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Impacts of Gender Inequality and Poverty on Trafficking in Women

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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)
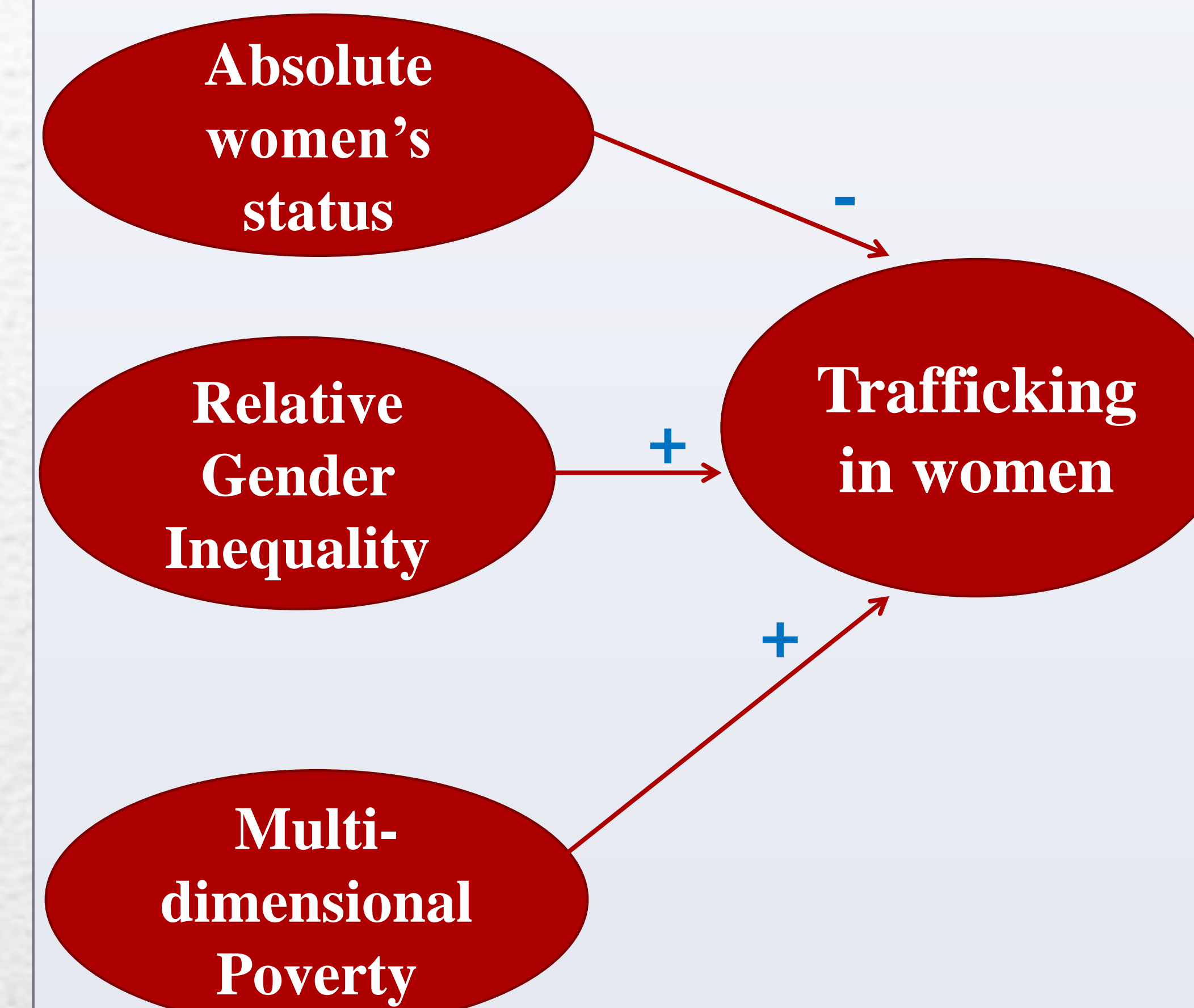- U shaped relationship between economic development and HT (Rao & Presenti, 2012)

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

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

- <u>Dependent variable</u>: 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:
- Absolute women's status (% of females) : Education, income, and economic activity (World Bank, 2009-2013)
- 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

	N	Mean	*SD*
Countries	113	3.01	1.13
Labor Participation of female (%) (*Absolute*)	109	53.97	17.71
Ratio of female to male primary enrollment (%) (*Relative*)	97	97.29	5.74
Multi-dimensional poverty (%)	82	0.17	0.19

Table 2. Regression analysis predicting trafficking

	1		2		3	
	B	β	B	β	B	β
Labor Participation of female (%)	.00	.06				
Ratio of female to male primary Enrollment (%)			.07	.34*		
Multi-dimensional poverty (%)					-1.41	-.26*

1: Absolute Women's Status **2:** Relative Gender (in) equality **3:** Poverty
p <.05*

Contact to Authors

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