VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

OR

VICTIMS OF RESEARCH?

Ethical Considerations in Research with Females Trafficked for the Purposes of Sexual Exploitation

by

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SUMMARY

Your research proposal raises really taxing ethical issues. If you are immobilised by them, research fails in its duty to take difficult complex social issues and put them under scrutiny...It seems to me unacceptable, that what flows from research is that it’s too difficult so therefore, we wont do it. That seems to me, unacceptable. (Supervision with Professor Norris, University of East Anglia, 8 February, 2006)

This research paper surveys the contextual factors surrounding females trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation (FTSE) and examines potential ethical issues arising from research to safeguard the psychological and physical well being of this population. This paper is not intended to provide an ethical best-practice checklist rather its aim is to encourage the exploration of important ethical issues and further questions to be addressed by researchers in this area. In so doing, I hope to encourage the development of a fully informed decision-making approach to anti-trafficking policy and practice, and the improved provision of appropriate services for FTSE. Hence the necessity, as I see it, for a reconsideration of victim-status and its constituents.

The qualitative research methodology used in this research involved semi-structured interviews conducted throughout the UK, Vietnam and India and an extensive review of current literature. The sample population included individuals from a wide spectrum of expertise including United Nations agencies and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with experience and knowledge of human trafficking and/or trauma and sexual abuse.

In the following chapters I explore conceptual definitions, the FTSE phenomenon and its potential impact on an individual. Contextual factors are explored and potential good-practice measures are examined. My final chapter considers the interplay of power, ethics and humanity in research and the dilemma facing social science in its attempt to balance the rights of the individual against the needs of wider society.
Dedicated to the young women and girls around the world who continue to be trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation

May this go some way to help protect and serve those who have survived
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INTRODUCTION

Both loss and trauma spin us into dark woods. They are assaults against the self that diminish us but that also sometimes help us grow and give back to others. (Harvey\(^1\), 2002:1)

In 2003, the United States declared human trafficking (the commodification of human beings) to be one of the greatest threats to human dignity and a humanitarian crisis spreading across the world (Ashcroft, 2003a). As such, it represents more than a subcategory of global migration:

…It is a subject that intersects contemporary anxieties concerning the global political economy, ethnic and gender stratification, multiculturalism, population growth, political corruption, transnational crime, the Internet, human rights abuse, and the (in) ability of states and global agencies to control effectively… (Kyle & Koslowski, 2001:4-5)

Despite such concerns, many governments and some I/NGOs (international/national governmental organisations) fail to fully acknowledge the severity and impact that human trafficking and trafficking for sexual exploitation\(^2\) (TSE) has on the psychological, physiological, cultural and social well-being of an individual and his/her community (Kyle & Koslowski, 2001)\(^3\):

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1 Harvey (2002) is referring to Dante’s dark wood: Midway this life we’re bound upon I woke to find myself in a dark wood, where the right road was wholly lost and gone. (Dante, The Divine Comedy, 1897) (cited in Harvey, 2002:1)

2 The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Task Force defines sexual exploitation as any abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes. This includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another (IASC, 2002).

3 The World Health Organisation (WHO, 1946) definition of health suggests that effective action directed to a person’s health must address his/her: …complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of dis-ease or infirmity (WHO, 1946:100). WHO (1946) define health in the context of a process rather than a moment in time.
...violence and sexual abuse are among the most distressing experiences a person can face. When they are combined with threats to one’s life, the result is a borderline situation, which strongly attacks a person’s integrity and identity, to an extent that the person’s psychological existence is deeply and profoundly challenged. Effects of such experience on later life are broad and profound. (Polovina, 2004:29-30)

The chapters of this research paper attempt to explore the psychological, physical, social and political context of ethical research with FTSE. Interviews and discussions have been conducted with individuals and organisations from a wide range of expertise in the UK, Vietnam and India and associated literature has been extensively reviewed.

My research focus concentrates on a minority population of young women who have been forced into prostitution⁴ and sexual enslavement, have been recovered and live temporarily, in a shelter home for survivors⁵. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this paper to distinguish the different risks and ethical considerations of research conducted with FTSE children (child shall mean any person under 18 years of age [UN Trafficking Protocol, 2000:Article 3]) although many of the same principles may apply⁶.

⁴ Trafficking and prostitution are two distinct phenomena, although they are often inextricably linked (Brown, 2000).
⁵ Throughout this paper I refer to the term shelter home rather than shelter. The apparently impersonal and routine shelter research setting may be the only safe environment experienced by FTSE which she considers her only home with staff to care for her. However, it should not always be assumed that the shelter home is a safe place for FTSE or that they experience it to be a kind and caring home environment.
⁶ Research data indicates that the average age of sex workers in Asia has been falling over the past decade: The premium age for prostitutes in Asia is between 13 and 16…as I interviewed former child prostitutes in South Asia, I was acutely aware that these girls had begun work at around, or even before, the age of puberty (Brown, 2000:4). Research findings indicate that although many females appear to be under 18 years, they report to be older (Cwikel & Hoban, 2005). It may not be possible to verify the age of FTSE, therefore the term minor is often treated arbitrarily.
This research paper asks the question; are FTSE victims\(^7\) of human trafficking or are they victims of research?

The aims and objectives of my research are:

1. Highlight some of the contextual factors surrounding the FTSE phenomenon. FTSE acquire their position in society as a consequence of their socio-economic historical process (Lewis 1998) (cited in Chantler & Smailes, 2004). Such contextual factors play a vital role in determining a young woman’s vulnerability to trafficking and her potential vulnerability throughout the research process.

2. Explore some of the ethical issues involved in FTSE research:

   *Identifying and responding to the risks associated with any research project are basic ethical responsibilities of all researchers, for which they should be willing to be fully accountable. The avoidance of harm to research participants should be the overriding ethical concern.* (Bond, 2004b:12)

In so doing, I hope to encourage dynamic and innovative ways to include young women in ethical FTSE research:

*Prostitution is not a subject that is easily tackled using traditional research methodology. Standard research techniques were particularly useless when the issues to be investigated were trafficking and sexual slavery.* (Brown, 2000:x)

\(^7\) Collins Concise Dictionary: 1. A person or thing that suffers harm, death, etc. 2. A person who is tricked or swindled. (Hanks et al, 1988:1322). Throughout this paper, the definition of *victim* is explored. It is in light of FTSE victim-status, a condition which not only gives the female subjects of oppression no role except that of passive suffering, but also renders acutely problematic the role of those who speak *for* them, that FTSE subjectivity finds its defence.
3. Identify possible approaches to help protect FTSE research participants.

4. Highlight the dilemma facing social science, in its attempt to balance its duty to protect the rights and vulnerabilities\(^8\) of FTSE with a duty to bring reliable and accurate knowledge and awareness of their experiences and perspectives to wider society:

... mainstream social science research has been implicated in maintaining the status quo, misrepresenting the lives and experiences of people marginalised and excluded by structural inequalities. (Smyth & Williamson, 2004:175)

5. Highlight the need for researchers and information gatherers to protect FTSE in a manner that does not further diminish their personal control or power over themselves or their environment. In particular, I explore the potential benefits of the collaborative research relationship whereby researcher/participant power is more equally distributed than with traditional methodologies. This empowering approach for disadvantaged groups (Tee & Lathlean, 2004) may also facilitate FTSE recovery:

Many women were grateful for the opportunity to tell their stories to concerned, neutral listeners. After being trafficked as purely sexual commodities, many women found interviews with researchers cathartic and helpful for gaining perspective. (Cwikel & Hoban, 2005: 6)

6. Despite apparent similarities in patterns of exploitation, inequality and vulnerability in FTSE lives, their experiences and subjective potential for distress are highly diverse. Variations in literacy, duration of time trafficked and time spent in

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\(^8\) Collins Concise Dictionary: *Capable of being physically or emotionally wounded or hurt* (Hanks et al, 1988:1333)
shelter homes (for some it may be the first time, others their second time) and histories prior to being trafficked, may prevent researchers from adopting a universal research framework and methodology for this population. It is also important to recognise that for some FTSE participation may be highly distressing, yet for others it may be therapeutically beneficial and personally empowering. Such diversity necessarily limits this paper to providing merely a platform from which further research may be guided and is not intended to be an exhaustive set of FTSE research safeguards:

*Our sense of the social world is shaped by the sense of what can be written about it.* (Atkinson, 1992:6)

7. Encourage informed decision-making in anti-trafficking legislation and FTSE service provision. Improving power relations between FTSE, the research community and wider society and encouraging dialogue can only facilitate a greater understanding of the FTSE phenomena and the design and implementation of appropriate measures needed to address it.

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9 The UK Department of Health (2002) call for a greater involvement of service users (e.g., FTSE) in the research process (cited in Tee & Lathlean, 2004:8).
METHODOLOGY

This research paper explores the question: *Victims of human trafficking or victims of research? Ethical considerations in research with females trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation.*

1. Qualitative Research

Qualitative research takes an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter; qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them. Qualitative research begins by accepting that there is a range of different ways of making sense of the world and is concerned with discovering the meanings seen by those who are being researched and with understanding their view of the world rather than that of the researchers. (Jones, 1995:2)

In order to capture the subjectivity and phenomenology\(^\text{10}\) (van Maanan, 1990) of my research area, a qualitative methodological approach seemed appropriate. According to Ellis & Flaherty (1992) qualitative methods investigate the lived experience of the participant and aim to capture their emic or insider's view (cited in Nastasi & Schensul, 2005):

A key element for the researcher who utilizes qualitative methods is the concept of culture and the ways in which culture affects the context of the phenomena under study... the culture of national and ethnic groups, has been applied in recent decades to institutions (e.g., culture of the organization) age cohorts (e.g., youth culture),

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\(^{10}\) van Maanan (1990) viewed phenomenology as: *The systematic attempt to uncover and describe the structures, the internal meaning structures, of lived experience. A universal or essence may...be intuited or grasped through a study of the particulars or instances as they are encountered in lived experience.* (van Maanan, 1990:10)
deviant sub-groups (e.g., culture of the addict), and occupational groups (e.g., teacher culture). (Nastasi & Schensul, 2005:179)

Researchers\textsuperscript{11} using qualitative methods often consider culture as localised, as a coherent body of behavioural guidelines, as a dynamic process, subject to change within and across generations, as functionally interrelated into reasonable coherence and as necessary for the development of the individual. This perspective often encourages qualitatively oriented researchers to include the ways in which cultural and institutional contexts affect the social, physical and psychological behaviours of individuals (Wright & Flemons, 2002).

According to Nastasi & Schensul (2005) qualitative researchers approaching a participant group may evaluate an intervention with the perspective that they need to define the specific and localised group context. They are of the view that culture\textsuperscript{12} and context may vary from one group to another, not necessarily implying that there are no universal social or psychological elements at work. This they believe leads many qualitative researchers to emphasise multiple perspectives and differences across cultures institutions and settings. In following a qualitative research model, I therefore attempted to understand the interpersonal and intrapersonal context of FTSE.

\textsuperscript{11} For example, Denzin & Lincoln (1994) and Schafer (1998).
\textsuperscript{12} Schafer (1998) for example, is of the opinion that: \textit{Culture is... an organic and dynamic whole which is concerned with the way people see and interpret the world, organize themselves, conduct their affairs, elevate and enrich life, and position themselves in the world...the complex interrelationships that comprise the domain of culture...the relationship of people to themselves; to each other; to the objects, artefacts and systems they create; to the particular culture in which they are embedded; to other cultures; to the natural environment; to the supernatural.} (Schafer, 1998:42)
2. Semi-Structured Interviews

...there are, of course, no observers of the internal events of thought and feeling except those to whom they occur. Most of the significant events of people’s lives can become known to others only through interview. (Weiss, 1994:2)

Semi-structured interviews\(^\text{13}\) are considered to focus on collecting and formally capturing thorough accounts of individual participant’s experiences, thoughts and perceptions with regard to target phenomenon\(^\text{14}\). They are regarded as flexible and explorative, allowing for unexpected changes in dialogue (York, 1998; Kadushin, 1990).

Hannabuss (1996) suggests that semi-structured interviews are preferable when complex, personal or sensitive issues are being probed. According to Fontana & Frey (1994) semi-structured interviews are conducted with a fairly open framework which allow for focused, conversational, two-way communication and that such interviews can be used both to give and receive information. Kadushin (1990) suggests that the open-ended framework allows the participant to answer in less prescriptive ways and allows the participant to feel partly in control of the interview (York, 1998).

3. Review of Literature

There is a paucity of literature regarding the ethical considerations of research with

\(^{13}\) For the purpose of convenience the terms interview and semi-structured interview have been used interchangeably.

\(^{14}\) See Nastasi & Schensul (2005) and Drever (1995).
FTSE. I reviewed literature concerning ethics in research, researching sensitive issues, qualitative research methodologies, human trafficking, migration, theories of trauma and psychological development, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, service provision, counselling adolescents and the philosophy of person centred therapy. A considerable amount of information was taken from I/NGO literature during my fieldwork in Vietnam and India.

4. The Interview Process and Nature of Data

Information has been gathered from the following areas:

i) Review of Literature

ii) Counselling Experience (including adolescent clients suffering from trauma and/or sexual abuse/rape)

iii) Fieldwork in Vietnam and India including discussions and interviews with:

   I/NGOs

   UN Agencies (including freelance consultants [e.g., Mitchells, UNICEF])

   Universities

   Shelter Home Staff

   British Embassy

iv) Fieldwork in the UK including interviews and discussions with:

   Norfolk Constabulary (Operation Acquaint)

   Metropolitan Police (Operation Pentameter) and SOCA (Serious Organised Crime Agency)
Maidstone Social Services, Child Protection Committee and Asylum
Oxfordshire County Council, Asylum
London Borough of Hillingdon, Asylum
Home Office
Joint Committee on Human Rights, UK Parliament
Members of UK Parliament
Committee Members for the Council of Europe
UN Agencies
Counsellors (specialising in trauma, sexual abuse/rape, adolescent therapy)
Journalists

The aims and objectives of this research were compiled into a self-explanatory information document\textsuperscript{15} (see Appendix 1) used to inform interviewees of the nature and purpose of my research.

The semi-structured interviews concentrated on 3 key areas of exploration and formed the foundation of open-ended questions conducted between December, 2005 and May, 2006 in the UK, Vietnam and India:

- Are FTSE in a position to give their consent freely?
- What can be done to improve the chances of gaining informed consent in this research context?

\textsuperscript{15} According to Barrio and the Working Party (1999) such introductory guides for semi-structured interviews should be sufficiently unstructured to allow interviewees to fully articulate their views about a topic yet structured enough to allow the interviewer to introduce limits on the direction of dialogue.
• If gaining informed consent is highly problematic, what other safeguards need to be in place to enable the research to proceed?

Research participants were mostly tape-recorded and/or notes were taken during or following, each interview (details of which were modified to preserve anonymity and confidentiality where necessary).

Where necessary, translators were used to facilitate interviews and consideration was given to select appropriate translators with direct experience of each research setting.  

5. Research Participants

Research participant consent was obtained prior to conducting interviews. All participants reserved the right to modify and/or withdraw their consent to participation throughout the research. Personally sensitive information was managed and protected.

6. Data Analysis

Interviews were analysed by identifying the relevant issues in relation to the themes of the research. These were compared to relevant literature corroborating, conflicting

16 This was aimed to help translators to: act as a guide to and translator of cultural norms and, at times, jargon or language (Fontana & Frey, 1994:367) and thereby help to reduce: added layer of meanings, biases and interpretations that may lead to disastrous misunderstanding (Fontana & Frey, 1994:367).
and/or offering new insights.

7. Ethical Considerations

I avoided direct interviews with FTSE. The focus of my research was on individuals and agencies working directly with FTSE and/or with direct knowledge and experience of FTSE in the UK, Vietnam and India. This approach provided me with a thorough, first-hand awareness of the research context, without potentially jeopardising the work of service providers or the aims of anti-trafficking initiatives. The identity and privacy of shelter homes has been protected as far as possible by excluding any identifiable features.

I have previous experience working with I/NGOs and UN agencies in Asia, the Middle East and Africa. I consider this experience invaluable and necessary to enable ethical research to be conducted within this sensitive and potentially high-risk area.

8. Ethical Orientation

The Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP, 2002) and Ethical Guidelines for Researching Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP, 2004) were followed.
9. Research Governance

A conscientious consideration of research governance requirements applicable to the research being undertaken. The Ethics Committee (2005-06) at the University of East Anglia, prior to starting the research undertook a thorough risk assessment of the potential for harm to participants and to the integrity of the research (including the competence of the researcher to undertake such research).
DEFINITIONS

This chapter briefly defines and explores some of the concepts referred to throughout this paper.

1.1 Human Trafficking

There is no consensus on the precise definition of human trafficking. The ideology of a particular government and I/NGO, or a country’s specific trafficking problem, challenges the validity of a universal definition.

The following organisations have attempted a definition; the United Nations (UN), the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women (GAATW), the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) and the European Parliament\textsuperscript{17}. Each of these definitions refer to human trafficking as a process or series of legal and/or illegal acts involving the recruitment, transportation and control of the trafficked person at the place of origin, transit and/or destination (Anderson & Davidson, 2002) rather than one single clearly definable act\textsuperscript{18}.

\textsuperscript{17} Suwal et al (2001) propose three approaches to anti-trafficking initiatives; the prohibitionist, abolitionist and regulationist. According to Fernando (1993) the prohibitionist approach prevails in many Anglo-American countries and is based on morality issues. In these countries trafficking is a criminal offence in which prostitution and all those involved (including FTSE) receive punishment. The regulationist approach or sex work/labour model, decriminalises all aspects of prostitution and legitimises the prostitution of adult women as a sector of labour. These two opposing perspectives are joined by the abolitionists who call for the criminalisation of those involved in the selling and procurement of FTSE and view prostitutes as victims rather than criminals (cited in Suwal et al, 2001).

\textsuperscript{18} The terms trafficking and smuggling are often used indiscriminately to describe two similar but distinct phenomenon. Smuggling involves the full consent of the individual and describes the process whereby migrants pay agents to assist entry into a country illegally. The agent is paid to bring the individual into a country and once they have arrived at their destination, the smuggled individual is released and has no further relationship with the agent. Trafficking in contrast, involves a continual relationship, the trafficked person is coerced or duped by the agent and on arrival at the destination country is exploited, often having little control over his/her life.
The European Parliament defines human trafficking as:

*The illegal action of someone who, directly or indirectly, encourages a citizen from a third country to enter or stay in another country in order to exploit that person by using deceit or any other form of coercion or by abusing that person’s vulnerable situation or administrative status.* (Rijken, 2003) (cited in Obuah, 2005:6)

GAATW emphasise a distinction between females who are trafficked and forced without their consent into sex work and females who knowingly travel to engage in sex work but are subsequently forced to work in abusive conditions and held in debt bondage.\(^{19}\) (Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children [WCRWC] 2005).

In contrast, prostitution abolitionists such as CATW consider all forms of trafficking for sex work to be exploitative\(^{20}\) and a form of violence against women (Cwikel & Hoban, 2005). This abolitionist framework views consenting sex workers as victims and that a woman’s voluntary entry into sex work is propelled through social, cultural and economic factors (e.g., economic impoverishment of the family, domestic violence and/or sexual abuse in childhood). Raymond et al (2002) in their Comparative Study of Women Trafficked in the Migration Process, found that young women circumscribed by structural factors are compelled to make final straw survival strategies. These are not real choices, rather they are taken in the face of severe constraints and lack or absence of actual or perceived alternatives. This

\(^{19}\) Debt bondage commonly occurs when traffickers deceive young women with false promises of employment or education. Having gained her trust the trafficker confiscates travel and identification documents and forces her to work to repay the debts including travel costs, rent, food, clothes and other expenses and interest charges. Over time these debts are arbitrarily increased, making repayment virtually impossible (WCRWC, 2005) and forcing FTSE to remain trapped in the exploitative, powerless and vulnerable situation.

\(^{20}\) Both trafficking and smuggling commonly involve illegal working and trafficking always involves exploitation (Peck, 2005) and undermines national minimum wage and labour standards.
approach calls for the criminalisation of traffickers, brothel owners, pimps\textsuperscript{21} and clients.

Kyle & Koslowski (2000) argue that like slaves, trafficked persons are forced to work in various sectors and industries and their exploitation is an integral feature of the modern global economy. The definition of slavery according to the Slavery Convention (1926) refers to:

\textit{The status or condition of a person over whom any or all the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised.} (Free the Slaves, 2004) (cited in Obuah, 2005:7)

However, unlike slaves trafficked persons are often aware that they will be smuggled illegally across international borders and may sometimes even be aware of the nature of the work, but they are unaware of the terms of the contract (Kyle & Koslowski 2001).

In November 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (herein referred to as the UN Trafficking Protocol, 2000). This broad and internationally accepted definition is embodied in the supplement to the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime. The protocol provided for the first time, a definition of the term trafficking in a legally binding international instrument:

\textit{(a) Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other...}

\textsuperscript{21} Collins Concise Dictionary: 1. A person who solicits for a prostitute or brothel. 2. A person who procures sexual gratification for another. (Hanks et al, 1988:866)
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;

(b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;

(c) 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;

(d) ‘Child’ shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

(UN Trafficking Protocol, 2000:Art. 3)

While the protocol was regarded as a necessarily bold attempt to address the problem of human trafficking, the protection of trafficked persons and development of a human rights framework:

...to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, paying particular attention to women and children; to protect and assist the victims of such trafficking, with full respect for their human rights; and to promote co-operation among countries that have ratified the protocol in order to achieve those objectives. (UN, 2002) (cited in Obuah, 2005:21)

\[22\] The UN definition includes both those who recruit and/or sell the trafficked person and those who receive and/or purchase the person and hold him/her in forced labour or abusive conditions (UN Trafficking Protocol, 2000).
It is nonetheless argued (Obuah, 2005) that its weakness lies in its lack of policing powers and enforcement procedures:

...like other conventions and protocols of the UN, it lacks any force as implementation and interpretation of its contents depend on the willingness of State parties to incorporate the stipulations into their domestic laws. (Obuah, 2005:22)

Some of the key aspects of human trafficking are summarised by Caouette (1998) to include violence or threat of deprivation to freedom of movement, deception or misrepresentation of working conditions or nature of work, abuse of authority, confiscation of identity and travel documents and debt bondage.

These factors distinguish trafficking from other forms of migration and although similar causal factors may influence trafficking and migration (trafficking networks often follow migration routes and patterns), the trafficking phenomenon is distinct from both legal and illegal migration (Jagori, 1998) (cited in Obuah, 2005). When the element of deception is present in migration, it is not necessarily recognisable as trafficking until the destination is reached and the deception is revealed. Therefore, an individual may at one stage of the process be a migrant only to become a trafficked person later (The Asia Foundation & Population Council [TAF/PC] 2000).

23 The tendency to equate migration and trafficking too closely negates women’s right to move and may reinforce economic vulnerability among those individuals and populations who depend on migration to survive (Obuah, 2005).

