

# FEASIBILITY OF PLACE MANAGEMENT IN STOPPING THE EXPLOITATION OF TRAFFICKED FEMALES

## Mekân Yönetiminin Kadın Ticareti Mağdurlarının Sömürüsünün Durdurulmasında Kullanılabilirliği

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### Abstract

Place managers as capable guardians of places are important figures in preventing crimes. Females trafficking for sexual exploitation mostly occur in hotels, motels, clubs, apartments or houses where various people play roles as place managers. Based on a sample of trafficked victims (N=429) and interviews of police officials (N=17), this paper examines the feasibility of using place managers to prevent or stop the exploitation of victims. The findings suggest that the police must work cooperatively with place managers to prevent exploitation of trafficked females. Managers of public places are more inclined to follow police directions than managers of private places.

**Keywords:** Crime prevention, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, place management.

### Özet

Mekân yöneticileri mümkün bir gözetici olarak suçu önlemede kullanılacak önemli figürlerdir. Kadınların seks amaçlı olarak sömürülmesi daha çok mekân yöneticisi olarak çeşitli kişilerin sorumlu olduğu otel, motel, kulüp, apartman ve evlerde meydana gelmektedir. İnsan ticareti mağdurlarından oluşan bir örneklem (N= 429) ve polis memurları ile yapılan mülakatlardan (N=17) elde edilen bulgular sonucu, bu çalışma mekân yöneticilerinin insan ticaretinin durdurulmasında kullanılabilirliğini incelemektedir. Bulgular, kadın ticaretinin önlenmesi için polisin mekân yöneticileri ile koordinasyon içerisinde çalışmasını tavsiye etmektedir. Polisin direktiflerini yerine getirmede ise umuma mahsus yerlerin yöneticileri özel yerlerin yöneticilerine nispeten daha fazla meyillidirler.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Suç önleme, insan ticareti, cinsel istismar, bina yönetimi.

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## Introduction

Female trafficking for sexual exploitation has become a worldwide problem. Trafficking is devastating to victims, communities, and nations. Trafficked victims suffer from emotional, physical, and psychological abuses and are at risks of serious health problems (Bertone, 2004). Nations are harmed by increased health risks to their citizens and by the expansion of organized crime (Department of State, 2007). A 2008 U.S. State Department report shows that more than 150 countries are involved in human trafficking, with each playing various roles such as source, transit facilitator and/or destination.

With the increasingly global scale in female trafficking, governments are urged to adopt legal frameworks to deal effectively with female trafficking; however, these measures are confined mostly to prosecuting offenders and partly to protecting the trafficked victims. Clearly, a focus solely on punishing traffickers and helping victims is not sufficient to prevent female trafficking. The problem should be approached in a more scientific way to produce long-term and effective solutions. Important insight for crime prevention comes from the knowledge that crime is clustered around particular times, individuals, and locations (Sherman, Gartin, & Buerger, 1989; Eck, Clarke, & Guerette, 2007).

This study explores how place managers can help prevent the exploitation of trafficked victims in Turkey. The paper describes current responses to female trafficking and, based on a sample of trafficked victims and interviews of police officials, the feasibility of using place managers to prevent or stop the exploitation of victims. In discussing the applicability of place management to the problem of female trafficking, two questions guide this study. First, do crimes occur in places where the utility of place managers is viable or feasible? Second, if so, how can place management be applied effectively?

### 1. The Current Criminal Justice Response to Female Trafficking in Turkey

The breakdown of the Soviet Union into economically and politically unstable independent states has added another dimension to Turkey's current immigration trend (which had been primarily from West Asian and South European countries). With the help of geographical nearness and liberal entry policies into Turkey, many citizens from the new independent states of the former Soviet Union visit Turkey to gain economic and social prosperity (Erder & Kaska, 2003).

This situation has created an opportunity for organized criminals — the majority of whom were the former rulers of socialist countries (Hughes, 2002) — to deceive and traffic desperate females searching for jobs. A series of reports from the U.S. State Department show that Turkey is both a destination country and a transit country for female trafficking, particularly commercial sexual exploitation (Department of State, 2007). As with the global

scale of human trafficking, the exact extent of trafficking in Turkey cannot be determined for a number of reasons.

