

Theorizing Child Trafficking in Young Adult Literature: A Review of the Literature

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Abstract:

Child trafficking is one of the most prevalent themes in literature, including novels for young adult literature. Despite its prominence as an often used theme in young adult literature, not much is known about what governs child trafficking, specifically in contemporary young adult literature. This article seeks to identify an appropriate theory that could explain child trafficking in literary works. Five theories, in particular, the agency theory, Bales' theory of modern slavery, Otherness, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's Subaltern, and Bronfenbrenner Ecological theory (1994) are discussed and compared to illustrate what has taken place in novels, particularly where child trafficking is concerned, for young adult readers. The paper concludes that while some of the theories could probably be employed to discuss the notion of child trafficking in general, they do not provide a profound analysis of the characters, themes, and plots in the novels for a young adult. Bronfenbrenner Ecological theory (1994) is viewed as the most suitable theory that lends better understanding in explaining child trafficking in literature because it concentrates on the victims, the close environment, and the national and international environment

Key Words: agency, child trafficking, ecology, Otherness, subaltern

Introduction

Theory clarifies how some parts of human conduct or execution are in place. It empowers us to make some assumptions about human conduct, in general. Defined as “a formal set of ideas that is intended to explain why something happens or exists” (Wehmeier, 2000, p. 1346), theories often help to explain human conducts, for instance. The connection between the theory, method, and analytic strategy is very important in building the framework (Richters, 1997; Tudge, 2008). Therefore, the purpose of a theory is to provide a framework for a scientific study in order to interpret the relation between certain phenomena. This paper is an attempt to highlight child trafficking topic by looking at possible theories that could probably explain the phenomenon of this topic in contemporary young adult novels. Five theories, which are the agency theory, Bales’ theory of modern slavery, Otherness, Spivak’s Subaltern and Bronfenbrenner ecological theory (1994), will be explored in this paper to see whether they could be mobilized in explaining the phenomenon of child trafficking in contemporary young adult novels. Since child trafficking is one of the prevalent themes in literature, it is interesting to see how existing theories could explain this issue better.

Review of Literature of the Selected Theories

Agency Theory

Although children are often the victims of child trafficking (Lehti & Aromaa, 2006), it has always been the traders who reap immense rewards from these lucrative transactions. Limited studies have been carried out to see how the traders, especially the traffickers, view children as their main commodities. One of the theories that could, perhaps, best explain the transaction of children as a commodity, particularly from the materialism perspective, would be the agency theory. The agency theory is not new as it has been used in disciplines such as accounting (Demski & Feltham, 1978), marketing (Basu, Lal, Srinivasan, & Staelin, 1985), political science (Mitnick, 1986), finance (Fama, 1980), sociology (Eccles, 1985), and economics (Spence & Zeckhauser, 1971). This theory presents a framework for studying the relation between the principal and the agent. The classical agency theory attempts to explain how the individual reduces the cost of the firm yet obtains the most profit from the agent by presenting the best contract. The employee/ agent is considered a rational person who looks for a good job. This theory tries to answer the following questions in order to determine the relation between child trafficking and agency theory.

1. Why does the trafficker recruit children?

This question can be illustrated through the *Rational Choice Theory*. Becker (1976) is considered one of the major advocates of this theory. The crucial notion of this theory is a supposition that a person in every specific case inclines to make the most optimum resolution. The little victims are the most optimal, advantageous, and the lowest cost, they are easy to be led by the traffickers and slaveholders and to adjust to the new situation. The principals (traffickers and slaveholders) can employ those victims in tiny cost or nothing. The traffickers usually try to disconnect the ties between the victims and their families, so the children will not think to leave the trafficking destination. As a result, the period of children retention within the traffickers’ group will be increased. To stop child trafficking, it is necessary to make child trafficking costly and the worst choice.

