



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
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Trawsnewid Addysg, Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education, Transforming Lives

ECSO4004

Hard to Reach Groups

Cults, Slavery and Human Trafficking



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Session Aims:

- Analyse the concept of Cults, and how the group is hard to reach





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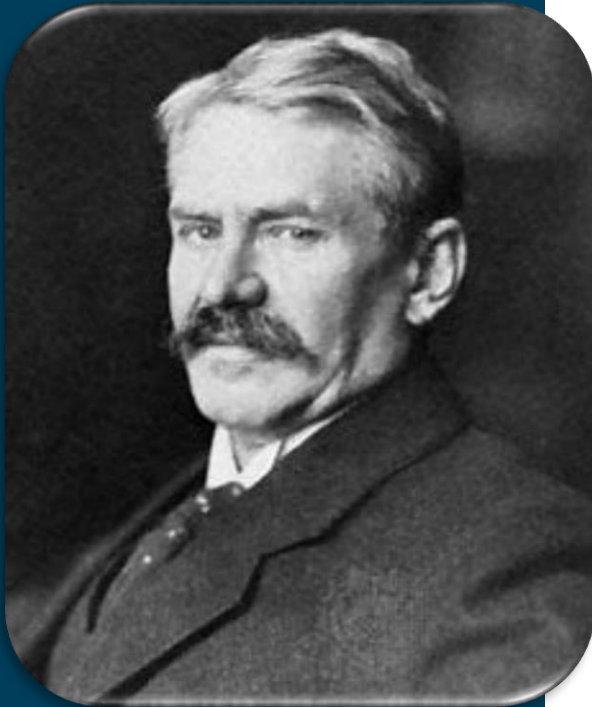
Cults, Sects and Religion

Cults: History, Beliefs, Practices

- There is no universally agreed definition of the word 'cult'
- It is only rarely used as a self-description and does not refer to any particular belief system.
- Since the 1920's, the word 'cult' has most commonly been used to designate a minority religious group whose beliefs and practices an outside observer might deem dangerous or strange
- Historically, 'cult' was first recorded in English as reverence or homage to a deity or saint,
 - for example: the 'cult of Mary' in the Roman Catholic Church.

Cults: History, Beliefs, Practices

- From the nineteenth century, the word 'cult' began to be associated with any religion 'other' than Christianity.
- Specifically, it was used to describe the diverse beliefs of tribal people worldwide, as well as the druid revival in eighteenth century Britain.
- In the 1890's, it was used to refer to the Theosophical Movement and the Church of Christian Science, amongst other groups.
- Overlapping with the original theological use of the word, in contemporary parlance cults are typically believed to have a charismatic leader who may be 'worshipped'.
- Also originating from this usage, a 'cult' can refer to a group of people with an interest in celebrity or non-mainstream band, game, book or film



Cults: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Sociological theory on 'cults' began with the work of Ernst Troeltsch (1931) who observed a growing tendency in German religiosity that emphasised a kind of 'radical religious individualism' of personal experience while avoiding affiliation with traditional religious institutions
- Expanding his theories, sociologists have debated various definitions of cult without any firm consensus on the meaning of the term.
- In sociological literature, 'cult' is typically used as a technical term which must be specifically defined by the author at the onset of the work.



Cults: History, Beliefs, Practices

- The Family Survival Trust (2019) is a registered charity whose mission is to prevent and to provide information on coercive control, cultic behaviour and psychological manipulation, supporting those affected by groups that use these techniques.
- They suggest that cults recruit members by various forms of enticement or deception, although religious cults are common, they can also take the form of:
 - Therapeutic
 - Political
 - Commercial
 - Educational
 - Self help
 - Pseudoscientific
 - And various spiritual groups.



Cults: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Cults can be damaging, characterised by the 'vindictive abusiveness' and their 'dissociative totalitarianism'
- Cults often demand subservience and total adoption of their ideas from members, to the exclusion of free thinking
- Members are usually exploited both financially and as a labour force
- At the same time, to gain acceptance from the wider society, cults lobby politicians and the public, using the same ideas of freedom of expression which they deny their members.

