
The Efficacy of the Trafficking in Persons Report: A Review of the Evidence

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Alese Wooditch¹

Abstract

Anti-trafficking efforts have been adopted globally to curb human trafficking, yet many nations have failed to put initiatives into practice. As a consequence, the U.S. Department of State implemented the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report to monitor and increase efforts worldwide and serve as a guide to funding anti-trafficking programs abroad. This exploratory study investigates the efficacy of this policy initiative by means of a longitudinal assessment of the TIP Report's tier classifications, a system that grades countries based on anti-trafficking initiatives, and determines if U.S. funded anti-trafficking initiatives internationally target those countries in need. The findings suggest that tier ranking has not improved over time, and the United States has failed to systematically allocate funds based on the recommendations of the tier classification system. Policy recommendations and implications for future research are discussed.

Keywords

human trafficking, legislation, anti-trafficking initiatives, Trafficking in Persons Report

The trafficking in persons is a growing phenomenon that remains legal in many countries (U.S. Department of State [U.S. DOS], 2010). For those that have criminalized the act, there often remains an inability, or unwillingness, to enforce anti-trafficking directives. The transnational element of the crime also requires a global initiative, especially given that an estimated number of 600,000 to 800,000 individuals are trafficked

¹George Mason University, Fairfax, VA

Corresponding Author:

Alese Wooditch, 10519 Braddock Road, Ste 1902, MS 6D3, Fairfax, VA 22030

Email: awooditc@gmu.edu

worldwide (U.S. DOS, 2004) each year. In response to this impasse, the UN World Ministerial Conference on Transnational Organized Crime brought together 142 States in 1994 in the interest of drafting an initial set of protocols (United Nations General Assembly, 1995a). The “Political Declaration and Action Plan against Organized Transnational Crime,” a product of the conference, was adopted in an effort to identify, prevent, and control transnational offenders (United Nations General Assembly, 1995b). During the next few years, these measures gained momentum. In 2000, the adoption of the “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children” signified a major development in international anti-trafficking efforts. With the drive behind these protocols surely being an issue of human rights, its adoption placed human trafficking high on the political agenda (Gallagher, 2001). Despite these provisions, several countries have failed to ratify the protocols or have adopted their own stand-alone approach to curb the TIPs (U.S. DOS, 2010).

Legislative efforts within the United States have resulted in the enactment of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act of 2000 (referred to as the TVPA), which set forth a three-pronged strategy to address human trafficking—prosecution, protection, and prevention (TVPA, 2000). This placed responsibility on federal law enforcement to pursue human trafficking cases. The TVPA established the following definition of a severe form of the trafficking in persons:

- (A) sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age; or
- (B) the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery. (TVPA, 2000, § 103 8a and 8b)

The TVPA has been reauthorized in 2003, 2005, and 2008 (referred to as the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act [TVPRA], 2003, 2005, 2008), which expanded the jurisdiction of federal law enforcement to investigate human trafficking crimes, enhanced criminal and civil penalties of traffickers, and increased collaboration between victim service providers and law enforcement agencies, among other provisions. The TVPA gave responsibility to the Criminal Section of the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division to prosecute human trafficking crimes. Trafficking victims have also been increasingly provided federally funded benefits, such as medical care, housing, and financial assistance (U.S. Department of Justice, 2006). In recognizing the need for a multifaceted approach to addressing this issue, the Bureau of Justice Assistance awarded a grant to establish 42 task forces to bring together victims service providers and local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies (Stolz, 2010). These efforts are critical to the identification and protection of victims within the United States (Farrell, McDevitt, & Fahy, 2010).

The prevention of human trafficking requires initiatives to extend beyond domestic efforts, given that the United States is largely a destination for victims. To initiate and coordinate targeted initiatives, the TVPA established the Office to Monitor and Combat TIPs within the U.S. DOS and required it to provide a summary of foreign governments' antitrafficking efforts. Since 2001, this information has been provided via the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report. It has served as a tool for the U.S. DOS, with the anticipation of "us[ing] information gathered in the compilation of this Report to more effectively target assistance programs" (TVPRA, 2008; U.S. DOS, 2005, p. 29; U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2006). Furthermore, the TIP Report intended to raise global awareness of the crime and spur global anti-trafficking initiatives. Over the last decade, the TIP Report has served as a foundation for the U.S. preventive efforts. It has drawn much criticism, however, over a failure to implement policy directives.