First, until recently, there have been no laws dealing directly with human trafficking in Turkey. Previously, laws related to illegal prostitution and irregular immigration were contained within Turkey's passport law and the Turkish Penal Code. These statutes were used to deal with human trafficking cases (Erder & Kaska, 2003). Second, women working in prostitution markets seldom report their victimization because they are threatened by traffickers and fear government deportation. Third, interviews of women by Istanbul Police Department officers showed that some women, particularly those who voluntarily work in the prostitution market, pretend to be victimized although they are not forced or exposed to exploitation (Bolat, 2005).

Several responses have been developed to control female trafficking in Turkey. The first is an amendment in the Turkish Penal Code in the form of article 80 in 2005. The amendment not only mandates heavier punishments for human traffickers, but it also mirrors the definition of human trafficking fashioned at the 2000 United Nations Palermo Conference. The Turkish National Task Force for Combating Human Trafficking report (TNTFCHT, 2008) shows that 639 persons were tried for crimes involving human trafficking. Turkish nationals comprise 87% of the total, while the remaining 13% are from other nations, mostly Moldova, Russian Federation, and Azerbaijan.

The second Turkish response to female trafficking is the establishment of the 157 help line and the efforts to promote the accession of human trafficking cases to the police. The help line is free and operates 24 hours a day in the English, Turkish, Russian, and Romanian languages (Demir, 2008). Establishment of the help line may encourage both victims and the public to tell police officials about trafficking cases, thereby helping to stop the exploitation. Statistics show that of 136 victims identified through the 157 help line, only 13% of the calls come from the victims themselves; 80% of the calls came from the public, including victims' relatives, friends, and clients (TNTFCHT, 2008).

The third response is a set of public-awareness campaigns that are arranged in coordination with Turkish government and International Organization for Migration. Awareness campaigns provide information about human trafficking to potential risk groups through the distribution of brochures and cards at borders and the presentation of media programs.

Although rearranging criminal laws, establishing help lines, and implementing awareness campaigns can be important tools in stopping the exploitation of victims, the problem still continues, therefore we need more steps to take. From this perspective, this study discussing the applicability of place management aims to address an important tool which is mostly disregarded in the prevention of crimes in Turkey.

## **2. Crime, Place, and Place Management**

A specific geographic location is an important element of crime. Research has shown that crime is not evenly distributed across places. Much research examining the distribution of crime from a macro-level perspective shows that crime is concentrated in certain regions, such as in lower socioeconomic and heterogenous neighborhoods (Shaw and Mckay, 1942; Sampson and Groves, 1989). Along with the uneven distribution of crime at the macro level, some research has found that crime also is concentrated at specific places, such as properties (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1993; Weisburd & Mazerolle, 2000). In terms of the logic of why crime is highly concentrated at these places, three theories of crime prevention—rational choice, crime pattern, and routine activity—explain why some locations attract the majority of crimes or criminals.

### **2.1. Rational-Choice Perspective**

The starting point for the rational-choice perspective is the observation that offenders are rational decision-makers who purposively choose to commit crimes to gain certain benefits, such as money, sex, fun, prestige, or excitement (Clarke & Cornish, 2000). However, Clarke and Cornish (2000) hold that criminal decision-making takes place under imperfect conditions that constrain offenders' decision-making abilities. These constraints, such as limited time and information, increase offenders' risks of detection and arrest as well as their uncertainty of success. Therefore, while offenders take into account perceived risks, rewards, effort, excuses, and provocations, they are not perfectly rational. Instead, offenders are "boundedly" rational (Clarke & Cornish, 2000).

### **2.2. Crime-Pattern Theory**

Crime-pattern theory describes how crimes cluster geographically. The theory explains why offenders pay more attention to certain places than to others (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1993). It is maintained that crimes occur as a result of the intersection of offender search areas and areas containing targets. With a focus on three concepts—nodes, paths, and edges—Brantingham and Brantingham (1993) emphasized how normal offender activities create opportunities for criminals in specific places. Nodes are main activity centers, such as homes, schools, and restaurants. The routes connecting the nodes are paths. Because offenders are more familiar with the areas around their nodes and routes, these are the areas they will search for targets. Crime patterns emerge when the search area overlaps with places with targets.

