

Collaboration And The Use of Technology in Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts

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COLLABORATION AND TECH. IN ANTI-TRAFFICKING EFFORTS

Abstract

Human trafficking is a global problem; it is one of the three largest organized crime industries in the world, alongside the drug and arms trade. The complex task of combatting human trafficking is a recent topic of concern within U.S. and international law that requires collaboration from many different perspectives: law enforcement, non-governmental organizations, non-profit organizations, social care providers, faith communities, and everyday citizens. Collaboration is needed from many different entities in order to counter human trafficking due to the high technological sophistication of traffickers and the complexity of the global crime. This study investigated the extent and nature of collaboration and technology among anti-trafficking efforts.

I conducted a case study of iEmpathize, a Colorado-based non-profit organization, whose main mission is to collaborate with and promote grassroots' counter trafficking efforts around the world through technological means. I conducted in-depth interviews of iEmpathize's employees, interns, and collaborators to obtain data. I conducted observations of meetings, events, and collaborative partnerships to obtain a comprehensive understanding of iEmpathize and their collaborations.

Through interviews and field observations, this study discovered that collaboration and technology are essential for iEmpathize's efforts. iEmpathize use media technology, artifacts, and art as tools to collaborate and to generate collective action through narrative. The narrative of victimized children was found to be the central counter trafficking strategy that generated collaboration, collective action, and collective identity, rather than technology.

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Collaboration And The Use of Technology in Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts

Chapter 1: Introduction

Human trafficking is a global problem; it is one of the three largest organized crime industries in the world, alongside the drug and arms trade. According to the U.S. Department of State (2010), 12.3 million people are victims of human trafficking worldwide, while some estimates are as high as 27 million people (Not for Sale, Free to Walk, 2010). Not for Sale states, “there are more people that are enslaved today than the total number of slaves removed from Africa during the transatlantic slave trade” (Not for Sale, Free to Walk, 2010, para. 2). One form of human trafficking is sex trafficking, which encompasses a smaller but still significant portion of trafficked victims. This subcategory is defined as a commercial sex act that is “induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age” (U.S. Department of State, 2010, p. 8). The sex trafficking industry is not only globally networked, it is an economically driven industry that can only thrive if there are consumers. With industry profits of \$27.8 billion annually, one could say that this is a global problem with a global market and demand (Belser, 2005). The use of technology such as digital cameras, the internet, and social networks, has contributed to human trafficking, and more specifically sex trafficking – making it easy for predators to lure and abuse victims of all backgrounds. Some find it hard to believe that human trafficking occurs in the United States; roughly 14,500 to 17,500 people, primarily women and children, are trafficked to the U.S. annually (Humantrafficking.org, 2011). Trafficking of people is not just a Third World problem; it occurs everywhere.

According to Warnath (1998), “Trafficking of women and children is not a new problem – it has occurred throughout history. What is new is the growing involvement of organized

crime and the increasing sophistication of its methods” (as cited in Aronowitz, 2001, p. 1).

Traffickers use a high level of sophistication, tools, and resources to conduct their work and extend their network. Knowledge of traffickers’ technologically advanced tactics poses a relevant question of how anti-trafficking efforts operate with technology to counter the traffickers.

The complex task of combatting human trafficking requires collaboration from many different perspectives: law enforcement, non-governmental organizations, non-profits, social care providers, faith communities, and everyday citizens. In order to counter human trafficking, these different entities should collaborate and work together to utilize each other’s resources. This research focuses on one aspect of this process – the collaboration within counter trafficking efforts and, in particular, the role of technology within their collaboration.

A Narrative Ten Years in the Making

Terms of human trafficking were defined in U.S. law just ten years ago in the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (TVPA). The act helped to define the many different forms of trafficking that occur today such as: forced labor, debt bonded labor, debt bondage among migrant laborers, involuntary domestic servitude, sex trafficking, forced child labor, child soldiers, and child sex trafficking. The TVPA gave victims of severe forms of trafficking entitlement to public programs and benefits. Severe forms of trafficking include recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining a person for the purposes of labor or a commercial sex act through the means of force, fraud, or coercion. The recent history of these laws and policies is an important narrative to understand for this study, in order to recognize the context that anti-trafficking efforts operate (U.S. Department of State, 2000).

Counter trafficking efforts practiced today are based on the TVPA, which established

comprehensive federal laws to address human trafficking. During the same year, the United Nations adopted the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, also known as the Palermo Protocol. Since its adoption, the world has become more aware of the significance of human trafficking and has made advancements in knowing more about the crime and best practices to respond to the issue, such as the 3P paradigm. The 3P paradigm was a response implemented by the U.S. government. There are three parts to this approach: prevention, protection, and prosecution. Both the Palermo Protocol and the TVPA use this paradigm in their anti-trafficking initiatives. Preventative measures provide training and technical assistance to law enforcement agencies and victim service providers. To provide protection, the act funded victim care and immigration relief for severe forms of trafficking and established legal rights for victims to use services funded by federal or state programs. With regards to prosecution, the act created more severe sentences for the crime. Since 2001, the Department of Justice has demonstrated an impressive record for prosecuting those responsible for human trafficking. From 2001 – 2005, the first five fiscal years after the TVPA, the Civil Rights Division and United States Attorneys' Offices filed 91 trafficking cases (405% increase), charged 248 traffickers (210% increase), and convicted 140 people for human trafficking (109% increase), which is a significant increase from 1996 – 2000 (U.S. Department of Justice, 2005). The number of prosecutions continues to increase. In 2009 the highest number of prosecutions and defendants were charged in a given year: 114 were charged, and 47 were convicted in 43 human trafficking prosecutions. Globally, there are around 4,000 trafficking convictions each year (U.S. Department of State, 2010).

The TVPA developed some creative collaborative initiatives. In 2004, the National Training Conference on Human Trafficking was held in Tampa, Florida. The mission of the

conference was to provide a model of victim-centered investigations and encourage the formation of local taskforces. Those who attended were called to design taskforces that best suited the needs of their community. Through a victim-centered approach, the Department of Justice instituted taskforces to counter human trafficking efforts. A victim-centered approach meets the needs of the victim and fulfills moral imperatives that reach beyond the criminal case. The Trafficking in Persons Report (2010) states that this approach “calls for partnerships between law enforcement agencies and service providers – not just to win the case but as colleagues sharing a humanitarian responsibility to act in the best interest of the victim” (p.13). Taskforce teams are comprised of many different entities: United States Attorneys or designated State Assistant United States Attorneys; Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement Special Agents-In-Charge; Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Agents-In-Charge; local law enforcement agency special crimes and victims units; state and local prosecutors; governmental and non-governmental organizations; and faith-based and community care providers (U.S. Department of Justice, 2005).

Taskforces have a wide range of purposes. They aid in finding victims; provide victims immediate protection and support; and work with victims to further investigate trafficking cases that help to prosecute traffickers. Taskforces add to the Department of Justice’s law enforcement resources by providing local intelligence and expertise from local immigration agents, community and faith-based social service providers, and local law enforcement. The taskforce approach leverages local resources as well as those who have strong federal and legal influence. Anti-human trafficking taskforces are innovative approaches. They integrate local law enforcement efforts with non-governmental crime victim service organizations that are funded by federal grants and community and faith-based organizations. Community and faith-based

organizations are essential to reach victims who are isolated by geography, culture, or language. An important feature of this approach is that local law enforcement and victim service providers must enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with all taskforce members. This means that each entity commits to collaborating other taskforce members to investigate and to assist victims (U.S. Department of Justice, 2005).

Using Technology for Human Trafficking

Collaboration among different anti-trafficking entities is essential to combating traffickers, especially when they use sophisticated means to conduct their work. Due to the rapid forces of globalization, human trafficking around the world has increased with the use of technology. According to Internet World Stats (2010), the last decade has seen a 400% rise in internet users; there are now over 1.8 billion internet users worldwide. The internet provides a means of global networking in which, “predators use chat rooms, message boards, peer-to-peer file-sharing servers, news groups, and specialized websites to obtain information on potential [sex tourism] destinations” (Kunze, 2010, p. 251). According to Hughes (2001), when new technologies are introduced to a network of people, they act as an enabler for “those with power to intensify the harm and expand the exploitation” (p. 1). Through technological means, the world has become more connected and a tighter network through which traffickers can intensify their work.

Due to the transient nature of human trafficking, law enforcement around the world has struggled to assist victims and identify perpetrators. With the use of online and mobile technology, trafficking of persons is even more difficult to identify because criminals exploit victims through technological means. Thus, law enforcement officers stipulate, “sex trafficking itself has ‘moved online’” (Kunze, 2010, p. 252).

Online trafficking of persons is a borderless crime without a simple solution. Kunze (2010) explains, “Unlike the flow of information on the Internet, domestic law enforcement are restricted by national borders. Because of this, domestic law alone cannot suffice to thwart international criminal activity such as tracking via the Internet” (p. 252). The complexity of a profitable, transient industry that is exempt from international technological law creates significant barriers for anti-trafficking efforts. A review of the literature suggests that traffickers are using sophisticated avenues of technology to advance their conduct of human and sex trafficking. A relevant question to ask is if, and how, anti-trafficking efforts utilize technology in counter trafficking efforts.

Using Technology to Combat Trafficking

It is easy to condemn technology as a source for the expansion and perpetration of human and sex trafficking around the world. However, law enforcement and other anti-trafficking groups are using technology to collaborate and combat the technological skills of the traffickers. Key examples of such efforts are found in The Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking (2008), which discussed how technology is used, both to perpetuate and to combat human trafficking. The forum proceeding stated the importance of recognizing the potential gains of technology use: “rather than repressing technology, it becomes necessary to harness its potential to interfere with organized criminal activities and to combat trafficking and assist its victims” (p. 13). There are many examples provided in the Vienna Forum that further illustrate the international operations conducted to collaborate with other anti-trafficking entities and to combat human trafficking with the use of technology. This literature will briefly overview a few counter trafficking collaborations and tactics.

Organizational efforts such as INTERPOL, the G8 Sub-group on High-Tech Crime, the Virtual Global Taskforce, and the Internet Watch Foundation collaborate with international law enforcement agencies through the use of technology to share intelligence, information, and resources. Technology significantly contributes to collaboration with anti-trafficking efforts. It provides a common database for information sharing and creates an instantaneous way for agencies to communicate with one another to break down barriers of time and distance. Sophisticated technology skills are also vitally important for law enforcement to counter online traffickers. They often use the same technologies as the organized crime rings but for reverse outcomes.

INTERPOL, the largest international police organization, was created to support law enforcement agencies in their fight against international crime. One of the five key priority areas for INTERPOL is human trafficking. INTERPOL provides an intelligence database for international law enforcement to access and gain information on traffickers. INTERPOL also lists international links, resources, and networks that provide information about different trafficking investigations, and provides support in tactical operations. INTERPOL's technological strategies create a platform for collaboration. One example of INTERPOL's effectiveness is Project Childhood, which specifically investigates trafficking of children for sex tourism purposes in Asia. Project Childhood develops partnerships between police and other regional stakeholders to prosecute offenders and to provide restoration programs for victims (INTERPOL, 2010).

Eight countries, including Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom, established the G8 "Sub-group on High Tech Crime" to prevent, investigate, and prosecute cybercrimes that involved computers, networked

communication, and other new technologies (UNGIFT, 2008). The 2004 meeting of G8 Justice and Home Affairs Ministers recommended that legal systems allow undercover agents to use covert filming and listening devices, and covert forms of electronic communications (Sea Island Summit, 2004, para. 2). These methods require collaboration with many international intelligence sources to gather evidence on organized crime for law enforcement operations.

The Virtual Global Taskforce (VGT) created an international partnership of law enforcement agencies in order to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. The taskforce's main focus is to protect children with objectives to "make the internet a safer place, identify location, and help children at risk; and to hold perpetrators appropriately to account" (UNGIFT, 2008, p. 15). VGT uses creative strategies to counter trafficking opportunities with technology, such as Operation Pin. Operation Pin was launched in December 2003 by the VGT. VGT created a website that claimed to contain images of child abuse to lure potential criminals to the site. Law enforcement monitored the website, captured details about individual users who accessed the site, and reported the individual's information to relevant national authorities. Through VGT and law enforcement collaboration, Operation Pin captured information about individuals that actively sought out information about child abuse, discouraged internet users from searching for such information, and caught many individuals in the process.

A slightly different approach regarding law enforcement efforts is the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF). IWF is a United Kingdom-based initiative that uses the internet as a 'hotline' for users to report illegal content online. The IWF is facilitated by law enforcement but is dependent upon worldwide internet users to report online crime. Efforts such as these support collaboration between worldwide internet users and law enforcement.

