.2% were Caucasian, and 1.1% was Asian or Pacific Islander. This FBI report did not have statistical information on the young female Hispanic population. According to Letot Center, one of the five therapeutic shelters that treats victims of child sexual exploitation in the United States (Shared Hope International, 2009); approximately 41% of their victims served in 2008 were Hispanic (Brock, 2009).

Historically, children involved in prostitution have not been recognized as victims of human trafficking (Heilemann, 2008); however, the “Trafficking Victim Protection Act” (TVPA) of 2000 (reauthorized in 2005 & 2008) has now defined all minors involved in commercial sex acts as victims of trafficking, including minors who are U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents (Shared Hope International, 2009, p. V). While much attention has been paid to international child trafficking, little attention has been given to the plight of domestic victims of sex trafficking (Ward & Patel, 2006; Melby, 2004). Even studies that concentrate on domestic sexually exploited youth focus little on empirical research geared toward building interventions for children who are *already involved* in prostitution (Melby, 2004; Hwang & Bedford, 2004).

Often, juvenile prostitution occurs outdoors and in large urban areas (Melby, 2004). Youth that fall victim to sexual exploitation typically come from difficult home situations and end up living on the streets (Shared Hope International, 2009). According to the United States Congress (S.2529, 2009), youth who run away are invited into prostitution within forty-eight hours of leaving or being kicked out of home. They may participate in survival sex, also called exchange sex, characterized by children or adolescents exchanging sexual acts for a ride, food, or shelter (Pearce, 2006). Youth are also at risk of becoming involved in pimp-controlled prostitution (Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002) "Pimp-controlled prostitution"(Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002, p.1074), is defined as youth being coerced or manipulated into prostitution by a peer or exploitative adult and subsequently exposed to violence and fear in order to keep these youth in prostitution. Once involved in sexual exploitation, the average life expectancy of sexually exploited youth is estimated at seven years (The Genesis Project, 2009; Dallas Police Department, n.d.). It is important to note that women entering into prostitution of their own free will "accounts for only about one percent of women in the sex industry" (Liedholt, 2003, p. 177). Children and adolescents are especially vulnerable to exploitation due to their psychological, emotional, and physical maturity levels. They typically "lack the knowledge, maturity, and awareness to fully understand their actions and make responsible choices" (The Hofstede Committee Report, 1999, p. 4). Perhaps this gives insight into why the average age of a woman entering prostitution is estimated between twelve and fifteen years old (Heilemann, 2008; The Hofstede Committee Report, 1999).

### 1.1 Social Implications of Sexual Exploitation

The implications for a society that permits the continual sexual exploitation of individuals are concerning. In addition to the physical and psychological suffering for victims of sexual exploitation, significant community health implications, public financial costs, and a growing criminal enterprise are tied to sexual exploitation.

### *1.1.1 Community Health Risks*

Control of infectious disease is a public priority and, over the past decade, STDs have increased or remained at stable numbers, increasing the risk of transmission. The annual number of Chlamydia cases has increased in every age group (Center for Disease Control, 2008), the percentage of Americans with genital herpes infection in the U.S. has not dropped over time, and an estimated 5.5 million Americans are infected with Human Papilloma Virus each year (Center for Disease Control, 2000).

The Center for Disease Control estimates that in 2006, 56,300 new cases of HIV were reported, and this number is projected to rise (Center for Disease Control, 2010). Approximately 6,000 teens will be infected with HIV every day (UNICEF UK, n.d.), and rates of HIV within the population of women who are prostitutes is estimated at up to sixty-five percent (Rosenberg & Weiner, 1988). Poverty and drug use is associated with high risk of HIV infection as well as prostitution. Even more alarming is many people believe that “one cannot contract HIV from having sex with a virgin or young child” (Barnitz, 2001; Spangenberg, 2001). Individuals involved in sexual exploitation are at high risk of contracting and spreading serious sexually transmitted diseases throughout the general public.

Risky sexual behavior (especially prostitution), inconsistent condom use, and early initiation of sexual behavior, has long been associated with the spread of sexually transmitted diseases (Koenig & Clark, 2004; National Institute of Mental Health Multisite HIV Prevention Trial Group, 2001; Noll, Trickett, & Putman, 2003). Transmission of STD's such as HIV, HPV, Chlamydia, and Herpes spread throughout the general population when sexually exploited individuals are forced to engage in unprotected sex with multiple partners on a daily basis.

### *1.1.2 Costs to Social Services*

Sexual exploitation poses “a challenge for social welfare agencies, law enforcement organizations, and private social reform groups” (Heilemann, 2008, p. 2). Due to the hidden and coercive nature of sexual exploitation, victims typically do not self-identify, making it difficult to intervene. Social service agencies and police departments are often involved with this population, regardless of whether or not the individual is identified as a victim. One study (Pearce, et al., 2002) showed that 24% of the 55 sampled women who were prostitutes had police records and 18% had previous contact with social services. Often, by the time social services or law enforcement is involved with victims of sexual exploitation, the consequences of their exploitation are already grave, and may affect future generations though the cyclical nature of the social services system.

“Sexually active adolescents who do not use contraceptives have a 90% chance of becoming pregnant” and many juveniles engaging in prostitution become pregnant (Willis & Levy, 2002). Furthermore, the health of infants born to prostituted children is poor. A U.S. study focusing on prostitution and pregnancy found that “8 % of infants born during the study died, while 67 % were referred to child protection agencies” (Deisher, Farrow, & Hope, et al., 1989). This translates to costs for the general public via taxation for health and human services. In Texas alone the amount of money spent on foster care, adoption subsidies, and other child protection service programs totaled over one billion dollars (TDFPS Operating Budget, 2010). This large amount of funding is dedicated to foster care as a retroactive response to the problems associated with juvenile prostitution. Adequate funding for interventions and services or youth involved in prostitution is practically non-existent, with only five therapeutic shelters in the United States to serve over 300,000 sexually exploited youth (Shared Hope International, 2009).

### *1.1.3 Growing Criminal Enterprise*

Sexual exploitation is considered one of the world's largest and most lucrative criminal enterprises (Barnitz, 2001). Five billion dollars of a twenty billion dollar sex industry profit is acquired through the prostitution of children each year (Lim, 1998). Drugs, violence, fraud, and secrecy keep silent the victims of these crimes. While domestic and international laws have been enacted to stop the sexual exploitation of children, the demand continues to grow. Slavery is considered one of the most egregious human rights violations of our time, and abuse of children is regarded as morally reprehensible; however, efforts to cease the sexual slavery and exploitation of children in the United States have not been sufficient or effective. More research into the problem of sexual exploitation, particularly in young populations, is necessary to inform social work practice and policy in order to better serve this population.

### 1.2. Purpose Statement

This study focuses on two types of sexual exploitation: pimp-controlled prostitution and survival sex. There is a great deal of controversy in the literature regarding the appropriate terminology when discussing this population; however, for the purposes of this research, the terms "sexually exploited youth" and "individuals involved in prostitution" will be used interchangeably to include the aforementioned groups.

Only recently have social sciences begun to recognize the substantial psychological, physical, and societal impact of sexually exploitation of youth. The injustice of young women and men being prostituted in the United States has been generally overlooked, with most individuals unaware of the actual prevalence of juvenile sexual exploitation. There is little quantitative data supporting the effectiveness of any intervention techniques with this population. Relapse after intervention is a common occurrence with sexually exploited youth (Robinson & Paramo, 2007); hence, we may not be appropriately addressing the reasons why youth remain in prostitution. This study seeks to address the basic motivations for youth

remaining in prostitution using quantitative data, so that we may better understand the complex nature of this issue and gain empirical data to develop an effective intervention strategy.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to the secretive nature of the juvenile sex trade industry, there is little ability to do large scale quantitative studies. Much of the quantitative research has been conducted on adult prostitutes. Because the average age of entry into prostitution is between twelve to fifteen years old (Heilemann, 2008; The Hofstede Committee Report, 1999), adults in prostitution are very likely to have experienced prostitution as juveniles. The literature review will focus on studies in three major areas: (1) factors preceding youth entering prostitution (2) impact of sexual exploitation, and (3) two types of juvenile sexual exploitation.

#### 2.1 Factors Preceding Youth Entering Prostitution

A good deal of research has pointed to possible preceding events correlated with juvenile prostitution. Common risk factors identified in the literature for youth becoming involved in prostitution can be separated into three categories: (1) familial factors, (2) personal factors, and (3) societal factors.

##### *2.1.1 Familial Factors*

History of abuse and abandonment in family of origin are mentioned in the literature as risk factors for youth becoming sexually exploited. Abandonment during childhood caused by parental death or removal from home by state agencies (Carter & Dalla, 2006), multiple foster care placements (Coy, 2009; Shaffer & DeBlaisie, 1984), sexual abuse (Miner, Flitter, & Robinson, 2006; Shaffer & DeBlaisie, 1984; Willis & Levy, 2002; Melrose, 2004; Cusick et al., 2003; Pearce 2006; Heilemann 2008), and violence in the home (Il'lashenko, 2004; Shaffer & DeBlaisie, 1984) are some of the more prominent factors correlated with sexual exploitation of youth in the United States.

### 2.1.1.1 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is common in the population of individuals involved in prostitution. An estimated 60% - 90% of prostitutes were sexually abused as children (Nandon, Koverola, and Scledermann, 1998; Shaffer & DeBlaisie, 1984; Willis & Levy, 2002; Melrose, 2004; Cusick et al., 2003; Pearce, 2006; Heilemann, 2008). Miner, Flitter, and Robinson (2006) sampled 230 African American women (*m = 33 years old*) to collect data for evaluation of an HIV prevention program. Face-to-face structured interviews with 409 questions, including a Likert scale and open ended questions, were utilized to gather data. Questions were asked relating to mental health issues, unhealthy sexual behaviors, communication with partners, and HIV risk behaviors. The authors found that those women engaging in prostitution were significantly more likely to have been sexually abused in childhood versus women who were not sexually abused.

Another study, by Silbert and Pines (1981), sampled 200 juvenile and adult street prostitutes (*m= 22 years old, range =10 – 46 years old*) to examine the relationship between sexual abuse and prostitution behavior. Sixty percent of the participants were under sixteen years old and seventy-eight percent reported beginning prostitution as juveniles. Participants were asked about their background information; history of sexual assault; history of juvenile sexual exploitation; and plans for the future. Results showed that sixty percent of the subjects were sexually abused before the age of sixteen years old; by an average of two people each, over an average period of twenty months.