The Trafficking in Persons Report

Methodology of the TIP Report

The TIP Report has evolved since its initial publication from brief descriptions of anti-trafficking efforts to detailed country narratives on each "three P" paradigm of prevention, protection, and prosecution. It includes information on countries of origin, transit, and destination for human trafficking, and the number of countries included in the TIP Report has increased each year. Data were collected from embassies and consulates on trafficking prosecutions, victim protection, and anti-trafficking initiatives (U.S. DOS, 2010). Additional information for the TIP Report was obtained through published reports, meetings with foreign government officials, and consultations with human rights and international nongovernmental organizations. Only countries with available and reliable statistics were included in the report.

Minimum Standards Outlined in the TVPA

International countries are encouraged to adopt minimal anti-trafficking standards that have been outlined within these areas in the TVPA. These standards consist of prohibiting severe forms of trafficking and prescribing sanctions proportional to the act (TVPA, 2000). The country must also make a concerted effort to combat organized trafficking by making a sustained effort to investigate, prosecute, and convict a trafficker, regardless of public office held, and to assist foreign governments by extraditing traffickers. In addition, the country must take initiative to prevent trafficking through such measures as public awareness and make an effort to protect and assist those who already have been victimized. The TVPA initially imposed these standards on countries with a significant number of victims, with more than 100 considered significant. This threshold was removed in 2008, which further increased the number of countries included in the TIP Report (TVPRA, 2008).

Criteria of Tier Placement

The TVPA required the U.S. DOS to provide an annual summary on countries with severe forms of human trafficking by providing the following:

- (A) a list of those countries, if any, to which the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking are applicable and whose governments fully comply with such standards;
- (B) a list of those countries, if any, to which the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking are applicable and whose governments do not yet fully comply with such standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance; and
- (C) a list of those countries, if any, to which the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking are applicable and whose governments do not fully comply with such standards and are not making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance. (TVPA, 2000, § 103 1b)

This statutory language provided the basis for the TIP Report's tier classification system, a progressive scale based on the minimum standards discussed above. Although the preceding list was a requirement of the TVPA, the publication of the TIP Report was not. Those countries meeting criteria for inclusion are placed in one of following three tiers each year: those countries successfully complying with the minimal requirements (Tier 1), noncompliant with minimal requirements but making significant attempts to do so (Tier 2), and noncompliant with TVPA standards and not making efforts to do so (Tier 3).

The tier classifications were modified in 2003 by the inclusion of the "Tier 2 Watch List" (TVPRA, 2003). This list contains countries with decreased anti-trafficking efforts from the prior year, such as former Tier 1 countries now meeting Tier 2 criteria, or Tier 2 countries that have regressed to Tier 3 standards. The Watch List also contains those Tier 2 countries where (a) the absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing; (b) there is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year, including increased investigations, prosecutions and convictions of trafficking crimes; increased assistance to victims; and decreased evidence of complicity in severe forms of trafficking by government officials; or (c) the determination that a country is making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with minimum standards as based on commitments by the country to take additional future steps over the next year (TVPRA, 2003, § 110b). In 2008, the reauthorization of the TVPA established a 2-year time limit for countries on the Tier 2 Watch List because previous practices allowed countries to remain indefinitely on this tier classification devoid of sanctions. At the end of this 2-year period, those Tier 2 Watch List countries that have not made significant efforts to address human trafficking will be classified as Tier 3. As of the 2010 TIP Report, this this requirement has already been waived for numerous countries.