These examples of anti-human trafficking tactics function as a powerful narrative that tells a story of what has been occurring in the past ten years. The literature demonstrates how technology can be strategically crafted to combat human trafficking and utilized for collaboration among anti-trafficking government agencies, law enforcement, advocacy groups, and worldwide technology users. The narrative of counter trafficking efforts throughout this chapter positions technology as a tool that anti-traffickers use: to effectively collaborate with each other, to directly combat the technological sophistication of traffickers, and to collectively gather data from internet users. With these different uses of technology in mind, this research will more deeply explore how technology and collaboration can be utilized for anti-human trafficking efforts.

Collaboration And The Use of Technology Among Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts

Chapter 2: The Role of Collaboration

The previous chapter told a historical narrative of human trafficking and counter human trafficking efforts that have taken place within the past ten years. The literature signified that traffickers use sophisticated, impersonal, and transmission type technologies. Presented was an overarching picture of how countering trafficking efforts require a complex array of technology, people, and organizations familiar with local contexts and laws to address the multi-faceted nature of trafficking. However, the introductory narrative lacked clear descriptions of the characters and personality types within the counter trafficking community. Understanding the framework of how counter trafficking collaborators approach their efforts is critical to understanding why entities do or do not collaborate with each other and what tensions might occur within collaborations.

Carey (in press), an activist researcher who has worked with many counter trafficking organizations, stated that there is no single formula to solve the broad and pervasive issue of human trafficking. He claimed that a significant amount of research and information has been published on the topic of human trafficking, its victims, and its survivors; but limited studies have explored the people, groups, and organizations involved in the anti-trafficking community. Within this chapter, information will be given about the different personalities that are seen within the counter trafficking community. In addition, key themes of inter-organizational collaboration, collective action, and collective identity will be presented and are important conceptual themes to understand when investigating inter-organizational collaboration.

Different Perspectives on Counter Trafficking

Each organization or advocacy movement has its own unique operations, perspectives, and mechanisms to counter human trafficking. Anti-trafficking efforts have different ways of framing how to alleviate the problem, which makes effective inter-organizational collaboration difficult. After extensive observations, research, and interviews, Carey (in press) identified four different approaches in international development that are used to combat human trafficking: *expert/didactic*, *moral*, *justice/equality*, and *postcolonial/resistance*. Insight into these four main approaches contributes to a better understanding of why different anti-trafficking groups do or do not collaborate with each other and how tensions could arise when these different approaches try to work together. Carey's categorizations of different counter trafficking organizations are important concepts for the overarching narrative of the counter trafficking efforts and will serve as a conceptual understanding when assessing collaborative counter trafficking measures.

The expert/didactic approach privileges academic expertise over grassroots' forms of knowledge. Carey (in press) argued the *expert/didactic* approach is the most dominant within the anti-trafficking community. This approach views human trafficking as a specialized problem that requires expertise in order to understand and to alleviate. Expertise reflects levels of merit such as an advanced degree, fieldwork, and participation at conferences and panels on the topic. Many of these experts are consultants who offer advice, lectures, and training on how to alleviate the problem of human trafficking. These experts often serve on boards and make decisions about the specifications for grants that fund many anti-trafficking groups and initiatives. This approach relies on a top-down model of development, which is a form of development that favors expert and academic hierarchy and esteems their theories, opinions, and approaches to development over local community knowledge. Many top down approaches have to do with how money is

distributed. Experts and academics in the field have greater control over who receives funding and how much funding is distributed to anti-trafficking development initiatives.

The moral approach is an approach often seen in faith communities and views the issue of human trafficking with strong polarizations – good versus evil. According to Carey (in press), the *moral approach* views “the fight against human trafficking as part of a larger, morally driven crusade against evil” (p.14). This approach is commonly seen in many faith-based and religious organizations, which are not only interested in the conviction of traffickers but the “redemption, healing, and restoration of victims’ souls” (p. 14). Not all religious organizations fit into this category but many have strong religious or faith-based components. A conceptual understanding of the complexities of the issue of human trafficking is often lacking when the moral approach polarizes the problem of human trafficking as a black and white issue, rather than a complex, local, and global problem with many shades of grey.

The third approach that Carey (in press) mentions is the *justice/equality approach*. The justice/equality approach is a more balanced perspective to anti-trafficking initiatives and fuses elements of both the expert/didactic and the moral approach to understand the rights and values most important to a specific culture. This approach aims to empower local communities to foster collaboration and to create local opportunities that will help gain agency and legitimacy within the international community. Often times this approach uses policies, politics, and legal ramifications to enact influential and sustainable action.

The postcolonial/resistance approach is unique from other development approaches. This approach uses a victim-centered perspective when approaching counter trafficking measures. This approach’s conceptualization of identity is fluid, constantly in flux, and changing. According to Carey (in press), the *postcolonial/resistance* approach focuses on empowerment of

the individual and contributes to the individual's journey of self-discovery. For example, many women and children survivors are unable to benefit from restoration care because these programs require survivors to have active participation with law enforcement. In this situation, the postcolonial/resistance approach would recognize that some survivors long to return home and have no desire to contribute to the legal engagements over the criminal pursuit of their traffickers. This victim-centered approach sympathizes with and meets the needs of the victim in ways of empowerment and self-worth. Measures of success from a victim-centered approach can be difficult to quantify. This creates challenges when trying to propose funding, gain organizational legitimacy, and larger societal recognition.

Carey's (in press) four different approaches help to conceptualize the main characters working to alleviate human trafficking. Recognizing these main approaches helps to understand the characters within counter trafficking operations and reasons why collaboration among different approaches is often challenging. Identifying the main ways that counter trafficking entities approach their counter trafficking efforts is important as tensions or challenges may arise when these approaches try to work with one another.

The Role of Collaboration

This study adopts a communication perspective in order to understand the complexities of the multi-faceted issue of human trafficking. According to Carey (in press), "effective communication holds the key to alleviating human trafficking" (p. 6). Using a communication approach based in inter-organizational theory, this study endeavors to explain the nature and extent of collaboration that currently occurs in counter trafficking efforts and the role that technology plays in facilitating inter-organizational collaboration.

Carey (in press) argued that effective communication holds the key to collaboration

among counter trafficking organizations. To understand successful aspects of communication within inter-organizational collaboration (IOC), this study looked to Austin's (2000) work. Austin described aspects of effective communication through description of personal connections and relationships. According to Austin, personal connections were found to be the focus and direction of IOCs; and personal relationships were the connecting piece that bound organizations together. Austin reveals insightful and conceptual understandings of IOC, specifically between non-profit organizations and businesses.

Austin (2000) argued that characteristics of effective communication such as personal connections and personal relationships are central to IOC. He identified the nature and functioning of partnerships through many factors. Key findings from Austin's study signified that relationships are stronger and more cohesive when collaborative members are more centrally aligned with the strategy, mission, and values of the partnership. Personal connections were found to be the focus and direction of IOCs; and personal relationships were the connecting piece that bound organizations together. Furthermore, Austin found that the fundamental component for alliance is dependent upon collaborative partners to generate cohesive values and shared visions. Austin concluded by stating that openness and passion to interact with one another in new ways fosters stronger collaboration between organizational partners. The answer to successful collaboration, as revealed by Austin, lies in personal connections and personal relationships with others.

Through 15 case studies, Austin's (2000) study expanded on inter-organizational collaboration (IOC) and investigated strategic collaboration between non-profits and businesses. This research will benefit from his findings because it provides conceptual and analytical concepts for logically examining IOCs between non-profits and businesses. This is particularly

relevant because counter trafficking efforts rely on collaboration with and participation from multiple stakeholders such as faith communities, government entities (international and national), businesses, and other counter trafficking organizations.

Koschmann and Isbell (2009) provided further insight into inter-organizational collaboration and the non-profit sector. Koschmann and Isbell defined *inter-organizational collaboration* as a type of “organizational relationship in which organizations can work together to address problems and manage their changing environments” (p. 2). To better understand this process and what is necessary for collaboration to occur in inter-organizational relationships, Koschmann and Isbell assessed the functionalities of IOC through a constitutive view of communication, which “sees communication as a process that creates and reproduces collective meanings” (p. 3). Koschmann and Isbell used case study methodology to conduct their research and developed a theoretical basis to further understand IOC. Their study collected data from Community Action Network (CAN). CAN is a public/private partnership of fifteen community collaborations that work to enhance the health and well being of two different Texas counties. Their study embraced the communication aspect of IOC, more specifically the communicative process of participation that occurs in the non-profit sector and considered tensions that emerge from collaboration. Through their case study of CAN, Koschmann and Isbell recognized that working with other organizations is an important but complicated process.

A common communication theme found in Koschmann and Isbell’s (2009) study was participation. In collaboration, participation is a desired communication characteristic. According to Koschmann and Isbell, “participation in collaboration happens when people have opportunities to realize some potential benefit, whether that be personal, organizational, or otherwise” (p. 9). It was discovered that when CAN provided opportunities for members to

pursue issues important to them, participation occurred. When members saw limited opportunities to benefit their interests, members were likely to disengage. They stated, “collaboration is sustained and thrives when human interaction ensures that opportunities are communicated throughout the collaborative structure” (p. 9). In practical terms, IOC was successful when collaborative members felt that their ideas were contributed, included, and valued throughout the length of the collaboration. Participation is an important theme to recognize within IOCs and necessary to have for effective collaboration.

Tensions in IOC

Tensions and inconsistencies are innate in human interactions. Koschmann and Isbell (2009) recognized this concept and found that tensions and inconsistencies in IOC are important components for organizational development. Embracing the dialectical tensions and challenges in IOCs are important to recognize and understand because they are common among IOCs.

Koschmann and Isbell (2009) identified inclusion/focus and talk/action as two primary tensions that occur in IOC. A core aspect of collaborative ethos is the inclusion of collaborative members’ ideas, resources, and opinions, which conflicts with the need for the collaborative group to focus on accomplishing their organizational and group goals. If a collaborative group’s inclusion is too broad, it results in an unfocused group perspective. In conflict with inclusion is the need for a group to exclude. The need for a collaborative group to focus and make organizational progress towards accomplishing their group goals, requires exclusion of certain group members’ ideas, resources, and opinions. Mentioned earlier was the significance and need for collaborative members to participate, which was best observed when members felt included and saw opportunities to contribute. The dialectical tension between inclusion/focus conflicts with collaborative members’ participation because collaborative groups need to be inclusive of

collaborative members' ideas and opinions in order to have high levels of participation. At the same time, collaborative groups need to exclude ideas and opinions from collaborative members in order to accomplish the groups' organizational goals. Findings from Koschmann and Isbell presented the dialectical tension between inclusion/focus and demonstrated that successful collaborations need to create an inclusive group atmosphere that encompasses a broad enough focus to afford individuals opportunities to contribute, yet a narrow enough focus to make organizational progress.

The second main tension Koschmann and Isbell (2009) found in IOCs is the tension between talk/action. This tension presents questions of how individuals collectively move from talk to action in order to act on behalf of the group or the collective. When collaborative participants individually act on behalf of the group and collectively come together to produce an action, collective action occurs. Collective action is a desired characteristic in IOCs, but there are many questions of how collective action systematically happens.

Collective Action

Other studies such as Hardy, Lawrence, and Phillips (1998) developed a theoretical model to examine the link between talk and action. They used case study methodology on The Community Partners, a Canadian-based initiative. This initiative included government organizations, universities, community groups, employment counselors, and training organizations. They aimed to explain how communicators move from thought to action and identified how communicators could facilitate collaborative action. The case study provided an example of how talk is transformed into collaborative action through the production of identity, skills, and emotion.

Hardy, Lawrence, and Phillips (1998) used a discursive approach to explain collective action and discovered that conversations are essential to produce identities, skills, and emotions, which in turn lead to collective action. Hardy, Lawrence, and Phillips stated, “not all talk may translate to action, but within talk lies considerable scope for action” (p.2). Talk does not mean that action will occur; but rather talk produces shared meanings (Koschmann & Isbell, 2009). The following descriptions briefly explain how conversations produce identity, skills, and emotions and how these factors create conducive elements for collective action. Concepts of identity, skills, and emotions within IOC are important to recognize and conceptualize because they are key themes for collective action – an essential component for IOC.