### 2.1.1.2 Physical Violence

Physical violence in the home is another factor antecedent to sexual exploitation. Potter, Martin, and Roman (1999) conducted a study with 29 female sex workers and 680 control participants. The participants were interviewed regarding socio-demographic information, family background, work history, health attitudes and behaviors, and abuse experiences. Over 80% of the participants who were sex workers reported a minimum of one



episode of physical violence toward them before 16 years of age (Potter, Martin, & Romans, 1999).

In another study (Nandon, et al., 1998), 45 female adolescent prostitutes were sampled and compared with 37 non-prostituted adolescents. About 87% of the prostitute sample began prostitution at an age below 16 years old. The average age of entry into prostitution was 14.1 years old (*range = 10 - 18 years old*). The participants were interviewed face-to-face over a 16-month period using a 35-page questionnaire that asked questions regarding the following: background information, history of prostitution, history of inter-parental violence, history of childhood sexual abuse, history of childhood physical abuse, adolescent drug and alcohol use, parental drug and alcohol use, leaving home, family functioning, and self-esteem. Physical abuse was considered to be any abuse that resulted in physical injury of the child and was repetitive in nature. Physical abuse was considered to have occurred if the abuse was severe, even if it was not repetitive. Nandon, et al. found that rates of childhood physical abuse were high among the sampled juvenile prostitutes (48%), but were not higher than the non-prostituted juveniles. This may be due to the fact that both the non-prostituted and prostituted juvenile samples were from residential treatment centers and detention centers. If sexually exploited youth were compared to the general, non-delinquent population of adolescents, the number of childhood physical abuse incidences could be much higher comparatively. Violence in the home seems to be a preceding factor that increases risk but does not necessarily cause youth to become involved in prostitution.

#### 2.1.1.3 Foster Care

Youth with previous experience in the foster care system seem to be overrepresented in juveniles involved in sexual exploitation (Coy, 2009). Literature indicates that 38% (Sanders, 2001) to 48.9% (Nixon, et al., 2002) of women who are prostitutes lived in residential treatment or foster care facilities.

Nixon et al. (2002) conducted a qualitative research study, using semi-structured interviewed techniques, with questions such as “How did you become involved in prostitution?” and “What services or resources did you find helpful or not helpful?” All the participants had begun prostitution before the age of 18 years. Of the 47 participants, 64% had been involved with the child welfare system as children. Many of the women involved in the child welfare system (77.8%) had been taken into care and resided in foster and group homes.

#### 2.1.1.4 Parental Substance Abuse

Parental substance abuse appears as another factor that precedes entry into prostitution. Nandon, et al. (1998) found that 35% - 58% of juveniles involved in prostitution reported that their parents used drugs or alcohol. In this same study, 79% of prostituted adolescents had at least one parent who was an alcoholic. Again, this was described as a preceding risk factor for prostitution but could not be characterized as a causal factor for youth becoming involved in prostitution.

#### 2.1.2 *Personal Factors*

Familial factors have a large influence on how a child develops into an adult. While a clear distinction between family influence and an individual’s motivation for behavior cannot be made, literature has identified certain personal factors that may leave a young person vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Just as with domestic violence, which has been compared to prostitution (Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002), victims' early life experiences can dictate later motivations for remaining in unhealthy and unsafe relationships (Carter & Dalla, 2006; Coy, 2009; Shaffer & DeBlaisie, 1984; Il'lashenko, 2004).

##### 2.1.2.1 Poor Psychological Health

Poor psychological health heightens youth risk of becoming sexually exploited. Family history of abuse can be linked to the psychological health of youth. Frequently, children who experience trauma early in life have difficulty forming healthy emotional attachments, trusting adults, and may have “cognitive distortions about sexuality and relationships” (Edinburgh &

Saewyc, 2001, p. 42). These cognitive distortions may propagate negative views of self, intimacy, and romantic relationships, creating a higher risk of emotionally and physically unhealthy sexual behavior. Perhaps these children are less likely to recognize personal risks involved with prostitution, and therefore may be more vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Robinson and Paramo (2007) sampled 28 sexually exploited youth who were residents in a community-based juvenile prostitution rehabilitation program. These youth were asked to respond freely to forty cue-cards relating to prostitution and street-life. These statements were then categorized into twenty-two belief statements. Such statements included: (1) "One's body is useful for getting money," (2) "It feels good when clients come back the next day," and (3) "Freedom only exists in street life" (p. 240-241). Many of these belief statements exemplify the type of faulty thinking that may motivate a juvenile to remain in prostitution.

#### 2.1.2.2 Discontinuous Education

In addition, low-educational achievement including dropping out and absenteeism is noted as a preceding factor to juvenile sexual exploitation (Crowly, 1977). A study by Lung, et al. (2004) sought to discover what personal characteristics of adolescence were correlated with juvenile prostitution. They used purposive sampling of 158 adolescent prostitutes as well as a control group constructed of 65 female high school students. Lung, et al. found that the average length of schooling for the group of prostituted juveniles was statistically and significantly lower than the control group. This study showed that discontinuous schooling such as dropping out and absenteeism is a risk factor associated with sexual exploitation of youth.

#### 2.1.3 Social Factors

Social issues are also influential in contributing to the sexual exploitation of children. It is accepted that the causes of prostitution likely differ between countries, especially in regards social influences (Willis and Levy, 2002). There are many antecedent factors such as high unemployment, urbanization, and poverty (Azaola, 2001; Hodge, 2008; Simkhada, 2008) in other countries (especially third world) that contribute to an increase in juvenile prostitution. In

the US, these do not seem to be statistically significant (Nandon, et al. 1998). The only empirically supported social factor contributing to juvenile prostitution is homelessness.

#### 2.1.3.1 Homelessness

Homelessness sets the stage for commercial sexual exploitation. Youth who run away are invited into prostitution within 48 hours of leaving or being kicked out of their home (United States Congress, s.2529 bill, 2009). Several studies have found that 77 - 90% of young women in prostitution ran away from home” (Lukman, 2009). Over 463,000 children run away from home or juvenile facilities each year (NISMART-2, 2002) and literature indicates that 16-46% of children living on the street become involved in prostitution. Although family factors and personal psychological factors increase risk for juvenile involvement in prostitution, the single most predictive factor for juvenile sexual exploitation is homelessness.

A national study found that being homeless for longer than thirty days was the most determinative factor causing youth to become involved in prostitution (Nandon, Koverola, & Schledermann, 1998; Shared Hope International, 2009). Nandon, et al. sampled 45 female adolescent prostitutes and were compared with 37 non-prostituted adolescents. The participants were asked questions regarding the following: background information, history of prostitution, history of inter-parental violence, history of childhood sexual abuse, history of childhood physical abuse, adolescent drug and alcohol use, parental drug and alcohol, leaving home, family functioning and self-esteem. A comparison of youth who were not prostituted versus youth who were prostituted showed that they had similar rates of drug abuse, parental drug use, and physical and sexual abuse, but prostituted youth had a higher incidence of homelessness. The most statistically significant indicator of engaging in prostitution as a juvenile was found to be youth homelessness.

### 2.2 Impact of Sexual Exploitation

Once an individual becomes enmeshed in the prostitution lifestyle, they are at risk for a multitude of psychological, health, and safety issues. Rape, violence, suicidal ideations

(Shahmanesh, Wayal, Cowan, Mabey, Copas, & Patel, 2009; Kidd & Kral, 2002) depression, pregnancy, STDs, substance abuse (Roxburgh, Degenhardt, Copeland, & Larance, 2008), and long-lasting trauma (Levy & Willis, 2002; Courtois, 2008; Heilemann 2008; Lui, 2009) are all frequently associated with sexual exploitation.

### *2.2.1 Physical Harm*

Literature shows that individuals engaged in prostitution experience a great deal of physical harm (Hunter, 1994; Farley, Baral, & Kiremire, 1998; Kidd & Kral, 2002). A qualitative study of women who have escaped prostitution revealed that 84% were victims of aggravated assault, 49% were kidnapped, and 53% were victims of sexual torture. This torture included being burned, gagged, hung, and mutilation of body parts (Hunter, 1994). Although these women were surveyed as adults, most were juveniles when they entered prostitution.

Williamson and Cluse-Tolar (2002) conducted a qualitative study with 21 women who were formerly prostitutes, ranging in ages from 18-35 years old. Six of the participants had pimps and these were selected for in-depth, face-to-face interviews. These women described intense violence used by their pimps as a form of intimidation. One woman described being “beaten until [she] blacked out” (p.1085). Another woman said that she was beaten in the face with a baseball bat and was too terrified of her pimp to press charges against him.

Another study conducted by Farley, et al. (1998), was administered across five countries (United States, Thailand, Turkey, Zambia, and South Africa) sampling 475 men, women, and transgendered individuals who were previously and currently engaged in prostitution. The ages of the participants from the United States ranged from 14-61 years old. The participants engaged in semi-structured interviews and were administered the Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) Checklist to determine if the participants exhibited symptoms of PTSD and to measure the severity of those symptoms. Of 475 individuals in the study, 73% reported being physically assaulted, 62% report being raped since entry into prostitution and of those 46% reported being raped more than five times (Farley, et al. 1998). The United States

and Zambia had the highest reported incidence of physical assault (both 82%) among all the sampled countries.

### *2.2.2 Psychological Harm*

Individuals who are sexually exploited fall victim to numerous psychological problems. Feelings of low self-worth, isolation, and rejection are typically the result of consistent physical and psychological abuse (Kidd & Kral, 2002). A meta-analysis conducted by Heilemann (2009) reviewed over 40 studies that explored various aspects of juvenile prostitution, including psychological consequences. An analysis of these studies found that, overall, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is reported in “72% to 96% of teenage prostitutes” (p.38).

Choi, Klein, and Chin, et al. (2009) studied the relationship between prostitution experiences, childhood sexual abuse, and PTSD and disorders of extreme stress not otherwise specified (DESNOS). In this study 46 women in Korea who engaged in prostitution were compared to 31 age-matched Korean women with no history of prostitution or sexual abuse. The participants were asked to complete questionnaires relating to childhood sexual abuse, experiences in captivity/coercive control, an Impact of Events Scale, a Somatic Experience Checklist, the Beck Hopeless Scale, the Dissociative Experiences Scale, and the Inventory of Altered Self-Capacities Scale. All scales were administered in Korean and a psychologist researcher remained with participants while they completed the scales. Prostitution was associated with “higher levels of PTSD re-experiencing and avoidance, somatization, identity problems, relational problems, and affect regulation problems as compared to women in the control group” (Choi, et al., 2009).

