Employees' helping behavior toward the victims of human trafficking in the lodging industry

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to examine the factors that influence hotel/motel employees' helping behavior toward the victims of human trafficking.

Design/methodology/approach – Using a survey-based quantitative method, this study examines and compares two models of helping behavior based on egoism and altruism theories to measure the helping tendencies of lodging employees toward victims of human trafficking.

Findings – The study results show that perceived intrinsic rewards of helping and empathy with the victims are the major antecedents of employees' likelihood to help the victims.

Research limitations/implications – The study contributed to the egoism school of thought and the Cost-Reward Model by showing that only perceived intrinsic rewards drive individuals' intention to help in risky covert situations, such as human trafficking, while perceived extrinsic rewards may demotivate people to help in these situations.

Originality/value – Previous studies overlooked the role of the lodging industry in human trafficking. This study focuses on service employees as potential helpers of the victims as they notice in hotels/motels.

Keywords Human trafficking, Helping behavior, Altruism, Egoism, Extrinsic rewards, Intrinsic rewards

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing types of organized crime in the world (Deshpande and Nour, 2013). It is defined as the recruitment of persons by deception, threat or other forms of coercion for exploitation (United Nations, 2000). The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimated that about 40 million victims were victims of human trafficking in 2016 (International Labor Organization, and Walk Free Foundation, 2017). In 2019, the US National Human Trafficking Hotline reported 11,500

cases of human trafficking. According to the hotline, hotels/motels were among the top venues where human trafficking victims were seen (The US National Human Trafficking Hotline, 2019). Hotels are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking [Paraskevas and Brookes, (2018a, 2018b)]. Researchers acknowledge the critical role of tourism and hospitality in sex trafficking, where hotels are used as a venue for sexual services (Aston *et al.*, 2022).

Tourism and hospitality jobs typically involve high interaction and physical contact with customers (Liu-Lastres *et al.*, 2022). Hence, most of the employees of the lodging industry are in direct contact with customers and are typically the first ones who notice/see/ hear about human trafficking incidents at their workplace. Hotel employees can be the eyes and ears to help limit the occurrence of human trafficking. Their helping behavior and what drives that behavior is the key to effectively fighting against the human trafficking problem in the lodging industry. Hence, it is critical to study their reaction to these incidents and identify the factors that motivate them to help the victims. Past literature on organizational behavior investigated employees' reactions to different incidents at the workplace, such as workplace aggression, bullying and harassment (Howard *et al.*, 2016; Maccurtain *et al.*, 2018; Öztürk and Huseyinzade Simsek, 2019); however, no studies focused on employees' reaction to human trafficking incidents or victims. Understanding the behavior of the workers in the lodging industry is critical for effectively tackling human trafficking incidents in the lodging industry. Scientific research is a critical step for such understanding and appropriate measures; however, the research on human trafficking is mainly limited to victims' experiences and needs (Gozdziak and Collett, 2005) and there is limited attention to the human trafficking issue from the employee perspectives in the lodging industry (Paraskevas and Brookes, 2018a, 2018b). Paraskevas and Brookes (2018b) dub both hotel employees and managers as the guardians who can identify and disrupt the crime journey of human traffickers. Thus, empirical research on lodging industry workers' behavior related to human trafficking is urgently needed to address this issue and provide solutions for lodging practitioners.

Workers' helping behavior toward the victims is a critical step against human trafficking in any workplace. Even though helping behavior was extensively studied in threatening incidents that occurred in front of bystanders, research on helping behavior in a human trafficking incident, which is a hidden crime, is nonexistent in the lodging industry context. Considering the pressing issue of the lodging industry's involvement in different stages and incidents of human trafficking and the importance of workers' helping behavior toward the victims, this study aims to examine the factors that influence hotel employees' helping behavior toward the victims.

Using egoism and altruism schools of thought, this study develops and compares two models to investigate the effects of egoistic and altruistic factors on hotel/motel workers' helping tendency toward the trafficking victims that they notice in their workplaces. Egoism and altruism models were compared to understand if self-focused or other-focused factors are the main drivers of employees' helping behavior toward the victims of human trafficking. Egoistic factors can be extrinsic (e.g. material rewards) and intrinsic (e.g. psychological rewards), while altruistic factors are intrinsic to a person (e.g. empathy). Understanding these drivers may provide lodging managers important insights into how to motivate their employees to be the eyes and ears to fight against human trafficking in their workplaces. Since there is a substantial amount of past research on helping behavior from these two perspectives, the study adopted the positivist research paradigm with a survey-based quantitative method to test the models. Below is a short discussion of the literature on helping behavior with egoistic and altruistic dimensions followed by hypotheses proposed to be tested in the study.

2. Literature review

2.1 Helping behavior

Helping behavior is a voluntary action to benefit others (Bar-Tal, 1982), and is the product of social interaction taking place within a specific social context (Callero *et al.*, 1987). In a human trafficking situation occurring at a workplace, social interaction may occur between an employee and a victim. In this interaction, a reciprocal exchange may occur in which the employee is the helper, and the victim is the recipient. According to the *egoism school of thought*, all human actions including helpful actions are driven by self-benefit intentions (Batson, 1987). This notion of self-benefit intention in the reciprocal exchange between a helper and recipient can be explained by the social exchange theory, which posits that involved parties seek to increase their benefits (Homans, 1958). In this context, the employee, who is the helper in a potential interaction, may consider the benefits of helping before any action (Piliavin *et al.*, 1981).

An alternative school of thought, *altruism*, disputes the egotistic nature of helping behavior, suggesting that individuals help others with the end goal of reducing others' suffering (Feigin *et al.*, 2018). Thus, according to this school, if an employee helps a victim of trafficking at his/her workplace, he/she solely intends to end the victim's suffering. Altruistic behaviors are typically explained by the Empathy–Altruism Hypothesis (Batson, 1987, 1991), which posits that empathy is the major factor driving altruism. By adopting the social exchange theory and Empathy–Altruism Hypothesis, the current study develops and compares two models that examine the effects of *rewards* as an egoistic factor and *empathy* as an altruistic factor on employees' likelihood to help the victims of human trafficking. Also, the study includes two additional constructs as common antecedents in both models, namely, familiarity with the human trafficking issue and the perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry, which are explained below.

2.2 Common antecedents of helping behavior toward victims of human trafficking

2.2.1 Familiarity with human trafficking. Human trafficking is a prevalent crime in the USA and globally with thousands of people trafficked; however, because of the hidden nature of human trafficking, the level of awareness of and knowledge about this global issue remains low (Hepburn and Simon, 2013). Past research reported a lack of awareness and knowledge of employees and professionals that may have direct or indirect contact with victims of trafficking (Hounmenou, 2012; Wong *et al.*, 2011). In the hospitality context, Curtis *et al.* (2019) assessed hotel employees' awareness of and knowledge about human trafficking and found that although 99% of employees were aware of this issue, they did not have any knowledge about how to identify trafficking signs and help victims of trafficking.

