

A Globalized Problem: Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation, A Violation of Human Rights: A Systematic Review

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The objective of this research was to identify and analyze a literary review of the best scientific evidence currently available on this new form of slavery, as well as the legal situation of victims of human trafficking in various databases published in high-impact journals. between 2016 and 2023. The methodology used was a systematic and reliable review through analysis of secondary sources in the following databases: Scopus, Scielo, Web of Science Group, Dialnet, Ebsco and Redalyc. It was free and available in Spanish for the last six years. The terms were filtered: “human trafficking”, “trafficking in human beings”, “sexual rape” and “human rights violation”.

On the other hand, in applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, articles that were published after 2016 and were not available for free download were selected and discarded.

It is relevant to highlight that 35 studies of this phenomenon were obtained, of which only 13 met the strict inclusion criteria; The analysis and discussion of each article also highlighted the importance of generating global awareness to prevent this form of crime against human beings, which threatens the full enjoyment of fundamental human rights and respect for their dignity.

Keywords: human trafficking, sexual exploitation, slavery, human rights.

1. Introduction

In the global context, human trafficking is regarded as a contemporary manifestation of slavery. Despite the various measures adopted by states to combat this heinous crime against humanity, the situation has become alarming in recent years and requires urgent attention, a sum of coordinated efforts, and concrete global responses. In this context, the International Labor Organization (ILO) has indicated that by 2021, 49.6 million individuals will be living in conditions of modern slavery, of whom 27.6 million will be in forced labor and 22 million in forced marriages. It is also important to note that 17.3 million of the 27.6 million people in forced labor are exploited in the private sector. It is estimated that 6.3 million individuals will be subjected to sexual exploitation. Concurrently, the United Nations Office on Drugs and

Crime (UNODC, 2023) has indicated that, in Peru, according to data provided by the Public Prosecutor's Office, during the period spanning 2021 and the first half of 2022, In 2022, the national prosecutorial treatment agencies provided assistance to a total of 3,525 victims, 43% of whom were foreign nationals. Notably, a significant proportion of these victims were of Venezuelan, Ecuadorian, and Colombian nationality. It is imperative to address this pervasive issue and uphold the fundamental rights, ensure the safety, and promote the well-being of those affected.

Accordingly, data provided by the Directorate Against Illicit Trafficking in Persons and Migrants (DIRCTPTIM) indicate that during the months of January to October 2022, a total of 425 victims of Venezuelan nationality were assisted and rescued in Lima, of whom 28 were children and 397 were adults.

As indicated by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI), the data on human trafficking in Peru is cause for concern. During the initial six months of 2023, the Peruvian National Police (PNP) documented 197 reports, which represents a troubling trend. It is noteworthy that 90% of the alleged victims are women, which underscores a troubling vulnerability in our society.

However, the authors Al-Tammemi, Nadeem, Kutkut, Ali, Angawi, and Abdallah noted that traffickers may employ a variety of means and strategies to maintain control over their victims and exploit them for a range of purposes, with forced labor and sexual exploitation being the most prevalent. In order to effectively combat trafficking, it is essential that a unified global campaign is initiated, with the protection of victims, the prosecution of traffickers, and the prevention of this crime serving as guiding principles.

In terms of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), it is now regarded as the foundation of international standards, providing inspiration and assistance in the development of related international treaties, and emphasizing the day when all human beings were born free, honorable, and equal in their rights.

A highly complex picture of this situation emerges, according to Yuliartini and Mangku, who determined that the unjust treatment of people constitutes an extraordinary crime that, in some way, violates human rights by attempting to infringe on their dignity. To address this criminal phenomenon, it is essential that the government prioritizes a multifaceted approach, targeting the underlying causes and contributing factors. This necessitates a comprehensive strategy that begins with law enforcement, socialization, and the protection of victims' rights against criminal acts involving the gross violation of human rights.

It is imperative to underscore that the trafficking of persons is a matter that necessitates the attention of states, with due consideration given to the imperative of promoting, defending, and safeguarding the fundamental human rights of victims, which are indispensable for the continuity of their life projects.

