Working against trafficking

Perspectives on collaborative work between Swedish administrative authorities.

Jenny Edlund Ängskog

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Supervisor: Pia Tham
Examiner: Pär Grell
Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore prerequisites for collaboration between Swedish authorities in their work with women exposed to trafficking with sexual purpose. A qualitative research method was used. Three over-phone semi-structured interviews and one face-to-face semi-structured interview were conducted with professionals from the County Administrative Board, the Social Services and the Swedish Migration Agency. The results were analysed thematically through three themes with relating subthemes. The results showed that the professionals perceived collaborative work as important in order to treat each aspect of the diverse issue that is human trafficking, as well as to exchange knowledge and experiences with the involved authorities. Moreover, the professionals described that prerequisites for a functioning collaborative work are; clear assignation of roles, sufficient time and budget, and that each agency is aware of the importance of collaboration. Some difficulties within collaborative work highlighted by the participants were; different opinions and agendas between the agencies and lack of knowledge. Finally, some implications for future research were noticed, for example a lack of research regarding collaborative work between agencies against human trafficking for sexual purposes.

Key words: sex trafficking, collaboration, social work, international social work
Preamble

I would like to express my utmost appreciations to the informants who participated in this study, without whom this essay would not have been possible. Thank you for sharing your knowledge and time.

I would also like to thank my family and friends for their endless support and cheering on, as well as control reading and inspiring me. Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude towards my supervisor Pia Tham for being so very helpful and patient with me.

Jenny
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1. Introduction

Selling sexual services, or prostitution, is not something new to this world. However, the concept of selling other persons’ bodies in sexual purposes (or other types of services, such as labour and organs) to buyers in other countries is a consequence of a more globalized world. In the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century a more open trade between states started, and not only common goods were exchanged among countries. Countries imported and exported, first and foremost, women as sexual objects to satisfy men’s sexual needs. Furthermore, women have been, and are, the group which has been mostly used for the purpose of both prostitution and human trafficking (Lee, 2011). Furthermore, Penttinen (2008) described that women have been - and are being - categorized into good and spoiled. This categorization has been prominent in a majority of countries and contexts and has been a general view of female population through the years. The good women are those who are “marriage material”, and they are to be saved as virgins for their future husbands. The spoiled women however, are considered as ruined and therefore not to be married but merely as an accessory to please needs of men. Therefore, to keep the good women clean from pre-marital sexual activities, prostitution, and later on also sex trafficking, became a way of keeping these women clean and let the spoiled women become objects for men’s sexuality. Hence, the categorisation of good and spoiled women seems to have been a substantial factor behind human trafficking in women specifically. When the world shrunk, in the sense that it became globalized and thereby easier to travel between countries, sex trade also escalated and turned into a problem for especially women exposed to poverty (Penttinen, 2008).

During the past years however, a systematic work against human trafficking in purpose of sexual exploitation has started around the world. Globally, human trafficking is seen as a stupendous violation against human rights. Furthermore, the United Nations developed the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto, with focus on exploitation of women and children as these groups are judged as the most vulnerable for trafficking of any forms. This convention was made to prevent trafficking in persons, to protect the victims of the action as well as to prosecute
the traffickers. Furthermore, it shall function as an instrument for states to utilise when dealing with cases of trafficking (United Nations, 2004).

My understanding of the topic is that many women (as well as children and men) are in danger of being used by traffickers. Women are pointed out as more vulnerable than men regarding trafficking with sexual purposes, as the society is shaped around patriarchal structures (Ebbe & Das, 2008: United Nations, 2004). Therefore, this study will focus on women exposed to sex trafficking.

Since trafficking consists of several operations around the globe and the persons exposed to these operations are being exported and imported between countries, it is highly linked to international social work. It is up to every person who is capable to help these victims, and it must be done on an international as well as national level, with established collaboration networks between both states and national authorities and organisations.

This study will however focus on how Swedish authorities collaborate against trafficking. Furthermore, the authorities involved in this study are; the County Administrative Board (translation from Länsstyrelsen), the Police, the Social Services and the Swedish Migration Agency (translation from Migrationsverket). The County Administrative Board have different projects regarding human trafficking, where they for example try to implement, as well as assist in, collaborative work regarding trafficking in humans (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, n.d.). The Police first and foremost have the legal perspective regarding human trafficking, which is to prevent networks within the phenomenon as well as to prosecute the traffickers. Moreover, the Police try to keep close collaboration with for example the Social Services. The trafficking victims usually come in contact with the Police as a first step, and thereafter might need help and care. Thus, the Social Services are significant, as they are the authority which provides with for example financial and resident support as well as counselling (Polisen, n.d.). The Swedish Migration Agency’s task is to detect cases of trafficking during for example asylum seeking processes. The professionals within the Swedish Migration Agency are given information regarding for
example signs of human trafficking to look for during interviews with asylum seekers and other clients they come in contact with (Migrationsverket, n.d.1; Migrationsverket, n.d.2).

1.1 **Aim and research questions**

The aim of this study was to explore how professionals describe the pre-requisites for collaboration between Swedish authorities in their work with women exposed to trafficking for sexual purpose.

To assist in answering the aim of the study, the following research questions were formulated:

1) How do the professionals reflect on the importance of collaboration between different authorities in their work against human trafficking with sexual purpose?
2) How do the professionals describe their collaboration with other authorities in their work against human trafficking with sexual purposes?
3) What are, according to these professionals, the prerequisites for accomplishing collaboration between authorities when working against trafficking for sexual purposes?

**Concepts**

**Collaboration** when discussing this concept throughout this study, I have chosen the definition of the concept made in the Swedish Social Services Act (translation from ’Socialtjänstlagen’). The Social Services Act (SFS 2001:453) states in the 3rd Ch 1§ that part of the social welfare board’s (translation from ’socialnämnden’) responsibilities is to partake in community development as well as to collaborate with other organisations and agencies in order to promote good municipal environments. Furthermore, the Social Services Act (SFS 2001:453) claims that clients should be involved in the social welfare board’s decisions regarding the specific individual, as well as it lies within the social welfare board’s responsibilities to collaborate with other governmental as well as nongovernmental agencies in the best interest of the client.
Human trafficking for sexual purposes

Sexual trafficking / human trafficking / trafficking for sexual exploitation there are several concepts that are used synonymously and refer to the definition of trafficking according to the United Nations. The UN describes human trafficking as involving either recruiting, transporting, housing of or receiving of persons; the process is built on violence, threats or other forms of force, fraud or misfeasance to be able to control and abuse other human beings; and that the intention is to use another individual in prostitution or other forms of sexual abuse, forced labour, slavery or organ removal (United Nations, 2000).

Trafficker / procurer in this study, these concepts regard the person or persons who for example recruit, lodge, transport and/or in other ways are involved in the act of taking advantage of these women (Länsstyrelsen Gävleborg, n.d.).

1.2 Essay disposition

The essay begins with an introduction to the topic, where I narrowed down the issue of trafficking and formulated the aim and research questions. Then follow explanation of concepts utilised throughout the study. In chapter two of the study, five previous research are described and then discussed. Thereafter follows theoretical framework, where the concept of collaboration is presented. In chapter four the methodology section of the study is described, including for example sampling, research process and validity and credibility. Thereon, the results of the study are presented through three themes and belonging subthemes, followed by an analysis after each theme. Chapter six provides a discussion of the results related to the aim and research questions of the study as well as reflection upon the utilised methodology. Lastly, chapter six includes suggestions for further research.