To include both awareness of and knowledge about human trafficking, this study adopts the *familiarity* construct, representing the "close acquaintance with or knowledge of something" (Lexico, 2022), with informational and experiential dimensions (Baloglu, 2001; Tan and Wu, 2016; Tasci, 2020; Tasci *et al.*, 2019). In the trafficking context, employees' familiarity with human trafficking typically occurs through exposure to information sources, such as educational materials and training workshops (i.e. informational familiarity). Also, familiarity may take place through direct experiences of trafficking incidents (i.e. experiential familiarity). However, this dimension of familiarity is excluded from this study for two reasons. The experience of actual trafficking incidents by employees is not common, and it cannot be – and not desired to be – increased by managers. Thus, measuring experiential familiarity did not offer any benefit for managerial implications.

2.2.2 Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry. Perceived probability (susceptibility) refers to the likelihood of an unpleasant or threatening event's occurrence (Gerrard and Houlihan, 2008). This construct is central to the Health Belief Model (HBM), which is one of the most common models to explain health-related behaviors (Maiman and Becker, 1974). According to HBM, the perceived probability of a health threat is a major factor that predicts individuals' motivation to take precautionary measures (Gerrard and Houlihan, 2008). Individuals with a high level of the perceived probability of disease were more likely to perform preventive health measures or seek care (Guidry *et al.*, 2019; Guilford *et al.*, 2017; Zare *et al.*, 2016). Perceived probability plays an important role in caregivers' behavior as well. The previous literature revealed that if caregivers perceive the probability of a specific disease is high in a person, they will take proper actions to help (Mitiku and Assefa, 2017).

The critical role of the perceived probability of health problems in defining individuals' and caregivers' behavior toward those problems motivated social science researchers to adopt this construct in their studies as well (Cornelius *et al.*, 2009). The current study also focuses on a social issue (i.e. human trafficking) in the lodging industry; thus, it adopts the construct of employees' *perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry* to study their perception of the likelihood of human trafficking incidents at their workplace. In the health context, the caregiver is usually a close one to the person experiencing the probability of disease, which amplifies the kind of care provided by them. In the context of human trafficking, potential helpers are typically strangers who may not identify themselves with the victims. Nonetheless, hospitality workers are trained to care, empathize and sympathize with their customers. Therefore, it is assumed that the probability of employees' workplaces being used to traffic any of the users of their services may also amplify the kind of care provided by these employees.

2.2.3 Egoistic motivator for helping behavior: perceived rewards of helping the victims. Several models were proposed to explain the egoistic nature of helping behavior. Cost-Reward Model is the most predominant model of egoistic helping behavior (Feigin *et al.*, 2018). This model posits that when an individual observes that another person is in need, he/she performs a cost-reward analysis to decide whether to help the other party or not (Piliavin *et al.*, 1981). If the observer perceives that the rewards of helping outweigh its costs, he/she will help the other party. Past research identified the rewards of helping behavior in different situations. A wide range of rewards from material (e.g. bonuses) to nonmaterial rewards (e.g. receiving gratitude) were identified (Meier and Stutzer, 2008). In this study, perceived rewards are categorized into extrinsic and intrinsic rewards (Obicci, 2015). Extrinsic rewards refer to the material and social rewards that are obtained from and controlled by external sources, for example, perks or praise. While intrinsic rewards refer to psychological rewards that are internal to a person, such as feeling good about doing the right thing (Batson, 2014).

2.2.4 Altruistic motivator for helping behavior: empathy with the victims. Empathy is a term modeled on the German word Einfühlung meaning feeling into, which is a translation of the Greek word empatheia (passion, state of emotion) (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2022). This term came into being in 1908 from a theory of art appreciation that considers empathy as the audience's ability to project their feelings onto an object of art (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2022). By 1950, empathy's definition began to change as scholars shifted their attention from the role of empathy in arts to social relations. These scholars defined empathy as understanding and imagining others' internal states, and differentiated it from its initial definition, which was projection (Lanzoni, 2015). In this study, empathy is defined as an other-oriented emotional response triggered by perceiving another person in
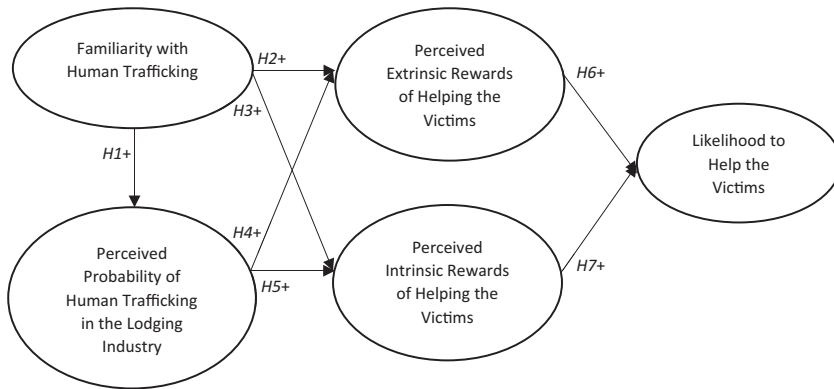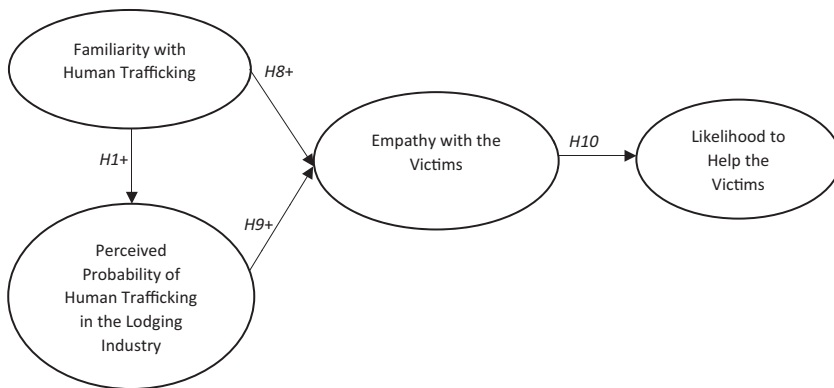
need (Batson *et al.*, 2002). More specifically, empathy refers to understanding a person with feelings of warmth and compassion toward that person (Davis, 1983).

3. Hypotheses development

As reflected in Figures 1 and 2, in both egoistic and altruistic models, familiarity with the human trafficking issue and perceived probability of human trafficking are included as the common antecedents. In the egoistic model, perceived extrinsic and intrinsic rewards are the major antecedents of the likelihood to help, while in the altruism model, empathy is the major antecedent of the likelihood to help.

