

# Trafficking in Persons in Cebu City, Central Philippines

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**Abstract** - This study investigated the status of human trafficking in persons in Cebu city, central Philippines from the years 2010 to 2015. The paper analyzed the profile of victims, types of human trafficking, complaints filed by law enforcement agencies. The study anchored its theoretical framework on the Gender Paradigm of Reed [1] and the Rational Choice Theory of Luty and Lanier [2] together with RA9208 [3] and Cebu City Ordinance 2163 [4] as the legal bases. The study employed a descriptive quantitative research design and document analysis using secondary data obtained from reports, databases of governmental agencies and online peer reviewed journals and dissertations. Findings revealed that majority of the victims were women and children who are considered as the most vulnerable groups to human trafficking. On the positive now, the number of victims was on a decline from the 2010 to 2015. Sexual exploitation and prostitution were the most prevalent followed by forced labor and pornography. With respect to prosecution processes, there was a relatively high frequency of convictions followed by those cases on trial, yet these remained low in relation to the volume of reported and monitored cases. Notably, the number of convictions does not necessarily indicate successful prosecution against human traffickers. For fear of risking their lives against ‘bigtime’ perpetrators and financial limitations brought about by income poverty, many victims are forced to execute affidavit of desistance thereby withdraw the filed cases especially when they are not placed under the witness protection program. In effect, first hand testimonies against identified offenders are not exposed during hearings and trials weakening speedy court decisions and case resolutions. Nonetheless, the local government and various stakeholders are exerting concerted efforts in curbing human trafficking in Cebu City. In conclusion, human trafficking in persons in the study area remain unabated as law enforcement, prosecution and aftercare agencies have not fully achieved substantial successes towards the eradication of human trafficking during the study period. This calls for a concrete, comprehensive and strongly well-coordinated efforts among concern government and private agencies and institutions to combat human trafficking in this part of Central Philippines.

**Keywords** - Trafficking in persons, human trafficking victims, rational choice theory, gender paradigm, affidavit of desistance, metropolitan Cebu.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has made the world smaller with the wide array of cross-boarder trade and commerce, exchanges of ideas and technology, online markets and accelerated

movements of goods and services. At the same time, the process of globalization has resulted brought several problems of illegal activities, not only in prohibited trade but also the exploitation of the human persons. In third-world countries, human trafficking has become prevalent than ever before [5] since trafficking in persons became a highly profitable business at the expense of the victims [6]. Human trafficking then become one of the pressing problems which require utmost attention and needs tangible solutions. State actions and responses in the form of policies and programs remain inadequate, unresponsive and predictable to traffickers [7].

Every government has the duty to protect its citizenry from the danger of social, economic and political decadence. The role of every state is crucial in combating human trafficking. The political will of a country determines the kinds of policies and programs created, if any, to address trafficking, and the resources to be allocated for their implementation of programs and initiatives to fight against human traffickers [7]. The implementation of anti-human trafficking law should be strong, comprehensive and effective thereby achieve proper assistance of victims. Human trafficking must be treated as a serious criminal offense with commensurate punishments for offenders [8].

The Philippines was a signatory to Palermo Convention in 2000 and commonly known as “The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children”, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Accordingly, the Philippines enacted the Republic Act 9208 otherwise known as “The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003”. While the enactment of RA9208 established the legal parameters of what trafficking means, clarified the basis for documenting and categorizing cases as involving trafficking, and recognized acts of trafficking as criminal offenses with corresponding penalties, trafficking continues to be widespread in the country [7]. Although the law apparently provides protection to the victims, they can not be taken as “victims” seriously when still some people gain profits and cloaked the warm euphemisms of “hospitality” conspiring to weaken the victims’ access to the protection of the law [9].

