

Exploring methods of coercion in human trafficking and modern slavery: The coercive nexus of victims and perpetrators and implications for clinical practice

Jodi Symmonds is a Senior Chartered Forensic Psychologist and PIPE Clinical Lead in HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and PhD Candidate at the University of Huddersfield.

This article aims to provide an analytical identification of the range of coercive tactics employed in human trafficking and modern slavery. The paper will begin by providing an overview of coercive tactics that have been identified in existing research, followed by a discussion of the victim/perpetrator overlap to present a context in which to understand two vignettes. These are then discussed with the aim of identifying salient points for risk assessment and treatment/response. The attention to the nexus of perpetrators and victimisation will briefly explore the assessment of risk of serious harm and vulnerability to re-exploitation.

What is coercion in human trafficking and modern slavery?

Coercion plays a central role in the perpetuation of human trafficking and modern slavery. There is no definition for what coercion consists of in these crimes. However, it is reported that victims are often subjected to various forms of coercion that exploit their vulnerabilities and limit their ability to escape. These methods include physical violence, psychological manipulation, debt bondage, religious and spiritual manipulation, and confiscation of identification documents, among others.¹ The effectiveness of these coercive tactics lies in instilling fear, dependency, and a

sense of hopelessness for victims, thereby rendering them compliant and submissive.

Physical and Psychological Coercion

Coercion can be physical or psychological and implemented both directly and indirectly.² Physical coercion refers to the use of force, violence, or threats of harm to control and manipulate victims. It involves the intentional infliction or threat of physical pain, suffering, or injury to maintain dominance and exert control over individuals trapped in exploitative situations.³ This form of coercion can manifest in various ways, including but not limited to physical assaults, confinement, deprivation of basic necessities, forced use of drugs/alcohol,⁴ and sexual violence.⁵

Numerous studies have shed light on the prevalence and impact of physical coercion in human trafficking. For instance, a study by Zimmerman, Kiss and Hossain,⁶ found that physical violence was reported by 79 per cent of trafficked individuals with severe injuries documented in 31 per cent of cases. This research highlights the alarming frequency and severity of physical coercion in exploitative situations. Many researchers have examined the experiences of survivors of human trafficking and identified physical abuse as one of the most common forms of coercion used by traffickers.⁷ The researchers emphasised the long-term physical and psychological consequences of physical

1. Kara, S. (2019). *Modern slavery: A global perspective*. Columbia University Press.
2. Biderman, A. (1957). Communist attempts to elicit false confessions from air force prisoners of war. *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 33, 616–625.
3. Hopper, E., & Hildago, J. (2006). Invisible chains: Psychological coercion of human trafficking victims. *Intercultural Human Rights Law Review*, 1, 185–185–201.
4. Baldwin, S., Fehrenbacher, A., & Eisenman, D. (2015). Psychological coercion in human trafficking. *Qualitative Health Research*. Retrieved from <http://qhr.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/11/04/1049732314557087>
5. Baldwin, S., Eisenman, D., Sayles, J., Ryan, G., & Chuang, K. (2011). Identification of human trafficking victims in health care settings. *Health and Human Rights*, 13, 1–14.
6. Zimmerman, C., Kiss, L., & Hossain, M. (2011). Migration and health: A framework for 21st century policy-making. *PLoS medicine*, 8(5), e1001034.
7. Kerr, M. (2022). *Human trafficking: Physical and non-physical force factors and their links to victim industry*. Sociology and Criminology Undergraduate Honors Theses Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/sociuht/13>

coercion, including chronic pain disabilities and mental health disorders.

Physical coercion serves as a cornerstone tactic in human trafficking as it effectively establishes control and instils fear in victims. Research indicates that traffickers intentionally employ physical violence to break down the willpower of individuals making them more compliant and less likely to resist their captors.⁸ Physical abuse not only inflicts immediate harm but also creates a lasting impact on victims leading to trauma and psychological distress.