According to Hardy, Lawrence, and Phillips (1998), conversations create identities for individuals through factors such as physical presence or absence, dominant or passive conversational style, and through personal narratives. Personal narratives are powerful, influential, and important to recognize because narratives have the ability to prompt individuals to collectively act on behalf of the collaborative. The embodiment or absence of an individual’s identity through conversation matters because it affects others’ perceptions and validations of the individual. For example, the presence and conversational acknowledgement of one’s identity as a knowledgeable expert of human trafficking at a collaborative counter trafficking group meeting validates others’ perceptions that the individual is an expert within his or her field. Identity is a key factor to influencing what ideas are noticed, considered legitimate, or important; and in response to the identity presented, ideas will or will not be acted upon by different organizational members.

Furthermore, Hardy, Lawrence, and Phillips (1998) claimed that conversations produce skills; conversations are the medium through which skills are identified, socially created, and

represented. Individuals are more willing to use their skills to act on behalf of the group when they are encouraged and affirmed through conversation within the group. Skills are socially shaped through conversation and influence individuals to act in particular ways because they know they have the means to do so. The ways that collaborative members talk about their roles and their skills among the collaborative group shape how group members view their identity as an individual and as part of the collective group.

Lastly, conversations affect emotion – positively or negatively. Hardy, Lawrence, and Phillips (1998) stated that positive experiences in organizational settings, such as contributing to the conversation, generate emotional energy and drive action, whereas negative experiences, such as a participant being subordinated, diminish emotional energy and contributions to the collective. Conversations, more specifically narratives, have the ability to affect the emotional energy and drive of a collaborative group. To summarize, conversation produces identity, skills, and emotions, which in turn produces an encouraging group atmosphere for collective action. This is an essential process to conceptualize because the process of conversation and shared meaning creates an atmosphere conducive for collective action.

Collective Identity

Hardy, Lawrence, and Grant (2005) focused on the identity aspect of shared meaning within IOCs. They recognized that collaboration is important among organizations because it allows organizations to leverage differences in knowledge, skills, and resources to create solutions to problems unsolvable on their own. Hardy, Lawrence, and Grant discovered that discursive processes, such as conversation, produce collective identities that lead to effective collaboration. A collective identity is a discursive object that refers individuals to some form of the collective and is produced by conversation. Collective identity enables collaborative

members to view themselves, the problem, and the solution as part of a collaborative framework. This enables members to attach importance to the issue and collectively invest their time, energy, commitment, collective risks, and support from their respective organizations. Hardy, Lawrence, and Grant found that effective collaboration is a two-stage process. First, the collaboration needs to create a discursively constructed collective identity through conversation. Second, collective identity is re-enforced through conversation, which transcends into innovative and synergistic action. Hardy, Lawrence, and Grant's study demonstrated that through conversation, individuals produce collective identity when they start to associate themselves and their contributions to the collective. When collective identity is reaffirmed through conversation, collective action is produced.

Technology and Collective Action

Technology supports collective action. Flanagin, Stohl, and Bimber (2006), discovered that human behaviors such as "how people interact with one another and the opportunities for engagement afforded them in collectivities" (p. 49) are fundamental to collective action. Supporting this discovery are Austin's (2000) and Koshmann and Isbell's (2009) work that claimed personal relationships and opportunities for engagement within participation are important components for IOC. Flanagin, Stohl, and Bimber bring a unique perspective to collective action theory and stated that advanced communication and information technologies have significantly contributed to collective action. Furthermore, Flanagin, Stohl, and Bimber (2005) claimed that "collective actions revolve around the internet" (p. 369) in forms such as electronic mail, chat rooms, weblogs, and bulletin board systems, which also extend to other technologies such as "databases, portable computing and communication devices, and mobile

phones” (p. 369). The following provides examples of technology that supports collective action.

An example of collective action that uses technology to connect people and events is Ushahidi, a text-based mapping system where people can report real-time concerns. Ushahidi (Swahili for “testimony”) was developed during the Kenyan election crisis in 2008. Ushahidi is an open source website that allowed citizens in Kenya to map incidents of violence and peace efforts that were happening throughout the country. Citizens mapped these incidents via the web and mobile phone. During the elections roughly 45,000 people used the open source web site. After the election, creators of Ushahidi realized the need for a platform that could implement the same concept but on a global scale. Since its beginning roots, Ushahidi has gone from an ad hoc group to a focused organization that is comprised of developers from Africa, Europe, and the United States (Ushahidi, 2010).

Stemming from Ushahidi’s idea of citizen journalism is Freedom Geomap. The platform started from Survivors Connect, a collaborative organization that works to build advocacy and facilitates networks for those that want to end ‘modern-day slavery’. Through Freedom Geomap, individuals and organizations are able to post cases where human and sex trafficking has occurred as well as what efforts are being done in specific geographical locations (Survivors Connect, 2009).

According to Survivors Connect (2009), Freedom Geomap is “a space to share critical information about trafficking and anti-trafficking activity” (para. 1). Freedom Geomap promotes transparency and provides a platform to understand current challenges across global anti-trafficking efforts. The platform facilitates a collective network from global sources such as news reports, blog posts, photos, videos, tweets, etc. that are used to unify anti-trafficking efforts

by creating an avenue of tactics and resources that organizations can learn from and implement.

A similar interactive map used to counter human and sex trafficking is SlaveryMap. SlaveryMap provides individuals the opportunity to contribute to the public good by reporting instances of human or sex trafficking that occur in different geographical locations around the world. Since the launch of SlaveryMap in 2008, the site has had over 1,300 reports made of international human trafficking cases.

These examples provide context for how technology can be utilized to afford individuals opportunities to collectively act and contribute to the collective. Individuals and organizations around the world interactively participated in conversation to seek out information, and share their ideas and opinions via mobile phone, twitter, and the internet. Such examples help to conceptualize key aspects of collective action – how people interact and communicate with one another, and how people choose to participate through technology to contribute to a collective group.

Flanagin, Stohl, and Bimber (2006) created a *collective action space*, a way of understanding the diversity of collective action, which incorporates new and traditional concepts of collective action and IOC. Flanagin, Stohl, and Bimber categorized collective action in two dimensions: “mode of interaction used (ranging from personal to impersonal) and the mode of engagement felt (ranging from entrepreneurial to institutional) among participants in collective action efforts” (p. 33). These dimensions incorporate the fundamental human behaviors involved for collective action. Flanagin, Stohl, and Bimber’s collective action space serves as a model to conceptualize what occurs within IOC’s and collective action. The collective action space demonstrates that collaboration can be thought of as a continuum. Group and individual participants have different levels of commitment, different opportunities for engagement, and

different ways of interacting within a collaboration. One section of the collective action space is not more successful than another but rather each section represents a way to conceptualize and think about the different levels of action that individuals or groups contribute to an IOC and where they may fall onto the continuum.

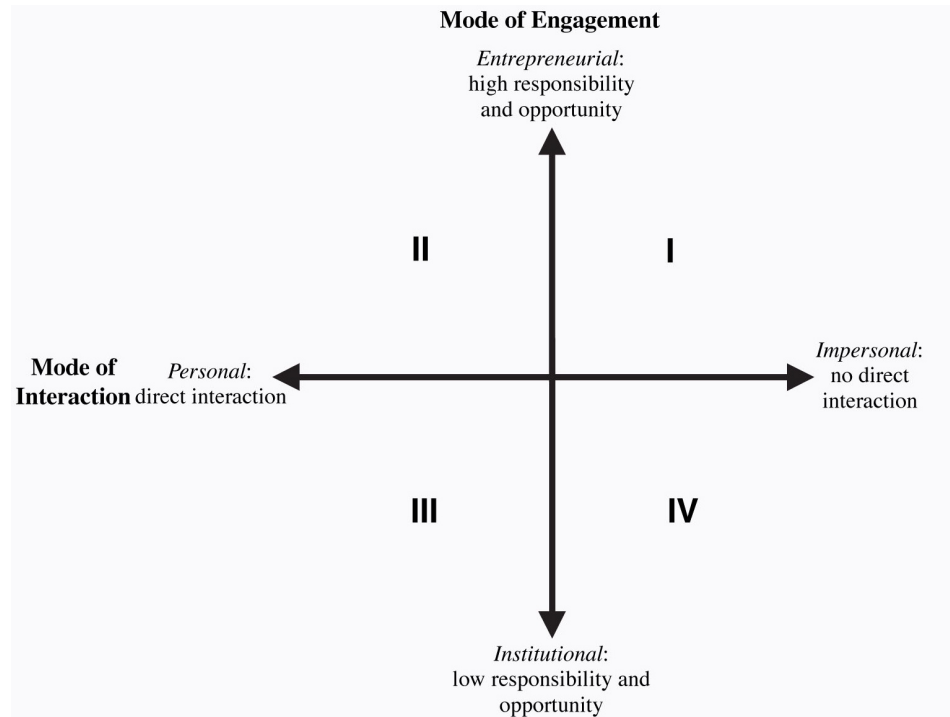


Figure 1: Collective Action Space (Flanagin, Stohl, & Bimber, 2006, p. 34).

In conclusion, effective IOC is dependent upon the relationships among participant members, which is a complex set of ongoing communicative processes that occur throughout the life of the collaboration. IOC is a communicative process that is built and dependent upon relationships; and is maintained through discourse and conversation. Recognizing these fundamental concepts of collaboration is essential for this research study because human trafficking is a complex and multi-faceted problem that requires coordination and collaboration from multiple entities.

Collaboration Literature Summary

Within the counter trafficking community, there are many different frameworks for how to approach the problem of human trafficking. According to Carey (in press), there are four main approaches to counter trafficking: *expert/didactic*, *moral*, *justice/equality*, and *postcolonial/resistance*. A consistent theme within the collaboration literature is a constitutive view of IOC, which is a process of communication that creates and reproduces shared meanings. Through this view of IOC, Austin (2000) stated that alliance is dependent upon collaborative partners to generate cohesive values and shared visions. Koschmann and Isbell (2009) described the need for participation and the need to embrace dialectical tensions that occur within IOCs such as inclusion/ focus and talk/action. Hardy, Lawrence, and Phillips (1998) found that in order for an IOC to move from talk to action, collective action needed to occur, which is produced through conversations and shared meaning – comprised of identity, skills, and emotion. Hardy, Lawrence, and Grant (2005) discovered that discursive processes, such as conversation, produce collective identities, which lead to effective collaboration. Flanagin, Stohl, and Bimber (2006) mentioned that fundamental features of human behavior involved in collective action are the way people interact with one another and the opportunities given to them by the collective. Examples of collective action with the use of technology can be seen all over the world and were notably demonstrated through platforms such as Ushahidi, FreedomGeomap, and SlaveryMap. Different levels of collective action and how to categorize an IOC can be conceptualized through Flanagin, Stohl, and Bimber's (2006) collective action space.

Based upon collected literature, collaboration from many different entities is needed in order to counter human trafficking due to the high technological sophistication of traffickers and the complexity of the global crime. Furthermore, the priority to address human trafficking

within U.S. and international law is a recent topic that calls for an investigation of how collaboration is needed to respond to the pervasive crime. Based on these literature findings, this study attempts to answer the following research questions. (1): What is the extent and nature of collaboration among anti-trafficking efforts? (2): What is the role of technology within collaboration, more specifically collective action, among counter trafficking efforts?