1.3 Background

In Sweden, human trafficking has been illegal since 2002 (SFS 1962:700: SFS 2002:436). In addition to illegalising trade of human beings, it is also illegal to purchase any form of
sexual services from another person according to 6th chapter 11§ of the Swedish Criminal Code (SFS 1962:700). This legislation was set in 1999. Since the illegalisation of trafficking in persons, various interventions and projects have been created to stop and prevent the trafficking industry. However, the effort to establish collaborations between authorities and organisations has also arisen. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency (translation from ‘Jämställdhetsmyndigheten’) has together with the Stockholm County Administrative Board (translation from ‘Länsstyrelsen Stockholm’) developed an operative network called NMT; National Methodological Support Team against prostitution and trafficking (own translation from ‘Nationellt Metodstödsteam’) (Nationellt Metodstödsteam, n.d.: Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, n.d.). NMT consists of agencies working against all forms of trafficking as well as prostitution, and their goal is to streamline and develop collaborations between agencies in their work against trafficking. To have an intermediary professional to assist in collaboration regarding human trafficking has shown necessary, as cases of trafficking involve various actors. Involved actors may for example be perpetrators and victims as well as authorities to deal with all aspects of the cases such as the Police, the Social Services, Migration Agencies in both Sweden and other countries, and so forth. Furthermore, NMT should also assist authorities directly in their work with trafficking cases. Their focus is to support regions and counties which lack experience in working against trafficking and prostitution. Therefore, NMT have divided Sweden into six regions, where each region has been allocated minimum one regional coordinator who should assist agencies within the region in trafficking cases as well as to ensure that the cases are linked to the correct agency. Moreover, NMT provide with material for education and information regarding trafficking, to be utilised by professionals who may come across these cases (Nationellt Metodstödsteam, n.d.).

Furthermore, the County Administrative Board (n.d.) highlights that collaboration between authorities should be marked as highly significant when working with cases of trafficking. Collaboration is essential to ensure that the victims acquire the support they need and are entitled to, but also to effectively be able to investigate and access the possible crime. It is important to remember that each authority have their specific responsibilities in a case and ensure that these responsibilities are withheld. Moreover,
for well-functioning collaboration, it is important to give clear instructions as to which professional group possess which responsibilities and keep close contact between involved authorities. Therefore, it is required that each authority involved have one contact person in each separate case to facilitate the communication between agencies (Länsstyrelsen Gävleborg, n.d.). Furthermore, the Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings, which was developed by the Council of Europe (2005) to protect the victims as well as to convict the traffickers, argue that collaboration between countries is an important step in preventing trading in human beings.

2. Previous research

Research on human trafficking and more specifically sex trafficking in women is extensive. However, there is little research to be found which focus on collaboration between authorities in the work against human trafficking with sexual purpose. Therefore, the previous research utilised in this study concerns collaboration between authorities and organisations in general, and not specifically against human trafficking. I assume that collaboration between authorities and professionals within social work in general can be relevant here as the best interest of the client should be the focal point of any form of collaboration in social work.

2.1 An international study on collaboration between professionals in social work

Collins and McCray (2012) carried out a study with the aim to explore how professionals perceived each other’s occupations as well as how they experienced the framework of collaboration, by performing 20 semi-structured interviews.

According to the authors, collaboration between authorities demand proper framework for procedures and roles in order for each party and person involved to know what to do when and why. The United Kingdom had a framework created for this purpose regarding work with youths and children in social work and health care.
Collins and McCray (2012) discovered that the professionals interviewed from the different agencies perceived that the first and foremost focus of their work was to ensure that the needs of the children and youths were met. Moreover, collaboration was perceived to give new perspectives about the situation of their clients, since different areas of expertise opened for new points of views. However, the results also showed that each agency had their specific tasks, which made the priorities between the agencies collide. This made it difficult for the agencies to fully collaborate, as each agency assess their perspective as the most important. Yet, the framework of collaboration simplified the agencies’ work together as this made it clear for each party to know what to do and why as well as creating a better understanding for each other’s work (Collins & McCray, 2012).

2.2 A Swedish study on collaboration between professionals in social work and health care in Sweden

Dunér and Wolmesjö (2015) conducted a study regarding collaboration between care administrators (own translation from ‘biståndshandläggare’), physiotherapists and nurses. The study was conducted through a workshop in Sweden, 40 care managers from various municipalities participated. Moreover, the workshop treated aspects regarding the strive for collaborative work, such as; ethical dilemmas and challenges. In the next step, two focus groups were made, within which the issues discussed during the workshop were further discussed.

The results of this research showed that this type of collaboration in general led to better judgments of needs as well as better provided care for disabled persons or elderly. However, some structural factors affecting possible good collaboration were discovered, such as; laws and regulations, as well as varying goals between the organisations. These different goals of each agency were noticed to create friction between the professionals, seeing as they usually perceive their aim as the most significant for the client. Furthermore, it was discovered that the collaboration guidelines were often quite vague,
which made it difficult for each professional involved to understand which task was appointed to which professional. This created confusion in work places, and professionals tended to perform other actors’ work in areas where they were lacking knowledge and mandate, which in turn made the client experience feelings of insecurity and confusion (Dunér & Wolmesjö, 2015).

2.3 Collaboration between professionals in social psychiatry and psychiatry in Sweden

Matscheck (2011) performed a qualitative case study with the aim to explore how the collaboration between social psychiatry and the psychiatry in a Swedish municipality functioned, as well as to discover if it would be possible to implement a long-term strategy of collaboration between these actors. Furthermore, the research included professionals with various forms of responsibilities and employments, working with persons age 18-65 years, in order to gain more varied perspectives on the subject. The participants included coordinators, managers and people of diverse collaborations.

Results of his research showed that collaboration between agencies is significant for the client’s health and should also occur during instances where the client’s health is of focus. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of municipal and other organisations to collaborate and continue to improve their collaborations. In conclusion, the researcher also emphasises that it is important for the collaboration to be clear and organised for each involved professional to understand what should be done when and by whom (Matscheck, 2011).

2.4 Collaboration between professionals in health care and social work in a “family central”

Abrahamson (2007) carried out a study regarding Family Centrals (own translation from ‘familjecentral’), where professionals from both the social services and health sector work together with the purpose of helping their clients. The research was conducted at a family
central where a scientific project was performed. The researcher made interviews with the participants as well as made observations about their experiences. Regular meetings between the participants and the researcher were held.

Abrahamson (2007) discovered both inner and outer obstacles, which both affected the collaboration between the health care personnel and the social workers. An inner obstacle was that there was a lack of clear directions about which tasks belonged to which profession. Moreover, the professionals had a regulatory document (own translation from ‘styrdokument’) to utilise in their collaboration. This document was however rather indistinct regarding when collaboration should be performed as well as which tasks and responsibilities belonged to which occupational group. The participants therefore argued that they needed more clear instructions. Furthermore, the different professions argued that their perspectives of the needs of the clients were more important than the other profession’s, which sometimes resulted in conflicts between the parties.

Moreover, outer obstacles were described. One of these outer obstacles was that the social workers’ responsibilities were quite feebly described, whereas the health care personnel had very clear-cut instructions in the regulatory document. This made the health care staff to seem inflexible. Furthermore, the lack of time was perceived as significant; the professionals described shortage of time to establish collaboration with other professions, as their time was spent on other aspects, such as; financial and practical matters.

In conclusion, Abrahamson (2007) noticed a ‘us and them’ division between the social workers and health care personnel. This created somewhat of a wall between the professions, making collaboration difficult. The researcher therefore argued, according to the results, that it was essential for the involved professions to discuss goals and treatment plans together in order to develop functioning collaboration.
2.5 The importance of effective governments in the work against human trafficking

Amahazion (2015) from the USA conducted a literature review research regarding the significance of established human rights as well as efficiency from governments to combat trafficking. The researcher read and summarised criminal and legal studies, gender and women’s studies, as well as statistics. The data utilised was published during the years 2001 to 2011 and stemmed from 168 countries. The researcher then analysed the data by summarising it and through descriptive variables.

The results of the study show that it is important for each country to practice human rights, and to embed these in their work with people exposed to trafficking. Amahazion (2015) describes government effectiveness as the capacity of countries to perform their jurisdictions regarding sustaining and establishing law, order and regulations within their borders. Furthermore, the researcher highlights that not all states have the prerequisites to efficiently utilise these acts, as countries possess variously developed bureaucracy, effective state bodies, knowledge regarding social structures, and abilities of providing security to their citizens. Moreover, countries differ broadly in what extent they pledge to laws and regulations. Amahazion (2015) argues that some countries have corrupt governments, which further aggravates the difficulties in government effectiveness. Thus, the results of the research tell that not only do states need to possess established laws and regulations regarding trafficking and human rights; but they must also have the tools and possibilities to carry them out (Amahazion, 2015).