24 NGOs repeatedly report (WCRWC, 2005) that service provision for FTSE is often limited due to the tendency of governments to view trafficking as a migration issue rather than a human rights violation: The protection of trafficked persons is still not systematically addressed to ensure that those victims that require sustained assistance receive it and are not wrongly returned to their homelands where their lives and safety may be in jeopardy (WCRWC, 2005:18).
Despite the ratification of several international conventions (see Appendix 2) and regional policies in support of the UN protocol\textsuperscript{25}, the trafficking of women and children not only continues but is also believed to be increasing (Obuah, 2005).

This is thought to be due in part, to the inadequate attention given to the lower status and position of women in relation to men in society, rendering women and children more vulnerable to trafficking (Upadhyay et al, 2004). The response of governments has also been criticised as inadequate due to i) denial of the problem ii) objectification of trafficked persons and failure to consider their human rights, iii) failure by governments to differentiate trafficking from migration and iv) lack of a universally applicable and comprehensive definition (Jordon, 2002).

1.2 Social Science Research - An Ethical Paradox

According to Geertz (1988), despite the vagaries of human motivation, commitment and intent, the only true instrument we have for social research is the human voice\textsuperscript{26}. The challenge for researchers is to find their own voice and perspective and to do this requires an understanding of social context, or:

\textit{Wearing the coats we weave for others}. (Geertz, 1988)

\textsuperscript{25} For example, the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) in 2002 signed the Prevention and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution Convention.

\textsuperscript{26} I also refer to the term voice to mean the extent of accurate representation of FTSE experiences either by themselves or by a second party (e.g., researcher, information gatherer) on their behalf.
However, if research is to be a catalyst for social change (Schratz & Walker, 1995) researchers must break free of their research community (social context) conventions. The researcher must conform to one set of expectations to gain entry to the research community but must simultaneously exercise other, often contradictory, capabilities:

*Being members of the research community gives us licence to practice but it does not in itself provide the personal resources of motivation, commitment, reflexive capacity, intellectual skill or courage that we require if we are to do research. Indeed if we become over-socialised into the community we will probably lose any capacity we had to do so.* (Schratz & Walker, 1995:139)

Bar-On (1991) describes the process of his coming to terms with this paradox in his research with the children of those who had carried out atrocities in the Death Camps during the Holocaust. As he attempts to condense his research data into generalisations, theory or explanation, he comes to realise that much of what he had done and what he knew as a result defied such summarising tendencies. In concluding an account of the methodological process, he wrote:

*I began writing articles about the working-through process. I was in the mood for summarising. But when I had finished the articles and given them to a few of my colleagues, their comments again gave the feeling that I had missed something. I was still trying to be the researcher, this time looking not for variables that correlate significantly but for patterns that emerge as raw data, to let readers crystallise their own concepts or conclusions. Only after going over the interviews for the third time did I finally decide to write a book in which readers still had to edit out my emotionally loaded or analysing comments again and again. I had to ‘let go’ of the ‘researcher’ in me completely and let the ‘person’ who was part of the encounters
speak freely. This was for me, extremely exposing, tearing away all the previous ‘coats’ I had wanted to put on this material, on myself. (Bar-On, 1991:339)

1.3 Ethical Research

In many countries, the problem of FTSE is a politically, socially and personally sensitive often-stigmatised issue, resulting in many ethical dilemmas for researchers:

*Ethics is a way of explicitly examining moral aspects of human behaviour. Professional ethics are particularly, but not exclusively, concerned with the moral challenges arising from the power imbalance between the service provider and the recipient and the integrity of the research. These are complex and often inter-related issues where the retrospective analysis of experience generates new insights.* (Bond, 2004a:4)

According to the Declaration of Helsinki (1964) research should not be conducted without the informed consent of the potential research participant, irrespective of the benefit to wider society. This autonomy as a form of ethical protection resulted in any person deemed incompetent to consent for research being automatically excluded. However, this overtly autonomous and rights-based approach has undergone several revisions since 1964 and an increasingly utilitarian approach has emerged over the years.

The subsequent evolution of an ethical code of conduct from this original Declaration, has not overridden the need for autonomy, but rather works alongside it (Smyth & Williamson, 2004) with a focus on four prima facie moral principles:
• Respect for an individual's capacity for autonomy and independent decision-making
• Non-maleficence or 'above all, do no harm'
• Beneficence, or the pursuit of benefit from actions in balance between risks and costs
• Pursuit of distributive justice that ensures the greatest will accrue to the largest number of persons (Beauchamp & Childress, 2001) (cited in Cwikel & Hoban, 2005:6)

Most organisations also encompass their own code of conduct relating to ethical standards. However, it is not always possible to resolve ethical issues by referring to available ethical guidelines. The Declaration of Helsinki and the various ethical guidance documents produced thereafter, often contradict one another (Smyth & Williamson, 2004).

The process of external ethical review seeks to assess the merits of a research proposal and sets standards for ethical good-practice. However, where there is no ethical review process, such decisions are often subject to the individual interpretation and integrity of the researcher (Smyth & Williamson, 2004). It is also important to recognise that both an Ethics Committee and an individual researcher may neither have the necessary experience or knowledge to make fully-informed decisions regarding ethical issues in research with populations about whom little is known.

27 Legal frameworks and regulation influence how research ethics and issues, such as freedom to informed consent are managed. In terms of legal frameworks, Article 8 of The Human Rights Act 1998, protects the right to respect private and family life and supports the need for consent to participate in research (Masson 2004) (cited in Wiles et al, 2005). The Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998 also relates to the disclosure of data or information about (potential) participants, the need for consent to the participant’s data, the use to which the data is put (i.e., that this should be limited to that for which consent has been sought) and the storage of such data.
1.4 Risk and Vulnerability

In documenting the potential risks and benefits of participating in trauma-focused research studies Newman & Kaloupek (2004) found:

Current, limited evidence suggests that most individuals make favourable cost-benefit appraisals regarding their participation. Although a subset of participants report strong negative emotions or unanticipated distress, the majority of these do not regret or negatively evaluate the overall experience. Continuing efforts are needed to identify individuals at risk of unfavourable reactions to research participation. A systematic empirical approach to evaluating participant experience in all human research is recommended. (Newman & Kaloupek, 2004: 383)

The definition of risk is often made with reference to the potential physical or psychological harm, discomfort or stress to a human participant that research may generate. However, wider risks could include risk to a participant’s personal social standing, privacy, personal values and beliefs, their links to family and their community, as well as the adverse effects of revealing information that relates to illegal sexual or deviant behaviour (Wiles et al, 2005):

All researchers must accommodate individual differences in risk-benefit perspectives when constructing study procedures and writing consent forms, but they often lack a reliable point of reference for decisions about how to do so. As a result, researchers resort to common sense approaches that leave them vulnerable to widespread decision-making errors... (Newman & Kaloupek, 2004:383)

It is also necessary to consider the general approach and ethical framework applied by the FTSE service provider. This will enable the researcher to work within the
overall aims and objectives of the service provider who aims at the rehabilitation, recovery and protection of the FTSE. Research that jeopardises the overall objectives of FTSE service provision may be deemed unethical.\textsuperscript{28}

Literature on vulnerability refers to the characteristics of a group or individual who are partially or entirely unable to make autonomous decisions about whether to participate in research (Tee & Lathlean, 2004). Anything that impairs a participant’s ability to make free informed and meaningful choices therefore renders them vulnerable. However, vulnerability may only become apparent during the research process or only exist at certain times and not in all situations\textsuperscript{29}. Determining the vulnerability of participants often requires the researcher to make informed yet subjective judgements. These may be based on observations and information, for example from FTSE case files and recommendations from gatekeepers\textsuperscript{30} and psychological assessments, in order to determine a potential participant’s autonomy to freely consent to research.

\textsuperscript{28} The main focus of service provision for FTSE recovery is: \textit{To improve the psychological quality of the victim’s life in the first period of emerging from the dark part of the world}. To assist the FTSE to start changing their self-perception from victim to survivor (to restore elements of identity), moving from a state of depression and fear to the awareness of one’s self and others, recognising their own vulnerability, as well as their own resiliency (IOM, 2004).

\textsuperscript{29} A study by Stanley et al (1981) challenged the assumption that people with mental health problems could or would not make appropriate decisions about research participation. They explored whether hospitalised psychiatric patients would participate in high risk research more often than non-psychiatric hospitalised patients. Both groups were in a secure unit, interviewed within 5 days of their admission and reported to be stressed. They were a captive population, participating in a study that would not directly benefit them and conducted by their service providers. The study suggests that there was no difference in decisions to participate in studies of high or low risks. In other words, their vulnerability did not correlate with their willingness to participate in research. The study challenges the belief that people with mental health problems are less capable of participating in the consent process than other people and supports researchers’ efforts to engage service users more meaningfully in research (Tee & Lathlean, 2004).

\textsuperscript{30} Collins Concise Dictionary: 1. A person who has charge of a gate and controls who may pass through it. (Hanks et al, 1988:462)
THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING PHENOMENON

You should note the difference between a small trafficking gang and a large network...Any bar owner or group of bar owners in Greece can send someone up to southern Bulgaria to buy women for cash. The cost of a girl in that area is $1,000, or, if you negotiate, you might be able to get two for $1,000. Best to try on Monday for cheap prices, because most trafficking happens at the weekends. Mondays are slow, so you can get the leftovers. A network on the other hand...has the ability to bargain and complete financial transactions from a distance. Simply call Moscow, ask for women, and they will be sent to Romania and from there on through Bulgaria to Greece. The parties don’t even have to know each other. The importer simply says, ‘I want so-and-so many first quality women, so-and-so many second quality, so-and so many third quality...Between 1990 and 2000 the total amount earned in Greece from trafficked women, that is to say those who were forced into this kind of prostitution, was 5.5 billion dollars...

(Lazos, 1990) (cited in Cockburn, 2003:10)
Ethical research with FTSE requires a consideration of the socio-economic, political and cultural factors that may pre-dispose a young woman to trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation. The stereotypical and sensationalist aspects of the phenomenon, isolated from their context, have tended to overwhelm the much greater complexity of the issues actually involved.

2.1 Recruitment

Traffickers recruit FTSE either by living in, or establishing local partnerships within her community. Two models help to explain the recruitment process, the soft model and the hard model (Suwal et al, 2001). The soft model is relatively non-coercive in that the trafficker seeks the consent of the family. This is often based on false promises made by the trafficker to deceive the family and the young woman, for example false employment opportunities or marriage. Young women are also deceived and sold by husbands and in particular step-parents, who are most often found to be responsible for the sale of step-children into trafficking networks (Suwal et al, 2001). There have also been many reports of recruitment through the use of professional husband traffickers, in these cases young men profess to love, marry and provide a better life for the young woman in a distant city or other country:

Now the trafficking network is changing. Some girls marry legally Taiwan man, but for only a short time – one week, one month. The men select women and marry them and take them to Taiwan and then they are sold to other men. (Interview with Dr Le Thi Quy, Hanoi University, Vietnam, 12 April 2006)
Approximately 35% of FTSE from Nepal are trafficked to India under the pre-text of marriage or better employment (Suwal et al, 2001):

In the soft model of trafficking, an agent who is often the relative or a close neighbour makes contact with parents and tells the good story of employment and earnings he could secure for their daughter...As parents are poor and in need of money, they are ready to send their daughter, even without knowing the nature and circumstances in which their daughter has to work. (Suwal et al, 2001:16)

Organisations such as the WCRWC working with FTSE report many instances of domestic violence and sexual abuse and rape of young women prior to trafficking.

With little recourse to government protection such vulnerable young women and children are prime targets for traffickers:

A social service agency that works with trafficked persons reported that it had assisted girls from Sierra Leone as young as 13 years old. In at least two cases, the girls had been raped while living in refugee camps. As a result, they were ostracised by the community and forced to leave. Both were then trafficked to the UK. (Interview with POPPY Project) (cited in WCRWC, 2005:16)

The rape of young women is also a recruitment method used by traffickers who are aware that their victims will be ostracised and forced to leave their communities. This more coercive form of trafficking describes the hard model in which traffickers use deliberate force (e.g., kidnapping, physical, psychological and/or sexual abuse).

31 Also known as the sending, source country or country of origin.
32 Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children.
33 The conventional definition of rape is the perpetration of an act of sexual intercourse with a woman against her will and consent, whether her will is overcome by force or fear resulting from the threat of force or by drugs or intoxicants or when due to mental deficiency, she is incapable of exercising rational judgement or when she is below an arbitrary age of consent (Kaplan & Sadock, 1998). Rape expresses power or anger and sex is rarely the dominant issue (DSM-IV, 1994). In a case of statutory rape, intercourse is unlawful between a man more than 16 years of age and a woman under the age of consent (which varies from 14 to 21 years depending on the jurisdiction).
It is also important to recognise that FTSE is not only an issue of female victims and male exploiters. More and more women can be counted among the traffickers, including women who are former victims of trafficking (IOM, 2004).

2.2 Magnitude

The difficulty of quantifying the extent of the problem is due, in part, to the clandestine nature of trafficking and, in part, to the lack of consensus on the definition of trafficking. (UNDP, 2005) (cited in Suwal et al, 2001:4)

Statistics on trafficking are difficult to collect\(^{34}\) and governments and I/NGOs have produced only broad estimates. This is particularly apparent in countries where the government does not prioritise\(^{35}\) the research and collection of data on trafficking and FTSE (IOM, 2001). FTSE are also often fearful or reluctant to report their experiences to police or those perceived to be in authority (Peck, 2005). FTSE may also escape and disappear from a transit or destination country, be murdered or commit suicide and thus go unreported and fail to appear in country statistics.

\(^{34}\) Perrin et al (2001) in their research on the Challenges of Child Sex Slavery and Trafficking in Cambodia reported the difficulty in determining accurate figures for the number of FTSE in Cambodia and suggest six contributing factors: a) the illicit nature of the sex industry b) transience and nature of FTSE c) demographic data on the population alone is not well documented e) security risks of monitoring or recording data regarding FTSE through direct observation f) information becomes rapidly obsolete due to the constant flow of FTSE and evolution of the problem and g) problems of definitions of FTSE. Steinfatt et al (2002) however, argue that although these six factors may influence the way in which research on FTSE is conducted, they can be taken into account.

\(^{35}\) Governments often do not take adequate steps to protect FTSE particularly where human trafficking is viewed as a migration control issue rather than a human rights violation (WCRWC, 2005). Consequently, FTSE may be deported from a transit or destination country and returned to their source country without adequate consideration for their safety or well being. Local integration in the transit or destination country and resettlement policies are urgently needed.
Data is therefore often i) unverifiable ii) has no original research from which it was composed and iii) has no computations or interim data summaries available from smaller scale data sets (Steinfatt et al, 2002). In fact, it appears that many statistics may be little more than estimates or pure fabrications (Steinfatt et al, 2002):

*Accurate data is difficult to obtain, however anecdotal evidence, discussions with practitioners, and agreed estimations suggest that trafficking, particularly in women and in children, has increased in scope and magnitude, especially for prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation.* (Communiqué of the Ministerial Conference of the G-8 Countries on Combating Transnational Organised Crime, 1999) (cited in UNIFEM & UNIAP, 2000:5).

Despite a paucity of accurate data, UN figures suggest that approximately 3 million people are trafficked across international borders each year (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002) and that people trafficking is one of the fastest growing and most lucrative areas of global criminal activity (USAID, 2004):

*In 1997, the UN estimated that procurers, smugglers and corrupt public officials engaged in international trafficking in persons extracted US$7billion in profits from their activities. If these calculations are accurate, trafficking in human beings is now more lucrative than the international trade in illicit weapons.* (USAID, 1999) (cited in UNIFEM & UNIAP, 2000:5).

The following estimates illustrate both the potential severity of human trafficking as well as the difficulty in determining the magnitude of trafficking, FTSE and forced labour:

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36 In 1930, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted the Forced Labour Convention (ILO Convention No.29). Article 2(1) of this Convention defines forced labour 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. The ILO Convention’s definition focuses on the exaction of involuntary labour through coercive means and thereby retains the link between forced labour and slavery (Kaye, 2001).
UN Economic and Social Council (UNESCO) (2004) over 1.2 million children trafficked globally each year.

International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2003) approximately 27 million people held in some form of bonded labour world-wide at any given time. Of this figure, approximately 8 million are minors forced into prostitution (Free the Slaves, 2003a).

Approximately 2.5 million people in forced labour at any given time as a result of trafficking (ILO, 2005). This figure includes only those trafficked across international borders and does not include persons trafficked internally within a country.

2.3 Socio-Demographics

As with refugee populations, women and children constitute the majority of trafficked persons. Pryce (2006) estimates that approximately 80% of persons trafficked annually across international borders are female and as many as half of those are minors (Pryce, 2006).

Research reports the average age of FTSE has decreased over the past decade from 14-16 years to 10-14 years (Ghirmire, 1999) (cited in Suwal et al, 2001).

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37 Although a breakdown of trafficking statistics by age and sex exists, the range varies considerably according to the research source.
Research conducted by the Central Department of Population Studies (CDPS) with FTSE found that the average age of first being trafficked was 15 years and of those trafficked between the ages of 9-18 years, approximately 25% were first trafficked under the age of 14 years. They also found that more than 50% were trafficked before the age of 16 years (CDPS, 2001).

In research conducted with FTSE working in brothels in Nepal (Suwal et al, 2001), 54% were found to have worked for 1-2 years, 33% for 3-4 years and 13% for 4 or more years, prior to their escape or rescue by police, authorities or I/NGOs. However, a study by Upadhyay et al (2004) found the years-spent working to be much longer than these suggest. For example, of the total 60% of FTSE who had remained for more than 3 years in brothels, 32% had been found to spend between 4-7 years and 27% had remained for longer than 7 years.

2.4 Geographical Routes

Trafficking affects mostly all countries, although not all equally (WCRWC, 2005). Traffickers often exploit existing or emerging migration routes. Traffickers transport FTSE from the source country through transit countries to finally arrive at the destination country. It may not be until arrival at the destination country that (commonly falsified) passports are confiscated, the process of seasoning\textsuperscript{38} begins and her situation becomes apparent.

\textsuperscript{38}Seasoning involves practices such as change of name, confiscation of money and travel/ID documents, coupled with violence including beatings, gang rape and death threats. The purpose is to break the will of the FTSE and to distance her from her previous life. It is a well institutionalised mechanism of control to ensure obedience, enslavement and forced identification with and subordination to her trafficker (D'Cunha, 1991).
Trafficking occurs domestically within a country (often from poverty stricken rural villages and towns to major cities) as well as from poorer countries and countries in economic, social and political crisis (e.g., Asia, Latin America, Africa) and new market economies (e.g., Russia, Ukraine and other former Soviet countries)\(^3\) to the wealthier and more politically and socially stable countries of Western Europe, Australia, Japan, the US and Canada (Raymond et al, 2002).

Eastern Europe has been identified as the largest source country for FTSE (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002) with an estimated 140,000 young women brought to the UK each year, mostly from Albania\(^4\), Latvia and the Ukraine (Burrell, 2002). Research on trafficking in Western Europe found between 2,000 and 6,000 women are trafficked into the Italian sex industry each year from countries throughout Eastern Europe (IOM, 2001)\(^5\).

There is also growing concern at the increase of trafficking within Africa. A pan-African conference held in Nigeria in 2000 reported approximately 1,200 Nigerian FTSE deported back to Nigeria between 1999 and 2000. The Ghana Immigration Department also estimates that over 3,500 Ghanaian FTSE were trafficked between 1998 and 2000 (Peck, 2005). Most of these FTSE had been trafficked to neighbouring countries such as Nigeria and Cote d’Ivoire, but also to Lebanon, Syria,

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\(^3\) As a result of the social and economic upheavals following the fall of communism and various regional conflicts, FTSE has grown dramatically from Eastern European countries formerly part of the Soviet Union (US Senate Subcommittee, 2000).

\(^4\) Albanians are reported to operate 70% of brothels operating in London and 75% of the females working in them are from Eastern Europe (Burrell, 2002). Research also indicates that Albanian traffickers are particularly cruel in their physical, psychological and sexual abuse and exploitation of FTSE (Boudreaux, 2001).

\(^5\) "the pattern of trafficking is different from that in Central and Eastern Europe with victims of trafficking coming from a much wider range of source countries. For example, Nigerian women are trafficked to Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands, Thai and Brazilian women have been trafficked to Great Britain, Ukrainian women to the Balkans and Germany, and smaller groups of women have been trafficked throughout Europe. (IOM, 2001:6)
the US and Western Europe, in particular Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands (Peck, 2005).

On arrival in the UK\textsuperscript{42}, the young women are taken to brothels (Somerset, 2004):

Conservative estimates suggest that during 1998 at least double the reported number of women – 142 – may have been trafficked into the UK. Taking the broadest set of assumptions, however, it may be estimated that ten times this number could have been so trafficked. It is recognised that these estimates are speculative, but they represent the best information that is currently available. (Policing and Reducing Crime Unit, 2000:4)

2.5 Demand and Supply

Trafficking cannot be adequately addressed through short-term and micro projects. It is a national development issue, linked to larger regional and global development processes. (UNIFEM and UNIAP, 2002:15)

Although the commercial sex industry has been increasing since 1970, there appears to be no single explanation for the cause or increase in FTSE. However, it may be possible to apply the traditional supply push and demand pull model of migration to the global FTSE industry:

Most of the people reside in remote villages where life is full of hardship, and they often find it difficult to manage for two meals a day...compels men to do anything for

\textsuperscript{42} Research conducted by ECPAT on trafficking into the UK (2001) concluded that the main group being trafficked was West African children (predominantly Nigerian girls) for prostitution. The studies found that many arrive into the UK as unaccompanied minors, claim asylum and are taken into the care of social services. Once in care, they follow pre-arranged plans to contact their trafficker. They do not disclose their traffickers identity or attempt to escape due to threats that they and their family will be harmed or killed (Somerset, 2004).
survival and the question of morality takes second place. (Ghimire, 1991) (cited in Suwal et al, 2001:23)

The following summary highlights some of the key factors that may influence the demand and supply of FTSE:

**Social and Cultural Variables:**

- Social value systems in countries where gender discrimination, hierarchical religious or social caste systems and early marriage define the low status of women and their sexual commodification (Suwal et al, 2001).

- Low levels of female education and/or awareness of trafficking (Ghimire, 1991) (cited in Suwal et al, 2001).