Cebu city is located at the center of the Visayas’ nine major islands [10]. Aside from its historic churches, modern shopping complexes, pristine beaches, Cebu has local and international air and sea routes, which enable easy access in and out of Cebu city. These amenities and facilities have made Cebu city a strategic location for human traffickers [10]. As a major, tourist destination in the Philippines, Cebu city has become transient and exit points of many trafficked victims, for sex tourism and child prostitutions, where the city is considered to be among the five infamous places in the country of human traffickers [11]. Cebu is being promoted as prime tourist destination for international visitors attracting a

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multitude of foreigners from first world wealthy countries seeking a relatively inexpensive vacations and holidays.

Cebu City is highly urbanized and is composed of 80 barangays while touted as having first-class commercial districts and tourist attractions of the country [12a]. Cebu city is linked to these three gateways to other islands in the Philippines and the world such as Mactan International Airport, Cebu International Port, Cebu Baseport Domestic Zone and along with other sub-ports. This easy connectivity makes Cebu city very conducive as point of entry and exit for human illegal transshipment, which has exacerbated due to loose monitoring systems of airports and seaports [13]. Poverty, natural disasters and insurgencies in many rural areas are also “push” factors which amplify children’s and women’s vulnerability to human traffickers especially in Cebu because of its strategic location as transit point [12b].

#### *Theoretical and Conceptual Framework*

This study is anchored on three theories namely the Human Rights Paradigm of Reed [14], [15], [16 ], [17], [18] and Rational Choice Theory of Luty and Lanier [19], [20]. The rational choice theory [2] postulates that criminals, as rational beings, decide to commit crimes basing from the costs and benefits involved along the process of the perpetration of the crime. Criminals keenly observe their potential victims, right location, the opportune time in which their victims are most vulnerable, the suitable methods for an easy entry and the effective ways to protect their illicit activities from the authorities [2].

Making a link to ‘root causes’ of trafficking, the human rights paradigm [1] is arguing for prevention practices that improve the socio-economic standards of those considered vulnerable to trafficking. In the case of sex trafficking, human rights advocates call for a particular focus on the environmental circumstances of women and children [1]. They utilize the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the United Nations’ Trafficking protocols, and Convention on pertaining to the discrimination against women as global instruments for combating human rights. The detection and punishment of violators of legal rules is an important subject and that can be attained through the enforcement of public law with the make use of governmental agents [21].

Often framed as ‘Violence against Women’, the gender paradigm concerns the global, state and local marginalization of women and, therefore, concerns itself with: women’s subordinate status in the workforce – often termed the ‘feminization of labor’; women and domestic violence; the economic marginalization of women – also called ‘the feminization of poverty’; sexual victimization of girls and women; and sexual violence, as demonstrably expressed in the prostitution of women [1].

This study investigated the developments in combating human trafficking in Cebu City, central Philippines. Specifically, it (1) identified the common victims of human-trafficking; (2) distinguished types of human trafficking cases; (3) evaluated the anti-human trafficking laws in the Philippines and local ordinances in Cebu City; and (4) examined the prosecution of trafficking in persons cases in Cebu City, central Philippines. This paper endeavored to

dissect trafficking in persons cases that existed in Cebu city, its frequency distribution and trends; assess the implementation of RA No. 9208 and Ordinance No. 2163; the status of trafficking in person cases and the factors affecting the successful prosecution of traffickers.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many have been victims of human trafficking around the globe, across international borders and the same holds true in the Philippines. Cebu City is not spared from cases of human trafficking problem brought about primarily poverty, natural disasters and insurgencies putting at high vulnerability the women and the youth [13]. The lack of employment opportunities primarily put the minors accept any type of work for survival. Corruption downplays the just solution to human trafficking by making it hard to arraign and punish traffickers [22], [23]. The loosening of border controls, high unemployment rate, lack of education and training are among the root causes of the vulnerable poor people falling victims to human trafficking. The Academy for Educational Development [12c] pinpointed the Philippines as the source and travel nation for human trafficking activities with approximately 20,000 to 100,000 child victims trafficked.