### **2.3. Routine-Activity Theory**

The routine-activity theory is based on the premise that people's normal activities create crime opportunities that offenders exploit. Routine-activity theory describes the conditions

needed for a crime to occur and therefore provides implications for prevention (Felson, 1995). As originally proposed, the routine-activity theory held that the occurrence of a crime requires three conditions: (a) an offender ready to commit the crime, (b) a suitable target, and (c) a place and time where the offender and target converge in the absence of capable guardianship that can protect the target (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Commission of a crime is impossible when any one of these elements is missing.

In later years, routine-activity theory was expanded by the addition of two other concepts for the prevention of crime. Basing his work on Hirschi's (1969) theory of social bonds, Felson (1986) added intimate handlers (i.e., those persons who have emotional links with potential offenders, such as parents, teachers, and friends). Handlers are capable of exerting informal social control on people, thereby preventing them from becoming involved in criminal acts. The absence of intimate handlers as a precondition for crime implies that creating handlers might reduce crime (Tillyer, 2008).

The second expansion of routine-activity theory came from Eck (1994), who emphasized the importance of place managers in discouraging crime at physical locations. Considering these recent expansions, routine-activity theory can be described as two concentric triangles as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Routine-activity theory shown as two concentric triangles involving the players shown.

The inner triangle describes the necessary elements of a crime (i.e., target/victim, offender, and place), while the outer triangle represents the controllers (i.e., guardian, handler, and manager, respectively) of each inner element. Although both handlers and guardians can be capable of preventing crimes, they often are not available in places where offenders and victims come across (Eck & Wartell, 1998). Therefore, some scholars attempted to determine if other individuals can protect victims or deter criminals from committing crimes.

Place management is proposed as a concept to prevent crime in places where offenders and targets merge.

Before explaining the role of place management in preventing female trafficking, it is important to focus on the definitions of the terms *place* and *place manager*. Place can be defined as a location with a designated purpose (e.g., restaurant, apartment, park, school) and either a physical or symbolic boundary that separates the location from nearby surroundings. Place manager refers to individuals who are held accountable for supervising and controlling these places. Place managers can be the owner of the specific setting, or they can be assigned to or be an employee of the place (Madensen, 2007).

One test site for the application of place management was San Diego, California. Drug dealing and related crimes were committed most often in weakly managed buildings (Eck, 1994). A few years later, Eck and Wartell (1999) conducted a randomized experiment to explore how improved place management could reduce drug dealing and related crimes. First, apartment buildings that the police had raided for illegal drugs were randomly assigned to three groups: one control group and two test groups. The owners of the control-group places received only an initial drug-enforcement response from the police. The owners of the places in the first test group received only a letter from the San Diego Police Department's Drug Abatement Response Team. The letter sent to place managers included information about the enforcement of drug laws, a suggestion that the owner seek assistance from the police, and a reminder of the owner's responsibilities under the law. The second test group received both the letter and a request to meet with the police and a city codes-compliance officer. The findings showed that drug-related crime dropped significantly in places where place managers had to meet with the police and the codes-compliance officer. Place managers who received only a letter were less likely to evict offenders than those place managers who also had scheduled meetings with the police. While crime declined in these places relative to the control group, the decline was not significantly different from the decline in crime for the control-place groups and was less than the decline in the meeting-place group. A synthesis of the literature on place management found that interventions with landlords consistently produced significant drops in crime (Eck, 2002).

### 3. Method and Data

Based on the application of place management to drug dealing, this study explores whether place management can be used to prevent the exploitation of trafficked females. Two questions need to be addressed:

1. Are trafficked females exploited in places where place management is applicable?
2. If so, then how can the effectiveness of place management be increased to prevent female trafficking?

Quantitative and qualitative data were used to respond to the two research questions. Quantitative data came from formal police interviews with the victims of trafficking (Demir, 2008), while interviews with police officials from five police departments in Turkey provided the qualitative data.