**Dysfunctional Families and Re-victimisation:**

- A considerable number of FTSE disclose maltreatment at the hands of relatives or step-family prior to trafficking. For example, many FTSE commonly cite domestic violence, sexual abuse in childhood, substance abuse and alcoholism prevalent in the household. Suwal et al (2001) found that more than 50% of trafficked persons

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\(^4\) This myth is common in some parts of Africa and has also resulted in the frequent rape of young women and girls by HIV infected men (UNICEF, 2005).
reported at least one type of maltreatment from their family members and in particular step-families:

*Multiple marriage and remarriage associated with large family size lead to the vulnerability of children...are always deprived from education, nutritional food intake, affection and care if they do not have their own parents, particularly mother.* (Suwal et al, 2001:24)

Krahe (2000) observes a positive correlation in young women who have been sexually abused during childhood and victims of sexual aggression in later life, relative to females who have not experienced early sexual abuse. He suggests that people learn to associate aggression or satisfaction of an aggressor’s needs with sexuality, they may not be able to take charge of their own sexuality neither have the resources or incentives to act for their own good. Alternatively, they may become dependent on sexually exploitative relationships for affection (Krahe, 2000):

*It has been argued that girls who leave home as a result of their abuse experiences are put at greater risk. Also their vulnerability may be increased by feelings of low self-esteem.* (Corby, 2006:203)

Russell (1986) found that 65% of women, who were sexually abused as children, were victims of subsequent rape or attempted rape. Similarly, Briere (1984) found that 49% of his sample of women sexually abused as children had been violently assaulted by men in later life.
Demographic Variables:

- High fertility and large family size among impoverished households places increased pressure on already limited resources, encouraging the migration of family members (particularly women) as a means of supplementing household income (Suwal et al, 2001). Government policies, such as those in the Philippines aimed at promoting migration for labour without the protection and enforcement of women’s rights as migrants, put women at high risk of trafficking (Raymond et al, 2002).

Natural Disasters and Community Displacement:

- Displacement and migration due to natural disasters and the subsequent lack of adequate service provision for displaced populations, increases the vulnerability of young women and children to potential traffickers.

- Similarly, regional and international conflict or threat of conflict may increase the vulnerability of young women to trafficking (Suwal et al, 2001).

Governmental and Legal Variables:

Upadhyay et al (2004) found the lack of adequate protection for young women from traffickers in Nepal was determined by:

i. Lack of political commitment to anti-trafficking legislation

ii. Inadequate and ambiguous legal support for trafficked persons

iii. Inadequate legal enforcement and protection for vulnerable young women

iv. Inadequate and ineffective intervention programmes for trafficked persons
Upadhyay et al (2004) also reports the involvement of corrupt police, border guards and other authorities in development of the FTSE industry. For example, police at checkpoints in Nepal take bribes from traffickers and assist in the illegal transportation of young women and children (Ghimire, 1997) (cited in Suwal et al, 2001).

**Globalisation and Commodification:**

Globalisation, accompanied by low-cost transport and communications, the lowering of national borders (Obuah, 2005) and global consumerism, has been argued to have influenced a perception of young women as freely accessible and exploitable commodities in a free global market (Batistella et al, 1997). The media is also complicit in the increased sexual objectification and commodification of young women:

*Sexual exploitation does not happen in a vacuum... advertising and objectification of women reinforce trafficking in migrant women for sexual exploitation in Latin American and Caribbean countries.* (Raymond et al, 2002:44)

This brief overview of causative factors indicates that not only poverty drives or forces young women to migrate:

*It is the gendered dimensions of most of these push and pull factors that account for the increased numbers of women who migrate, many of whom are trafficked into the sex industry.* (Raymond et al, 2002:12)
2.6 FTSE Service Provision

I was in a small village until they told me I was going to the capital, to a safe shelter where they’d protect me. I had no idea what the building was when I walked in. I just saw the girls and was a bit afraid. Why were they locked up? One of the girls stabbed her hands with needles, because she had been locked up there for nine months. She couldn’t go out or back to her country. She had been promised she would be able to go back home in a month. But they did not let her go because she had nowhere to go. The windows were closed. The doors were locked day and night. Only when the police came to visit us were the doors opened...When I went to the interview with the psychiatrist...she made me remember things she shouldn’t have. She asked me where I had gone and why...things she shouldn’t have asked me...’ Could you refuse to talk to her? ‘No, I couldn’t. None of the girls had that option’.  

FTSE are rarely able to extricate themselves independently from their exploitative situation. If FTSE come to the attention of the authorities it is often as a result of interception at checkpoints or brothel checks by police.

Once recovered, FTSE are sent to any one of a number of different facilities, variously managed, and funded either jointly or independently by individual governments, I/NGOs and/or private organisations. FTSE may be sent to a transit centre and await deportation to her country of origin or to a shelter home, where

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44 Video testimony of a trafficked young woman screened at the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation meeting in Warsaw (2002). The young woman was a minor when she was trafficked (OSCE/ODIHR, 2004).

45 Locating and identifying FTSE is a fundamental problem in all anti-trafficking policy. FTSE often mistrust state authorities, where FTSE are convinced that she will be offered employment by her trafficker she will attempt to cross borders without exposing her trafficker. Knowing that border police may try to arrest them increases her dependency on the trafficker. In addition, FTSE often fear violent retaliation by traffickers against themselves and family members and compounds her fear of deportation due to her illegal status.

46 Many women’s NGOs, overwhelmed with trafficking cases have attempted to establish shelters for trafficked persons. However, many of these shelters have had to close, while others are overcrowded and insufficiently funded (UNICEF, UNOCHR and OSCE/ODIHR, 2005).
immediate support is provided in either her country of origin or while she remains in the transit or destination country.

The aim of a shelter home is to provide direct assistance and/or re-integration support for trafficked persons. The term re-integration is broadly used to include direct assistance such as support in the form of legal representation, health care, social, medical and psychological care and material assistance.

On arrival at a shelter home FTSE may be physically exhausted, confused, disoriented, intensely emotional, distressed and incoherent or unable to recall her experiences (IOM, 2004) and many report re-living their experiences in nightmares or sudden memories. Despite trying to avoid recalling memories they often spontaneously reveal the traumas that they went through, oscillating between restlessness, anxiety and apathy (IOM, 2004). Usually, FTSE undergo a brief diagnostic interview on arrival at a shelter (usually during the first 24 hours) possibly including an assessment of stress and trauma levels. This information is later used to prepare individual development plans and to identify possible long-term therapy (Interview with AFESIP, Vietnam, 10 April, 2006).

Standards and quality of care in shelter homes vary between countries, governments and I/NGOs. Unfortunately, the trauma, maltreatment and human rights abuses associated with trafficking may not end when FTSE are recovered from their

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47 Such re-integration/assistance programmes are viewed as not only a part of the assistance to which victims of human rights violations are entitled, but also as a necessary strategy to help prevent re-trafficking. The lack of support and options available to FTSE following their return make them easy prey for traffickers and re-integration is beginning to be viewed as part of a strategy to empower FTSE to break the trafficking cycle (UNICEF, UNOHCHR and OSCE/ODIHR, 2005).
situation but may continue during shelter programmes\(^{48}\) (OSCE/ODIHR, 2004). FTSE may be required to stay in a shelter for an extended period if they are required for legal or medical purposes, or if they cannot be returned safely to their home and/or country of origin\(^ {49}\) (IOM, 2004):

*The experience in the shelter can be re-traumatising if they are given little information about the expected duration of their stay or the reason why they are kept longer if they wish to return to their country of origin as soon as possible.* (IOM, 2004:13)

\(^{48}\) I/NGOs, government and law-enforcement agencies often lack the expertise and experience needed to deal with the particular needs of individual FTSE. Police may be required to detain FTSE for their activities or attempt to obtain information on organised crime syndicates. Countries of origin may be unwilling to readmit the FTSE if she does not possess any legal identification or travel documentation and I/NGOs may lack the resources to ensure the safety and recovery of FTSE. Therefore, even after FTSE are freed from their traffickers, they may continue to feel trapped, controlled, maltreated and unable to make decisions about their own lives (OSCE/ODIHR, 2004).

\(^{49}\) The UN Trafficking Protocol (2000) states that countries of origin should facilitate and accept the return of trafficked persons with due regard for their safety and without undue or unreasonable delay. The protocol further states that returns shall preferably be voluntary, but does not include provisions for the trafficked person who is expelled from the country of destination. However, for example in South Eastern Europe until 2004, FTSE had no option but to return to their home country if they did not wish to be deported as illegal immigrants (OSCE/ODIHR, 2004).
THE IMPACT OF TRAFFICKING

For I am the first and the last
I am the venerated and the despised
I am the prostitute and the saint
I am the wife and the virgin
I am the mother and the daughter
I am the arms of my mother
I am barren and my children are many
I am the married woman and the spinster
I am the woman who gives birth and she
  Who never procreated
I am the consolation for the pain of birth
  I am the wife and the husband
And it was my man who created me
  I am the mother of my father
  I am the sister of my husband
  And he is my rejected son
  Always respect me
For I am the shameful and the magnificent one

Hymn to Isis, 3rd or 4th century BC,
  Discovered in Nag Hammadi
During the trafficking process, traffickers violate an extensive array of laws in their treatment of victims. They subject them to physical, psychological and sexual violence, hold them in captivity and deny them the right to control over their own bodies, fail to provide a safe and healthy working environment, confiscate their wages and travel documents, and generally subject them to inhuman and degrading treatment, forced labour, slavery-like practices or slavery. (Ministry of Justice, Vietnam, 2004:2)

The impact of trafficking on the individual psyche is a largely neglected area of research. In one of the few studies conducted by Raymond et al (2002), FTSE appeared to present severe and wide-ranging psychological disturbances indicated to be a result of trafficking\(^5\). Their data suggests that depression and anxiety are common amongst FTSE and trauma symptoms and rates of psychopathology were as high as 84% in their sample population. A study by the IOM Kosovo Counter Trafficking (CT) Programme also found that the most common symptoms displayed by FTSE to be acute stress reaction, post traumatic stress disorder, dissociation, acts of deliberate self-harm and depression\(^5\) (IOM, 2002).

Many FTSE are often stigmatised or ostracised and fear violence and re-trafficking if they return home to their communities. Brennan (2005) suggests that such fear often prevent FTSE from describing themselves as trafficked persons (rather they seek help for other issues such as immigration or housing):

...they may not see themselves as victims of trafficking...None of the women tell me I’m a victim of trafficking; rather they say ‘I need help not to get deported.’ (Fletcher, 2003) (cited in Brennan 2005:7)

\(^5\) There is also limited research into the psychological therapy needed for survivors.

\(^5\) Researchers have long argued about the central role that abuse plays in mental distress (Arnold 1994) (cited in Chantler & Smailes, 2004) and the national women’s mental health strategy for the Department of Health, formally recognises the link between abuse and mental disease (DoH, 2004).
Brennan (2005) defines trafficking as part of what Fletcher (2003) describes as a continuum of violence and exploitation. However, each trafficking case has distinct individual characteristics (Brennan, 2005) and organisations experienced in working with FTSE report difficulties in identifying individual FTSE needs:

*Every case is a little bit different, even cases that look similar, there is always some twist, some difference that makes each case unlike the others.* (Zarembka, 2003) (cited in Brennan, 2005:40-41)

The impact of trafficking and sexual exploitation is further compounded by the FTSE life stage (adolescence). It is during or prior to adolescence that the majority of FTSE are trafficked (Raymond et al, 2002). Adolescence is a unique stage of development and transition into adulthood, characterised by significant psychological, hormonal and emotional changes (Frankel, 1998).\(^{52}\)

Hutchison (2005) suggests the following symptoms may present in adolescents in response to traumatic incidents:

i. Dreams of the incident

ii. Avoidance of traumatic reminders and withdrawal from social activity

iii. Guilt for not being able to intervene effectively to assist others that suffered

iv. Sense of foreshortened future with suicidal thoughts and behaviour\(^{53}\)

v. Diminished interest in activities

\(^{52}\) Drawing on Jung’s concept of individuation, Frankel (1998) shows how adolescence expresses through its traumas the urge towards self-realisation. Through case studies, Frankel explores the impact of contemporary culture on the lives of young people and illustrates the practical difficulties therapists face in their work with clients of this age group.

\(^{53}\) Traumatised adolescents tend to engage in high-risk behaviours for example, promiscuity and substance abuse due to feelings of disillusionment and belief that their future is limited (Hutchison, 2005).
vi. Hypervigilance

vii. Intrusive imagery may trigger traumatic memories

viii. Difficulty concentrating

ix. Difficulty sleeping

x. Emotional numbing

xi. Appetite disturbances

xii. Depression

xiii. Anger

xiv. Alcohol and drug use to avoid intrusive recollections

xv. Psychosomatic complaints

(Hutchison, 2005:60-62)

However, Frankel (1998) also acknowledges that such theories must be made in light of the following consideration:

*Our theoretical ideas about the psychology of adolescence dramatically influence what we attend to and value as significant during this period of development. The differing theoretical perspectives rest upon a set of implicit assumptions concerning the course and direction of human development, the nature of the psyche, and the psychological implications of a biological process.* (Frankel, 1998:13)

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54 Traumatised adolescents may appear to be constantly wary and suspicious of other people and situations and are easily agitated by external stimuli and peer interactions may be perceived as hostile (Hutchison, 2005).

55 Sights, sounds, smells and other triggers associated with memories of the traumatic experience may resurface and the trauma is experienced as if it were occurring in the present (Hutchison, 2005).

56 Traumatised adolescents often attempt to emotionally detach themselves in order to avoid feeling retraumatised (Hutchison, 2005).

57 Feelings of irritability and rage are often present in traumatised adolescents. They may have uncontrollable outbursts of temper, resulting in destruction of property and hostility toward others and/or themselves. Social relations can be negatively affected (Hutchison, 2005).
The following psychological, physiological and cultural variables have been outlined below and may be worthy of further exploration by researchers attempting to conduct ethical research with FTSE:

### 3.1 Trauma

A painful or threatening event in a person’s life, the suddenness of which cannot be readily integrated psychologically. Examples can include sexual abuse, rape and other physical violence...and profound losses. The key characteristic of trauma is that it is usually unexpected, unavoidable and overwhelming. Because of these factors it is commonly defended against psychologically and somatically by being blocked off from conscious awareness, temporarily or chronically. (Feltham & Dyden, 2004:243)

Traumatic reactions occur when resistance and self-defence (fight or flight) are not possible. If the fight or flight were successful the traumatic stress is usually released and the individual returns to normal functioning (Rothschild, 1997):

...what turns an experience to be traumatic is not only the interruption of information processing, but the activation of a maladaptive process, i.e., trauma is a threatening experience which turns an adaptive process to a maladaptive one. (Vedat, 2006)

FTSE are subjected to repeated instances of abuse in the form of physical harm (80%), sexual assault (60%) and emotional abuse (80%) (Raymond et al, 2002) and:
An adequate definition of trauma would require the inclusion of both the objective and subjective components of a traumatic experience. (Vedat, 2006)

FTSE have little psychological respite and are often uncertain of the specific nature or timings of the violence and abuse. The FTSE begins to live only for the present, realising that she has no control over her economic, emotional, physical and sexual life (D’Cunha, 1991). Rothschild (1997) suggests that it is at this point that the traumatic event produces significant and long-term psychological and physiological changes (damage) for example, in emotion, cognition and physiological arousal (Rothschild, 1997).

Symptomatic responses to trauma reported by FTSE include disorientation, confusion, anxiety, nightmares, flashbacks, a need to avoid traumatic memories and their associated psychological triggers, the tendency to isolate and detach feelings and an overwhelming sense of fear and mistrust (IOM, 2004).

Research also suggests that for FTSE who have endured prolonged abuse, these symptoms may not be identifiable by them, rather they perceive these responses as obvious and predictable and do not feel the need for them to be explicitly mentioned (IOM, 2004). Feltham and Dryden (2004) describe this normalcy as a survival mechanism used by individuals who have endured prolonged abuse. Research by Browne and Finkelhor (1986) suggests a positive correlation between duration of abuse and traumatic impact on the individual. Abuse of longer duration is

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59 The delay caused by the lengthy, bureaucratic repatriation process from a destination/transit country back to the FTSE country of origin, often further increases anxiety (IOM, 2004).
associated with long-term psychological damage and further compounded when accompanied by violence (Beitchman et al, 1992) (cited in Corby, 2006).

3.2 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

*PTSD disrupts the functioning of those afflicted by it, interfering with the ability to meet their daily needs and perform the most basic tasks. Trauma continues to intrude on the lives of people with PTSD as they relive the life-threatening experiences they have suffered with visual, auditory and/or somatic reality, reacting in mind and body as though such events were still occurring.* (Rothschild, 1997:1)

Box 3:1

**Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

A. *Recurring Intrusive Recollections of the Trauma*: Intrusive thoughts, dreams, flashbacks, dissociative events, intense emotional and physiological distress when re-exposed to trauma associated stimuli

B. *Avoidance of Trauma-Associated Stimuli or Numbing*: Sense of detachment, restricted range of affect, dysphoria, loss of recently acquired developmental skill, sense of a foreshortened future

C. *Persistent Physiological Hyperarousal*: Sleep difficulties, hypervigilance, difficulty concentrating, increased startle response, lability, impulsivity, irritability, physiological hyperactivity

(Perry, 2003:6)

Kaplan and Sadock (1998) define PTSD as a set of symptoms, which develop in response to an extreme traumatic stressor. PTSD is a complex psychobiological condition that can emerge when psychological and somatic stress responses to a
traumatic event\(^6\) are not resolved or released. The individual reacts to the experience with fear and helplessness, persistently re-living the event while simultaneously attempting to avoid recollection. Symptoms continue for more than a month and may significantly impact the individual’s life. The disorder may be especially severe or long lasting when the stressor is of human design (e.g., torture, rape) (Kaplan & Sadock, 1998).

However, not everyone who is exposed to a traumatic event will develop PTSD. Studies indicate that only a fraction of those facing trauma will go on to develop PTSD (Rothschild, 1997). Similarly, treatment for PTSD is dependent on the nature of the traumatic event and the severity of its impact on the individual:

Typically, sufferers will need to confront the event again (particularly in imagery) and fully accept it as a fact in all its details. They need to talk about it and be given ample opportunity for catharsis and working through.\(^6\) (Feltham & Dryden, 2004:169)

3.3 Sexual Abuse

1. The forcing of unwanted sexual activity by one person on another, as by the use of threats or coercion. 2. Sexual activity that is deemed improper or harmful, as

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\(^6\) According to DSM-IV (1994) this includes sexual and physical assault, being held hostage or imprisoned, terrorism, torture and receiving a diagnosis of a life threatening illness. PTSD often also presents in children who have experienced sexual abuse (Rothschild, 2003).

\(^6\) Catharsis is a release from tension through crying, laughter or vicariously through witnessing others emotional experiences. Catharsis commonly includes a trigger event, an emotional release and a memory of a significant previous experience (Feltham & Dryden, 2004). However, the therapeutic concept of working through suggests that catharsis is not sufficient for change, but that client and therapist need to continue working over and over again with the client’s reactions and responses. Working through implies that therapeutic change takes time and that it cannot be condensed (Feltham & Dryden, 2004).
between an adult and a minor or with a person of diminished mental capacity. (www.answers.com/topic/sexual-abuse [Retrieved on 14th February 2006])

No specific psychiatric symptom universally results from sexual abuse. Vulnerability to the sequelae of sexual abuse depends on the type of abuse, its chronicity, the age of the individual and the overall relationship of the victim and abuser. Rape is most appropriately discussed under the heading of aggression ...(DSM-IV, 1994:850).

During rape, the individual experiences shock and fright (approaching panic) with the primary motivation to stay alive. The psychological and physical effects of sexual abuse and rape may be devastating and long-term. Recovery benefits from the quality of the support system available immediately following the abuse, acceptance and recourse, and the ability of the individual to release fear and rage (Kaplan & Sadock, 1998).

Inadequate recovery from rape and sexual abuse may predispose an individual to later symptom formations such as phobias, anxiety, depression and aggression\(^\text{62}\) (Kauffman, 2002). These may be combined with feelings of shame, guilt and a sense of permanent damage, commonly reported among young people who have been sexually abused (DSM-IV, 1994).

Adolescents who have experienced sexual abuse commonly present high rates of poor impulse control, self-destructive behaviour and/or suicidal ideation. PTSD and dissociative disorders are also highly common in adults who have been sexually abused as children and sexual abuse is often present in the development of dissociative identity disorder (Kaplan & Sadock, 1998). Substance abuse has also

\(^{\text{62}}\) Unless a woman has a severe underlying disorder, therapy usually focuses on restoring a victim’s sense of adequacy and control over her life. It also aims to relieve the feelings of helplessness, dependence and obsession with the trauma of rape (Kauffman, 2002).
been frequently reported among sexually abused adolescents and adults (Corby, 2006).

3.4 Autonomy

FTSE violates a young woman’s autonomy through the de-humanising experiences she is subjected to by her traffickers and clients. FTSE come to live only for the present realising that they have no control over their emotional, physical, sexual and economic life (D’Cunha, 1991). FTSE have little or no control over the number of clients, the freedom to refuse certain clients or their specific requests. Her identity is replaced with another new, false, identity when documents (e.g., passport) are confiscated. Overall loss of control is often recounted by FTSE as the most humiliating aspect of their experience (Tudorache, 2004).

As a result of recurrent abuse, FTSE come to believe that there is no better alternative to their situation. Seligman terms this phenomenon of passively accepting one’s circumstances as learned helplessness (Seligman, 1975) (cited in Tudorache, 2004:21) and may partly explain FTSE inability to attempt to escape. Rothbaum (1997) also suggests that when individuals are unable to exert primary control over their environment, they become withdrawn and repress their feelings and beliefs since they cannot control events around them. Consequently, when they cannot change their environment to fit their needs (primary control) they change themselves

63 The debilitating effects of uncontrollable and aversive events have been demonstrated in a variety of experiments on animals and humans. Seligman (1975) studied the effects of constant coercive actions on animals. The subjects started to lose weight, to be agitated and depressed and when they were allowed to escape, their responses ranged from complete inability to move to avoidance behaviour.
to fit their environment (secondary control) (Rothbaum, 1997) (cited in Tudorache, 2004:21)

3.5 Personal Boundaries

FTSE relationships are governed and controlled by their traffickers. Symptoms presenting in FTSE include difficulties establishing appropriate personal and social boundaries and in making decisions about appropriate personal closeness or intimacy (Interviews with AFESIP, Vietnam, 13 April, 2006). Horst (2006) suggests that a demarcation of clear boundaries allow the individual to connect with another person without subsuming their needs, opinions or feelings. Therapy therefore, often attempts to concentrate on helping FTSE to develop appropriate boundaries in order to protect them from future vulnerability (Geldard & Geldard, 2004) and potential re-trafficking and/or exploitative relationships.

3.6 Attachment and Multiple Loss

FTSE experiences of attachment may significantly influence psychological development:

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64 FTSE are also often supplied with drugs or given forcible injections of drugs to exact their compliance, make them lose inhibitions and encourage dependency. 61% of Russian FTSE stated that drugs and alcohol were used to control them (Raymond et al, 2002). FTSE may also be long-term drug users prior to trafficking and/or used by FTSE to block emotional pain. Substance abuse may result in serious long-term psychological and physical damage (Kaplan & Sadock, 1998).
The kind of attachment the child develops with the primary care giver may impact on that child’s development throughout life. (Geldard & Geldard, 2004:17).

Winnicott (1939a) suggests that one of the most devastating consequences of inconsistent parenting is that the young person does not form a connection between her impulses and her self, therefore acting without a sense of responsibility. Insecure or unsatisfactory attachment relationships have been linked to many maladaptive behaviour patterns in adolescents (Geldard & Geldard, 2004) for example, substance abuse, eating disorders and high-risk sexual behaviour.