Low self-worth is another effect of involvement in prostitution. Kidd and Kral (2002) conducted a qualitative analysis of the narratives of 29 street youth. 74% of the males and 70% of the female participants had been or were currently involved in prostitution. Low self-worth was described by 74% of the participants and 64% described feelings of isolation. In particular,

participants described feelings of low self-worth relating to prostitution experiences, with many juveniles relating feelings of being nothing but an object for people to “get off on” (p. 415).

Depression (Heilemann, 2008) and suicide attempts are common within the population of sexually exploited youth. Kidd and Kral (2002) found that at least one suicide attempt was reported by 76% of their participants. Another study (Van Brunschot & Brannigan, 2002) compared a group of 42 female street prostitutes (39 *Caucasian*) to a group of 37 female college students. Snowball sampling was used to engage participants who were prostitutes over the years of 1990, 1991, and 1993. Ages of the female prostitutes ranged from 14 to 45 years, with a mean age of 22.6 years ( $SD = 6.0$  years). In-depth and open-ended interviews were conducted with the participants who were prostitutes, while a self-reflection questionnaire was administered to the comparison group. Both groups were asked questions relating to family structure, abuse experiences, parental abuse of drugs and alcohol, running away from home, school expulsion, and suicide attempts. Van Brunschot and Brannigan found that prostituted women were 6.8 times more likely to have attempted suicide than the comparison group.

### 2.3 Types of Juvenile Sexual Exploitation

Literature indicates that the sexual exploitation of youth falls on a continuum ranging from those at risk to those who are continuously exploited. Specifically, this study focuses on two identified types of juvenile sexual exploitation: pimp controlled prostitution and survival sex. “Pimp-controlled prostitution” (Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002, p. 1074), is defined as youth who are coerced or manipulated into prostitution by a peer or exploitative adult and subsequently exposed to violence and fear in order to keep them in the lifestyle. The other category of sexual exploitation, “exchange sex or survival sex,” is categorized as youth who use sex to “secure food, housing transportation, and other items of survival, in the absence of a pimp (Shared Hope International, 2009, p. 5; Pearce, 2006). According to federal law, although there is no pimp coercion involved in this form of sexual exploitation; the person who is engaging in sex with the minor is considered a sex trafficker (Shared Hope International, 2009).

Little research has focused on classifying the possible motivations for juveniles to remain in prostitution; however, Hwang and Bedford (2004) made efforts to empirically understand and categorize motivations for remaining in juvenile prostitution. Hwang and Bedford (2004) gathered qualitative data via interviews with 49 prostituted juveniles from two rehabilitation centers in Taiwan. These juveniles ranged from 13 to 28 years old with a mean age of 16.41. Two types of juvenile prostitution were identified as: "confined (indentured, kidnapped) prostituted juveniles" or "free prostituted juveniles" (Hwang & Bedford, 2004, p. 139). The youth in the latter category ("free prostituted juveniles") perceived themselves as having the option whether or not to remain in prostitution. In contrast, "confined prostituted juveniles are imprisoned, constantly watched while with customers, and allowed to go outdoors only when ill and need medical treatment" (p. 139).

Hwang and Bedford (2004) found that confined prostituted youth could be categorized into four phases that resulted in long-term enmeshment in prostitution: (1) resistance; (2) development of interpersonal connections; (3) self-injury, and loss of hope; and finally (4) acceptance of prostitution. The first stage, resistance, was characterized by the confined juvenile prostitutes feeling resentful of their physical and emotional exploitation and acting out violently towards their customers. During their time of confinement, the juveniles entered a second stage of enmeshment: development of interpersonal connections. During this stage, the juveniles began to change their view of the prostitution lifestyle and gave up violent protest. These juveniles even began to develop friendships with customers and other juveniles in prostitution. In the third stage, most confined juveniles fell into feelings of depression, hopelessness, and used drugs as a coping mechanism. Hopelessness was not a clearly defined aspect of the freed prostituted juveniles, but was a largely described as a reason for confined juveniles remaining in prostitution. In the last stage, acceptance, the confined juvenile prostitutes began to "accept prostitution as their destiny and see their way of living as easy



“(Hwang & Bedford, 2004, p. 143). Ninety-one percent of the confined juveniles reached this stage of enmeshment.

The confined prostituted juveniles could be compared to pimp-controlled sexually exploited youth in the United States, whereas the “free” prostituted juveniles could be compared to youth who engage in survival sex. Although both types of juvenile prostitution involve the sexual exploitation of children, the confinement and coercive control which was evident in the group of confined juvenile prostitutes in Hwang and Bedford’s (2004) study is similar to the violence, coercion, and control experienced by pimp-controlled juvenile prostitutes in the United States. The study by Hwang and Bedford supports the proposition that there may be differing motivations for remaining in prostitution depending on the type of prostitution a juvenile is involved in.

After an exhaustive review of the literature, several themes emerged as possible motivators for remaining in juvenile sexual exploitation: fear of harm, fear of loss of social supports, and fear of losing basic resources. These external factors help to form ideas about the internal motivations that hold sexually exploited youth in prostitution and motivations may differ with the type of sexual exploitation the juvenile is subjected to.

### *2.3.1 Motivations for Remaining in Prostitution: Survival Sex*

Literature stated that up to 90 % of sexually exploited youth have run away from home (Lukman, 2009). Many youth who runaway become sexually exploited through survival sex. These juveniles lack resources such as food, shelter, and transportation. Once they are alone on the street they are faced with very little options for survival; therefore, they may stay in prostitution in order to serve their needs for basic resource and emotional support. One child explains: “I would sell myself for the smallest things and sometimes it was the most important things, like just to get a place to sleep at night” (Shared Hope International, 2009, p. 5).

#### 2.3.1.1 Need for Basic Resources

In the study by Hwang and Bedford (2004), 73% of participants stated that financial and lifestyle reasons were the most important reason for remaining in prostitution. Free prostituted juveniles described a desire for material things such as clothes, transportation, and entertainment, feeling of freedom from "rigid, low-paying jobs" (p. 140), and positive peer support or friendships as reasons for remaining in prostitution. Although some customers were described as hateful, this group of juveniles stated that most clients were fairly respectful and didn't describe fear of physical harm. Youth who are exploited through survival sex may have perceptions that the only way to attain material needs and basic resources is through prostitution. Perhaps they fear that if they leave prostitution, they will lose these survival items such as food, shelter, and clothing.

#### 2.3.1.2 Need for Emotional Support

Emotional and social support seemed to be a large motivator for remaining in prostitution with 73% of the girls describing it as a major factor. "Clients, pimps, and friends in prostitution [supply] many juveniles with companionship, attention, affection, excitement, and a sense of accomplishment" (Hwang & Bedford, 2004, p. 140). Many participants in the Hwang and Bedford (2004) study described feelings of pride related to being liked by customers or being very popular on the street. In addition, many sexually exploited women report that they were infatuated with their pimps and saw them as a source of love and companionship (Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002). Positive feelings (of acceptance from pimp, peers, and johns) can psychologically enmesh the child in prostitution due to the fear of losing those perceived supports.

#### 2.3.2 *Motivations for Remaining in Prostitution: Pimp-Control*

An estimated 80% - 95% of prostitution is pimp-controlled (Farley, et al., 1998). Pimp-controlled prostitution is characterized by a trafficker/pimp building a romantic relationship with the child and subsequently coercing the child into sexual exploitation. Once the pimp/trafficker

establishes control over the child, the relationship becomes violent (Shared Hope International, 2009). Part of the domination established over the child is the fear of swift and brutal violence if the child does not comply with what the pimp/trafficker asks. One study describes the violence immediately following the violation of a pimp/trafficker's rules as being punched in the chest, having her ribs cracked, and being beaten in the head with a baseball bat (Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002). This type of systematic and continuous violence can cause intense and hopelessness in sexually exploited youth.

#### 2.3.2.1 Feelings of Hopelessness

The "confined-prostituted juveniles" in the Hwang and Bedford study (2004) described feelings of hopelessness, depression, then, finally acceptance of prostitution. One participant describes her realization that she could avoid beatings if she agreed to engage in prostitution with the customers. Although this group does not mention fear of harm explicitly, it is mentioned often as a contributing factor to feelings of hopelessness. Another juvenile who was "confined and prostituted" explains the role fear plays in sexual exploitation: "I finally realized that if I treated the customers nicely, the boss wouldn't beat me....I'd rather be nice and make my life easier." In sum, sexually exploited youth have a very real fear of physical harm, especially from pimps/traffickers, as a means to keep them involved in prostitution. Once a child believes that there is no escape, they may become hopeless at the thought of rescue. The violence associated with pimp-controlled prostitution is ruthless, causing not only severe physical harm to youth, but psychological harm as well.

#### 2.3.2.2 Fear of Physical Harm

Complex trauma has been linked to victimization through sexual exploitation because of its repetitive and violent nature (Courtois, 2008). Trauma reactions are more likely to occur when juveniles are subjected to high levels of violence via pimp-controlled prostitution. The emotional response of trauma is operationalized as "intense fear, helplessness, and horror" (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, p. 428). Helplessness and hopelessness are subtly

different: helplessness is seemingly short-term while hopeless is seems to be long-term and permeates a person's worldview (Beck, 1974). Because hopelessness and fear are common reactions during and after an ongoing traumatic event, pimp-controlled youth may be more likely to experience higher levels of fear and hopelessness.

#### 2.4 Conclusion of Literature Review

In conclusion, existing literature provides insight into the problem of sexual exploitation. Research indicated that most women enter prostitution as juveniles and identifies multiple factors that precede youth entering prostitution. Familial factors such as sexual abuse, physical abuse, placement in foster care, and parental substance abuse are highly correlated with juveniles entering prostitution. Personal factors such as poor psychological health and a discontinuous education are also associated with youth engaging in prostitution. In addition, literature identifies homelessness as the most important social factor proceeding youth entering into prostitution. Research shows the detrimental psychological impact sexual exploitation has on young women as well as the serious physical harm they endure.

Literature has examined the types of sexual exploitation and motivations for remaining in prostitution. Two types of sexual exploitation have been identified in research as survival sex and pimp-controlled prostitution. Each type of sexual exploitation may have different factors involved that keep youth enmeshed in the prostitution lifestyle. Motivations for participating in survival sex have been categorized mainly as engaging in prostitution because of a need for basic resources and a need for emotional support from peers. Once a youth is coerced into pimp controlled prostitution it seems that hopelessness and fear of physical harm serve as the reasons why youth cannot escape sexual exploitation.

