

Gender Inequality and Human Trafficking

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Abstract : The trafficking of women and children for abuse and exploitation is not a new problem under the umbrella of human trafficking; however, over the last decade, the problem has attracted increased attention from international governments and non-profits attempting to reduce victimization and provide services for survivors. Research on human trafficking suggests that the trafficking of human beings is, largely, a symptom of poverty. As the trafficking of human beings may be viewed as a response to the demand for people for various forms of exploitation, a product of poverty, and a consequence of the subordinate positions of women and children in society, it reaches beyond randomized victimization. Hence, human trafficking, and especially the trafficking of women and children, goes beyond the realm of poorness. Therefore, to begin to understand the reasons for the existence of human trafficking, one must identify and consider not only the immediate causes but also those underlying structural determinants that facilitate this form of victimization. Specifically, one must acknowledge the economic, social, and cultural factors that support human trafficking. This research attempts to study human trafficking at the country level by focusing on economic, social, and cultural characteristics. This study focuses on inequality and, in particular, gender inequality as related to legislative attempts to address human trafficking. Within the design of this project is the use of the US State Department's tier classification system for Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and the USA CIA Fact Sheet of country characteristics for over 150 countries in an attempt to model legal outcomes as related to human trafficking. Results of this research demonstrate the significance of characteristics beyond poverty as related to country-level responses to human trafficking.

Keywords : child trafficking, gender inequality, human trafficking, inequality

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