Cults: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Characteristics of Cults described by The Family Survival Trust (2019) include:
 1. Cults are socially and psychologically isolating, separating members from families, friends and colleagues
 2. Cults create a cognitive dissociating and traumatic dependency in followers
 3. Cults tend to psychologically manipulative or abusive in order to exploit and control members commercially or sexually.
 4. Some cults can also be physically abusive
 5. The guru and/or upper ranks of the cult are supported in a relatively comfortable lifestyle by the exploitation of lower ranking members
 6. Cults are totalitarian in structure and thrive on master-slave dependency



Cults: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Research by Barker (2010) has revealed a ‘hidden epidemic’ of abusive cults within the UK, suggesting that there could be as many as 2000 groups operative freely.
- Thousands of British adults and children are being deceived into joining UK cult groups, of which Barker (2010) criticised the UK government for failing to address it.
- Barker (2010) further states that ministers have not acted because of fears that they cannot legally distinguish between religion and semi-cultural cults

Cults: History, Beliefs, Practices

- In a survey of 105 victims of 36 different cult groups, Baker (2010) found that:
 - 62% of people worked long hours for the cult for little or no payment
 - 47% said that their groups violated employment laws
 - 52% were born or raised in high-control groups, whilst the remaining 48% were recruited as adults
- The 26 groups ranged from those based on religion and politics, to those pertaining to wellness and personal growth.
 - 91% said that they were part of religious or spiritual groups
 - 14% of personal growth groups
 - 11% part of politics groups
- Membership of the cults ranged from three people to large groups of international members totalling millions

(Barker, 2010)

Cults: History, Beliefs, Practices

- 55% said they had to justify the time not spent on the group to their leaders
- 35% said that they were expected to submit timesheets
- One participant said:
‘We were told that all time not spend on cult activity was us ‘stealing’ time from the cause and that we would be punished for it’
- Another said:
‘We were not allowed to use the internet for anything apart from our jobs, with the exception of viewing their own website and online videos’
- The Majority of respondents said their cult leaders controlled what they looked at and what they could wear

(Barker, 2010)

Cults: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Sexual abuse was also commonly reported among ex-members.
 - 21% said that they had sexual contact with their group leaders
- A participant said:

‘The leader had many relationships with women in the group. He said it was our duty to please him. He made us do sexual acts that I didn’t consent to because I couldn’t say no’

 - 43% said that they had witnessed the physical punishment of children within their group
 - 31% experiencing assault or violence
 - Nine participants said that they had witnessed human trafficking

Cults: UK Legislation

- It is currently not illegal within the UK to establish or become a member of a cult.
- Many cults use current laws to defend their organisations.
- In the UK the *Human Rights Act* (1998), combined with Article Nine of the European Convention on Human Rights, guarantees religious freedom of choice.
- Section 76 of the *Serious Crime Act* (2015) outlaw coercive behaviour, however, does relate principally to family relationships and has been proven to be problematic to apply to a cult dynamic

Cults: European Legislation

- In Europe, there is more specific legislation in France, Belgium and Luxembourg that prohibits individuals engaging in activities designed to physically or psychologically control someone, but these laws are largely the exception to the rule.

Cults as a 'hard to reach' group

- The evidence provided by research suggests that people who belong to cults are often isolated from society, which can mean that it is very difficult to include them within society
- They may face barriers within
 - Healthcare
 - Education
 - Socialisation/behaviours
- And are often oppressed by the 'leaders' of the groups.
- Some cults have resulted in mass suicide or mass killings due to the 'brainwashing' culture

Sects

- Wilson (2016) Describes a 'sect' as:

Small, exclusive bodies which impose membership tests on entrants and require some degree of behavioural deviance and social separation. Lay led, they usually recruit from a narrow section of society. Initially rejections of liberal tendencies in Christianity, they are now often rejections of modern secular culture.

Sects

- Wilson (2016) considers:
 - Mormons
 - Seventh Day Adventists
 - Christian Science
- To be groups that fit into the 'sect' category
- Wilson (2016) also makes the important point that not all sects are the same, he delineates the differences between conversationalist, evolutionist, introversionist, and manipulationist types.