Formal police interviews taken by police officers working in various city police departments in Turkey are part of police investigation files on female trafficking that are sent to the court. Each interview is between three to four pages long and written in Turkish. These data were obtained from the Department of Foreigners, Borders, and Asylum of the Turkish National Police (DFBA). Procedurally, all city police departments are required to send a copy of these investigation files, including victim interviews, to the DFBA, which is located in Ankara.

The written text of the police interview data was quantified into variables showing the characteristics of victims (e.g., income, age, marital status), recruiters, and places where victims are kept and exploited. The data consist of 74 variables and 430 cases, each of which summarizes the statements of a victim. One case was excluded because the victim was from Turkey. Therefore, the total number of cases is 429.

Police officials chosen for the interviews were selected from city police departments located in four Turkish cities and at the headquarters of the Turkish National Police in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey. The selection of the city police departments was based on the frequency of police interviews with victims of human trafficking between 2004 and 2007. The city police departments participating in the study are located in Antalya, Istanbul, Trabzon, and Izmir. As shown in Table 1, these four cities represent almost 63% of all cases involving sexual exploitation in Turkey between 2004 and 2007.

Police officials were selected among those who (a) worked in units related to human trafficking, (b) were responsible for investigating these crimes, and (c) had at least two years' experience investigating human trafficking. Because these officers had the capacity to investigate female-trafficking cases, to interview victims and witnesses, and to collect evidence about human trafficking, the information they provided was helpful in the exploration of how place management can be used to stop the exploitation of trafficked females.

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**Table 1.** Distribution of Trafficked Females in Turkey, by City, January 2004-June 2007

| City      | Frequency | Percent | City         | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Antalya   | 126       | 29.1    | Hatay        | 4          | 0.9          |
| Istanbul  | 65        | 15.1    | Ardahan      | 3          | 0.7          |
| Trabzon   | 53        | 12.3    | Gaziantep    | 3          | 0.7          |
| Izmir     | 26        | 6.0     | Isparta      | 3          | 0.7          |
| Mersin    | 25        | 5.8     | Sanliurfa    | 2          | 0.5          |
| Ankara    | 21        | 4.9     | Osmaniye     | 2          | 0.5          |
| Aydin     | 21        | 4.9     | Erzincan     | 2          | 0.5          |
| Canakkale | 11        | 4.9     | Edirne       | 2          | 0.5          |
| Igdir     | 10        | 2.6     | Yalova       | 1          | 0.2          |
| Erzurum   | 7         | 2.3     | Corum        | 1          | 0.2          |
| Artvin    | 6         | 1.6     | Kayseri      | 1          | 0.2          |
| Kars      | 6         | 1.4     | Samsun       | 1          | 0.2          |
| Mugla     | 5         | 1.4     | Duzce        | 1          | 0.2          |
| Adana     | 5         | 1.2     | Elazig       | 1          | 0.2          |
| Nevsehir  | 4         | 1.2     | Karabuk      | 1          | 0.2          |
| Bursa     | 4         | 0.9     | Rize         | 1          | 0.2          |
| Denizli   | 4         | 0.9     | Van          | 1          | 0.2          |
|           |           |         | <b>Total</b> | <b>429</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

#### 4. Findings

Demir (2008) found that traffickers generally forced victims to stay in certain places, such as locked apartments and hotel rooms. On rare occasions, traffickers provided their victims with limited movement rather than confinement, such as letting them walk from the hotel room to a cafe or their workplace. Places where victims are exploited can be examined whether the places are private (e.g., houses, cars, and apartments) or public (e.g., hotels, cafes, clubs, and discos). In public places, legally assigned individuals are responsible for taking care of the business; therefore, it is highly possible to apply place management to prevent victim exploitation in these places. However, it is relatively difficult in private places except for apartments. Apartments are generally two/three-bedroom rental units in taller buildings mostly located in urban or suburban areas. The general custom has been that apartments have managers who are responsible for organizing and supervising daily maintenance issues for the apartment residents. Beyond these responsibilities, Article 11 of Turkey's Law on Identity Notification holds apartment managers accountable for checking



whether any nonresident individuals are staying in their apartments. If apartment managers see any suspicious conditions in their apartments, the managers and their maintenance workers are expected to report the situation to the local police.