2. Why does the trafficker force the children to be recruited?

Potential clarifications are offered in the theory of the *Economics of Labor Coercion* suggested by Acemoglu and Wolitzky (2011). This theory is based on the model a coercive principal - agent model, with two noteworthy variances, first, the theorists proposed that the agent (the trafficked child in our case) does not have money, and the principal (the trafficker and the slaveholder) can use the punishment and remuneration in dealing with the agent (the trafficked child). Another difference is that the principal (the trafficker) selects the volume of coercion, and he or she uses the coercion to reduce outside other choices of the agent (the trafficked child) and coerces him\ her to accept the condition of the work. This model offers several significant perceptions in the relation between the principal and the agent that based on coercion:

A. Coercive labor permits to reduce the cost of employing the agent and save money for the principal. It permits to give less payment (incentives) for the agent (the trafficked child). In our case, the traffickers have limited funds and refuse to reward the trafficked children since they consider the bad accommodation that is provided to the agents as their wages. **B.** Coercion enforces the agent (the trafficked child) to work hard to avoid a potential threat and torture. **C.** Coercion is used to prevent escaping the agent (trafficked child) from the workplace. The principal (the trafficker) follows distinct sorts of method to keep the agent (the trafficked child) for a long time until the later becomes disabled and useless. **D.** Coercion occurs when the other choices for the agents are limited since they come from poor and backwardness society. In our case, the trafficked children suffer from social ostracism because they become irredeemably tainted, or they do not have families because they are orphans or sold by their parents. Therefore, the traffickers curb the will, dignity, and identity of the trafficked children so as to benefit from them.

3. Why does child volunteer to be a child soldier, a prostitute in sex trafficking, child labor, and other types?

Irrespective of the immoral, the danger, and the threat of being within the trafficked children circle, there are some children who join this circle voluntarily. The *Bounded Rationality Theory* clarifies the doubt points around the answer to this question. This theory was suggested by Simon (1955). It proposed that the individuals build their decisions based on the available information, and their mental ability to issue the correct decision. Children do not possess the ability to estimate and comprehend the situation, and they do not have enough cognitive ability to plan their future. This explains why the children are easily deceived and enticed with false promises. In fact, taking this theory into account, education could be the solution for avoiding the danger of slipping in the child trafficking and to assist them in adopting the rational decision.

4. Why does the trafficked child stay in the trafficking location?

Identity and the economy of the organization may justify this question. This theory is proposed by Akerlof and Kranton (2005) where the principals devote their effort to replace the original identity of the agent with a new one. The new one must bring a good outcome to the principal; otherwise, the agent will be penalized by him or her. This guarantees that the agent will stay for a long service and produce much with no or low cost. In our case, the traffickers enforce the trafficked children to adopt a new identity where this new one will satisfy the traffickers. The victimized children are exposed to the coercion of the traffickers that enforces

them to commit many brutal deeds or accept to be treated in a disgusting way without any resistance. The victims will have two identities. The first one is the original, but it is weak and depressed while the second is the identity of the slavery which executes the orders and wills of the traffickers.

Theory of Modern Slavery: Kevin Bales (2005)

Bales (2005) views slavery as a relation between two or more people, and he discusses how the cost of the slaves falls down over the course of time. In contrast, the slaveholders' profits are increased sharply. The key cause of this in the deterioration in worth is the continuous supply of possible slaves. He also debates the three elements that cause the drop in prices of slavery, specifically high population growing; the economic changes around the globe, and finally the weak law in several states and the corruption of the government in dealing with the child trafficking.

The overpopulation is not the reason for enslavement, but it exacerbates destitution by aggregating pressure on scarce resources. The hasty alteration in the world economy has contributed to exacerbating impoverishment, thus, changing in the global economy has also increased poverty, thereby magnifying the defenselessness of poor people to the potential danger of human trafficking. In addition to that, an efficacious law has a serious role in combating human trafficking. Governments carry out and apply laws to uphold the social system. Though, when this law is not followed, the corruption profiles, the looting of national wealth, the law justice become in suspicious case, and the use of ferocity by corrupted officials threatens and exercises against the public people.

