

## 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