Women utilize the political procedure to push for universal help program to counter trafficking at the national and multinational levels and a successful response by the state to the perpetrators and the victims of trafficking [15]. Recent proof [22],[24] demonstrates that the degree of human trafficking is connected to women’s representation in organizations, since female government authorities usually express concern over such wrongdoing often victimizing women.

The nature of human trafficking assessed in this study is not limited to women who experience sex mistreatment but also looked into social divisions of class, race, sexuality and different types of persecutions [25]. The determinants of human trafficking in the source and destination nations include migration, the vulnerability to crime incidence, policy and institutional endeavors [23]. With stringent regulations to national border to migration, women are resorting to undocumented labor agreements, making them more susceptible to trafficking syndicates [26].

Because of income poverty, minors are forced to work in underground labor arrangements such that their parents often condone untoward physical and sexual abuses whom their children falls into. Children as young as 14 years are still in their high school education level who are from poor families [27]. Prostitution usually exists among women in exchange for money. Human trafficking is transnational and happens when a person who has been carried over the borders, is pressured, particularly into forced labor and prostitution [28]. They are being deceived by recruiters and have to work with a little or even without a due payment. There are victims who are in debt bondage or bonded labor, a type of exploitation wherein victims are kept as long as the traffickers want while they are profiting money.

The act of using and abusing children in the sex trade is illicit under Philippine Laws, the Palermo Protocol, and other international conventions. Sex trafficking can cause

permanent trauma to the victims both physically and mentally. Moreover, trafficking is deterrent to public health, because it is most likely to spread communicable diseases with children who often contract diseases such as HIV or AIDS and at times, their experiences result to death [29]. As noted, exploitation is an indication of lack of respect to the victims—especially when victims are impeded from interacting from one another, forced to change themselves and improve their economic status [30]. Victims, in the worst case, lose their self-esteem and self-dignity aside from their income and integrity.

The Woman and Children Protection Desk (WCPD), a unit in every police central station is mandated by RA 8851 (PNP Reform and Reorganization Act of 1998), to handle cases involving women and children. Furthermore, the PNP women’s desk provides assistance, conducts investigative cases and rescue operations to women and children survivors of violence and abuse. The Anti-Child Labor Rescue Operations, with the PNP among its partners, competently raised the administration drive against child prostitution, which is one of the most exceedingly terrible sorts of child labor under Cebu City has been distinguished as a point of origin, target destination of trafficked victims in light of seaports and air terminals as an avenue for human traffickers to transport their victims [31]. The Cebu city government passed and approved City Ordinance No. 20163 to form strategies and projects which run counter trafficking in person, to rehabilitate and reintegrate victims of trafficking back into the society. Ordinance No. 2163 aims to reinforce and implement the provisions of Republic Act No. 9208, its executing rules and regulations, specifying punishments on any act of violation of the ordinance.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive quantitative survey research design using primary and secondary data obtained from government data and from interviews of actual respondents. The research was conducted within Cebu City which is strategically situated as origin and transit point of entry and exit for human trafficking. The research respondents consisted of key civil society organizations, private sector groups and government agencies working against trafficking in persons. They included the Camp Sergio Osmeña (Police Regional Office VII), Department of Justice (DOJ), the Department of Social Welfare and Development Region 7 (DSWD), and International Justice Mission Cebu (IJM). The respondents are mostly composed the mandated agencies under the Cebu City Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking.

The researchers gathered the data through primary and secondary data collection obtained from online databases, criminal records, archives, quarterly and annual reports and financial statements. The following agencies were the data sources: cases pertaining trafficking in persons (TIPs) filed by Inter-Agency Council Against Human Trafficking (IACAT), Regional Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force of Region VII (RATTF), PNP Unit Office of RPO VII, and Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of RPO VII (CIDG); data of victims from DSWD Region 7; published reports from the

IJM Cebu; and Cebu city local ordinances. The regional office of the Philippine National Police (PNP) 7 referred the researchers to the Women and Children’s Desk (WCD) over the matters of human trafficking. WCD is responsible for keeping records of TIP-related complaints submitted by other RPO 7 branches such as Regional Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force of Region VII (RATTF), PNP Unit Office of RPO VII, and Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of RPO VII (CIDG). Additionally, the DSWD Region 7 provided valuable data concerning victims of trafficking. On the other hand, the IJM provided a link on the human trafficking statistics from the Inter-Agency Council Against Human Trafficking (IACAT) which is based from Department of Justice.