Bales (2005) also tests the relationship between numerous political and social aspects, and the dominance of slavery in a specific state. He examines whether the factors of corruption, poverty, and the growth of the population represent the key causes of slavery across the states. He recognizes six variables of trade in person, namely corruption of the government, child mortality, the percentage of children below age 14, little food production, population density, and struggle and social strife.

Bales (2005) considers that human trafficking an amalgamation of psychological, social, as well as political impacts in the contemporaneous human trafficking. The thematic approach of this theory depends on desperate economic conditions or social collapse. However, many female children and women seek to survive or to improve their life. This economic inequality brings about females to be more vulnerable goals for the human trafficking gangs.

Otherness

Through the discussion of Otherness, there will be some glossaries that need to be spelled out such as Ethnocentrism, Exotic, Exotism, Other, Othering, Otherness, In-group, and Out-group. Other means "member of a dominated out-group, whose identity is considered lacking and who may be subject to discrimination by the in-group" (Staszak, 2008,p.1), (In our case the trafficked children will be the Other). The geographical side may play a vital role in determining who is in the group and who is out of the group. If the individual is out of the group, the group (the traffickers' group), he or she is from the otherness since the geographical area is the determining factor in the backwardness of the individual. In the group pertains to the superiority

of the people (the traffickers) and those who demonstrate themselves as civilized people whose duty is to civilize the out-group (the trafficked children) who are barbarians, savages, and colored people. "Starting with the end of the 19th century and the institutionalization of colonial geography in Europe, geographers sought to document the particularity of the physical environment and tropical societies" (Staszak, 2008, p.2). Ethnocentrism is the inclination of a group of people (the traffickers and slaveholders) to regard their norms, traditions, culture, complexion, and color as superior and they demand the others (trafficked children) to follow and imitate them if they want to survive. For those who emigrate from their countries to western countries 'Exoticism' (the destination of the traffickers), westerners look at them through abhorrent binoculars. Those exotic migrants (the trafficked children) meet the segregation, living in a poor and dirty ghetto, poverty, and marginalization.

The colonizer's mind (the trafficker and slaveholder) is obsessed with the idea of his\ her superiority in power and wealth. He or she lacks human values or even the ability to communicate with the colonized people (the trafficked children). In his *Orientalism*, Said (2003) tackles the use of the terms superiority and inferiority among the western people (the traffickers). Eurocentric universalism takes for granted both the superiority of what is European or western (the traffickers) and the inferiority (the trafficked children) of what is not (p. 7). The American and European reviewers, scholars, and writers use the term Orientalism in their discussion to indicate the culture of the Middle East and East Asia, (Tromans & Kabbani, 2008, p. 6). Therefore, according to the postcolonial theorists, the world has been split into two sides "it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant ... the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West)" (Said, 2003, p. 2). Occident countries are the Western world (the traffickers, slaveholders) whereas the Orient Eastern world is Near East, Middle East, and the Far East. In the frame of academic studies, the Orientalists are sent to the east not only to study the oriental culture, but also to criticize the knowledge, culture, religion, and society of the Easterners. The outcome of this raid is the subjugating of the eastern mind to the brilliant westerners. Here, the countries of the traffickers are always looking for the homes of the trafficker as the place of their dream. Therefore, most of the western countries and America are the destination of the child trafficking. The otherness here is the culture, tradition, religion, language, norms, and thoughts of the Easterner's mind (the trafficked children). For Said (2003), Orientalism is defined as "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident" (p.3). The indulgence of the trafficked children in the traffickers' culture will be a good method to erase their identity and morality.

Otherness is found only in the mind of the Occident, in the patriarchal mind, and in the mind of those who considered themselves as civilized people. The question that is posed by its existence is if the men are "us" then, does this mean women are "other"? Can women become "us" and men become "other"? Or let us ask the mind of oriental people, who are the others? The Occident or the Orient is the answer. Said (2003) ensures that "neither the term Orient nor the concept of the West has any ontological stability; each is made up of human effort, partly affirmation, partly identification of the Other"(p.xiii). The traffickers consider themselves the Occident and the trafficked children are the others. Therefore, they look to those children as illiterate, backwardness children and they should follow the orders and wills of the traffickers. A

quandary of interacting and listening to the other opinion will cause an argument between the traffickers and the others.