Sexual exploitation is an important problem with far-reaching consequences for the individual and society at large. Sexual exploitation of individuals contributes to rates of PTSD, physical violence, criminal enterprises, and costs to the public sector. Most existing literature focuses on qualitative experiences of individuals who have been sexually exploited and shows

that a great deal of sexual exploitation begins in youth. Unfortunately, there is little quantitative data supporting the effectiveness of any intervention techniques with this population, particularly with juveniles involved in prostitution. Relapse after intervention is a common occurrence with sexually exploited individuals and indicates that research on more effective intervention techniques are necessary. Knowing more about the reasons why people remain in prostitution can assist in developing more effective interventions to help individuals get out of their exploitative situations. This study, examining the relationship between two types of sexual exploitation and fear and hopelessness, may help social workers in developing more effective interventions, policies, and practices to address this problem.

## CHAPTER 3

### SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY

This section summarizes social exchange theory and the nature of the exchange process. In addition, conditions that effect social exchange will be explored, especially those relating to the character of the relationship between exchange partners. Furthermore, exchange theory as it applies to sexual relationships will be addressed, including sexual exploitation by pimp control and as survival sex. Coercive power as a means of social control is also discussed. Social exchange theory applies to sexual exploitation due to the unbalanced power relationship that exists between a trafficker/pimp and a sexually exploited individual. Intrinsic and extrinsic rewards specific to the phenomena of sexual exploitation are described. Historical experiences of individuals also affect how they anticipate costs and benefits in the context of social interactions and exchanges.

Social exchange theory is characterized by “voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to receive and typically do receive from others” (Blau, 1964, p. 91). This theory was derived from the melding of utilitarianism and behaviorism and states that “an individual who supplies rewarding services to another obligates him (or her), and to discharge this obligation, the second person must furnish benefits to the first in return” (Blau, 1964, p. 89). Social exchange models have three basic suppositions “(1) Social behavior is a series of exchanges; (2) individuals attempt to maximize their rewards and minimize their costs; and (3) when individuals receive rewards from others, they feel obligated to reciprocate” (Spreecher, 1998). A basic exchange process is more concerned with external benefits than internal benefits. However, Blau (1964) reminds us that the extrinsic and intrinsic nature of interpersonal exchange can never be fully differentiated from one another. Blau stated that the most important way that social exchange differs from a basic economic exchange is an

unspecified obligation as the basis of social interactions. One person may give something to another; a favor, a kind word, social support or an actual material gift, and the reciprocation of this gift is not explicitly stated in the interaction, but is indeed expected in some form. Trust is the root force in social exchange theory. One person trusts the other to produce some form of reciprocation in the interaction.

Intimate human relationships, including sexual relationships are governed by exchange mechanisms (Van de Rijt & Macy, 2006). Sex and sexual favors are clearly supported in the literature as a resource used for exchange (Micheals, Acock, & Edwards, 1986; Van de Rijt & Macy, 2006; Marelich, et al., 2008) and there are many conditions that affect the course of this exchange. Blau states that “the character of the relationship between exchange partners, the nature of the benefits that enter into the transaction, the costs incurred, and the social context” (p. 97-98) all effect the nature of the exchange that takes place.

Various social exchange theorists propose different models to help explain the relevance of social exchange theory in sexual exchanges. Most appropriate to the population of individuals exploited through prostitution seems to be the outcome interdependence theory and invest model (Thibaut & Kelly, 1959). This model focuses on how an individual interprets their costs and benefits in the relationship rather than focusing on the equity and homeostasis of relational interaction. Key concepts of this theory are rewards, costs, comparison level, and comparison level for alternatives. According to Spreecher (1998) “Comparison level refers to one’s expectation of what one deserves in a relationship and is a standard for evaluating the relationship that develops based on past experiences. Comparison level for alternatives affects how dependent one feels on the relationship.” For instance, individuals may compare what they perceive as their costs and rewards in a current relationship to what they expect to receive from an alternative relationship. If an individual expects costs to be greater and benefits to be lower in alternative relationships, then the individual will be dependent on the current relationship. The pimp-prostitute relationship seems to exemplify this phenomenon. The individual exploited

through prostitution may expect alternative relationships to provide less benefit and require higher costs; therefore they become dependent on the current relationship with their pimp, trafficker, or exploiter.

Social Exchange theory can be used as a theoretical basis for the reasons individuals enter and remain in prostitution. Social exchange processes in sexual relationships are applicable to the prostitute client relationship (Sprecher, 1998) as well as the prostitute-pimp relationship. People engage with each other in ways that are available to them and can enhance rewards while minimizing cost (Cook & Rice, 2003). These rewards and costs can be explicit or implicit and can involve “trust, affect, and emotion” (Cook & Rice, 2003, p. 54) and play heavily into power relationships. Individuals who experience sexual exploitation through pimp control usually enter into the lifestyle after being lured into trusting a pimp/trafficker. After the individuals trusts the exploitative person, feelings of fear and hopelessness could be influential factors in keeping sexually exploited youth in prostitution. Fear and hopelessness are related to trauma (Staudenmayer & Selner, 1987; Classen, Koopman, & Spiegel, 1993) and post-traumatic stress disorder is common in “72% to 96% of teenage prostitutes” (Heilemann, 2009, p. 38). According to Cook and Rice (2003) “existing historical conditions are taken as a given” in this theory. In other words, “Values [of costs and benefits] are determined by a person’s history of reinforcement” (p. 54) and effect the way people interact with one another.

All conditions that affect the social exchange process affect the power relationship between two individuals engaged in an exchange. Coercive power can be gained through physical threat, at the most extreme, but can also be garnered through “negative sanctions” (Blau, 1964, p. 116), in other words, the threat of some type of loss. In addition, regular rewards can be used as an unspoken bartering tool in order to gain the particular type of reciprocity. Blau (1984) describes power as an individual’s ability to repeatedly command his/her will over another, and mentions that “punishment threatened for resistance, provided it is severe, makes this power a compelling force” (p. 117).



In regards to prostitution, costs and benefits may differ depending on the type of prostitution the individuals engages in. For instance, individuals who engage in exchange sex may find extrinsic rewards in the form of monetary gain, clothes, or food. These same individuals may also gain intrinsic rewards such as a feeling of belonging with others who are participating in similar activities. Individuals who may be involved in pimp controlled prostitution may have some cross-over with others engaged in exchange sex regarding their costs and benefits; however, some of these costs and benefits may differ dramatically. Coercive power is a typical tactic used in recruiting youth into engaging in pimp- controlled prostitution. "Negative sanctions" (Blau, 1964, p. 116) such as being ignored by the trafficker or threat of loss of affection and feelings of love and acceptance from trafficker may heavily impact an individual's ability to wield personal power and leave the exploitative relationship. Physical threats are another powerful tactic used to exert control over individuals who are sexually exploited. The cost of attempting to leave the trafficker/pimp could result in assault, rape, even death for the individuals being sexually exploited. The perceived benefit of remaining with the pimp/trafficker is the perception of safety, if only in the short term. Sexually exploited individuals have an extensive history of sexual, emotional, and physical abuse (Willis & Levy, 2002; Melrose, 2004; Cusick et al., 2003; Pearce 2006; Heilemann 2008; Shaffer & DeBlaisie, 1984). This population, due to the powerful reinforcement of previous experience, may feel that the cost of leaving the lifestyle (fear factors of harm, loneliness, lack of resources) is not worth the payoff (possibility of safety). In the experience of most sexually exploited individuals, they may feel that safety and happiness are unrealistic. Homans (1961) postulates that it is the anticipation of results of behavior that causes individuals to choose a particular action. If an individual anticipates feelings of love or belonging by staying with a pimp or anticipate criminalization and subsequent feelings of hopelessness if they disclose victimization; the individual will choose not disclose victimization to police or other social work professionals capable of intervening.

Personal historical experiences, such as sexual abuse, can shape perceptions of perceived costs and benefits in intimate personal relationships and sexual exchanges. Coercive power from an exploitative individual can play a large role in manipulating an individual's expectation of alternative relationship costs and benefits. Social exchange theory, particularly the outcome-interdependence theory and investment model, illuminate various reasons why women, especially young women, may enter and remain in the lifestyle of prostitution.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This study used cross-sectional design to examine the relationship between prostitution and the variables of hopelessness and fear. This study compared levels of hopelessness and fear between young women who have engaged in pimp-controlled prostitution versus survival sex. Most studies concentrate on preventative measures for young women that may be at risk for sexual exploitation. Since there is little research specific to young women who have already been sexually exploited; this study focused on young women who are already involved in sexual exploitation and seeks to understand the motivations for remaining in this lifestyle.

#### 4.2 Research Question and Hypothesis

This study addressed the following question: How do levels of fear and hopelessness differ across two kinds of prostitution (pimp-controlled v. survival sex)? This study hypothesized that individuals who have engaged in exploited pimp-controlled prostitution will have higher levels of fear and hopelessness compared to individuals who have engaged in survival sex alone. Specifically, the study hypothesized:

- (1) Women who are sexually exploited through pimp-controlled prostitution will have higher levels of fear than women who are exploited through survival sex alone.
  - a. Women who are sexually exploited through pimp-controlled prostitution will have higher levels of overall fear than women who are exploited through survival sex alone.

- b. Women who are sexually exploited through pimp-controlled prostitution will have higher levels of fear of loss of basic resources than women who are exploited through survival sex alone.
  - c. Women who are sexually exploited through pimp-controlled prostitution will have higher levels of fear of harm than women who are exploited through survival sex alone.
  - d. Women who are sexually exploited through pimp-controlled prostitution will have higher levels of fear of loss of social supports than women who are sexually exploited through survival sex alone.
- (2) Women who are sexually exploited through pimp-controlled prostitution will have higher levels of hopelessness than women who are exploited through survival sex alone.

#### *4.2.1 Independent Variables*

Type of prostitution was the independent variable. Pimp-controlled prostitution was defined as individuals who are forced, manipulated, coerced, or told by a pimp, trafficker, or any person close to them to exchange sex for money or goods. The High Risk Victim Survey, developed by the author, was used to measure if an individual engaged in pimp-controlled prostitution.

Survival sex/exchange sex was defined as individuals who have been sexually exploited without force or coercion from an outside person that benefitted from their exploitation. Survival or exchange sex typically involves an individual exchanging sexual favors for survival items such as food, clothing, money, a ride, or a place to stay at night. These individuals were still categorized as sexually exploited; however, they were not categorized as participating in pimp-controlled prostitution. The High Risk Victims Survey was used to determine if the youth were engaged in survival/exchange sex.