Collaboration And The Use of Technology Among Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts

Chapter 3: Methods

Previous chapters described a narrative of human trafficking and counter human trafficking efforts that have taken place within the past ten years. The narrative revealed that trafficking and counter trafficking strategies use sophisticated and transmission type technologies. Presented were overarching themes of inter-organizational communication, questions regarding the extent and nature of collaboration among anti-trafficking efforts, and the role of technologies within collaboration. To answer these questions, I conducted a case study of iEmpathize. I chose iEmpathize because of their unique media technology strategies and their mission to collaborate with other counter trafficking efforts. A case study of iEmpathize was conducted to better understand how technology is used to combat human trafficking and how components of inter-organizational collaboration function through concepts such as, personal relationships, participation, and technology use for collective action and collective identity.

iEmpathize

iEmpathize defines their organization as an arts and advocacy non-profit. Empathy is the essence of iEmpathize. The goal of iEmpathize is to pull an individual from sympathy, feeling badly for the suffering of others, to empathy, an active perspective that compels one to dive into the suffering of others. iEmpathize accomplishes their goal through media, art, and artifacts. Through an educational, awareness, and collaboration mission, iEmpathize partners with existing grassroots solutions that are overlooked and underfunded. iEmpathize categorizes their partnerships as prevention (child protection), intervention (rescue), and restoration (after-care). Current partnerships are in South East Asia, Russia, the United States, and México.

iEmpathize is a new organization that is two years old and has three full-time staff members: two full-time employees and one full-time intern. All full-time staff raise their own funding to support their living expenses. The media, art, and artifacts that iEmpathize displays are produced by professional photographers and film artists through pro bono or discounted services; many other facets of iEmpathize are provided by volunteer contributions (iEmpathize blog, 2011).

iEmpathize's South East Asia Partnerships. iEmpathize started their organization after a trip to South East Asia. In South East Asia, the founder of iEmpathize, two University of Colorado film students, and a New York City photographer discovered the reality of human trafficking. The team visited at risk areas, red light districts, and closed child brothels. An unforgettable experience for the team was when a mother approached the team and offered to prostitute her young daughter. After the trip, iEmpathize was created and began to do extensive research on the issue of human trafficking and counter trafficking efforts within South East Asia (iEmpathize blog, 2011).

iEmpathize's collaboration with South East Asia includes: partnership with Chab Dai, a network of over 40 counter trafficking organizations, funding for a prevention-training curriculum for boys and girls in at risk communities, and monthly funding for Transitions Global (TG) and child sponsorships. TG provides safe solutions for children through intensive trauma therapy and sustainable life and job skills training (iEmpathize blog, 2011).

iEmpathize's Russia Partnership. Each year over 17,000 Russians graduate from orphanages at the age of 16. After graduation the adolescents are encouraged to live in the nearest city and have limited knowledge of a trade skill to make a living. With limited skill sets, the youth are highly vulnerable and over half of the girls will be forced into prostitution.

iEmpathize collaborates with Hope Chest transition centers. Hope Chest serves the orphans in the difficult transition process. Through extensive research, iEmpathize was able to capture film, artifacts, and photography that tell the story of human trafficking within Russia and Eastern Europe. The film documentaries are used to educate orphaned Russian teenagers about the trafficking industry and ways to avoid traffickers' tactics. The Russian media exhibit is currently touring the United States to raise funds for the Russian field collaborative (iEmpathize blog, 2011).

iEmpathize's U.S. Partnerships. iEmpathize collaborates with Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) to help three million U.S. highway truck drivers identify potential scenarios and victims of human trafficking through training seminars, wallet cards, and multi-media. Contact information on the training card for the National 1-800 Trafficking Hotline, gives truck drivers a way to anonymously intervene. A call on the hotline notifies trained law enforcement to investigate the call. In the U.S. alone at least 100,000 American minors are prostituted each year and 200,000 – 400,000 minors are estimated to be at risk. The average age for young girls to enter prostitution in the U.S. is 12 years old. Traffickers target truck drivers because truck drivers are a profitable customer base and are recruited to transport victims (iEmpathize blog, 2011).

In the summer of 2010, iEmpathize created a documentary to partner with TAT. iEmpathize's "Trucker's Project" captured the story of Sheri, a 15-year-old American born Ohio girl that was kidnapped with her 14-year-old cousin while they were walking to Wendy's to buy Frosties™ after dinner. The young teenage girls were physically and sexually abused and indoctrinated into truck stop prostitution. The girls were saved because of a truck driver's phone call. The anonymous call to the local authorities reported that young girls were soliciting at the

truck stop and that something was not right. The trucker's call directly led to the rescue of Sheri and her cousin and opened up a case that lead the authorities to catch 31 offenders, rescue 7 minors, and shut down a 13 state prostitution ring (iEmpathize blog, 2011).

Two versions of the "Trucker's Project" are scheduled to release in 2011 – one version to the trucking industry and the other version will be used to inform the public about trafficking on U.S. highways. Both versions will show interviews with survivors, FBI, prosecutors, truck drivers, and industry professionals. The video release to the trucker industry will be partnered with TAT and used to inform, enlist, and train industry professionals on how to address trafficking on U.S. highways. The Trucker's exhibit will feature stories of trafficked youth through film, photography, and artifacts. iEmpathize is scheduled to release a mobile trucker exhibit that will tour truck shows, truck stops, music festivals, and state fairs. Homeland Security has recently contacted iEmpathize because of the "Trucker's Project" and requested to use the video teaser for Homeland Security's new Blue Campaign to combat human trafficking through the U.S. airline industry (iEmpathize blog, 2011).

Other U.S. initiatives include collaboration with local and federal law enforcement. iEmpathize is collaborating with a new human trafficking law enforcement unit comprised of the Denver Police Department in collaboration with the FBI and law enforcement agencies around the state that will investigate and intervene in Colorado trafficking cases. iEmpathize's role is to raise \$250,000 that will fund two full-time human trafficking investigators on the Front Range. This collaboration is facilitated by the Colorado Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce, which is comprised of law enforcement (national, state, and local), counter trafficking organizations, specialized attorneys, state universities, faith communities, etc.

iEmpathize's Boulder County Churches Partnership. BoCo México is an initiative and collaboration between iEmpathize, the Boulder County faith community, and grassroots efforts in México. In 2010, iEmpathize and Boulder County faith community leaders (BoCo) traveled to México City and worked with a wide range of collaborators that focused on anti-trafficking initiatives. Through extensive research and site visits, the BoCo México initiative discerned how to make a difference.

BoCo México initiatives support a safe home for trafficked victims of human trafficking, conduct street outreach, and develop multi-media work. Support given to the safe-home helps to benefit hundreds of at-risk children and helps to bring restoration care to child survivors of sex trafficking in México. Efforts provide monthly support to address practical needs like transportation and housing. BoCo México is at the beginning stage of securing a permanent home for children survivors in México City.

Other BoCo México initiatives focus on street outreach. Street outreach encompasses financial support for various projects and advocacy media in Spanish that helps to impact efforts from the safe-home as well as hundreds of abandoned children in México City. One of the most unique aspects of the BoCo México collaborative is the media footage developed in both English and Spanish. Media development is catered for the Mexican public and the Mexican government's anti-trafficking taskforce. The media travels to venues throughout México City including congressional events that advocate for further anti-trafficking legislation. English versions of the media are currently touring the U.S.

History of the iEmpathize and BoCo Collaborative. In order to describe iEmpathize, their collaboration, and the technology that they use for counter trafficking efforts, it is best to describe the overarching narrative of their México partnership. Five years ago friends that were

leaders from different faith communities wanted to collaborate and make a difference across Boulder County. Within their collaboration, they needed each other and each other's resources. The collaborative faith group has worked on many local initiatives and outreach programs such as foster care, work within the Boulder Valley School District, and homeless initiatives within Boulder County.

BoCo was created because a group of friends wanted to make an impact and difference in Boulder County. After five years of different churches working together on different local societal problems, the group wanted to extend their focus and their efforts abroad. The facilitator of BoCo described the creation of BoCo as happening in a meaningful moment where the founders of the group had a clear vision and connection for future work that they wanted to accomplish. He called this moment an "ah ha" moment. BoCo was realized in September of 2009 after a visit to México to meet with congresswoman Rosi Orozco. Congresswoman Orozco is friends with the BoCo facilitator's cousin – the connection that originally connected BoCo with the Mexican congress. The "ah ha" moment was the moment in time that the foundation, creation, and vision of BoCo formed. This is an example of a common moment in time of shared meaning, interest, and passion.

iEmpathize and BoCo have a reciprocal relationship; they need each other to make a difference for counter human trafficking efforts. BoCo did not have the expertise to partner with international counter trafficking efforts and iEmpathize needed a platform to extend their work. The founder of iEmpathize joined BoCo as an expert in counter human trafficking efforts and BoCo provided iEmpathize a platform and a faith community network for support and fundraising. Therefore, the BoCo México collaboration was formed.

The BoCo group is comprised of individuals that represent different faith communities. iEmpathize's 3 full-time staff members – the President/Founder, the Intern Director, and the Full-time Intern of iEmpathize – are BoCo members and represent 3 different faith communities. This is unique to the iEmpathize and BoCo collaborative because iEmpathize is a non-faith based non-profit, but they are able to collaborate with others from the Boulder County faith community.

iEmpathize's México Partnership. In 2010-2011, BoCo México has been working with Rosi Orozco, Mexican congresswoman and leader of the Mexican anti-human trafficking taskforce. Orozco is a key collaborative member with iEmpathize and BoCo. Through her connections, BoCo México was able to play a pivotal role in counter trafficking efforts across the country of México. Currently the Mexican congress is trying to pass bills and legislation for further counter trafficking efforts in the country. México has limited laws, legislation, and funding resources to define, prosecute, and restore human trafficking cases. Through legislation, advocacy, and support, congresswoman Orozco and her taskforce team are trying pass laws and legislation that will define human trafficking, prosecute the perpetrators, and help victimized children of human trafficking to receive justice and restoration after rescue.

Congresswoman Orozco is also the founder of a safe home in México, one of the few established recovery centers in México for victims of human trafficking. The safe home is specifically for young girls and has had 62 different girls in their program; the safe home currently houses 24 girls. The girls range in ages from as young as 1 to their early 20's. The safe home is a key collaborator with BoCo México because it provides the narratives, photographs, and media content that iEmpathize uses to promote awareness and advocacy within México and the United States. In return, the safe home receives all of the funds that BoCo

México generates from the media and is given media and advocacy tools to raise their own awareness and funds in México.

In 2011, iEmpathize premiered their latest film, “The México Experience”, first in México and then in the United States. The video documentary tells a narrative of facts, locations, and children in México that have been victimized by human trafficking. The focal characters of the film are congresswoman Rosi Orozco and an unidentifiable teenage girl named Maria, who is currently living in the safe home. Orozco appears interchangeably with Maria’s story as she advocates for victimized children in México and for further laws, legislation, and counter trafficking measures. Maria’s silhouetted body tells of her brutal past as a victim of sex trafficking. At the age of 15, Maria was performing for over 30 men a day. iEmpathize’s “The México Experience” reveals the facts and stories of young victimized children. To conclude the film, iEmpathize presents the hope, rescue, and restoration that have occurred through their grassroots partners in México. A short teaser film (3 minutes) was released by iEmpathize to the Mexican congress in November of 2010. Congresswoman Orozco and her taskforce team favored the iEmpathize media teaser and will distribute the film to airport monitors across the country of México for travelers to view and to become aware of the problem of human trafficking in México. The BoCo México collaborative was also invited by the Mexican Congress to display the finished documentary and art gallery at the Mexican congress and the Attorney General’s office in spring of 2011.

BoCo plays a vital role in the partnership between iEmpathize, Orozco, and the safe home. The facilitator of BoCo was the first connection and contact to Orozco through a cousin and introduced Orozco to iEmpathize. The BoCo México collaborative discovered the expenses and funds needed for the safe home through Orozco. Through a collaborative partnership of over

a year, BoCo has provided many funds to the safe home as well as the connection to iEmpathize. The following provide examples and the distributions of such funds.

Through BoCo, the safe home has received a commuting van to allow the girls to travel to school, court hearings, doctors' appointments, and other necessary commutes. The most recent provision of the BoCo México collaborative was a five thousand dollar donation to send a 15-year-old victim to a year-long drug rehab program for solvent and glue addiction. Getting young children addicted to solvents and glue is a common tactic used by traffickers. Although this young girl was rescued and is living at the safe home, she needed professional rehabilitation care for her drug additions. The BoCo México collaborative was able to fund her rehabilitation care.

The following chart shows iEmpathize's national and international partnerships.



Data Collected

I chose iEmpathize as case study because of their local Boulder, Colorado-based headquarters and the close relational ties that I have with this counter trafficking organization.

Throughout my research, I was a BoCo member, who represented the leadership of a faith community in Boulder County. I collected qualitative data that involved in-depth interviews with iEmpathize employees, interns, and collaborative BoCo members. Field notes were collected from collaborative iEmpathize and Boulder County faith community (BoCo) meetings (4), benefit fundraiser events (5), and a field observation trip to México City, México (1 week).

Data Collection Methodology

In-depth interviews. In-depth interviews were conducted with iEmpathize's collaborative members, who include iEmpathize employees, interns, and BoCo members (n=7). In-depth interviews provided discursive and contextual insight into the specifics of iEmpathize's collaborative practices, technology use, and organizational culture. Participants interviewed were the President/Founder of iEmpathize, the Intern director of iEmpathize, the Full-time Intern for iEmpathize, a Part-Time intern for iEmpathize, the Facilitator of BoCo, a BoCo Member, and a BoCo member, who is a professor in inter-organizational collaboration. Collaborative members were chosen based on an email response that the director of iEmpathize sent out inquiring for research participants for my study.

