



Mapping the Contours of Modern Slavery, two years on

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Mapping the Contours of Modern Slavery, two years on

Rose Broad and David Gadd

Small Grant project

'Mapping the contours of modern slavery' project was initially a collaboration between the University of Manchester, Greater Manchester Police (GMP) and University of Leeds. The main aim of the collaboration was to map the contours of modern slavery as they appeared in 2015 data recorded for the Greater Manchester area by GMP and the Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) – formerly the United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC). Conducted over 12 months in 2016/17, the research mapped the victims, suspects and geographical distribution of the cases known to GMP in 2015. It found that the victim population at the time was two thirds female and one third male and almost a quarter of victims were children; many more were young adults. Suspects were predominantly adults: one third was male, two thirds female. Suspects were on average ten years older than victims, but there was considerable variation by type of modern slavery. The geographical distribution correlated broadly with areas scoring more highly on Indices of Multiple Deprivation. The analysis revealed a concentration of modern slavery – particularly sexual exploitation – in the City Centre as well as two other northern towns. The research found that facilitating travel for exploitation represented a substantial part of the intelligence picture.

The research concluded that efforts to tackle the more organised aspects of modern slavery should address the interface with British offenders as these

may facilitate longevity in a market that is shaped by rapidly shifting patterns of migration and border control. Care needs to be taken to ensure that knowledge of the breakdown of the international business of modern slavery is not obscured in favour of coding by exploitation type.

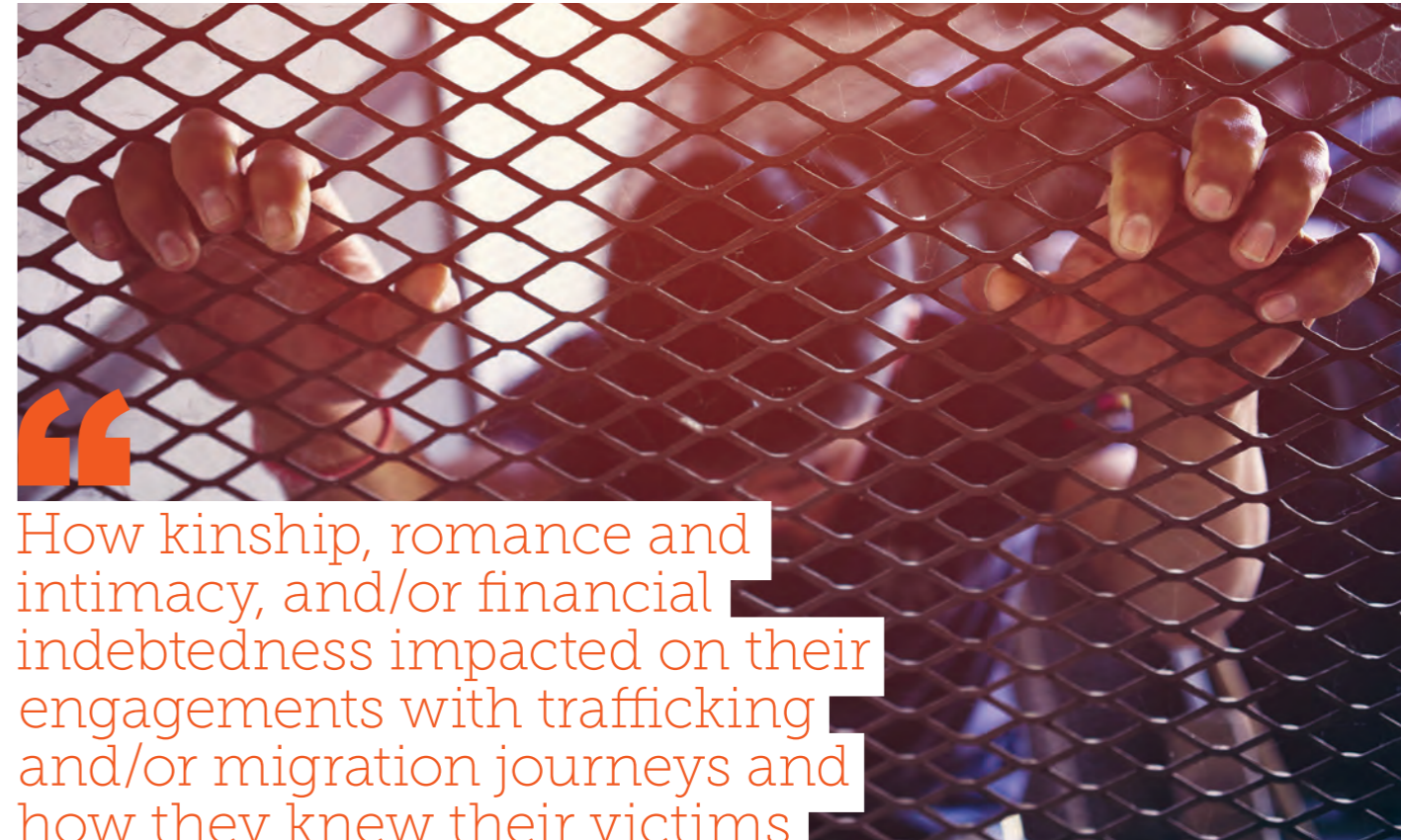
The research identified considerable knowledge gaps and data issues and concluded that more information needs to be retained about the role suspects play in modern slavery, whether in terms of facilitating travel, direct exploitation, or the perpetration of violence and sexual violence. The generational gap between exploiters and exploited, often of the same nationality, together with the gendered patterning of exploitation, evidence the need to address the ways in which modern slavery is organised through communities and in response to economic circumstances as much as via organised crime networks.