3.1 The influence of familiarity with human trafficking on perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry

According to perceptual cycle model (PCM), the core element of perception is information, whether received by the five senses through a stimulus or stored in memory as an element of a schema (Neisser, 1976). More specifically, an individual's familiarity with a subject through exposure to that subject or knowledge acquisition feeds information into and influences his/her perception (Gregory, 1970). The influence of familiarity on perception was revealed in various

contexts ranging from psychology to tourism. For example, in psychological studies, the effect of perpetual and knowledge-based familiarity on face perception was shown (Cloutier *et al.*, 2011). Also, tourism studies revealed that the tourists' familiarity with a tourist destination affects their perception of a destination and their interest to visit it (Baloglu, 2001; Kim *et al.*, 2019; Tasci, 2018, 2020; Tasci and Knutson, 2004). Regarding the relationship between familiarity and the perception of the probability of a phenomenon (i.e. perceived probability), a stream of research was developed in the health field of study. For example, Ey *et al.* (2000) showed the effect of familiarity with parental health history on the perceived probability of specific diseases. Hashemiparast *et al.* (2015) also found the effects of familiarity with and knowledge about urinary tract infections on the perceived probability of this health issue. Based on the abovementioned perception theories and research findings of various fields of study, familiarity with human trafficking is expected to allow hotel employees to perceive the probability of human trafficking at their workplace. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H1. Hotel employees' familiarity with human trafficking has a positive influence on their perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry.

3.2 Egoism model

3.2.1 The influence of familiarity with human trafficking on perceived rewards of helping. According to PCM, familiarity feeds information into perception (Gregory, 1970); thus, an effect on the perception of the rewards/benefits of a specific subject/action can be expected. For example, the positive influence of familiarity with foods and their nutrients was shown on the perceived benefits of their consumption (Fischer and Frewer, 2009). Also, the research showed the positive effect of familiarity with dietary supplements on the perceived benefits of their consumption (Royne *et al.*, 2014). In terms of helping behavior, familiarity with the situation in which a person needs help allows the potential helpers to better understand what the person in need experiences and what external and internal benefits/rewards can be obtained by helping him/her (Gamberini *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, considering the PCM and the prior literature, it is hypothesized that:

H2. Hotel employees' familiarity with human trafficking has a positive influence on their perceived extrinsic rewards of helping the victims.

H3. Hotel employees' familiarity with human trafficking has a positive influence on their perceived intrinsic rewards of helping the victims.

3.2.2 The influence of perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry on perceived rewards of helping. According to the risk-return tradeoff principle, individuals expect to receive greater rewards when the likelihood of risk increases (Lintner, 1975; Sharpe, 1964). This notion applies to the helping behavior context as well. If individuals perceive that the likelihood of a risky incident is high and their help is needed, they will perceive that they can receive greater rewards by helping. In terms of human trafficking, when employees perceive that the likelihood of human trafficking incidents is high at their workplace and their help is needed to save the victims and maintain the image and reputation of their hotel/motel, they may have a higher perception of the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of helping. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H4. Hotel employees' perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry has a positive influence on their perceived extrinsic rewards of helping the victims.

H5. Hotel employees' perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry
has a positive influence on their perceived intrinsic rewards of helping the victims.

*3.2.3 The influence of perceived rewards of helping on likelihood to help the victims of
human trafficking.* Advocates of egoism believe that the ultimate goal of helping others is to
benefit oneself (Feigin *et al.*, 2018). According to Cost-Reward Model, when an individual
observes that another person is in need, he/she experiences emotional arousal and performs
a cost-reward analysis to choose the best way to reduce his/her distress and increase his/her
benefits (Piliavin *et al.*, 1981). This model can be explained by the social exchange theory,
which claims that the actors of a social interaction seek to increase their benefits (Homans,
1958). In the trafficking context, the potential helper, who is the active agent of social
interaction, tries to find the best way to increase his/her own extrinsic and intrinsic benefits
(Caserotti *et al.*, 2019; Graziano *et al.*, 2007). For example, if an employee perceives that he/
she may receive a perk or experience self-satisfaction by helping a victim, he/she will have a
higher tendency to help. Thus, considering the Cost-Reward Model of helping, it is
hypothesized that:

H6. Hotel employees' perceived extrinsic reward of helping has a positive influence on
their likelihood to help the victims of human trafficking.

H7. Hotel employees' perceived intrinsic reward of helping has a positive influence on
their likelihood to help the victims of human trafficking.

3.3 Altruism model
3.3.1 The influence of familiarity with human trafficking on empathy. Past literature on
prosocial behavior showed that when potential helpers have familiarity with the victims,
they develop a sense of identification and, consequently, empathy with them (Batson *et al.*,
2005; Coyne *et al.*, 2019; Zagefka *et al.*, 2013). Identification with a victim may take various
forms and degrees including having kinship with the victim, feeling similar to the victim or
having some commonalities with the victim (Zagefka *et al.*, 2013). In the context of human
trafficking, potential helpers are typically strangers who may not identify themselves with
the victims; however, an increase in their information and knowledge about human
trafficking enables the potential helpers to understand victims' painful experiences to some
degree (Zagefka *et al.*, 2013). This understanding results in feeling compassion toward them.
Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H8. Hotel employees' familiarity with human trafficking has a positive influence on
their empathy with the victims.

*3.3.2 The influence of the perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry
on empathy.* Past research supported the positive effect of the perceived probability of a
threatening incident on the arousal of various caregiving emotions including empathy
(Dijker, 2001). When an individual perceives that the probability of a threatening incident is
high for a person/group, his/her parental caregiving mechanism is activated. This
mechanism is found in all mammals to enable them to take care of their vulnerable offspring
(Dijker, 2010). Past research showed that individuals show sympathy and tenderness
toward the targets that may be impacted by highly probable harmful/painful experiences
(Dijker, 2010; Sinclair *et al.*, 2017).

In the lodging industry, employees are trained to understand and empathize with their
customers. When employees perceive that their hotels/motels are susceptible to human

trafficking incidents and perceive the signs of the need for help in their customers, their parental caregiving mechanism may be activated. This activation may result in a sense of relatedness and identification with customers and, consequently, empathy with them. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H9. Hotel employees' perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry has a positive influence on their empathy with the victims.

3.3.3 The influence of empathy on likelihood to help the victims of human trafficking. According to the Empathy–Altruism Hypothesis, empathy results in altruistic motivation and, consequently, helping behavior (Batson, 1987). In this hypothesis, empathy refers to the empathic concern, which is an "other-oriented emotional response elicited by and congruent with the perceived welfare of a person in need" (Batson *et al.*, 2015, p. 260), and altruism refers to a motivational state to increase the welfare of the person in need (Batson *et al.*, 2015).