Table 2 shows the distribution of places where victims are exploited. Victims are more likely to be exploited in apartments (42%) followed by hotels (39%). The table further shows that 89% of victims are exploited in venues where place management can be applicable.

**Table 2.** Places Where Trafficking Victims are Exploited

| Places of exploitation | N          | Percent       | Place manager                  |
|------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Public                 | 200        | 46.62         |                                |
| Hotel & Motel          | 169        | 39.39         | Yes                            |
| Club & Disco           | 10         | 2.33          | Yes                            |
| Cafe                   | 19         | 4.43          | Yes                            |
| Message Parlor         | 2          | 0.47          | Yes                            |
| Private                | 229        | 53.38         |                                |
| Apartment              | 182        | 42.42         | Yes                            |
| House & Villa          | 42         | 9.79          | No                             |
| Car                    | 5          | 1.17          | No                             |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>429</b> | <b>100.00</b> | <b>Yes = 89%;<br/>No = 11%</b> |

When interviewed police officers were asked how apartment and place managers could contribute to preventing crime, 10 police officers said they have concerns about the application of place management, while others suggested the use of place managers to help deter crime.

Those interviewees who questioned the place-management approach said that if a human-trafficking crime is committed in a hotel or a public place, then place managers or other responsible persons are more likely to be part of the crime. Even if place managers are not active actors in crime prevention, place managers such as hotel or motel owners sometimes know what happens on their property and for the sake of making money, do not call the police. One of the victims described how business owners help traffickers to make money:

“We were staying in a hotel (with other girls). We usually waited in a near-by café where we sat and waited for customers. When customers came, our pimp talked to them and agreed on the price. Then, after some drinks, customers took us to a near-by hotel and



we had sex with them on an hourly or nightly basis. Pimps worked with café owners and attendants who knew each of us very well and they always had a share in the income” (Demir, 2008: 182).

Moreover, those owners and employees of public settings can be the persons operating the trafficking activities. Some trafficked victims explained this:

“There are two hotels next to each other. They work together. Their managers share the total income as far as I know. In one of the hotels, customers come and have dinner and drink until late hours. Hotel attendants make arrangements for girls. Then customers are taken to the other hotel and go to the rooms in which girls wait for them. Girls are afraid of talking to the police. Girls usually stay in both hotels. Hotel attendants continuously walk in the hotel, and girls are afraid of them as well.”

“There is a disco in the first floor of the hotel. Girls go to the customers and join them at their tables, drink until late hours. Then they agree on the price and take the customers to the rooms. They have sex with them. If girls find customers that night, they pay \$40 for the room and girls get the remaining money. If they can’t find customers, they stay in the hotel as usual, but don’t pay for the room. It is an unwritten agreement with the girls and the hotel manager. But the money the girls receive then directly goes to the pimps” (Demir, 2008: 181).

Despite such concerns, some interviewed police officers were more positive about the effectiveness of place management in preventing human trafficking. One police officer said the following:

“It is very difficult for the police to monitor every place. Since this crime is committed in either hotels or apartments, there are certain things that we must do and there are also the things that place managers can do. They can raise the awareness of persons working in the hotel. We certainly do not expect place managers to arrest a person who commits crime; however, they can call the police when they see prostitution and trafficking activities in and around their places.”

Several police officials said that place managers do not appropriately follow regulations required by law. This official said the following:

“There are rules and regulations that require place managers to supervise their places. These rules must be followed by place managers accordingly. According to Identity Notification Law, all hotel managers must collect information about guests staying in the hotel. We frequently see that this requirement is violated.”