New Project

In 2018, in part as a follow-on to the initial research, we were successful in being awarded grant funding from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) for a new project entitled 'Perpetrators of Modern Slavery Offences: Motivations, Networks and Backgrounds'. It is the first in the UK to study three sources of data about this group: National Referral Mechanism (NRM) outcomes; police crime and intelligence records; and primary research interviews – conducted in this project – with those convicted under modern slavery legislation within the UK.

Using a mixed methods approach the research seeks to expose the connections, tensions and interdependencies among victims, perpetrators, those involved in allied business activity (whether licit or illicit) and regulatory, law enforcement and border control agents. The research will seek to demonstrate, from official and offender vantage points, how perpetrators organise and carry out their activities. The project aims to draw on offenders' own accounts of their role in the crimes for which they were convicted and will look at how they justified this to themselves, what specifically was said to those they trafficked, to what extent they understood the laws they were breaking and any attempts they have made to leave the businesses of modern slavery behind.

The project will also develop an understanding of how offenders become involved in modern slavery. It will examine the relationships perpetrators have with those who worked alongside, beneath and above them in such activities, including how kinship, romance and intimacy, and/or financial indebtedness impacted on their engagements with trafficking and/or migration journeys and how they knew their victims. Additionally it will generate a better understanding emerging models of modern slavery from which practice and policy interventions can be derived.



How kinship, romance and intimacy, and/or financial indebtedness impacted on their engagements with trafficking and/or migration journeys and how they knew their victims

Reflections on the Impact of the Small Grant project

The N8 PRP award allowed the development of the quantitative element of the proposal which has since been funded by the ESRC. The work that we were able to do as a result of the N8 PRP funding enabled the research team to explore the data, pilot the methods, develop the access arrangements and further build on existing relationships with colleagues in Programme Challenger in GMP. This was led by Professor David Gadd along with input from colleagues who are conducting some specialist parts of the quantitative analysis; Dr Elisa Bellotti at the University of Manchester and Dr Carly Lightowlers at the University of Liverpool.

The N8 PRP funding also allowed us to work with a police analyst from GMP's Programme Challenger team. This partnership allowed us closer contact with the wider Programme Challenger team and helped to develop a better understanding of how the work might have operational impact. The research to practice element of the research is very important and something that we wanted to highlight in the ESRC project – the N8 PRP project assisted with the development of the research to practice in terms of thinking about policing and multi-agency approaching. Without knowing about the decision making process of the ESRC, it is reasonable to assume that the progress that we had made, familiarity with the data and evidence that the research was

feasible and achievable, helped towards the positive decision from the ESRC. The N8 PRP project also helped us to build on existing relationships with the Home Office Modern Slavery Research Unit who were interested in the N8 PRP research and who have subsequently supported us with the ESRC application and are on the Steering Group for the project.

David Gadd is a Professor of Criminology and Dr Rose Broad is a lecturer in Criminology at the University of Manchester.