2.6 Discussion and summary of previous research

The previous research presented above discusses collaboration between different authorities in relation to social work. In these studies, there was discovered that professionals collaborating still tend to view their area and perspective as the more significant ones. It was also discovered that an ‘us and them’ atmosphere can be noticed between social workers and health care personnel, which makes collaboration between these professions difficult (Abrahamson, 2007). Furthermore, Dunér and Wolmesjö
(2015) found that an aggravating factor regarding collaboration was that the different professions had different responsibilities and goals in various cases, and that each professional perceived their goals as the most significant.

Others argue that the obstacles described in the paragraph above can however be prevented, if the collaboration is clear and organised where each profession has their distinct role and function in every individual case (Matscheck, 2011). This can be arranged through frameworks of collaboration as well as good communication between each involved agency (Abrahamson, 2007; Matscheck, 2011). Moreover, collaboration between agencies is highly significant, as it generates new perspectives and understandings of clients’ situations (Collins & McCray, 2012). Last, Amahazion (2015) argues for the importance of functioning, efficient governments, which implement and follow laws and regulations regarding for example human rights and crime control in order to fully being able to combat trafficking.

3. Theoretical framework

This chapter will present the theoretical framework chosen for this study. The theoretical framework consists firstly of organisation theory, which was chosen in order to increase the understanding of how organisations work; alone as well as together. Secondly, I have chosen the concept of collaboration. I find the concept of collaboration to be an important approach to the topic of the study as it allows to deepen the understanding for collaborative work and how to make it possible. Furthermore, these factors are significant as this study aims to explore how professionals describe the pre-requisites for collaboration between Swedish authorities.

3.1 Organisation theory

Organisations have been defined as formal and goal-oriented units and that they furthermore have merely one way of organising. However, it has lately been shown that
the case is rather the opposite; organisations tend to be affected by their surroundings and they do in fact have as a goal to adapt to and function within surrounding circumstances (Johansson, 2002). Furthermore, authorities can be defined as formal organisations. There are different ways of describing what characterises formal organisations possess. However, one of these definitions include that they should always have formalised purposes or goals (Forssell & Ivarsson Westerberg, 2007).

Another significant factor within organisation theory, is that various structures can be found within organisations. These could be for example clear-cut role and responsibility assignments within the organisation, as well as which professionals have which authorisations. How these structures are formed depends to a large extent on how the organisation is formed (Forsell & Ivarsson Westerberg, 2007). Furthermore, there are other controlling elements within organisations. These could be resources, education, rules and communication. Resources include for example budget, which decides where money should be spent, as well as staff, which decides which area should be provided with extra or less staff. Furthermore, education and communication are significant elements within organisations as these keep organisations up to date and informed about their field and organisation (Ahrne & Papakostas, 2014; Forssell & Ivarsson Westerberg, 2007).

3.1.2 Organisation theory related to collaborative work

Within organisation theory, there are two central concepts which are lifted; specialisation and integration. Specialisation refers to how organisations distribute work tasks and responsibilities within the organisation. Integration then refers to collaboration between authorities in order to increase effectiveness and reach of their work (Grell, Ahmadi & Blom, 2013). Organisations which are focused on working with people have lately started to focus more on specialisation, which in turn has led to increased demands of collaboration. In these circumstances, collaboration is thought to increase the quality of the organisation and care for the experiences and resources within the organisation as well as to prevent dismemberment of the organisation (Grell, 2016).
Organisations within the social work field, and this especially regards the Social Services, are usually divided into different units. These units are supposed to tend to various needs of the clients, such as: financial aid, children, youth and family, addicts and so forth. This kind of division is called *problem specialisation*. However, there is also a disjunction regarding differences in investigations and decision depending on which treatment plan and interventions are concerned. This way of separation is called *function specialisation*. Grell, Ahmadi and Blom (2013) highlight that *specialisation* within authorities can be applicative in order to deal with specific problems or target groups. However, *specialisation* might also risk difficulties to arise within the organisations. Such risks might be that the organisations do not know within which department the responsibilities lie. This can lead to an increase in work load and “unnecessary work” to be performed. However, it may also cause a situation where no-one is taking care of the client because there is no clarity in which agency should be performing what task. Therefore, these types of risks demand for thorough planning both within and between authorities, to prevent these risks from arising.

### 3.2 Collaboration as a concept

As there is no generic or established theory of collaboration this study will use the concept of collaboration as theoretical point of departure. Danermark (2003) is a prominent researcher within the field of collaboration and is, as Boklund (1995), Danermark and Kullberg (1999) and Löfström (2001), often referred to when writing about collaboration.

Danermark (2003) defines collaboration as people working together towards an explicit purpose or goal and Danermark and Kullberg (1999) discuss collaboration as an important element in labour markets of developed welfare states. Moreover, Boklund (1995) also emphasises that collaboration is essential and demanded in order to achieve a society where different perspectives are considered as well as where communication is functioning. Danermark (2003) highlights collaboration between agencies as a method which will facilitate authority work, as well as benefit the client as professionals can exchange knowledge, experiences and competence through successful collaborations.
Furthermore, Löfström (2001) argues that collaboration contain three eminent reasons for authorities to collaborate:

1) Collaboration gives local actors as well as citizens an increased possibility to influence their cases.
2) Collaboration allows authorities to meet individual needs of each groups of the society.
3) Last, collaboration can function as a way for authorities with similar goals and operations to more efficiently utilise resources, regarding for example usage of supportive interventions. Furthermore, this may result in improvement of societal budget as well as more qualitative work.

Löfström (2001) further argues that collaboration should not be looked upon as a process created to force professionals to change their goals and purposes. He merely suggests authorities to see how agencies and organisations with similar aims can streamline their collaborative work in order to generate improved patterns of management operations.

Boklund describes in her doctoral dissertation (1995) that a significant factor and possible outcome of collaboration is the comprehensive view over a certain phenomenon. A comprehensive view means that professionals allow for different perspectives and points of views to be considered in client meetings. According to Boklund (1995) there are two different perspectives regarding comprehensive view; the macro perspective and the micro perspective. The macro perspective suggests that agencies should provide with more efficient and sufficient care for the client; the micro perspective means to focus on the specific situation of the client when assessments are made in client cases. These perspectives, and this comprehensive view, are essential to bear in mind when collaborating within social work (Boklund, 1995).

3.2.1 Prerequisites for functioning collaboration

According to Danermark (2003), when a framework for collaborative work between authorities is planned, it is important to consider some prerequisites needed in order to accomplish functioning collaboration. One of these prerequisites is to recognise that
collaborative work demands time, and to therefore create structured schedules regarding when and how often meetings between involved agencies should occur, and to ensure that it will not consume too much time from the personnel’s primary tasks as this can create stress and negative emotion towards the collaboration. Moreover, it is important to provide with clear instructions regarding which profession should do what, when to delegate cases to other authorities, and so forth (Danermark, 2003). Boklund (1995) also described the significance of showing understanding towards each other’s various perspectives and regulations.

Boklund (1995) stresses the importance of acknowledging who the collaboration is supposed to benefit; the client or the organisation? It is significant for the result of the collaboration to recognise who should be helped through collaboration, as this is part of the wanted results from collaborating.

Danermark (2000) as well as The Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare (2013) claim that there is something called knowledge support, which can function as a guide for successful collaboration. This knowledge support focuses on three key words; direction, structure and consensus:

1) Direction means that authorities’ managements actively decide that collaborative work is necessary. To determine collaboration as a work model includes that the management legitimates collaboration, provides resources and authorisations as well as demands evaluations and follow-ups.

2) Structure refers to the significance of clarifying the collaborative work; why it is done, who it is done for, what should specifically be done and who should do what.

3) Consensus refers to the collective understanding for the matter about which the collaborative work regards. It also describes the importance of respect and understanding for each other’s limitations, resources and tasks.
To achieve functioning collaborative work, it is highly significant to consider all three of these key words, and to ensure that they are maintained. In other words, Danermark (2000) and The Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare (2013) points out the importance of clear cut goals for the collaboration, as well as an understanding for each legal and social perspective of the involved organisations. Moreover, it is also significant to have resources for collaboration as it demands time and effort from each involved part. Collaboration further requires that the involved professionals possess good understanding for working collaboratively, that each organisation investigate what aspects might ease, and what aspects might aggravate, collaboration. Furthermore, it is significant to also work to promote facilitating factors, and to neutralise the factors which might aggravate collaboration.