Descriptive statistics was carried out from the gathered data reports obtained from various sources. Comparative analyses on the summary of TIP-related complaints filed to the court (FY 2010-2015) and profile of victims (CY 2010-2014/2015) and types of trafficking (CY 2010-2014). All calculations were carried out using the minitab software.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### *Victims of Trafficking*

TABLE I: FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF TRAFFICKED PERSONS BY AGE GROUP, 2010-2014

Age group (years)	Frequency (n=1002)	Percent (%)
≤14	61	6.09
15-17	123	12.28
18-22	361	36.03
≥23	457	46.61
<i>Source: Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Region VIII, Central Visayas, Philippines, 2015 Report</i>		

Table 1 reflects the frequency of persons, by age group, who fall victims to human trafficking during the 2010-2014 period as reported by the DSWD Region VII. It should be noted that some of these victims have been trafficked and have also been re-trafficked. The table shows that nearly half of the victims being trafficked are adults, or those who are 23 years of age and above. This was closely followed by the youth 18-22 years of age as victims of human trafficking. All establishments, particularly those offering adult entertainment are required by law to hire workers of legal age which is ranging from 18 years old and above. Most of the victims belong to the legal age as manifested by adults who are found in commercial sex establishments. Some research respondents confirmed that these adult victims know their vulnerability to being trafficked but still consented to do such elicit jobs.

The number of teenagers (15-17 years of age) accounted about 12 percent among the trafficked persons. Although trafficking of minors manifested a declining trend, this is still alarming as it indicate continued trafficking among teenagers in the study area. The Cebu city anti-trafficking groups really find it hard to completely eliminate human trafficking with the geographical locations of the city being an island and with many entry of ports connecting its neighboring islands and

international airports with direct links to many destinations in the southeast Asia.

The increased law enforcement activity has propelled sex trafficking activities to move outside Cebu City. Anecdotal evidence suggested, home-based web-porn other cottage industries had served as “underground”, and/or bled into informal markets [33]. Apparently, the collection of data about of victims on underground human trafficking has been difficult since the crimes are committed inside the households of the victims themselves. Hence, inspection of formal establishments and the red light district is no longer enough because human trafficking extended to private houses in Cebu city. The number of victims grouped by age were manifested an erratic trend of fluctuations during the study period. The number of victims were possibly influenced by the changes in practices and capacity of law enforcement agencies in locating these victims, the availability of commercial sex establishments and the seasonal fluctuations of reported cases.

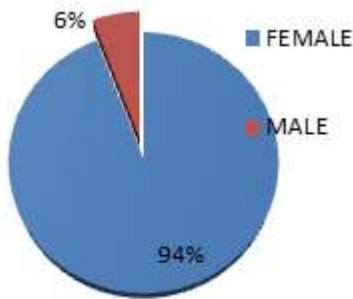


Fig. 2 Gender of victims of trafficking in person in Cebu City, 2010-2014

Figure 2 reflects the proportion of female and male victims of human trafficking in Cebu City. There were more trafficked females than males during the period under study. Data shows that trafficked victims were almost women while only a few were men, translating to about 16 women and 1 man per 17 counts of human trafficked victims. Based on the interviews, women were most likely engaged in sexual activities and prostitution, while those trafficked males were most aptly engaged in forced labor. The marginalization of women in society has been one of the reasons why huge number of sexual trafficking cases still persist. Society’s objectification of women’s body for sexual satisfaction turned out to be a lucrative business. On other hand, the common notion that men are physically stronger compared to women makes the former more susceptible to bonded or forced labor. Evidently, gender is strongly associated with the kinds of exploitation among trafficked persons.