Empathy–Altruism Hypothesis has roots in value-extension theory, which states that human beings are capable of valuing not only their own welfare but also others' welfare (Batson *et al.*, 2015). According to this theory, when an individual perceives that another person is in need, his/her capacity to intrinsically value that person's welfare will be activated, which leads to an empathy-altruism correlation. Several studies tested and verified the Empathy–Altruism Hypothesis in different contexts (Chopik *et al.*, 2017; FeldmanHall *et al.*, 2015; Longmire and Harrison, 2018; Persson and Kajonius, 2016; McAuliffe *et al.*, 2018). Thus, considering the Empathy–Altruism Hypothesis, it is hypothesized that:

H10. Hotel employees' empathy with the victims of human trafficking has a positive influence on their likelihood to help the victims.

4. Methods

A survey-based quantitative methodology was selected for this study. Hotel/motel employees in the USA whose work involves direct contact with customers comprised the study population. The survey included screening questions that excluded the participants who were not working directly with customers. Scales were developed based on past research (see Table 1 for measurement items). The familiarity scale was adopted from the informational familiarity scale developed by Seo *et al.* (2013), which is contextualized to assess familiarity with human trafficking through various informational resources, such as educational material and workshops. The perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry was developed using Duncan *et al.* (2009) scale for the perceived probability of a disease as a template. The items assess the perceived likelihood of human trafficking for sex in hotels/motels. The empathy scale items were adopted from different scales developed by Caruso and Mayer (1998), Davis (1983) and Spreng *et al.* (2009). The scales for perceived rewards of helping were generated based on the rewards of helping introduced by Batson (2014) and Brown (2016). Finally, the items for the likelihood to help were borrowed from Banyard's (2008) and Banyard *et al.*'s (2005) studies. Additionally, considering that respondents may try to provide socially desirable responses about their helping behavior in a context such as human trafficking to portray a positive self-image, a social desirability scale was included as a control variable in the study to examine whether social desirability bias distorted the findings (Crowne and Marlows, 1960). Finally, demographic questions and work-related questions were included to describe the sample characteristics.

Survey questions	Items
Screening questions	Do you work in a hotel/motel? Which department of a hotel/motel does your work involve? (Front office – housekeeping – other)
Familiarity (informational) (Seo *et al.*, 2013) Please rate your agreement level with the following statements about your familiarity with human trafficking through different informational resources. 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree	I learned about human trafficking through . . .. Educational manuals Training workshops Online courses Scientific articles
Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry (developed using the perceived vulnerability to diseases scale as a template (Duncan *et al.*, 2009) Please rate your agreement level with the following statements about the occurrence of human trafficking in the hotel industry. 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree	Hotels/motels are typically used as venues of human trafficking Hotels/motels are typically used for sex trafficking Hotels/motels are typically used for trafficking people Hotels/motels are typically used by sex traffickers Hotels/motels are typically used by purchasers of services provided by sex traffickers
Empathy (Caruso and Mayer, 1998; Davis, 1983; Spreng *et al.*, 2009) When you think about human trafficking victims that may be trafficked at your workplace, please indicate how likely it is that you experience the following. 1 = very unlikely; 7 = very likely	I have concerned feelings for them I feel sympathy for them I feel compassion for them I feel sorry for them I am concerned about the things that may happen to them
Perceived extrinsic rewards (Batson, 2014; Brown, 2016) Please rate your agreement level with the following statements about the factors that may have an influence on your decision to help or not to help the victims of human trafficking. 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree	My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim would help me. . . get a salary raise get a perk (employee of the month, incentive trips, gift cards, bonuses, parking spots) get more respect get approval of my supervisors at work
Perceived intrinsic rewards (Batson, 2014; Brown, 2016) Please rate your agreement level with the following statements about the factors that may have an influence on your decision to help or not to help the victims of human trafficking. 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree	My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim would help me. . . feel that I am doing the right thing feel that I do justice to victims feel that I find inner peace

(*continued*)

Table 1.
Measurement items used in the study

Table 1.

Survey questions	Items
Likelihood to help (Banyard, 2008; Banyard *et al.*, 2005) Please rate the likelihood of doing the following if you were to witness a human trafficking incident at your workplace. 1 = very unlikely; 7 = very likely	If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would ... call 911 contact the help hotlines call a crisis center notify my supervisor/manager notify my colleague(s) notify the human resources department (HR) at work notify the security at work
Social desirability Marlowe–Crowne social desirability scale (true-false questions) (Crowne and Marlows, 1960), short version	It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way. I am always careful about my manner of dress On a few occasions, I have given up something because I thought too little of my ability There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority, even though I knew they were right No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener There have been occasions when I have taken ad- vantage of someone I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings

The survey was designed using Qualtrics and was administered using an online survey platform, Amazon's Mechanical Turk, in May 2020. Respondents were incentivized US$2 for completing the survey. The sample (N = 628) was randomly split into two halves; the first half (*n* = 309) was used to refine the measurement items, and the second half (*n* = 319) was used to test the hypotheses. Since the measurement items were borrowed from different studies in different contexts and reworded to fit the context of the study, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to first purify the items using IBM's SPSS v.25. Then, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) were performed to test the reliability and validity of the two models using IBM's AMOS v.25.

5. Results

5.1 Sample characteristics
Descriptive statistics revealed that study participants were 32 years old on average, mostly male (68%), white (56%), married or in a domestic partnership (64%) and holding a bachelor's degree (60%). In terms of employment, participants mostly included full-time employees of the lodging sector (86%), holding a managerial position (58%) and working at the front office (72%) and housekeeping (28%) departments. Even though the gender ratio of the sample is skewed toward men, this mirrors the industry profile. Although the lodging industry employees are mostly women (The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020), management-level lodging employees, who are the major participants of this study, are mostly men (Arlotta, 2019).

5.2 Exploratory factor analysis
EFA was conducted after testing for sampling adequacy (KMO = 0.910, >0.7 threshold; and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity $p < 0.001$). Extracted communalities were above 0.3 (Hair *et al.*, 2010) and six factors were extracted explaining about 60% of the models. Inspection of the pattern matrix revealed that one item in intrinsic rewards (i.e. feeling good about oneself) had a problematic cross-loading; thus, it was removed. EFA was repeated, and six factors were extracted again that still explained 60% of the model. The pattern matrix showed that all factor loadings were greater than 0.5, and there were no strong cross-loadings, indicating convergent and discriminant validity. In addition, Cronbach's alphas were greater than 0.7, which showed an acceptable level of reliability (Table 2). Additionally, the factor correlation matrix showed that all correlation values were lower than 0.7, indicating no discriminant validity issue (Table 3).

To check and control the common method variance (CMV), Harman's Single-Factor Test was conducted by loading all variables into a single factor in EFA. The results showed that the variables explained 27.30% of the single factor. Since the variance explained was less than 50%, no CMV was found in the study. Finally, the descriptive statistics of the remaining measurement items were calculated for the second half of the sample (*n* = 319) as displayed in Table 4.