Cults as a 'hard to reach' group

- The following slide contains a video made by Claire Ashman.
- Claire was born, raised and birthed 9 children in a cult. She shares how the prevalence of cults and cult-like thinking impacts everyday people.
- Support is available via student services [Student Support & Wellbeing | University of Wales Trinity Saint David \(uwtsd.ac.uk\)](https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/student-support-and-wellbeing)





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Slavery

Slavery: History, Beliefs, Practices

- In one form or another, slavery has existed throughout the world for millennia.
- It helped to change the world, and the world transformed the institution.
- In the 1450's, when Europeans from the small corner of the globe least enmeshed in the institution first interacted with peoples of other continents, they created in the America's, the most dynamic, productive, and exploitative system of coerced labour in human history (Drescher, 2011)

Slavery: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Slavery, described by Drescher (2011) is a condition in which one human being was owned by another.
- A slave was considered by **law** as property and was deprived of most of the rights ordinarily held by free persons.
- There is no consensus on what a slave was or how the institution of slavery should be defined.
- Nevertheless, there is a general agreement among historians, anthropologists, economists, sociologists and others who study slavery that most of the following characteristics should be present in order to term a person a slave:

- The slave was a species of property; thus, he belonged to someone else.
- In some societies slaves were considered movable property
- In others, immovable property (like real estate)
- They were objects of law, not its subjects.
- Thus, like an ox or an axe, the slave was not ordinarily held responsible for what he did.
- He was not personally liable for tortes or contracts
- The slave usually had few rights and always fewer than his owner; but there were many societies in which he had absolutely none.
- As there are limits in most societies on the extent to which animals may be abused, so there were limits in most societies on how much a slave could be abused.
- The slave was removed from lines of natal descent.
- Legally, and often socially, he had no kin.
- No relatives could stand up for his rights or get vengeance for him

- As an ‘outsider’ or ‘marginal individual’ or ‘socially dead person’ in society where he was enslaved, his rights to participate in political decision making and other social activities were fewer than those enjoyed by his owner
- The product of a slave's labour could be claimed by someone else, who also frequently had the right to control his physical reproduction
- Slavery was a form of dependent labour performed by a nonfamily member
- The slave was deprived of personal liberty and the right to move about geographically as he desired
- There were likely to be limits on his capacity to make choices with regards to his occupation and sexual partners.
- Slavery was usually, but not always, involuntary.

Slavery: History, Beliefs, Practices

- If not all of these characterisations in their most restrictive form applied to a slave, the slave regime in that place is likely to be characterised as mild,
- If almost all of them, then it ordinarily would be characterised as severe.
- Slaves were generated in many ways, the most frequent was capture in war, either by design, as a form of incentive to warriors, or as an accidental byproduct.
- Others were kidnapped on slave-raiding or piracy expeditions.
- Many slaves were offspring of slaves.
- Some people were enslaved as a punishment for crime or debt, others were sold into slavery by their parents, other relatives or even spouses, either to satisfy a debt or to escape starvation

Slavery: History, Beliefs, Practices

- A variant on the selling of children was the exposure, either real or fictitious, of unwanted children, who were then rescued by others and made slaves.
- Another source of slavery was self-made, undertaken sometimes to obtain an elite position, sometimes to escape destitution.
- Slavery existed in a large number of past societies whose general characteristics are well known.
- It was rare among primitive peoples, such as the hunter-gatherer societies, because for slavery to flourish, social differentiation or stratification was essential
- Also essential was an economic surplus, for slaves were often consumption goods who themselves had to be maintained rather than productive assets who generated income for their owner.
- Surplus was also essential in slave systems where the owners expected economic gain from slave ownership

Slavery: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Modern slavery still exists in various forms in the UK, including:
 - Trafficking into criminal activities
 - Sexual exploitation
 - Domestic slavery
 - Forced labour
 - Working in exploitative situations such as cannabis farms, building sites, and sex work.
- Modern slavery is a serious crime across the UK, in which victims are exploited for someone else's gain.
- Victims are often hidden away, may be unable to leave their situation, or may not come forward because of fear or shame.