Each of the (n=7) participants agreed to take part in an in-depth informant interview about collaboration within their anti-trafficking efforts. This study utilized a semi-structured interview protocol. This protocol allowed for a structured comparison across participants, and it gave participants room to fully explain their answers. Based upon collected literature mentioned in chapters one and two, interview questions asked iEmpathize's collaborative members about the specifics of successful inter-organizational collaboration practices, the use of technology for counter trafficking strategies, and the use of technology for collaboration with other counter trafficking efforts. Participants were asked to describe how collaboration affects their efforts and

is practiced within their organization. In addition, this study asked specific questions about benefits and struggles experienced with their collaborations. Interview questions can be found in the Appendixes on page 73. Interviews ranged from 15 to 35 minutes, averaging approximately 25 minutes in length. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed word for word, resulting in 44 single-spaced pages of analyzable text.

Data Analysis

To analyze the 44 pages of transcribed interviews and field notes, this study used analytical coding methods. To analyze the data, a typological strategy was used. The first step in analyzing the data was preliminary readings. All data was read three times to assess general themes and patterns. The second step in analyzing the data was to group interview transcripts into key themes and concepts based upon collected literature mentioned in chapters 1 and 2.

Field notes of collaborative iEmpathize and BoCo meetings. Field notes were conducted over a sixth month period at collaborative iEmpathize and BoCo meetings (4) and iEmpathize benefit events (5). Field notes of benefit events and collaborative iEmpathize and BoCo meetings provided an avenue to observe the organization's technology strategies, conversations, collaboration, collective action, participation, and group dynamics.

Field notes of the collaborative iEmpathize and BoCo trip to México City. Field notes were conducted on the México City trip to provide further observations of iEmpathize's technology strategies, conversations, collaboration, collective action, participation, and group dynamics with their grassroots partners abroad.

From February 28th through March 6th, 2011, seven members including myself from the iEmpathize and the BoCo collaborative (representing seven different faith communities) traveled to México City with several goals in mind. 1.) Congresswoman Orozco invited iEmpathize and

the BoCo collaborative to the Mexican Congress and the Mexican Attorney General's Office to display “The México Experience” film and the media, art, and artifacts exhibit. “The México Experience” and media exhibit was displayed for two days during the Mexican Congress session and displayed for one day at the Attorney General’s Office, which was featured on national Mexican news. 2.) iEmpathize and BoCo members re-connected with facilitators of the safe home to assess the needs of the safe home. 3.) The iEmpathize and BoCo collaborative visited prospective locations for future iEmpathize art and media exhibits that will generate awareness and funds within México City that will go directly to the safe home.

Summary

A thorough description of iEmpathize and their BoCo collaborators provides important data for analysis. The following chapters will demonstrate how collected data from observations and in-depth interviews helped to conceptualize and explain the extent and nature of collaboration among anti-trafficking efforts, the role of technology within iEmpathize’s collaboration, and tensions experienced within iEmpathize’s collaborations as well as strategies used to overcome such tensions.

Collaboration And The Use of Technology Among Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts

Chapter 4: Analysis

I presented two research questions based upon the literature from chapters one and two. I wanted to discover the extent and nature of collaboration among anti-trafficking efforts. I also wanted to understand the role of technology within collaboration, more specifically collective action, in counter trafficking efforts. To answer my research questions, I conducted a case study on iEmpathize. Through in-depth interviews of iEmpathize and BoCo collaborators, I was able to answer my research questions and I discovered several themes. Key themes found in iEmpathize's collaborations are friendship and trust, challenges of participation, challenges of talk to action, and challenges of individual and group identity. This chapter will discuss the data findings of my observations and in-depth interviews with iEmpathize's employees, interns, and BoCo collaborators. First, the analysis will discuss iEmpathize's uses for technology to collaborate with others, how they share the narrative of victimized children, and challenges that occur. Second, the analysis will uncover the BoCo collaborative, their pivotal role with iEmpathize, and challenges that occur within the iEmpathize and BoCo collaborative.

The Mission of iEmpathize

I conducted a case study on iEmpathize because of their mission to collaborate with other counter trafficking efforts and their use of technology to conduct their work. Through observations and in-depth interviews, I discovered the intricacies of iEmpathize's collaborations and technology strategies. The president of iEmpathize explained the central strategy of iEmpathize, *"every effort we have is a collaboration. We don't do anything without a collaboration"*.

Counter trafficking organizations have become more prevalent in the past ten years. An intern of iEmpathize talked about different organizations and the specific niche of iEmpathize.

“Since there are so many more human trafficking organizations...it’s more effective, more efficient when we each focus on one aspect of that...we’re focusing on grassroots organizations and a lot of what we talk about is...funding safe homes, but not only that...We are reaching out to those organizations as opposed to us doing it ourselves, so that’s our niche”.

The niche of iEmpathize is to collaborate with grassroots efforts and give media tools that enable grassroots efforts to tell their story. The president explained this process, *“the first priority is to give them media, and then all we do there is stylize the media back to the public, so every piece of media that you’re seeing, it’s not just generic media, it’s not just awareness about an issue, it’s telling the story of the efforts that you’re supporting, it’s telling the children’s story...When you see our media, you’re seeing the kids that you’re helping and you’re seeing the media that they’re using to make a difference”.*

The media is also used as a teaching tool and an advocacy fundraiser for the grassroots’ collaborations. One intern explained, *“I just see iEmpathize as a really great network...the whole point is to be able to give it to them so that they can convey it to other locals, their issue, or their purpose, and then also as a teaching tool for the kids so that they can learn what it is for a preventative measure”.* The teaching tool aspect of iEmpathize’s media can be seen in their Russian collaboration. An iEmpathize employee explained, *“We have been able to in Russia, for example, create media tools and create an art exhibit that allows girls at the age of sixteen, who are orphans and moving into the world, to have an educational framework by which they understand this issue so they aren’t immediately bated into prostitution as their only viable option of survival”.*

Technology

iEmpathize was also chosen for a case study because of their technology strategies. An intern described iEmpathize's work, *"Technology is very important...technology comes into play in all of our communication"*. An employee explained iEmpathize's technology use, *"technology is really everything here...of how we engage audiences and how we address the issue is focused on the tools of media and photography and artists that come together to bring their talents and skills to address this issue. Technology is the center of all that work"*. Through observations and field interviews, it was discovered that iEmpathize uses technology to communicate within their own organization and with other counter trafficking organizations. iEmpathize conducts conference calls, designs websites, produces films, and uses online project management software. To communicate with other collaborators iEmpathize primarily uses emails, phone calls, and as one intern described, *"iphoneing technologies"*.

The president of iEmpathize mentioned that, *"technology helps us communicate with each other as organizations. We, all of us anti-trafficking orgs., follow each other on twitter...so we can be aware of what we're all doing and celebrate that and tell others"*. He further explained that websites help iEmpathize and their collaborators to know about each other and to communicate to the public about their work. iEmpathize uses a volunteer-based web site called VNEHT (Volunteers Network to End Human Trafficking). Through VNEHT, iEmpathize is able to tell others about their efforts and collaborate with others that use the site. Technology enables iEmpathize to connect with collaborators that are oceans away and wire funds instantaneously. The president gave an example of this, *"I can raise ten thousand dollars for Cambodia and I can wire it that night, that's technology"*.

iEmpathize and law enforcement

iEmpathize collaborates with law enforcement on varying levels throughout their work. The president mentioned that law enforcement is *“a part of the matrix of who we support on the grassroots level”*. He listed several examples of how iEmpathize collaborates with law enforcement in their grassroots efforts. In Cambodia, iEmpathize partners with a network of organizations that work closely with law enforcement on counter trafficking strategies such as prevention, intervention, and restoration. iEmpathize works with law enforcement in México. Their safe home partner consistently collaborates with the police to bring legal justice to the girls. The Mexican police give insight, leads, direction, and protection for iEmpathize members when they travel to some of the most dangerous parts of México to film and capture the story of victimized children.

iEmpathize has two initiatives in the United States and both initiatives collaborate with law enforcement. The president of iEmpathize mentioned that law enforcement is *“an indispensable part of the initiatives”*. One initiative is Trucker’s Against Trafficking (TAT). As mentioned in chapter three, iEmpathize creates media to teach truck drivers how to identify and report human trafficking that occurs on U.S. highways. iEmpathize works directly with law enforcement on this initiative. Law enforcement advises iEmpathize to train truck drivers and the public. Training includes information on how to report a call and how to give specific information that will lead to arrests and prosecute those that are victimizing children.

The president described current collaborations and future expansion of the TAT initiative, *“we are collaborating with faith based groups and we’re collaborating with the trucking industry and any organization that is connected with the trucking industry. So what we would love to, is the Truckers Against Trafficking thing be, twenty, thirty, forty, organizations strong or companies strong, who are all working together. So we want to collaborate with the industry,*

we want to collaborate with the FBI, we want to collaborate with local law enforcement, we want to collaborate with other organizations that would have overlap in intercepting trafficking cases along highways and truck stops". iEmpathize is currently working to make the "Trucker's Project" a training film for truck driver school.

The other iEmpathize U.S. initiative collaborates with the FBI and the Colorado Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce. Through observations and interviews, it was discovered that iEmpathize is one of the funding sources for the Colorado Taskforce. A governor's initiative is currently underway to establish two full-time specialized police officers in Colorado that work on human trafficking cases. However, there is not enough money in the Colorado budget to fund these officers. iEmpathize's role is to raise \$250,000 to fund the police officers' annual salary. The officers will focus their full-time efforts on human trafficking cases. The Denver-based police officers will recruit and train law enforcement throughout the state of Colorado. Taskforce officers will establish a network of police representatives from every police department on the Front Range that will report and collaborate with other law enforcement when a case is outside of their Denver jurisdiction. The president mentioned that, *"There're many different people raising funds, separate from iEmpathize. iEmpathize just happens to be the channel that it all comes through as a 501c3...but we are developing media specifically to be able to hold awareness and fund raising events that directly get distributed to the taskforces"*. In addition to collaborating with the Colorado Taskforce, the FBI requested iEmpathize to be the media advocacy piece for different states and national campaigns in the future.

Limited staff have conducted all of iEmpathize's work in two years that includes: two full time employees, one full-time intern, and three part-time interns. iEmpathize does not have a central office or meeting place. To compensate for this, iEmpathize uses Basecamp, an inter-

organizational collaborative online tool that serves as a project management site for information sharing and task organizing. One intern stated, *“It’s like our headquarters, especially since we don’t have an office necessarily”*. Another intern mentioned, *“Basecamp is the main tool that we use to encourage and maintain updates on what we are doing and working together”*.

Other iEmpathize work has been accomplished with the help of hundreds of volunteers. The president described volunteer efforts and said that it’s *“not just volunteerism but taking the skillset of what someone has and bringing it together...our website is a professional web company, we don’t pay for any of that, they collaborate with us and give us those. Our films are made by world-class filmmakers. That’s their career but they take their vacation time to go and work with us, so that’s a collaboration, our photographers are the same way, our accounting firm is the same, and the list goes on and on, everything that it takes to make iEmpathize run, is a collaboration and it’s done without anyone getting compensated for”*.

Challenges of Collaboration within iEmpathize

iEmpathize has to navigate different collaboration challenges because of their limited staff, mission of collaboration, and volunteers that have different levels of participation. The president of iEmpathize alluded to challenges of different levels of participation, *“the web site, as wonderful as that gift is to us, cause it’s pro-bono, we’re on the back burner...that creates a bit of tension but your expectation is what gets you frustrated”*. When asked about unsuccessful collaborations, the president explained, *“There’s always unsuccessful attempts to collaborate, constantly”*. He further mentioned that iEmpathize navigates unsuccessful collaborations through a set of metrics. Before a collaboration takes place, iEmpathize wants to know what the values of the organization are and if the grassroots efforts are working on a solution that is not a *“band aid to the problem”*. Other metrics look for a level of demonstrable success within the

current grassroots initiative. The president further explained, *“When I come alongside these underfunded, overlooked efforts, even though they are underfunded and overlooked; they’ve shown some impact. That’s how they got our attention and so we come along side them with what we call a ‘project’. A project is just something that they need, that can make a big difference. And it might just be a small film project, or it might be an advocacy or media tool that they thought might help them, and maybe we, maybe that lets us work together for six months”*. Through a short-term project, iEmpathize is able to see if the grassroots partner has the capacity to manage donations and expansion, has a leadership structure in place, or is implementing their vision well. After assessing different metrics, iEmpathize is then able to establish a long-term collaboration.