5.3 Test of egoism model
5.3.1 Measurement model. CFA revealed that all regression weights were significant ($p < 0.001$). The standardized regression weights below 0.7 (i.e. Likelihood to Help_ call 911, call a crisis center, notify my colleague(s), notify HR at work) were removed from the model except Intrinsic Reward_ Find inner peace. Perceived intrinsic rewards had three items, and the regression weight of Intrinsic Reward_ Find inner peace was at the borderline (>0.600); thus, it was kept in the model (Table 5). The convergent and discriminant validity of the constructs (Table 6) were checked, and no issue was found. All AVEs were greater than 0.5, all MSVs were smaller than AVEs, and the bivariate correlations between constructs were lower than the square roots of AVEs.

Table 2.
Results of exploratory factor analysis

Factors and items	Factor						Cronbach's alpha
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Familiarity with human trafficking							0.86
I learned about human trafficking through educational manuals	0.068	−0.062	−0.024	−0.106	0.729	0.228	
I learned about human trafficking through training workshops	−0.085	0.076	0.008	0.136	0.782	−0.016	
I learned about human trafficking through online courses	−0.065	0.090	−0.028	0.121	0.834	−0.076	
I learned about human trafficking through scientific articles	0.106	0.057	0.197	−0.043	0.573	−0.135	
Perceived probability of Trafficking in the Lodging Industry							0.88
Hotels/motels are typically used as venues of human trafficking	−0.108	0.085	0.667	0.107	0.090	0.004	
Hotels/motels are typically used for sex trafficking	−0.013	−0.077	0.788	−0.052	0.053	0.009	
Hotels/motels are typically used for trafficking people	0.154	0.035	0.660	−0.086	0.103	−0.054	
Hotels/motels are typically used by sex traffickers	−0.026	0.004	0.837	−0.071	−0.070	0.130	
Hotels/motels are typically used by purchasers of services provided by sex traffickers	−0.009	0.019	0.771	0.107	−0.057	−0.10	
Empathy with the victims							0.86
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I have concerned feelings for the victims of trafficking	0.043	−0.014	0.128	0.579	−0.046	0.031	
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I feel sympathy for the victims of trafficking	−0.017	0.016	0.018	0.802	0.060	−0.081	
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I feel compassion for the victims of trafficking	0.174	−0.091	0.018	0.571	0.073	0.048	
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I feel sorry for the victims of trafficking	0.092	−0.019	−0.179	0.750	0.061	0.030	
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I am concerned about the things that may happen to the victims of trafficking	−0.014	−0.031	0.015	0.725	0.060	0.064	
Perceived extrinsic rewards of helping the victims							0.92
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me get a salary raise	0.030	0.775	0.072	−0.052	0.074	−0.104	
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me get a perk (employee of the month, incentive trips, gift cards, bonuses)	0.115	0.787	0.008	−0.134	0.080	−0.040	

(continued)

Factors and items	Factor						Cronbach's alpha
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me get more respect	-0.074	0.911	-0.072	0.063	-0.038	0.131	
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me get approval of my supervisors	-0.44	0.883	0.026	0.007	0.009	0.017	
Perceived intrinsic rewards of helping the victims							0.79
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me feel that I am doing the right thing	-0.013	0.040	0.137	0.142	-0.020	0.538	
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me feel that I do justice to victims	-0.023	0.008	0.017	0.040	-0.80	0.817	
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me feel that I find inner peace	0.113	-0.003	-0.054	0.151	0.665	0.665	
Likelihood to help the victims							0.86
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would call 911	0.576	-0.119	0.104	0.078	-0.066	0.021	
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would contact the help hotlines	0.864	-0.151	-0.023	-0.113	0.129	-0.052	
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would call a crisis center	0.686	-0.12	-0.093	-0.029	0.110	0.098	
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would notify my supervisor/manager	0.554	0.048	0.099	0.257	-0.132	-0.064	
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would notify my colleague(s)	0.541	0.259	-0.047	0.147	-0.127	-0.008	
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would notify the human resources department (HR) at work	0.596	0.185	-0.084	-0.003	0.026	0.100	
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would notify the security at work	0.641	-0.050	0.062	0.145	-0.102	-0.44	

Extraction method: maximum likelihood
Rotation method: Promax with Kaiser normalization
a. Rotation converged in eight iterations

Table 2.

Factor	Likelihood to help the victims	Perceived extrinsic rewards of helping the victims	Perceived probability of trafficking in the lodging industry	Empathy with the victims	Familiarity with human trafficking	Perceived intrinsic rewards of helping the victims
Likelihood to help the victims	1.000					
Perceived extrinsic rewards of helping the victims	0.135	1.000				
Perceived probability of trafficking in the lodging industry	0.526	0.433	1.000			
Empathy with the victims	0.646	−0.118	0.437	1.000		
Familiarity with human trafficking	0.293	0.621	0.501	0.016	1.000	
Perceived intrinsic rewards of helping the victims	0.540	0.168	0.440	0.555	0.274	1.000

Notes: Extraction method: maximum likelihood; rotation method: Promax with Kaiser normalization

Table 3.
Factor correlation matrix

Also, composite reliability and maximum reliability values were above 0.7, so there was no reliability issue (Hair *et al.*, 2010).

In the next step, the model fit indices were calculated ($\rho < 0.001$, χ^2/df =1.78, GFI = 0.924, TLI = 0.959, CFI = 0.966, NFI = 0.927, RMSEA = 0.050, PCLOSE = 0.514 and SRMR = 0.056). According to Hair *et al.* (2010), if the sample size is >250, CFI or TLI > 0.9, NFI > 0.9 and RMSEA < 0.07 indicate the goodness of fit, although significant *p*-values are expected. Thus, the model fit of the study was acceptable.

5.3.2 Structural model. First, factor scores were calculated and multicollinearity was checked. All VIFs were less than 3 and all Tolerance values were less than 1; thus, there was no multicollinearity issue (Hair *et al.*, 2010). Next, a structural model was developed, and model fit indices were calculated. They showed a goodness of fit ($\rho < 0.001$, χ^2/df = 1.907, GFI = 0.918, TLI = 0.953, CFI = 0.960, NFI = 0.921, RMSEA = 0.053, PCLOSE = 0.270 and SRMR = 0.069). SEM results showed that familiarity with human trafficking exerted a positive impact on the perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry ($\beta = 0.384$, $\rho < 0.001$), thereby supporting *H1*. Familiarity also had a significant positive effect on extrinsic rewards ($\beta = 0.623$, $\rho < 0.001$), thus supporting *H2*. However, it did not have an effect on intrinsic rewards ($\beta = 0.120$, $\rho > 0.05$); therefore, *H3* was not supported. The opposite case was observed for the perceived probability of human trafficking, which did not have an effect on extrinsic rewards ($\beta = 0.018$, $\rho > 0.05$); thus, rejecting *H4*; while it had a positive effect on intrinsic rewards ($\beta = 0.351$, $\rho < 0.001$), thus supporting *H5*. Extrinsic rewards exerted a negligible impact on the likelihood to help, but the direction of the impact was surprisingly negative ($\beta = -0.133$, $\rho < 0.05$), thus *H6* was not supported. However, intrinsic rewards had a significant positive impact on the likelihood to help ($\beta = 0.650$, $\rho < 0.001$), thus, supporting *H7* (Table 7). It is worth mentioning that more than 42% of the variance of Likelihood to Help was accounted for by egoistic variables in this model.