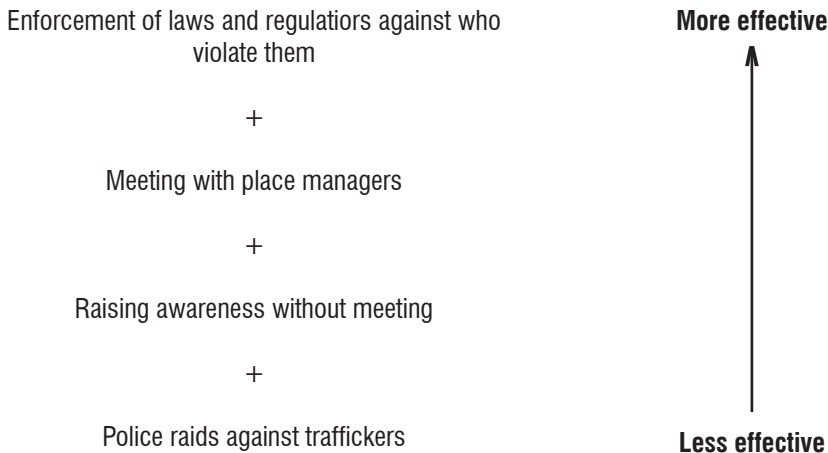
Another police official said the following:

“Sometimes in hotel rooms, there are five and six individuals accommodated and only one person is registered. Other individuals are not registered. However, according to

the Law on Identity Notification, hotel managers should provide the local police with the information about the identities of their guests. We sometimes encounter females arrested for prostitution and ask them where they have so far stayed since they arrived in Turkey; they tell us certain hotels in which their name has never been registered. This is a problem which must be controlled.”

In terms of apartment-management systems, the use of place management is highly recommended by some police officials; however, it seems that place management is not appropriate for the prevention of female trafficking.

Eck and Wartell’s (1999) study provides not only important implications about the effectiveness of place management but also methods on how to apply it to reduce female trafficking. As they found, informing place managers with letters is more effective than relying on initial enforcement. However, meeting with place managers and sending informative letters is the most effective way to prevent female trafficking. Based on the findings of their study, Figure 2 illustrates the likely effectiveness of various methods for addressing place management.



**Figure 2.** Effectiveness of various methods for addressing place management.

Depending entirely on police raids is not an effective mechanism to deal with female trafficking. The crime is more likely to be prevented when police officers inform place managers about female trafficking, warn them about the consequence of disregarding the law,



have face-to-face meetings with them, and enforce the laws and regulations against place managers who violate the law.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

Much research has shown that focusing merely on police practices and resources is not an effective way to prevent crime (National Research Council, 2004). The police are not capable of monitoring public places all the time; therefore, other individuals need to be involved in the crime-prevention efforts (Goldstein, 1990). Places where victims are exploited also provide important implications for crime prevention. The data show that a significant portion of victims are exploited and confined in open public venues, such as hotels, cafes, and nightclubs. In addition, more than 40% of victims are exploited in apartments. Because both public venues and apartments in Turkey have a management system, this distribution pattern requires taking advantage of the place management system. Effective use of place management and warnings to employees about the consequences of the crime in these places may increase the risk perceived by traffickers and customers. Therefore, an important implication of this study is that the police must work cooperatively with place managers to prevent exploitation of trafficked females. However, it is also necessary to consider the difficulties of cooperating with place managers.

Because the police are more likely to have a capacity to impose sanctions on public-place managers than on apartment managers, managers of public places are more inclined to follow police directions. Moreover, the number of apartment managers is overwhelmingly higher than the number of public-place managers. Therefore, it is necessary to narrow the target by focusing on regions where higher numbers of trafficked females are exploited.

As some interviewed police officials have stated, if place managers are involved in trafficking either actively or by turning a blind eye, then place management may be considered ineffective. Some police officers interviewed suggested that the business licenses of place owners should be temporarily or permanently revoked if their place is repeatedly found to be a site of exploitation of trafficked women.

This study also has limitations, which future research will need to address. The most serious limitation is the general lack of important data. The secondary data of police interviews with victims were not created for the purpose of examining the contribution of place management to the prevention of female trafficking. Considering these limitations, the richness of the data plays a key role in obtaining detailed information about human-trafficking

stages. In addition, personal interviews by a researcher on a sample of trafficked victims could provide more consistent information about specific situational patterns and measures to prevent the crime.

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