Furthermore, Danermark (2000) highlights the importance of acknowledging different levels of ambition within collaborative work. He argues that it is important not to begin with too extensive commitments and plans of action, but to start with small collaborations and thereafter develop the collaboration while learning what works in this municipality or region as well as what interventions are needed when, etcetera. This could be by starting to keep meetings and consultations between professions and to further on develop this to more specifically work by synchronising each other's interventions and intervention plans.

### 3.2.2 Conflicts related to collaboration

Myers (2013) describes conflict as “a perceived incompatibility of actions or goals” (p. 482). Furthermore, he describes conflict as an event which may occur in various social situations and when parties involved perceive situations differently or where imbalance of power is present.

Danermark (2003) explains that when working with human beings, several professions are involved. Depending on the problems of the concerned client, there are different professions involved. Within these profession groups, there can exist some form of
hierarchy; where one profession is more dominant than the other. This can be seen when treating patients with substance abuse, for example; when both social workers and doctors are involved. Doctors tend to possess higher professional status than social workers, and this may be obvious in collaborative situations; where doctors perceive their opinions, agendas and recommendations as the more important ones. It is natural that different agencies have different goals. However, this tends to aggravate collaboration between professions, as it does not promote each party to express their knowledge and experiences. Therefore, it is significant for functioning collaboration to encourage mutual respect and explanations of involved professions’ agendas and purposes (Danermark, 2003). Moreover, Boklund (1995) as well as Danermark (2003) claim that it is important to establish what differences exist and how to cope with these already from the beginning, to facilitate for the differences to provide new knowledge and points of views rather than to generate conflict and negative emotions. Boklund (1995) further expresses that to implement collaboration between authorities might be difficult, as professionals tend to view their perspectives as the more significant and thereby also forget the comprehensive view.

Another factor which can cause conflict between involved authorities is the different discourses prevalent in various work places; some concepts and words are specific for one occupational group and will therefore perhaps not be understood by other involved parties of collaboration. Thus, it is essential that these concepts are explained during the planning of the collaborative framework, and that involved authorities explain new concepts patiently and respectfully if others do not understand (Boklund, 1995: Danermark, 2003).

3.2.3 Collaboration connected to social work

Collaboration between different authorities is important in order to gain outcomes which are effective for society as a whole and its budget, as well as beneficial for the clients since collaborative work allows for more holistic perspectives. As this thesis focuses on collaborative work between authorities working against trafficking, I judged that concept of collaboration fitted the aim of the study.
4. Method and material

This section of the study will treat the methods utilised in the study. Matters such as research design, sampling and tools of analysis will be discussed in this chapter.

4.1 Research design

A qualitative research method was used for this study, where semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were utilised to gain deeper understanding of the topic, which is necessary in order to answer the aim of the research. Furthermore, a qualitative research design has been recognized as the more advantageous method when, as this allows the researcher to consider and respect nuances in different experiences (Patton, 2002). Open-ended questions encourage the participants to develop their answers and thereby give a deeper understanding to the topic rather than to simply answer ‘yes’ and ‘no’ (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

4.2 Mode of procedure

4.2.1 Selection of literature

Before starting this study, I searched in libraries and databases to find literature on the topic of human trafficking for sexual purpose and prostitution, to gain a deeper knowledge of the topic and to easier be able to understand what the informants of the study were communicating. Furthermore, it is argued that a better pre-knowledge of the researched topic helps improve the study (Patton, 2002). However, I received further advice on other texts to read by my participants as well.

To find articles I searched following databases via the website www.hig.se: SocIndex and Discovery. Following key words were used in various combinations to find previous research: collaboration, collaboration, collaboration, social work, sex trafficking, trafficking, agencies, authorities, authority, government. These search terms were utilised
both in English and in Swedish. Only peer reviewed articles were included in order to ensure the quality of the studies. Even though these combinations generated in rather many hits, not all search results were suitable for this study. Thus, the search results were narrowed down to the studies described and discussed above, as they appeared as most relevant to the research aim.

4.2.2 Sampling

To acquire professionals with the correct knowledge regarding the topic of the study a purposive sampling method was utilised, purposive sampling means that participants will be chosen based on their knowledge on a specific topic (Bryman, 2012). Through this purposive sampling method, I gained three interviews from the beginning, however two of these were cancelled in the last minute, just before the interviews were planned to take place. Hence this sampling method only generated one performed interview. As it was difficult to find respondents, snowball sampling was utilised in the process to find the last three informants. Snowball sampling means that one person further recommends other possible informants to the researcher (Bryman, 2012).

The sample consisted of four participants, who come in contact with human trafficking within their profession. Two persons from the County Administrative Board, one person from the social services (translation from ‘Socialtjänsten’), and one person from the Swedish Migration Agency (translation from ‘Migrationsverket’) were chosen based on their work tasks and professions.

4.2.3 The interviews

To answer the research’s aim and questions, a semi-structured interview style was applied. An interview guide was created with ten questions and probing questions. Usage of semi-structured interview techniques allows the researcher to get more into depth on certain topics (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). The interview guide started with background questions regarding education and experience within the field, and so forth. The interview
guide was constructed on the basis of the research questions (see Appendix 1). Later followed questions about the participant’s own work with the target group and concurrent work with other authorities. Thereafter, questions regarding collaborative work followed.

Three interviews were made via telephone, this due to geographical factors. The fourth interview was conducted in person. All interviews were recorded, the telephone interviews were recorded through a smartphone application which made it possible to record full phone calls. The interview made in person was recorded by a voice recorder accessed on a smartphone. To attain fuller understanding and point out themes, notes were also taken throughout the interviews. Further, the interviews were transcribed in detail into text, where emotional expressions such as laughter and various noises of “hmm”, “err”, and so forth were accounted for to make the transcriptions as accurate as possible (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

4.2.4 Tools of analysis

In order to analyse the data of this study, a thematic analysis method was chosen. Thematic analysis is utilised when one requires to find themes and patterns in an interview, which stem from thoughts and concepts preselected through the research aim and questions. Thus, thematic analysis allows the researcher to discover themes which are compatible with the purpose of the study (Bryman, 2012).

After the interviews were conducted, they were transcribed. According to (Bryman, 2012), transcribing the interviews is an important step in the process of creating deeper understanding of the data. Thereafter, the transcriptions were printed out and read through multiple times to search for themes, where each theme was underlined with one specific colour as a visual model of assistance. The research questions appointed for this study functioned as a foundation in order to find and identify main themes within the transcribed interviews. These themes were further named as the importance of collaborative work, how the collaborative work functions and prerequisites for collaborating between authorities. Thereafter, to discover further depth and understanding of the data, sub
themes were searched for within the main themes. The process of identifying themes helped me as a researcher to gain more thorough understanding of the interviews as well as of the discovered themes (Bryman, 2012). The themes were then discussed in detail and depth in the chapter *Results and analysis* of this study, where they were further supported by direct quotes from the interview data. The quotes were chosen with connection and basis from the organisation theory as well as the concept of collaboration. Moreover, the data was also analysed with support from previous research and theoretical framework utilised in this study.

4.3 Essay credibility

4.3.1 Credibility, validity and reliability

To increase the credibility of the study, the research process has been described in detail. As the interviews were conducted in Swedish and thereafter translated into English when being quoted in the study, the translations were carefully made in order to not lose valid information and to ensure the credibility of the study (Bryman, 2012).

To ensure that the information and data received from the participants remained cohesive and related to the aim of the study, the interview guide was based on the research questions. The same interview guide was used for all interviews. Furthermore, open-ended questions were used in order to prevent leading questions and thereby reduce the risk of biased answers from the informants.

As qualitative studies are sometimes described as being more subjective than qualitative research it is important to acknowledge this when regarding the quality of the research. Furthermore, unexperienced researchers might affect research reliability which amounts to that my inexperience may have affected this study in negative ways (Patton, 2002).
4.3.2 Generalizability

A qualitative study method is utilised when the aim is to gather information and analysing it without overlooking the details of the collected data (Patton, 2002). Qualitative studies are supposed to explore different experiences and emotions regarding certain phenomenon, which vary depending on context and individual. Therefore, it is not possible to generalize qualitative studies to a wider context. Furthermore, the aim of this study was to explore the prerequisites for collaboration between Swedish authorities in the work with women exposed to human trafficking with sexual purpose. Thus, it must be understood that the results of this study might not be applicable to other professionals’ perspectives regarding prerequisites for collaborative work between authorities.

