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# Anti-Human Trafficking: A Descriptive Study of Adult Education Programs in Relationship to Policy and Funding (Empirical)

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**Abstract:** In this study, I describe anti-human trafficking organizations with an educational mission. Organizations vary based on educational approach, location, gender, and age served, and founder's gender. I categorize the organizations using these factors and illustrate organizations' characteristics and their impact on funding through descriptive statistics.

## Background

Despite the challenges inherent in quantifying underground industries such as trafficking and modern slavery (Okech, Morreau, & Benson, 2011), several organizations have attempted estimates. The often-cited International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates 21 million people are currently subjected to forced labor, including 11.4 million women and girls. Of the 21 million working in forced labor, approximately 4.5 million individuals are enslaved for sexual exploitation (ILO, n.d.), 98% of which are estimated to be women and girls (USAID, 2013).

In 2000, the United Nations (UN) and the U.S. issued legislation designed to reduce the staggering trafficking in persons (TIPs) statistics (United Nations, 2000; U.S. Department of State, 2000). In 2012, the latest year reported, the U.S. government obligated \$77.4 million to governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for projects combatting TIPs (derived from U.S. Department of State, 2013). The funding illustrates a financial commitment by the U.S. government to reduce TIPs.

A review of anti-trafficking and anti-modern day slavery NGOs, relevant literature, and U.S. Department of State funding reports (U.S. Department of State, 2013) revealed different approaches used in the social movement to end trafficking. This study categorized education programs based on three identified educational approaches, consistent with those identified by Samarasinghe and Burton (2007). First, some organizations were created to generate awareness about global trafficking, an approach referred to in this study as *awareness education*. Second, NGOs provide education services to trafficked persons and/or communities participating in trafficking. Such programs include job reeducation, counseling, and community economic sustainability programs, which this study will call *empowerment education*. Third, additional education programs provide what this study terms *preventative education*, which includes, for example, educating susceptible communities and their law enforcement about traffickers' strategies.

The purpose of this study is to describe the organizations and programs designed to combat human trafficking through education, identify characteristics common to organizations receiving funding, and characterize any trends related to organizations' founding and

categorization. In the adult education field, there is limited research related to education programs provided by NGOs (Hoff & Hickling-Hudson, 2011). To fulfill the identified need, this study attempts to establish a foundation for future research by providing a detailed picture of educational programs combating trafficking. The following theoretical frameworks support the study, the intersection of which will provide a unique approach to addressing the gap in existing literature.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The theoretical frameworks used included transnational social learning, categorization theory, and feminist theory. First, transnational social learning is concerned with organizations', such as NGOs', roles in learning and action for solving transnational social problems (Brown & Timmer, 2006). Transnational social learning was useful in framing educational organizations' motivations and educational approaches for this study.

Additionally, this study will use categorization theory, borrowed from management research, to summarize information describing anti-trafficking education efforts. When applied to organizations, categorization provides insight into how people view the organization (Baum & Lant, 2003; Porac et al., 1995; Vergne & Wry, 2014), including organizations' privileged or stigmatized status (Lakoff, 1987; Vergne, 2012), which may impact NGO funding.

In addition to using the three educational approaches as categories, this study categorized organizations based on the gender and age of individuals served by the NGO. Specifically, the study differentiated between organizations serving children only, women only, women and children, and individuals of all ages and gender. Similarly, the study categorized NGOs based on labor targets by differentiating between organizations serving individuals enslaved for sexual exploitation from those exploited for other labor forms. These categories were supported by feminist theories and critique related to trafficking coverage by the media and policy wording (Agustín, 2003a & 2003b; Doezema, 2001) and support evaluating category privilege or stigmatization.

### **Research Design**

#### **Methodology**

A quantitative study, utilizing descriptive statistics, was selected to most effectively answer the research questions described below. The paucity of research related to trafficking organizations requires a descriptive study to better understand relevant organizations prior to further statistical analysis.

#### **Research Questions**

*RQ1: What is the distribution of NGOs based on educational approach?*

*RQ2: What is the distribution of NGOs based on other shared characteristics, such as date of origin, individuals served, labor targets, or country served?*

*RQ3: What are average funding amounts and dispersion for NGO categories evaluated in RQ1 and RQ2?*

#### **Data Collection**

**Population.** The population consists of all NGOs self-identifying as anti-human trafficking and/or anti-modern day slavery organizations registered with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in the US. Information for all IRS registered nonprofit organizations is included on GuideStar, which we used to establish our population by searching "trafficking" and "slavery". After removing duplications for organizations listed under both searches, 625

organizations remained. Financial data, as reported by each organizations on the annual IRS filing form 990, was collected through the National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS). Years observed were 1999, one year before the TIPs legislation was passed by the US and the UN, through 2012, the latest year for form 990 data availability through NCCS. Organizations inactive from 1999 to 2012 or with a founding date after 2014 were eliminated due to a lack of financial data. The result was 3,594 entity-year observations for 451 distinct firms. The 451 remaining organizations were filtered for organizations with an educational purpose resulting in 313 organizations.