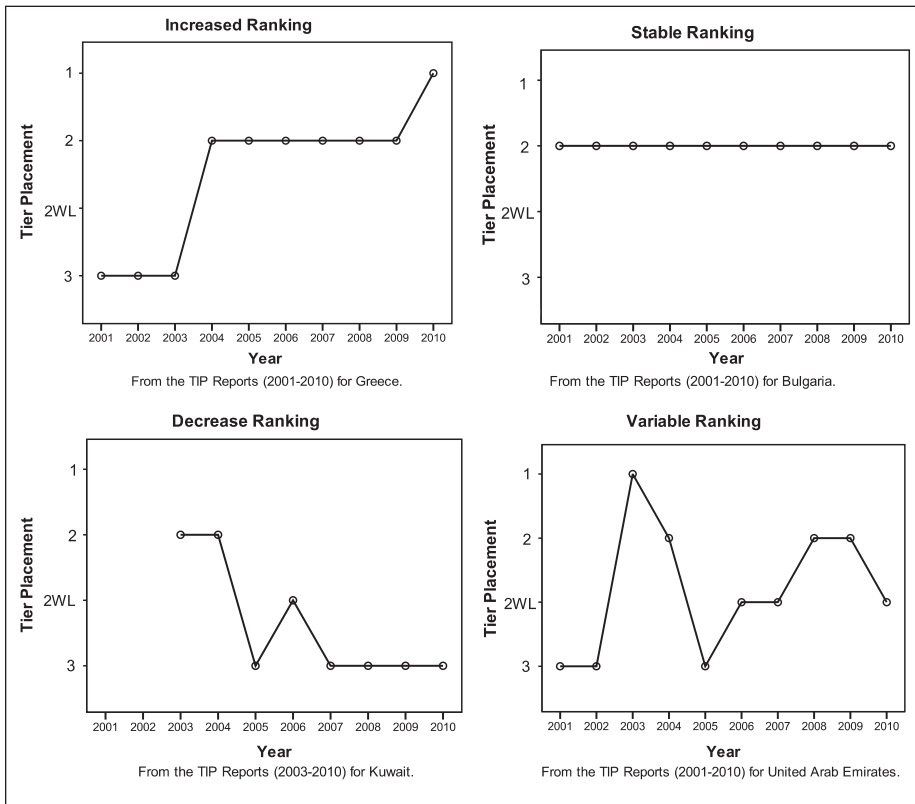


Figure 1. Illustration of changes in tier placement

The tier rankings discussed above are not permanent. Countries are reranked annually based on anti-trafficking efforts of the prior year, and the tier placement may change from year to year. The Inner City Fund (ICF) International (2009) has stated that the number of Tier 1 countries has increased since the first TIP Report, whereas Tier 3 countries have decreased. Although the TIP Report aims to stimulate anti-trafficking initiatives, its role is not always evident in tier rankings. Failing to increase or maintain efforts from the preceding year leads to variable or declining tier placements, whereas other countries have increased or maintained their tier placement. Figure 1 depicts examples of these changes.

Promoting the Adoption of Minimum Standards

Foreign governments must continue to cooperate with the international community to assist in the prosecution of traffickers and the protection of victims. If governments

fail to meet this minimal standard, or do not make strides to do so, they will be classified as a Tier 3 country. Under those circumstances, the United States will only provide humanitarian and trade-related assistance. Financial assistance of any other form by the United States is unauthorized (TVPA, 2000). Furthermore, Tier 3 countries will face opposition from the United States in obtaining support from financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Gallagher, 2006).

Another aspect of the TVPA's prevention component is the allocation of funds to initiate and carry out international programs to prevent human trafficking, prosecute traffickers, protect victims, and conduct research. To this end, a competitive grant process has been established to award aid to nongovernmental and intergovernmental organizations abroad. Since the TVPA's initiation, the United States has invested more than US\$600 million in international anti-trafficking programs (U.S. DOS, 2009; U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2007). The majority of the funds have been directed to the U.S. Agency for International Development, U.S. DOS, and U.S. Department of Labor. The U.S. government has also provided more than US\$100 million to international organizations such as the UN on Drugs and Crime, International Labour Organization, and International Organization for Migration. The TVPRA (2008) has recently required that a system be established to evaluate the effectiveness of funded initiatives. The ICF International (2009) has stated that the funds awarded abroad "predominantly fall on the U.S. Department of State's . . . *Trafficking in Persons Report* Tier 2 Watch List or Tier 3 rankings" (p. 1). The TVPRA (2003) placed restrictions on U.S. funded anti-trafficking aid, as it prohibited the allocation of funds to organizations that promote or support the legalization of prostitution. Despite this provision, the United States has continued to award grants to address human trafficking within some countries that have legalized prostitution, to include Argentina Germany, the Netherlands, and Senegal (Do Espirito Santo & Etheredge, 2004; Marino, Minichiello, & Disogra, 2003; Raymond, 2004). However, the funds allocated to these countries are often meager given the need for aid.