Slavery: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Modern day slavery is an umbrella term for all kinds of slavery, human trafficking and exploitation.
- The home secretary stated within the 2021 UK Annual Report on Modern slavery:

‘Slavery has not gone away... it is horrendous to contemplate the face that this despicable crime endures. Eradicating modern slavery is a moral imperative and a continued priority for the UK Government’

Slavery: UK Legislation

- The UK Government takes a 'Zero Tolerance' approach to modern slavery and human trafficking.
- Modern day slavery is defined within the *Modern Day Slavery Act* (2015) as a term used to encompass slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour, bonded and child labour and human trafficking
- Where a person arranges, or facilitates, the travel of another person with a view to that person being exploited.

Slavery: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Modern day slavery is a major topic of concern in international law and global governance, in civil society, and in academic debates
- Slavery has been legally banned worldwide, with Mende (2019) stating that the 'death of slavery' was proclaimed in the 1990's
- However, slavery appears in almost every country on every continent in both new and old forms today

(Mende, 2019)

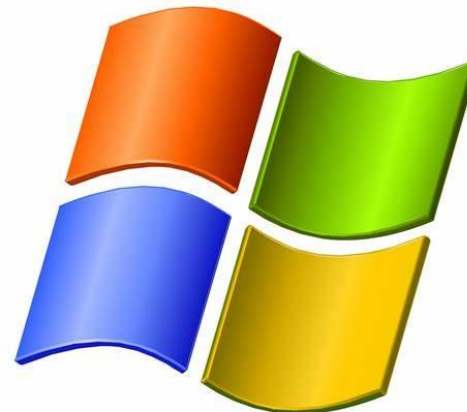
Slavery: History, Beliefs, Practices

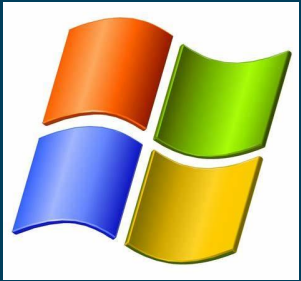
The exhausted list by Mende (2019) claims that Modern slavery can be found in all aspects of our lives:

- Trafficking
- Debt bondage
- Chattel slavery
- Contract slavery
- Enforced prostitution
- War slavery
- Restavecs (Children given into domestic service)
- Child labour
- Forced marriage
- Forced or compulsory labour
- Work in sweatshops
- Mining
- Brick lanes
- Cult and ritual slavery in religious shrines
- The selling of organs
- Domestic slavery in private households

Slavery: History, Beliefs, Practices

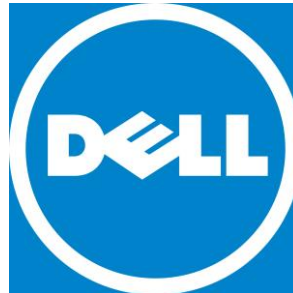
- Sweatshops are one example of modern-day slavery, and unfortunately, we are consumers of it.
- What mobile phone do you have?





Slavery: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Apple, Google and Microsoft (Including Dell and Tesla) have all been sued by international rights Advocates for using child labour in the Congo.
- Children were used to mine cobalt in dangerous conditions
- This is the component used to make lithium-ion batteries which are used in rechargeable electronic gadgets



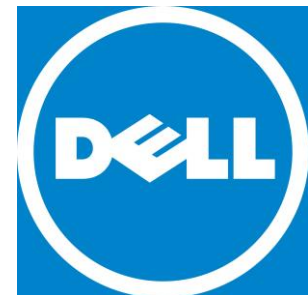
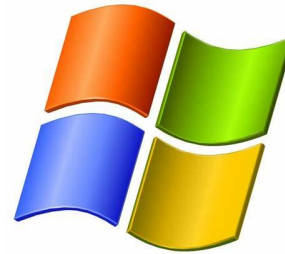
Slavery: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Now let's think about the brands you are wearing:
- **Nike** – Linked to forced child labour in dangerous conditions as recent as 2020
- **Adidas** – Same as Nike, however, have released a 5-year plan to address some of the issues
- **H&M** – Utilises sweatshops and child labour with poor workforce conditions
- **Gap** – in 2004 GAP admitted the factories they used had unsafe machinery and violated child labour laws, in 2018, factory workers were still being abused.
- **Shein** – a Chinese fashion brand where reports suggests workers do 75-hour work weeks, the staff get paid per item of clothing, not per hour



Slavery: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Is anyone in this room not a consumer of Modern Day slavery?