Gilligan (1983) also suggests that the formation of female identity takes place not in the development of an autonomous self, but rather in the context of on-going relationships. Hence, for girls the experience of attachment and connection develops in parallel to the formation of her identity and she therefore comes to know herself largely through her relationship with others. Those who have no other internalised standard, often use abusive relationships as their only norm (Kauffman, 2002).

Loss for FTSE can be referred to in terms of multiple relations since they often experience the loss of secure trusting relationships, loss of freedom, dignity, privacy and ownership, loss of home, country/culture and/or place in society (Kareem & Littlewood, 2000). Simpson (1993) also relates PTSD to loss:

\[I\text{ }believe\text{ }that\text{ }PTSD\text{... }reflects\text{ }a\text{ }turbulent\text{ }response\text{ }to\text{ }a\text{ }very\text{ }primal\text{ }loss\text{ }of\text{ }innocence\text{ }after\text{ }one\text{ }has\text{ }been\text{ }faced\text{ }with\text{ }the\text{ }irreversibility\text{ }of\text{ }some\text{ }kinds\text{ }of\text{ }knowledge.\] (Simpson, 1993:619)

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65 Attachment is a strong bond, dependence on physical and/or emotional closeness, to another. Bowlby (1969) suggests that when such attachment is threatened or ended prematurely, anxiety is likely to be experienced in relation to this loss. Early experiences of attachment, security and threats to this security form the basis of later adult security or vulnerability to anxiety (Bowlby, 1969). However, this emphasis on a need for consistent attachment to one person alone has been criticised from various quarters (Feltham & Dryden, 2004).

66 Gilligan (1983) critiques the developmental theories of Freud, Erickson, Piaget and Kohlberg for adopting a significantly masculine perspective to developmental theory.
3.8  Identity and Role Confusion

*It’s important especially for adolescents, to have an identity. For these people that have been trafficked, that is where the damage happens the most. What I see as a really delicate time in adolescence, it’s informing who they are and their perspectives on the world. Hers would be completely corrupted.* (Interview with Miller, Child Protection Officer, UK, 2 March 2006)

The successful development of identity provides knowledge of an individual’s place in society:

*Primarily concerned with what they appear to be in the eyes of others as compared with what they feel they are and with the question of how to connect the roles and skills cultivated earlier*... (Erikson, 1950:261)

The search to discover a sense of self that feels real in the world is at the centre of identity formation\(^{67}\) (Frankel, 1998):

*As a culture, we transmit forceful messages, spoken and unspoken, to adolescents regarding their place in society and our willingness to tolerate their developing struggle to form an identity.* (Frankel, 1998:213)

In addition, identity development is interrupted by trauma the individual may develop a premature adult role (Hutchison, 2005):

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\(^{67}\) Contrast with identity crisis (IC) resulting in the experience of acute and distressing uncertainty about who we are, what one’s values are and where one’s future lies. IC are associated mainly with adolescence, a period when people seek to distinguish themselves. An IC can be experienced by people whose circumstances change dramatically or painfully, forcing them to reconsider how they will relate to a new situation. IC challenges an individual to reconstruct their self-image and/or to view their past from a new perspective (Feltham & Dryden, 2004).
The abrupt loss of a parent or the witnessing of violence may precipitate a premature identity formation or identity diffusions among adolescents. (Macksoud et al, 1993) (cited in Hutchison, 2005:40)

FTSE are forced into adult roles and the formation of identity is distorted:

Adolescents have trouble establishing a strong sense of identity due to the traumatic experiences that destroyed most of the physical and emotional connections they had prior...(Lee, 1988) (cited in Hutchison, 2005:49).

3.7 Identity and Culture

As it is in the South Asian context, if I know that my daughter was rescued from prostitution, I would consider my daughter dead. I would not consider that she did anything wrong, it was I as a parent who failed to protect her and therefore she is in trouble today. But I will not take that ownership. I would say she brings shame to the family and my name and therefore I refuse her existence. She doesn’t exist for me. I have other daughters to marry off. (Interview with Chowdhury, Sanlaap, India, 28 April 2006).

Winnicott (1963a) describes the adolescent as being essentially an isolate. However, such feelings of isolation and separation are often compensated by an intense desire to be part of a group. However, returnees FTSE are often not accepted by their communities and subjected to high levels of social stigma. Perceived as soiled or contaminated by the community, she will be most likely refused marriage (TAF/PC, 2000). If she is also ostracised by her FTSE peer group she will experience an added layer of isolation (Frankel, 1998), being a member of (or ostracised from) an already marginalised group.
3.9 Physical Health

Some of the physical symptoms presenting in FTSE are HIV/AIDS\(^68\) and other STDs, gynaecological problems, infertility, malnutrition and weakened immune system (Upadhyay et al, 2004). It is reported that of the 70,000 commercial sex workers in the red light areas of Mumbai, India, 65% are HIV positive (Ghimire, 1997) and many more suffer from malnutrition:

*Each woman’s home is a 4-by-6 foot pinjara – Hindi for cage. Brothels line Falkland Road in Mumbai, with the youngest and prettiest displayed in street level cages to attract customers. Traffickers deliver many women here and many others are sold outright by parents or husbands. Some 50,000 women – nearly half shipped across India from Nepal – work as prostitutes in Mumbai. Violence, disease, malnutrition and lack of medical care reduce their life expectancy to less than 40 years. (Cockburn, 2003)*

3.10 Psychological Survival Mechanisms

i) **Stockholm Syndrome**

Stockholm syndrome, also referred to as *trauma bonding*, is a phenomenon which may occur in intensely hostile situations whereby the victim develops an emotional attachment to his/her aggressor (Feltham & Dryden, 2004). On arrival at her destination country the FTSE existence is enclosed by a life of extreme dependency,

\(^68\) FTSE return to their source country has in part influenced the increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS since many FTSE are likely to take up the same profession in their source country due to social stigma and the limited economic opportunities available. This ultimately contributes to the increasing spread of HIV/AIDS (Suwal et al, 2001). The pandemic’s *feminisation* is most apparent in sub-Saharan Africa, where close to 60% of those who are HIV-positive are female and among the young people in the region aged 15-24 years, females account for 75% of the infected population (UNICEF, 2005).
often comparable to being held hostage (Raymond et al, 2002). FTSE are encouraged to develop submissiveness, passivity, docility and dependency towards their traffickers. It is this traumatic dependency that may encourage an emotional attachment:

*Trauma bonding is a relationship that is based on terror and the twisting and manipulation of normal attachment behaviour in service of someone else’s malevolent intent. People who are terrorised experience the perpetrator as being in total control: the source of pain but also the source of pain relief, the source of threat but also the source of hope.* (Kauffman, 2002:142)

The characteristic bond of Stockholm syndrome emerges within approximately 3-4 days of captivity. During this time the individual begins to develop mixed feelings towards the abuser, simultaneously experiencing both fear and compassion, or even love. This bond of inter-dependence between abuser and abused develops as a survival mechanism and has long-term relationship implications:

*Victims come to internalise the experience of helplessness and the role of perpetrator and then later in life unconsciously re-create the pattern of these early and traumatising relationships in new relationships…these relationships are also associated with a deep sense of fear and foreboding at their loss.* (Kauffman, 2002:142)

**ii) Neuro-physiological Hyperarousal**

*…A temporary state of high arousal becomes a more or less permanent trait of personality. Children who have been traumatised in early childhood when the brain is still developing tend to develop survival responses that are characterised by either hyperarousal or dissociation. When faced with sensory stimuli, they are unable to*
process it cortically. Instead the stimulus is processed sub-cortically within the limbic system...Children who are traumatised appear to re-activate an already activated 'fear system' in the brain. (Gogarty, 2000) (cited in Howe, 2005:245)

Perry (1999) suggests that both the mind and body respond adaptively when under threat, moving along an arousal continuum from calm to alarm to fear and terror. However, when the threat is constantly present the survival response of fear and terror may become permanent:

_Traumatic experiences and the consequently altered self-perceptions contribute to the impairment of the mutuality between internal world and external reality of the affected person. This is accompanied by a renewed perception of the self in context of a different reality accompanied by an alteration in vigilance, awareness, control and sense of concentration. Depersonalisation is the core clinical element of this resulting condition, which is called dissociation._ (Vedat, 2006)

### iii) Dissociative Disorders

_Unconscious defence mechanism involving the segregation of any group of mental or behavioural processes from the rest of the person’s psychic activity; may entail a separation of an idea from its accompanying emotional tone..._ (Kaplan & Sadock, 1998:285).

Research suggests that individuals exposed to repeated traumas similar to those experienced by FTSE may develop dissociative disorder(s) to enable the mind or body to compartmentalise the experience thereby splitting the traumatic memories from consciousness. Over time however, dissociative disorders may develop into a conditioned response to any stressful situation and it is at this point that splitting impedes healthy functioning and interaction\(^69\) (Sutton, 2004).

Research by Krahe (2000) also suggests that dissociative disorders are commonly displayed in victims of childhood sexual abuse and often reported in women working in the sex industry (Raymond et al, 2002)\(^70\). FTSE are therefore susceptible to the development of dissociative personality disorders prior to and as a consequence of trafficking.

iv) Self-Harm and Suicidal Ideation

One of the many tasks of adolescence is to plan for the future (Geldard & Geldard, 2004) however, research conducted with adolescent refugees (Van der Veer, 1998) suggests that their future, self-image and worldview has been shattered:

> The adolescent has to learn to live with the fact that some of the possibilities he dreamed about are, temporarily or permanently, closed to him because the situation in exile is not suitable for their realisation and that the alternatives are not clear. (Van der Veer, 1998) (cited in Hutchison 2003:50)

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\(^69\) Warner (2000) writes that a number of these dissociated parts can take on self-abusive or suicidal qualities, impulses that arise when the pain of the dissociated memory threatens to return to awareness (cited in Bryant-Jefferies, 2003).

\(^70\) Abusive sex is the dominant reason why women in the sex industry dissociate from their bodies and often use drugs and alcohol as a defence against fusing their emotional lives with sex work (Raymond et al, 2002).
Research suggests (Feltham & Dryden, 2004) that if FTSE are unable to express immediate and appropriate anger reactions, these feelings are suppressed and internalised and often result in self-harm or personality and psychosomatic disorders. FTSE report high rates of attempted suicide during and following their confinement. Documented acts of self-harm by FTSE include razor cuts, cigarette burns, hitting or bruising of self, ingesting sedatives or chemicals (Interviews with AFESIP, Vietnam, 10 April, 2006):

*In almost 80% of participants, we could identify trace evidence of self-inflicted injuries (acts such as extinguishing cigarettes on their bodies, cutting veins, etc.). Being unable to handle their frustrations, they chose instead to injure themselves.*

(IOM, 2004:24)
To look at any thing
If you would know that thing,
You must look at it long:
To look at this green and say
‘I have seen spring in these
Woods,’ will not do – you must
Be the thing you see:
You must be the dark snakes of
Stems and ferny plumes of leaves,
You must enter in
To the small silences between
The leaves,
You must take your time
And touch the very place
They issue from.

The major ethical challenges in research arise primarily from inequality, difference, risk and uncertainty. (Bond, 2004:4)

Box 4.1 summarises some of the psychological symptoms displayed in FTSE. The aim of the following chapter is to highlight some of the ethical challenges facing researchers and information gatherers in their attempts to include FTSE in ethical research. This is by no means a conclusive set of ethical considerations.

Box 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethical Research Considerations with FTSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excessive emotional attachment; Attention-seeking behaviour; Disorientation; Impaired learning ability; Short attention and memory span; Lack of concentration; Tendency to escape into fantasy; Inability to make decisions; Strong present time orientation; Fear of new caregivers and authority figure; Distrust and suspicion of people; Difficulty confiding; Multiple loss – loss of childhood by being forced into adult roles, loss of identity, loss of innocence, loss of future, loss of culture and family</td>
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4.1 Group Identification

In the final analysis, the self is indistinguishable from the life story it constructs for itself out of what is inherited what is experienced and what is desired. (Freeman, 1998) (cited in Ellis & Bochner, 2000:746)

In their research with cancer patients, Smyth & Williamson (2004) reported that when patients were questioned about whether they wished to maintain an identity categorisation beyond treatment, many participants expressed negative feelings towards such group identification. Similarly, research with FTSE may produce
and/or reinforce a self and societal perception and categorisation of victim and victim-status:

*From participants’ testimonies, we can observe that a number of the patients considered being defined by their illness as something potentially harmful.*

(Smyth & Williamson, 2004:50)

Kleinman & Kleinman (1997) describe victim’s stories as a form of currency and warn of the danger in not allowing research participants to change their expected role of victim-hood. Rothschild (2003) also suggests how a repeated and reinforced victim status may increase vulnerability to further victimisation:

*Among other things, encountering traumatic incidents can greatly influence one’s self-concept. Particularly when trauma is in the hands of other people, being a victim can become part of the self-perception.* (Rothschild, 2003:89)

Continued victimisation occurs not because the individual wants to be victimised or seeks it, rather she is missing or has lost the tools (reactions and resources) she requires to prevent it from re-occurring (Rothschild, 2003) and the resulting victimisation is so pervasive that she feels internally victimised by herself.

Research by Manz (2002) however, suggests that by giving voice to victims of trauma may enable them and their communities to come to terms with the past and

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71 Collins Concise Dictionary: 1. To punish or discriminate against selectively or unfairly. 2. To make a victim of.

(Hanks et al, 1988:1322)
not remain a victim of it\textsuperscript{72}. However, Manz also acknowledges the difficulties involved in breaking free from a potential cycle of victim-hood:

\textit{...the act of remembering, let alone of retelling, is a highly charged, politicised event, fraught with danger.} (Manz, 2002) (cited in Brennan, 2005:10)

\subsection*{4.2 Power}

To ignore issues of FTSE status and powerlessness is to deny their frame of reference\textsuperscript{73} and the resulting power dynamics that may potentially arise within the FTSE participant/researcher relationship. The stigmatisation and silencing of FTSE by traffickers and society places them in what Becker (1967) defines as the bottom of the hierarchy of credibility\textsuperscript{74}. This may have important implications for FTSE researchers:

\textit{Understanding the power dynamic in a participant-interviewer relationship and how both manage that relationship is key, not only to carrying out the study, but also to understanding the data it generates.} (van den Hoonard, 2005:2)

Early literature on the interviewing process (Oakley, 1981) suggested that the interviewer defines the power dynamic and thereby defines the role of the interviewee as subordinate (Oakley, 1981) (cited in van den Hoonard, 2005).

\footnote{Manz (2002) researched the residents of Santa Maria Tzeja, a Guatemalan village and site of a 1982 massacre. The residents spoke about the past and wrote and performed a play documenting it entitled: \textit{There is Nothing Concealed That Will Not Be Discovered} (Manz, 2002).}

\footnote{The typical way in which someone makes sense of the world according to experience, culture and values. Each individual’s frame of reference as it applies to each unit of experience is idiosyncratic (Feltham & Dryden, 2004).}

\footnote{Becker (1967) refers to the opinions of some being sought and taken more seriously than others.}
However, more recent literature (Brannen, 2005) defines power within the relationship in two senses, one is the ability to control the interaction by determining the structure and content of the interview (where there is a less rigidly specified structure, the exercise of power has more mutuality and becomes more of a two-way process). Another is the ability to have power over the participant by virtue of possessing potentially damaging information. Brannen (2005) also adds that participants may also be vulnerable within the research process in a collective way, since they have little control over the interpretation of data.

Limerick et al (1996) suggest that the dynamics in research are such that at any time during the interview, neither the researcher nor the participant are devoid of power, rather it is constructed discursively between both parties. From this perspective, the interview is a power struggle rather than a co-operation between parties.

The constructivist view (Denzin, 2001; Gubrium and Holstein, 1997) of the power dynamics within the interview emphasises the dialogic nature and mutuality of the process. It is viewed as a stage for producing knowledge through the active collaboration of both the interviewer and interviewee from which both elicit and represent an interpretative relationship of the world (Denzin, 2001). The interviewer largely controls the direction, length and focus of the interview and the participant, by definition, acquiesces to these objectives but offers meaning and potential order to his/her experience throughout the research, in what Denzin (2001) refers to as interpretative practice. From this perspective, both researcher and participant are active, but they are active in different ways (Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004).
Glesne and Peshkin (1992) question whether non-hierarchical relations can ever be truly present in interviews, rather at best the participant/researcher can be involved in merely seeking reciprocity. They argue that reciprocity rarely involves equality since the collected data will inevitably remain the intellectual property of the researcher/research community regardless of the level of collaboration in its design and collection.

4.3 Cross-Cultural Research

We live in a society that allocates meaning, value and power to different sections of society based on perceived racial, cultural, class and gender norms. Consciously or not, we engage with notions of racism, sexism, classism, etc. We may take such ‘baggage’ with us and recreate research relationships based on racist/sexist/classist forms. (Chantler & Smailes, 2004:35)

Frames of reference are informed by gender, culture, class and ethical/moral frameworks that may be projected (consciously or subconsciously) onto the research participant or research process. It has recently become accepted that the perception of the participant effects the level of equality that the researcher is able to attain (Cotterill, 1992) and there are cultural expectations and international economic hegemonies that situate power between a first world researcher and third world participant (Lal, 1996).

The inequalities that accompany first world researchers who conduct research in the third world however, are not necessarily resolved by conducting research in the same
country or with the same or similar participant culture (Katz, 1994) and such cultural matching (Chantler & Smailes, 2004) requires careful consideration:

Ignoring minoritised women’s political, social, cultural and religious realities evades issues of power and invisibility between minoritised and dominant groups. (Lewis, 1998) (Chantler & Smailes, 2004:36)

The tendency for cultural and economic differences to be silenced in an attempt to reduce power inequalities is problematic:

Failure to attend to difference silences a potentially fruitful exploration for [researcher and subject] and reinforces prevailing power relations. (Chantler & Smailes, 2004:36)

4.4 Research Location – The Shelter Home

Access to FTSE using overt research methodologies is limited. Research within the FTSE shelter home setting therefore has methodological sample biases as well as ethical implications:

When they arrive, their psychological conditions are critical and, in some cases severely traumatised...The shelter has to be, first and foremost, a safe space for women and the best interest of the women sheltered there must always serve as the basis of any action...The police and the judiciary often perceive the shelters as facilities for housing witnesses and collecting information from them, rather than safe spaces for their rehabilitation. (IOM, 2004:9-14)
FTSE living in a shelter home may be awaiting deportation, witness in a legal prosecution and/or for recovery and rehabilitation. In addition to the distress caused by their trafficking experience, FTSE face considerable pressures when involved in prosecutions against traffickers (Interview with Sanlaap, India, 28 April, 2006). FTSE may also fear disclosing information to a researcher if she believes it may jeopardise her legal case, immigration status or implicate others in legal proceedings. The shelter home may not be in the FTSE home country, furthering her anxiety:

*Subjective reports from brothel-based FTSE and women awaiting deportation suggest that the psychological state as measured by depression scales was far worse for women awaiting deportation than for women who were working.* (Cwikel et al., 2004) (cited in Cwikel & Hoban, 2005:8)

Service providers/gatekeepers aim to protect and keep FTSE safe from re-victimisation by traffickers and from exploitation by the media and researchers/information gatherers. FTSE safety and recovery could be compromised by the presence of a researcher with little experience of (overseas) fieldwork, qualitative research methodologies, psychotherapy or knowledge of the effects of human trafficking, sexual abuse or trauma.

Conducting research within the shelter home also requires consideration of the multiple identities and roles individuals assume in different locations. Research conducted by Elwood and Martin (2000) suggest that explicit and implicit presentations of identity have important implications. They explore the nature of

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75 Elwood & Martin (2000) found in interviews with resident volunteers located in an organisation’s office that the interviewees were more likely to present themselves as knowledgeable participants with valuable information to contribute. Conversely, in the interviewees own homes they expressed considerably more anxiety about whether or not they could make a contribution or were giving the *right answer* (Elwood & Martin, 2000).
perceived power and participant expertise in relation to the research location and found that participants offer different perspectives on questions asked, depending on where the interview is conducted:

Different sites may serve to define a participant as having valuable knowledge to contribute, or, conversely, can constitute the researcher as holding expert knowledge. (Elwood & Martin, 2000:655)

Both Longhurst (1996) and Goss & Leinbach (1996) explore the dynamics of conducting research in the participant’s home and the researcher’s attempts to create a more reciprocal relationship with participants. Oberhauser (1997) and Falconer-Al Hindi (1997) argue that interviews conducted in participants’ homes have the potential as a strategy to address power hierarchies between participant and researcher.\footnote{Oberhauser (1997) does not suggest that locational choices erase power differences, rather her research attempts to illustrate how power relations are constituted.}

The impact of conducting research within the shelter home may be influenced by the aim of the research as much as the individual FTSE. If the research aim is appropriate service provision, participants may feel constrained in discussing honest views particularly if shelter home staff are involved. Alternatively, research conducted within the shelter home may enable some individuals to feel empowered feeling that they have valuable and expert knowledge to contribute (in a safe environment). It also allows the researcher to observe the context in which FTSE live and receive services. For example, Oberhauser’s (1997) discussion of the home as a field site, highlights how conducting interviews in participants’ homes enabled her to
observe women navigating the multiple demands of home working which was the primary inquiry of her research.

It is also important to consider the selection method for the sample population from a shelter home and the potential impact the chosen method may have on those excluded from and included in the research. It is important to consider the close confines most FTSE are forced to live and the security that shelter homes often impose upon FTSE residents. Such confinement may prevent participants from containing their own emotions should they become distressed during research. This may impact the otherwise smooth functioning of the shelter home routine, distressing other residents, the community within which the shelter is located and potentially threaten the long-term sustainability of the home.

i) Restricted or Conditional Access?

Gatekeepers such as shelter home staff are likely to play an important role in influencing the conduct of ethical research. They are able to facilitate the acceptance of the researcher and their trustworthiness and therefore able to influence the nature of researcher access and the participant/researcher relationship.

Cassell (1988) distinguishes between physical and social access in research whereby social access crucially depends on establishing interpersonal trust but gatekeepers control physical access. Social access can be problematic especially where there is a hierarchy of consent (Dingwall, 1980) (cited in Lee, 1993) in which gatekeepers

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77 The shelter home may allow the FTSE either very limited leave at appointed times with prior arrangement or no leave whatsoever (Interview with AFESIP, Vietnam, 10 April, 2006).
reserve the right to permit or exclude FTSE from research. An imbalance of power between gatekeeper and researcher may lead to a bargaining of access to the research site (Lee, 1993) and an ongoing process of negotiation.

Research by Suwal et al (2001) found that in their need to protect FTSE, shelter home staff were reluctant to provide researchers with any information and their findings suggest a sense of competition between shelter homes which contributed towards a less than co-operative attitude towards their research team.

Lee (1993) talks of 3 conditions that may be imposed on the researcher by the gatekeeper in return for access i) restrictions on the methodology used by the researcher ii) conduct additional research on behalf of the gatekeeper and iii) the right of the gatekeeper to examine, modify or censor research data.