#### *4.2.2 Dependent Variables*

The two dependent variables in the study were fear and hopelessness. Fear was measured using the High Risk Victim Survey. Fear-related items existed on an ordinal 3-point Likert scale. These fears were grouped into three categories (a) fear of loss basic resources; (b) fear of loss of social supports; and (c) fear of harm. Participants were considered to be fearful if they score over 0 on any fear item. Hopelessness was defined as negative expectation about oneself and the future. Hopeless was measured by the Beck Hopelessness Scale (Beck, 1974). Higher scores on Beck Hopelessness Scale (Beck, 1974) reflected greater levels of hopelessness.

#### 4.3 Procedure

Approval to collect data for this study was obtained from Human Subjects (see Appendix D). Data were collected at two separate agencies, New Friends New Life and Nexus Recovery Center. New Friends New Life is an agency in the Dallas/ Ft. Worth area that enables women and their children to leave the sex-industry. Their programs include a women's program and a children and youth program. The women's program includes a Wednesday night support group, in which the women are served dinner, given life skills presentations, and then participate in a faith-based process group. Nexus Recovery Center is an inpatient drug treatment facility for women only. Nexus has various inpatient and outpatient programs, but only the inpatient program was sampled for the purposed of this project. Nexus Recovery Center receives referrals from the Dallas Prostitution Initiative, a Dallas program which gives women arrested for prostitution a choice to enter into drug treatment and counseling rather than going to jail.

Data were collected over a 6 month period, and thirty-four women were sampled. New Friends New Life allowed the primary investigator to access participants during their Wednesday night support group. Nexus allowed the primary investigator to access participants during Saturday visiting hours. An identification number was assigned to consent forms, the surveys, and the participants. One master list of identification numbers with corresponding

participant names was kept on a password locked computer. This information was available only to the researcher to ensure that all participants have appropriate documentation for their participation and to ensure their confidentiality.

All surveys were administered by the researcher. To collect data the researcher was introduced to the Wednesday night group at New Friends New Life. Each woman was given an opportunity to withdraw from participation in the survey at that time. The women were surveyed individually in an activity room in the agency. Instructions were given to participants to fill out surveys and questions were answered. Participants were allowed to discontinue the study at any time. If a participant became distressed as a result of completing the survey, the researcher provided referrals to appropriate counseling services within each agency. This occurred only once during the data collection process and an on-call staff was notified. New Friends New Life and Nexus had licensed counselors present at the time of data collection. The researcher collected the completed surveys and placed them in a sealed envelope to protect confidentiality. Completed surveys were stored in locked file cabinet in the office of the research committee chair after data entry. After the initial data collection session at New Friends New Life and Nexus Recovery Center, flyers gave information about the research study and contact information for the researcher if an individual was interested in participating.

#### 4.4 Measurement

Two measures, the High Risk Victim Survey and the Beck Hopelessness Scale (1974), were used to gather data. Demographic information was also collected from participants regarding age, gender, ethnicity, education level, and information about running away from home.

##### *4.4.1 Type of Sexual Exploitation*

Due to the lack of appropriate measures to assess motivations in sexually exploited individuals, the researcher developed The High Risk Victim Survey (HRVS, see Appendix A), specifically for this study. The HRVS was used to measure fear relating to prostitution. The

HRVS contained five demographic questions including one question regarding running away from home and one regarding educational attainment. Three main questions about sexual exploitation followed the demographic items to measure whether a sexual exchange occurred, if the participant was over or under the age of eighteen, and three subsections. The subsections measured (1) if an individual has exchanged sex for a particular item; (2) if this sexual exchange was pimp-controlled; and (3) the level of fear associated with this exchange. The questions on the HRVS measured the variables of type of sexual exploitation a participant engaged in and sought to measure the levels of fear associated with particular types of sexual exploitation.

If a participant responded to any item on the High Risk Victims Survey (HRVS Section B, item numbers 1-3, "I have exchanged sexual favors for...") with "Yes" that participant was assumed to have engaged in prostitution for that item. If the participant answered "No" on any item that participant was considered not to have engaged in prostitution for that item. Participants who answered "Yes" to the portion of any question 1-3 ("On any of these occasions did someone force, manipulate, or ask you to do the above activity for his/her benefit") were considered sexually exploited through pimp-controlled prostitution. Participants who indicated that they had engaged in prostitution but answered "No" to the portion of question 1-3 ("On any of these occasions, did someone force you to do the above activity for his/her benefits") were categorized as sexually exploited through survival/exchange sex.

Fear was measured in the HRVS. Eight items related to fear were placed under each of the three main questions. Each item asked the participants to rate their level of fear (0 = no fear, 1 = some fear, 2 = strong fear) as it related to each self-statement. These fears were grouped into three categories (1) fear of loss of basic resources; (2) fear of loss of social supports; and (3) fear of harm. The participant was considered to be fearful if she scored higher than zero on any fear item. Higher scores indicated higher levels of fear. Overall fear scores and fear sub-scores for the three fear categories were measured.

Reliability analysis was run on all fear scales and fear subscales (fear of harm, fear of loss of basic resources, and fear of loss of social supports). Reliability also was run for items of sexual exchange (for material items, basic resources, and drugs or alcohol). Cronbach's alpha was satisfactory ( $r = .70$  or higher) for 7 of 8 scales (material item overall fear  $r = .83$ , material item fear of harm  $r = .70$ , material item fear of loss of social support  $r = .7$ , material item fear of loss of basic resources  $r = .79$ , basic resource item overall fear  $r = .85$ , basic resource item fear of harm  $r = .78$ ). The subscale for the drug item fear of loss of social supports was dropped from analysis due to an unacceptable level of reliability ( $r = .54$ ). Cronbach's alpha was satisfactory for all other sexual exchange items (basic resource item fear of loss of social supports  $r = .73$ , basic resource item fear of loss of basic resources  $r = .83$ , drug item overall fear  $r = .88$ , drug item fear of harm  $r = .77$ , and drug item fear of basic resources  $r = .88$ ).

#### *4.4.2 Hopelessness*

Hopelessness is defined as negative expectation about oneself and the future. Higher scores on the Hopelessness Scale (Beck, Weissman, Lester, & Trexler, 1974) reflect greater levels of hopelessness.

The Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS) was used to measure the dependent variable of Hopelessness. This measure contains 20 True/False self-statements (see Appendix B). The BHS has been used in various clinical studies on depression and suicide, and focuses on three areas: (1) feelings about the future; (2) loss of motivation; and (3) future expectations" (Beck, et al., 1974). Internal reliability is considered high ( $Rkk = .87$  to  $.93$ ; Beck & Steer, 1988) and has acceptable levels of test-retest reliability ( $r = .69$ ; Beck & Steer, 1988). Scores are the number of items answered and range from 0-20, with higher scores reflecting greater hopelessness.

#### 4.5 Sampling

English speaking women, ages eighteen and over, were invited to participate in the study and asked to fill out the surveys. Women who did not self-identify as engaging in prostitution were not included in the sample.



Thirty-four women from two agencies were sampled over a 6 month period. At the time of data collection, participants ranged in age from 22 - 55 years old. The majority of participants sampled was Caucasian, had some high school education or completed high school, had run away from home, and had run away from home on an average of four occasions (see Table 1).

Table1 Demographic information

Age	M( <i>SD</i> )	
	37(8.43)	
Educational attainment	N(%)	
7 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	3(8.8)	
Some high school	11(32.4)	
Diploma/GED	11(32.4)	
Some college or trade school	8(23.5)	
Ethnicity	N(%)	
Black or African American	9(26.5)	
Caucasian	19(55.9)	
Hispanic	4(11.8)	
Other	1(2.9)	
Ran away from home	Yes	No
	26 (76.5)	8(23.5)
Number of runaway attempts	M( <i>SD</i> )	n/a
	3.74 (3)	
Age of first runaway attempt	M ( <i>SD</i> )	n/a
	12.71 (2.7)	

#### 4.6 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the participants in the study by ethnicity, age, grade completed, age of runaways, and number of runaways. Descriptive analysis created an understanding of the distribution of data. One way independent t-tests were used to measure differences between the two conditions in the independent variable (type of sexual exploitation) and the dependent variables (levels of fear and hopelessness).

## CHAPTER 5

### RESULTS

All participants in the study engaged in some form of sexual exchange for material items, survival items, drugs and alcohol, or a combination of these items. The most frequently reported sexual exchange items were material items such as money, clothes, etc. (see Table 2). As also shown on Table 2, over half of the sampled women reported being asked, manipulated, or forced into these sexual exchanges via pimp control. Furthermore, over half of the sampled women reported being under the age of 18 years old the first time they were sexually exploited either through pimp control or survival sex.

Table 2 Summary of sexual exploitation categories

Sexual exchange item	Women engaged in this activity	Women sexually exploited through pimp control	Women sexually exploited under 18
Material items	90.9%	61.3%	51.6%
Basic resources	73.5%,	61.8%,	61.8%,
Drugs or alcohol	85.3%,	52.9%,	62.1%,

### 5.1 Frequency Scores on Fear and Hopelessness Scales

Hopelessness scores ranged from 0-20 with higher scores indicating higher levels of hopelessness. Most women (n=12) fell in the range of severe hopelessness. On average, participants fell within the middle range of Hopelessness, with a great deal of variation. Participants had highest overall fear score, fear of harm scores, fear of losing basic resources, and fear of loss of social supports when they exchanged sex for survival items. Highest reported fear levels were fear of loss of basic resources regardless of the sexual exchange item (as shown in Table 3)

Table 3 Summary fear scores for all participants

Overall scale	
	M(SD)
Material items	.85(.57)
Survival items	1.03(.57)
Drug and alcohol	.83(.65)
Fear of harm scale	
Material items	.78(.67)
Survival items	.83(.69)
Drug and alcohol	.79(.72)
Basic resources scale	
Material items	1.11(.69)
Survival items	1.31(.67)
Drug and alcohol	1.02(.83)
Social supports scale	
Material item	.65(.71)
Survival items	.90(.75)
Drug and alcohol	.63(.70)

### 5.2 Hypothesis Testing

#### *5.2.1 Hopelessness*

Individuals who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control were hypothesized to exhibit higher levels of hopelessness than individuals who had been sexually exploited through

survival sex alone. A one-tailed independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare Hopelessness Scale scores in pimp control and survival sex conditions relating to sexual exchange for three different items: material items, survival items, and drugs or alcohol. Results (see Table 4) indicate that there are no statistically significant differences in Hopelessness scores for women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control and women who had been sexually exploited through survival sex for material items or survival items. However, women who were sexually exploited through pimp-control did exhibit higher levels of hopelessness when exchanging sex for drugs and alcohol than women who were sexually exploited through survival sex alone and all pimp controlled women showed higher average hopelessness scores on all items than women who were sexually exploited through survival sex.