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Human Trafficking

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of people through force, fraud, coercion or deception, with the aim of exploiting them for profit.
- People who are trafficked are often groomed and forced into sexual exploitation,
- Tricked into accepting risky job offers and trapped in forced labour in building sites, farms or factories.
- You do not have to be transported across borders for trafficking to take place. Trafficking is defined by the movement of a person, and this can happen within a single country or even within a single community.

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Human Trafficking in Numbers:
 - 50% of trafficking victims were trafficked into sexual exploitation and 38% for forced labour.
 - 67% of people trafficked for sexual exploitation are women.
 - 67% of people investigated or arrested for trafficking in persons are men, and 33% women.

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Human Trafficking is international organised crime, with the exploitation of human beings for profit at its heart.
- It is abuse of basic rights, with organised criminals preying on vulnerable people to make money.
- In most cases, victims are brought to the UK from abroad, but we know that trafficking also occurs within the UK and that children in particular are increasingly vulnerable to falling victim to exploitation.

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (The Palermo Protocol) describes trafficking as:

‘the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs’

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices



- Historically, most adult victims identified were women trafficked for sexual exploitation.
- However, recent trends suggests that trafficking for labour exploitation could become more prevalent than other forms of trafficking.
- Child trafficking victims are brought to the UK for many purposes, including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, benefit fraud, cannabis farming, street begging, theft and shop lifting.

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- The greatest numbers of adult victims come to the UK from China, South East Asia, and Eastern Europe
- Child victims are trafficked in the greatest numbers from Vietnam, Nigeria, China, and Eastern Europe.
- However, it is a truly international crime, with potential victims from over 80 different countries referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) since its inception and 47 different countries identified as sources of child trafficking to the UK by CEOP

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- The hidden nature of trafficking makes it difficult to gain an accurate picture of its true scale and nature.
- Recent evidence has started to build a clearer picture of the numbers of victims in the UK.
- Project Acumen, A study by the Chief Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) estimates that there are at least 2,600 female adult victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in England and Wales.
- Reports from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre suggest that there are on average around 300 child trafficking victims in the UK per annum with 322 potential child victims referred to the NRM between 1 April 2009 and 31 December 2010.

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- In contrast the UK's human trafficking victim identification and support framework, the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), recorded 1,254 potential victims of trafficking in the UK referred from 1 April 2009 to 31 December 2010

Exploitation Type	Number of referrals	
	Child	Adult
Sexual Exploitation	99	438
Labour Exploitation	98	267
Domestic Servitude	44	175
Unspecified Exploitation	81	52
Totals	322	932
No of Prosecutions - 2010/11	116*	

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Victims may travel to the UK willingly, in the belief that they are destined for a better life, including aid work and may start their journey believing they are economic migrants, either legally or illegally.
- They may also believe that the people arranging their passage and papers are merely facilitators, helping with their journey, rather than people who aim to exploit them.
- In other cases, victims may start their journey independently and come to rely on facilitators along different stages of their journey to arrange papers and transportation.

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- The UN Human Rights Office addresses the issue of trafficking through the lens of the human rights-based approach.
- This approach stems from international human rights conventions and other international legal frameworks on trafficking
- It is conceptualised in the recommended principles and guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking.

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Since 2000, OHCHR has been successful in promoting this approach. The efforts made are focussed on three main areas:
 - Capacity Development
 - Research and Knowledge production
 - Partnerships
- We will now explore each of these in turn.

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Capacity Development
 - The OHCHR build the capacity of Member States to ensure that their laws, policies and administrative regulations comply with international human rights standards in human trafficking.
 - Over the past decade, the office has assisted countries in Central Europe, the Middle East and North Africa to achieve positive steps in integrating human rights in their responses to trafficking.
 - The OHCHR also raise awareness

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Research and Knowledge Production
 - Even though a solid legal and policy framework to combat trafficking in persons is in place at the international level, there are still many grey zones with regards to trafficking and the most efficient means to eliminate it.
 - The UN Human Rights Office is committed to contribute to further research and knowledge production on emerging and under-researched issues.

