Impacts of Gender Inequality and Poverty on Trafficking in Women

Jihye Park  
_Illinois State University_

Cara Rabe-Hemp  
_Illinois State University_

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OVERVIEW OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING (HT)

- Definition of HT by United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC):
  - Recruitment of people by force or deception in order to exploit them
- HT as gendered crime: “The crime of particularly targeting women for sexual exploitation.”
- Female victims (75%)
- Purpose of trafficking:
  - Sexual exploitation (79%), forced labor (18%), and organ removals (.3%)

Current Trends:
- “Globalization & Cross border Trafficking”: 800,000 women are trafficked across national borders
  - Europe and Central Asia (62%), Americas (51%), South/East Asia and Pacific (44%), and Africa/Middle East (36%)
  - Low conviction rates for traffickers

Human Rights Concerns
- Violations of human rights:
  - Victims are physically tortured, raped, abused and murdered
  - Reinvestment of profits by HT to other criminal ventures

What we know about HT

- Lack of empirical approaches:
  - Describing characteristics of HT (Salt & Stein, 1997) or government’s combating efforts (Tamura, 2010).
- Themes:
  - Most women are from poor families or countries that have low levels of education (Di Tommaso et al., 2009)

What we know Cont’d

- Traffickers offer false-promises such as arrangement of jobs and marriages for wealthier places/countries (Kim et al., 2009; Reddy, 2013)
- Income inequality leads to HT (Rao & Presenti, 2012)
- U shaped relationship between economic development and HT (Rao & Presenti, 2012)

Gaps and What we don’t know

- Lack of empirical studies
- Focused HT issue in certain geographic areas
- Measurement Issues with Rao & Presenti’s study:
  - Gender Inequality: Only include relative indicators → failed to use absolute indicators
  - Economic Development: Only considered income poverty

Current Study

- Cross national empirical study
- Examines forms of gender inequality: absolute & relative indicators
- Examines effects of multi-dimensional poverty on HT

Research Hypotheses

- Absolute women’s status
- Relative Gender Inequality
- Trafficking in women
- Multi-dimensional Poverty

Methods

- Data: Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns (UNODC 2006)
  - The number of times a country was cited as: ‘origin’, ‘transit’, and ‘destination’ country
  - A 5-scale of severity: (Very low – Very high )
  - Reporting 127 countries in the world

Measurements

- Dependent variable: Countries ranked by incidence of trafficking ‘origin.’
  - The current study: 113 countries out of 127 countries (Excluding countries where HT mostly involves men in forced labor)

Measurements Cont’d

- Independent variables:
  - Relative Gender Inequality (Ratio of females to males): Education, income, and economic activity (WB 2009–2013)
  - Poverty: Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index by UNDP (2010)

Analytic Strategy: The OLS (Ordinal Lease Squares) Regression

Preliminary Results

Table 1. Descriptive Variables

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<th>Countries</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>3.01</td>
<td>1.13</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Labor Participation of female (%) (Absolute)</th>
<th>Countries (Relative)</th>
<th>Ratio of female to male primary enrollment (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>109</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>97.29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-dimensional poverty (%)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>0.17</td>
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<th>Mean</th>
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<td>Labor Participation of female (%)</td>
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<td>Ratio of female to male primary Enrollment (%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-dimensional poverty (%)</td>
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<td>-.26</td>
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Contact to Authors

For further questions, please contact to:
JJ Park: jpark3@ilstu.edu
Dr. Rabe-Hemp: cerabe@ilstu.edu