The DSWD Region VII is the agency of government tasked with “aftercare” services to these victims of human trafficking alongside other nongovernmental organizations which provide the parallel services. There are three shelters or institutions that are currently being utilized and supported by Cebu City government intended for human trafficking victims namely: Haven-Regional Center for Women (for women ages 18-59 years old) located in Labangon, Cebu City; DSWD 7-Home for Girls (for 18-below) in and HerSpace (both for women and children). These are temporary shelters for the purpose of rehabilitating victims before they are reintegrated

back into the society. The victims are expected to receive necessary services such as skills and livelihood training programs for adults, educational assistance to trafficked children and psychological or medical services for both.

*Types of Human Trafficking Cases*

Data obtained from the DSWD Region VII (Table 2) revealed that four main types of trafficking in persons (TIPs) that existed in Cebu city; (1) sexual exploitation, (2) pornography, (3) prostitution and (4) forced labor. Table 2 the type and frequency of TIPs reposted during the period 2010-2014. Pornography manifested fluctuation over the five consecutive years accounting for the number of TIPs. PSA data indicate that in Cebu city, a total of 195,461 households have accessed to the internet. Pornography among all other types of TIP cases is hard to detect since the crime happens commonly in the households or in other private venues. Cybersex dens often façade as normal households. Furthermore, cybersex transactions happen with the use a personal computer and a webcam over the internet. Victims are either one persons or by group, perform sex acts or just pose nude in front of the camera to please their clients for a fee through international wire transfer. It is noted that the incidence of the pornography will continue unless parents go against such practice of exposing their children’s body in exchange for money.

TABLE II: TYPE AND FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS (TIPS) IN CEBU CITY, 2010-2014

Type	Frequency (n=1002)	Percent (%)
Pomography	39	3.89
Prostitution	414	41.32
Sexual Exploitation	387	36.62
Forced Labor	162	16.17

*Source: Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Region VIII, Central Visayas, Philippines, 2015 Report.*

The trend for prostitution and sexual exploitation has dramatically decreased from 2010-2014 but it accounted the most dominant type of human trafficking activities. Sexual exploitation is the broader term for both prostitution and pornography which are often used interchangeably. The fluctuations of these types of trafficking vary because of the rescue operations conducted by law enforcement agencies in raiding strip bars, beerhouses, and other adult entertainment establishments where most victims are women making sexual exploitation rampant.

On the other hand, forced labor cases have increased gradually starting from the year 2012 to 2014. In Cebu city, it ranked third among the four types of human trafficking. Force labor most likely affects children workers and other groups in the informal sector, it is second among the types of trafficking that is hardly detected. Workers are exposed to heavy work loads, receive low wages and treated unfairly by their employers. Forced labor occurs when there is no clear and transparent employment policies deprived workers of their rights as stipulated in the Labor Code of the Philippines.

The Cebu City Government through the Office of the City Mayor, in furtherance with police power of local government units, regulates the issuance of business licenses and has the power to revoke licensed establishments offering adult entertainment once violations against RA 9208 is committed. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) in coordination with Cebu City Government can issue a permanent closure order to establishments which commit violations of RA9231, the law protecting the children from worst forms of child labor.

#### *Statutes and Ordinances against Human Trafficking*

The Philippine laws on combating human trafficking were aligned from numerous international conventions, declarations, and protocols that set the generally accepted principles and guidelines to fight human trafficking. The Palermo Protocol laid down the definition of trafficking in persons, the commission of acts and the punishments commensurate to the gravity of crime. The Philippine Congress enacted the Republic Act No. 9208, otherwise known as “Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003” in May 26, 2003. The law was considered a turning point in fighting against human trafficking of the country since it was taken as a clear indication that the Philippines is responding to the problem of trafficking head on (UN.GIFT, 2012). Not only that, the Congress too enacted other pertinent laws covering other acts of trafficking as follows. Republic Act No. 7610 and Republic Act No. 9231 for protection of children’s rights; Republic Act No. 8042 for safeguarding overseas workers; Republic Act No. 9262 for both children and women; and Republic Act No. 6955 and Republic Act No. 9710 for protection of women’s rights.