Sociologists attempt to study the identity of an individual or society where both of them interact with each other to form their future. The Occident looks to the other in inferiority vision; and describe the Orientals as "half devil half child" (Sardar, 1999, p.6). Therefore, the others need to struggle to support their identity and to coerce or persuade the westerners to accept their right and identity. The identity of the other is in the hand of the west. The westerners (the traffickers and slaveholders) give themselves the right to represent the identity of the other.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's Subaltern.

This theory scrutinizes a collection of bids by marginalized people to launch a sonic space in the educational milieu in the decolonized countries. It grips and discusses the postcolonial question of Spivak (1988) : "can the Subaltern speak?" This question concentrates on the history of the decolonized people through the period that has extended from the date of their interference period that preceded the military occupation until the period of imperialism that threatens the decolonized country. The imperialists grab the decolonized countries to be in backwardness status in their economy, policy, and culture for good. These countries which represent the Otherness comparing to the superiority of the colonial countries are a good example of Subaltern. Spivak's question becomes the issue of anyone who needs to find his or her identity and subjectivity in addition to promoting his or her characters.

This theory is germinated from the great essay "*Can the Subaltern Speak?*" which is written by an Indian Professor Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (born in 1942). It has triggered a lot of hot debates in using the term "Subaltern", and she also adds a new contribution to post colonialism literature. According to Ives (2004) that Spivak takes the word "Subaltern" from an Italian Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937). It means unrepresented individual or people from low ranks in a specific society who bear from the hegemonic control of a governing class that repudiates giving them their human rights. The theory ties the voices of trafficked children as Subalterns to the queer of the traffickers or slaveholders' authority. In order to use this theory in the framework of child trafficking, the trafficked children (TC) will be treated as the subalterns.

In her theory, Spivak (1988) fights the political and economic heritage of colonizers. Her concentration is on the marginalized people (TC) who are victims of the western culture and power. She attempts to reject the legacy of all forms of colonialism, and the idea that western minds (traffickers) have to control the people in the third world countries (TC). People may have the opportunity to flee from the collar of the colonizers but they will not find a free space from their imperialism. Morton (2003) states that "Spivak emphasizes how anti-colonial nationalism assumed a distinctively bourgeois character and was thus perceived by many to reproduce the social and political inequalities that were prominent under colonial rule" (p.1-2).

Spivak asks about the possibility of giving the Subalterns (TC) their opportunity to learn but there is a challenge that faces them that the trafficker, slaveholders or the colonizers do not like to learn from them (Spivak, 2012) If the super power (the traffickers) wants to teach the

Subaltern (TC), they should realize that teaching should guide them to know how to build their brightness future and depart their current depressed life. So, the traffickers or slaveholders reject to school the children and teach them the virtue and nobility, because they realize that knowledge forms a real threat against their material interest, and they know learning should aim to promote the desiring of shifting the Subaltern from their current status to more logical and applicable one. Ironically, Knowledge has been used as a false promise to entice the families to send their children to the city, as soon as the children reach their new destination; they discover that it is not more than a mirage and this promise is a snare to them, and they become members of the new slavery.

Spivak (1988) discusses the occurrence of "epistemic violence" as a result of knowledge that dissevers the world. She is worrying that this voice of the subalterns could be a repeated useless silence. While she recognizes the "epistemic violence" which imposes on Subalterns (TC) in India, she proposes that any outside effort to amend their situation and position by allowing them to discourse perpetually will inevitably face some obstacles: a logocentric suspicion of social solidarity midst dissimilar individuals. 2. Based on the help of European and American intelligent people to "represent" the Subaltern condition instead of permitting them to represent themselves. Therefore, the victims of child trafficking usually do not have the power to represent and liberate themselves from this trafficking.