An iEmpathize intern uses the internet to locate and assess potential collaborations for iEmpathize. She currently researches Russian non-profit organizations that work with victims of sex trafficking. Her main strategy is to search organizations’ web sites and find their mission statements. She described her findings, *“to be able to collaborate with an organization you kinda need to know that they exist. Another thing that would be helpful, so having mission statements or...this is one point that was brought up, was like we’ll buy girls out of the situation, and other organizations are completely opposed to that idea. So having those fundamental building blocks of your ethical...mission statement, are...important to know about each organization before you tried to get into contact with them or decide to collaborate with them”*.

The strategy that she uses to locate potential Russian collaborations relies on the ability of Russian non-profit organizations to produce a website. The website has to have a clear mission statement; and the mission statement has to align with iEmpathize’s values and mission. Similar to Carey (in press), it is important to recognize the different values and missions of other counter

trafficking organizations and could help to explain why counter trafficking organizations do or do not work with one another. Austin (2000) stated that relationships are stronger and more cohesive when collaborative members are more centrally aligned with the strategy, mission, and values of the partnership.

Many collaborations are unsuccessful, short-lived, or collaborators can drift apart over time. The president of iEmpathize described such a scenario, *“So, let’s say the project, even though it’s a good fit for them and we’ve left them with something, we might have discovered that our values are just enough different or our philosophy, or methodology, or the way we implement those things are just enough different that we can’t quite work together, maybe someone else out there is a better fit to collaborate with them. And, that happens a lot...I have stories of that in the United States and I have stories of that in every part of the world that we work in...even in Colorado”*. The previous description would be an example of a short-term collaboration. Longer-term collaborations of iEmpathize have the same values, philosophy, and approach for counter trafficking efforts.

The president of iEmpathize gave a specific example of a collaboration challenge that occurred within the counter trafficking community. He explained, *“I have an organization and another organization, I work with both of them, but they don’t want to work with each other...what I’ve become is a buffer between them...the two efforts actually have overlap and need to work together but because of personality conflicts, they struggle”*. He further explained how he helps to navigate conflict between different counter trafficking organizations, *“I get to come in and say it’s about abolition, it’s about mission, so, let’s throw our relational conflicts aside and I’ll be the one that helps you to do that”*. He concluded that navigating collaboration conflict is difficult but necessary because, *“We are better together than we are apart. We are*

stronger together than we are apart. So we just have to figure out what levels we can collaborate and be okay...Sometimes you can collaborate in really small ways and that's good, and other times you go deep and that's good".

The mission of iEmpathize is to partner with grassroots efforts, which at times can be challenging for iEmpathize in terms of time, focus, and direction. An intern expressed iEmpathize's challenges of time and having clear direction, *"There is always the tension as a group against time. We are always trying to meet a deadline for an event or something that is coming up and so just doing everything within the time allotted for it, which is never, it never feels like enough, and I think there is also some kind of tension as far as clarifying who is doing what exactly".* An employee also described the challenge of adapting to meet the grassroots' needs, *"because we are coming behind field partners, field partners that have specific needs that change on a weekly basis, perhaps that changes what we do and how we need to spend our time because we are not building something for ourselves...and it can become obscure of what we are doing, how we are doing it, why are we doing it, when it is always a moving target, so tensions naturally come out of that".*

iEmpathize consistently navigates collaborative challenges such as: different values of other counter trafficking organizations, different levels of participation from collaborators, the constraints of time to accomplish their work with limited funds and staff, maintaining a clear vision for their efforts, and the ability to be flexible to accommodate the needs of grassroots partners. To navigate the different challenges of collaboration, iEmpathize deferred to one overarching concept. The president of iEmpathize stated, *"Children are the CEO of iEmpathize, and they get first priority at all times, and even if our media is interfering with that, kill it, get it out of the way, whatever, if an event is like taking too much time and it's not helping kids but*

taking us away... from really helping children...if I can identify that anything like that's happening, then I'm gonna kill it". The narrative of victimized children was found to be the overarching strategy that navigated different collaborative challenges.

Ideas for technology

After asking interview participants about tensions and challenges within iEmpathize's collaborations, I asked interview participants to describe an ideal collaborative technology that they would use or like to see used in iEmpathize's efforts or within the anti-trafficking community. An intern described her idea for an innovative and collaborative tool. It would include *"a wiki database of organizations but also how to's for organizations"*. In detail she described a technical tool that would provide information about successful ways to advertise, obtain donations for benefit events, effectively talk to business professionals about corporate sponsorship, and the do's and don'ts of non-profit work. The collaborative technology would have a collective resource section that would include student research papers, a list of non-profit organizations (local, state, national, and international), information about different counter trafficking organizations and how they approach their efforts, and technical, factual, and educational information about non-profit organizations. She concluded by stating, *"I think that it would be a great tool for collaborating with CU, and also building a model of CUSAMS (CU Students Against Modern Day Slavery) and iEmpathize that could be replicated on other campuses and in other communities as well as a great source for information and learning"*.

The president of iEmpathize had a different answer to this question. He stated that the ideal collaborative technology is not theory but rather it is a tool that iEmpathize currently provides for those that want to get involved in the counter trafficking community. He explained, *"We have a web site and it's a program we call 'My iEmpathize' and what I want people to do,*

is to take what they're good at and offer it, I don't want people to re-invent themselves to change people's lives. I want you to use who you are to change kids lives". Through the website a participant owns his/her own url and web page. A participant is able to upload their own images and link to My iEmpathize through social media platforms; and is able to host a temporary email list for quick communication links. iEmpathize also provides a home media tool kit that participants can use to host their own events through photography and media. He concluded by saying that, *"those are simple things and what we hope is that those things lead to deeper things"*.

Measures of Success

iEmpathize has current partnerships in Cambodia, Northern Thailand, Russia, México, and the United States. When asked about measures of success within their organization, iEmpathize employees and interns described iEmpathize's efforts as being successful. One intern explained, *"I think that our films definitely are very successful for us and for our partners because on our end they are telling the stories of people that we are helping, they help us personally to keep going in our work, and for them, it gives them an advocacy tool as well as a little more of a spotlight. They will possibly get more support and be able to sustain themselves longer"*.

Although members of iEmpathize believe that their efforts are successful, they want to broaden and expand their work. An employee described future plans for iEmpathize, *"We want to keep moving forward and we believe that there are many other efforts out there that need our help and we hope that we will be able to come alongside them here in the next year whether it's in Brazil and India. We would like to be in Eastern Europe where it's very prevalent and it*

really just depends on the ongoing collaboration that we see here in the U.S. and right here in Boulder County”.

The collaborations within Boulder County that help to sustain, fund, and expand the work of iEmpathize is through their Boulder County Churches (BoCo) collaborative. An employee described, *“one of the most profound collaboration efforts that we’ve seen here locally are with local churches in Boulder County. We’ve had eight churches come together and say, we don’t want this to happen on our watch...we’ve seen that collaborative effort, churches crossing denominational lines and...other cultural lines as well to come together and to advocate for these kids”.* The employee further described how the BoCo collaborative has financially provided for iEmpathize. BoCo funded all of the production, media tools, and travel expenses for the México partnership.

Friendship, Trust, and Inclusion

A consistent theme from iEmpathize and the BoCo collaborative is a theme of friendship, trust, and the inclusion of others, which is similar to Austin’s (2000) study that found personal connections and personal relationships were the connecting piece that bound organizations together. The lead facilitator of BoCo mentioned that friendship was the building block of the collaborative, *“Initially it was built around a bunch of friends who got together and wanted to do something. Now it’s built around, let’s partner together in helping around human trafficking in México”.* Another BoCo member described the emphasis of trust, which has only occurred because different church leaders have established relationships in the past five years. *“BoCo probably wouldn’t work five years ago, but it does now because people trust each other more”.* He further stated, *“if people trust each other they are eager to work together and so what we have to keep - the essence of us collaborating is that the guys, it’s this simple, the guys like each*

other, and the girls like each other. Those that are kinda making decisions on behalf of their church like each other”. According to Austin (2000), openness and passion to interact with others in new ways fosters stronger collaboration between organizational partners. The answer to successful collaboration, as revealed by Austin, lies in personal connections and personal relationships with others.

The Boulder County faith community has worked together on local and international societal issues but the collaborative did not happen without collaborative challenges. As one BoCo member mentioned, *“churches are notorious for not working well together, I mean they all have agendas, and they are also notorious for not following through and really pulling stuff off”*. He later described how the collaborative navigated potential collaborative conflict. *“It comes down to friendship and trust...we have to work through conflict to keep that but that is also built up, that we have this level that we know that we can trust each other cause we have done other things less significant together. But really it is about friendship and trust among us”*.

Challenges With Different Levels of Participation

A common theme found through observations from BoCo meetings and in-depth interviews were challenges of participation. The BoCo collaborative had challenges with participation among other churches in their efforts. One BoCo member stated that the reason why many churches do not work together is because they define success in different ways and have different agendas to accomplish their success. Similar to Carey’s (in press) description of different agendas within counter trafficking approaches mentioned in chapter two, churches have different agendas and terms of success. One BoCo member described these different agendas, *“Different churches define success in a different way and so for some churches, if what they are doing in the community is not resulting in people coming to their church, it’s not a success and*

they will back out and that is their agenda....so that would be an agenda. And some let's say we just want to do social good and we don't care about letting people know why we are here, which specifically would be more evangelistic and that Jesus is the motivation for doing what we do. Other agendas would be just to communicate Jesus. So it would be like, we serve you just so that you would listen to us and so because of all those agendas, and in a sense, they all conflict against each other because the end result is something slightly different and that's one reason that churches don't work well together".

The BoCo member described three different frameworks of how churches within Boulder County define success and want to accomplish their organizational goals. The first framework focuses on getting more people to come to church. The second framework is more "evangelistic" and desires to do social good. The third framework is a service-minded agenda to be able to tell others about the opinions and beliefs of the church. This is important to recognize because each framework is representative of a faith community that a BoCo member represents. Because each framework is slightly different, faith communities have different levels of participation.

A word that occurred frequently within observations and interviews is the word *reality*. The facilitator of BoCo described, *"We have kinda come together and the reality is that our worlds are a little different"*. *Reality* was a term or way to frame and describe how different churches have different agendas, goals, and definitions of success. *Reality* was intentionally used to avoid placing judgment or blame on churches that had different levels of participation in the BoCo collaborative. The facilitator of BoCo further mentioned, *"some of the churches with the larger resources that provide people that can come to an event, like our March event or even funds, are harder because it's not like a judgment of them it's just a reality. There is so much*

going on and they operate to manage this mass amount of people and you can't just throw a new thing out. Or we have had other churches that have said, well, we're interested in this but we already have other things going on in missions". Another BoCo member iterated, "We couldn't get everyone. Some churches are huge and some are small, and so we can't ask them to do the same thing".

The BoCo collaborative developed a strategy to navigate the challenge of different levels of faith community participation. BoCo decided to include any faith community that wanted to participate on any level. One BoCo member described this strategy, *"you can participate at whatever level you feel comfortable, or whatever level you are able to. And an example, there are some churches that they are only going to allow a certain level of partnership. And there will be other churches that will say, this is the single most important thing that we are doing right now. And so, when we say that you are able to jump in as much as you want or that you are able to or feel comfortable with, that allows more people to participate".*

Although the BoCo collaborative incorporates different levels of participation, they run into challenges of different expectations. One BoCo member stated, *"The challenge is that it is really easy to be disappointed that some people are not as far in as you may be or there may be this pressure or this persona of pressure that may not even exist from people that are not participating enough, that they're disappointing the rest of the group".* Another BoCo member described different levels of commitment that were tangibly represented at one BoCo meeting, which he referred to as tensions of formality, *"we saw that yesterday in the meeting when there was low attendance, compared to the previous meeting when there was high attendance".* Another challenge with participation is having people attend the BoCo meetings. One BoCo member described this challenge, *"You know it sounds kinda practical and simplistic but it's big,*

just getting people together at the table, is big in collaboration because you can't do stuff if people are not represented, or at least it is a lot harder or allows people to defer".