4.5 Access to Appropriate Services

Mental health and psychological needs have not been addressed in most social services in Viet Nam and there is a particular need for developing and improving psychosocial support, as women who are trafficked are often exposed to the same injuries, infections and trauma as those suffered by women who have been battered, sexually assaulted or raped...the effects of trafficking are often not reported by trafficked persons, and at the same time government and social service agencies in Viet Nam are rarely trained to look for physical and psychological reactions and symptoms in trafficked persons. Government, mass organisations and local NGOs

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78 Finch (1986) suggests that quantitative research methodologies are more easily scrutinised and controlled than qualitative methods and therefore may be preferred by gatekeepers.
working in the area of trafficking require training, experience and exposure to trauma. (Trees, 2005:6)

FTSE needs assessment and appropriate support services necessary for recovery and rehabilitation is a newly evolving area for governments and I/NGOs working with FTSE and compounded by:

*We are seeing a more diverse group of trafficking victims and the symptom response is not as homogenous.* (Brennan, 2005:7)

Human rights organisations have criticised in particular, the UN Trafficking Protocol\(^79\) for its relatively weak language regarding the rights and assistance needs of trafficked persons, especially FTSE (WCRWC, 2005). My research found that shelter homes in Vietnam and India often under-staffed and under-resourced and service provision was mainly task orientated, focusing on education, finances, health and physical safety. International treaties emphasise the provision of educational, health, and economic services however, these need to be coupled with psychological therapy and other support which are often not readily available.

A study by TAF/PC (2000) indicated a lack of interventions focusing on community based and empowerment\(^80\) oriented programmes (Suwal et al, 2001).

\(^79\)The UN Trafficking Protocol requires governments to consider implementing programmes to address the physical, psychological and social recovery of victims and to endeavour to address their physical safety. The Protocol is not mandatory which reflects in part, that it was negotiated under the auspices of the UN Crime Commission, whose mandate is law enforcement rather than human rights (Jordan, 2002). Nonetheless, countries are obliged under international human rights instruments to protect the rights of trafficked persons, regardless of a government’s ratification of the Trafficking Protocol.

\(^80\) Collins Concise Dictionary: 1. To give power or authority to, authorise. 2. To give ability to, enable or permit. (Hanks et al, 1988:366)
Suwal et al (2001) research includes recommendations aimed at improving all FTSE service provision including safe housing, urgent medical and psychological care, interpretation services, cultural mediation and legal aid.

The lack of appropriate FTSE service provision is coupled with research findings for example by the Angel Coalition (2005) who reports that FTSE at the beginning of rehabilitation programmes are rarely able to request psychological help:

_Survivors frequently have tremendous resistance to allow them to be helped. They may not allow themselves to be aware of the impact of their torture because of the emotional pain of the shame, guilt and rage such awareness would bring. Psychological distress is often channelled into psychosomatic symptoms that survivors do not connect with their torture experiences._ (Angel Coalition, 2005:16)

Lack of adequate or appropriate support services for FTSE coupled with their potential reluctance to request support are issues which require consideration when preparing research with this population.

### 4.6 Trauma / PTSD

_The degree and duration of the physical danger and psychological trauma to an individual is not always evident. In some cases risks may not be obvious to the interviewer. In other cases, the dangers may not be apparent to the woman._

(Zimmerman & Watts, 2003:5)

_Dual time awareness_ (Rothschild, 2003) enables an individual to separate the sense that the trauma occurred in the past despite experiencing it in the present. FTSE
suffering from PTSD may be unable to distinguish the past from the present and so therefore find it difficult to contain the trauma process. Hence contracting and research with FTSE suffering from PTSD can be uncertain and potentially volatile:

You never really know how a client will react to an intervention, or, for that matter, to a simple question, the colour of your shirt, or the smell of your office. One of the features of PTSD is that the traumatic memory can be easily triggered. When that happens, hyperarousal accelerates out of control, causing intense physical symptoms and/or flashbacks. Until triggers are identified, they are unpredictable – literally anything can be a trigger...they need to be equipped with tools to help them contain reactions...and to halt the out-of-control acceleration of hyperarousal. Being able to “put on the brakes” will aid clients in their daily life, as well as give them courage to address difficult issues. (Rothschild, 2003:19)

It may not always be possible to identify FTSE suffering from PTSD due to their development of complex psychological defensive systems, this may include the hardened FTSE who:

...tries to prove that she enjoys prostitution, and is the toughest in the street is no less a victim. Her reactions are a defence and survival mechanism, a crutch to her ego and self-worth. Girls often become desensitised, reports Patricia Green. They say things like ‘I no longer care what happens to me, or nothing worse can happen to me now.’ They talk only about what happens to others. Many girls who are out of prostitution are often unable to recall their life in prostitution, or particular events at that time. (Raymond et al, 2002:144)

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81 Trauma is not limited solely to the traumatic situation, but is better defined as a socio-psychological process which can be completed in the course of time, if at all: the superposition of multiple trauma processes throughout a person’s life span can make this task even more complex. (Vedat, 2006)

82 During the initial research phase, the researcher makes an agreement and contract regarding the purpose, possible duration, benefits, risks and uncertainties of the research to the potential research participant. Contracting forms part of the informed consent procedure and may need to be amended and/or reiterated continuously or at various times during the research process.

83 Such as those outlined in Chapter 3.
4.7 Dissociative Disorders

The essential feature of dissociative disorders is the disruption of the usually integrated functions of consciousness, memory, identity or perception of the environment (Kaplan & Sadock, 1998). Warner (2000) suggests that these may result in a switching in which the dissociated part takes over conscious awareness and the individual often has no recollection of what has happened during this period.

Research with individuals suffering from dissociative disorders may be challenging particularly since they will often not appear to suffer from any psychological or emotional symptoms (Bloom, 2004). It may also be difficult for the researcher to accurately assess the psychological and emotional state of the FTSE at any one time during the research process (compounded by the lack of appropriate FTSE service provision and qualified assessment of FTSE psychological needs).

Warner (2000) in working with victims of sexual abuse cites the risk of an unskilled therapist invoking false memories to the victim since they are likely to be in a highly vulnerable and impressionable state. Her studies emphasise the need to keep empathic responses simply and directly reflective of what has been said. There is a high risk with this group of feeling unheard, misunderstood or of making sense of an experience based more on the therapist’s perception than their own (cited in Bryant-Jefferies, 2003).
4.8 Transference

Transference describes the phenomenon in therapy whereby the client unconsciously relates to the therapist as if to a significant person (or persons or aspects of persons) from the past (Feltham & Dryden, 2004). FTSE may identify with the researcher (transference) or vice versa (counter-transference). This is more likely where the researcher is of a similar social class, culture or religion as the participant (WCRWC, 2005).

Transference is not always easy to identify during research and is also not confined to the relationship, but feelings, fears and expectations may also be displaced onto the researcher with a compelling sense of reality and immediacy.

In addition, if a participant feels grateful for the opportunity to express her feelings this may over time lead to a growing closeness and blurred boundary between the role of friend and that of research participant. Cassell (1988) argues that the researcher cannot avoid temporarily adopting the perspective of those studied, in fact empathy is necessary in qualitative research. However, it is also important that the researcher gain distance on the experiences of the participant in order to present an analysis of the processes of identification (Lee, 1993). Beale (2004) also suggests that since the qualitative research process can be therapeutic in nature the emotional engagement of the participants, the emotional response of the researcher and the possibility of over-identification by the researcher must be considered:
Transference is fostered by the intensity of the analytic situation and by the relative neutrality of the counsellor: intense, problematic feelings from the past repeat themselves in a bid for resolution. (Feltham & Dryden, 2004:241)

4.9 Developmental Age

Ethics and researching victims of trafficking is basically a policy which is laid down by the supreme court which very clearly states that any victim of sexual abuse or of trafficking cannot be put in the media, cannot be questioned – other than in camera or court proceedings – and cannot be used for direct interviewing. This applies to minors not for victims above the age of 18 years... (Interview with Chowdhury, Sanlaap, India, 28 April 2006)

Ethical research should be appropriate to the developmental age of the FTSE. However, in the case of FTSE chronological age is not necessarily a reliable indicator of developmental age. Traumatic and abusive experiences would not have facilitated the development of a fully integrated, coherent processor of complex psychological, emotional and interpersonal information. The earlier and more severe the onset of the abusive experience, the greater the potential for immaturity in her emotional processing and regulating abilities (Howe, 2005):

Many severely abused and neglected children suffer core developmental impairments in their social cognition. (Howe, 2005:236)
4.10 Participant Motivation

On admission to a shelter home, FTSE must provide information to police, lawyers and service providers in return for a variety of tangible benefits. Researchers offer no such direct benefits and consequently some FTSE may view participation in research as a business opportunity and request some financial benefit or other reward in exchange.

FTSE motivations and expectations in return for participation may vary. For example, she may anticipate that participation will gain her legitimacy with legal authorities, immigration or visa approval. Such expectations may not only remain unfulfilled but may also bias the research data if she is hoping the information she provides will assist her legal status or access to further service provision.

There is little consensus about the appropriateness of payment or other rewards for research participants. Some researchers believe it is important that participants are rewarded in return for their time and effort and that payment is important in terms of respecting and valuing them. Others believe this may encourage potentially vulnerable people from participating for the wrong reasons (Ensign, 2003) (cited in Wiles et al, 2005). However, Ensign’s use of the term wrong highlights the danger and need to remain alert to the many ways in which economically advantaged first world researchers attach a first world moral value system to motivation and incentives in ethical research participation.

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84 Truman (2003) argues that research that typically provides lunch or refreshments on attendance is also using a form of inducement (cited in Wiles et al, 2005).
For FTSE, in impoverished circumstances with uncertain futures, financial rewards may be particularly influential in their decision to participate. Such incentives not only have the potential to introduce bias in research data but also potentially blur the boundary between service provision and research. However, it is important to consider that although payment may present a motivation for participation, it may not necessarily be the deterministic factor in the choice to participate.

### 4.11 Freedom to Informed Consent

Social researchers clearly have to balance a number of factors in managing issues of informed consent. They obviously have to comply with any legal frameworks and regulation but additionally they have to balance a range of sometimes competing interests, such as the aims of the research, what they consider to be the best interests of research participants and the interests of formal or informal gatekeepers. They also have to operationalise and be reflexive about issues of ‘information’, ‘consent’ and ‘competence’. (Wiles et al, 2005:10)

Informed consent to participation in research[^85] is one of the main ethical safeguards (to prevent coercion). Obtaining informed consent (without obligation) is only achieved if participants are fully aware of what is involved in the research process and able to freely exercise their right to refuse to participate at any point.

[^85]: This paper focuses primarily on consent in relation to qualitative research using traditional methods of data collection, such as interviews and observation.
Box 4.2

**Ethical Good-Practice in Research**

- The adequately-informed, full and freely-given consent of all participants should be obtained prior to their contribution to research.
- Careful consideration should be given to linguistic or cultural barriers to the consent process.
- It is normally good practice to give participants a written statement of the research aims, procedures and information about any potential risks. This is the basis on which the research is conducted. Where appropriate it may take the form of a written contract signed by both participant and researcher.
- Participants should receive information and details of whom they could consult or complain should they have concerns during or on completion of research.
- Participants should retain the right to modify or withdraw their consent at any time for whatever reason, including following the completion of data collection and analysis.

(Bond, 2004b:12)

However, gaining informed consent can be problematic for some research. For example, when neither the researcher nor the participant are able to predict the details of what will be revealed during the research (Ramcharan & Chutliffe, 2001). In addition, what is said during research may not always be under the control of the participant for example, FTSE containment of their trauma and recollections. Research may be well designed and ethical at a particular point in time, but many unanticipated ethical issues may arise (Ramcharan & Chutliffe, 2001). The uncertainty involved affects everyone related to the research:
...it is a journey into the unknown that cannot be fully apprehended in anticipation. (Bond, 2004a:5).

However, such uncertainty may not necessarily be problematic:

One participant, on the contrary, was pleased to have an understanding of the uncertainties involved, being realistic about the options available was important to her, even if this resulted in her feeling that the difficulty of the choice was ‘overwhelming’. (Smyth & Williamson, 2004:42)

### i. The Principle of Choice

*Because decisional dilemmas ignite freedom-anxiety, many go to great lengths to avoid active decisions...and forge others in their life to take the decision from them.* (Yalom, 2002:147)

The potential participant may also perceive the choice to participate as more than simply a matter of weighing the perceived risks and benefits; rather it may require some emotional investment on her part or responsibility assumption (Yalom, 2002)\(^\text{86}\). Some FTSE may be undecided because of not being sure of what they want or they may not feel they have the right to want anything. Some may attempt to relinquish their wish to participate and others may not experience or express a view in the hope that others around them will choose for them (Yalom, 2002).

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\(^\text{86}\) Yalom (2002) uses the term *responsibility assumption* to describe how therapy with clients needs to facilitate the individual to assume a responsibility that they do not easily do for themselves. Yalom (2002) also refers to responsibility assumption as the *dark side of freedom*. 
Obtaining FTSE consent to participate from gatekeepers such as shelter home staff (proxy consent) also raises serious issues regarding the potential for coercion (Cwikel et al., 2004) (cited in Cwikel & Hoban, 2005). Smyth & Williamson (2004) examine the issue of proxy consent in conducting research with potentially vulnerable populations such as mental health service users, people with learning difficulties and children. Smyth & Williamson (2004) propose that the researcher consider how free participants would feel to refuse in circumstances where she may suspect her participation (or refusal to participate) will impact her access to service provision, immigration status or any outstanding legal investigation or prosecution.

The principle of choice may itself be psychologically demanding for FTSE, requiring emotional strength to deal with such a complex decision in an unfamiliar situation. Such choice may also introduce or further FTSE uncertainty, trust or confidence in relationships with shelter home staff and other experts. However, as Yalom (2002) indicates, most therapeutic work involves facilitating responsibility assumption. Therefore when given the responsibility to decide for themselves to participate in research, may help facilitate their own therapeutic recovery and growth.

**ii. The Principle of Freedom**

*Factors which made choosing difficult were perceiving the personal stakes involved to be very high, feeling forced into the position of having to make the decision at all,*

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87 Cameron et al (2004) discuss how the competence of participants to give consent may fluctuate during the course of research making it difficult to maintain fully-informed consent. Where this arose, family members were proxy consent givers. However, the impact of proxy consent on the confidentiality of participants is substantial. Smyth & Williamson (2004) also address the methodological implications of gaining proxy consent.
and struggling to achieve an ‘objective’ evaluation of the risks and benefits of participation from the information provided. (Smyth & Williamson, 2004:46)

Accustomed to exploitation and abuse for non-compliance, the principle of freedom to consent to participate in research and the right to refuse and/or withdrawal from research is an important consideration in FTSE research. The accumulation of trauma, fear and violence experienced by FTSE may develop a tendency for her to place the opinion of others above her own well-being and psychological and physical safety.

Two specific considerations have been identified in relation to gatekeepers and the process of informed consent. Firstly, assumed consent is often found in institutional settings where individuals are denied the freedom to exercise choice and their refusal to participate can be difficult (Miller & Bell, 2002). Secondly, potential participants may be denied the opportunity to participate if the gatekeeper believes she is incompetent and/or may be over-protective towards her, particularly where gatekeepers have taken a parental role with the FTSE. Even where consent is freely given by participants, gatekeepers may seek additional consent from relatives or guardians and her choice may therefore be overridden by their refusal. In most cases, researchers are not in a position to influence the gatekeeper’s decision to deny participation or to seek additional consent (Lee, 1993).

Freedom to consent is therefore not simply the absence of pressure to consent from researchers and/or gatekeepers. Other factors, such as emotional distress, gratitude, power and uncertainty may make decisions to consent less than free. It is also important to distinguish between the freedom of choice she has as a consequence of
her own subjective values and beliefs versus the freedom of choice she has as a consequence of the values and beliefs exercised and imposed on her by others (Smyth & Williamson, 2004).

iii. The Principle of Informed and Meaningful Consent

*Informed consent is consent given by a competent individual who has received the necessary information, who has adequately understood the information, and who after considering the information, has arrived at a decision without having been subjected to coercion, undue influence or inducement, or intimidation.* (European Federation, 2004:3)

Informed consent is designed to enable participants to legitimately trust the researcher and research process, thereby protecting them from any potential risk involved. Authors such as Homan (1991) (cited in Wiles et al, 2005) argue that the notion of true informed consent is not possible. There are a number of issues that might deny a participant the information and ability to reach a full understanding of what participation in research involves. An objective evaluation of the risks and benefits of participation can also be difficult without a thorough understanding of social science research and risk.

The experiences of FTSE may also reduce her sensitivity to risk taking whereby she may focus on the implications of the risk of participation rather than on the

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88 However, Reiss (1979) also highlights that once informed consent is given by the participant the burden of both responsibility and more crucially liability, shifts away from the researcher should something go wrong (Reiss, 1979) (cited in Lee, 1993).
probability of it occurring. Smyth & Williamson (2004) describe risk information in terms of the imaginability\(^{89}\) of the effect rather than the chance of it happening.

Weighing the risks and benefits of participation therefore occurs within the context of the FTSE perception of previous and current risks and their successful or otherwise outcome. Smyth and Williamson (2004) question whether it is ever possible for any research participant taking part in potentially emotionally disturbing research to be sufficiently informed to give truly informed consent.

iv. Written Contractual Consent

*Concerns about (legal) liability within academic institutions make it difficult for researchers to deviate from so-called ‘accepted’ practice of written consent, even when this occurs with the (verbal) consent of the participant.* (Smyth & Williamson, 2004:199)

If a FTSE wishes to participate but no written contract exists, should she be included and/or what other safeguards exist to ensure the validity of the research and the protection of the participant?

Written contractual consent may be problematic for FTSE who have been forced by traffickers to sign their consent to work. Possible language and translation difficulties, literacy and communication and the issue of confidentiality are also issues worthy of further consideration with this aspect of the consent process:

\(^{89}\) Here, imaginability is defined as a function of the cognitive bias of availability (Smyth & Williamson, 2004).
When they arrived in Dumai, they were forced to engage in prostitution. The three young women refused to do so and tried to escape but were repeatedly beaten by the bodyguards. They were made to sign contracts indicating that they had consented. (Raymond et al, 2002:20)

FTSE may decline to participate in research due to the reduced anonymity it affords. Research by Cwikel & Hoban (2005) found that women were reluctant to sign informed consent forms and therefore verbal consent often had to be adequate if the research could proceed. Coomber (2002) (cited in Wiles et al, 2005) notes that participants wishing to protect their identity who are required to provide written consent are likely to be unwilling to participate or if they do so, they are likely to give a false identity. Participants may fear that the information they provide is traceable to them, leaving them vulnerable to investigation or prosecution (particularly with regard to their immigration status) and may also force researchers to be:

...complicit in the prosecution of research participants which would contravene researchers' responsibility to their participants. (Wiles et al, 2005:16)

Written consent may also be interpreted by FTSE as a more formal and bureaucratic process, which they may wish to avoid, particularly if they have had distressing experiences with immigration officials and/or lawyers.

It is also important to consider the past experiences FTSE have had regarding the terms of the contracts they have signed. Interviews with Thai women (Raymond et al, 2002) trafficked to Japan and Singapore, reported that agreements and contracts
were commonly breached\textsuperscript{90} and they were forced to go beyond the terms of their agreements and contracts. According to a Human Rights Watch Report (1995) police and government officials:

...protect traffickers, brothel owners, pimps and buyers often arresting traffickers or pimps for a couple of days and then releasing them after the press has covered their rhetorical action. Even if they (offenders) are brought to court, they won’t be punished accordingly. (Gatra, 1998) (cited in Raymond et al, 2002:21)

Such experiences may make it difficult for FTSE potential participants to trust the terms of an agreement, or have faith in formal complaints procedures and merely the request to sign a consent form could trigger distressing and traumatic memories, exacerbating an already highly sensitive and potentially risky, research process.

v. Trust


d\textit{Trauma destroys the trust relationship of the victim with themselves and the world. This creates an inordinate amount of stress on the mental, emotional and physical capacities of the victim whose coping behaviours and belief structures have been shattered by trauma. The victim no longer knows how to act or what to expect from the world in order to survive. } (Whitmer, 2001:2)

FTSE experiences are likely to prevent her from developing trusting relationships with others, particularly those perceived to have greater power or authority\textsuperscript{91}.

\textsuperscript{90} None of the women sought any kind of help or reported the frequent rapes and abuses to the police, knowing that they would be told that they asked for it (Raymond et al, 2002).

\textsuperscript{91} Many FTSE in the Philippines indicated that government officials and agencies had colluded in some way in the trafficking process (Raymond et al, 2002).
Without official documents, unable to speak the local language, with little knowledge or access to legal aid, FTSE are often highly vulnerable to violence and sexual abuse by officials such as police, immigration authorities and border guards. In Bosnia, Milorad Milakovic was arrested on charges of buying and selling young women through his bar and brothel empire. The wealthy Serb reported that UN international police forces and Bosnian visa and immigration officials had been among his most valued customers (Lyday, 2003):

There’s a clear link between slavery and government corruption...Government officials in dozens of countries assist, overlook, or actively collude with traffickers. (Lyday, 2003) (cited in Cockburn, 2003:16)

Perceived or actual social and cultural differences between participant and researcher may also induce the researcher to errors in interaction with the participant and create a lack of trust in the ability or integrity of the research(er):

Since they do not trust outsiders, people in the setting may erect ‘fronts’ designed to impede the researcher’s progress through concealment, obfuscation or deception. (Lee, 1993:133)

With little trust in the researcher or faith that the information (and identity) provided will be protected she may be wary. Josselson (1996) also highlights an additional and inevitable dilemma in research:

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92 Johnson (1975) refers to freeze-outs in which some individuals in the research setting may never come to accept the researcher’s presence and even where the researcher has been accepted, the legitimacy of his or her presence can still be questioned or revoked.
When we get to the writing stage, we tend to take ourselves out of relationship with our participants to form a relationship with readers. How can we help then but have feelings of betraying our participants? (Josselson, 1996) (cited in Ellis & Bochner, 2000:758)

vi. Conditionality and Research Autonomy

FTSE experience of trafficking, traffickers, clients, dealings with shelter homes, law enforcement agencies, immigration services and lawyers may have been extremely conditional. For example, co-operation with the authorities is often a pre-condition for FTSE to receive services, protection and assistance from government and/or I/NGOs. The notion of unconditional participation in research may be difficult for FTSE to accept without assuming (undisclosed) conditions are attached. To what extent is the FTSE influenced by conditionality, perceived or actual?

It is also important to note that the traditional role of the FTSE is one of compliance, dependency and deference. The role of research participant however, is one of autonomy, independent decision-making and freedom to consent. Hence participation in the research process not only necessitates a shift in roles for the FTSE, but it is also conditional upon such a role change.
4.12 Confidentiality

...if a child is rescued at the age of 15, she was probably in Mumbai for 2 years and she has been in a tremendous amount of trauma, tremendous amount of trouble, raped several times, taken 10-12 clients a day, rescued by the police and is in custody with us for her protection and care, is learning a skill. Here comes the media, puts her picture up, sells that paper for that one day and then people forget about it, but what people don’t forget is that girls face and the name if it comes with it and every time that girl intends to start a life a fresh, there are questions raised. She can never do a PhD, she can do little things, but it always becomes a barrier because she was put up there... (Interview with Chowdhury, Sanlaap, India, 28 April, 2006).