Spivak (1988) mentions how the colonizers pretend that they own a good intention towards the others, and the best example is the British banning of sati in India where wives were burnt directly after the death of her husband, the British succeed in rescuing the poor widows and at the same time, they enforce their power by applying their rules. They also assert the deep hollow between the civilization of the colonizers "the British" and the colonized barbarism "India". Spivak (1988) invites the Indian intellectuals to write a justice rule that protects the Subaltern rights and to avoid disdain the oppressed people. The eradication of Hindu wont of sati by the colonizer British system has been considered "white men saving brown women from brown man" (Spivak, 1988, p.93) Indeed, the colonizer has nothing to do with the queer of Indian community root which is corrupted by the Hinduism and its convention. By this demolishing, British prove that their purpose of occupying and colonizing the other is to civilize them from the darkness of their life, tradition, religious rites, and their horrible deeds. This false aim adds a different mask to the fact of colonizers who always seek to demolish the identity and dignity of the others and raping their land and economy.

Traffickers scam the family of children by offering education and accommodation in order to civilize their children, and to release them from the oppression of their people. For example, commanders of the war pretend that they want to rescue the children from the war and its consequences, and at the same time, they recruit them in the war as child soldiers. The sex traffickers also try to convince the people that they want to improve the economy and encourage the tourism; therefore, the need for finding entertainment places and resorts is necessary. The sex industry, of course, is very important to attract the tourists and children who are a very appropriate commodity for this industry since they are cheap and easy to follow the orders.

Subalterns have immigrated to America and western countries in order to live their dream. Inappropriately, this romantic idea is one of the causes that these countries have become child trafficking destinations. Traffickers find it is not difficult to convince probably preys that living the western and American dream is not a sort of fantasy. Traffickers promise deprived and helpless people high salaries in genuine jobs as labors, maids, and servers. A lot of them end up in awful situations as indentured servants: their passport and other papers are confiscated, and then they are compelled to join the trafficking places. This dream facilitates the human trafficking procedures which deceive the victims by new honey future when the traffickers depict the new land by the land of dream

Scholars increase their critiques on Spivak writings that pertaining the Subaltern in the text of colonial studies, therefore, she starts looking for the literary products of poststructuralist intellectuals like Gilles Deleuze and Michael Foucault where the scholars have refused the idea that people are sovereign subjects. Spivak (1988) points that Foucault as soon as Deleuze discuss that the burdened people and the working classes who suffer from the lack of sovereign subjects cannot express their needs, therefore those intellectuals and the mediators intend to represent the voice of those oppressed group. The little victims of trafficking do not always have the encouragement to defend themselves and ask for their rights in front of the traffickers.

Spivak (1988) pronounces the causes of her stress in her article where thinkers have often attempted to make a counter discourse that effaces all the debates. She also inquires about the possibility of the intellectuals' intervention in their literary work to change the nature of the Subaltern from the voiceless case to speaking one. Her answer "NO" comes as a challenge to all the devoted effort to encourage the Subaltern to speak. Spivak offers a Subalternity in her "Can the Subaltern Speak?" where she inquiries if the Subalterns have the ability to speak the reason behind their silence of the Subaltern. She insists that they cannot speak because the Subalterns do not have a real proud history. At the end of the essay, she reaches the important findings that, "The Subaltern cannot speak. There is no virtue in global laundry lists with a woman as a pious. Representation has not withered away. The female intellectual has a circumscribe task which she must not disown with a flourish" (Spivak, 1988, p. 104). She means that there is no need for Subalterns to speak since there is no one wants to listen to them because superiors do not own the patience to listen. The Subalterns believe that being in an inferior race is not going to give them the ability to contribute to building the nation. The problem of the trafficked children that there is no one like to hear from them, and their governments and families do not pay attention to their issues, so it is useless to speak in front of the people who do not care for your issues since they see you in a peripheral status.

To some degree, since the Subalterns exist outside the center of power and control, scholars and promoters see them as a possible source of alteration. Marxists discuss of and talk to the public and burdened females of the decolonized people from different third world countries to resist the political, cultural and economic policy of the colonizers. On the other hand, Spivak (1988) is against the idea that the Subaltern should lead a revolution against the capitalism because this ensures the basic violence of the colonizers, and will bring more violence to them. She focuses on the recommendation that all third world people groups should stand at the same distance from the capitalism and their reaction should be essential.