Table 4 Hopelessness scale scores for women exploited through pimp control and women exploited through survival sex

Sexual exchange item	M (SD)		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Significance (one-tailed)
	Pimp control	Survival sex			
Material items	11.59(7.57)	8.08(6.93)	-1.29	27	.11
Survival items	10.95(7.08)	7.00(7.35)	-1.01	21	.17
Drugs or alcohol	12.50(6.92)	8.00(6.42)	-1.71	25	.05

### 5.2.2 Fear

Individuals who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control were hypothesized to exhibit higher levels fear than individuals who had been sexually exploited through survival sex

alone. Fear was measured on three subscales: (1) fear of loss of basic resources, (2) fear of loss of social supports, and (3) fear of physical harm. Independent t-tests were conducted comparing these groups on each item scale (material items, survival items, drug items). Independent t-tests were conducted to compare the two groups on overall fear as well as each item's fear subscales (fear of harm, fear of loss of social supports, fear of loss of basic resources).

#### 5.2.2.1 Overall Fear

Individuals who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control were hypothesized to exhibit higher levels of overall fear than individuals who had been sexually exploited through survival sex alone. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare overall fear scores related to exchanging sex for a material item in women who were sexually exploited through pimp-control and women who were sexually exploited through survival sex. Results (as shown on Table 5) indicate that there is no significant difference in overall fear score levels for women who have been sexually exploited through pimp control for material items and women who had been exploited through survival sex for materials items.

An independent t-test was conducted to compare overall fear scores related to exchanging sex for survival items (i.e. food, shelter, a ride) in women who were sexually exploited through pimp- control and women who were sexually exploited through survival sex. Results (see Table 5) indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in overall fear score levels relating to exchanging sex for survival items between the two groups. Women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control had higher overall all fear scores when exchanging sex for survival items than women who had been exploited through survival sex.

An independent t-test was conducted to compare overall fear scores related to exchanging sex for a drugs or alcohol in women who were sexually exploited through pimp-control and women who were sexually exploited through survival sex. Results (see Table 5)

indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in overall fear score levels relating to exchanging sex for drugs and alcohol between the two groups. Women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control had significantly higher overall fear scores when exchanging sex for drugs and alcohol than women who had been exploited through survival sex.

Table 5 'Overall fear' scores for women exploited through pimp control and women exploited through survival sex

Sexual exchange item	M(SD)		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Significance (one-tailed)
	Pimp control	Survival sex			
Material item	.93(.50)	.73(.67)	-.98	29	.17
Survival items	1.15(.53)	.38(.32)	-2.80	23	.005
Drugs or alcohol	1.01(.60)	.44(.57)	-2.70	26	.005

#### 5.2.2.2 Fear of Loss of Basic Resources

Individuals who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control were hypothesized to exhibit higher levels of fear of loss of basic resources than individuals who had been sexually exploited through survival sex alone. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare scores of fear of loss of basic resources when exchanging sex for a material item in women who had been exploited through pimp control and women who had been exploited through survival sex. These results (as shown on table 6) indicate that there is no significant difference in levels of fear of loss of basic resources when exchanging sex for a material item for women who have been exploited via pimp control and women who had been exploited via survival sex; although, results are trending toward significance with women who are pimp controlled showing a higher average fear of loss of basic resources score.

An independent t-test was conducted to compare scores of fear of loss of basic resources in women who had been sexually exploited through pimp control and women who had been sexually exploited through survival sex when exchanging sex for survival items (i.e. food, shelter, and a ride). These results (as shown on table 6) indicate scores of fear of loss of basic resources do not differ significantly for women who had been sexually exploited through pimp control and women who had been sexually exploited through survival sex when exchanging sex for basic resources (i.e. food, shelter, a ride); although, results are trending toward significance with women who are pimp controlled showing a higher average fear of loss of basic resources score.

An independent t-test was conducted to compare levels of fear of loss of basic resources as it related to exchanging sex for drugs or alcohol in women who were sexually exploited through pimp-control and women who were sexually exploited through survival sex. These results (as shown on table 6) indicated that there is no significant difference in levels of fear of loss of basic resources relating to exchanging sex for drugs of alcohol in women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control; although, results are trending toward significance with women who are pimp controlled showing a higher average fear of loss of basic resource score.

Table 6 'Fear of loss of basic resources' scores for women exploited through pimp control and women exploited through survival sex

Sexual exchange item	Mean fear of loss of basic resources score		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Significance (one-tailed)
	Pimp control	Survival sex			
Material item	1.17(.59)	1.00(.84)	-.68	29	.25
Survival items	1.40(.61)	.83(.88)	-1.58	23	.07
Drugs or alcohol	1.19(.78)	.73(.87)	-1.41	26	.09

### 5.2.2.3 Fear of Harm

Individuals who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control were hypothesized to exhibit higher levels of fear of harm than individuals who had been sexually exploited through survival sex alone. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare scores of fear of harm when exchanging sex for material items in women who had been sexually exploited through pimp control and women who had been exploited through survival sex. Results (as shown on table 7) indicate that there is a significant difference in levels of fear of harm (to self and family) when exchanging sex for material items for women who have been exploited via pimp control and women who have been exploited via survival sex. Women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control had higher fear of harm scores when exchanging sex for material items than women who had been exploited through survival sex.

An independent t-test was conducted to compare fear of harm scores as it relates to exchanging sex for survival items (i.e. food, shelter, a ride) in women who were sexually exploited through pimp- control and women who were sexually exploited through survival sex. Results (as shown on table 7) indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in fear of harm scores relating to exchanging sex for basic resources in women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control for basic resources and women who had been sexually exploited through survival sex for basic resources. Women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control had higher fear of harm scores when exchanging sex for basic resources than women who had been exploited through survival sex.

An independent t-test was conducted to compare fear of harm scores as it related to exchanging sex for a drugs or alcohol in women who were sexually exploited through pimp-control and women who were sexually exploited through survival sex. Results (as shown on table 7) indicate that there is a statistically significant difference in fear of harm scores relating to exchanging sex for drugs and alcohol in women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control and women who sexually exploited through survival sex. Women who had been



sexually exploited through pimp-control had higher fear of harm scores when exchanging sex for drugs and alcohol than women who had been exploited through survival sex.

Table 7 'Fear of harm' scores for women exploited through pimp control and women exploited through survival sex

Sexual exchange item	M(SD)		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	Significance (one-tailed)
	Pimp control	Survival sex			
Material item	.96(.62)	.50(.67)	-1.97	29	.03
Survival items	.97(.67)	.08(.17)	-2.60	23	.01
Drugs or alcohol	1.06(.61)	.30(.67)	-3.03	26	.005

#### 5.2.2.4 Fear of Loss of Social Support

Individuals who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control were hypothesized to exhibit higher levels of fear of loss of social supports than individuals who had been sexually exploited through survival sex alone. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare levels of fear of loss of social supports when exchanging sex for material items in women who had been sexually exploited through pimp- control and those that had been sexually exploited through survival sex. Results (as shown on table 8) indicate that there is no significant difference in levels of fear of loss of social support when exchanging sex for material items in women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control and women who had been exploited through survival sex.

An independent t-test was conducted to compare fear of loss of social support score as it related to exchanging sex for survival items (i.e. food, shelter, a ride) in women who were sexually exploited through pimp- control and women who were sexually exploited through survival sex. Results (as shown on table 8) indicate that there is a statistically significant

difference in fear of loss of social support score levels relating to exchanging sex for survival items in women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control for basic resources and women who had been sexually exploited through survival sex for survival items. Women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control had significantly higher fear of loss of social support scores when exchanging sex for material items than women who had been exploited through survival sex.

No independent t-test was conducted to compare fear of loss of social supports as it relates to exchanging sex for drugs or alcohol in women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control and women who had been sexually exploited through survival sex. The subscale for the drug item fear of loss of social supports was dropped from analysis do to an unacceptable level of reliability ( $r=.54$ ).

Table 8 'Fear of loss of social supports scores for women exploited through pimp control and women exploited through survival sex

Sexual exchange item	M(SD)		t	df	Significance (one-tailed)
	Pimp control	Survival sex			
Material item	.68(.67)	.58(.79)	-.38	29	.36
Survival items	1.05(.72)	.13(.25)	-2.49	23	.01
Drugs or alcohol*					

*\*This item was dropped from analysis*

Exploratory analysis was conducted in order to compare levels of hopelessness, overall fear, fear of harm, fear of loss of basic resources, and fear of loss of social supports for women who were sexually exploited over the age of 18 and women who were sexually exploited under the age of 18. No significance results were found in any independent t-tests when comparing women who reported being exploited under the age of 18 years old and over the age of 18 years old on any scale or subscale.

## CHAPTER 6

### DISCUSSION

General outcomes of this study showed some statistically significant differences between women exploited through pimp controlled prostitution versus women exploited through survival sex. This is consistent with literature by Hwang and Bedford (2004) which found that juvenile prostitutes that were identified as "confined (indentured, kidnapped) prostituted juveniles" reported different experiences than "free prostituted juveniles" (p. 139). The youth in first category, "confined prostituted juveniles." were likened to pimp-controlled sexually exploited youth in the United States, whereas the "free" prostituted juveniles could be compared to youth who engage in survival sex. Although both types of juvenile prostitution involve the sexual exploitation of children, the confinement and coercive control which was evident in the group of confined juvenile prostitutes in Hwang and Bedford's (2004) study is similar to the violence, coercion, and control experienced by pimp-controlled juvenile prostitutes in the United States. When women were exploited through pimp-controlled prostitution, they showed higher levels of overall fear as well as higher levels of fear of harm when exchanging sex for survival items and drug and alcohol than women who were sexually exploited through survival sex alone.