2. Methodology

For the present research work, the method used was a systematic review study of scientific production related to the topic, starting with an exhaustive search of the information and

review of the literature in indexed journals in Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa in different digital repositories, during the period from 2016 to December 2023.

Study design and site

It was carried out by means of a systematic review of articles of scientific production, whose content included: name of the author(s), year, title, source, DOI and references. Data collection began in January 2023 and the research work was completed in April 2024.

Eligibility Criteria

Types of participants: Academic studies concerning human trafficking to the detriment of victims, through the modality of sexual violence, were included, being excluded those literature reviews of a theoretical nature or that were not part of the researched topic. Types of studies: Considering the limited number of studies on this subject, the objective of this review was to analyze the existing knowledge on the topic and to identify the study designs, categories, variables and dimensions in the review and research articles. Types of results: The following were selected as primary results: case studies, empirical research, experiences and the like.

Search for studies

In this setting, a manual search was conducted using bibliographic references of primary and secondary studies found. The universe of the research comprises the sum of the variables identified and the electronic searches, which were carried out in the Scopus, Ebsco, Scielo, Web of Science Group, Dialnet, and Redalyc databases, for which the criteria was the consultation by titles, summary and key words “human trafficking”, “human trafficking”, “slavery”, “sexual violence” and “human rights”.

Selection of studies

Thus, the search and analysis selection process was carried out by the researchers. The studies were selected in two phases. The first step consisted of reviewing the titles and abstracts of the references found with various search strategies, selecting eligible studies. The second step consisted of reviewing the full text of the pre-selected studies to confirm their eligibility.

3. Results

In accordance with this viewpoint, the search strategies yielded a total of 35 articles. No duplicate references were identified during the selection process. The selected articles were then read in order to confirm their eligibility. A review of the selected texts revealed that 22 studies did not meet the inclusion criteria and were thus excluded (see Figure 1).

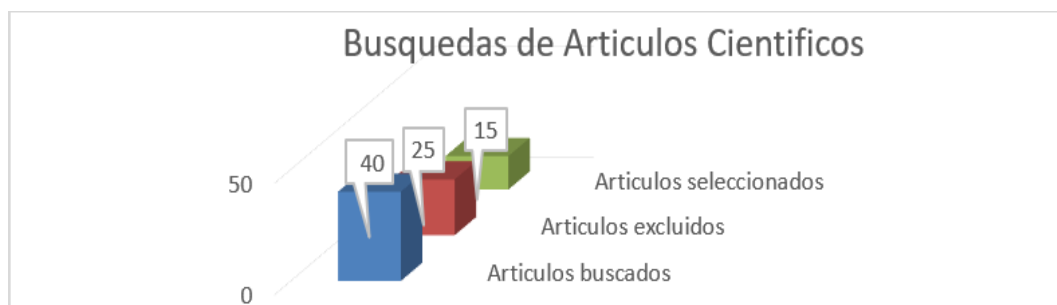


Figure 1: Scientific articles used.

It is also noteworthy that the databases consulted yielded information on the 13 selected articles. Of these, 3 were drawn from Scopus (equivalent to 3.2%), 1 from Ebsco (also 3.2%), 5 from Scielo (5.3%), 1 from the Web of Science Group (1.7%), 1 from Dialnet (1.7%), and 2 from Redalyc (2.1%). (Please refer to Figure 2 for details.)

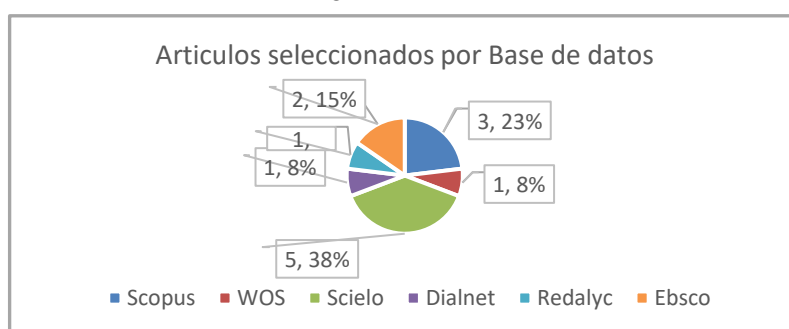


Figure 2: Articles according to database.