5.3.3 Control variables. Social desirability and gender were included in the model as control variables. Social desirability had a small negative effect on extrinsic rewards ($\beta = -0.182$, $\rho < 0.001$), which implies that participants reported slightly lower levels of extrinsic rewards than their real levels. Gender had a small positive effect on the likelihood

Constructs and items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Familiarity with human trafficking				
I learned about human trafficking through educational manuals	1	7	4.86	1.648
I learned about human trafficking through training workshops	1	7	4.68	1.739
I learned about human trafficking through online courses	1	7	4.65	1.831
I learned about human trafficking through scientific articles	1	7	4.58	1.838
Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry				
Hotels/motels are typically used as venues of human trafficking	1	7	5.29	1.292
Hotels/motels are typically used for sex trafficking	1	7	5.35	1.328
Hotels/motels are typically used for trafficking people	1	7	5.22	1.305
Hotels/motels are typically used by sex traffickers	1	7	5.30	1.258
Hotels/motels are typically used by purchasers of services provided by sex traffickers	1	7	5.37	1.271
Empathy				
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I have concerned feelings for them	1	7	5.61	1.369
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I feel sympathy for them	1	7	5.58	1.394
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I feel compassion for them	1	7	5.57	1.365
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I feel sorry for them	1	7	5.62	1.417
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I am concerned about the things that may happen to them	1	7	5.69	1.341
Perceived intrinsic rewards of helping victims of trafficking				
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me feel that I am doing the right thing	1	7	5.36	1.443
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me feel that I do justice to victims	1	7	5.51	1.366
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me feel that I find inner peace	1	7	5.27	1.508
Perceived extrinsic rewards of helping victims of trafficking				
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me get a salary raise	1	7	4.30	1.940
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me get a perk (e.g. employee of the month, incentive trips, gift cards, bonuses, parking spots)	1	7	4.26	1.867
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me get more respect	1	7	4.73	1.838
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me get approval of my supervisors at work	1	7	4.61	1.863
Likelihood to help victims of human trafficking				
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would contact the help hotlines	1	7	5.41	1.324
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would notify my supervisor/manager	1	7	5.65	1.379
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would notify the security at work	1	7	5.60	1.388

Table 4.
Descriptive statistics of the measurement items (N = 319)

Factors and items	Factor loadings	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Familiarity with human trafficking					
I learned about human trafficking through educational manuals	0.757	1.000			
I learned about human trafficking through training workshops	0.794	1.106	0.079	13.992	***
I learned about human trafficking through online courses	0.824	1.208	0.083	14.518	***
I learned about human trafficking through scientific articles	0.777	1.144	0.084	13.692	***
Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry					
Hotels/motels are typically used as venues of human trafficking	0.710	1.000			
Hotels/motels are typically used for sex trafficking	0.742	1.073	0.090	11.883	***
Hotels/motels are typically used for trafficking people	0.749	1.064	0.089	11.975	***
Hotels/motels are typically used by sex traffickers	0.725	1.074	0.067	11.642	***
Hotels/motels are typically used by purchasers of services provided by sex traffickers	0.748	0.994	0.085	11.969	***
Perceived extrinsic rewards of helping the victims					
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me get a salary raise	0.907	1.000			
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me get a perk	0.888	0.942	0.041	22.982	***
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me get respect	0.808	0.844	0.045	18.964	***
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me get approval	0.841	0.891	0.043	20.547	***
Perceived intrinsic rewards of helping the victims					
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me feel that I am doing the right thing	0.827	1.000			
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me feel that I am doing justice to victims	0.856	0.980	0.066	14.757	***
My decision to help (or not to help) a human trafficking victim at my workplace depends on whether helping the victim help me feel that I find inner peace	0.631	0.798	0.071	11.257	***
Likelihood to help the victims					
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would contact the help hotlines	0.721	1.000			
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would notify my manager	0.819	1.182	0.099	11.988	***
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would notify the security at work	0.722	1.048	0.094	11.205	***

Table 5.
Results of the confirmatory factor analysis (egoism model)

to help, which suggests that female employees had a higher tendency to help the victims of human trafficking than male employees ($\beta = 0.145$, $\rho < 0.05$).

5.4 Test of altruism model
5.4.1 Measurement model. CFA revealed that all regression weights were significant ($P < 0.001$). The standardized regression weights below 0.7 (i.e. Likelihood to Help_ call 911, call a

Constructs	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	Perceived extrinsic rewards of helping the victims	Familiarity with human trafficking	Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry	Likelihood to help the victims	Perceived intrinsic rewards of helping the victims
Perceived extrinsic rewards of helping the victims	0.920	0.743	0.077	0.927	0.862				
Familiarity with human trafficking	0.781	0.641	0.045	0.784	0.665	0.800			
Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry	0.854	0.540	0.138	0.855	0.256	0.387	0.735		
Likelihood to help the victims	0.799	0.571	0.370	0.808	−0.001	0.174	0.363	0.756	
Perceived intrinsic rewards of helping the victims	0.819	0.605	0.370	0.848	0.277	0.213	0.372	0.608	0.778

Table 6.
Construct reliability and validity (egoism model)

Dependent variable		Independent variable	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Standardized estimate	Hypothesis
Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry	←	Familiarity with human trafficking	0.285	0.050	5.674	***	0.384	H1: supported
Perceived extrinsic rewards of helping the victims	←	Familiarity with human trafficking	0.883	0.092	9.574	***	0.623	H2: supported
Perceived intrinsic rewards of helping the victims	←	Familiarity with human trafficking	0.115	0.066	1.738	0.082	0.120	H3: not supported
Perceived extrinsic rewards of helping the victims	←	Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry	0.034	0.105	0.321	0.949	0.018	H4: not supported
Perceived intrinsic rewards of helping the victims	←	Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry	0.457	0.094	4.865	***	0.351	H5: supported
Likelihood to help the victims	←	Perceived extrinsic rewards of helping the victims	−0.073	0.032	−2.266	0.023	−0.133	H6: not supported Reverse relationship
Likelihood to help the victims	←	Perceived intrinsic rewards of helping the victims	0.525	0.059	8.926	***	0.650	H7: supported

Table 7.
Unstandardized and standardized regression weights of the structural model (egoism model)

crisis center, notify my colleague(s), notify HR at work) were removed from the model. The results of the final measurement model are displayed in Table 8. The convergent and discriminant validity of the constructs were checked, and no issue was found (Table 9). The model fit indices were calculated and an acceptable model fit was achieved ($\rho < 0.001$, χ^2/df = 1.851, GFI = 0.931, TLI = 0.955, CFI = 0.962, NFI = 0.922, RMSEA = 0.052, PCLOSE = 0.383 and SRMR = 0.043).