Women who were sexually exploited through pimp-control were hypothesized to have higher levels of hopelessness than women who were sexually exploited through survival sex; and statistically significant differences were found between participants who were exploited via pimp control and participants who were exploited via survival sex on levels of hopelessness. Women who are pimp-controlled were showed significantly higher levels of hopelessness when exchanging sex for drugs or alcohol. Results indicated hopelessness scores do not differ significantly for women who had been sexually exploited through pimp control and women who had been sexually exploited through survival sex when exchanging sex for basic resources or

material items; although, results are trending toward significance with women who are pimp controlled showing a higher average hopelessness scores. It is important to note that all participants did score within the range of intense hopelessness. Existing literature (Hwang & Bedford, 2004) indicate that levels of hopelessness differ regarding the type of sexual exploitation a youth is involved in. The current study may show differing results than that of the Hwang and Bedford study due to nature of sexual exploitation in the United States versus Taiwan. As stated earlier, the prostituted juveniles in Taiwan may be likened to prostituted juveniles in the United States in some respects, but may differ in others. The contradictory findings may be a result of various cultural differences between these groups, or differences in the overall experiences of sexually exploited individuals in each country or may be a result of a small sample size. Perhaps if a larger sample were collected, the results trending towards significance would be detected.

In general all participants reported fearfulness. There were no significant differences in levels of fear of loss of basic resources when exchanging sex for any item (material item, survival item, or drugs or alcohol) for women who have been exploited via pimp control and women who had been exploited via survival sex; however, results are trending toward significance with women who are pimp-controlled exhibiting a higher average score of fear of loss of basic resources. Highest average reported fear levels for participants overall were fear of loss of basic resources regardless of the sexual exchange item. These results indicated that perhaps women who have experienced prostitution in any respect have similar levels of fear of losing survival items, but women who are pimp controlled generally show higher levels of fear of harm as compared to women who are sexually exploited through survival sex alone. Literature indicates that most individuals enter prostitution at a young age (Heilemann, 2008; The Hofstede Committee Report, 1999) and that the most significant reason youth enter prostitution is homelessness (United States Congress, s.2529 bill, 2009; Lukman, 2009; Nandon, et al., 1998; Shared Hope International, 2009). Being homeless is largely considered a lack of the

necessary resources for survival. Since homelessness is found to be the most significant reason for women entering prostitution, it is fair to assume that these individuals have great fear of not attaining necessary survival items (i.e. food & shelter) regardless of the type of sexual exploitation engaged in (pimp-control or survival sex

In addition, the lowest reported fear levels for participants overall were fear of loss of social supports. Perhaps women who remain in prostitution over a long period of time become more isolated and social supports are non-existent. After all, individuals are typically not fearful of losing something they do not feel they possess. Furthermore, if the sample of individuals who were sexually exploited were younger in age, they may show higher levels of fear of loss of social supports, since adolescents typically highly value peer support and acceptance.

No significance results emerged when comparing women who reported being exploited under the age of 18 years old and women who reported being sexually exploited over the age of 18 years old on any scale or subscale. Fear and hopelessness, then, may be a by-product of sexual trauma regardless of the age that the trauma occurs. Literature shows that sexually traumatic events occur in a wide age range of individual who have been sexually exploited (Farley, et al.,1998; Choi, Klien, & Chin, 2009 ; Kidd & Kral, 2002); therefore, the age at which an individual engages in sexual exploitation may have little bearing on the levels of fear or hopelessness that the individual experiences.

Consistent with the literature (Shared Hope International, 2009), many participants were sexually exploited through pimp-control prostitution. Previous findings in the area of prostitution indicate that only few women enter into prostitution of their own free will (Liedholt, 2003). Results from the current study's data analysis indicated that a little over half of the women sampled consider themselves to be acting on their own free will. In addition, the majority of research indicates that women who engage in prostitution began at ages younger than 18 years old (Heilemann, 2008; The Hofstede Committee Report; 1999). Results from this research indicate that only a little over half of the women sampled in this study reported engaging in

sexual activity below the age of 18 years old and the average age of running away from home was reported to be approximately 13 years old. Consistent with the existing literature (Lukman, 2009) the majority of women sampled reported running away from home at a young age. The results of runaway questions were found to support existing claims in the literature (United States Congress, s.2529 bill, 2009; Lukman, 2009; Nandon, et al., 1998; Shared Hope International, 2009) that running away from home is highly correlated with engaging in prostitution as a juvenile.

Overall, levels of fear did differ significantly between women who were pimp-controlled and women who had been sexually exploited through survival sex. This is consistent with qualitative interviews (Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002) with women who state that they are extremely fearful to leave prostitution if they have a pimp. Women who had been sexually exploited through pimp-control had higher fear of harm scores when exchanging sex for material items, survival items, and drugs or alcohol than women who had been exploited through survival sex. These results indicate that the presence of a “pimp” greatly increases the level of fear of harm women experience when engaging in prostitution. Furthermore, literature indicates that individuals who are exploited by force, through pimp control, report a great deal of physical harm (Williamson & Cluse-Tolar, 2002; Hwang & Bedford, 2004) and it is logical that they fear harm from their exploiters more readily because they have already experienced frequent violence from these individuals.

### 6.1. Social Exchange Theory

In the context of prostitution, sex is a resource used for exchange and this study supports this theoretical notion. Participants in this study used sex as a tool to garner basic resources needed for survival. Threat of loss, a.k.a. negative sanctions (Blau, 1964), are theorized to affect the exchange relationship in Social Exchange Theory. Participants reported highest levels of fear regarding losing basic resources as overall reasons for engaging in a sexual exchange; therefore, negative sanctions appeared to motivate participants to participate

in prostitution (a sexual exchange process). Loss of safety, (a.k.a. fear of harm) also seems to support Blau's idea that coercive power, through physical threat from pimps, strongly affects social exchange relationships.

The Outcome Interdependence Theory and Investment Model (Thibaut & Kelly, 1959) of Social Exchange Theory focused on "perceived costs" and "perceived rewards." The participants in the current study perceived the rewards from the sexual exchange of survival items, materials items, and drugs or alcohol to be worth the cost of the sexual exchange. The idea that homeostasis or equality in the nature of the exchange relationship is less important than the perception of costs and benefits is supported in this study's results. Although the nature of prostitution is exploitative, the women did not seem to perceive the costs of fear to be an important factor compared to the benefit of the reward item received for the sexual exchange. Perhaps this is because the women involved in prostitution typically have a great deal of trauma history (Willis & Levy, 2002; Melrose, 2004; Cusick et al., 2003; Pearce, 2006; & Heilemann, 2008) and this trauma history influences current perception of costs and rewards.

## 6.2 Limitations

The most important limitation of the study is its sample size. Due to various agency constraints, there was difficulty in gaining access to the primary population intended to be surveyed at the beginning of this research. The lack of funding for the study precluded using an incentive to help recruit participants. Due to the small sample, this study's findings may not be generalizable to the larger population of women who are sexually exploited. When interpreting the results of the analysis, it is important to note that these results may then only be applicable to samples of women in the Dallas area who are in treatment programs. Furthermore, due to small sample size some significant findings may not have discovered when they were present.

A second limitation of the study is that retrospective nature of the questionnaire. Adult women were asked to reflect back on their experiences with prostitution and report feelings based on the first time they experienced prostitution. Recalling past events can be influenced by

a variety of experiences that occurred between the time of the actual event and the recall of that event and literature has shown that it is difficult to capture a reliable snapshot of childhood experiences in particular (Brewin, Andrews, & Gotlib, 1993) Although participants were asked to recall how they felt at the time of the incident of sexual exploitation, it may have been difficult for them to differentiate current feelings of hopelessness and fear from past feelings of hopelessness and fear, possibly causing the scale to be unreliable in its attempt to capture how the women felt at the time of the incident.

Another limitation of the study relates to the recruitment location of the research participants. All the women sampled in the current study were adults and either in inpatient, acute recovery centers or long-term recovery programs. The sample was taken from two separate agencies, whose typical demographic may differ from the majority of prostituted women. The first agency, New Friends, New Life serves women that are in recovery from the sex industry. These women may exhibit higher levels of resiliency than the general population of sexual exploited women who have not sought treatment and joined recovery support groups. The second agency, Nexus Recovery Center, is a drug rehab facility for women. These women have typically been picked up from areas such as truck stops in the DFW metroplex and given the opportunity to choose drug rehabilitation over jail time. Typically prostituted women who work at truck stops have been causally reported to be of older age than other areas of prostitution.

The instrument (High Risk Victim Survey) used in this study was created by the principle investigator due to lack of existing appropriate measures. The High Risk Victim Survey was developed in order to measure if an individual engaged in pimp controlled prostitution. Pimp controlled prostitution was defined as individuals who are “forced, manipulated, coerced, or told” by another person to exchange sexual activity for the other persons benefit. The aim of this definition of a pimp was to garner responses from those that may be sexually exploited through pimp-control but may not consider their boyfriend, spouse, friend, or parent to be a



“pimp.” Although this definition inclusive of boyfriends, spouses, or family members who may be the perpetrators of sexual exploitation, it may have been confusing for respondents and a more clear operational definitions of a “pimp” may need to be developed through qualitative research techniques. Using an instrument that is not validated invites caution when interpreting the results; however, preliminary psychometric testing of the created measure was completed and the measure shows promise. Further work is needed with larger sample sizes to test the reliability and validity of the High Risk Victim Survey.

### 6.3 Implications for Future Social Work Practice

This study provides some preliminary support for helping women who are engaging in survival sex obtain basic resources while women who are engaged in pimp- controlled prostitution may need more complex interventions based on a variety of needs including interpersonal violence interventions. Social work agencies and therapists should focus on the specific needs of each type (pimp-controlled or survival sex) of sexually exploited individuals when providing services. Women who are pimp controlled reported high levels of fear of harm while women who were not pimp controlled reported highest fear of losing basic resources. Providing services based on alleviating these fears may improve the outcomes of practical interventions.

### 6.4 Implication for Future Social Work Research

Sexually exploited individuals are an understudied population; therefore, studies with larger sample sizes are needed to guide social work practice. In addition to a lack of research, there is a lack of research investigating theoretical constructs which are needed to develop best practice interventions. Furthermore, since this is an understudied population, research should focus on studying differences between two types of sexual exploitation in younger samples in order to identify directions for appropriate intervention. Gaining access to this population proves challenging; however, capturing juvenile experiences is crucial for the development of successful interventions.

Future research studies should focus on specific and targeted intervention efforts toward women who are pimp-controlled (i.e. interventions focused on protection and personal safety). Women who engage in survival sex alone may have more successful intervention techniques when focusing on providing survival needs and basic resources. These assumptions could be tested through applying intervention techniques that differ based on type of sexual exploitation and measuring long-term outcomes such as recidivism rates.

In addition, a more succinct operational definition of what it means to be “pimp-controlled” is necessary for moving forward with quantitative and qualitative studies regarding sexual exploitation. It is possible that the definition of a pimp differs among individuals sexual exploited through prostitution, the general population, and professionals who work with individuals who are sexually exploited. Perhaps qualitative focus group research may be useful in defining the characteristics of a pimp. These focus groups could include professionals, the general population, and individuals who are exploited through prostitution. Qualitative coding would be useful to identify possible differing perceptions between these groups.