Criticism of the TIP Report

The TIP Report has received skepticism over its effectiveness to change policy (U.S. Congress, 2002), with particular scrutiny of the use of sanctions (U.S. DOS, 2007a, 2007b). According to the TVPA, all sanctions can be waived if necessary to avoid significant adverse effects on vulnerable populations. In 2007, President G.W. Bush sanctioned only 5 out of the 15 Tier 3 countries; all of which were already under some form of sanctioning unrelated to the TIPs (U.S. Department of Treasury, 2008). It has also been suggested that the anti-trafficking grants awarded have failed to prioritize anti-trafficking aid to lower ranked countries and have not targeted specific needs within the country (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2006, 2007). As stated by the Governmental Accountability Office (2006), "the U.S. Government agencies do not systematically link the programs they fund to combat trafficking overseas with the tier rankings or the deficiencies that are identified in the report's country narratives" (p. 33).

The TIP Report also has received criticism over its tier ranking determination (U.S. DOS, 2007a, 2007b, 2008a, 2008b). For example, some tier determinates have been suspected of being political in nature (U.S. DOS, 2006a, 2006b) as certain Tier 2 countries “clearly do not meet the minimum standard, several among them *have not* been threatened with Tier III and the loss of foreign assistance that accompanies that status” (International Justice Mission, 2007; italics added). As of 2010, India and China have been on the Tier 2 Watch List for 6 years yet have not been listed as Tier 3 countries (U.S. DOS, 2008a, 2008b, 2009). This is also evident with Saudi Arabia and several other Middle Eastern countries that remain as a Tier 2 and Tier 3, devoid of U.S. sanctions (U.S. DOS, 2006a, 2006b). The TIP Report narratives also lack a full description of each country’s compliance with the minimal standards. The U.S. Governmental Accountability Office (2006) noted that the (U.S. DOS, 2005) provided a comprehensive explanation for only 2 of the 24 Tier 1 countries, and 5 of these countries failed to mention compliance with the prosecution of sex traffickers entirely. For these reasons, it is difficult to use the TIP Report to prudently guide for anti-trafficking programs.

A Conceptual Framework

The socioeconomic characteristics of a country have shown to predict the supply and demand for the TIPs (Bales, 2007). Given that certain factors differentiate countries of origin and destination, they may also help explain the adoption of anti-trafficking initiatives and United States awarded aid. By exploring these phenomena in concert, it will help identify those in need of anti-trafficking aid and those who actually receive it.

The Emergence of a Trafficking Market

The TIPs has found to be largely related to illegal immigration. The reasons people migrate to a country may be a function of multiple and potentially dissimilar factors. Among these reasons, the desire for higher standards of living is a major determinant of migration. The shortage of workers for low-skill jobs in destination countries suggests a potential demand for immigrant workers. This provides higher paying job opportunities than the source country (Borjas, 1989). When a country has a high demand for labor that its workforce cannot meet solely within its borders, workers may be internationally recruited to reduce the pressure placed on the job market. To regulate this competition, restrictive immigration policies place barriers between the high demand for employment and the strong supply of workers (Borjas, 2000). This sets the stage for a lucrative market with the purpose of bringing the supply to the demand. With an abundance of qualified international workers, an immigration market in the host country emerges. This immigration market theory provides a framework for explaining the demand of trafficking persons, or what shall be termed a trafficking market.

Preliminary empirical evidence has assisted in refining the push and pull factors that explain and predict the strength of each respective trafficking market. Economic pressures, environmental conditions, political instability, and sociocultural considerations

are causal factors unique in geographical context. The factors of both push, driving migrants to leave the origin country, and pull, attracting migrants to the destination country, have been characterized as “relating to two separate decisions made at two separate points in time—one focusing on whether to go, the other on where to go” (Klenosky, 2002, p. 385).