Although there are challenges of participation with the BoCo collaborative, the challenge is worth the cost for the purpose and functioning of the group. One BoCo member explained, *"it is both a strength and a weakness but it's easier to navigate through, what is it that are you expecting from me, we are not disappointed in one another, it's easier to navigate through that, than asking everyone to participate at the same level".*

The foundation of the BoCo collaborative was built on friendship, trust, and inclusion. This has helped the BoCo collaborative to navigate tension and maintain collaborative efforts. One BoCo member described, *"because we are friends and we spend time together, we can talk about this on a casual level, which is much more effective than having some meeting to fix a problem. When we do have to do that, the rare times that we do, it's friends talking about it, and not associates".*

This strong friendship could potentially hinder the BoCo collaborative in terms of different levels of participation. One BoCo member stated, *"There's a few key people that the relationships hinge around...there are some guys that just have relationships with everyone and have the emotional, relational ethos to connect with everyone, not everyone has that. There are a few people that have to be in because...the relationships hinge around a few people and other relationships are being strengthened and built during that time".* Another BoCo member claimed, *"most of that group are friends with each other long before BoCo México got started and I think those informal and previous friendships are doing a lot of heavy lifting for the group that formal agreements and documents aren't".* Observations and descriptions from BoCo members revealed that some of the BoCo members are closer friends than others and those

members are doing most of the work for the collaborative through informal gatherings such as coffee or lunch. One BoCo member presented this type of informal group business, *“What happens when you’re trying to get other people from other organizations, other churches to do stuff when you don’t have a friendship with them, they haven’t been to México, now what?”* The closer friendships and informal group work were being done outside of the formalized BoCo meetings. This contributes to challenges of participation because newer BoCo members may see limited opportunities to contribute to the group.

Observations and interviews revealed that the BoCo collaborative has to navigate through challenges of participation and different church realities. To ease this challenge, the group decided to allow churches to participate at whatever level of participation they were able to commit. However, this created an unequal distribution of work for those that were the founders of the group; these members did the relational heavy lifting for the group. The strength and work of the BoCo group was done through informal relationships outside of group meetings. This created a barrier for new members who are part of the BoCo group because they might want to participate on a deeper level with the BoCo collaborative but are not aware of the informal meetings outside of the formal BoCo group meetings.

Challenges of Collective Action and Collective Identity

The biggest challenges within the BoCo collaborative are the challenges of collective action and collective identity. One BoCo member recognized this challenge, *“So, where am I going to act? That’s the big question for collaboration, is the talk to action. What is going to move me to action?”* Monetary incentives or a hierarchical model often provide answers as to why individuals collectively act on behalf of their collaborative. But the iEmpathize and BoCo collaborative is different from a market-driven corporate collaborative; it is comprised of

volunteers with no monetary incentive. The time that BoCo members donate to the group is in addition to normal jobs and their life schedule; there is no monetary gain for members. Those that are a part of the group are sacrificing something of themselves to collectively participate on some level with BoCo. A BoCo member further explained, *“I think one of the biggest problems, particularly like this BoCo thing, they are always in addition to everyone’s normal job...So one of the biggest tensions we have, is how does that additional work get done...That I think is one of the fundamental questions about collaboration”*.

Interview transcripts revealed that there are challenges of individual and group identity within the iEmpathize and BoCo collaborative. iEmpathize and BoCo have a reciprocal relationship and need for each other. iEmpathize needs support and funding from the faith community, but BoCo needs the label, recognition, and professionalism of iEmpathize to conduct humanitarian work in México City. One BoCo member described a collaborative group challenge of identity, *“BoCo México is an extension of iEmpathize. Yes, there are some things that are going on that are non iEmpathize, the micro financing program, some stuff with the [church’s] youth group, but that’s not what gets talked about at the meetings. [The president of iEmpathize] is central to what is going on in the meetings and [the president of iEmpathize] is great about, you know, opening stuff up, but it’s just a reality that iEmpathize is central to what BoCo México is doing. Would it exist without iEmpathize? Probably, maybe, I don’t know, but in a very different manifestation. So when a [church’s] youth group goes down and no one from iEmpathize but the people in México think that they are iEmpathize, what does that mean for how iEmpathize gets represented, especially as they try to not be identified as a religious organization? So I think that’s a tension, tensions of identity, I guess you could call that”*.

During a summer trip, BoCo members and a high school youth group from one of the churches traveled to México City to generate funds for the safe home through fundraiser events and benefit concerts. While there, the iEmpathize and BoCo collaborative experienced challenges of group identity. The BoCo facilitator described, *“our youth pastor gets up there on stage and we are all wearing iE shirts, and they go [Mexican church attendees], yeah well when you go to congress don’t say that you’re with the church, but say that you are with iE because of the separation of church and state. And I thought that this is genius. I thought no longer is BoCo and iE one of our little projects, it was really evident that where we need to go is iE”*. The challenge of group identity within the iEmpathize and BoCo collaborative is especially evident in México because there is a strong separation of church and state within the country. The facilitator of BoCo described the first time that Orozco viewed “The México Experience” film, *“she looks at it and she goes this is so good because it is not religious”*. The facilitator of BoCo further described the vision of the iEmpathize and BoCo collaborative and how they navigate and think about the separation of church and state, *“it’s like something that anyone no matter where they are can engage in this issue and it’s not just a faith thing and being in congress. They’re pretty tight on the separation of church and state there because of the catholic church having been in control of the state before so they’re very sensitive about that”*. The iEmpathize and BoCo México collaborative struggled with creating, establishing, and maintaining identity among themselves and with their México partners. iEmpathize has many different collaborative members and needs to keep a strong separation of church and state in the country of México.

Technology of iEmpathize and BoCo Collaborative

Additional to BoCo members’ jobs are that different faith communities have different realities and different levels of participation with BoCo. Overarching questions are, how are

these individuals persuaded and called to move from talk to action; how does this get accomplished through the BoCo and iEmpathize collaborative; how is technology being utilized for this. One BoCo member referred to the BoCo website as a starting point for how different churches obtain information about the BoCo collaborative, *“the website helps to do that but you know collaboration with churches is different than collaboration with organizations because organizations usually collaborate if they have the same end goal and a church does so many different things”*. He stated that the website serves as, *“a central place to put information, anyone can go to it, but it’s not run by a church...so it’s a neutral ground, so in a sense it belongs to everybody”*.

The BoCo website was a common example mentioned by BoCo members and serves as a platform for others to learn information about the mission and purpose of the iEmpathize and BoCo collaborative. The website was found to be the only technology used by BoCo members. There were suggestions or recommendations for how technology could be used more. One BoCo member mentioned, *“I just have a hunch that they could use technology a little better to maintain and sustain the existence of BoCo, right now it exists in the informal connections, and there’s a website but that’s about it”*. He further stated, *“There is not a lot of electronic communication. There’s a meeting reminder every now and then, but again a lot of this is being done by just informal relationships, so maybe they don’t need to”*.

Interested to know more about the technological aspects of BoCo, interview questions prompted participants to describe an innovative and hypothetical technology that could be used for collaborative strategies. In response, BoCo members presented logical and group specific ideas. One BoCo member stated that the proposed collaborative technology *“would have to be region specific...I think a tool that could communicate to other churches that churches work*

together in an area, that that could be effective...But it's not going to happen if those guys aren't already spending time together and connecting. So, um, it's sad to say that the issue is not big enough to bring them all together. They have to have something more already to even consider working on the issue when it comes to churches. There is a reason that it just doesn't happen very much". When describing his hypothetical technology, the BoCo member centered his technology on the relational side of the collaborative and focused on themes of friendship and trust.

Another BoCo member stated his idea for a collaborative technology, *"for me, the valuable collaborative technology, is a technology that is going to help manage the diversity of opinions and ideas and to represent those ideas accurately and to move people towards making decisions that are collaborative decisions that somehow encapsulate multiple interests".* Both BoCo members designed their collaborative tool around relationships, communication, and trust rather than technology.

Summary

Analysis findings revealed that iEmpathize's main counter trafficking strategies are collaboration and media technology. Technology is used to manage collaboration within their own organization and used to communicate and collaborate with other organizations. Since iEmpathize does not have a central office, their main source for intra-organizational collaboration is through Basecamp, an online software program. To communicate and collaborate with other collaborators, iEmpathize uses VNEHT (Volunteers Network to End Human Trafficking), twitter, web design, media and film, photography, art, artifacts, emails, conference calls, and as one intern stated, *"iphoneing"*.

iEmpathize collaborates with many different entities. I would describe iEmpathize as an organization that implements the justice/equality approach, as mentioned by Carey (in press). iEmpathize has a balanced perspective to anti-trafficking initiatives and fuses different counter trafficking approaches to understand the rights and values most important to their collaborators. iEmpathize empowers local communities with their collaborative media tools, which allows their collaborators to gain agency and legitimacy within the international community. iEmpathize currently has collaborations in Northern Thailand, Cambodia, Russia, México, and the United States. Different entities within those collaborations include: counter trafficking organizations, international politicians and law enforcement, the United States Government, law enforcement (federal, state, and local), attorneys, universities, non-profit organizations, business corporations, professional artists, faith communities, everyday citizens, and victims of human trafficking. In the midst of iEmpathize's collaborations, key themes were discovered. Key themes of friendship and trust, challenges of participation, challenges of talk to action, and challenges of individual and group identity were found throughout iEmpathize's collaborations.

Collaboration And The Use of Technology Among Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts

Chapter 5: Discussion**Narrative**

Narratives are powerful. Presented in pervious chapters was the narrative of human trafficking and counter trafficking efforts that have taken place in the past ten years. Within that narrative, I focused on technology and collaboration. Chapters one and two discussed transmission type technologies that were used for trafficking and counter trafficking strategies, which focused on the sending and receiving of messages. In order to understand the intricacies of collaboration and technology use among counter human trafficking efforts I conducted a case study on iEmpathize. I found that iEmpathize has many different collaborations and uses many different technologies to conduct their work. However, technology was not the central motivation that generated collaboration or collective action; rather, it was the narrative of victimized children.

The complex task of combatting human trafficking requires collaboration from many different perspectives within society and culture. The president of iEmpathize explained how shaping culture through narrative is part of their strategy, *“We want culture to begin to empathize with them. We want legislators and law enforcement, business people, the public to begin to have an empathetic embrace of mankind...so somehow you have to bridge that gap and although we would like to think that we are very good at media and very good at telling stories, that has become a bridge”*. The narrative of victimized children was found to be the bridge that persuaded people from all facets of culture to collectively act for counter trafficking purposes. iEmpathize was able to recognize the influential power of narrative. Technology happened to be the medium through which the narrative was told. The president of iEmpathize further explained

how technology is a tool for the work that iEmpathize does. He described iEmpathize's media films, *"that's what most people see but it's just a tool for us to connect resources to needs"*. The president of iEmpathize concluded, *"If we found out that there is a better way to connect, then we would do that. But I happen to be an artist so that's natural for me"*. The president of iEmpathize understood his role in the narrative of counter human trafficking. His role as an artist was to tell the story of victimized children; and he chose to do so through the medium of media technology.

The president of iEmpathize described what influenced him and how he guides others that want to contribute. He stated, *"Martin Luther King is this reasonable and radical blend of the way he lived his life...he wasn't asking for anything radical. He was just saying, these are basic components and I'm asking for this reasonable thing to be done. Now, what made him radical is that he was willing to die for that...For me, I want to give people an opportunity to come in at a reasonable level"*. iEmpathize created the online collaborative tool My iEmpathize as a way for people to become a part of the narrative at their own reasonable level.

Many people have contributed to iEmpathize but they have had varying levels of participation. The president of iEmpathize talked about different levels of participation and what he has learned throughout his years of travel, collaboration, and advocacy. He concluded, *"I don't care exactly how people get into the pool of fighting injustice, I just want them to get into the pool...for iEmpathize to expect somebody who is so overwhelmed by the intensity of child trafficking to jump over that chasm of not understanding the issue, of not knowing what to do, it's not fair to them. And so, empathy is a process and so as long as I can inspire someone to even dip their toe in, I'm going to celebrate that...I celebrate the smallest gesture to make a*

difference in a kid's life, well, that's better than no gesture, and that one gesture could lead to a big gesture five years from now".

iEmpathize's narrative of victimized children produced shared meaning and a conducive environment for collective action. This is similar to Hardy, Lawrence, and Phillips (1998) theoretical model that examined the link between talk and action by stating that talk is transformed into collaborative action through the production of identity, skills, and emotion. iEmpathize's narrative fostered an environment for collective action because the stories of victimized children invoked emotion, presented opportunity for individuals to contribute their individualistic skills, and allowed individuals to associate their identity as part of the counter trafficking community.