### Measurement

**Frequency distribution.** To address *RQ1* and *RQ3*, NGOs were categorized based on date of origin, educational approach, population served, and country served. A frequency distribution based on the number of organizations in each category was analyzed.

**Central tendency.** To address *RQ2*, mean for funding was calculated for each established category.

### Data Analysis

Frequencies and funding within each category were evaluated to identify privileged categories. A date of origin frequency distribution and average funding were evaluated for any potential connection between organizations’ date of origin and policy issuance.

### Findings

Analyzing the data revealed several categories of organizations receiving higher average funding than organizations in other categories. The most pronounced difference was found in organizations founded by women or a man and a woman compared to organizations founded by only men or when the founder’s gender was unknown. Female-founded organizations received average annual contributions of \$1.5 million compared to male-founded organizations receiving \$9.8 million. The frequency of female-founded organizations exceeded male-founded organizations at 107 organizations compared to 53, respectively. Table 1 shows

Table 1. Frequency and mean annual contribution based on founder’s gender

Founder Gender	Count	Percentage	Average Annual Funding
Male	53	17%	\$9,826,132
Female	107	34%	\$1,524,931
Male and Female	18	6%	\$649,607
Unknown	135	43%	\$4,896,413
	313	100%	

Table 1

Another pronounced difference was found in organizations with an international affiliation. Organizations with international affiliation received \$11 million in average annual contributions. International affiliation was identified based on the organization’s primary National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) code, which is assigned by the IRS. The next highest NTEE category received less than half the contributions with a \$5.5 million annual average. Further, based on average annual funding, organizations serving Africa received the

most funding. Based on frequency, more organizations served in Asia than in any other international region with 13% of the organizations.

Additionally, 65% of organizations were founded after 2000, which is the year the TIPs legislation was passed by the US. However, organizations founded after 2000 are only receiving 2.55% of total average funding.

Other factors, such as age and gender of individuals served had less impact on variations in average annual contributions, as demonstrated in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Frequency and mean annual contribution based on other organizational characteristics

Characteristic	Count*	Percentage*	Average Annual Funding
Religiously Affiliated	95	30%	\$7,784,228
Child Focused	160	51%	\$5,898,400
Sex Trafficking/Slavery Focused	154	49%	\$4,649,470
Women Focus	139	44%	\$3,444,202

\*Organizations may be affiliated with more than one characteristic, so count should not total 313 nor percentage 100%

Table 2

### **Implications for Adult Education Theory, Practice, and Policy**

Attracting resources can be challenging for any organization and especially critical for organizations with a social mission (Frank, 2008), including this study’s population. NGOs providing anti-trafficking related education services are competing with each other and other NGOs (Frumkin, 2002). This study and future research could help organizations prepare grant proposals in efforts to increase their funding likelihood.

Future research could investigate why female-founded organizations have lower average annual contributions than male-founded organizations. Gender discrimination is a well-established management theory in for-profit organizations (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Fay & Williams, 1993; Sexton & Bowman-Upton, 1990) with similar gender bias found in nonprofit organizations (Gibelman, 2003). In both contexts, women are underrepresented in leadership. In for-profit organizations, Fay and Williams (1993) found gender discrimination impacted women’s ability to obtain start-up capital through bank loans. Investigating the impact of founder gender on nonprofit organizations’ ability to secure funding is particularly interesting. In this study, I show donors seem to demonstrate the same biases toward female founders, similar to those evident in corporate funding decision making, despite their assumedly altruistic motives for donating. In corporate settings, management theorists have debated whether female-founded organizations secure less funding because they are founded by women or because women position differently organizations they have founded (Bigelow, Lundmark, Parks & Wuebker, 2012). By studying the interaction between female-founded organizations and other category characteristics, a future study could determine if the founder’s gender or how the company is positioned has a greater impact on their ability to secure funding in a nonprofit setting.

From a theoretical perspective, incorporating organizational theory from the management discipline provides adult education scholars with a new framework for program evaluation. This study and future related research provides a unique application and context for adult educators

using feminist theory. Finally, TIPs is a global social issue and education is an approach used in efforts to combat the problem. Therefore, this study provides increased opportunities for adult education scholars to make a contribution to global social justice theory and transnational social learning theory. Additionally, Samarasinghe and Burton (2007) identified a need for quantitative research to evaluate program effectiveness, for which this study hopes to provide a foundation.

Finally, this study contributes to adult education's understanding of potential policy impact on educational programs. The study evaluated NGO origin dates relative to the U.S. passing the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA 2000) and the similar UN protocol in the same year. The study also provides insight to the impact policy wording and implementation practices have on educational NGOs' funding.

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