4.4 Ethical considerations

Efforts were made to have a transparent communication between me as a researcher and the participants. The participants received written and oral information regarding the study and its aim (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Before the interviews were conducted, an oral agreement was made between interviewee and interviewer where the interviewee was informed of 1) being guaranteed anonymity throughout the study, and that they would only be referred to by code names; 2) the interview was going to be recorded with the purpose of being transcribed later, and; 3) that the interviewee could choose not to answer certain questions without having to declare the cause for it (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). They were also ensured that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

Due to confidentiality, the participants will not be mentioned by their proper names in the study and will be given code names when brought up through quotes. The cities where the participants work will not be mentioned by names throughout the study to minimize the risk of the participants to be recognized.

5 Results and analysis
This chapter will begin with further information regarding the informants, thereafter the results and analysis of the collected data will be presented. The results have been divided into three themes with additional subthemes, an analysis will be presented under each subtheme. The three main themes discovered in the data are; the importance of collaborative work, how the collaborative work functions and prerequisites for collaborating between authorities.

The informants

Four professionals involved in the work against sex trafficking in women, working within Swedish authorities were interviewed. They have each been arranged with a code name, as follows:

**P1** for Participant 1 = Development manager against prostitution and trafficking at the County Administrative Board. His work tasks consist of coordinating and supervising non-governmental organisations and authorities which may come across victims of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. He provides with for example methodological support to professionals within the Police and Social Services, for instance. He had been working at this title for approximately two and a half years when the interview was conducted.

**P2** for Participant 2 = He initially worked with the sex purchasers and was later employed as regional coordinator. However, he now works as regional coordinator (own translation from ‘regionskoordinator’) against trafficking, working part time at the Police and part time at the Social Services. He is employed by the social services administration (translation from ‘socialförvaltningen’), but works part-time at the Social Services and part-time at the Police and functions as a sort of link between these two authorities.

**P3** for Participant 3 = Coordinator regarding domestic violence, working at the Social Services. She is also part of a special competence group (own translation from ‘spetskompetensgrupp’), where they discuss and elaborate ways of collaboration between authorities.
P4 for Participant 4 = First and foremost works as a regional coordinating supervisor (own translation from ‘regional samordnare’) against trafficking, working at the Swedish Migration Agency. Her work tasks consist of spreading information as well as compile reports of cases regarding human trafficking or suspicion of such. Furthermore, she also works as a case worker within the Swedish Migration Agency, where she occasionally comes across cases where human trafficking is either suspected or existing.

5.1 Reflections on the importance of collaborative work

This theme intents to explore the informants’ points of views regarding if and, in that case, why collaborating between authorities is significant when working against sexual trafficking. Subthemes to this theme are; different perspectives call for various roles and responsibilities and knowledge providing.

5.1.1 Different perspectives on human trafficking

Through the transcribed data I discovered a unity of opinions regarding importance of collaboration in relation to work against human trafficking for sexual purposes. P1 from the County Administrative Board as well as P4 from the Swedish Migration Agency described human trafficking for sexual purposes as a complex phenomenon as it often includes several of both victims and perpetrators, and the businesses are not seldom spread across several municipalities. The participants argued that in order to prevent trafficking one needs to work with both the victims of the traffickers as well as with the perpetrators; traffickers and sex buyers. Therefore, the participants argued, collaboration between authorities should be deemed as highly significant in the process to fulfil this goal, as each authority have different roles and responsibilities. The victims need support of various matters, such as; psychological and physical health care, accommodation, financial support and possibly some form of residence permit as well. Traffickers need to be prosecuted for their actions, as well as the sex buyers do. Therefore, the participants argued that it is important to collaborate to be able to counter and treat these various perspectives.
Collaboration is important, but it is also important that each authority understands that this question is not possible to reach without cooperating (...). With this question it is extra significant, as it withholds both a crime and a crime victim which demand different kinds of authorities.

(P1, County Administrative Board)

Furthermore, the data showed that the informants regarded collaboration as significant, not only for the knowledge and experience exchange between professionals, but for professionals to sufficiently meet the needs of the victims as well. Collaboration was described as a measure which facilitates for authorities to more adequately perform their work and thereby also increasing the probability that every case will be treated with the same competence and dignity. The participants of the study all argued for the significance of collaboration to be able to establish proper framework for processes and guidelines regarding work with cases of sexual trafficking.

I believe that collaboration is an important thing. Collaboration, and above all, intimate collaboration, are two very important tools. Without that it is difficult to work with this. And then the risk will be that ‘Well, here we’ve got a trafficked person’ and we don’t provide with the care and concern, but rather the victim can say ‘I want to go home’ and they’re sent home and then we’ve lost that case (...) we need to represent some form of predictability.

(P2, the police and social services)

We have to collaborate for all of us to be able to perform our professional work in the best way possible for the victim.

(P3, the social services)

Moreover, the participants described collaboration between state lines as sometimes equally important as collaborating within the country borders, especially regarding preventative work and prosecuting traffickers. P4 from the Swedish Migration Agency argued that an established collaboration between other countries as well as agencies in Sweden helps prevent further crimes performed by the same perpetrators, as this sort of
collaboration allows for and facilitates to discover and prosecute the traffickers. Furthermore, P2 from the police and social services described that collaboration across state lines allows for him to ensure that the women exposed to trafficking are provided the help which they need in order to break the circle of poverty and thereby decrease their vulnerability to sex traffickers.

It is not always the case that the perpetrator situates in Sweden (...). This makes it very difficult to find the perpetrator and connect this perpetrator to the person exposed to the crime. This is why it is important to collaborate between authorities, in Sweden between different actors, but also across state borders.

(P4, Swedish Migration Agency)

We also have a return program through IOM (International Migration Organisation) which I consider is functioning well. We want to ensure that the victims of human trafficking receive psychological help, financial support (...) to be able to build a new livelihood to not having to end up in trafficking again.

(P2, the police and social services)

5.1.2 Collaboration to provide knowledge

Another possible outcome of functioning collaboration described by these participants was that it may be knowledge providing and helpful during case processes. P4 from the Swedish Migration Agency described that collaboration enables for each involved authority to know what to do and when, as well as how to perform various processes of cases in order to facilitate for each other and ensure that other involved agencies can perform their tasks sufficiently and in relation to one another.

Collaboration facilitates for authorities to ask for advice. For example, regarding how a proper police report should be written. It is highly significant that a police report covers who, what, when and how as sufficiently as possible, for the police to have something to investigate. That link is really important. If we can write better police reports, then they can investigate the crimes to a greater extent.
Furthermore, P4 from the Swedish Administrative Board argued that collaboration between authorities is significant for reaching the phenomenon of human trafficking. However, she also lifted the importance of authorities collaborating with other organisations which have similar agendas and tasks. She perceived that, to fully meet the many and complex needs of trafficking cases, it is crucial to collaborate and take advantage of each other, between authorities. Therefore, P4 argued that close work with both other agencies as well as private organisations may be beneficial in combattting trafficking.

... We work together with both the non-profit sector as well as other authorities in order to gain different perspectives and approach angles, which allows us to use each other professionally.

(P4, Swedish Migration Agency)

5.1.3 Analysis

In relation to the collected data, it was noticed that collaboration between authorities when working with sex trafficking is described as significant from all the participants from these different agencies. This in order to receive and provide with knowledge and professional experiences regarding work against trafficking, and thereby gain a holistic and full perspective of the phenomenon. Furthermore, and in similarity to Collins and McCray (2012), the participants of this study discussed collaboration as a tool to facilitate for authorities to implement various perspectives to cases. Löfström (2001) described three core reasons behind working collaboratively, whereof one of these aspects was that it assists authorities in more sufficiently encounter different needs of different members of society. This could be noticed in the results of this study, where P1 from the County Administrative Board described that holistic approaches are significant in order to
prosecute perpetrators. Furthermore, P2 and P3 argued that collaboration is necessary to meet needs of involved authorities as well as to sufficiently be able to provide help to the victims. Löfström (2001) also argued for authorities with equivalent professional focal points to collaborate, to more efficiently utilise their resources. This was also described by P4, who considered the combination of both non-profit sectors and authorities to work together and learn from one another.

Another possible outcome of collaborating between authorities which was pointed out as important by the participating informants, was that it can facilitate the case processes for involved agencies. The facilitation could be seen in different aspects. One of these aspects was that collaboration enhances the insight in how other agencies work and what their legal frameworks are, which might increase understanding for each other’s case processes as well as help agencies take each other’s processes into consideration. P4 from the Swedish Migration Agency described an example of this, where she explained the link between the Swedish Police and the Swedish Migration Agency. She described their collaborative work as helping employees at the Migration Agency to write profound and sufficient police reports in order to facilitate for police officers to further investigate possible trafficking cases. This was discussed by Boklund (1995) as well as Danermark and Kullberg (1999), who describe collaboration in general as a necessary tool for welfare states to properly and fully fulfil their duties towards their citizens.

The data further discovered that, although collaboration is important, it is also significant for every authority to understand that human trafficking as a problem cannot be tackled without collaboration. This was mentioned by for example P1 from the County Administrative Board, where he further described that collaboration might be extra important when working with human trafficking cases, as these cases involve crime and crime victims both within and outside national borders, which demand different approaches from different authorities. This can be linked to consensus, which is described by Danermark (2000) as being one crucial factor within collaborative work. Consensus is the idea that there should be an understanding between authorities when collaborating among each other and involves different ways of understanding. Firstly, each professional
need to realise for what reasons collaboration is necessary, as well as having mutual understanding for the topic and each other’s responsibilities.

In the organisation theory, Grell (2016) and Grell, Ahmadi and Blom (2016) describe specialisation within organisations as a phenomenon which can sometimes be necessary. They suggest that specialisation allows for organisations to direct their knowledge to specific areas of a problem or person. However, they also emphasize that specialisation demand integration; where authorities involve collaborative work with other agencies. Integration, or collaboration, is thought to increase the reach and effectiveness of the organisations’ work. This can further be linked to the results of this study, where P4 from the Swedish Migration Agency discuss the significance of working together against human trafficking. She argues that in order to catch and link a procurer to the victims, there need to be collaboration between agencies to be able to prosecute the trafficker. This, she means, is because the various knowledge from the different professionals will provide with new points of views which will increase the effectiveness and quality in their work.

5.2 Views on how the collaborative work functions

This theme will describe and analyse how the participants experienced the collaborative work to function between authorities, exploring two subthemes; exchange of knowledge and experience and obstacles in collaborative work.

5.2.1 Exchange of knowledge and experience

The results of the study suggest that exchange of knowledge could be a method to implement and maintain collaborative work. One way to facilitate and make this exchange more accessible is the positioning of regional coordinators for separate regions throughout Sweden. Regional coordinators have been appointed for professionals who may encounter trafficking cases in various situations through their work to have experts of the topic to ask for advice and guidance. The interviewees from the police and social services (P2) and the Swedish Migration Agency (P4) described that it is vital to have
another professional to turn to if or when one might feel insecure about how to proceed with a trafficking case. The interviewee from the County Administrative Board (P1) developed this by denoting that it is not solely important to have experts to turn to, but also to have one designated person to turn to regarding questions and opinions of specific cases.

We use regional coordinators, who are supposed to cover their region. This person is then supposed to function as a link between, first and foremost, the social services and the police … This will facilitate the work as this person (the regional coordinator) will function as a mediator between the different authorities.

(P1, County Administrative Board)

It is good to know that there is someone that you can call and ask for advice.

(P4, Swedish Migration Agency)

Furthermore, the participants raised the understanding that agencies should not solely ask for advice and other agencies’ experiences when they have a concrete case, but also to seek knowledge actively on other occasions as well. P4 highlighted that it is important to not go on one single educational seminar or to discuss the topic in small groups on a few occasions, but to also keep the knowledge of the topic updated.

It is important to attend lectures and other knowledge providing opportunities, to keep the understanding of the phenomenon active and alive within the agency.

(P4, Swedish Migration Agency)

Moreover, the results showed that knowledge may be provided through different methods. One of these methods is to have regional coordinators, as discussed previously under this heading. However, as P2 from the County Administrative Board suggested, experiences and new ideas of modes of procedure can be exchanged through other methods as well. He suggested that municipalities should perform field surveys regarding trafficking within their municipality, and that municipalities also should work together in this surveying to obtain diversity of perspectives and knowledge bases. P4 from the
Swedish Migration Agency further discussed this by also describing the need of plans of collaboration, in order to fully be able to exchange and understand different approaches and perspectives.

Agencies can carry through an interventional week, do field studies, and investigate if there are active trafficking businesses in this particular municipality. Where does it exist? How can we get access to it? … And if you do not have enough experience regarding trafficking cases, it can be helpful to see to how other municipalities work.

(P1, County Administrative Board)

We do have a collaboration plan, regarding every agencies’ various tasks. This is a good, and necessary, basis to how we are supposed to collaborate for everybody to be able to perform their tasks in the best ways possible.

(P3, the social services)

5.2.2 Obstacles in collaborative work

The results of the study showed that the professionals who participated in this study experienced a variety of obstacles in cooperating. I will discuss the three most prominent obstacles discovered under this sub chapter in the following order; lack of resources, lack of knowledge and different opinions and agendas.

The participants of the study discussed that resources, both regarding budget, personnel and time, was lacking within the field of trafficking for sexual exploitation. P1 pointed out that he would prefer that each county in Sweden should have a coordinator, however he remarked that there is lack of resources as there are other fields within social work which demand or need more attention now. P3 from the social services also highlighted this. She described that they have been working against trafficking within her municipality. However, she described that focus had been on trafficking for other purposes than sexual exploitation, and that this has been highly resource consuming. P4 mentioned that she experienced that professionals with special competences in working
against trafficking within the Swedish Migration Agency had been assigned limited resources and limited amount of time, which made it difficult to fully work with the topic.

Of course, one would have hoped to place regional coordinators in each county, however this is difficult now … We do not have the resources and there are other areas in social work which need to be prioritised at the moment.

(P1, County Administrative Board)

What we have been focusing our work on in this county is trafficking connected to other intentions that sexual exploitation, which has taken up lots of resources.

(P3, the social services)

Another result of the study is the lack of knowledge regarding sex trafficking experienced by these participants, and how this affects collaboration. P4 described that lack of knowledge is one factor which aggravates both the general work against trafficking, but also the collaborative aspect of the process. P4 further lifted that knowledge transferring between authorities is an area which needs to improve, as this is an important step towards combatting trafficking. P3 from the social services argued that knowledge is highly essential in order to understand how to proceed when cases of trafficking are discovered. This can also be connected to quotation from P3 under chapter 5.4.1; where P3 described the importance of having clear collaboration plans in order to fully be able to utilise each other’s knowledge and experiences.

The difficulties are the same in all our cases, that there is a lack of knowledge in how to discover cases of human trafficking.

(P4, Swedish Migration Agency)

The thing is, if you don’t have your eyes open for it (trafficking for sexual purposes), you cannot discover it or combat it that easily. Therefore, it is significant to gather knowledge to know what to look for.

(P3, the social services)
The final obstacle regarding collaborative work against human trafficking described was the presence of different opinions and agendas, which especially P1 and P2 described as being an issue. P1 discussed the importance of all agencies involved with sex trafficking cases to have knowledge of the complexity of these cases. Furthermore, P1 argued that it is also significant that these authorities understand that collaborative work is an important factor in the step towards combating the trafficking issue. P2 described that it is common to have different points of views on how to combat the issue of sex trafficking, depending on which agency you work with and which municipality you are employed in. Moreover, P2 described that the agendas of involved authorities might collide as they have different goals and focal points.

In some municipalities it may be that, for example, the police have not understood the importance of collaboration on this issue.

(P1, County Administrative Board)

You sort of have different ideas and positions regarding trafficking in humans, and how to deal with it … There exist many wills and desires which sometimes contrast each other, and this makes you contrast to other agencies and people who you really need to work with. And this makes collaboration difficult sometimes.

(P2, the police and social services)

5.2.3 Analysis

The findings of the study suggest that knowledge could be seen as a key factor regarding work against trafficking for sexual purposes. P3 described that an understanding and knowledge of human trafficking needs to exist in order to be able to work against it. Moreover, P1 highlighted the significance of all authorities to understand the importance of collaboration, in order to implement this kind of work. This can be related to Ahrne and Papakostas (2014) as well as Forssell and Ivarsson Westerberg (2007), who argued that resources in the sense of education and knowledge increased the understanding for the phenomenon as well as it helped involved authorities understand each other’s roles. Furthermore, Collins and McCray (2012) described that collaborative work also facilitated for involved agencies to keep the understanding and knowledge of the different
roles and perspectives vivid and up-to-date. In relation to this, P4 from the Swedish Migration Agency described an importance to keep the phenomenon of human trafficking updated in order to keep the topic present within the agenda of the agency.

As the results of the study contained descriptions of shortage of time for establishing plans of action regarding work against trafficking, it can be argued that it will, as a consequence, be difficult to further develop collaboration plans between authorities. P3 from the Social Services described that, in her municipality, the focus has been on trafficking for other reasons than sexual exploitation, which has demanded lots of resources. Furthermore, P1 highlighted that a need for regional coordinators can be seen although there are no resources to arrange that. This can be connected to Danermark’s (2003) suggestion, that collaborative work is difficult to accomplish when involved agencies do not have proper time and resources to spend.

Moreover, the results suggest that agencies might find difficulties in collaborating due to their different perspectives on what should be prioritised. The social services might for example be more focused on treating the trauma of the client and find that perspective to be the most significant, whilst the police might consider prosecution of the perpetrators to be the more prioritised factor. Related to these results, Dunér and Wolmesjö (2015) described that friction may occur when involved agencies have different agendas regarding cases, and that each agency generally sees their perspective as being the most significant. This can be further discussed through Boklund’s (1995) emphasis on considering both micro- and macro perspectives within social work. This means that authorities should focus on both making individual assessments in client cases, as well as to ensure that through collaboration between agencies be able to provide better care for the client. In relation to this, P3 from the Social Services described that a collaboration plan is necessary in order to reach both the micro- and macro perspectives of a case.

Abrahamson (2007) argued that in order to avoid friction between the different agendas of the agencies, it is essential for the authorities to discuss their goals and treatment plans together, before taking on cases. Danermark (2003) further described this, as he argued
for involved parties to go through their laws and regulations and to find constructive ways to implement each perspective in every case. Moreover, Danermark emphasised importance of being respectful to each other’s differences. These perspectives can be applied to the results of this study, where all of the participants highlighted lack of understanding of human trafficking as well as lack of knowledge regarding other authorities’ work which in turn aggravated the collaborative work.

5.3 Prerequisites for collaborating between authorities

Under this theme some important prerequisites in collaborative work described by the participants will be explored and analysed. The following subthemes will be described; clear assignation of roles, time and budget and awareness from each agency.

5.3.1 Clear assignation of roles

The results suggested that to distinctly separate and emphasize the different roles which each professional possess, it is important to distinctly sort out where each agency’s responsibilities lies. According to the interviewees, this is required in order to establish and maintain collaborative work, and to facilitate this for the involved professionals. One of the ways which makes it prerequired is that it is necessary, as P4 from the Swedish Migration Agency and P2 from the police and social services argued, to separate the tasks of each agency in order to avoid overstepping authorizations between the agencies. This was described as significant since each agency are experts within their field, and therefore should be the ones treating their area of a trafficking case to get the best aid and resources for the victims of trafficking as well as to ensure that the most competent professionals were working with the legal aspects of the case. Furthermore, P2 described that agencies need to make for some predictability in what their tasks and responsibilities are, and that it therefore is important to not overstep these roles.

… There is an established collaboration, where each of the authorities perform their task of the agreement, when you suspect human trafficking. The main task for the
Swedish Migration Agency is to discover suspected cases of human trafficking, the police investigate, and the social services provide with the social support needed.

(P4, Swedish Migration Agency)

We must keep to laws and regulations, and not overstep each other’s authorizations in order to make for some predictability.

(P2, the police and social services)

The data suggested that time saving was another factor to why clear assignation of roles is important when collaborating. The participants discussed that collaboration should not demand too much time from the professionals, and that clear role assignation might be helpful in this as it helps professionals to know from start who to call when they have questions regarding another agency’s role in a sex trafficking case.

Clear assignation of roles and responsibilities is very important, and that everyone is aware of the different roles … In my region there are two people in the police who work with questions regarding human trafficking, and the contact persons at the Swedish Migration Agency in my region now know who to call to ask for advice. If the different authorities have contact persons it is very helpful, so that we can call them quickly and thereby save valuable time.

(P4, Swedish Migration Agency)

5.3.2 Time and budget

The results suggested that time and budget could be considered as a prerequisite to keep a functioning collaboration between authorities. Collaboration demand various efforts and contributions from the involved agencies, where time and resources are core issues. As discussed previously in the results of the study, the participants described knowledge as an important factor when working against trafficking. However, knowledge is something which demands time and money to acquire. To, for example, participate in lecture seminars regarding human trafficking requires that the agencies have personnel to spare as well as for the personnel to have time to partake. P2 described that the ability to
participate in such seminars depend much on how the budget within that particular county or municipality is divided, and that this is decided upon on higher political levels.

To develop and maintain collaboration requires that there are eyes and ears further up the chain who are willing and interested to gather knowledge regarding the issues of human trafficking.

(P2, the police and social services)

Furthermore, P3 from the social services described the importance of having the possibility to meet the persons exposed to trafficking in order to allow the victims to trust the professionals with their experiences. As the victims have lived through a massive trauma, the importance of giving them patience and time is extra significant. P4 developed this where she argued that to meet the exposed individuals properly, one needs to have the time to do this.

Sometimes, the exposed individual is not ready to talk about their experiences right away. This demands that there are agencies who have the resources and patience to for the opportune moment. Resources are always significant, that professionals are given the time to work with the issues of sex trafficking.

(P4, Swedish Migration Agency)

5.3.3 Awareness from each agency

Another prerequisite for working discovered through the data, was that agencies are aware of the phenomenon of sex trafficking and of the importance of collaborative work between agencies in order to combat the issue. P3 from the social services argued that if agencies are not aware of how trafficking cases express themselves, it might aggravate the possibility to discover such cases. Furthermore, P1 from the County Administrative Board argued that agencies do not solely need knowledge regarding trafficking as phenomenon, but also to realise that collaboration is necessary in order to combat the issue.
If you do not have the knowledge about it (sex trafficking), it is not that easy to discover it. Therefore, it is important to gather knowledge regarding the topic.

(P3, the social services)

Collaboration does not work if only the police handle the question of trafficking, or that only social services are working against it, because this issue demand both the law enforcement perspective as well as the social perspective.

(P1, County Administrative Board)

5.3.4 Analysis

Forssell and Ivarsson Westerberg (2007) argued for the importance of structure within collaboration. There need to be clear-cut role assignations with distinct guidelines regarding which agency or professional has what responsibilities. In relation to this, the findings of this study suggested that collaborative work between agencies requires that involved authorities have been assigned distinct understandings of which agency has which responsibility. The data showed that clear assignation of roles can be helpful as it facilitates for involved professionals to understand which authorizations and tasks lie within which authority. Furthermore, it encourages each agency to have assigned contact persons regarding trafficking cases, which facilitates for other authorities to call and ask for advice or provide information. In relation to this, Matscheck (2011) argued for the importance of clearly organised collaboration, and Collins and McCray (2012) further described that framework of collaboration is necessary.

The data further indicated that time and budget are necessary tools regarding collaborative work. Collaboration requires time, as it is necessary to develop plans of collaboration, to discuss various aspects of the collaborative work (such as contact persons, areas of responsibilities, different approaches and agendas, etcetera) as well as more thorough contact between agencies (Danermark, 2000). P2 discussed the importance of also having a management that listens and understands the significance of collaborating with other agencies regarding specific topics, such as human trafficking. This can be related to the importance of communication within the authorities, described by Forssell and Ivarsson Westerberg (2007).
Furthermore, the results illustrated that professionals working with combatting trafficking may have little time and resources to perform their tasks. Moreover, the findings highlighted that other social issues may have affected how much resources were assigned to the work against human trafficking. This underlines Danermark’s (2000) and The Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare (2013) emphasis on the importance of having resources in order to be able to implement collaboration as a working method. Danermark (2000) further describes three key words as knowledge support for functioning and successful collaboration. These key words are direction, structure and consensus which accentuate three important prerequisites for collaboration. It is demanded that the organisations have resources (both personnel and budget) for collaboration; that there is knowledge (both regarding collaborative work in general, involved authorities and about the focus of collaboration); that there is understanding and respect of the authorities’ goals and work processes.

Furthermore, the results suggested that knowledge regarding work against trafficking is significant in order to understand how and where to find cases of trafficking. However, the results also highlighted that knowledge may not solely be needed in the work against human trafficking, but also that authorities must realise that collaboration is significant to combat the issue. According to chapter 5.1.1 of this study, trafficking is described as a phenomenon which requires different perspectives in order to access the issue. The results further illustrated that professionals therefore need to understand that collaborating between different agencies could facilitate to include these perspectives. This is in line with Amahazion (2015), who described the importance effective governments when combatting trafficking. Löfström (2007) also described collaborative work as crucial for welfare states and Boklund (1995) developed this with describing that collaborative work is important as it facilitates in attaining a comprehensive view on a case. Furthermore, Danermark (2003), in his description of the concept of collaboration, argued that in order to establish functioning collaborative work, each agency involved needs to understand the importance of collaborative work in order to counter and treat social issues of the society.
Moreover, the results showed that there are organisations which do have specialised professionals within their organisation. However, Grell, Ahmadi and Blom (2013) highlight that in order to gain full use out of these specialised professionals, it is important to also implement integration; collaboration between organisations. Grell (2016) further claim that increased specialisation also increases the requirements for collaboration. This shows that collaboration is highly important, especially when it regards work within specialised fields, in order to gain as much advantages, clarities and effectiveness as possible out of the organisations’ work.

6 Discussion

Under this chapter, there will be a discussion of following aspects of the research; discussion of results, discussion of method and implications for further research.

6.1 Discussion of results

The aim of this study was to explore the prerequisites for collaboration between Swedish authorities in the work with women exposed to trafficking with sexual purposes. The aim was supported with three research questions. The first research question was how the professionals reflect on the importance of collaboration between different authorities in their work against human trafficking with sexual purposes. The second research question was how the professionals would describe their collaboration with other authorities in their work against human trafficking with sexual purposes. The third research question was what the professionals perceived as the prerequisites for accomplishing collaboration between authorities when working against human trafficking for sexual purposes.

According to the interviewees, collaboration between agencies involved in work against trafficking is highly significant. One reason to this that was described is that trafficking is such a complex phenomenon as it most often includes several victims and perpetrators.
and is not seldom spread across municipal borders as well as state lines. This makes it an issue most difficult to combat without having established collaboration plans between Swedish authorities and municipalities as well as between different countries. Another reason to why the collaboration between authorities when working against human trafficking was described as important, is that it allows for professionals to partake in various experiences and knowledge regarding the topic. This was described as helpful, not only for professionals to develop more efficient methods of work, but also for the victims as the professionals might gain more holistic perspectives in their performances.

However, the results also showed that collaborative work is not always as simple as theories suggest. The participants described obstacles, such as lack of time and resources. This makes collaboration difficult to develop. If authorities do not have the time or staff resources to properly implement a framework regarding collaboration, it means that this type of work is not easy to do. The results further illustrated that there are active forms of collaboration advancing within work against trafficking. There have been experts appointed to assist and supervise professionals who encounter trafficking within their work, where there are clear guidelines regarding who to call in which authority. This means that to know who to call for specific questions might facilitate and save time, as professionals will reach the right person directly.

However, another obstacle described was the different perspectives and agendas of the various agencies involved on how to handle trafficking cases. These various points of views were described as aggravating the collaboration, as each professional tended to find their perspective as the most important and favourable and thereby creating conflict. Though as Danermark (2000) suggests; this could be somewhat prevented by gathering involved agencies for meetings where agendas, perspectives and goals are discussed. Although it is understandable that professionals experience lack of time, and perhaps perceive collaboration and the road towards it as something negative or time consuming, studies have shown (as previous research utilised in this study) that collaborative work might facilitate and save time after having been established. Therefore, it might be worth it to spend some time with developing collaboration. Although, I want to emphasise the
importance of not forcing collaboration onto professionals who are not at all interested, as this has shown to be ineffective (Danermark, 2000).

When discussing the perception from different professionals that their perspectives are the most significant for the best interest of the client, another thought crossed my mind; would it not be better to make individual judgements from each case to find what is most needed in each individual case? Therefore, a coordinated individual plan (own translation from ‘samordnad individuell plan’; SIP), which is used within other areas of social work in Sweden, could be an effective and functioning method of attending to the requirement of the best interest of the client. SIP is performed by gathering the client together with involved authorities, where the situation and needs of the client are discussed. Thereafter, each of the professionals are supposed to inform what they can do within their agency in order to help the individual in question. This allows the authorities to first see to the specific needs of each client and thus, the authorities will adapt after the client’s requirements, instead of it being the other way around (The Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare, n.d.). Furthermore, this in turn would allow the client and his/her needs to direct which interventions to apply to their case, rather than the authorities arguing over which perspective will be the most important. I would therefore argue that a SIP could be helpful also when working with victims of human trafficking. However, as the needs of the client are supposed to be central during SIP meetings it is also important to note that frictions of opinions between authorities may occur nonetheless, as there might still be different views on what needs are most prominent.

6.2 Discussion of method

The study was performed by using a qualitative research method and semi-structured interviews. In qualitative methods the researcher usually is the tool of analysis, which makes it important to avoid biases. However, since I performed the study alone I asked family and friends to read it through in order to avoid biases. Furthermore, the fact that I am an unexperienced researcher might have affected the quality of the study.
Additionally, the results of the study are not possible to generalise, as the data consist of personal experiences and perspectives which only apply to each individual participant. Therefore, the results of new studies regarding this topic might be different from results of this study.

Another aspect which might have affected the result of the study is that three of the interviews were conducted via telephone. This made it impossible to register body language, which could have been utilised to interpret the conversations and the meanings behind some statements. Moreover, collaborative work against trafficking is a relatively new field within social work, especially compared to other fields. Therefore, some of the informants who participated in the study were fairly new in their professions.

One factor which may have affected the analysis of the results is the previous research, as the majority of the research and studies were not directly linked to human trafficking. Although all of the previous research regard collaborative work, as also mentioned in the beginning of chapter 5 of this study, it may have had an impact on the depth of the result analysis.

6.3 Implications for further research

When I searched for previous research regarding collaborative work between agencies in the work against human trafficking, I did not discover a variety of results. The search results were quite narrow and did not directly treat the topic which I wanted to research. Furthermore, the search results showed research focusing on experiences of trafficking from victims’ and perpetrators’ points of views, and collaborative work within social work fields other than work against trafficking. Therefore, I would want to highlight the need for further research on how collaborative work against trafficking might facilitate or aggravate the combat against selling human beings.
References


Appendix 1 – Interview guide

1. Do you, within your profession, come in contact with women who you suspect are exposed to trafficking?
   - How do you proceed if you do come in contact with the target group?
   Can you give any unidentifiable examples?

2. What difficulties have you come across working with this target group?

3. How could the work with this target group develop?
   - What would be needed to accomplish this change?

4. Is it common procedure to collaborate with other agencies when you suspect a case of human trafficking?

5. How would you describe the collaborative work?
   - What works?
   - What could be improved?
   - Could you give any concrete examples from when the collaborative work functions, as well as when it does not function?
   - What do you perceive as lacking from your collaborative work?
   - If there is not any established collaboration, what kind of collaborative work do you believe would help you in this matter?

6. Describe what you perceive as the most significant step when working with women exposed to human trafficking for sexual purpose.
   - If all steps are equally significant – why?

7. Finally, is the something that you would like to add or discuss more profoundly regarding the issues of human trafficking for sexual purposes?