This theory does not see that the trafficked children can do something to alter their current situation for their physical and psychological limitations. It also sees that the role of parents, schools, governments, anti-trafficking organizations and others should be steadfast against this crime. In the light of child trafficking, the efforts of the governments to combat child trafficking are very humble in the decolonized countries because of the inherent corruption of the colonizers who did not depart the colonized countries before leaving very high rate of child trafficking, illiteracy, poverty, civil wars, unemployment, social diseases and others.

Bronfenbrenner Ecological Theory (1994)

This theory handles the trade in children as one of the serious issues that face the children all around the world. It is one of the distinctive theories that explicate the development of children, and how this development is affected by the culture, community, and the surrounded environment. According to Bronfenbrenner (1994), the ecological system contains five social system (1) microsystem, (2) mesosystem, (3) exosystem, (4) macrosystem, and (5) chronosystem.

1. Microsystem.

This is the key stage in the child's life, and it encompasses the child's surrounded environment (father, mother, siblings, family, school, and friends). The relation between the child and the microsystem is very imperative in construction his/her character. In this stage, the child is taught and learned the behavior of the microsystem (Rogoff, 2003). The role of microsystem tends to be near the child in order to offer him/her daycare that he/she needs.

To tie this theory with the child trafficking, the microsystem could be the vital factor that causes the child trafficking. Parents sell their children (Vinkovic, 2010), children are not aware of to the danger of trafficking because of lack of education (Davy,2014) or due to the pressure of friends (Lehti & Aromaa, 2006) who pretend that they are happy in their work.

2. Mesosystem.

In this stage, the child does not interact with the microsystem, but he or she is influenced by the interaction and the mutual relation of his or her microsystem. The possibility that a child could be a prey of child trafficking forms an upsurge in dysfunctional families (Bowen, 1966), especially with the existence of illiterate or low- level educated parents, and oblique peers. Family dynamics facilitates the exposure chance to the trafficker, deviant friend, and possible clients.

3. Exosystem.

The exosystem does not have a direct impact on the child. This situation is an inevitable result of the relation between the microsystem of the child and the workplace, and the government of the states. This relation is infected by some issues such as poverty, the low and high price, vac, the increase of crime rate..etc. Children are infected by the mood of their siblings when he or she gets a promotion because this may lead to improving their life. Bronfenbrenner (1986) categorizes the exosystems that influence the child's progress into three points "The first of these is the parents' workplace, the second parents' social networks, and the third community influences on family functioning" (p.727-728). In many cases, when the parents face problems in paying their debt to the moneylender, for example, the later asks the parents to send their

children to work (Tucker, 1997) in their farms, brick kiln, sweatshops, and so on. The exosystem level is very complex because of the scarceness, joblessness, natural disasters, and family collapse that contribute to the propagation of child trafficking.

4. **Macrosystem.**

Boemmel and Briscoe (2001) state: “The macrosystem consists of things that influence and sometimes support the child within the environment such as cultures, norms, and laws” (p.2). This context involves some issues such as impoverishment, conviction, illiteracy, and so on. The macrosystem must bolster the parents in nursing their kids, and prepare them to become future leaders. Unfortunately, the failure of a government to combat child trafficking or support the anti-child trafficking organization is obvious in some countries. For example, one of the responsibilities of the government is to provide birth certificates for the children who are born on its land in order to facilitate their joining schools, and benefit from health care at least. The failure of the government to treat this issue will push the children to resort to the street to get some money that covers their or their families’ expenditure. Some of them will be forced laborers, spongers, thieves, prostitutes, and others. Therefore, they are easily attracted to child trafficking “An unregistered child will be a more attractive ‘commodity’ to a child trafficker” (Pais, 2009, p.1).