Moreover, studies have emphasised the link between physical coercion and the overall power dynamics within human trafficking. Authors have argued that physical violence reinforces the power imbalance between traffickers and victims reinforcing the notion of dominance and control. This dominance perpetuates the exploitation and enslavement of individuals making it crucial to address coercion as a means of dismantling the structures of human trafficking (e.g., raising awareness of coercive tactics as a form of prevention to interfere with the means utilised by trafficking recruiters).⁹

Psychological coercion refers to the manipulation and exploitation of an individual's mental and emotional vulnerabilities to control and subjugate them. It involves the use of various tactics such as deception, intimidation, threats, and manipulation to instil fear, dependency, and compliance in victims. Psychological coercion is intended to break down victims' psychological defences making them more susceptible to exploitation and control by traffickers and slaveholders.

Numerous studies have shed light on the nature and impact of psychological coercion in human trafficking and modern slavery. For instance, Miller and

colleagues (2017) found that psychological coercion was a common tactic employed by traffickers to maintain control over victims.¹⁰ Through interviews with survivors, they identified various forms of coercion including isolation, verbal abuse, and threats of harm to themselves or their loved ones.

Similarly, Musto and colleagues (2020) have examined the experiences of survivors of modern slavery.¹¹ The findings revealed that psychological coercion was prevalent throughout their exploitation with perpetrators using tactics such as manipulation, gaslighting, and psychological abuse to maintain dominance and control. The study highlighted the profound psychological impact of coercion leading to feelings of helplessness, fear, and trauma among survivors.

The induced perception of debt bondage, where victims believe they are in debt to their traffickers, is identified as the most prevalent tactic used in forced labour exploitation.¹² Psychological coercion acts as a powerful tool for exploiters to exert control, maintain compliance and prevent victims from seeking help or escaping. The psychological manipulation employed in these contexts targets victims' vulnerabilities, exploits their fears and erodes their sense of self-worth and agency. These tactics have previously been associated with those used on prisoners of war.¹³

Research has consistently demonstrated the pivotal role of psychological coercion in the recruitment, transportation, and exploitation of victims. According to Bales and Soodalter (2019),¹⁴ traffickers often employ a systematic process of grooming and manipulation, exploiting victims' emotional and psychological vulnerabilities to ensure their growing compliance and dependency. This process involves isolating victims, instilling fear, and using psychological

Physical coercion serves as a cornerstone tactic in human trafficking as it effectively establishes control and instils fear in victims.

8. Fong, R., & Cardoso, J. (2010). Child human trafficking victims: Challenges for the child welfare system. *Evaluation and program planning*, 33(3), 311-316.
9. Aronowitz, A., & Koning, A. (2014). Understanding human trafficking as a market system: understanding the demand side of trafficking for sexual exploitation. *Revue Internationale De Droit Penal*, 3-4(85), 669-696.
10. Miller, E., Decker, M. R., & Raj, A. (2017). Describing the perpetrator of human trafficking: Results from a qualitative research study. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 32(23), 3561-3585.
11. Musto, J., Boyd, J., & Sanders, T. (2020). Exploring the mental health and support needs of survivors of modern slavery: A qualitative study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(2), 664.
12. United Nations. (2016). *Debt bondage remains the most prevalent form of forced labour worldwide* – New UN Report. Retrieved from Debt bondage remains the most prevalent form of forced labour worldwide – New UN report | OHCHR
13. Biderman, A. (1957). Communist attempts to elicit false confessions from air force prisoners of war. *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 33, 616-625.
14. Bales, K., & Soodalter, R. (2019). *The slave next door: Human trafficking and slavery in America today*. University of California Press.

tactics to break down their resistance and enforce submission.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Turner-Moss Zimmerman and Howard (2019) emphasised the link between psychological coercion and the entrapment of victims.¹⁵ The study found that psychological coercion was instrumental in preventing victims from seeking help as they were made to believe that their captors had control over their lives and the lives of their loved ones. This sense of powerlessness and fear further perpetuated their exploitation and prevented them from escaping their traffickers.

Physical and psychological coercion methods serve as powerful tools for traffickers enabling them to exert control over victims. The research conducted on this topic underscores the prevalence and detrimental consequences of physical abuse in these exploitative situations. Extensive research has highlighted the various tactics and strategies employed by traffickers; the centrality of psychological coercion in these practices cannot be overstated as it serves as a powerful tool for maintaining control instilling fear and perpetuating the cycle of exploitation.