FTSE are often deeply fearful of their own safety and that of their family (Brennan, 2005):

...there are as many as 1.4 million cases pending in our courts, of which 50% relate to children and even if there is one victim in each of those it means 0.7 million children whose cases are pending, who are either witnesses or accused and the State does not have the mechanism for protecting them for these pending time periods. If I were a witness to a case and I went out onto the streets someone would just get me killed. It’s so easy. (Interview with Chowdhury, Sanlaap, India, 28 April 2006)

FTSE confidentiality and anonymity is also often breached without legal redress or protection:

...there is no mechanism of media accountability or reprimanding of the media so if lets say you are a victim of trafficking and I’m from the media and I promise you and I write you in a contract that I will hide your face when I put you up on TV and if I don’t do it you do not have a place to go and complain. There is no reprimand process as yet unfortunately, so therefore the media can do what they want, take
pictures put them up on TV, in newspapers and we see it all the time. It’s unfortunate, but true. (Interview with Chowdhury, Sanlaap, India, 28 April 2006)

FTSE identity and personal details may be stored in a destination country, forwarded to authorities in the country of origin or shared internationally between police and immigration agencies. FTSE may also be obliged to recount their experiences in a criminal prosecution (in the presence of the perpetrator) without the protection of anonymity (OSCE/ODIHR, 2004):

...if the child is the victim of a rape, then she actually becomes a witness of the State because the State is fighting a case against the accused. The girl would have to be questioned to establish that this person has committed the crime. (Interview with Chowdhury, Sanlaap, India, 28 April 2006)

Cases relating to FTSE are tried in court openly like any other crime. The Traffick in Human (Control) Act (1986), lacks the provision of closed court for trial of FTSE. Giving due regard to this problem the Indian Government has attempted to form a system of closed hearing (in camera or camera court) in order to protect the identity, psychological and physical safety of the FTSE and avoid further victimisation. However, often the infrastructure does not exist for this facility and FTSE are required to prosecute before the judge in an open court (Interview with AFESIP, Vietnam, 10 April 2006).

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93 FTSE often have to undergo mandatory HIV/AIDS testing on arrival at a shelter home or on identification by police/border guards and are not obliged to provide FTSE with test results (Human Rights Watch, Global Report on Women’s Human Rights, 1995) (cited in Raymond et al, 2005). In Thailand, under the AIDS Plan, men are tested on a confidential basis but women’s results are revealed to brothel owners and pimps (Raymond et al, 2002). Access to women’s records by public officials results in brothel owners expelling those found to be infected, e.g., young Burmese women expelled from Thai brothels after testing HIV positive were returned to Burma and on arrival punished by the Burmese government for unauthorised emigration, prostitution and contracting HIV/AIDS (Human Rights Watch, 1993) (cited in Raymond et al, 2002).
There may be many pressures on FTSE to maintain silence\textsuperscript{94} about their experiences making issues of confidentiality and anonymity important considerations throughout the research process and researchers should expect to encounter difficulties concerning the protection of potentially sensitive information. Resolving these may require innovative ways of disseminating and publishing the research data.

Burke, Senior Director of the Anti-Trafficking Programme at Safe Horizon in New York, describes the tentacles of some trafficking rings (who can be well-known and even respected members in their communities) as so far-reaching including back to the trafficking persons’ home country (Brennan, 2005). In some cases, research material may need to be excluded if there is a danger that the FTSE could be identified and her safety and recovery jeopardised\textsuperscript{95}.

The question as to whether or not a researcher should warn the participant that legally sensitive information might necessitate disclosure remains a delicate one particularly with the potential for research data to be subpoenaed. However, ethical research requires the participant must be as fully aware as possible of the knowable potential risks of participation, regardless of the potential impact on FTSE willingness to participate.

\textsuperscript{94} Because of a learned silence as a survival strategy during civil war or genocide, refugees are reluctant to speak about their past experiences. Aiwha Ong writes about Cambodian refugees who, while living under the terror of the Pol Pot regime in the midst of life-and-death choices and the extremity of daily survival, depended on subterfuge, disguise, lying, and silence (Ong, 2003) to survive.

\textsuperscript{95} Maintaining confidentiality can at times dictate the research methodology since taking the context out of the data to preserve anonymity may threaten the research objective(s).
a) **Use of Recording Equipment**

*Over half of both Russian/CIS and US trafficked women stated that pornography was made of them and/or used against them while in the sex industry.* (Raymond et al, 2002:65)

Live video-conferencing is an advanced technology that is being used to sell live sex shows over the Internet. There have been several documented cases in which children have been sexually abused through live video-conferencing (Hughes, 1999).

Electronic recordings made during research may trigger traumatic memories for FTSE since she would have almost certainly been video and/or audiotape recorded during police and/or immigration procedures as well as during her time as FTSE. Psychological therapy with clients who have suffered abuse during childhood, often describe their feelings of desperation during criminal proceedings, describing feeling that they are also on trial alongside the perpetrator. In my work with clients, I have often heard descriptions of these experiences as equal to, if not worse than, the experience of the initial abuse.

b) **Adopting a Collusive Role**

In contrast to the untrusting stance of some FTSE, others may offer acceptance, friendship and honesty and researchers may be required to adopt a collusive role. This may present dilemmas if participants invite researchers to have contact with
FTSE friends or family outside of the shelter home. Third parties may be unaware of the information that the researcher has knowledge of and research is:

...no longer distanced from the action, the discourse, but is implicated unavoidably in its production. (Mitchell, 1991:108)

Sanders (2005) describes this process as similar to living a double life, in which one set of information is legitimate with one audience, only to be concealed from another (Sanders, 2005:33).

4.13 Secondary Trauma

Emotions are not a luxury, they are a complex aid in the fight for existence. (Damasio, 2003) (cited in Miller, 2005:7)

Successful research inevitably involves some emotional investment on the part of the researcher (Hobbs 1988) (cited in Sanders, 2005:36):

We have come to recognise that the choice of research topic often has personal significance for the researcher, whether conscious or unconscious. (Devereux, 1967) (cited in Etherington, 2004b:50)

Liebling and Stanko (2001) describe the moral turmoil experienced by researchers who are witness to the violence and harm in other people’s lives:

Confronted with the devastation of some women’s lives, I had to be clear with myself and those around me that I was not a social worker but a researcher, and although
awful to witness, I was relatively powerless in making any difference to individual situations. (Sanders, 2005:36)

The symptoms presented in PTSD sufferers and those suffering from secondary trauma are almost identical, the only difference is that with secondary trauma, the traumatising event experienced by one person becomes a traumatising event for the second person (Perry, 2003):

It has only been recently that researchers and practitioners have acknowledged that persons who work with or help traumatised persons are indirectly or secondarily at risk of developing the same symptoms as persons directly affected by the trauma ...are at risk of absorbing a portion of the trauma. (Perry, 2003:7)

Mitchells (2006) suggests that staff often suffer from secondary trauma, usually emerging in many disguised forms and without the resources needed to meet such work related demands and challenges:

I have time after time, gone out to NGOs who are in difficulty mainly because they’ve been in the field for a while and they’re traumatised, they are suffering from secondary traumatisation and sometimes direct traumatisation. They are burned-out, they’re tired, they’re committed, they want to stay, but they are having managerial problems mainly because they are tense, anxious and tired. They are presented as management issues and they are addressed as management issues but they aren’t, they are in fact trauma issues. (Interview with Mitchells, Consultant for Kosovo, UNICEF, UK, 31 March, 2006)

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66 Secondary traumatic stress is sometimes confused with burnout however, according to Pines et al (1981) burnout is a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion caused by long term involvement in emotionally demanding situations. Unlike secondary traumatic stress, burnout can be described as emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and a reduced feeling of personal accomplishment. Burnout is a condition that begins gradually and becomes progressively worse. Secondary trauma, conversely, can occur following the exposure to a single traumatic event and when there is interaction between the caregiver and the traumatised person trauma can occur.
Secondary traumatic stress and burnout may limit the resources necessary to provide support and services for FTSE within the shelter home. This can include the demands and resultant changes that occur through the presence of a researcher or research team working within a shelter home.

4.14 Ethical Withdrawal

*Your clever academics befriend us for a few months, they come down to our site, eats our food and drinks our tea. Some of them even lives among us. Then they disappear to their nice homes and university libraries. Next thing we know they’re giving lectures on us, writing books about us...what do they know about our struggles? How can they know our pain? We live it all the time. Our persecution lasts a life-time, not just a few months. Give us the tools to say it right and we’ll tell you like it is. You know what we call them on our site? Plastic gypsies.* (Scraton, 1976) (cited in Smyth & Williamson, 2004:175)

Researcher withdrawal can be ethically problematic particularly if the research has been long and close relationships have developed:

*It is very sensitive for them. Some are scared and won’t talk. This happened to us on the first time we went to the village. But we worked there a long time and they trust us and built a relationship. Takes a long time to build relationship with victim, about a month...Researcher stay there for 4 months.* (Interview with Dr Le Thi Quy, Hanoi University, Vietnam, 10 April 2006)

Ethical considerations with FTSE require that such withdrawal be well managed and avoid:
**Smash-and-grab raids on other people’s stories.** (Ryden & Loewenthall, 2001) (cited in Wright, 2005:111)

Barnard (1992) also reflects on the competing pressures of moral obligation and research objective and reflects on the women who had entrusted her with personal histories and information, to whom she felt an extended sense of responsibility. FTSE articulation of previously kept private feelings may encourage an increasing sense of personal identity which may have wider ramifications for which the researcher may be seen to be responsible:

*Research supervision is helpful in identifying responsibilities to the group and the less helpful breaches of roles and overstepping of responsibilities within the group.* (Dallos & Vetere, 2005:171)

Prior to research participation FTSE may not necessarily be fully aware of their lack of opportunities. Interaction with researchers can facilitate an experience of an alternative perception of life choices. This can be problematic for FTSE who may project their ability to realise such life choices onto sources of authority or power (e.g. gatekeepers and researchers). There may be minimal support structures in place to assist FTSE in actualising their choice potential at the cessation of research.
ETHICAL GOOD PRACTICE IN
FTSE RESEARCH

Two things fill my mind with ever-increasing
wonder and awe: the more often and the more
intensely the reflection dwells on them:
the starry heavens above me and
the moral law within me

(Kant, 1788)
The FTSE industry manipulates the consent of young women and employs violence and abuse of power to achieve compliance. It is important that FTSE do not experience psychological distress or physical harm as a consequence of having survived their trafficking ordeal. They must be assisted and protected as survivors, not only as witnesses. Ethical research with FTSE requires researchers to serve as ethical and moral exemplars (Lee, 1993) particularly when the principle of freedom to informed consent is problematic:

*Funding to establish a standard of assistance and social protection for FTSE must be provided and initial support activities should aim at enabling survivors to recover from the trauma.* (Upadhyay et al, 2004:46)

The following chapter identifies possible ethical safeguards for consideration throughout the FTSE research endeavour. These examples cannot resolve the myriad of ethical challenges facing researchers rather they attempt to focus attention on encouraging ways to protect the participant, the researcher, the participant/researcher relationship and the research aims and objectives.

### 5.1 Researcher Competence

*What passes muster as ethically responsible research is down to the individual researcher and no one else. Judgement has to be exercised when deciding how the researcher ought to conduct him or herself if faced with significant moral choices during the research process. Judgements made are inescapably personal if moral in kind.* (Gregory, 2003:3)
Researcher competence is essential in the planning, design and implementation of ethical research and requires consideration in the initial risk assessment phase. The researcher should consult an independent but associated individual/organisation such as a case worker, sponsor (or host organisation) gatekeeper and/or research supervisor. These parties each have a responsibility to ensure the researcher has undergone sufficient training and experience to conduct research that reflects ethical good practice and minimises potential risks.

Consideration needs to be made for measuring researcher competence. A basic-level qualification for an independent researcher working mostly autonomously is usually at Master’s level:

...this requirement permits students on Master’s level courses to undertake suitable research, typically as part of a dissertation, provided that they have received sufficient research training and are adequately supported to undertake their proposed study. Accountability for the suitability of any research undertaken within a course is primarily the responsibility of the training provider. (Bond, 2004b:16)

Researchers themselves also have a responsibility to know their own limitations and be able to communicate these as a component of the initial research assessment.

Research conducted by Owen (2001) with bereaved women, drew heavily on their former roles as clinical practitioners (cited in Tee & Lathlean, 2004). Research with FTSE may require similar skills to those used in psychotherapy. When participants

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97 Here, research undertaken within a course may be subject to greater accountability and transparency than research undertaken within an organisation. Freelance consultants and interns for example, may be required to collect information without due consideration of ethical issues, competence and safeguards.
are encouraged to tell their story the research process can be similar to a therapeutic session (Gale, 1992):

*Both the researcher and the therapist are taught to listen, demonstrate empathy and respect, seek clarification and confront the other with new thoughts...both ideally experience similar feelings of being valued, accepted and understood.* (Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004:2)

The research interview is different from the therapeutic session in that while some catharsis and empowerment, even self-awareness, may take place therapy is the by-product of the research process, rather than its object (Hutchinson & Wilson, 1994). Tee & Lathlean (2004) research on the ethics of conducting a co-operative inquiry with vulnerable people suggest the need for:

*Researchers to have developed high levels of personal awareness and skill to navigate the interpersonal relational and group dynamics that may arise. This could include proven ability to make ongoing assessments of vulnerability, sensitivity to changes in decision-making capacity and transparency. Whilst ethical guidelines and codes of moral conduct are helpful in setting broad parameters, they are rather blunt instruments that cannot take account of the complexities of specific situations encountered by researchers.* (Tee & Lathlean, 2004:8)

IOM (2004) recommends that IOM staff working with FTSE should:

*Receive training and ongoing support...to help ready her for encounters with women who have been exposed to severe trauma...(the interviewer)...needs to be prepared to work empathetically with women who are presenting high levels of distress, yet be able to remain calm and contained in the face of the horrific accounts of abuse. As part of her training for the post, the interviewer should be informed that it is common
for survivors to initially give accounts that are confused and include inconsistencies. Inconsistencies tend to diminish after the survivor has processed her experiences. This will help prepare the interviewer to tolerate gaps and inconsistencies in the women’s accounts of their experiences and to remain open-minded. (IOM, 2004:62).

There may be many instances that require the researcher to be highly vigilant, competent and skilled in interacting with the participant. For example, the FTSE may be forming a dependence on the researcher or exhibiting transference. Researcher experience and skills in working with such relationships and/or attachment issues may safeguard against and/or enable these to be addressed and worked through with the participant.

5.2 Researcher Preparation

It is important for researchers to study statutory and professional guidelines in order to appreciate the potential nature of FTSE vulnerability and their capacity to participate in research (Zimmerman & Watts, 2003). However, while such guidelines are necessary, they do not provide solutions to the many complex ethical dilemmas that can arise during the research.

Therefore an essential pre-requisite for ethical research with this population is for the researcher to gain as much knowledge and first-hand experience of the FTSE context (including research location, gatekeepers, I/NGOs and government) first-hand experience working with traumatised young people or females who have been sexually abused and/or sex workers. A wide and varied first-hand exposure to the
research context is likely to provide a valuable foundation and range of information and experience from which to draw. Fieldwork experience is highly valuable, particularly experience working in LDC’s, with different cultures, religious beliefs with minority, marginalised or stigmatised populations.

Inexperienced researchers who are unaware of the political, cultural and economic context on the ground put themselves and others around them at risk, albeit inadvertently. Such insensitivity, naivety or ignorance on the part of the researcher is potentially dangerous and unethical, particularly for research conducted in war and/or post war zones, regions that are highly susceptible to FTSE\(^98\).

*We think about the ethics of research but we don’t think about the preparations of fieldwork in the way that we should...There are people who go out and are not sufficiently aware of the situation on the ground and can put themselves or other people at risk because of the way that they have behaved and not always deliberately.* (Interview with Mitchells, Consultant for Kosovo, UNICEF, UK, 31 March, 2006)

### 5.3 Risk Assessment

Approved ethical research should include a clearly articulated risk assessment and management plan. This should attempt to manage ethical dilemmas, assessing FTSE

\(^{98}\) For example, Morrell-Bellai et al (1997) (cited in Beale et al, 2004) strongly recommends that inexperienced researchers working with vulnerable populations must be given information and literature on the research topic and additional support from experienced researchers.
vulnerability and her capacity to participate in research. Attempts have been made to develop an objective measure of competence to participate in research, for example the MacArthur Competence Assessment Tool – Clinical Research (MacCAT-CR) (Grisso & Applebaum, 1998). Tee & Lathlean (2004) found it helpful in their study to develop (with participants) a risk management plan demonstrating how risks were to be assessed and quantified and what action would be taken in the event of a crisis (Tee & Lathlean, 2004).

However, such plans are usually applied at a particular point in time, i.e. at the outset of the research and therefore do not account for any changes in individual decision-making capacity at a later stage. However, re-administering competence assessment tools at intervals could have negative repercussions for the participant/researcher, eroding trust and potentially threaten participation. Therefore, identifying and assessing changes in participant competence also requires on-going researcher competence:

*It is unavoidable that the responsibility to determine ongoing competence remains with the researcher who needs to ensure they are adequately equipped to make such a judgement.* (Tee & Lathlean, 2004:5)

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99 Applebaum et al’s (1999) study of 26 non-hospitalised women with major depressive disorder and Kim et al’s (2002) comparative study of the decision-making ability of 34 participants with mild to moderate Alzheimer’s disease and 14 healthy older participants, found that the majority of participants, whatever their diagnosis, had adequate capacity to give consent.

100 This uses a semi-structured interview format to assess and rate the ability of potential participants in which they answer questions about their understanding of information about the research, understanding of the effects of participation on their own situation and their reasoning and ability to communicate their choice.
Conducting research with FTSE also requires knowledge of the individual and her stage of recovery:

_Rehabilitation for empowerment. Empowerment is achieved through two fundamental developments in terms of personal development and socio-political recognition. Empowerment requires following two sets of development: Personal (in relation to self) self-esteem, courage, strength, happiness, solidarity/spirituality, sense of control, confidence ability to make plans/decisions, energy, hope/vision for the future. Social/Political (in relation to family/society): Access to resources, ability to make decisions in family settings, sense of control in relationships with others/fulfilling friendships, critical consciousness of subordination in family/society, participation in grass-roots organisation, interest in political processes. The above descriptions help analyse the success of rehabilitation and reintegration processes._ (Upadhyay et al, 2004:28)

Brennan (2005) researching the lives of trafficked persons, conducted interviews in different cities in the US where young women:

...came forward to their case managers requesting to be put in touch with researchers and journalists or their case managers identified them as psychologically and emotionally ready to – and interested in – speaking with researchers. (Brennan, 2005:6)

Gozdziak (2004) (cited in Brennan, 2005) refers to this kind of middle research ground where researchers have access to FTSE (and vice versa) as a golden middle, in which their safety and privacy is balanced with the political need to bring public attention to the lives of FTSE101.

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101 Researchers and social service providers are currently working through how best to reach this golden middle (Brennan, 2005).
5.4 Process Consent

FTSE may be reluctant to participate unless the researcher is able to demonstrate the benefits of participation and the use to which the information will be put. The researcher may also discuss their own aspirations for the research as well as determine the participants’ previous research experience and motivations:

*Power relations go both ways...researchers will be wholly dependent on others giving their consent on the basis of an adequate understanding of what the research involves.* (Gregory, 2003:39)

Process transparency (Tee & Lathlean, 2004) begins an on-going dialogue between participant/researcher that may help instil confidence and increasing sense of empowerment.


*Official information sheets that labour the point about confidentiality or the possible distress that might arise from participating are viewed as likely to make research participants reluctant to participate or...encourage relatives or care workers to refuse participation on their behalf.* (Wiles et al, 2004:11)
It is the responsibility of the researcher to identify ways of providing information that is appropriate and has been understood\textsuperscript{102}. Researchers could work closely with peer researchers/colleagues to help ensure they provide appropriate information. Once FTSE have been given the information, they must be given sufficient time to consider whether or not they wish to participate.

Information and informed consent sheets should include the principle of confidentiality and the FTSE right to ask any question, avoid any question or withdraw from research at any time for whatever reason without explanation. In order to minimise the formality of the relationship, the informed consent papers could be signed by the researcher and left with the participant\textsuperscript{103}.

However, as the research progresses safeguards are needed to ensure ongoing informed consent. Munhall (1993) describes this ongoing dialogue in collaborative and qualitative research methodology as \textit{process consent}. It is the process of continual information giving and permission seeking at key points during the research that helps to maintain trust between participant/researcher and ultimately reduces the likelihood of unethical practice\textsuperscript{104}:

\textit{It is extraordinarily difficult to know really what the other feels; far too often we project our own feelings onto the other.} (Yalom, 2002:21)

\textsuperscript{102} If the formality of written information is felt to be inappropriate to a particular participant or the setting of safe home is not conducive to potential participants reading written information, oral information can be provided or offered in conjunction with written information.

\textsuperscript{103} van den Hoomaard (2005) successfully used this method in her study of vulnerable widows to create a less intimidating frame of reference.

\textsuperscript{104} Yalom (2002) suggests that therapy is enhanced if the therapist enters accurately into the clients world and that the client profits enormously simply from the experience of being fully seen and fully understood.
Some participants may need continual reassurance that they are *doing it right*, particularly if they are used to more formal structured interviews with questionnaires (Devault, 1999). In such situations, it is important for the researcher to stress that the correct way is whichever the participant wishes to answer and emphasising the value and appreciation to the participant for sharing her experiences.

### 5.5 Contractual Consent

If FTSE wish to tell their story as Brennan (2005) and Manz (2002) findings suggest, it is incumbent upon researchers to explain the limit of their role and the extent of the purpose of the research. It is important that researchers inform participants that the information will be used for no other purpose than that which has been stated in the informed consent procedure. It is also important for the researcher not to allude or commit to anything that is not possible. The researcher may be easily led into situations outside their area of expertise or in breach of ethical research practice (Cwikel & Hoban, 2005). An example would be promising to maintain contact with the participant or return in person to the shelter home in the future. It is also important for researchers to remain constantly vigilant to the socio-economic situation and relatively limited future opportunities available to FTSE and their potential for fantasy. They may be easily led into creating possible future scenarios in order to manage the sometimes stark reality of their situation.

In a workshop with FTSE (IOM, 2004) some of the participants began to reveal their traumatic experiences:
We were careful to listen and validate them. However, we did not encourage them to open up further because it would not have been appropriate (it would have caused significant distress in themselves and others, which would have been difficult to contain and may not have been therapeutic). The workshop was not the appropriate setting to engage in any trauma processing. (IOM, 2004:68)

The IOM (2004) example highlights the difficulty of contracting with FTSE and the need for the role and purpose of the research and researcher to be made explicit throughout the research process. It also highlights that despite full and proper contracting, the separation of highly traumatic and emotionally charged experiences and memories from the present day and self-identity focus can remain difficult. It is important for the researcher to be mindful of the interconnected nature of these daily practical realities with FTSE emotional recollections of trafficking and sexual exploitation.