However, there are still weaknesses of Republic Act No. 9208 that needs to be rectified. The ages 17 below are considered minors in the legal term so they are automatically protected regardless of the means is deemed as trafficking; however, a source of confusion among law enforcers and prosecutors arises when it comes to the question of whether adult prostitution without coercion is considered as trafficking or not [7]. There is a serious concern of witnesses seeking legal protection from the government. In addition, the fact that the penalty for sexual exploitation of trafficked persons is considerably lower (the first offense is a community service of six months and for the second and subsequent offenses will be a one year imprisonment and a fine) relative to the penalty for the violation of confidentiality, (six years imprisonment and a fine) has discouraged some from filing cases (Sison-Arroyo, 2008). The Republic Act 10364 or the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act corrected this weak side of the former law and meted out a much heavier penalty as follows: acts of trafficking (imprisonment of 20 years with a fine of P1M to 2M); acts that promote trafficking (imprisonment of 15 years with a fine of P500,000 to P1M); and qualified Trafficking (Life imprisonment with a fine of P2M to P5M).

With respect to Local Government Unit of Cebu City, they passed through the Sangguniang Panglungsod the Ordinance no. 2163 or otherwise known as the “Cebu City Anti-trafficking in Persons Ordinance”. The latter is an ordinance implementing and enforcing the provisions of Republic Act No. 9208. The ordinance was created last November 26, 2008

which is five years after RA 9208 was enacted. The ordinance in congruence with the statute defined therein the qualifying terms such as “trafficking in persons” and “child”. It further identifies the different forms of TIP such as prostitution, force labor and slavery, sex tourism, debt bondage, pornography and involuntary servitude. The succeeding articles speak of the various acts to be penalized and they are classified to an extent as an explicit act, a promoting act and qualified acts of human trafficking (Section 4, Ordinance no. 2163).

Nevertheless, the weak spot of the ordinance are the sanctions to be imposed to any establishments and persons who have violated the ordinance. Given a fine ranging from PhP2,500 to PhP5,000 (first offense or subsequent offense) and imprisonment of not exceeding 3 months to 6 months is actually diminutive though the business license is licensed. It will not scare adult entertainment bar owners from doing the same business again and public officials or private persons to omit from reporting vital information on any trafficking cases that is transpiring with their personal knowledge about it.

There are some provisions of the ordinance that needs a slight tweaking. In Section 20, the infractions committed against the ordinance should be meted out with higher penalty. As for the implementation level, the Cebu City Government should prioritize an adequate budget for Cebu City IACAT. Last year’s Cebu City Annual Budget allocated P 250, 000.00 to the Cebu City Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (CCIACAT) should be increased this year as the amount is noticeably small to cater the needs of law enforcement agencies such as trainings, materials and technical assistance.

#### *Prosecutions of TIPs Cases in Cebu City*

Table 3 shows the status of trafficking in persons cases from the years 2010 until the August of 2015. These data were compiled by different law-enforcement agencies like the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of RPO VII (CIDG), Regional Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force of Region VII (RATTF), PNP Unit Office of RPO VII, and Department of Justice (DOJ). The Cebu City Government demonstrated an increased effort in terms of law enforcement. The number of convictions for the past five years was considerably higher (2014 with 11 convictions) compared to the number of charges filed. However, it should be noted that the number of convictions does not necessarily tell if the prosecution is successful in combating traffickers. The number of affidavits of desistance being filed by victims and data among law enforcement agencies greatly affected the total number of cases filed. The weak side of the collected data is the differences of the details and format in the case monitoring of the different law enforcement agencies. The researchers experienced difficulty to determine if the number of conviction is higher compared to charges filed in court. Hence, still the number of convictions remains low compared to the magnitude of the problem [8].