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

(OHCHR, nd)

- Research and Knowledge Production
- **Guidelines on human rights and trafficking for the purpose of organ removal.** The [GA resolution A/71/L.80](#) mandates OHCHR, in collaboration with WHO and UNODC, to develop international guidelines on the health, criminal and human rights aspects relating to trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal and trafficking in human organs. In this regard, OHCHR has undertaken research that aims at adapting the Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking to the specificities of TPOR. The research draws on the work undertaken in 2013 by the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children.
- **Compendium of definitions and concepts related to human trafficking and contemporary forms of slavery**, which looks at linkages and overlaps between trafficking and modern day slavery and other forms of exploitation.
- **ICAT Issue briefs.** As part of ICAT, OHCHR has led the development of several ICAT issue briefs including [What is the Difference between Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants?](#) and [Providing Effective Remedies for Victims of Trafficking in Persons \(2016\)](#).

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Partnerships
 - Human Trafficking is a complex issue that required a multidisciplinary approach to stop it.
 - For this reason, the UN Human Rights Office is strongly committed to engaging with UN inter-agency processes and strengthening cooperation with various actors
 - At the global level, the Office is an active member of the [Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons](#) (ICAT), which is a policy forum mandated by the UN General Assembly to improve coordination among UN agencies to facilitate a comprehensive approach to preventing and combating trafficking in persons.

Human Trafficking: History, Beliefs, Practices

- Partnerships
 - In this context, the Office contributes to the inclusion of a human rights-based approach in the joint policy papers, issue briefs and briefings to Member States, which are developed by the ICAT.
 - The UN Human Rights Office was chair of ICAT in 2017. In that role, the Office led the drafting of the [group's submission](#) to the Appraisal of the [Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons](#) and the drafting of the Political Declaration, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2017. As chair of ICAT, the Office also actively contributed to the organization of the preparatory multi-stakeholders hearing held in New York, in June 2017.

Human Trafficking: UK Legislation

- The Modern Slavery Act (2015) consolidates previous legislation criminalising offences of slavery and trafficking for all forms of exploitation.
- It came into force on 31 July 2015, however, does not apply to offences committed before then.
- The offences arising under the Act are:
 - [Section 1 – Slavery, Servitude and Forced or Compulsory Labour](#)
 - [Section 2 – Human Trafficking](#)
 - [Section 4 – Committing an offence with intent to commit an offence under section 2 of the 2015 Act](#)

Human Trafficking: Hard to Reach

- Trafficked people are among the most difficult to reach, there are several reasons for this:
- Isolation and Loss of Support Networks
 - When individuals are trafficked, they are often taken away from their familiar surroundings.
 - As a result, they lose their community support networks and end up being socially and culturally isolated.
 - This isolation makes it challenging for them to seek help or connect with others

Human Trafficking: Hard to Reach

- Trafficked people are among the most difficult to reach, there are several reasons for this:
- Fear of Reprisals
 - Victims of trafficking often fear reprisals from those who enslaved them.
 - They may worry about retaliation to harm to themselves of their loved ones if they speak out or seek assistance.
 - This fear can prevent them from reaching out for help

Human Trafficking: Hard to Reach

- Trafficked people are among the most difficult to reach, there are several reasons for this:
- Lack of Access to Basic Resources
 - Trafficked individuals often lack access to basic resources such as food, shelter, and healthcare.
 - They may be in unfamiliar environments, making it difficult for them to navigate and find the necessary support services

Human Trafficking: Hard to Reach

- Trafficked people are among the most difficult to reach, there are several reasons for this:
- Legal and Immigration Status:
 - Depending on where they flee to, trafficked individuals may lack regular immigration status.
 - This can create additional barriers to accessing services, as they may fear deportation or detention

Human Trafficking: Hard to Reach

- Trafficked people are among the most difficult to reach, there are several reasons for this:
- Healthcare Challenges
 - Trafficked people experience known risk factors for mental illness, including violence, abuse, and deprivation.
 - However, they may struggle to access healthcare services due to a lack of awareness, language barriers, or fear of exposure

Human Trafficking: Hard to Reach

- The combination of fear, isolation, lack of resources, and legal challenges makes trafficked people hard to reach.
- Efforts to support and assist this vulnerable group require a comprehensive approach that addresses these barriers.



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