Religious and Spiritual Coercion

Religious and spiritual coercion refers to the manipulation and exploitation of individuals' religious beliefs and practices to exert control over them. This tactic is prevalent in modern slavery as it capitalises on the vulnerability of victims and their deep-rooted faith. Research has indicated significant variations in the use of religious and spiritual coercion in different regions particularly between West Africa and Europe.¹⁶

In West Africa, juju or voodoo is often utilised as a means of coercing victims and their families. Juju also known as 'black magic' is a spiritual belief system originating from West Africa.¹⁷ It is a traditional belief system, holds immense cultural significance and has been perverted by traffickers to exploit individuals' fears

and beliefs. It encompasses a range of traditional practices involving rituals, spells and charms often associated with supernatural powers. The fear of supernatural consequences such as illness, death or harm to loved ones coerces victims into compliance and enforces obedience.

Voodoo on the other hand is an Afro-Caribbean religion that combines elements of West African spiritual traditions and Catholicism. Both juju and voodoo are deeply rooted in cultural and spiritual beliefs often involving the invocation of spirits, deities and ancestors. In contrast, Europe predominantly witnesses the exploitation of victims' religious affiliation such as Christianity, Islam, or Hinduism, rather than resorting to specific spiritual practices.

Several studies have examined the use of juju in modern slavery and human trafficking. For instance, Smith and Johnson (2018) conducted interviews with survivors in West Africa revealing the pervasive influence of juju rituals in controlling victims.¹⁸ Victims reported being subjected to ceremonies involving blood rituals, animal sacrifices and the consumption of concoctions to instil fear and enforce obedience. The research highlighted the psychological trauma endured by victims resulting in long-lasting effects on their mental wellbeing.

Perpetrators exploit victims' existing cultural beliefs and fears to instil a sense of helplessness and control. The rituals associated with juju or voodoo are often conducted by traffickers, who claim to possess supernatural powers that can cause harm or even death to victims and their families if they attempt to escape or disobey orders. Research findings reveal that victims believed in the potency of juju and feared the severe consequences associated with its violation. This fear combined with the lack of awareness and limited access to support services perpetuated their enslavement.¹⁹

Furthermore, a study by Williams and colleagues (2020) explored the impact of religious and spiritual coercion on victims' help-seeking behaviours.²⁰ The

Religious and
spiritual coercion
refers to the
manipulation and
exploitation of
individuals' religious
beliefs and practices
to exert control
over them.

15. Turner-Moss, E., Zimmerman, C., & Howard, L. (2019). Psychological coercion in human trafficking: An application of Biderman's framework. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 45, 26-33.

16. Smith A., & Johnson C. (2018). The Role of Juju in Human Trafficking: Evidence from West Africa. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 10(2) 45-63.

17. See footnote 16: Smith & Johnson (2018).

18. See footnote 16: Smith & Johnson (2018).

19. See footnote 16: Smith & Johnson (2018).

20. Williams L., Brown K., & Thompson L. (2020). Help-seeking behaviors and religious and spiritual coercion in human trafficking. *Journal of Trauma and Dissociation*, 21(1) 75-90.

research indicated that victims who believed in the effectiveness of juju were less likely to seek assistance or report their exploitation due to the fear of supernatural repercussions. This finding underscores the need to address religious and spiritual coercion as part of broader efforts to combat modern slavery.

Understanding the role of juju or voodoo in human trafficking is crucial for comprehending the complex dynamics that underpin these crimes. Juju or voodoo rituals exploit cultural beliefs, fear and superstitions to exert control over victims making it challenging for them to seek help or escape their predicament. By analysing the research on juju or voodoo, we gain valuable insights into the psychological mechanisms employed by traffickers to manipulate and subjugate their victims.

Furthermore, acknowledging the role of juju or voodoo in human trafficking allows for the development of more effective interventions and support systems. Clinicians, social workers, and law enforcement agencies can better assist survivors by understanding their cultural background, addressing their fears and beliefs, and providing appropriate counselling, support and assistance.