#### 6.5 Policy Implications

Understanding the similarities and differences for individuals who have been sexually exploited is necessary in order to inform appropriate policy decision on local, state, and federal levels. Local policy in Dallas (Dallas Prostitution Initiative) is an example of a model intervention by arresting women who are prostitutes and providing social work intervention on site. At the time of arrest, Dallas Prostitution Initiative gives the option of drug treatment over jail time. While this policy is a step in the right direction, this research indicates that sexual exploitation is more complex than drug and alcohol addiction issues, because it involves high levels of physical and emotional trauma. In addition, social issues such as homelessness and lack of basic resources are factors that influence the occurrence of sexual exploitation. Policy makers may want to push for higher levels of funding aimed at providing basic resources to sexually exploited individuals once they are removed from the prostitution environment. In addition,

understanding the high levels of fear pimp-controlled women experience, perhaps policies aimed at protecting women who experience domestic violence can also be applied to individuals who are being sexually exploited such as harsher punishments for those considered to be pimps.

Most importantly, recognizing that homeless youth are in need of basic resources and counseling in order to prevent the hopelessness and fear that influence the onset of prostitution. Therefore, policy should focus on implementing programs that prevent youth using prostitution as a means to gain basic resources such as job, housing, or education programs.

### 6.5 Conclusion

Sexual exploitation is an immense problem with ramifications for the individual and society at large. History of family violence and abuse, poor psychological health, and homelessness are all common factors to individuals preceding entrance into prostitution and once individuals enter prostitution they experience a range of severe violence and trauma leading to poor outcomes in adulthood. There is little quantitative data supporting the effectiveness of any intervention techniques with this population, particularly with juveniles. This study examined the relationship between two types of sexual exploitation and fear and hopelessness in order to assist in developing more effective interventions, policies, and practices to address this problem. This study provides preliminary data on differences between types of prostitution that warrant further study in order to develop effective theory based intervention.

Most importantly, study results indicate that women who reported experiencing pimp-control have higher levels of fear of physical harm to themselves and their families. Understanding the influence that fear of harm has on individuals who are sexually exploited can more accurately inform social work policy, practice, and research. By focusing on the unique needs of the population of sexually exploited individuals and developing targeted interventions

that utilize data driven theoretical constructs, social workers can provide a framework for effective interventions for the most vulnerable of populations.

APPENDIX A

HIGH RISK VICTIM SURVEY

(Section A) These questions ask you for basic information about yourself.

1. What is your Date of Birth?

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your Gender (Sex)?

- Male
- Female

3. What is your race or ethnicity?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)

4. Have you ever run away from home? Please circle YES NO

How many times have you run away from home? \_\_\_\_\_  
How old were you the first time you ran away from home? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is the last grade you completed? \_\_\_\_\_

(Section B)

For the following questions think of times you engaged in these activities.

Please circle True or False.

- Before I was 18 years old I had exchanged sexual favors for: Material things (such as cell phones, CD's, TV, shoes, or clothes, etc.) or Money (if you did not engage in this activity before you were 18 please write the age you were when this happened: \_\_\_\_).

True False







If I didn't do this...	#
I was afraid the person who forced/told me to do this would hurt <i>my family</i> .	
I was afraid the person who forced/told me to do this would hurt <i>me</i> .	
I was afraid the person who forced/ told me to do this wouldn't love me.	
I was afraid I would have to return to an abusive family member's home.	
I was afraid I would have no place to live.	
I was afraid I would have no food.	
I was afraid I wouldn't have any friends.	
I was afraid I would have no money to take care of myself.	

APPENDIX B

BECK HOPELESSNESS SCALE

Please circle the response (True/False) that most closely fits your opinion of whether the sentence is not like you.

1. I look forward to the future with hope and enthusiasm.	True	False
2. I might as well give up because I can't make things better for myself.	True	False
3. When things are going badly, I am helped by knowing they can't stay that way forever.	True	False
4. I can't imagine what life would be like in 10 years.	True	False
5. I have enough time to accomplish things I most want to do.	True	False
6. In the future I expect to succeed in what concerns me most.	True	False
7. My future seems dark to me.	True	False
8. I expect to get more of the good things in life than the average person.	True	False
9. I just don't get the breaks, and there's no reason to believe I will in the future.	True	False
10. My past experiences have prepared me well for the future.	True	False
11. All I can see ahead of me is unpleasantness rather than pleasantness.	True	False
12. I don't expect to get what I really want.	True	False
13. I never get what I want, so it's dumb to want anything.	True	False
14. Things just won't work out the way I want them to.	True	False
15. I have great faith in the future.	True	False
16. I never get what I want so it's foolish to want anything.	True	False
17. It is very unlikely that I will get any real satisfaction in the future.	True	False
18. The future seems vague and uncertain to me.	True	False
19. I can look forward to more good times than bad times.	True	False
20. There's no use in really trying to get something I want because I probably won't get it.	True	False

APPENDIX C

FLYER

### RESEARCH STUDY ON SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Domestic sexual exploitation of children and adolescence is a growing public health, social, and criminal problem. The goal of this research project is to learn more about the experiences of sexually exploited youth.



Do you feel you were sexually exploited as a young person? Do you have an interest in participating in this study?

(You must be 18 years or older and English speaking in order to participate)

If so, please contact:

Ashley Martin

MSSW candidate at The University of Texas at Arlington

(214) 674-0798

[astaffordssw@gmail.com](mailto:astaffordssw@gmail.com)

APPENDIX D

HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL LETTER



July 22, 2011

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### EXPEDITED APPROVAL OF HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH

**IRB No.:** 2011-0423  
**TITLE:** *Fear and Hopelessness in Two Types of Sexually Exploited Youth*  
**Effective Date:** July 18, 2011  
**Expiration Date:** July 17, 2012

**Approved Number of Participants: 90 (Do not exceed without prior IRB approval).**

The University of Texas Arlington Institutional Review Board (UTA IRB) has made the determination that this research protocol involving human subjects is eligible for expedited review in accordance with Title 45 CFR 46.110(a)-(b)(1), 63 FR 60364 and 63 FR 60353, category (7). The IRB Chairman (or designee) approved this protocol effective July 18, 2011. IRB approval for the research shall continue until July 17, 2012.

#### APPROVED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:

This protocol has been approved for enrollment of a maximum of 90 participants and is not to exceed this number. If additional data are needed, the researcher must submit a modification request to increase the number of approved participants **before** the additional data are collected. Exceeding the number of approved participants is considered an issue of non-compliance and will result in the destruction of the data collected beyond the approval number and will be subject to deliberation set forth by the IRB.

#### INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT:

The IRB approved and stamped informed consent document (ICD) showing the approval and expiration date must be used when prospectively enrolling volunteer participants into the study. The use of a copy of any consent form on which the IRB-stamped approval and expiration dates are not visible, or are replaced by typescript or handwriting, is prohibited. The signed consent forms must be securely maintained on the UT Arlington campus for the duration of the study plus a minimum of three years after the completion of all study procedures (including data analysis). The complete study record is subject to inspection and/or audit during this time period by entities including but not limited to the UT Arlington IRB, Regulatory Services staff, OHRP, and by study sponsors (if the study is funded).

#### MODIFICATION TO AN APPROVED PROTOCOL:

Pursuant to Title 45 CFR 46.103(b)(4)(iii), investigators are required to, "promptly report to the IRB **any** proposed changes in the research activity, and to ensure that such changes in approved research, during the period for which IRB approval has already been given, are **not initiated without prior IRB review and approval** except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject." Modifications include but are not limited to:

BeAMaverick 71

Changes in protocol personnel, number of approved participants, and/or updates to the protocol procedures or instruments and must be submitted via the electronic submission system. Failure to obtain approval for modifications is considered an issue of non-compliance and will be subject to review and deliberation by the IRB which could result in the suspension/termination of the protocol.

**ANNUAL CONTINUING REVIEW:**

In order for the research to continue beyond the first year, a Continuing Review must be completed via the online submission system within 30 days preceding the date of expiration indicated above. A reminder notice will be forwarded to the attention of the Principal Investigator (PI) 30 days prior to the expiration date. Continuing review of the protocol serves as a progress report and provides the researcher with an opportunity to make updates to the originally approved protocol. Failure to obtain approval for a continuing review will result in automatic *expiration of the protocol* all activities involving human subjects must cease immediately. The research will not be allowed to commence by any protocol personnel until a new protocol has been submitted, reviewed, and approved by the IRB. Per federal regulations and UTA's Federalwide Assurance (FWA), there are no exceptions and no extensions of approval granted by the IRB. The continuation of study procedures after the expiration of a protocol is considered to be an issue of non-compliance and a violation of federal regulations. Such violations could result in termination of external and University funding and/or disciplinary action.

**ADVERSE EVENTS:**

Please be advised that as the principal investigator, you are required to report local adverse (unanticipated) events to The UT Arlington Office of Research Administration; Regulatory Services within 24 hours of the occurrence or upon acknowledgement of the occurrence.

**HUMAN SUBJECTS TRAINING:**

All investigators and key personnel identified in the protocol must have documented Human Subjects Protection (HSP) training or CITI Training on file with The UT Arlington Office of Research Administration; Regulatory Services. Completion certificates are valid for 2 years from completion date.

**COLLABORATION:**

If applicable, approval by the appropriate authority at a collaborating facility is required prior to subject enrollment. If the collaborating facility is *engaged in the research*, an OHRP approved Federalwide Assurance (FWA) may be required for the facility (prior to their participation in research-related activities). To determine whether the collaborating facility is engaged in research, go to: <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/assurance/engage.htm>



**CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS:**

The UT Arlington Office of Research Administration; Regulatory Services appreciates your continuing commitment to the protection of human research subjects. Should you have questions or require further assistance, please contact Robin Dickey at [robind@uta.edu](mailto:robind@uta.edu) or you may contact the office of Regulatory Services at 817-272-3723.

Sincerely,

Patricia Turpin

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## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Ashley Martin graduated from the University of North Texas with a B.A. in Psychology in 2007. Her research interests include trauma, sexual violence, and child abuse and neglect. She has worked on various research initiatives for the Texas Prevention Institute at the University of North Texas Health Science Center focusing on prevention of chronic disease in minority populations. She currently lives in Dallas, Texas with her husband, Kirk and her greyhound, Hammy. She enjoys African and Hip-Hop dancing.