In addition, the 13 selected articles have been plotted by year of publication, having as a result that, from the year 2023 we have 2 articles which makes 15%, from the year 2022 we have 2 articles which is equivalent to 15%, from the year 2021 we have 1 article which is equivalent to 8%, in 2020 we had 3 articles which makes 23%, in 2019 we obtained 1 article which makes 8%, in 2018 we obtained 3 articles which is equivalent to 23% and in 2016 1 article, which results to 8% (see figure 3).

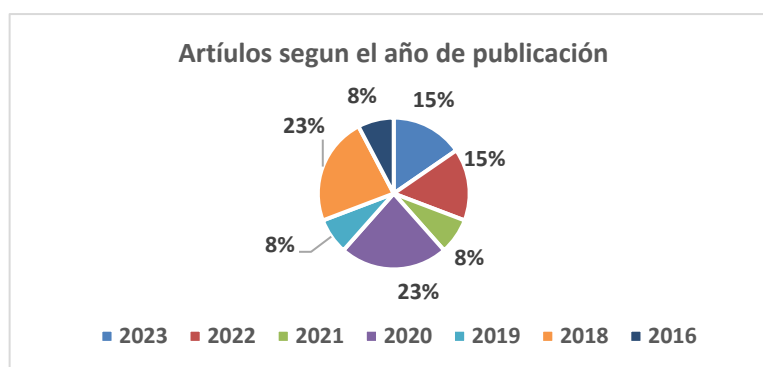


Figure 3: Articles according to years of publication.

The locations of the 13 articles by country are as follows: USA, Jordan, Colombia, Ecuador, Indonesia, Spain, Peru, Mexico and Costa Rica (see Figure 4).

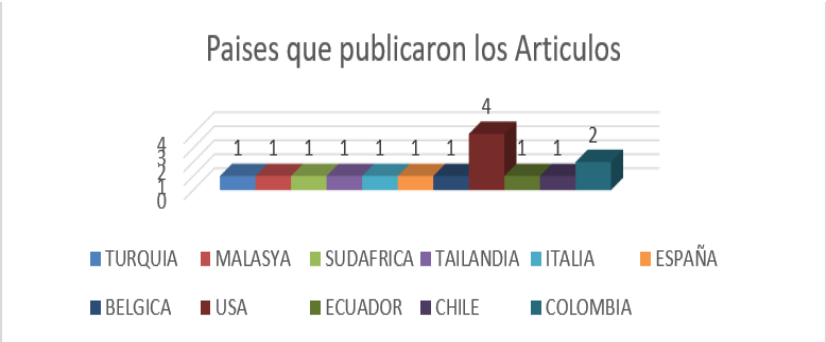


Figure 4: Countries that published articles.

The results of the remaining 13 articles are presented below in descriptive form, since the nature of the present studies does not allow any other type of analysis. It should be noted that Table 1 presents the results in a precise manner.

Table 1: Authors of indexed texts and journals that were selected for their relevance.

Authors/ Year/ Title	Database	Type of Study	Methods	Conclusions
Allan, C., Winters, G.M. and Jeglic, E.L. Current Trends in Sex Trafficking Research (2023).	Scopus		Documentary analysis	In recent years, research has focused on better understanding sex trafficking. Empirical data has shown that sex trafficking has become a major global problem.
		Research article		
Al-Tammemi AB, Nadeem A, Kutkut L, Ali M, Angawi K, Abdallah MH, et al. (2023) Are we seeing the unseen of human trafficking? A retrospective analysis of the CTDC k-anonymized global victim of trafficking data pool in the period 2010-2020.	Scopus	Research article	Retrospective secondary analysis of data set	It is a global concern, reports attempt to capture the number of trafficking victims worldwide, in order to impose a significant challenge in the fight against this menace.
Díaz-Cruz, P.-C., & Rodríguez-Lizarralde, C. (2022). Trafficking of minors for sexual exploitation: prevention strategies in the Bogotá region.	Web of Science Group	Research article	Descriptive research	Ignorance of the ways in which the human trafficking market operates and the lack of strategies to deal with the impacts of these commercial and lucrative practices leave organizations lagging behind in the face of a crime that arises from structural socioeconomic inequalities and is constantly changing.
Zurita Cajas, E. S. (2022). Women victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. Links with patriarchy and a business within capitalism.	Scielo		Documentary review	States play a fundamental role as guarantors of rights, but also as responsible for the violation of the rights of women victims of human trafficking by institutionalizing violence.
		Research article		
López Marroquín, Scherezada (2019). Disappearance, slavery and human trafficking: situation of women in Mexico.			Documentary review	The phenomena of forced disappearance, slavery and human trafficking is currently one of the