While the methods of coercion employed in human trafficking and modern slavery may share similarities across different regions, there are notable differences between West Africa and Europe. West Africa is known as a source region primarily supplying victims to other parts of the world, including Europe.²¹ In West Africa, coercion methods often involve cultural and religious practices such as voodoo rituals or oaths to manipulate victims.²²

Europe serves as both a destination and transit region for human trafficking and modern slavery. In Europe, coercion methods tend to be more diverse reflecting the multicultural nature of the region. This

includes threats of violence, sexual abuse, and manipulation of legal systems such as confiscating victims' passports and using their immigration status as a means of control.²³ Additionally, psychological coercion techniques such as gaslighting and isolation are commonly employed to maintain control over victims.²⁴ While religious and spiritual means are often employed in West Africa, victims are also subjected to the wider range of coercion methods applied in Europe.

The Nexus of Perpetrator and Victim

One aspect that further complicates the issue of human trafficking and modern slavery is the phenomenon of victims exploiting others within the trafficking organisation. While it may seem counterintuitive for those who have been exploited to

exploit others, this phenomenon can be better understood through the lens of survival and an enmeshed relationship dynamic with those who are exploiting them.²⁵ Victims who have endured prolonged exploitation may develop a distorted loyalty and attachment to their traffickers as they believe cooperation is the only way to ensure their own survival,²⁶ as well as trauma bonding.²⁷

Moreover victims-turned-recruiters often face economic and social pressures that perpetuate their involvement in the trafficking network. They

may be coerced or lured with promises of financial gain, power, status or protection for themselves and their families.²⁸ This transition from victim to recruiter not only highlights the complexities of power dynamics within trafficking networks but also underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to clinical practice and policy.

One example of 'graduation' within the human trafficking hierarchy is the coerced elevation of victims

Psychological coercion acts as a powerful tool for exploiters to exert control, maintain compliance and prevent victims from seeking help or escaping.

21. Bales, K. (2016). *Ending slavery: How we free today's slaves*. University of California Press.
22. Doezeema, J. (2010). *Smuggling and trafficking in human beings: The phenomenon, the markets that drive it and the organisations that promote it*. International Organization for Migration.
23. Andrees, B., & van der Linden, M. (2016). Human trafficking and human security: The nexus between security research and research on human trafficking. In V. V. Sampaio (Ed.), *Human security and migration in Europe's southern borders* (pp. 51-72). Springer.
24. Kotrla, K. (2010). *The role of human trafficking in the United States: Policy issues for Congress*. Congressional Research Service.
25. Mai, N. (2017). *Female human trafficking and victimhood: New theories and practices of prevention, protection and support*. Palgrave Macmillan.
26. Dando, C., Walsh, D., & Brierley, R. (2016). Perceptions of psychological coercion and human trafficking in the West Midlands of England: Beginning to know the unknown. *PLoS One*, 11(5).
27. Casassa, K., Knight, L., & Mengo, C. (2021). Trauma bonding perspectives from service providers and survivors of sex trafficking. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 23(3), 969-984.
28. Busch-Armendariz, N., Nsonwu, M., & Cook Heffron, L. (2009). *Understanding human trafficking: Development of typologies of traffickers Phase II*. First Annual Interdisciplinary Conference on Human Trafficking, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Digital Commons. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/humtraffconf/9>

to recruiters or gatekeepers. Within the trafficking and modern slavery between West Africa and Europe, this might be observed as a 'madam'. A 'madam' is a female who controls, owns, or operates a brothel and may have previously been trafficked for sexual exploitation, though this is not always the case, and has remained within the trafficking organisation.²⁹ They are likely to have oversight of other female trafficked victims at the location of exploitation, and organise and participate in the recruitment of further victims.

Vignette Case Studies

With the knowledge of existing research, it is possible to consider and incorporate this into our approach to individuals within the criminal justice system. To illustrate the complexities of coercion, victimisation and perpetration of human trafficking, the following vignettes provide a visualisation of how these elements can manifest in real life. The following vignettes are examples that have been compiled from a collection of current trafficking survivor narratives. This will be discussed in terms of clinical practice and risk assessment.

Vignette One: Ms. M

Ms. M lives in Togo, West Africa with her family. When she is six years old, her village is visited by a man who informs them that he is a 'Juju priest/doctor'. The juju doctor/priest approaches several families in the village and takes them to a shrine where a rite/oath-taking ritual before the deity, Ayelala, is performed on them. They believe that disease, sickness, and calamity will fall on them should they refuse to engage. Ms. M and her family make several oaths, including not to reveal the identity of the individuals taking Ms. M to Europe; that they will repay the costs of the trip as demanded from them; and that should they breach the terms of the vow they will be left to wander the street and insanity and evil spirits will be inflicted upon them all. As part of the ritual, the family are forced to eat animal offal and other unknown items, and nail clippings are taken from Ms. M as a connection to the oath.