5.4.2 Structural model. First, factor scores were calculated and multicollinearity was checked. All VIFs were less than 3 and all Tolerance values were less than 1; thus, there was not any multicollinearity issue (Hair *et al.*, 2010). The structural model test revealed a goodness of fit ($\rho < 0.001$, χ^2/df = 1.773, GFI = 0.927, TLI = 0.949, CFI = 0.957, NFI = 0.908, RMSEA = 0.049, PCLOSE = 0.533 and SRMR = 0.051). SEM results showed that familiarity

Factors and items	Factor loadings	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Familiarity with human trafficking					
I learned about human trafficking through educational manuals	0.772	1.000			
I learned about human trafficking through training workshops	0.809	1.106	0.077	14.306	***
I learned about human trafficking through online courses	0.801	1.153	0.081	14.167	***
I learned about human trafficking through scientific articles	0.773	1.117	0.082	13.670	***
Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry					
Hotels/motels are typically used as venues of human trafficking	0.715	0.944	0.078	12.107	***
Hotels/motels are typically used for sex trafficking	0.739	1.002	0.080	12.503	***
Hotels/motels are typically used for trafficking people	0.751	1.000			
Hotels/motels are typically used by sex traffickers	0.724	0.930	0.076	12.261	***
Hotels/motels are typically used by purchasers of services provided by sex traffickers	0.745	0.968	0.077	12.614	***
Empathy with the victims					
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I have concerned feelings for the victims of trafficking	0.762	1.000			
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I feel sympathy for the victims of trafficking	0.785	1.048	0.075	14.064	***
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I feel compassion for the victims of trafficking	0.819	1.072	0.073	14.731	***
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I feel sorry for the victims of trafficking	0.711	0.967	0.077	12.633	***
When I think about victims who may be trafficked at my workplace, I am concerned about the things that may happen to the victims of trafficking	0.760	0.977	0.072	13.574	***
Likelihood to Help the Victims					
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would contact the help hotlines	0.710	0.913	0.080	11.347	***
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would notify my manager	0.808	1.082	0.088	12.351	***
If I were to witness a human trafficking incident at my workplace, I would notify the security at work	0.743	1.000			

Table 8.
Results of the confirmatory factor analysis
(altruism model)

Constructs	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry	Empathy with the victims	Likelihood to help the victims	Familiarity with human trafficking
Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry	0.854	0.540	0.154	0.855	0.735			
Empathy with the victims	0.808	0.585	0.000	0.816	0.383	0.765		
Likelihood to help the victims	0.798	0.570	0.130	0.805	0.361	0.677	0.755	
Familiarity with human trafficking	0.868	0.622	0.154	0.869	0.393	0.013	0.181	0.789

Table 9.
Construct reliability
and validity
(altruism model)

with human trafficking exerted a positive impact on the perceived probability of human trafficking ($\beta = 0.391$, $\rho < 0.001$), thereby supporting *H1*. Familiarity did not have an effect on empathy ($\beta = -0.114$, $\rho > 0.05$), thus rejecting *H8*. The perceived probability of human trafficking had a significant positive effect on empathy ($\beta = 0.445$, $\rho < 0.001$), thus supporting *H9*. Empathy exerted a positive impact on the likelihood to help ($\beta = 0.671$, $\rho < 0.001$), thus *H10* was supported (Table 10). It should be noted that more than 46% of the variance of Likelihood to Help was accounted for by empathy in this model.

5.4.3 Control variables. The influence of social desirability and gender was checked. Social desirability had a small positive effect on empathy ($\beta = 0.123$, $\rho < 0.05$), which implies that participants reported slightly higher levels of empathy than their real levels. Gender also had a small positive effect on the likelihood to help, which suggests that female employees had a higher tendency to help the victims of human trafficking than male employees ($\beta = 0.111$, $\rho < 0.05$).

6. Discussion and conclusion

The study compared egoism and altruism to explain hotel employees' helping behavior toward the victims of human trafficking. Model test results showed that hotel employees' familiarity with human trafficking exerted a significant influence on their perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry. Past research also showed resources such as handbooks, articles, workshops and educational courses are key to employees' knowledge about the nature of human trafficking, forms of exploitation, victims' characteristics and trafficking venues (De Shalit *et al.*, 2014).

In the egoism model, familiarity had a positive effect on extrinsic rewards but not on intrinsic ones. Informational familiarity with human trafficking may provide hospitality employees with some information about the rewards that they can obtain from their workplace for helping a victim (e.g. perks); however, intrinsic rewards cannot be obtained from an external environment; thus, informational familiarity with human trafficking does not lead to any perception about intrinsic rewards among employees. Intrinsic rewards can be formed and learned by doing meaningful undertakings over a lifetime.

The results of the egoism model also indicated that the probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry had a significant effect on perceived intrinsic rewards of helping but not on extrinsic ones. Past research indicates that the increase in employees' perception of the vulnerability of their workplace to human trafficking may put less emphasis on obtaining extrinsic rewards (Batson *et al.*, 2002). A vulnerable workplace may negatively affect its employees' sense of safety and professional image; thus, they may not expect to receive any extrinsic rewards to engage in helping behavior. However, they may expect to experience intrinsic rewards since helping a trafficking victim at the workplace may lead to an increase in employees' intrinsic, physical, psychological and professional safety and well-being.

Furthermore, the results of the egoism model showed that perceived intrinsic rewards had a positive effect on the likelihood to help, while surprisingly extrinsic rewards had a negative small effect on it. As discussed earlier, employees would like to experience intrinsic rewards because helping in a threatening situation, such as human trafficking, is perceived as a meaningful accomplishment. Thus, if employees assume that intrinsic rewards are obtained through helping the victims of trafficking, they will have a higher motivation to help. However, this study revealed that if employees assume that extrinsic rewards are received by helping the victims, they will have a lower motivation to help. This negative relationship can be explained by the overjustification effect, which is expressed in decreased motivation to perform an activity when being externally rewarded (Deci, 1971; Lepper *et al.*, 1973).