	Scielo	Research article		major concerns at the national and global level. Involuntary absence has serious consequences for families. Families, governments and policies are trying to address this problem.
Miranda-Ruche, X. and Villacampa Estiarte, C. (2021). Care for victims of human trafficking. A critical analysis of the Spanish framework protocol from a comparative perspective.	Scopus	Research article	It is based on the content analysis of documentary material.	A more meaningful involvement of key actors (social and health services, specialized NGOs, labor inspectors, trade unions) should be encouraged. Likewise, the operational elements that are critical to the proper functioning of victim intervention should be specified
Núñez Laura, M. A., (2020). The victim of the crime of human trafficking, from a human being perspective.	Dialnet	Research article	Qualitative, which will serve to make a work of appreciation and interpretation of events related to the subject of the research.	The victim of the crime of human trafficking is sui generis in relation to the victims of common crimes, considering that the victim of trafficking loses control over his or her manifestation of will, during and after the event, distinguishing, between the victimizer and the victim, a relationship of subjugation, the violation of his or her human rights as a usual ingredient.
Dammert-Guardia, Manuel, Dammert, Lucía, and Sarmiento, Katherine (2020). Human trafficking in the Andes: socio-spatial dynamics in the borders of Peru.	Scielo	Research article	The study is based on a review of the written press, statistical information from state institutions competent in the matter and secondary sources from international organizations.	Human trafficking involves different levels of complexity. The first level involves the recruitment of victims in vulnerable conditions, due to their socioeconomic status, gender or ethnic origin, to be exploited by organized perpetrators. A second level involves displacement and disruption of the victims' immediate support networks. A third level involves the rupture of the support of belonging to a nation state by incorporating migration as the axis of reproduction of vulnerability.
Rai Yuliantini, N. P., and Sudika Mangku, D. G. (2020). Legal Protection for Women Victims of Trafficking in Indonesia in an International Human Rights Perspective.	Ebsco	Research article	It is normative empirical legal research.	The crime of human trafficking is an extraordinary crime, because it violates dignity. Therefore, the State must seriously address various causes and backgrounds, starting with law enforcement, socialization and legal efforts to protect the interests of victims against the criminal act of human trafficking that refers to human rights.
María Rita Chávez-Gutiérrez, and María Antonia Chávez-Gutiérrez. (2018). The situation of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Mexico.	Redalyc	Research article	The type of research is descriptive.	The political will of international organizations and consumer countries to confront this form of slavery cannot be postponed; as well as the commitment of countries of origin and transit to intervene in the causes of human trafficking and improve welfare regimes and the effective application of comprehensive care for

				the victims of these crimes.
Rodríguez-Fernández, A. and Ramos-Con, P. (2018). Between the hidden and the silenced: human trafficking in Costa Rica and its challenges for academic research.	Redalyc	Research article	Documentary review	The participation of universities is essential to train sensitive and committed professionals to participate in the prevention, care and punishment of trafficking.
Reyes Jaimes, J., Vargas Parra, J., & Aceros, J. C. (2018). Analysis of the measures of assistance to victims of human trafficking in Colombia in a human rights perspective.	Scielo	Research article	Content analysis of documentary material.	The legislation lacks specific measures and this may be due to the fact that, even at the national level, there are no clear guidelines or directives on the subject; it is limited to stating the human rights approach as a principle, but does not develop it.
Torres Falcón, Marta (2016). The new face of an old phenomenon: human trafficking for sexual exploitation and human rights.	Scielo	Research article	Content analysis of documentary material	Human trafficking for sexual exploitation is a dense and complex network of patriarchal pacts. A deep and rigorous look is needed to identify the precise points where it can be dismantled.