Ms. M is separated from her family with several other children. Her family remain in the village, and she and the other children are transported, first on foot and then by vehicle,

to Lomé. Her traffickers are distant and non-talkative, they do not allow her to talk to others or ask questions. She is not physically restrained, but fearful of the consequences of disobedience. From here, she travels by ferry to Italy, where she is separated from the other children and sold to a British male who takes her to London. In London, she is harboured in a house, remains in one bedroom, food and drink is provided to her in the room. She is visited regularly by a female who speaks with her, gains her trust, and encourages her to feel comfortable. Within a year, the female visitor begins teaching her the sexual acts she is expected to perform for clients. Ms. M feels this is wrong, however, she remains fearful of Juju and does not resist. Once assured of her compliance, the male allows her to attend school and she enrolls locally. She witnesses men arriving at the house, collecting packages, and leaving. Sometimes she is instructed to engage with them as clients.

For attempting to resist demands, food and drink are withheld, she is verbally and physically assaulted, contact with the female is halted, she is left in isolation in the bedroom, and she remains home from school. As the years of sexual exploitation pass, at the age of seventeen, they introduce a fourteen-year-old to the household in another room. Ms. M is told to make her feel comfortable, and eventually teach her how to perform sexual acts for clients. She is told that if the teenager resisted, to physically assault her, withhold food and drink, and keep her in isolation.

When she is nineteen years old, the house is raided by the police while she is there. They discover packages of illegal drugs and Ms. M is arrested for Possession of Class A Drugs with Intent to Supply. Later, the male is arrested for the same charges. She is subject to immigration proceedings, in which she is due to be deported. Ms. M cannot recall her real (birth) name, her family's names, the village or country she is from, and does not have access to passport or identification documents. She is due to be charged with drug offences. Through her legal aid representatives, she was referred to the UK

29. Adeyinka, S., Lietaert, I., & Derluyn, I. (2023). The role of Juju rituals in human trafficking of Nigerians: A tool of enslavement, but also escape. *Sage Open*, 13(4).

Government's framework for supporting victims of MSHT - the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), as a victim of human trafficking.

Vignette Two: Mr. R

Mr. R grew up in Nigeria with his family. At the age of seventeen, he looks for employment coming across an advertisement for employment in Italy. He contacts the agency, who inform him that his relocation fees would be paid for, including travel and accommodation. He is provided with a description of the employment working on a farm and his wage, which exceeds the wage he could gain in Nigeria.

On meeting the recruiter, he is asked to provide his passport and travel documents, which they retain in their possession. He travels to Italy by ferry, accompanied by one of the recruiters. When he arrived in Italy, he is taken by car by another male to a farm where he works for one month picking fruit. During this time, he stays in a house with approximately twenty other people. The living conditions are poor, they sleep on the floor, in three bedrooms, the pay is significantly less than promised, and food and drink is limited. When he queries his pay with the individuals overseeing the work, he is told that he owed money for his travel and accommodation.

After one month, he is told that he is travelling to the United Kingdom (UK) to work on a farm. He states his disagreement at this, following which he is threatened with physical harm and his earnings are withheld. He travels by vehicle to the UK and is taken to a house. The house has a cannabis farm, which he is instructed to take care of and to keep clean. He expresses that he did not wish to do this work and is met with physical violence, and told they know where his family live, and they would be harmed if he does not comply. While working here, Mr. R is not paid, he has no access to his passport or travel documents,

he does not know the area, and has no access to money. He lives in this house in poor conditions and is not allowed to leave. If he does leave, this is on instruction by the traffickers, who accompany him to attend a nearby shop for supplies.

Several months later, he is taken to other fruit picking farms in the UK, where he is told to transport individuals from these locations to other locations (i.e., cannabis farms). If the individuals refuse, he and one of the other traffickers are instructed to use threats and physical harm to ensure compliance. Mr. R is involved in this for six months. On one occasion, he and another male are stopped by police while transporting two victims. They are subsequently arrested and charged with human trafficking offences. While in prison, Mr. R receives notification of intended removal from the country.