There are factors which affect the progress and success in the prosecution of traffickers. First, is the lengthy process of trials and court appearances. Trafficking cases take three to five years for a decision to be reached. To significantly expedite trafficking prosecutions, the Supreme Court instituted the continuous trial system pilot project in 2014

[32]. It requires the cooperation of witnesses in appearing to the courts otherwise the trial may be dismissed as witnesses have disappeared beforehand. It is noted that the severity of drug trafficking and human trafficking is not equally treated by the courts. Human trafficking needs to be prioritized because humans who are sold as commodity are more immoral compared to illegal drugs that are mere substance. Second, is the protection of the lives of victims. Many victims file affidavit of desistance to discontinue the case filed in the fear of risking their lives against a “big time” perpetrator especially if a victim is not under the Witness Protection Program. Because of fear, financial and practical considerations, and the desire to move on with their lives, many victims choose not to cooperate from the very beginning [3]. Lastly, is the strength of law-enforcement agencies. These law enforcement agencies are tasked in arresting offenders and raiding business establishments where possible victims are situated. A wide range of materials and technical assistance is also important in combating trafficking aside from in-depth surveillance trainings [10].

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

TABLE III: STATUS OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS CASES IN CEBU CITY, 2010-2015

Status	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Aug 2015	Total
Convicted	4	5	8	3	11	0	31
On-trial	2	4	1	3	1	1	12
Under Preliminary Investigation	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Filed in Court	0	0	0	0	6	0	6
Under Police Investigation	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Unclear data	1	0	1	0	1	0	3

Data sources: CIDG, RATTf, PNP, DOJ, Cebu City Government.

Based from the foregoing discussions, it is concluded that considerable developments in the combat against human trafficking in Cebu City has been done. Yet, law enforcement agencies, the prosecution, the aftercare agencies, and administrative bodies have not fully achieved the much desired eradication of human trafficking even if they are exerting concerted efforts to bring down such illegal activities in Cebu City. The local government, though has forge stronger partnerships with private institutions and civic societies, still is not effective enough in brining down, much less in halting, the illegal human trafficking activities within its jurisdiction, hence human trafficking activities still abound. Issuance and renewals of entertainment establishment business licenses has never been stringent. Routinized inspections and monitoring of night clubs and other entertainment business always fall short of the possibly dens for trafficked victims.

It is recommended that Any person in authority, men in uniform or government officials if proven guilty of patronizing or fending these illegal activities must be discharged from service and if possible they cannot hold again any government position. The efforts should not only be limited to the city administrative bodies but also extends to numerous barangays in Cebu City. Seminars and awareness

campaigns against trafficking are to be conducted in schools, barangays and sitios to increase social demands in the grassroots level.

Many victims should be under the Witness Protection Program in order that more witnesses are encouraged to push through by giving relevant information and to testify against offenders. The prosecutors should invoke speedy disposition of trial to arrive at court decisions if possible in a three months time up to one year. Those people who have a position in authority like police officers, NBI agents and social workers should be granted immunity from suit when they perform raids, rescue operations or other kinds of intervention.

They too are facing job hazards in the form of death threats and harassment complaints resorted by the offenders. The three temporary shelters should be adequate and spacious to cater more victims of trafficking. Children’s condition is the most critical given that they are less mentally matured and that is why they should undergo psychological services, constant counseling, and educational assistance by the government. Trafficked women too should be given the same support but particularly the medical services since they are prone to sexually transmitted diseases or worse, cases of HIV or AIDS; livelihood and skills training programs must be offered so that they will refrain from being re-trafficked and find decent jobs or create sources for their own living when they reintegrate into the society.

Alongside with these state efforts in battling trafficking, academic research must come in hand in order to have a balance between theory and practice.

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