Source: Own elaboration

The first is a publication by Allan, Winters and Jeglic, a review article conducted in the United States. The study described the characteristics of sex trafficking cases, risk factors for sexual assault, recovery and maintenance processes, identification and intervention techniques, and treatment approaches. The study concludes that sex trafficking has become a global problem in which millions of people are sexually exploited each year. Research has identified the nature and extent of the problem, but there are still many areas that require further investigation.

The second paper, presented by Al-Tammemi, Nadeem, Kutkut, Ali, Angawi, and Abdallah, focused on research that was conducted in Jordan. The secondary retrospective analysis of victim data describes the sociodemographic profiles of anonymous victims, the means of control, and the purpose of treatment. It concludes that trafficking has negative effects on the physical and psychological well-being of victims. The most common forms of control used by traffickers over their victims, who will be used for a variety of purposes, include sexual exploitation and coerced labor.

The third study by Diaz and Rodriguez highlighted work done in Colombia. They examined the treatment of children under the age of 18, known internationally as “niñas y niños”, focusing on their experiences. They provided information on the various intersections that may exist between age, sex, gender, nationality, ethnicity, disability, class and circumstances related to migration, such as forced relocation. He concluded that the treatment of people has not been seriously considered as a criminal economy. On the one hand, prevention efforts have focused on raising awareness and making the problem more visible, while on the other hand, prosecution of criminal organizations has not diminished.

The fourth document presented by Zurita, emphasized with research conducted in Ecuador. A brief conceptualization of human trafficking was made, along with a description of the new legal frameworks under which it operates. These frameworks have allowed human traffickers to avoid state controls, and it was revealed that traffickers have created some degree of legal protection both within and outside their respective countries to conduct their business on a

regular basis. He concluded that despite the existence of national and international standards that protect women victims of this crime, States must do much more to reduce and eradicate human trafficking on a global scale.

The fifth piece by author Lopez, supported original research conducted in Mexico. It examined the general conditions of female disappearance, sexism and abuse in Mexico today. On the other hand, we believe it is important to remember that men are also victims of these acts. The study concludes that treating people unjustly is possible and fits perfectly with the ideas proposed by the capitalist world, which supports the treatment of people as mercantile objects and prioritizes money over all other living beings.

The sixth article by Miranda and Villacampa, who addressed a groundbreaking research conducted in Spain. The presentation included specialized documents and websites dealing with intervention with victims of trafficking in Spain, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Germany and the United Kingdom. Categories of sources were chosen: governmental, with details on procedures and mechanisms for providing assistance to victims; and evaluative, constructed from documentation that would contribute to an empirical and interpretative analysis. It concludes by indicating that once the research is completed, it will be necessary to move beyond the criminal element and move more decisively toward a victim-centered approach. This will require broadening the social dimension with which the subject is approached, both in terms and in practice.

The seventh title given by Núñez mentioned a scientific investigation carried out in Peru. This work was strengthened by the presentation of several cases that showed, from a holistic perspective, the lack of empathy towards the victim. The conclusion is that the victim of human trafficking deserves due consideration because we are talking about a human being who has been subjected to coercion, exploitation, vulnerability, aggravation of their dignity and objectification by another human being, to combat this it is necessary to curb the apathy of both state employees and the general public.

The eighth paper presented by Dammert and Sarmient, relates to a novel study conducted in Peru: of human trafficking on the borders of Peru with Ecuador and Bolivia between 2000 and 2014 in order to contribute to the analysis of the complexity in the relationship between illegal activity in the territory. It concludes that trafficking involves many levels of complexity that are determined by the vulnerability and character of the victims, as well as by the methods used to kidnap, transport or kill them.

The ninth article, designed by Yulartini and Mangku, was based on original research conducted in Indonesia. It analyzes the legal protections afforded to women who have been victims of abuse in Indonesia from a global human rights perspective. I conclude that the legal protection provided by the state to women and children victims of the crime of unfair treatment of others has standardized the protection provided to those who are victims of such crimes, either directly or indirectly, including the payment of reparations.

The tenth article, prefaced by Chávez and Chávez, responds to original research done in Mexico; it describes the situation of trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation in Mexico while emphasizing the definition of crimes, the means of committing them, and the purposes and results of the functioning of the justice systems in Mexico. It concludes that the

procurement, application and execution of justice in the area of human trafficking is explained by a series of inefficiencies and ineffectiveness in the administrative and criminal justice systems. The people who operate the justice-seeking process lack tact and expertise.

The authors of the article, Rodriguez and Ramos, conducted research in Costa Rica. In particular, they seek to identify the challenges currently faced by public universities in this field. The study aims to reflect on the main objectives and challenges involved in academic research in human rights in Costa Rica. It concludes that the participation of universities is essential not only because of their academic and scientific resources, but also because of the importance of training sensitive and committed professionals who have the necessary knowledge to participate in the prevention, attention and punishment of trafficking.

The twelfth offered by Reyes and Acero is original research carried out in Colombia. It examines how human rights considerations have been incorporated into Colombian legislation regarding human trafficking, particularly in the area of victim protection and assistance, which has been a controversial and problematic issue in the country's approach to the crime. It concluded that the standard of treatment lacks specific measures (such as gender-specific housing standards and specialized medical and psychological care, among others). This is because there are no clear guidelines or directives on the subject, even at the national level.

With respect to the author Torres, he based his work on original research conducted in Mexico and provided an analysis of sexual exploitation from an integral point of view that merges gender and human rights perspectives. Exploitation as a particularly extreme type of gender-based violence; as a result, she described the environment of vulnerability and the chain of events that begins with abduction, trafficking and exploitation. He concludes that inequality is the fundamental issue. If steps are not taken to achieve the fundamental equality of all human beings, condemnation of this practice will face an insurmountable reality.

4. Discussion

It should be noted that the United Nations established the “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, particularly Women and Children” in Palermo, Italy, in 2000, the crime of trafficking in persons was recognized as such on a global scale, known as “Protocol Against Trafficking in Persons”, defines trafficking in persons as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, lodging or receipt of persons, recourse to threats, use of force or other coercive measures, theft, deception, abuse of power, exploiting a vulnerable population with the situation of giving or receiving payments or benefits in order to obtain the consent of a person for the purpose of exploitation” (Núñez, 2020), in this regard I agree with the author on the definition of trafficking in persons.

Through the research, it is observed, that one of the forms of human trafficking is sexual exploitation, which occurs when one or more persons perform an unlawful act or omission in order to abduct, trap, transport, transfer, gather, serve, receive or harbor one or more persons for the purpose of reaping a libidinous benefit (Chavez and Chavez, 2018).

For this reason, it is crucial to conceptualize the behaviors and tactics used by those who commit sex trafficking in five stages: first, victim selection, which involves choosing a victim based on specific internal and external vulnerabilities, such as drug addiction, intellectual

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disability, disabilities, and unmet domestic needs. The second step is gaining access and isolating the child, which involves adopting behaviors designed to gain access to the child, such as manipulating current relationships or isolating the child from emotional support and physical protective factors. However, the third stage is trust development, during which the sex trafficker focuses on gaining the trust and cooperation of the victim he or she is trafficking. The fourth is desensitization to sexually explicit content and contact, once trust has been established, the sex trafficking perpetrator works to desensitize the victim to sexually explicit questions and contact, such as taking photographs and exposure to pornography and likewise, the fifth is post-abuse maintenance, those involved in sex trafficking engage in post-abuse manipulation to facilitate further abuse and/or avoid disclosure of the abuse. That is, both emotional manipulation and controlling behaviors may be used at this stage (Allan et al., 2023).

It is important to elucidate between criminal traffickers, who operate individually as third parties or victims forced to exclude others, but who act in the context of trafficking and are therefore connected to sexual exploitation, and non-criminal traffickers, who operate at the individual or group level. Criminal traffickers are those who are deeply rooted in a criminal lifestyle and may be involved in other crimes; they are those who practice trafficking as a component of an overall criminal network or organization against individuals who play a certain role and finally, states are seen as perpetrators of violence (Zurita, 2022). A relatively small number of people commit the crime using others for sexual exploitation. Costs have decreased, international trade has increased, and in essence, globalization makes it easier to locate victims and exploit them with the least amount of effort. Success is virtually non-existent if victims continue to bear the burden of responsibility. To get to the bottom of these arrangements, their foundations must be attacked. Additional considerations for analysis: the role of the consumer and demand decoupling strategies; migration policies repatriation mechanisms; and the role of civil society organizations in the prevention of trafficking and assistance to victims (Torres, 2016).

It is necessary to make a reflection, that in several ways, human trafficking is connected to border regions: (i) as a key place for the configuration of routes and routes of the illegal human trafficking market; (ii) as spatial configurations where the characteristics of border regions play an important role in the reproduction and development of activities related to human trafficking; (iii) as spaces that modify the situation of vulnerability of the victims by incorporating migration as a new axis of reproduction of vulnerability; and (iv) since it gives visibility to institutional and organizational arrangements specific to the border subsystem in which it is articulated and that do not depend solely on the national or local particularity (Dammert et al. , 2020).

It is women who have suffered the greatest number of victims of human trafficking. Depending on the specific case, victims are trafficked not only for the purposes of prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, but also for other forms of exploitation such as forced labor, slavery, or acts similar to slavery. Consequently, all entities, including the government, should prioritize the protection of women who have been subjected to human trafficking (Yuliartini and Mangku, 2020).

It is also noteworthy that the term "sex tourism" is not defined in the legislation. Instead, the

promotion of trips within and outside the country for the purpose of engaging in sexual acts with minors and individuals with disabilities is considered to constitute sex tourism. The only category included is that of the mentally disabled, with no mention of adults who are capable. Those who benefit from exploitation yet demonstrate forgiveness towards those who remunerate them for such services (Chávez and Chávez, 2018). The legislation in question may be employed to safeguard victims of human trafficking at the administrative, civil, and criminal levels. Notwithstanding the fact that these efforts remain indirect and abstract, the protection of victims of human trafficking is incorporated into the definition of human trafficking itself and into the legal measures taken to combat it at various stages (Yuliartini and Mangku, 2020). The objective of the legislation is to address the issue at the local level. It is anticipated that departments and municipalities will establish national guidelines for territorial dynamics. It is evident that national policy is being replicated without consideration of the distinctive characteristics of each territory. The Victim Assistance Decree fails to meaningfully enhance the care provided to victims in the country, as it merely reiterates statements that have already been explicitly outlined in existing normative legislation. Conversely, some of its actions would contravene the principles of the normative criminal justice system (Reyes et al., 2018).

In essence, victims of trafficking are subjected to a range of violations that erode their dignity, dehumanize them, and steal their lives. These violations often result in the victims being given different female names. In many instances, the condition of enslavement is more detrimental than incarceration, as at least the latter is subject to the constraints of the law. In contrast, an individual subjected to trafficking is rendered outside the purview of the law. The experience of treatment will undoubtedly leave a psychological imprint on each individual, which will manifest in different ways. Those who cease treatment often exhibit signs of addiction. These individuals, who are predominantly women and children, resort to substance abuse, including alcohol and a range of other drugs, to cope with the demands of treatment and to extend their work hours. Similarly, this lifestyle results in physical harm to the victims, including illnesses that can be treated and cured, and others such as HIV, or severe physical injuries that are not curable, such as mutilations (López, 2019).