Navigating Collaborative Challenges

The director of iEmpathize stated, "*empathy is a process*". The first part of the process is to tell the narrative that generates collective action and collective identity (Hardy, Lawrence, & Grant, 2005). The second part of the process is to recognize that individual and group contribution is a process. Several themes found in iEmpathize's case study demonstrated that collaboration is a process with dialectical tensions such as challenges of participation, talk to action, and individual and group identity. iEmpathize and BoCo were able to navigate through dialectical tensions through two strategies: referring back to the narrative and embracing collaborative tensions.

iEmpathize and BoCo consistently referred to the narrative of victimized children. According to Hardy, Lawrence, and Grant (2005), collective identity is a discursive object that refers individuals to some form of the collective and is produced by conversation, or in iEmpathize's case by narrative. Collective identity enables collaborative members to view

themselves, the problem, and the solution as part of a collaboration framework. In one BoCo meeting, the president of iEmpathize held an empty box of syphilis medicine and presented it to the group before the meeting started. He proceeded to tell the story of the 13-year-old girl that the medication belonged to. He set the box of syphilis in the middle of the table for everyone to see and then said that the meeting could begin. By referring to the narrative, he reminded all who attended the meeting of why they originally joined the collaborative and re-affirmed that the children are the CEOs of iEmpathize and they get first priority.

iEmpathize and BoCo embraced that collaborations have dialectical tensions. Koschmann and Isbell (2009) recognized this concept and found that tensions and inconsistencies in IOC are important components for organizational development. Embracing the dialectical tensions and challenges is important to recognize and understand because they are common among IOCs. iEmpathize and BoCo did this well. iEmpathize recognized that different volunteers and collaborators have different levels of participation and dedication. In collaboration, participation is a desired communication characteristic. Koschmann and Isbell discovered that participation is more likely to occur when members have opportunities to contribute to the collaborative. It was found that iEmpathize welcomed any level of participation and was thankful for the smallest contribution. BoCo embraced collaboration tensions by recognizing that different faith communities have different realities; and BoCo allowed different faith communities to participate at whatever level they were able to commit.

Friendship, Trust, and Personal Relationships

Relationships are stronger and more cohesive when collaborative members are more centrally aligned with the strategy, mission, and values of the partnership (Austin, 2000). Central to iEmpathize and BoCo were the personal relationships that collaborative members had

with one another. Observations and interview data revealed that friendship and trust were the foundation of the iEmpathize and BoCo collaborative. Personal connections and relationships were the maintaining aspect of the group that allowed group members to embrace ideas, generate cohesive values, and share meaning. The friendships among iEmpathize staff and BoCo members generated an environment of openness and passion to interact with one another, which fostered a stronger collaboration among collaborative members.

Summary

Data and analysis findings were unexpected. I was originally interested in how technologies were directly involved to fight the crime of human trafficking based upon the literature from chapters one and two. However, my observation and interview data resulted in a different perspective. Central to counter trafficking strategies were the relationships, communication, narratives, and characters involved in the counter trafficking community rather than the technology.

Flanagin, Stohl, and Bimber (2005) stated, “collective actions revolve around the internet”. Fundamental components of collective action are how people interact with one another and the opportunities for engagement afforded to them in collectivities (Flanagin, Stohl, & Bimber, 2006). The collective action space was founded upon these components but the conceptual model lacks a metric for the relational quality of collaborations. Through my research, I found that effective IOCs revolve around the relationships of participant members (Austin, 2000) and are maintained through discourse, conversation, and narrative (Hardy, Lawrence, & Phillips, 1998), rather than technology. Narrative was the form of communication that generated collective action and collective identity among multiple collaborators (Hardy, Lawrence, & Grant, 2005).

Recommendations for the iEmpathize and BoCo Collaborative

Based from my findings on iEmpathize, technology is not the central strategy for counter trafficking efforts, but technology can be developed to make counter trafficking efforts more effective. The following recommendations propose ideas for the iEmpathize and BoCo collaborative. Recommendations are based on collected literature, interviews, and observations and aim to show how technology can be utilized for collaboration and counter trafficking efforts.

The iEmpathize and BoCo collaborative have challenges of different levels of participation and have limited technology strategies to collaborate with multiple members. Since narrative is central to generating collective action and collective identity, the iEmpathize and BoCo group should capture the narrative and vision of BoCo México through film and media technology. A simple narrative of three to five minutes would help the collaborative to obtain more members, solidify a group identity, and generate opportunities for a deeper level of participation among members. The narrative would be most effective on the BoCo México website or presented in person at different Boulder County faith communities.

Similar to platforms like Ushahidi, Freedom Geomap, and SlaveryMap, the BoCo México collaborative should create a collaborative online space that is region specific to Boulder County. The collaborative technology tool should afford members opportunities to contribute to the online space such as: posting ideas, opinions, recommendations, pictures, and videos. This idea is based off of a BoCo member's comment. He stated that an idealized collaborative technology *"would have to be region specific...I think a tool that could communicate to other churches that churches work together in an area, that could be effective"*. The online collaborative space would not be the source of collaboration but rather it would compliment the personal relationships and connections already present. Since the BoCo México collaborative is

dependent upon a few key members that have the relational ethos, this collaborative tool could be beneficial for BoCo members that are not as relationally central or that would like more opportunities to contribute to the collaborative.

This type of online collaborative space would be a subsection on the existing BoCo México website. An informative and compelling narrative along with a collaborative tool that allows members to contribute to the collective will strengthen the collaborative in several ways. First, the BoCo México narrative will compel others to join. Second, the online collaborative space will allow others to contribute at different levels of participation. Lastly, a neutral website with a different members' posts, pictures, and informative information, along with a descriptive group narrative of BoCo México, will give legitimacy to the group and will serve as a template for inter-organizational collaboration within faith communities.

Contributions

This research study will contribute to existing literature because limited research has been conducted on the people, organizations, collaborations, and technological strategies within the counter trafficking community. Findings from my research will benefit academics interested to explore technology and collaborations, specifically with a focus on social movements and social change. Technology is not the source or means of collaboration or collective action but rather technology is a tool that provides an avenue to convey narrative, share meaning, and afford opportunities for engagement.

Findings from this research are significant for practitioners in many different fields: counter trafficking efforts, international development, non-profit organizations, and faith communities. This study revealed that friendship, trust, and personal relationships are the foundation for inter-organizational collaboration. Practitioners in the field that want to generate

collective action should find a way to convey an over arching narrative that represents their values and the central focus of their cause. A consistent reference to the overarching narrative and the recognition that collaborations have dialectical tensions provide an environment that is conducive for collective action, collective identity, and effective collaboration.

Limitations

There were limitations to my study. I collected data from a small sample size. I observed counter trafficking efforts from one organization and only conducted seven interviews. For future research, it would be beneficial to interview different collaborative members such as law enforcement personnel, other counter trafficking organizations, and iEmpathize's international partners.

There is potential that I was bias in my observations, interview questions, and data analysis because I am a BoCo member. As a researcher I struggled with the personal dialectical tension of identity. At BoCo meetings, I had to choose which identity I was to perform, whether that was a researcher or a BoCo member. If I were not a BoCo member, I might have discovered different findings. As a BoCo member, I was able to observe a more intimate side of iEmpathize and the BoCo collaborative.

Future Research

I would like to explore different counter trafficking organizations that exist on the web and assess how counter trafficking organizations are networked through online technologies. With web crawler software, I would be able to determine what organizations are networked via the web and what organizations need further web presence to convey their story, mission, and values. Data would be collected from anti-trafficking organizations' online information through

the use of web crawler software and would analyze counter trafficking entities' web presence and collaborations via internet technology.

Concluding Thoughts

During my field observations in México City, I had the opportunity to meet some of the highest of highs in México – Mexican congressmen and congresswomen. I also met some of the lowest of lows in México – child victims of human sex trafficking. Through my research, I discovered that both the Mexican congress members and the children are part of the narrative. As a person and specifically as a researcher, I had to discover what my role and character was within the story. After meeting people from all walks of life that have different levels of participation in counter trafficking efforts, I can confidently state that all play a role in the narrative of counter trafficking efforts. My goal with this thesis was to contribute to the overarching narrative of counter trafficking efforts and to provide a resource and literature piece that will help academics, practitioners, and every days citizens to recognize the magnitude of the global issue of human trafficking. I want to reveal to others that all are part of the story and can be a part of a solution to help victimized people around the world. Because, *“We are better together than we are apart. We are stronger together than we are apart”* (the president of iEmpathize).

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Appendix

I. IRB Approval Letter

II. IRB Amendment Approval Letter

III. Interview Schedule



University of Colorado
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Institutional Review Board
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01-Mar-2011

Initial Approval - Expedited

Strobel, Rachel

Protocol #: 10-0406

Title: Collaboration Among Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts

Dear Rachel Strobel,

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved this protocol in accordance with Federal Regulations at 45 CFR 46. You must use the IRB approved informed consent form when obtaining consent from subjects participating in this protocol. The IRB approved consent form is available in the attachments folder of your protocol in eRA.

Initial Approval Date: 01-Mar-2011

Expiration Date: 29-Feb-2012

Documents Approved: Letter of Agreement; Revision Letter; Protocol; Interview Questions; Reference List; Consent Form; Initial Application - eForm v2;

Number of subjects approved: 15

Review Cycle: 12 months

Expedited Category: 7

Regulations require that this protocol be renewed prior to the above expiration date. The IRB will provide a reminder prior to the expiration date, but it is your responsibility to ensure that the continuing review form is received in sufficient time to be reviewed prior to the expiration date.

Changes to your protocol must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to their implementation. This includes changes to the consent form, principal investigator, protocol, etc.

All events that meet reporting criteria must be submitted within 10 business days from notification of the event. Any study-related death must be reported immediately (within 24 hours) upon learning of the death.

The IRB has approved this protocol in accordance with federal regulations, university policies and ethical standards for the protection of human subjects. In accordance with federal regulation at 45 CFR 46.112, research that has been approved by the IRB may be subject to further appropriate review and approval or disapproval by officials of the institution. The investigator is responsible for knowing and complying with all applicable research regulations and policies including, but not limited to, Environmental Health and Safety, Scientific Advisory and Review Committee, Clinical and Translational Research Center, and Wardenburg Health Center and Pharmacy policies. Approval by the IRB does not imply approval by any other entity.

Please contact the IRB office at 303-735-3702 if you have any questions about this letter or about IRB procedures.

Douglas Grafel
IRB Admin Review Coordinator
Institutional Review Board



University of Colorado
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16-Mar-2011

Amendment Approval - Expedited

Strobel, Rachel

Protocol #: 10-0406

Title: Collaboration Among Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts

Dear Rachel Strobel,

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved the amendment described below in accordance with Federal Regulations at 45 CFR 46. You must use the IRB approved informed consent form when obtaining consent from subjects participating in this protocol.

Approval Date: 16-Mar-2011

Expiration Date: 29-Feb-2012

Number of Subjects: 15

Associated Documents: * Updated Protocol; Consent Form; Amendment - eForm;

Description of Amendment:

* Approved documents can be found by logging into the eRA system, opening this protocol, and navigating to the "Versions" folder.

This approval DOES NOT change the expiration date of your protocol.

The IRB has approved this amendment in accordance with federal regulations, university policies and ethical standards for the protection of human subjects. In accordance with federal regulation at 45 CFR 46.112, research that has been approved by the IRB may be subject to further appropriate review and approval or disapproval by officials of the institution. The investigator is responsible for knowing and complying with all applicable research regulations and policies including, but not limited to, Environmental Health and Safety, Scientific Advisory Committee, Clinical and Translational Research Center, and Wardenburg Health Center and Pharmacy policies. Approval by the IRB does not imply approval by any other entity.

Please contact the IRB office at 303-735-3702 if you have any questions about this approval or about IRB procedures.

Douglas Grafel

IRB Admin Review Coordinator

Institutional Review Board

Interview Schedule

1. Can you describe the central mission of iEmpathize and the main strategies iEmpathize uses to achieve this mission?
2. Do you work with law enforcement in your counter trafficking efforts? If so, can you describe the relationship between you and law enforcement? What is needed or given in that relationship?
3. As there are so many organizations working to combat human trafficking, how do organizations such as your work together?
Is there a specific example of a collaboration that has worked to your benefit and can you describe it? Has there been a time when you've tried to collaborate, but it was unsuccessful? What were the circumstances?
4. How important is technology for your collaborations with other counter-trafficking organizations? What does this look like? For example, is the technology used for information sharing, maintaining collaborative efforts, or specific combatant strategies?
5. Knowing that inter-organizational collaboration is often challenging, how is collaboration encouraged and maintained within your organization? Do you use any inter-organizational technologies to collaborate, such as an intranet or a common database? Do you come across tensions or challenges? If so, what kind? Can you give an example or instance of a type of tension that occurs within your collaborative relationships?
6. What are the most important aspects of successfully working with other counter trafficking entities? Is this being accomplished within your efforts?
7. Lastly, if you could design a collaborative tool or database or website to encourage collaboration with other anti-trafficking organizations, what kind of features would it have? Feel free to be as creative as you'd like.