5. **Chronosystem.**

This level presents a way to comprehend the alterations that face people over the course of life. The life of people changes over the time. For example, children share some similar traits and behaviors, but when they become old, these traits and behaviors may change. Time can change the mood and condition of a person from a state to another, for example, the effect of the death of one relative will influence the mood of a person who becomes sad due to his/her loss. However, the passing of time will reduce the person’s sadness. “The chronosystem is the historical time in which development is occurring” (Weisskirch, 2010, p. 71). The little victim of child trafficking does not accept the deeds of the trafficker, and he or she attempts to avoid doing them, but the frequent occurrence of these events breed familiarity which will result in the victims committing the crime without much thought. Many trafficked children become managers of the sweatshop, pimps of the brothels, or commandants of gangs later in their adult life.

Methodology

In order to present a systematic study of the four theories (the agency theory, Bales’ theory of modern slavery, Otherness from postcolonial studies, and Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Theory) that may describe issue of child trafficking in young adult literature, a comparative and contrastive approach will be used to derive a suitable theory that could discuss child trafficking issue in detail in literature for young adult.

Findings

Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Theory (1994) is a comprehensive theory that discusses everything in detail and provides flexibility to the literary scholars in understanding the situation of child trafficking. It is “among the most widely adopted theoretical frameworks for studying individuals in ecological contexts” (Neal & Neal, 2013, p. 722). It has been adopted by several scholars as a framework in their studies of child trafficking (Williams et al, 2010; Dinah, 2012; Chinyoka & Naidu, 2014).

Discussion

The agency theory describes the relation between the principals (the traffickers and the agents (the trafficked children) in the framework of materialism. It disregards the value of human beings and the human relationship. Apart from dissecting the aspects of themes, characterization, plot, settings, and literary devices, literature examines the emotion, for instance, sympathy for the characters, the character's happiness or misery. Using this theory in literary studies does not give scholars the flexibility to analyze other factors that may contribute to child trafficking.

In contrast, Bales' theory of modern slavery also handles the human trafficking in the framework of business. This theory calls the government to work hard to prevent the traffickers from using this illegal trade as a business. It seeks to make the cost of child trafficking override its selling cost and renders the trade useless. Similar to the agency theory, this theory does not prioritize the victims and the surrounded environment, but rather discusses human trafficking in general.

On the other hand, the Postcolonial theory, specifically Otherness, deals with the relation between the superpower or the colonizers who represent the traffickers or the slaveholders and the inferior power, or the decolonized people who represent the trafficked children. This theory illustrates how the traffickers regard the victims and concentrates on the nature of the relation that connects between them. It does not tackle other possible environments that may have direct or indirect effects on the victims.

Spivak's Subaltern is another postcolonial theory that it may use as a framework of child trafficking issue. It concentrates on the relation that connects between the Subaltern and their colonizers through the mirror of the colonizers. The traffickers or the slaveholders always see the trafficked children as a commodity or simple things. This theory does not assist the scholars to study the child trafficking topic in depth but it deals with the mutual relation between the traffickers and little victims.

Finally, Bronfenbrenner Ecological Theory (1994) handles the child trafficking from different aspects. It pays attention to the victims, his close environment (microsystem) (parents, school, peers, neighbors). It also discusses the effects of social class on the child in the light of child trafficking, describes the relationships between the exosystem, investigates the role of the government in eradicating or promoting child trafficking, and the national and international issues which contribute to finding like this trade in addition to the natural disaster that contribute to child trafficking if it occurs.

Conclusion

Child trafficking is one of the most prevalent themes in literature, including novels for young adult literature. Despite its prominence as an often used theme in young adult literature, not much is known about what governs child trafficking, specifically in contemporary young adult literature. This paper compares and contrasts between four potential theories that perhaps could be used as a framework to expound child trafficking in the literary studies. The discussion of these theories demonstrates the size of variation and the differences between them, and shows how Bronfenbrenner Ecological Theory (1994) is more appropriate to be employed in handling issues of child trafficking in young adult literature, mainly due to the theory's flexibility and

ability in explaining the details of child trafficking issues since it incorporates family, social, national and international issues underline child trafficking.

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