Otherwise, human trafficking creates a detrimental effect on victims' physical and emotional health, as well as their right to freedom and bodily integrity when it occurs. There are many risks associated with unfair human trafficking that may be related to health risks or global exploitation. Furthermore, human trafficking is harming a variety of populations regardless of age, gender, or nationality. Children and minors are also at risk of suffering from this crime because they can be used as tools for forced labor and sexual trafficking (Al-Tammemi et al., 2023). The victim needs a long process to return to their environment or resume their life before the abuse because there will be obstacles along way, including personal, family, social, economic, and even cultural ones. Personal obstacles are important because there is a constant internal struggle to determine whether the decision taken is right one or not (Núñez, 2020). Due to a lack of knowledge about funding sources, most national organizations agree that economic vulnerabilities are primarily what cause victims to end up in human trafficking networks. Social networks, which are used without adult supervision, are also places where children, young people and adolescents can enter. They are tricked or sent offers to obtain money in response to their desire to buy high-end smartphones, game consoles, video games,

clothes and shoes of certain brands (Díaz and Rodríguez, 2022).

Indeed, the need to overcome the criminal environment and move more decisively towards a victim-centred approach requires continuing to expand social dimension with which the issue is addressed, both in terms of operational approaches and understanding of the phenomenon. It certainly also raises the question of a more active role for social services and social work. It is reasonable to suggest their participation and recognition should be much more prevalent, given that their widespread presence throughout the territory, combined with their proximity to social reality, places them in an ideal position to identify and assist victims of abuse and to do so with greater intensity and effectiveness than has so far been possible (Miranda and Villacampa, 2021).

A growing social consensus and awareness about the treatment of people as a problem that endangers social cohesion and human dignity ignores this situation; rather, Universities must generate knowledge and encourage the development of academic spaces that reflect this reality. Considering that research is one of the pillars of public higher education, it is imperative to prioritize human rights issues on research agendas, especially if one is aware of the challenge of having systematic, reliable and up-to-date scientific data. In addition to research, universities also have the responsibility to train professionals who are more aware of this reality and with the necessary experience to respond in the most accurate way possible at the level of prevention, care and punitive treatment of trafficking. To achieve this, it is essential to include these contents in the professional career study plans and provide additional opportunities for specialized training through extension courses (Rodríguez and Ramos, 2018).

5. Conclusions

In addition to the findings of the present study on human trafficking in the form of sexual exploitation, which constitutes a violation of human rights, the following key points were reached as a result of a comprehensive and systematic review of the literature on the subject:

1. Human trafficking, particularly in its sexual exploitation form, is regarded as a grave infringement of human rights and is a widely condemned criminal act. It encompasses all illicit commercial activities that dehumanize individuals by treating them as mere commodities or instruments, stripping them of their inherent dignity and humanity. Such inhumane practices result in the exploitation of individuals, perpetuating suffering and generating substantial illicit profits.

2. It must be acknowledged that the criminal act of human trafficking is a highly intricate phenomenon, encompassing a multitude of actions, including but not limited to recruitment, transportation, housing, and lodging. Furthermore, a variety of means are employed to obtain consent, including deception, force, coercion, and extortion. These methods are used to exploit individuals who have authority over others. Additionally, disorder is intentionally caused with the intention of exploiting others.

3. Human trafficking is a highly complex criminal act that encompasses a multitude of actions, including recruitment, transportation, housing, and lodging. This criminal act is perpetrated through a multitude of tactics, including deception, force, coercion, and extortion, which are employed with the objective of manipulating the consent of individuals in positions of

authority over the victims. At its core, human trafficking is a deliberate and calculated system of exploitation, designed with the sole intention of exploiting vulnerable individuals.

4. It is irrefutable that the infringement of human rights has a profoundly detrimental impact on the lives of victims, resulting from the exposure of their legally protected assets, including their inherent dignity, liberty, and life. Such experiences have been shown to have a detrimental impact on the victims' self-esteem and psychological well-being, as well as their physical health.

5. States, within the framework of international treaties, have the imperative responsibility to prevent human trafficking and protect the human rights of victims. They must not only act to eradicate this scourge, but also ensure that victims have a firm legal path to access comprehensive reparation.

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