5.6 Right to Withdraw

It seems to have been a way of prospectively dealing with the uncertainty inherent in accepting the risks...Thus a higher degree of risk could be taken in the knowledge that they could withdraw...This maximised the chance of benefiting from taking the risk in the first place, while leaving one’s options open. (Smyth & Williamson 2004:47)

Researchers have noted that it is common for participants to show reluctance to withdraw (Alderson, 2004) (cited in Wiles et al, 2005) due to the possible perceived or actual participant/researcher power relations and the difficulty of withdrawing from something they have already consented to. It is therefore important for
researchers to be particularly vigilant to participants’ unspoken expressions of reluctance to continue for example an apparent lack of interest or irritation.

In research with children and participants with limited communication, some researchers (Wiles et al, 2005) have used *stop* cards. Participants can hold up the card if they don’t wish to answer a particular question or don’t wish to continue to participate. This method of refusal may be easier than verbally communicating any difficulties or requesting to withdraw.

### 5.7 Individually Tailored Research

*Each counts for one and none for more than one.* (Adam Smith, 1723-90)

The causes, impact and consequences of FTSE are potentially so diverse that ethical research requires individual consideration and assessment:

*The focus should not be on what serves victims of trafficking generally, but what is in the best interest of the specific individual, at that specific moment in time.* (IOM, 2004)

Yalom (2002) describes therapy as at its very core a spontaneous flow forever following unanticipated riverbeds. He questions whether therapy and in my view, also research is grotesquely distorted by being packaged into a formula.
Jung (1963) describes his appreciation of the uniqueness of an individual’s inner world and language as a uniqueness that requires the researcher to invent a new research language for each person (cited in Yalom, 2002).

Yalom (2002) believes that the therapist must strive to create a new therapy for each patient. He suggests that the use of a protocol allows inexperienced or inadequately trained therapists to deliver uniform therapy. Similarly, do research protocols allow inexperienced and inadequately trained researchers to deliver uniform research data and is this in the best interests of FTSE?

Research tailored to value the individual FTSE may enable the development of her identity as greater than a victim of trafficking if participation reinforces her identity (e.g. through her likes and dislikes). In this way, her identity becomes greater than her past experience and the research process can be viewed:

*As a simulacrum, a perfectly miniature and coherent world in its own right...Every interview text selectively and unsystematically reconstructs that world, tells and performs a story according to its own version of narrative logic.* (Dillard, 1982) (cited in Denzin, 2001:25)

### 5.8 The Research Relationship

*What I would like to have done differently is meet with the young people first before we did the interview. The groups that worked best, and by that I mean they were most forthcoming in what they were saying, were the ones where we had a chat before it and they got to know more about me; me as a person; me as a researcher; the*
politics of the research; why I was doing it; and what I was doing with it. Basically, just trying to reduce the hierarchical relationship by giving them more information about the research and me…I think if I had had a longer time to speak with them first, it would have made it less daunting and easier for all of us. (Smyth & Williamson, 2004:208)\(^{105}\)

The constructivist approach (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) to research suggests that the researcher plays a formative role in how the research unfolds and subsequently what the participant discloses. Researcher integrity and trustworthiness are interdependent in reinforcing or undermining each other.

Bond (2004a) defines trust in terms of the quality of relational reciprocity\(^{106}\) and highlights the important position researcher’s occupy in establishing trust and safety in the research(er)\(^{107}\):

*A quality of relationship...that is sufficient to withstand any challenges arising from inequality, difference, uncertainty and risk in their work together.* (Bond, 2004a:5)

Building trust and a sense of safety with participants requires researchers to spend time demonstrating in words, body language and silences that they are trustworthy, Wenger (2001):

*Interviewers have to be prepared to be generous with their time if their respondents have been generous with theirs.* (Wenger, 2001) (cited in van den Hoonoord, 2005:11)

\(^{105}\) An extract from Smyth & Williamson’s (2004) research when they asked researchers of domestic violence: *If you knew then what you know now, would you do it differently?* (Smyth & Williamson, 2004:208).

\(^{106}\) This approach is developed by Fetterman’s (1991) view of the need for professional distance in field relations.

\(^{107}\) In Cwikel & Hoban’s (2005) research with FTSE, they also informed the women of accessible services in order to not only assist them with health and legal issues but also to help establish and demonstrate trust and mutuality in the research relationship.
FTSE research may continue over a series of interviews (*sequential interviewing*) (Ortiz, 1994). Research also suggests that at least initially, most women are likely to find it difficult to attend scheduled activities regularly (IOM, 2004) since they have not been used to a normal schedule (Sanders, 2005). It may also take time to achieve closure of the research relationship as the participant works through feelings, observations and evaluations, perhaps for the very first time (Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004). Oakley (1981) suggests that one-off interviewing encourages an ethic of detachment (cited in Lee, 1993) which makes it difficult to develop a deep and genuinely collaborative research relationship. However, sequential interviewing may not be necessary if the participant is trusting and willing and/or a trusted intermediary introduces the researcher.

The temporary and precarious nature of the researcher’s acceptance in fieldwork is noted by Sanders as she writes of her experiences as a participant observer:

*Often I was caught unaware and would suddenly find myself in a situation, being offered the chance to step away from the periphery and closer to the centre, knowing that the wrong answer could spurn a trusted informant and possibly my reputation within the local sex work community. These roller coaster incidents and interruptions, reinforcing how acceptance was only temporary.* (Sanders, 2005:34)

However, FTSE may have had few encounters that allowed them to freely talk about themselves. The researcher’s status as a stranger may enable them to feel safer than someone who they know in their everyday lives. As Simmel (1971) suggests, a stranger is someone who receives confidences and then moves on.
It is important for researchers to consider the implications of the competing needs of
time sensitive research (research agenda), the needs of participants and to what
extent a time sensitive research framework may jeopardise the immediate and/or
long-term well-being of the participant and the quality of the research relationship:

*They have a budget and they feel they have to go in with an agenda and a plan that satisfies their donors. On the other hand what they also need is time for research and to find out the local needs...And that’s where I think they fall down. The larger NGOs seem to manage it better, it’s the smaller ones that have a really specific agenda and tighter resources.* (Interview with Mitchells, Consultant for Kosovo, UNICEF, UK, 31 March, 2006)

Despite a commitment to openness and accountability in establishing and
maintaining trustworthiness, it is also dependent on the perceived and actual
relationship the researcher has with the shelter home and its staff:

*The researcher makes an important contribution to securing the opportunity to be trustworthy but may not be solely responsible for the relational and systemic aspects of his or her role.* (Bond, 2004b:17)

Smyth & Williamson (2004) research into gaining access to women’s refuges
highlights the responsibility researchers have to conduct ethical research and enable
future researchers to expand the body of available knowledge:

*Some of the refuges that I approached had had unfortunate experiences with researchers and each of them separately put their own screening process in place. You could argue that that wasn’t empowering women by not allowing them to choose if they wanted to participate or not. But the groups felt that they had been used and exploited and they weren’t prepared to take part in any further research without*
thorough checks...But it seems very sad that there is this ethical problem where researchers may exploit and damage women...So there was a personal vetting and a vetting of the ethics and morality of what I was doing, that it was going to benefit women in general, and that they were going to get full feedback on the research and contribute to the research results. So, openness and honesty were what they were looking for ...(Smyth & Williamson, 2004:202).

5.9 Reflexive Research

Who we are is not a fixed image but an ongoing story. It is not only new in this very moment, but will be new again, in the next moment. (Epstein, 1995) (cited in Gangjee, 2006:91)

Reflexive approaches allow the researcher, participant and topic to be located within a historical, cultural and social context. Reflexivity requires a level of researcher self-awareness and competence to operate on multiple levels, being aware, in the moment, of what influences responses, as well as understanding the factors that influence the research relationship:

The reflexive interview is not an information-gathering tool per se. It is not a commodity that you hire someone to collect for you, or that you pay someone to give you. It belongs to a moral community...As researchers, we belong to a moral community. The reflexive interview helps us create dialogic relationships with that community. These relationships, in turn, allow us to enact an ethic of care and empowerment. (Denzin, 2001:24-43)
Reflexivity in Research

- Requires self-awareness but is more than self-awareness in that it creates a dynamic process of interaction within oneself and between us and our participants and the data which informs decisions, actions and interpretations
- Recognises the context of researcher and researched as both having agency
- Challenges us to be more fully conscious of our own ideology, culture and politics and that of our participants and audience
- Creates transparency and goes some way to addressing the ethical issues and power relations between researcher and researched
- Enables us to provide information on what is known and how it is known
- Is not the same as subjectivity but rather it opens up a space between subjectivity and objectivity where the distinction between content and process becomes indistinguishable
- Adds validity and rigour by providing information about the contexts in which data is located

(Etherington, 2004a:47)

Reflexivity requires researchers to identify and respond to ethical issues such as power inequalities and their impact on the participant/researcher relationship. Heyl (2000) suggests that reflexive interviewing allows individuals to connect in mutually empowering ways (cited in Denzin, 2001):
When we enter into relationships with our research participants it is inevitable that issues of power come into focus and require us constantly to scrutinise and interrogate our own positions, views and behaviours. (Wright, 2005:112)

Reflexive methodologies are best suited to researchers who value using themselves in their research and who also value transparency in relationship with others (Hiller & DiLuzio, 2004). Reflexivity may be particularly appropriate with FTSE research given FTSE experiences which are characterised by secrecy, manipulation of consent and abuse of power.

However, Denzin & Lincoln (1994) warn of the difficulties of reflexivity for some researchers in what they call a crisis of representation in which some people:

Struggle with how to locate themselves and their subjects in reflexive texts that are complex and multi-layered and therefore sometimes difficult to manage. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) (cited in Etherington, 2004a:47)

5.10 Collaborative Research

If the researcher is attempting to know the participant as fully as possible, a diagnosis (e.g., vulnerable victim) may limit their experiencing and diminish their ability to fully relate to them. Researchers are required to tread a fine line between subjectivity and objectivity:

Participatory and action-oriented research approach in which participants are co-researchers and co-subjects. The design and management of the inquiry is agreed
between the participants, who engage in cycles of action and reflection...It is essentially an emancipatory approach which benefits people normally excluded from the decision-making process, with all participants being equally involved in the conclusions drawn from the work. (Reason, 1994) (cited in Tee & Lathlean, 2004:2).

The collaborative (or co-operative) approach reflects a growing awareness that research is a relational and interactional process (Enosh & Buchbinder, 2005). It acknowledges the empowerment of the participant\(^{108}\) and offers voice to those silenced through marginalisation or oppression, including victims of trauma, sexual assault and harassment (Stewart et al, 1996; van Roosmalen & McDaniel, 1998):

\[\text{I will look to this group experience as a turning point in my life and remember the shock of recognition when I realised that the strength I so readily saw in the other women who have survived this...violation was also within me. (Harvey, 2002:273)}\]

Collaborative research may therefore enable FTSE to move beyond their victim status (providing trafficking testimonies) to participating in decision-making\(^{109}\). Here, FTSE are active participants, formulating the questions, methods, analysis, results and disseminating the research:

\[\text{Meaning is not elicited merely by apt questioning, nor simply transported through respondent replies; it is actively and communicatively assembled in the interview encounter. Respondents are not so much repositories of knowledge – treasuries of information awaiting excavation, so to speak – as they are constructors of knowledge in collaboration with interviewers. (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997:114)}\]

\(^{108}\) Smyth & Williamson (2004) argue that research with more powerful groups requires less collaboration in the research process since their power influences their individual and collective ability to challenge the research and the potential implications of it.

\(^{109}\) MacClancy (2002) argues that transmitting words of the marginalised, the poor and the ignored can bring high-flying approaches back down to ground and reintroduce the concerns of ordinary people into the equations of policy-makers.
Constructivists have shown how collaborative research is a meaning making experience. Whether it was interactive interviewing (Ellis et al, 1997) or co-constructed methods (Bochner & Ellis, 1992) or feminist methods (Smith, 1987) the interview, according to the constructivist perspective could no longer be seen as a data-yielding process but as a meaning-making process (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995) that intimately involves both parties:

Constructivism…restores humans to the centre of the inquiry process, is educative to all participants, tilts the inquirer toward ethical behaviour, provides a new perspective on the change process, is empowering and emancipatory, rescinds the special privilege of science and emulates the emergent paradigm in the hard sciences. (Guba and Lincoln, 1990) (cited in Cain, 2002:323)

Such capacity building may benefit participant recovery, particularly if participants are asked to discuss mechanisms that could help them\(^\text{110}\) and corresponds to Herman’s (1992) model of recovery from trauma\(^\text{111}\).

Working collaboratively may reduce issues of inequality in power and status but should not be assumed to eliminate ethical issues of FTSE research. For example, researchers will continue to face differences in academic background and cultural identity and decision-making responsibilities. Working collaboratively researchers need to:

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\(^{110}\) This approach has advantages in that it enables participants to make decisions regarding the potential risks and benefits involved in a proposed research study, helps minimise the ethical dilemmas inherent in the concepts of freedom to informed consent and therapeutically beneficial in its empowerment and self-determination effects.

\(^{111}\) Herman (1992) argues that the first principle of all recovery is the empowerment of the survivor. She believes three major phases are involved in trauma recovery i) helping the survivor feel safe and re-establish a sense of personal control to understand the meanings of the trauma ii) facilitating a survivor’s remembrance of the traumatic event and mourn the loss involved, telling the story of the event(s) (however, Herman argues that we never achieve total completion in our grieving and interpretative reconstruction) and iii) helping the survivor to reconnect with the world and create a new future (Harvey, 2002).
Demonstrate clearly how a balance between autonomy and paternalism will be achieved, how risks will be anticipated and managed and how fairness will be maintained throughout all procedures...Researchers and ethics committees have a shared responsibility to ensure that vulnerable people are appropriately engaged to maintain the advancement of user knowledge which informs practice. (Tee & Lathlean, 2004:2)

Melton et al (1988) warn of the potential for risky-shift (cited in Lee, 1993) when participants work together in groups. Melton describes individuals working in groups as more readily wanting to countenance risks associated with participation. It is important therefore, that group consultation should be distinct from and in addition to researcher attempts to obtain individual consent in order to prevent group pressure from pre-empting individual decisions to participate. This highlights the importance of remembering that the locus of responsibility for ethical decision making in collaborative research is not being shifted away from the researcher and onto the community.

5.11 Confidentiality

One strategy that will propel this protection agenda forward is for donor agencies to make protection a prerequisite to funding. (Chen & Marcovici, 2003:15)

Research data and participant identity must be protected. However, researchers should be mindful of situations in which a commitment to confidentiality may conflict with additional ethical considerations (for example, information relating to criminal prosecutions). These and any foreseeable limitations, which could adversely
impact participant’s safety, should be made explicit in the terms of the consent procedure. Reminding participants of any limitations to confidentiality should be made throughout the research process. During the planning stage (versus preparatory risk analysis) careful consideration should be given to how any disclosure of information regarding abuse, malpractice, or criminal behaviour will be managed.

FTSE may sign informed consent forms using pseudonyms or provide verbal, rather than written informed consent. It may also be helpful to leave participants with access information, such as the name and phone numbers of researchers and I/NGOs.

To ensure data confidentiality, researchers and personnel handling the data should be briefed on the importance of confidentiality and only authorised access should be given once the data has been collected. If electronic recordings are used, information should be deleted immediately following transcription.

Deductive disclosure of participant’s identification is also possible and careful consideration should be given to the potential vulnerability of participants who have freely consented to any publication of sensitive information. It may be useful to explore how the participant is likely to respond and to identify what, if anything can be done in the event of an adverse reaction. This could form part of the preparatory risk analysis.

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112 In order to match interviews for follow-up, Cwikel & Hoban (2005) kept password-protected lists of participants real names and dates of birth together with the pseudonyms recorded on the questionnaire or the questionnaire number (Cwikel et al, 2005) (cited in Cwikel & Hoban 2005).
Working in a reserved, separate place within the shelter home setting may encourage a confidential and boundaried environment:

This kind of situational arrangement gives the residents a concrete perception of intimacy, being able to lock the door and to have available a protected space allows the outlining of a tangible limit between what belongs to the interview and what belongs to the outside. (IOM, 2004)

The issue of confidentiality also relates to the safety of the researcher. The FTSE industry is a highly lucrative, global network and a politically sensitive issue for many governments. Researching FTSE and its young women (often testifying against their perpetrators) is a potentially high-risk area. If FTSE are targets for traffickers it follows that their researchers may also represent a perceived threat to criminal networks and/or governments attempting minimal exposure of the problem (Steinfatt, 2002) (cited in UNESCO, 2005):

Three days ago a group of youths called me up and said there is this girl in a house and she is below 18 and she is being sold...If we wait too long, she is just moved from one house to another and we won’t be able to trace her. I called the police and eventually the girl was rescued and is safe now, but who is not safe is those 3 young youth group members who sleep in the street of the red light area...I am safe in this office. I have a bodyguard outside...Those 3 kids are not safe. (Interview with Chowdhury, Sanlaap, India, 28 April 2006).

According to Troiden (1987) (cited in Lee, 1993) the occupational stigma which attaches to research on sexual behaviour also produces personal and professional risks:
Researchers on sexual deviance seem often to suffer ‘stigma contagion’, coming to share the stigma attached to those being studied. And although the researcher may provide an audience and a voice for the victims, the dangers and stigma inherent in this research setting may deter researchers from entering it. (Kirby & Corzine, 1981) (cited in Lee, 1993:9)

However, Goldsmith (2003) reminds us from his criminological research in Colombia of the importance in remembering that research is often characterised by fear, but it is the task of the researcher to sift the perceived risks from the real risks.

5.12 FTSE Support

A request for help should immediately take precedence over the research and every attempt to assist the FTSE to access the appropriate resources should be made. (Zimmerman & Watts, 2003).

Distressing and painful memories may require a support system to be developed into the research programme that extends beyond the collection of the research data. The provision of post research support and FTSE de-briefing sessions may be essential to enable participants to manage feelings they may have been unable to share with the researcher, but may feel able to share with shelter home staff or other support workers.

FTSE have had limited access to qualified psychological support (IOM, 2004) and it is therefore important that the purpose and access to such support is introduced to participants gradually and sensitively as part of the contracting process. However, consideration should be made for the freedom with which participants are able to
request such support. For example, shelter home staff may have a number of duties to perform and may be responsible for many of the resident’s needs. This may discourage participants from requesting support, debriefing or therapy if FTSE are not able to relate to staff as therapists given their multi-functional roles.

5.15 Researcher Support

Since the subjectivity of a qualitative research process recognises an interdependent dynamic participant/researcher relationship (Silverman, 2005) the well-being of both researcher and participant is important. Support systems are encouraged as a means of processing painful emotions, dealing with unanticipated reactions, controlling bias and balancing information (Alexander et al, 1989) (cited in Beale et al, 2004).

Researchers have recorded their experiences of emotional and physical distress as a result of conducting in-depth interviews (Beale et al, 2004) and as Sanders (1980) notes one cannot hope to learn the ropes of being a field researcher without suffering from rope burns (cited in Lee, 1993).

113 Shelter home staff may also not be fully qualified in psychotherapy and/or may not have access to regular, scheduled individual or group supervision. Such supervision for project staff would provide an opportunity to reflect on the necessary support for participants, discuss their experiences and plan appropriate interventions and safeguards.
Box 5:1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safeguards to Secondary Trauma</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Empathy – <em>Researcher is vulnerable to internalising some of the trauma-related pain</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Insufficient Recovery Time – <em>Researcher exposed to FTSE experiences with little recovery time</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Unresolved Personal Trauma – <em>Researcher’s painful experiences can be ‘re-activated’</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vulnerable Members of Society – <em>Researcher’s sense of morality and decency shaken</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Isolation and Systemic Fragmentation – <em>Group cohesiveness regulates individual stress reactions, therefore individual researchers less able to tolerate stress</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of Systemic Resources – <em>Lack of economic and personnel investment in services for FTSE may exacerbate the above problems</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Perry, 2003)

The researcher should have access to a supervisory relationship that facilitates exploration of psychological issues which may also become potential sources of unintended manipulation (Tee & Lathlean, 2004). It is important for the researcher to identify the support structures and resources necessary to process and manage emotional difficulties:

*Receiving adequate personal and professional support in which ethical issues can be addressed lowers the exposure to adverse risk(s) for both the research participants and the researcher.* (Bond, 2004b:12)
Sources of support for researchers to defuse affective reaction include family members, colleagues, researchers, academic supervision and a research reference group. These might include the use of a personal journal to reflect on the emotional reactions to the research and participants, periods of remission from the field and the use of colleagues for support and debriefing (Lee, 1993). Cowles (1988) (cited in Beale et al, 2004) strongly recommends spacing between interviews to ensure psychological and emotional recovery.

5.14 Is it necessary?

*Although it was very important for me to understand the process of interviewing women and understanding their experiences of health in relation to their experience of domestic violence, looking at it afterwards, I did question whether or not I actually needed to ask that question. I think it helped me to analyse the other data much more clearly, the fact that I had...so I think it added quite a lot, but in terms of what it cost those participants to take part...I could have done it in a different way, and I think that is certainly something that took away from my research. I would have found another way to access those experiences of violence without asking the women to actually go through it.* (Smyth & Williamson 2005: 208)

Ethical research has a duty to its participants and wider society to continually re-assess the relevance of its aims and objectives and to re-evaluate the appropriateness and necessity of the specific questions it seeks to answer.
Would not God find a way out,
some superior deception such as the
grownups and the powerful always contrived,
producing one more trump card at the last moment,
  shaming me after all,
  not taking me seriously,
  humiliating me under the
damnable mask of kindness?

(Hesse, cited in Miller, 1987:79)
FTSE is a violation of human rights exercised through the manipulation of consent and the abuse of power. Ethical research with FTSE must attempt to avoid any further abuse or misuse of power or exploitation of vulnerability\(^\text{114}\).

Box 6:1

**Power, Ethics and Humanity**

- Can researchers adequately inform FTSE of the consequences (risk/harm) of participation? If not, where does the researcher’s responsibility begin and end both within research interactions and throughout the research process?

- Can FTSE truly freely consent to participate in research? If not, are alternative safeguards adequate? How do we measure these? Who measures these?

- What are FTSE being protected from - Abuse of power? Incompetent researchers? Inadequate research frameworks?

- Some FTSE report the benefit of empowerment from research participation while others report distress. What is too distressing? Who defines it?

- Is the FTSE the expert on her own experience and recovery process? When is she not?

- Is the researcher, with potentially competing interests, able to make an objective judgement regarding the best interests of the FTSE?

Since it is difficult to adequately quantify potential risk in FTSE research, ethical frameworks and research governance may recommend that FTSE should not be directly involved in research. However, such an overtly cautious approach risks

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\(^{114}\) According the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): Article 1. *All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.* Article 2. *Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.* (UN, 1948).
FTSE continuing to have their status and needs defined by those with greater authority and (presumed) expertise. Excluding FTSE from research, risks maintaining their victim status while simultaneously allowing their participation in the provision of evidence for legal prosecutions.