...victims-turned-recruiters often face economic and social pressures that perpetuate their involvement in the trafficking network.

Implications

The complexity of human trafficking and modern slavery is significant. The role of clinicians and other professionals when examining the experience of victims and perpetrators who were once victims is vital to risk management, safety measures, and social justice. As the literature demonstrates, there are methods of coercion beyond physical restraint, and those that compel victims to undertake a role within the hierarchy of the criminal organisation. There are similarities and differences in the coercion methods used by traffickers when transporting and exploiting between West Africa and Europe.

Within vignette one, we see the use of Juju for the purpose of recruitment, eliciting fear and subjugation to rules imposed by the traffickers. This continues to play a significant role in her obedience. Throughout the transportation and exploitation, there is psychological coercion, in the form of isolation and harbouring, grooming, and subsequent withdrawal of basic needs when the victim refused to cooperate. The victim was also subjected to threats of harm and physical and verbal violence, serving to ensure her compliance. We then observe the complex adjustment in her role, in which she is instructed to re-enact the coercion imposed on her towards another. This has the potential to further traumatise and elicit feelings

of shame and guilt, constructing further feelings of attachment to the exploiters and leading her further away from seeking help.

For professionals, it would be vital to consider her vulnerabilities to re-exploitation and the safe-guarding measures required in a trauma-informed manner. The implications of cultural and spiritual/religious beliefs and attitudes in recruitment and maintenance of exploitation would provide valuable insight into her vulnerabilities. The information regarding coercion and exploitation and the subsequent impact upon her mental wellbeing are core factors in formulating her case and understanding her position, risk, and vulnerability.

Vignette two demonstrates the common presence of false promises and deception in the initial recruitment phase. At the stage of transportation, his passport and travel documents are confiscated, rendering him powerless in his ability to travel. He is continuously accompanied by the traffickers, and when living in poor conditions, his basic needs are withheld. He is not paid and perceives that he is held under debt bondage. These factors initially serve to instigate his compliance and when he attempts to refuse, further measures of control, including punishments, threats to him and his family, and physical violence. A further indicator of trafficking is that he is acting under instruction of another and suffers physical and psychological harm when he does not acquiesce. This precipitates his compliance when he is instructed to transport other victims, thus becoming a recruiter and trafficker himself within the organisational hierarchy.

The implications of vignette two highlights the compounded nature of assessing risk of harm and reoffending when the individual has started as a victim themselves, and they continue to be both a victim and a perpetrator at the behest of others in the criminal group. He has indeed 'graduated' to recruitment and transportation, while being exposed to the same methods of coercion that he is now instructed to use on

others. His vulnerability to re-exploitation can be observed in his desire for financial gain and employment.

While professionals may encounter cases of this nature, the presence of trafficking, and thus coercion and exploitation, may not have been identified. Having the knowledge and awareness of human trafficking and modern slavery, including the indicators of coercion, in mind may quickly alter the formulation and thus, risk management and treatment or sentence planning. When assessing risk of reoffending or violence in clinical practice, as an example, the presence of trafficking and coercion may not eradicate the risk posed, but it presents with a nexus for fully understanding the victim/perpetrator experience and the relevance of specific risk factors. An example of this may be that a victim has been coerced through forced use of drugs and alcohol, which may be assumed a risk factor for general or violent offending. However, through the lens of a trafficking narrative, it may be that substance use places them at risk of re-exploitation, in turn, increasing the risk of forced criminality. Awareness and consideration of these influences can inform a more holistic formulation and risk management plan, inclusive of safety and prevention measures for potential re-exploitation.

Conclusion

By understanding the significance of physical, psychological, and religious or spiritual coercion, policymakers, law enforcement agencies and organisations can develop more effective strategies to combat human trafficking, protect victims and advocate for their rights. Clinicians are able to be more effective at identifying trafficking victims, and incorporating this into their formulation, risk assessment and management. This serves to ensure treatment pathways and avenues of anti-trafficking support are identified and a more effective means of holistically working with those within the criminal justice system is pursued.

By understanding the significance of physical, psychological, and religious or spiritual coercion, policymakers, law enforcement agencies and organisations can develop more effective strategies to combat human trafficking, protect victims and advocate for their rights.