Dependent variable		Independent variable	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Standardized estimate	Hypothesis
Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry	←	Familiarity with human trafficking	0.301	0.052	5.846	***	0.391	*H1*: supported
Empathy with the victims	←	Familiarity with human trafficking	−0.094	0.056	−1.689	0.091	−0.114	*H8*: not supported
Empathy with the victims	←	Perceived probability of human trafficking in the lodging industry	0.474	0.078	6.068	***	0.445	*H9*: supported
Likelihood to help the victims	←	Empathy with the victims	0.664	0.071	9.289	***	0.671	*H10*: supported

Table 10.
Unstandardized and standardized regression weights of the structural model (altruism model)

More specifically, the presence of extrinsic rewards may cause employees to feel that if they help the victims of human trafficking, it will be due to an external incentive rather than an intrinsic interest in helping, which may decrease their motivation to help. Also, employees may consider extrinsic rewards as a bribe or coercive factor that controls their behavior, resulting in decreased likelihood to help (Ulber *et al.*, 2016).

In the altruism model, familiarity did not have any significant effect on empathy, against the findings of past research (Coyne *et al.*, 2019; Zagefka *et al.*, 2013). Empathy is an affective state induced by perceiving another person in need. More specifically, when an individual perceives that another person is in need, they will be emotionally engaged. Informational resources such as educational material typically provide descriptive information through a third-person perspective, which may not have enough power to emotionally arouse employees and increase their empathy toward victims.

The perceived probability of human trafficking had a positive influence on empathy in the altruism model. When employees perceive that their customers may be the victims of trafficking and have painful experiences at hotels/motels, they may feel empathy toward the victims (Dijker, 2010; Sinclair *et al.*, 2017). Although employees may not directly observe the victims, their perception of customers being in pain at their workplace may activate their parental caregiving system and consequently result in empathy with the victims (Bernhardt and Singer, 2012). In addition, empathy had a positive effect on the likelihood to help, which can be explained by the Empathy–Altruism Hypothesis.

In sum, the egoism and altruism models showed that both perceived intrinsic rewards of helping and empathy are the major antecedents of the likelihood to help in human trafficking incidents. Both of these factors are intrinsic; thus, they are not contradictory and can simultaneously influence helping behavior in a situation like human trafficking with a high likelihood of costs or risks that could involve psychological and even physical danger to the helper.

7. Theoretical implications

Theoretically, this study makes a significant contribution to the literature on human trafficking by focusing on the employees of hotels/motels, which are among the top venues of human trafficking incidents. Past studies mainly investigated the subject of human trafficking from the survivors' perspective, while the current study focused on the lodging industry employees who might encounter trafficking victims at their workplace. This study also provides a new perspective on helping behavior toward victims of human trafficking by diverging from the past research that mostly investigated helping behavior in emergency incidents that occurred in front of bystanders. The study results showed that human trafficking incidents are complex and require potential helpers' awareness, knowledge and perception of the probability of the incidents. Furthermore, this study compared two rival schools of thought on helping behavior and showed that perceived intrinsic rewards of helping and empathy with victims are the main precursors of the likelihood to help the victims of trafficking in egoism and altruism models, respectively. The study contributed to the egoism school of thought and the Cost-Reward Model by showing that only perceived intrinsic rewards drive individuals' intention to help in risky covert situations, such as human trafficking, while perceived extrinsic rewards may demotivate people to help in these situations. Contrary to previous research findings, this study revealed a negative effect of perceived extrinsic rewards on the likelihood to help, which may be due to the over-justification effect and high level of risk in human trafficking incidents. The study also contributed to the altruism school of thought by supporting the Empathy–Altruism Hypothesis and showing that empathy plays an important role in driving helping behavior

in the human trafficking context. Since both perceived intrinsic rewards and empathy are intrinsic factors, it can be inferred that people need to be intrinsically motivated to help others in risky situations. Thus, it would be better to look at the helping behavior from an extrinsic vs intrinsic motivation lens rather than an egoistic vs altruistic one in the human trafficking context.

8. Managerial implications

Paraskevas and Brookes (2018a) propose that hotels "have moral obligations to protect victims that are trafficked within their properties and to help law enforcement to combat this crime" (p. 2009). Even though Baum and Hai (2020) foresee that global restrictions on travelers due to COVID-19 may help reduce human trafficking by limiting the mobility of victims along with normal travelers, effective combat with the help of employees may be a more permanent solution to the issue. Paraskevas and Brookes (2018a) identified several macro-, meso- and micro-level factors contributing to hotels' vulnerability to human trafficking, and they concluded that workplace culture is one of the microlevel factors that should be the starting point to combat human trafficking. The workplace culture should highlight employees as a critical factor to combat human trafficking. Considering the results of the study, lodging practitioners should increase their employees' awareness and knowledge about human trafficking through educational materials and workshops. However, educational resources should avoid traumatic language that portrays victims as passive individuals belonging to specific groups (De Shalit et al., 2014). In addition, practitioners should provide psycho-educational programs for their employees to increase their sense of belonging and inclusiveness. Programs that provide mindfulness- and acceptance-based behavioral techniques can increase employees' empathy by making them aware of their emotions and experiences (meta-cognitive awareness), developing their capacity of understanding others' emotions and experiences and helping them to suspend judgments about themselves and others (Block-Lerner et al., 2007).

It is also recommended that lodging businesses develop a protocol for reporting human trafficking incidents. Employees should know exactly what actions they must take when they suspect a trafficking case. For example, some businesses may prefer to assign a specific hotline to trafficking and ask their employees to contact the hotline whenever they encounter an incident. Also, practitioners should avoid providing any external incentives for their employees to induce helping behavior. Instead, they should subtly remind employees of the intrinsic rewards of helping. For better crime control, Hua et al. (2020) recommend better cooperation among tourism stakeholders and the use of technological tools. Thus, technological tools can be used to encourage anonymous cooperation of employees as well as customers for more effective prevention of human trafficking in the lodging industry.

9. Limitations and future research suggestions

The study was conducted during the lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Millions of people, particularly in the lodging industry, were laid off during the pandemic. Thus, a lot of employees, particularly male management-level employees, who typically do not participate in online surveys, participated in this study, which resulted in an unequal gender ratio in the sample. Considering the above limitation, in-person data collection from hotel employees with proportionate gender and position representation is recommended for future studies. The socially desirable nature of the helping behavior topic may have also posed another limitation. It is suggested that future studies apply more restrictive measures to control the social desirability effect, such as an experimental design in a controlled environment. Additionally, this study included empathy as a unidimensional construct that

refs to an other-oriented emotional concern; however, there is a cognitive dimension of empathy (i.e. perspective-taking) that can be included in future research. Finally, the study did not include fear as a potential reason for people not helping potential victims of trafficking. Since traffickers are highly dangerous criminals who would do anything to protect their property (victims), this may be a highly influential factor in helping/not helping and should be investigated in future research. Aston *et al.* (2022) acknowledge the lack of research on trafficking and recommend more academic attention and interdisciplinary research on this meta issue for more effective measures to prevent it. Hence, interdisciplinary research on employees as well as customers is needed for more comprehensive measures to prevent tourism and hospitality venues from human trafficking.

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