Denzin (2001) suggests that research is abused if it is treated as a commodity which belongs to the research community rather than a deeply human interaction, to which we all should belong and pay respect:

*Doing interviews is a privilege granted to us, not a right that we have...Interviews are part of the dialogic conversation that connects all of us to this larger moral community.* (Denzin, 2001:24)

Brown (2000) echoes this sentiment in her study of sex workers in Asia:

...They told their stories in painful detail and I am indebted to them for their courage and for their willingness to relive such traumatic events...The resilience of these young women has taught me a great deal about the stereotypical weakness and subservience of Asian women. This stereotype is a myth. Poor Asian women may be vulnerable, and many may be subject to terrible abuse, but they are not weak ... I have been privileged to witness remarkable reserves of psychological strength in young women who have suffered immense physical and emotional tortures. I have learned a humbling respect and an enormous admiration for the girls and young women who, after being treated as sub-human and sold like livestock, have then managed to rebuild their lives...I hope that I have kept their faith and I pray that I have done them justice. (Brown, 2000:xi)

Researchers should be committed to the basic humanity of the research endeavour and able to manage the pressures they face in attempting to maintain this quality:
We both had a real commitment to doing research, not only to breaking down power differentials between the research and the researched person, but also breaking down power differentials within research teams...We never wanted it like that and we always tried not to have it like that. But now we are being forced into that situation really, and that means that we are having to retract from some of this...But we have to try to hang onto something about the integrity and humanness of it. What I would like to emphasise is the humanness of the endeavour of research. It is not just a mechanistic thing: it is a deeply human interaction and that is what we have to hang on to. (Smyth & Williamson, 2005:208-209)

In this respect, Chowdhury (2006) emphasises the required knowledge and experience of competent field researchers, rather than the prescriptive rationalities of social science:

*Ethics don’t come from the first world. They don’t come from books. Ethics come from the realities on the ground.* (Interview with Chowdhury, Sanlaap, India, 28 April 2006)

An inevitable paradox also exists when FTSE are included in research, whereby the researchers and organisations benefit professionally and personally from the unethical exploitation of FTSE, as O’Neill (1996) warns:

*Researchers are sometimes seen as akin to pimps, coming into the field to take, then returning to the campus, institution or suburb where they write up the data, publish and build careers – on the backs of those they took the data from.* (Cited in Sanders, 2005:22)
Research by Smyth & Williamson (2004) indicates the potential empowering aspect of research participation for women living in a refuge:

...Two women said ‘We felt important and useful again’, so it was actually bolstering their self-esteem and self-confidence that somebody was listening and using what they were saying. One of them said that she enjoyed the chance to get her views across to others ‘...the interview made me decide to be positive and to think of myself and what I want to do in the future.’ So it wasn’t just a looking back; it was actually a springboard forward for her as an individual. (Smyth & Williamson, 2004:205)

However, it is important not to assume that empowerment (or a further disempowerment) always occurs in all research with disempowered women. Each participant is an individual, each research process and relationship is different and each researcher/participant interaction may have a different outcome. Nonetheless, it is possible that an individual’s history of powerlessness (internalised in the self-concept) may become a less powerful mechanism of disempowerment as a consequence of participation in research.

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115 The following two approaches to empowerment view power from opposite moral perspectives, Kelly et al (1994) assumes that the researcher knows the research group and designs the research in an attempt to empower that group and change their situation (cited in Enosh & Buchbinder, 2005). Millen (1997) criticises this approach as condescending and ignoring of participant needs, goals, strengths and independence. Instead they support work to help individuals to achieve their own goals through helping them realise their own strengths (Millen, 1997).

116 The self, may be defined simply as a person’s conceptual construction of him/herself (Mearns & Thorne, 1999). A part of Rogers’ definition of the self-concept included the perceptions of the relationships of the individual’s ‘I’ or ‘me’ to others (Rogers, 1959).
Box 6:2

FTSE Empowerment

- **Personal (in relation to self):** Self-esteem, courage, strength, happiness, solidarity/spirituality, sense of control, confidence and ability to make decisions, future vision/hope

- **Social/Political (in relation to family/society):** Access to resources, ability to make decisions in family settings, sense of control in relationships with others, critical consciousness of subordination in family/society, participation in grass-roots organisation, interest in political processes

(Upadhayay et al, 2004)

FTSE participation in research is therefore potentially able to ensure their active participation in society not only as survivors but also as resourceful contributors and members of their community:

*I believe the sustainability of an anti-trafficking movement... hinges not only on ex-captives telling their own stories but also on their taking an active leadership role in its direction, agenda-setting, and policy formation... participation also could rest the anti-trafficking message away from a sensationalistic media. This reorientation could help frame the issue as a labour issue that involves a spectrum of abuse, with trafficking at one end of the spectrum.* (Brennan, 2005:4)

However, it is equally important for researchers not to assume that all research participants will wish to play such a role:
...I cannot suddenly turn this child into a feminist and say go out in the open and say hey, I was raped and I’m a survivor...She just wants to live her life in the way she chooses and I have no business to push her into a situation, make her into a spokesperson for the cause. We must realise these girls are neither saints nor sinners. They want to live their lives and be something in between. They don’t want to become Mahatma Gandhi...and I have no business being a researcher or media person to juxtapose my viewpoint on her life and say this is how you should live it. It is for them to decide... (Interview with Chowdhury, Sanlaap, India, 28 April 2006).

It is in the context of this methodological crisis that the issue of conceptualising female subjectivity as agency gains its political imperative. However, balancing the right to participate in research with the right to non-participation is problematic; simply the invitation to participate may raise a number of ethical issues. Conversely, for some FTSE, posing the question may be unproblematic or even therapeutic and as Schratz & Walker (1995) argue emotion is not a side effect or a pathological consequence of engaging in research, rather it is central to the endeavour. Read (1997) for example, in their study of mental health services for female survivors of sexual abuse, reported that each survivor stated that they would have valued the opportunity to identify and talk about the issue. Some had spent years in care, without their abuse being addressed or recognised and felt their silencing had been replicated several times over117 (Read, 1997).

Their research challenges the assumption that victims of sexual abuse would be more distressed if they confronted their trauma than if not. Studies of domestic violence against women (WHO, 2001) also demonstrate that research can be conducted with

117 The Read (1997) study also challenges the assumption that psychiatric patients are unable to give coherent accounts of their experiences and needs or that they are unable to know their own minds or are inherently unreliable, particularly if they have suffered psychotic episodes (Smyth & Williamson, 2004).
full respect for ethical and safety considerations. They illustrate how, when approached in a non-judgemental manner in an appropriate setting, many women will discuss their experiences of violence and many find participating in research highly beneficial (Centre for Health and Gender Equity, 1996) (cited in WHO, 2001):

...The women were already in pain and distress, and years of silence had exacted their own toll...If people are not permitted to be the people they believe themselves to be, and are not given credibility for their own life experiences, their views will have no value and they will not be consulted for their own expertise. These people are also in a double bind. Being a victim of sexual abuse has led to them being regarded as inherently unreliable and untrustworthy, therefore incapable of giving evidence, or of knowing their own minds – which could be seen as further abuse. (Smyth & Williamson, 2004:98-99)

This paper has highlighted that there are potential benefits to FTSE and society from their participation in research. It is therefore an ethical responsibility and duty of the research community to attempt to identify ways in which these voices and experiences may be heard and valued, whilst minimising the potential risks involved.

Social science and researchers have an ethical obligation to wider society to enable the inclusion of willing FTSE to participate in research. Researchers must strive to develop innovative and dynamic approaches, which protect FTSE from unethical participation and non-participation. Researchers who trawl current literature and research studies for solutions, recommendations or frameworks to depend upon in this endeavour, must consider the potential risks of immobilising their own creative resources and individual reflexivity. Hence the necessity, as I see it, for universal
frameworks to be viewed as necessary but not sufficient in isolation of the individual research(er) context:

The danger of overdetermining the ‘solution’ in the very terms of posing a problem is one to which we must remain alert. A liberal framework that proceeds from absolute moral values and irreducible moral positions...can impatiently foreclose upon a solution in its own terms, both reducing the complexities of the problem and refusing a consideration of it in its specific context...(Rajan, 1993:12)

The following quote summarises some of the issues involved in FTSE research including the fragility of the research participant, their access to support services, their need to share feelings with trusted others and the challenges faced by experts/authority figures in managing complex issues in which they have little or no experience and/or inadequate resources:

The walls I felt were closing in. I saw eyes everywhere, they were just black eyes to begin with, but when I confronted my abuser I realised they were his eyes. I went back to the same [psychiatric] ward, back and forward...they would change my tablets, or up my tablets, then send me out. It helped in the sense that it gave me time out, but it wasn’t dealing with the problem. One night I had an urge to talk. I said to the night nurse, ‘Could I wait until it quietens down a bit and talk to you?’ She said, ‘I don’t have time’, told me to take my sleeping tablets...but the charge nurse was brilliant. He said, ‘Talk to me if you need to...He admitted 75% of people coming through the doors had been abused; and they didn’t know how to deal with it. (Smyth & Williamson, 2004:91)

In my view, FTSE have a right to engage in informed risk taking provided the limits of the researcher’s ability to know and predict that risk is explained. The researcher and the participant should aim to make as informed a decision as possible as to how
and why an individual FTSE may participate and what the consequences of such participation may be. This collaborative, informed decision-making involves both the researcher and participant moving together along the ethical research continuum.
The water said to the dirty one, ‘Come here.’

The dirty one said, ‘I am too ashamed.’

The water replied: ‘How will your shame be washed away without me?’

(cited in Seierstad, 2002:136)
An increase in funding has been seen as an attempt to assist and support the rehabilitation of FTSE. In time, this may lead to an increase in the demand for reliable and ethical FTSE research data. However, in view of the issues explored throughout this paper, such an opportunity brings with it often complex ethical dilemmas requiring fully informed decision-making on the part of the participant, researcher and research community.

There is no one typical FTSE. FTSE come from a variety of source countries and have varied histories entering and exiting trafficking. The duration of time spent may vary from weeks to years. Researchers, who work with FTSE from one source country, may not easily extrapolate experiences from other source countries. General themes may be common across some cases but for researchers, these generalisations can be frustratingly imprecise and at times contradictory.

This paper has explored some of the contextual factors and characteristics involved in ethical FTSE research and advocated that the research community and society has a duty to hear the voices and the contributions of FTSE survivors in order to expand knowledge, inform policy responses\(^{118}\) and protect those it purports to represent.

I suggest that the continued exclusion of FTSE from research may reinforce discriminatory stereotypes, further disadvantaging these young women and risking reflection at policy level:

\(^{118}\) The problems of speaking for marginalised individuals has been well documented, including Caplan’s discussion of exactly for whom one is speaking and the pressures for minority groups to speak with one voice (Caplan, 2003).
Thus it is a common concern of all international instruments relating to issues of women that empowerment of women is essential and should be assured through education, training and policies to accord and improve women’s rights and access to assets, human and civil rights and participation in decision-making. Such measures are viewed to be panacea for the burgeoning issue of trafficking in women/girls.

(Suwal et al, 2001:62)

This paper has highlighted how qualitative research is context-laden and that it is not possible to dictate procedures and safeguards for situations that are by their very nature dynamic. One of the strengths of qualitative research is to transfer as much control of the research process as possible to the participant. Participation in this context means research with, rather than on, groups of people.

Reflexive and collaborative approaches have been explored and consideration of additional support services has been presented as an integral part of the research design. Nonetheless, balancing the rights of research with the rights of the research participant will always be delicate and always challenge the validity and reliability of available knowledge in this research area.

The primary ethical principles of freedom to informed consent, confidentiality and avoidance of harm present huge difficulties and (often)-unanswerable questions for the researcher. For example, can consent be obtained for what is a process in action? Confidentiality can be asserted, but can it be guaranteed? Researchers may intend no harm, but is self-harm in the hands of the participant?

I have proposed that ethical FTSE research should be individually tailored to meet the psychological, social, cultural, political, geographical and economic contextual
needs of each participant. It is necessary for good practice FTSE research to be considered along a dynamic, ethical continuum, always in process:

*In the post-experimental period no discourse has a privileged place, no method or theory has a universal and general claim to authoritative knowledge.* (Richardson, 1997) (cited in Denzin, 2001:25)

My wish is that this research paper will strengthen the foundation upon which further exploration of ethical FTSE research is encouraged.

Researching this paper has also provided me with not only privileged access and insight into the FTSE research context but has also enabled me to reflect on my own process. I was touched by the remarkable strength and resiliency of the young women and girls I met in the shelter homes of Vietnam and India. I gained a humbling respect for their ability to survive and I hope that in writing this paper I have done them some justice.

*I slipped the picture back to where I found it. Then I realised something. That last thought had brought no sting with it...I wondered if that was how forgiveness budded, not with the fanfare of epiphany, but with pain gathering its things, packing up, and slipping away unannounced in the middle of the night.* (Hosseini, 2003:313)


Department of Health (DoH) (2004). *The research governance framework for health and social care: implementation plan for social care*. London; DoH.


European Federation (2004). Good Epidemiological Practice (GEP) proper conduct in epidemiologic research. IEA.


APPENDIX 1

1. Introductory Letter (sent to each research participant)

Dear [Name],

I am writing to ask if you would be willing to participate in a research project I am undertaking as part of an MA in Counselling Studies at the University of East Anglia.

The aim of the research is to learn about the ethical issues involved in researching and interviewing young women who have been trafficked. My hope is that my research will highlight the ethical issues involved in human trafficking research and help to safeguard victims through highlighting good practice ethical procedures. I intend to investigate three main themes throughout the interview:

- Are trafficked victims in a position to give their consent freely?
- What can be done to improve the chances of gaining informed consent in these circumstances?
- If gaining informed consent is highly problematic, what other safeguards need to be in place to enable the research to proceed?

I am hoping to carry out one or two tape-recorded interviews, lasting approximately one hour each. The interview will take place on [date] at [time]. When the interviews are finished I will send you a copy of the transcript for you to amend should you wish. If you wish, details may be changed to preserve your anonymity. Measures outlined in the accompanying information sheet will be taken by me to maintain confidentiality at every stage of my research.

If you are interested in participating in this research please study the enclosed statement which offers more about what is involved. If, having read this, you are willing to participate please could you sign the informed consent form A and return it to me. If there is anything else you would like to know about the research before making your decision please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please do not feel that you have to take part in this research. If you feel unable to do so I will fully respect your wishes. If you do take part and subsequently change your mind you are free to withdraw from the research immediately or at any time and without explanation.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Harrison
Research Information Sheet

Study of the Ethical Considerations of Researching Victims of Human Trafficking

Information for Potential Participants

The purpose of this document is to provide you with information about the research helping you to make an informed decision about whether or not to take part.

Name of Researcher: Deborah Harrison

Contact Address: The School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ, UK.
Tel: 01603-592651

Research Supervisor: Prof. Nigel Norris

Academic Context of the Research:

The research is being undertaken as part of a part-time study towards an MA in Counselling Studies at the University of East Anglia, UK.

Aim of the Research:

The aim of the research is to explore the ethical issues involved in researching victims of trafficking, in particular females who have been trafficked for work in the commercial sex industry.

The Research Objectives:

The objectives are to increase awareness of the ethical considerations involved in researching trafficked victims and attempt to further understand ethical research in this context.

What is involved in taking part?

Interviews will be conducted with each participant separately at a pre-arranged time at the ………. It is anticipated that the total time spent for each interview will be approximately 1 hour and it may be necessary to have two interviews. All interviews will be tape-recorded (with the consent of the participant) and a typed transcript produced. A transcript of the interview(s) will be returned to the participant, which the participant has the right to delete, change or add to anything said.
Participation:

Participants have the right to decline the invitation to take part in this project without giving any explanation. You may agree to participate initially but may change your mind later either before the interview or during the course of the research. Again, you are not required to provide a reason and no attempt will be made to dissuade you.

Debriefing after the interview(s):

Following an interview there will be time to review how you are feeling and an opportunity for you to talk through any difficult feelings or issues which may have arisen as a result of the interview. Although the aim of the interview will be to collect data, priority will be given to your needs and feelings.

Confidentiality and Anonymity:

Everything you say to me will be regarded as confidential and will not be revealed in an identifiable way to other persons. Your name will be removed from the audiocassette and will be given a number. Any extracts I use from interviews will be shown to you, for your approval, prior to it being presented in written form. You may wish me to change any information which may identify you personally to a reader such as, for example your name, family history etc.

Ownership of the Data

Data obtained through interviews is the property of the individual who has been interviewed. Any material extracted from the data for publication therefore, can only be used if you give your consent. You have the right to refuse permission for your data to be used in the dissertation or research based papers.

All tapes and transcripts, other than those excerpts that are included in the dissertation and research papers, will either be returned to you or destroyed, when the research is completed and writing the results is concluded.

Ethical Issues

In conducting this research project I will be bound by the code of ethics with regard to research practice:

The School of Education and Lifelong Learning, Research Ethics Committee, University of East Anglia, Norwich, NR4 7TJ, UK.

Complaints Procedure

If, at any stage of your involvement in the research you consider I am acting unethically you may initiate a complaints procedure to the Course Director, MA in Counselling Studies, or the Chair of Research, at the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, UEA.
Conclusion

In this document I have tried to provide you with information about what will happen if you agree to take part in the research, what your rights are and what will happen to the data I collect from you. If you choose to take part I hope it will be from a position in which you feel well informed about what is involved. There may be additional information that is unclear and you would like to know before you can make a decision. If so please ask me I will be very happy to discuss this with you.

Thank you very much for reading this document. If you wish to discuss any issues related to the research please contact me at School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of East Anglia, Norwich, NR4 7TJ, UK. Tel: 01603-592651.

If you do not wish to participate in the research please do nothing, I will not ask again.

If you are willing to take part in the research please keep this document and complete and return Form A to me. When I have received it I will contact you to arrange a convenient time and place for us to meet for the first interview.

Many thanks.

Deborah Harrison
Form A

Research

I have read the information for the research and I am willing to take part. I understand I may subsequently withdraw from the research at any time without prior notice or explanation.

Name ..............................................................

Date ..............................................................

Please return to Deborah Harrison
Masters Degree Research Proposal

Deborah Harrison  BA (Hons), PG. Dip. Couns.,      Prof. Nigel Norris
Researcher            Supervisor / Chair of Research
University of East Anglia, UK    University of East Anglia, UK

Masters and PhD Fieldwork Research Proposal into
HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The purpose of the Masters and PhD research programme is to promote informed decision-making around national and international anti-trafficking legislation, improve service provision for victims and increase public awareness. As a qualified economist and psychotherapist my aim is to correlate the political, economic, social and cultural context of human trafficking with the individual’s experience and associated emotional and psychological development. I intend the research findings to provide an integrative and comprehensive understanding of the context and effects of human trafficking and contribute towards appropriate policy responses.

This research proposal (2) is a revision of my original research plan that was submitted to the University Ethics Committee on December 5th, 2005. Concerns arose during the formulation of the original plan regarding the perceived balance of risk and benefit to be gained within the limited scope of a Masters research programme. Ethical concerns emerged regarding the following four issues:

- A potential for serious risk. The benefit resulting from MA research was agreed to be significantly less than the perceived risk. Conversely, a PhD programme of research was felt to be much more likely to result in significant benefit.
- The circumstances and research context were perceived to be such that it would be especially problematic to obtain fully informed consent from this research group.
- Concerns were raised regarding the age of the proposed sample population and whether they could be capable and/or competent to consent or assent to research.
- A considerable potential for distress in sample population.

In view of the ethical concerns raised, I have revised the research schedule and have proposed that the Masters paper is a preparatory research phase, examining the ethical issues pertaining to this particular research population. For this initial preparatory phase, I shall explore the ethical issues involved in researching trafficked victims by examining three principle themes:

- Are trafficked victims in a position to give their consent freely?
- What can be done to improve the chances of gaining informed consent in this research context?
- If gaining informed consent is highly problematic, what other safeguards need to be in place to enable the research to proceed?
I shall also examine how an established ethical framework for good-practice in social science research may influence:

- the direction and value of human trafficking research
- public awareness of human trafficking
- decision-making and policy resolution
- service provision for victims
- Rogerian personality theory

I intend the proposed findings to contribute to the body of knowledge regarding ethical research in highly sensitive contexts. I intend to make recommendations for a model of good-practice by highlighting the steps required in order to as far as possible, protect the safety, emotional and physical well-being of trafficked victims. Such a model may be applicable to other highly sensitive, marginal or hidden populations.

The methodology for this initial research phase will involve a qualitative approach and fieldwork to be conducted in the UK, Vietnam and India. Sample populations will be drawn from the United Nations (Child & Migration Division), UNICEF (UK, Vietnam, India), the Home Office, NGO’s, the Metropolitan Police and Norfolk Constabulary. Research participants will be interviewed and tape-recorded, details of which may be modified to preserve anonymity and confidentiality where necessary.

The Masters research phase will therefore provide the ethical foundation from which to develop the PhD research programme due to commence in October 2006. The aim of the PhD programme is to provide an integrative evaluation of the macro and micro conditions representative of human trafficking. The framework will be an international comparative analysis with fieldwork conducted from sample populations in the UK, Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Within each region the research will focus on:

- Macro Analyses: Political, Economic, Social and Cultural Context
  *Factors determining the supply of and demand for human trafficking*
- Micro Analyses: Individual Experiences
  *Factors determining the impact of trafficking on the human psyche in particular, female sex workers*
- Service Provision
  *Factors determining appropriate service provision*

The methodology for the PhD programme will incorporate qualitative and quantitative data, evaluating the individual experience (qualitative) with both qualitative and quantitative data drawn from governments, international agencies and NGO’s to examine the political, economic, social and cultural context of each trafficking region. This integrative approach aims to provide a single comprehensive working paper drawing on individual, national and international data.

Deborah Harrison, BA (Hons), PG. Dip.Couns., Researcher, The University of East Anglia, UK
APPENDIX 2

2. Anti-Trafficking Conventions

The increase in human trafficking has led to a gradual increase in international, regional and national anti-trafficking initiatives by governments and I/NGOs. For example, in Vietnam The National Plan of Action and the Mekong Sub-Regional Programme to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women, Phase 2 (2005-2007) funded by UK Department for International Development (DFID). Following is a brief review of some of the main FTSE relevant international conventions and human rights provisions (including those effecting minors):

1930 - ILO Convention No. 29 concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour

1948 - Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1949 - UN Convention for the Suppression of the Traffick in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others

1957 - ILO Convention No. 105 concerning the Abolition of Forced Labour

1966 - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

1966 - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

1973 - ILO Minimum Age Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment

1979 - UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

1989 - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

1990 - World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and its Plan of Action


1993 - Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights

1993 - United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women

1994 - Cairo Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Population and Development
1995 - Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women

1995 - Copenhagen Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit on Social Development

1996 – Stockholm Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children


1996 - World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children and Women

1999 - Convention 182, ILO Convention for the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour

1999 – The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime