

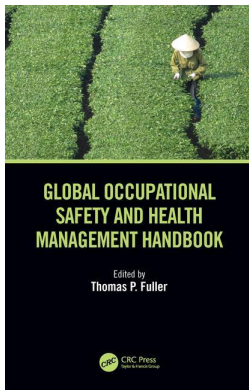
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Publisher: *CRC Press*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



Global Occupational Safety and Health Management Handbook

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Modern Slavery and Occupational Health

Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.1201/9780429056475-16>

Thomas P. Fuller

Published online on: 01 Mar 2019

How to cite :- Thomas P. Fuller. 01 Mar 2019, *Modern Slavery and Occupational Health from: Global Occupational Safety and Health Management Handbook* CRC Press

Accessed on: 02 Jun 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.1201/9780429056475-16>

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16 Modern Slavery and Occupational Health

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16.1 INTRODUCTION

Despite extensive evidence to the contrary, many people in the world today believe that slavery and forced labor are occurrences fixed in past civilizations and societies.

They seem to adhere to several myths about the extent of modern slavery, and the forms that it takes. One myth is that slavery no longer exists in the U.S. or modern European or Western civilizations. Another myth is that if it does exist in a developed nation, it is only in the sex industry. Yet another myth is that slavery only exists as one form and does not include the trafficking of people into slavery. Unfortunately, none of these common assumptions made by many people in our modern and civilized societies are true.

Modern slavery, in all its forms, represents a gross violation of human rights and international law, and it is considered a crime against humanity. It is also a major threat to global economic stability, democracy, political development, and world peace (Ngwe, 2012). The lack of rights and protections, normally afforded to workers, such as the ability to voice concerns or refuse dangerous jobs, makes slaves exceedingly more vulnerable to workplace risks.

16.2 DEFINITIONS OF MODERN SLAVERY

The most basic definition of slavery is found in Article 1(1) of the Slavery Convention of 1926 as “the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised.”

In recent years, the concept of “modern slavery” has arisen and has broadened the definition to include forced labor, forced marriage, forced sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and state-imposed labor. The International Labor Organization (ILO) in the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), Article 2.1, defines forced labor as “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily” (ILO, 1930).

Forced labor includes six basic conditions:

1. Threat or actual physical harm to the worker
2. Restriction of movement and confinement
3. Debt bondage
4. Withholding wages and wage reductions
5. Retention of passports and identity documents
6. Threat of denunciation of illegal status to authorities (Craig, 2007a; ILO, 2005).

Slavery was prohibited by Article 4 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948). On paper, slavery is illegal in every nation. Modern forced labor differs from historic slavery in a few basic ways. In contemporary slavery it costs less to acquire slaves. Some slaves can be purchased for as little as 10 U.S. dollars (Bales, 2008). Unlike in the past, slaves are not owned for life, but for limited durations of a few years, or even months. Slaves cost less and are easy to get rid of, and replace. This is a particular concern because there is less interest in keeping them healthy and safe. Lastly, slavery today is globalized, meaning that it is occurring in numerous countries and in broad swaths of geographic and economic regions on a regular and persistent basis. Some of the basic differences between old slavery and modern slavery are provided in Table 16.1.

TABLE 16.1
Basic Differences between Old Slavery and Modern Slavery

Old Slavery	Modern Slavery
Slaves were owned and traded as a commodity	Legal ownership is not always part of the process
High purchase costs	Low purchase costs
Low return on investment	High return on investment
Long-term ownership	Short-term usage and exploitation
Slaves were of limited commodity and supply	Unlimited supply of slaves, easy to transport
Slaves maintained	Slaves used and disposed of

Source: Adapted from Bales (2000).

In an article entitled “Badges of modern slavery,” Amir Pas-Fuchs helps to identify and define modern-day slavery by a series of basic working and living conditions called “badges” (Pas-Fuchs, 2016). The first of these is the lack of dignity or state of humiliation in the social order. Slaves have no rights as citizens or members of society for a variety of logistical and legal reasons. But this lack of status can be used to identify and indicate when modern slavery is occurring or is likely to result in exploitative conditions. Another badge is ownership of a person. A person may willingly pay to be transported to a new employer in a foreign land, and in the end be coerced or tricked into a life of bondage or indebtedness. The term “ownership” is not always clearly applicable but needs to be applied more broadly to identify conditions where the level the employer maintains is tantamount to possession. Control, and thus possession, can be maintained through violence, sexual abuse, threats of legal action, excessive debt, withholding pay, psychological abuse, and physical restraint.

Another badge of modern slavery that is common to the practice is that it feeds on the otherness, race, or sex of the persons. Differences, weaknesses, and disabilities are exploited in order to seek some benefit. These slaves are often children or even family members who are unlikely to protest or even be aware initially of the degree to which they are being abused. In many parts of the world, race is still the key feature that determines who is enslaved by whom. Differences are exploited and accepted as part of the social landscape and order.

The last badge of slavery is the lack of consent or free choice. The choice between starvation and work rationally puts the employer in a position of exploitation of the worker. They can wield complete control and offer the most meager of wages. Working excessively long hours in hazardous conditions, in isolation, for meager wages could be considered exploitative and thus modern slavery. It is common for employers to hold workers’ hostage on boats or isolated locations, withholding their passports, and restricting their departure. These activities should be considered modern slavery and called out as such.

The Palermo Protocol defines trafficking in persons as the recruitment, transportation, harboring, or receipt of persons, by means of coercion, abduction, deception, or abuse of power or of vulnerability, for the purpose of exploitation. It goes on to

specify that exploitation shall, at a minimum, include sexual exploitation, forced labor, slavery, and slavery-like practices. The full definition of trafficking in persons in Article 3 of the protocol is as follows: “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.” (Art. 3 (a)). It also specifies that “The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered ‘trafficking in persons’ even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article” (Art. 3 (c)).

- *Smuggling* is defined as explicit consent to be taken illegally across national borders. The relationship between smuggler and migrant typically ends when the destination is reached.
- *Trafficking* is a form of ongoing exploitation: even if the person has at some stage consented, this is meaningless because of the deception and coercion involved. Trafficking occurs within as well as across national borders (Craig, 2007a)(2007b).

Smuggling is the act of moving people or objects secretly and illegally. Trafficking is an act of transporting people or migrants to employers. Trafficking takes a more insidious connotation in that the process includes recruitment, transportation, transfer, and harboring persons by means of the use of force or coercion, abduction, fraud, the use of power or position, giving or receiving benefits to achieve consent of the person for the purpose of exploitation (UN Protocol 3A, 2000a).

16.3 TYPES OF SLAVERY

16.3.1 HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking includes the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of people by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or position, or receiving payment or benefit to achieve consent of a person with control over another person for the purpose of exploitation (UN, 2000b). Depending on the terms of the trafficking activities, international courts have made different interpretations of law for trafficking cases. In general, the trafficking process and traffickers are conducting slavery despite the consent of the victim, in some cases, to be exploited. Trafficking is basically the transport of people into slavery. In a review by Siller (2016) however, in the international judicial use, the terms “slavery” and “trafficking” have become mostly indistinguishable. In many cases, “the law of trafficking is encompassed under the umbrella of enslavement as a crime against humanity” (Siller, 2016).

Since persons are often brought into trafficking by means of deception, the traffickers are often initially trusted by the victim. They may be the same sex, race, religion, or come from the same country of origin (Simmons, 2013). These commonalities are used to form a bond with the victim. Many of these bonds remain in the victims' mind even as they are suffering the exploitation and bondage (Aronowitz, 2010).

Contrary to common thought, traffickers are not always affiliated with organized criminal groups, but often acted through close knit cultural or family groups. Many of these groups did not see their activities as criminal but as a means to make profit on the lives of their victims (Simmons, 2013). Trafficking has often rightly been associated with immigration fraud and the corruption of federal agents (David, 2010). Trafficking has been shown to be associated with the illegal transfer of money including money laundering (Simmons, 2013). In Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia, two-thirds of the trafficked labor were men working in fishing, agriculture, and factories (Pocock, 2016).

16.3.2 DEBT-BASED SLAVERY

Debt-based slavery is one that forms when the victim enters an arrangement to work to pay off prior debts. However, wages are not enough to pay the debt, related interest, and living expenses during the work, and as a result, the victim enters an increasing spiral of uncontrollable debt. In some cases, these workers willingly take employment and sign extended contracts to work that they would not normally sign due to their vulnerability and desperation as a form of **contractual bondage**. In colonial times, this form of debt bondage was also known as **indentured servitude**. In many cases, workers enter into these agreements even knowing, or sensing, the possible conditions they will be living or working under, yet feel they cannot refuse the opportunity. In other cases, workers given the opportunity to escape the extreme conditions (including violence and degradation) refuse to leave until the end of their next pay period (Phillips, 2012).

In Southeast Asia, debt bondage is practiced as a form of slavery where poor parents sell their children or themselves as collateral for loans. Between 15 and 20 million people have entered slavery in this way (iAbolish, 2018). Unfortunately, few are able to earn enough to ever repay their debts and never regain their freedom. Enslavement of children in this form is common in Haiti and other Latin American countries where children live with a family and in return for food and shelter they work excessively, are mentally and physically abused, and never receive an education (Issa, 2017).

16.3.3 CONTRACT SLAVERY

A significant portion of people entering into slavery do so on their own volition in search of work due to economic desperation (ILO, 2009). Workers migrate to distant regions or nations in order to avoid poverty and hunger. They are enticed by offers of money and security from landowners and businesses. However, it often turns out that the costs for room and board for workers exceed what they earn, and they enter

into an endless spiral of debt, without contact with their home countries, and without any way to pay to return to home.

16.3.4 STATE-IMPOSED FORCED LABOR

State-imposed forced labor is a special type of modern slavery whereby the government abuses its citizens in the form of abuse of conscription or compulsory labor under the guise of economic development. The abuse of internationally accepted standards for prison labor also falls under this category.

16.3.5 FORCED MARRIAGE

Women make up more than 70% of forced labor. This figure includes women and girls who comprise 84% of people into forced marriage globally. More than 90% of all forced marriage takes place in Asia and Africa. More than 36% of those forced into marriage were children at the time of the marriage (ILO, 2017).

16.3.6 DESCENT-BASED SLAVERY

Descent-based slavery describes the conditions and cases where people are born into slavery because their parents were slaves (Quirk, 2009).

16.3.7 FORCED RECRUITMENT FOR ARMED SERVICES

In a number of regions, children as young as six are forcibly recruited to fight in armed conflict and combat. Children are often used as informers and trained to handle crude weapons and improvised devices. According to a recent report by the United Nations (2016), child recruitment is common in Afghanistan, India, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya, Bali, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Yemen, Columbia, Nigeria, the Philippines, and Thailand (UN, 2016).

16.4 NUMBERS OF SLAVES

The ILO estimates that between 19.5 and 22.3 million people were victims of forced labor or human trafficking at any given time in the period between 2002 and 2011q (ILO, 2012). By 2016, there were 40.3 million people living in modern slavery, including forced marriage, of which 24.9 million were in forced labor. There are 5.4 slaves for every 1,000 people living in the world (ILO, 2017). A breakdown of global estimates of forced labor in 2011 by activity is shown in Figure 16.1.

By region, the ILO has identified the numbers of forced laborers in million as (ILO, 2012):

- Asia and the Pacific—11.7
- Africa—3.7

- Latin America and the Caribbean—1.8
- Central and southeastern Europe—1.6
- Developed economies—1.5
- The Middle East—0.6

Data show that most victims of human trafficking come from Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, and Africa. The most desirable destinations for traffickers are the more developed countries of Western Europe and North America. Fifty-eight percent of people living in slavery are in the five countries of India, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Uzbekistan (Walk Free Foundation, 2016). Figure 16.2 shows a geographic distribution of slavery in the world.

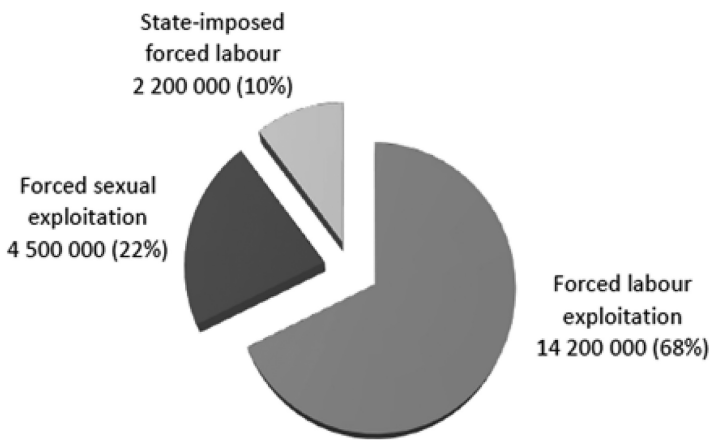


FIGURE 16.1 Global estimate of slavery by form. (www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_182004.pdf accessed February 7, 2018.)

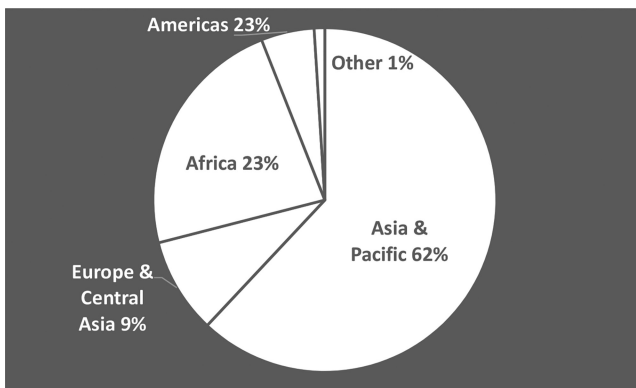


FIGURE 16.2 Geographic distribution of slavery globally. (Adapted from ILO, 2017.)

Although there are numerous resources for data on modern slavery, there is an immense amount that remains unknown. Human trafficking and slavery remain hidden crimes in an underground economy. Neither perpetrators nor victims of slavery are likely to report slavery, and thus, reliable data on the exact numbers of victims are impossible (Ngwe, 2012; Bales, 2015). About 42% of all those trafficked work in the sex industry (Craig, 2007a). In a study by Brown (2011), 70% of trafficking victims were women and 50% were children. Other common slave industries include brickmaking, mining, fish processing, gem production, fireworks, and carpet production (Craig, 2009). The remaining 58% of trafficked workers go to other occupational sectors in a broad range of categories. In 2016, the victims of exploitation were working in the following sectors (ILO, 2017):

- Domestic work—24%
- Construction—16%
- Manufacturing—15%
- Agriculture and fishing —11%
- Wholesale trade—9%
- Personal services—7%
- Mining and quarrying—4%
- Begging—1%.

Modern slaves tend to be placed into industries with large staffing shortages, where there is a high demand for cheap labor. These are often the most arduous or dangerous jobs in hazardous industries. These sectors are often conducive to trafficked workers because they have little government oversight and workers can be easily hidden from authorities, such as in homes, restaurants, hotels, farms, logging, and boats (Lindley, 2011).

16.5 CONSEQUENCES OF SLAVERY

16.5.1 ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF SLAVERY

Much of the negative impact of slavery is in the form of economics. Employers and even multinational corporations and governments could be considered to be encouraging and facilitating modern slavery when they force the cost of labor into unrealistically low levels. Human trafficking and modern slavery are valued at \$32 and \$44 billion per year. It is the third largest illicit trade globally, falling just behind arms and drug sales (Bales, 2007; Belser, 2005). Trafficking is expected to surpass illegitimate arms and drug sales within the next few years (Wheaton, 2010). Home countries suffer the loss of the youngest, healthiest, and most capable workers. In host countries, slaves often create economic and social burdens and lead to increased legal, medical, and social costs that were unforeseen, and for which the host country is ill prepared.

Slavery creates unfair competition between businesses and nations. A neighboring country that uses slaves for a significant portion of an industry gains an unfair economic business advantage against their rival nations. Similarly, a global business

that includes slaves within portions of their global supply chain creates an unfair advantage over their competitors who need to pay more for labor of free workers. It is in the interest of businesses to know whether their competitors use slave labor, in addition to consumers wishing to follow basic legal, moral, and ethical principles.

The money going into the hands of slave owners is a significant loss of tax revenue for governments. Taxes lost from slaves performing labor, at minimal or no wages, rather than legitimate workers in legitimate business represent significant financial losses to governments. These also represent losses to other competing businesses who create products and services without the use of forced labor at much lower labor costs. There are great financial reasons for legitimate businesses to care that their competitors are not using slavery in significant portions of their supply chains.

The societal costs of supporting trafficked victims are also significant. Although victim support is lacking in many countries, whether rescued or not, these slaves at some point end up in hospitals, social services, mental health facilities, or prisons. All of these represent significant potential costs. A person who sells a kidney to send money home to Somalia where their family is starving is inevitably going to end up in the hospital receiving tens of thousands of dollars of medical services that will likely never be repaid. Currently trafficked victims are supported by charities and nongovernmental organization (NGO) efforts. But with greater recognition of the problems, governments will be called to play a greater role in victim support, even if only in the form of judicial prosecution and deportation of illegal immigrants (Craig, 2017a).

16.5.2 SOCIAL AND HEALTH CONSEQUENCES TO SLAVES

Slavery victims suffer a variety of psychological and physical consequences. Besides direct physical and psychological violence, victims often work in unsafe environments, live in conditions of poor sanitation, receive poor nutrition, and receive little or no medical care when it is needed (Rezaeian, 2013). Slaves tend to have and receive very low levels of schooling. Despite continuous work for many years, slaves tend to remain in poverty, which continues to be the principal cause of their vulnerability (ILO, 2009). Slaves seldom achieve long-term economic or social security, they maintain low levels of literacy and education, they tend to be excluded from political activity or discourse, and they seldom interact or receive benefits from social infrastructure or services (Phillips, 2012).

In a study of 387 survivors of trafficking of the ages 10–17 in Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Laos, 56% showed symptoms of depression, 33% had symptoms of anxiety, and 26% had symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Kiss, 2015). In another study of sex-trafficked workers in Nepal, 85.5% reported symptoms of depression, 87% had clinical symptoms of anxiety, and 27% reported symptoms of PTSD. In one study from Southeast Asia, 53.8% of trafficked males working in the fishing industry had been subject to severe violence (Pocock, 2016). This same study indicated extended working hours (mean 132.3h per week) without breaks, and excessive lifting and bending and other exposure hazards.

Slaves often suffer occupational illnesses and injuries from hazardous machinery, exposure to pesticides, poor sanitation, temperature extremes, inadequate shelter,

excessive work durations, and physical abuse. Injuries and illnesses due to the treacherous occupational exposures and living conditions lead to incapacities that reinforce the precarious position of the slave (Harriss-White, 2006; Kabat, 2017).

Perhaps one of the most impressive demonstrations of the lack of empathy for slaves is in the Morecambe Bay tragedy in 2004 when 21 Chinese illegal immigrant laborers were drowned by an incoming tide off the coast of England. Men and women between the ages of 18 and 45, who spoke little English and knew little about the area, were picking cockles in the sands off the coast when the tide came in suddenly. They were part of a larger total group of 36 workers. The Chinese gangmaster of the group was eventually sentenced to 12 years for manslaughter, but British natives purchasing the cockles from the illegal group were not prosecuted (BBC, 2004). A prime example of the racially biased nature of modern slavery where a jury of British natives found the British men purchasing the cockles were not guilty and 36 Chinese workers without proper cockling permits were working and living under the noses of immigration officials and local cockling licensing authorities.

If modern slaves are not kept in shackles by force, there are many other means of coercion to keep them in place. The leading means of coercion include withholding wages and physical violence. Other methods include threats against other family members, the need to repay debts, physical isolation and barriers, withholding passports, and threats of legal action or imprisonment (ILO, 2017). Debt bondage occurs when workers arrive at a job and find that they cannot make enough to pay for their lodging and food and fall into an endless chain of debts they can never repay.

Many victims that become part of the sex industry come from homes with extreme physical, sexual, and psychological abuse (NISMART, 2002). These children, often living on the street, are extremely vulnerable and common targets for pimps, sex offenders, and pornographers.

16.6 FACTORS THAT FOSTER MODERN SLAVERY

The various factors that lead and contribute to the growth of modern slavery are often overlapped and intertwined. Modern slavery exists due a large part, to apathy and ignorance of government officials, the general public, and corporations. Several of the major factors that affect the likelihood of slavery occurring in a particular nation are the basis of country ratings in the Global Slavery Index (WFF, 2016). Some key features of the likelihood of slavery are included in the following sections:

16.6.1 OVERPOPULATION

The rapid increase in population after World War II, particularly in developing nations, led to further breakdown of already fragile economic and social conditions. When countries cannot economically secure the well-being of their people, it can lead to poverty and often higher infant mortality rates. As a means to compensate, populations tend to rise overall. Subsequent overpopulation and the lack of food or work in poorer countries rendered many of the most able-bodied vulnerable to trafficking as a means to escape their status (Bales, 2008; Population Matters, 2010). Overpopulation

and lack of local opportunity is still a main reason today why people willingly give themselves up to migrate or be “taken” to a new and potentially better life.

16.6.2 POVERTY

Poverty is often the reason why people seek to migrate or move to a different geographic region. The causes of poverty can be many. They include famine, war, overpopulation, economic collapse, government corruption, and injustice in legal and social systems. When faced with a choice of continuing on in poverty or migrating to a new region, even at great risk, many people will accept those risks. They may pay for transport directly to a trafficker and without any control or recourse, become the victim of the trafficker.

Migrants from Haiti, Mexico, and Central America seeking to escape poverty and violence come to America to work in agriculture and domestic service; many of these people fall into various forms of modern slavery and exploitation. Originally trafficked with the promise of “good” work and pay, they barely make enough for mere subsistence and continue to work and live in harsh and dangerous conditions without the freedom to get away (Bales, 2009).

16.6.3 GOVERNMENT INSTABILITY, WEAKNESS, CORRUPTION, AND LACK OF INTEREST

The growth of modern slavery must also be linked with the governments in the countries where it occurs. Government institutions and the rule of law are difficult to develop and maintain when a nation is in economic and social turmoil. Corruption undermines existing government policies and destroys the morale of the population (Ngwe, 2012). When democracy, justice, and the rule of law breakdown, it leads to general discontent and violence. Criminal traffickers use the cover of chaos, conflict, and disaster to inflict violence and trickery on desperate people to enslave them (Bales, 2008). The lack of civil, political, and social protections for all or a portion of a population increases the likelihood that various forms of modern slavery will occur.

Modern slavery occurs in developed countries when governments do not promulgate or enforce laws that prohibit it. International treaties and laws clearly set the standards for the prohibition of slavery, yet it goes on in many advanced countries throughout the world. This occurs for a variety of reasons from lack of funding and resources, lack of interest, or weak and corrupt government agencies. Slavery is allowed to occur where there is complicity between slave owners and lax enforcement by government officials (Craig, 2017a).

Since it is often an international problem with traffickers working across borders and continents, there is a need for multiple nations to work together and coordinate activities, yet there is relatively little or no formal cooperation between governments and the various international antihuman trafficking agencies (Laczko, 2005).

Slavery is also a result of global capitalistic economic and monetary policies that require maximum financial efficiency and profit for corporations. Slavery is clearly

linked to global supply chains through the global economy and not exclusive to any one industry or geographic region (Issa, 2017). Ever-increasing global competition requires that labor be very cheap. The reduction in wages, and the unavailability of other choices, forces workers into a type of “wage slavery” doing appalling work in hazardous conditions just to survive. Economic and business models and policies that force nations and people to lower standards for environmental care, occupational safety and health (OSH), and the basic rights of workers to refuse hazardous work are a form of slavery. Businesses in developed countries that do not maintain supply chains free of slaves and other hazardous working conditions are supporting systems where nations and people accept work that would be illegal in developed countries.

In regions of Latin America, a high demand for labor in remote areas where there is little supply leads to trafficking and slavery where government oversight is difficult (Issa, 2017). Urban workers may agree to a contract and be taken to a remote area where they are cheated out of their wages and physically confined. This form of slavery that occurs in remote areas without government oversight in industries such as mining, agriculture, and logging often coincides with various other illegitimate operations, hazardous working conditions, and environmental destruction.

16.6.4 WAR AND SOCIAL DISRUPTION

Factors that disrupt social stability have been associated with victims entering into human trafficking and slavery. This has been notably demonstrated in the precarious positions of Syrian refugees who in order to escape civil war allow themselves to be trafficked out of the region, often ending in modern slavery-like conditions in Western Europe.

16.6.5 CULTURAL VALUES

Many cases of modern slavery come about due to cultural and religious beliefs and practices. In northern African countries such as Mauritania, the Republic of Sudan, and Mali, racially based **chattel slavery** is thriving. This is perhaps the worst form of slavery where people are captured and forced into bondage, and becomes the “property” of their captors. Children can be born into this slavery and become the property of the slave owners. People including children can be traded or bartered for property or payment of debts (Fight Slavery Now, 2018).

In some nations, the historical context of slavery itself is an impetus to continue the practice. In Brazil for example, wealthy landowner families may have owned slaves, in some form, for several generations. It is an accepted and expected practice and almost considered a “right.” There are even cases as late as 1998 where slaves that have escaped from landowner estates are captured by local law enforcement and returned to the plantation by the police (ILO, 2009). Many of these wealthy landowners and business people exercise power and influence over state, federal, and municipal authorities and practice slavery with impunity.

16.6.6 ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION

Wherever conditions lead to the loss of the natural environment, the impacts on local society can be profound in terms of food and water supply, availability of agricultural jobs, loss of fuel for cooking or heating, and other factors. Environmental destruction is often closely linked to the human population that it supports through overpopulation, overharvesting or fishing, and financial gain through poaching, illegal mining, and deforestation. This loss of the environment then leads to poverty and the loss of paying work. People move towards various forms of slavery and forced labor to survive.

Interestingly, many of the illegal activities destroying the environment that lead to increased levels of slavery due to financial hardship and desperation also use slaves to perform the work. In Brazil, where slavery has been entrenched for 300 years, slavery still exists in every region (Antero, 2013). And today, the deforestation of the tropical rain forests in Brazil is primarily conducted by slave labor in order to create more land for ranching and livestock production, production of charcoal, and other agricultural development (sugarcane, coffee, cotton) (ILO, 2009; Phillips, 2012).

16.7 HOW IS SLAVERY REPORTED OR IDENTIFIED?

Considering the magnitude of the modern slavery problem, there is still a lot unknown about how it occurs, and what the impacts are. The phenomenon is understudied on many fronts from the economic impacts on nations and corporations, the costs to societies in loss of people and provision of services, and the long-term impacts on victims. Health impacts on slaves that result from working conditions are mostly unknown and undocumented. This is an area where OSH academics could make a large impact and provide a benefit.

16.8 WHAT CAN ORGANIZATIONS DO TO COMBAT SLAVERY?

The discovery and public identification of modern slavery in a company's supply chain can have serious economic and public image consequences (Noble, 2014). Corporate social responsibility (CSR) tools and programs have been developed to help large companies identify a broad range of ethical and environmental conditions and challenges (New, 2004). Tools that can be used to identify and remove modern slavery in supply chains are less well developed to this point. Companies that allow slavery within their supply chains are a major reason nations and workers accept this type of work.

In recent years, retailers such as Wal-Mart and Carrefour established trade restrictions on meatpacking groups connected to producers in Brazil known to use slaves in their livestock production. Nike also placed restrictions on the use of leather coming from the Amazon region of Brazil due to the lack of reliable governance of illegal operations such as deforestation, but also including slavery (Phillips, 2012).

Supply chain management is often seen to fall under a larger umbrella of corporate sustainability initiatives (Gladwin, 1995). Supply chain ethics, environmental evaluation, and even occupational health and safety concerns are often covered

by the same professionals (Rasche, 2013; Epstein, 2014; New, 2015; Bartley, 2007). Several firms have prohibited slavery and forced labor in their supply chains through the use of standard wording in their corporate codes of conduct and CSR statements. In general, these firms place the ethical responsibility to ensure that slavery is not part of their supply chain within environmental and worker health and safety management systems and consider the problem resolved. It turns out, however, that finding and eliminating modern slavery from supply chains is more difficult than thought, and often the corporate business models themselves are part of the reason slavery begins and flourishes. In an extensive review by Crane (2013), he shows how corporate actions that require suppliers to cut costs to minimum levels in order to survive, leave suppliers to cut costs in the only part of the chain they control, wages of workers. Workers who may have entered into a working arrangement suddenly have their wages cut and can no longer cover their living expenses supplied by the employer, and fall into a form of debt bondage. Geographically isolated and destitute, the workers must continue on in the position.

Often, it is difficult for a CSR program to see or evaluate all the parts of the supply chain. The electricity used to produce a product in China may use a form of state-imposed forced labor. It would first be difficult to identify this form of labor as an independent corporation, and secondly, it would be problematic to try to influence change in a state-run operation without other larger influences.

Other types of workers who are often not covered by CSR programs would be contracted, temporary, and agency-supplied workers that might be used within the supply chain. These workers may be indistinguishable from other factory workers, but they may be subject to some of several aspects of the definitions of modern slavery (Barrientos, 2008). Ultimately, these workers have lower visibility within CSR programs. Even victims of slave labor have reason to hide their plight from CSR evaluators since their discovery would probably mean the end of their position. These people are also often bound to their lives by complex social and psychological ties (Bales, 2002).

The illegality of slavery brings another challenging dimension to CSR programs. Due to the illegality, suppliers go to great lengths to hide slavery, or “slavery-like” practices. If they are caught, they not only may lose an important customer but also could be fined or even go to prison. So there is a known criminality to modern slavery which can put CSR auditors or inspectors in harm’s way if they are doing their job effectively. Unlike environmental conditions that might or might not meet the goals of the CSR program, or that may be overlooked for a period where new systems or controls are put in place, the identification of slavery is often more clear and explicitly illegal. A company would be expected to cut ties with the supplier, the CSR evaluator would be expected to report the slavery to authorities, and the supplier would be expected to take immediate actions to rectify the situation, which may not be possible. Evaluators or auditors could be subject to bribery or grave physical harm.

Some of the best advances in CSR supply chain management in regard to identifying and policing slavery have come from the nongovernment sector. NGOs have increased the visibility of trafficking activities through websites and other media attention. One example is the Walk Free Foundation, a nonprofit that was formed in

2001. The group performs independent studies and published a Global Slavery Index and is working with numerous global nonprofit organizations, religious groups, and governments to communicate conditions and measures to be used to combat slavery through advocacy and policy change (Walk Free Foundation, 2018).

In one study, it was shown that organizations that include human rights due diligence in their CSR programs are four times more likely to uncover actual or potential human rights violations (McGregor, 2017). Companies and organizations that use due diligence processes such as those to evaluate workplace violence or harassment could effectively apply similar methods to identify and prevent modern slavery in their supply chains (Olsen, 2017).

NGOs can play a leading role in the development of antislavery policy in governments, in addition to corporations. It has been shown that NGOs played a significant role lobbying for and shaping the UK Modern Slavery Act (Craig, 2017a). Much of the work and output of NGOs in the United Kingdom was in the form of education and public awareness of the existence of slavery amidst their communities, despite ongoing inattention and lack of action by the government. One NGO called “unchosen” has created a series of short films on various aspects and conditions of modern slavery based on actual case studies (Unchosen, 2017; Craig, 2014). The films are valuable tools for building awareness in the community and can be shown as educational tools in schools to create empathy.

The Walk Free Foundation includes ratings of national government regulations to curb slavery in their annual Global Slavery Index. The listing reviews existing legislation in each country and rates them on a scale of 12 different categories (WFF, 2016). The index also rates nations on their level of response to and support of victims of slavery once they are identified and rescued. Measures in this index include such categories as survival support and criminal prosecution of perpetrators.

16.9 LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT AND CONTROL

As modern slavery is primarily a criminal activity, it would follow that creation and strict enforcement of laws and regulations would be a good starting point for combatting it. But despite the fact that international laws outlawing slavery have been in place for nearly 100 years, it still abounds. In 2015, the United Kingdom passed a Modern Slavery Act. This is a comprehensive series of laws that clarifies the various actions that are considered slavery, gives the government the means and funding to identify wrongdoing and enforce the laws, and structures judicial prosecution and sentencing for perpetrators (UK Government, 2015). Unfortunately, this Act does not go far enough to ensure that slavery does not occur, or to enforce and apply penalties if it does.

Sex trafficking and prostitution of minors has been an extremely difficult phenomenon for governments to effectively address. Where it is illegal for a minor to consent to sex, trafficked children have been arrested and charged for prostitution by local law enforcement agencies. Rather than being treated as victims, these children earn criminal records and receive no assistance to change their

predicament (Jordan, 2013). In the United Kingdom, as soon as a prostituted minor who has a record of prostitution turns 18, they are deported for being an illegal immigrant.

The United Nations has begun to address illegal trafficking in two relevant protocols: The first protocol addresses the smuggling of migrants, and the second is related specifically to trafficking (UN, 2000a, 2000b). These protocols provide guidance and standards for governments to follow to assist in the eradication of transnational human trafficking. In order for countries to be signatories of the protocols, they must first be signatories of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto (UN, 2004).

The United Nations Global Compact is a voluntary system designed to align strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labor, and the environment. The system calls for the “elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labor” (UN, 2018). The global compact has more than 9,500 participating companies in more than 160 countries that have committed to the sustainable development goals and a reporting framework for progress on human rights and sustainability. The elimination of forced labor and development of decent work in global supply chains is a main focus of the compact goals. It also promotes communication and education on the risks of slavery in supply chains.

In 2017, France passed a law that requires French-based companies employing 5,000 workers in the country or 10,000 employees worldwide, to develop a “plan of vigilance” to identify and report possible environmental, health, and human rights violations within their supply chains. This includes the use of child labor and slavery within corporate supply chains. The program requires companies to develop programs and procedures to evaluate their partners and subsidiaries and to take actions to alleviate potential violations. They must also arrange a system for reporting and responding to potential violations. Companies that are found to be in violation of the law can be fined up to 10 million euros (France, 2017).

In 2012, California began enforcing the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act of 2010. This law requires certain large companies to disclose their efforts to ensure that slave labor was not any part of their product supply chain to the public. The law provided detailed requirements for the content and format for the information to be made available. Disclosures must address by whom and how the supply chain was evaluated, how audits of material suppliers were conducted, forms of supply chain certification, accountability standards and procedures for addressing employees or contractors that do not meet company standards, and training for employees and supply chain managers (CA, 2010; Harris, 2015). The California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) enforces State OHS regulations without any consideration of the immigration status of the worker. This California law provides a basic structure to guide companies to improve transparency and public disclosure of their supply chain activities, but this law has been criticized for not going far enough and leaving enforcement to other federal and state laws. Statements on a website regarding corporate policies and programs denouncing slavery may look good to the public, but may not actually be addressing the actual issues (New, 2015).

Much of human trafficking is preventable through immigration policy reform. Immigration policies that punish victims through racial profiling, and threats of imprisonment or deportation, force the endeavor further underground and exacerbate the problems (Brennon, 2017). Policies that encourage fair and decent wages and provide social supports for migrants who may be uneducated, unaware of available services, and afraid to report abuse and exploitation to authorities would automatically reduce the trafficking trade.

One of the closest links between OSH and slavery is through the regulation of health and safety in the workplace. Trafficked workers and migrants have been shown to routinely work in environments dangerous to their health (Benach, 2011). If governments had regulations on health and safety, and they conducted regular worksite inspections and enforcement, then in theory working conditions for migrants, or otherwise exploited laborers, would become apparent. If working conditions are unsafe, then the workers are clearly being exploited and the safety conditions may just be the tip of the iceberg indicating other deeper exploitation issues. Dangerous and unhealthy working conditions are one of the key exploitations inflicted by slave owners. Additional research regarding migrant and slave work exposures will work to expand understanding of the problems and issues, and work towards job safety improvements and safer working conditions.

Several legislative actions have been taken in Brazil over the past two decades to combat slavery. In 1995, a federal labor inspectorate system was established to create legislation. In 2003, a National Plan for the Eradication of Slave Labor was established that identified employers that kept workers in conditions that were “slave-like.” As a result of negative publicity to these businesses, and other factors, between the years of 2003 and 2010, more than 21,000 workers were released from these “slave labor” conditions (Phillips, 2012). In 2005, a National Pact for the Eradication of Slave Labor in Brazil was created that asks firms to voluntarily commit to the antislavery effort. In 2010, the pact had more than 130 full signatories representing 20% of the gross domestic product of Brazil (Phillips, 2012).

16.10 OTHER RESPONSES TO SLAVERY—EDUCATE, COMMUNICATE, AND COLLABORATE

The fact that there are more than 40 million slaves in the world today does not mean that it is a well-known or understood phenomenon. Employers and enslavers, and even slaves themselves, have serious interests in keeping their activities hidden from society. As we have discussed, even people perpetrating the crimes of trafficking and slavery do not always understand the criminality of their behaviors, as they are only exploiting willing workers. The importance of researching modern slavery and trafficking for the purpose of disseminating information and communicating the issues and outcomes to a broader society cannot be understated. In a study of the narration of slave stories, Laura Murphy has documented how telling stories about slavery in various literary genres can be used to elevate the social awareness and discussion of the great injustices ongoing in our societies right below our noses. She shows how powerful personal stories of suffrage can connect an otherwise

impartial reader with those who have suffered under bondage and exploitation. The strategic use of real-life experiences can instill a sense of world citizenship and responsibility that “exceeds the bounds of the personal identification with the solitary narrator who suffers” (Murphey, 2015). Individuals and organizations that would not normally feel that slavery is their problem or take an interest in stopping it, can be influenced to take action by creating a sense of duty and promote a sense of social justice activism.

Similar to the use of narrative to communicate stories of exploitation and injustice, researchers and other OSH professionals can report and disseminate information about exploitation of workers regarding health and safety issues. In many cases, exploitation may be evident by unsafe working conditions. Everyone globally deserves a safe workplace. It is the OSH professionals’ responsibility to make the unsafe conditions known to officials and the public. This may include reporting conditions to their own managers and directors regarding unsafe workplaces of suppliers or others in the supply chain.

CASE

As my well-meaning colleague stated, she has a small farm in Pennsylvania and she hires the nicest group of migrants to help her harvest pumpkins every autumn. When I asked what form of healthcare do they have? And what is available for medical response to the workers in the field? Or what types of safety training do they receive for the operation of the heavy equipment, she said “none”. What differentiates this small operation from one that might be termed “modern slavery”?

In his article about supply chain management and CSR, Stephan New concludes that modern slavery is in many cases created by external social and economic forces that are ultimately created by economic and business models and practices. Policies that push to improve corporate profits do so at the expense of suppliers who are often pushed to reduce costs of labor to the point where they can only hire workers at the most meager of wages, taking advantage of other economic and social conditions and factors (New, 2015). The place of modern CSR programs is to butt against the profit incentives to increase transparency and root out slavery despite the economic incentives to utilize it, from within the corporations. Unfortunately, CSR programs are doing little to actually provide safe working conditions for workers, prevent the use of child labor, or eliminate the use of slavery. OSH professionals involved in CSR programs need to ensure that they are not part of a company or CSR program that condones slavery for ethical and legal reasons.

Modern slavery is a fact of our global society, and every person, company, and organization plays a role in its existence. The complexity of the relationships between business, government, academia, and every other aspect of our daily social lives makes addressing the underpinning issues and causes of modern slavery difficult. All civilized institutions need to communicate and collaborate to work together to combat slavery at the root causes, wherever possible. Collaboration between different agencies and social and scientific disciplines will be essential to solving the problem of slavery (Jordan, 2013). Conditions that allow slavery to exist are a long-term threat to global political and economic stability.

In his assessment of the UK Modern Slavery Act, Craig (2017) noted that training on the topic was lacking at many levels. Legislators, judges, and law enforcement needed better training on recognizing and defining illegal human labor conditions and activities. This is also true for other members of the community including educators and service providers.

Health-care and social workers who may eventually come in contact with victims of modern slavery, whether in an emergency room or courtroom, need to be trained on the signs and symptoms of modern slavery. Once a victim is identified, these workers need to know how to report the crime without bringing attention to the victim or the possible perpetrator who may be accompanying, and even assisting the victim. Reporting processes need to be created and used so that victims can be recognized and managed to address their immediate needs and work with them as they escape their captors and return to normal society. Medical, nursing, and emergency responder education should include the means to recognize and support victims of modern slavery, and how to effectively work with local law enforcement to report illegal conditions (Domoney, 2015; Stoklosa, 2015).

16.11 CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Governments need to adhere to international conventions against human trafficking and create associated laws and border controls. Border controls and immigration policies need to be improved and equipped to detect and prevent human trafficking. There should be increased cooperation and information exchange between nations regarding perpetrators and victims of trafficking. States should improve training on the issues and identifiers of trafficking for law enforcement, immigration officials, and others associated with the transfer and movement of people including airlines and shipping companies.

The failure of CSR programs to identify and eliminate slavery from global supply chains demonstrates an inherent fault with the approach. Businesses do not have an interest in social justice if it goes against corporate profits. Although the public face of CSR programs is to demonstrate interest in social and environmental concerns, the majority of companies do not include social justice or slavery parameters within their CSR programs or reporting. And corporations will practice CSR to the extent that the public takes an interest in slavery or is aware of and care about the negative ramifications, which to a large extent they are not and do not. To improve compliance with international regulations on the use of slavery in supply chains, governments need to become more involved in CSR reporting.

OSH professionals and their professional organizations need to advocate for the rights of workers in all situations. This includes slaves in all of the various forms, industries, and geographic regions described in this chapter. OSH professionals' ethical responsibilities do not stop at the doors of their employer or border of their nation. OSH professionals have an ethical responsibility to improve working conditions globally and in all workplaces.

As consumers, we need to demand that the supply chains of our retailers are free of slave labor. CSR information is becoming more readily available in most industries. Consumers can read the reports and demand more action and transparency

regarding the use of slaves within the supply chains of the products they purchase. As citizens, we need to demand that our governments do more to protect our economies and the fair trade of our businesses to exclude the use of slaves in supply chains. As the government itself is a huge consumer, this must include transparency in governmental supply chains to ensure slaves are not used in government activities, in addition.

OSH professionals need to take an active role in educating businesses, the public, the government, and colleagues on the breadth and depth of the global slave problem that exists today. The provision of healthy and safe conditions for workers must include vulnerable and defenseless slaves, who have no resources or capacities to defend themselves. Modern-day slavery needs to be understood and explained to a broader population, and OSH professionals must take an active role in this process.

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