Push Factors Driving Migration

Origin countries serve as source countries for trafficking victims. Migrants are increasingly at risk within these host countries because of a lack of awareness of the issue. The pool of victims in the origin country is influenced by a complex interaction of push factors, such as governmental corruption, unemployment rates, population pressure, social conflict, and political unrest. All of these are positively correlated with migration pressure (Ebbe, 2008; Kelly, 2002). Bales (2007) conducted an exploratory analysis to determine which variables serve as the strongest predictors of human trafficking. The author compared 76 socioeconomic variables against estimates of trafficking from origin countries. The data yielded multiple statistically significant variables ($p < .05$), with 57% of the variance between countries explained. Although every case of TIPs is unique, Bales (2007) found that government corruption, infant mortality rates, percentage of the population below the age 14, conflict and social unrest, food production, and population pressure are important push factors in trafficking. If countries fail to address these issues, the variables stated in the outset make a migrant susceptible to being trafficked. In effect, a country's economic well-being, is negatively correlated with the number of victims exported and positively correlated with the number victims imported through trafficking (Bales, 2007).

Trafficking Market in the Destination Country

Migrants are trafficked from host countries to destination countries. The relationship between push and pull factors creates a one-way flow of victims from underdeveloped countries into developed countries. Push factors in the origin country provide a supply of individuals with a desire to migrate, and the presence of pull factors attracts migrants and traffickers to another country. The decision on which host country is dependent on the strength of a variety of pull factors relative to the destination country. Bales (2007) found that government corruption and a country's economy are the strongest predictors of trafficking to a country, yet only 16% of the variance was explained by the model.

A country with migrants competing for employment is often a fertile market for recruiting unskilled labor or work within the sex industry that can be easily exploited. Due to limitations on the number of those who are legally able to migrate into the host country, migrants tend to rely on illegal methods of entry, which place them at risk of victimization. Similar to a migrant using a cost-benefit analysis to select a country for potential employment, a trafficker selects a destination country in relative proximity to

the origin country that is optimal for the commercial exploitation of migrants. This is a threshold several countries cannot meet. Although it may require a mode of transit that is more expensive, dangerous, and pose a higher possibility of detection, a trafficker may incur the risks and extra expense to travel to a sustainable trafficking market. These considerations have become less of a concern, however, through the increase of transnational migration routes that have come to make long-distance trafficking schemes more plausible (Kelly, 2002; Savona, Di Nicola, & Da Col, 1996). In consequence, the transnational aspect of this crime creates a new complexity that requires the consideration of its international context (Williams & Savona, 1996).

Present Study

Since the United States is primarily a destination for trafficking victims (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2006), prevention of human trafficking outside of domestic efforts is of great importance. This study attempts to assess the efficacy of the TIP Report by exploring two research questions. First, has tier ranking improved since the initiation of the TIP Report? Second, does the U.S. government prioritize funds to those countries in need, as exemplified by tier classification?

Hypotheses

From the preceding discussion, this research proposes the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Tier placement has improved since the initiation of the TIP Report.

Hypothesis 2: Anti-trafficking aid is awarded to lower tiered countries that demonstrate a commitment to combating human trafficking.

The first hypothesis is based on the expectation that the TIP Report will have a strong effect on global anti-trafficking initiatives. Its key policy objective is to bring attention to the issue of human trafficking and stimulate international efforts to address the problem. In essence, the United States created a 21st-century version of shaming with the TIP Report, exposing the social, political, and economic conditions within individual nations that impede anti-trafficking efforts. International scorn and the threat of U.S.-imposed sanctions are thought to be sufficient pressure for a nation to institute policies and strategies to reduce the trafficking of persons within its borders. This hypothesis is also expected given that grants should be directed at countries in need of assistance to develop and implement anti-trafficking policy.

The second hypothesis is guided by the fact that the U.S. government has implemented a competitive grant process to award anti-trafficking funds to countries in need of aid. And, the TIP Report is to be used as a tool to prudently target these resources. Based on Bales' research (Bales, 2007) to identify socioeconomic predictors of human trafficking and Borjas' (2000) immigration market theory, the dynamics that drive human trafficking and migration are integrated into a single conceptual framework to

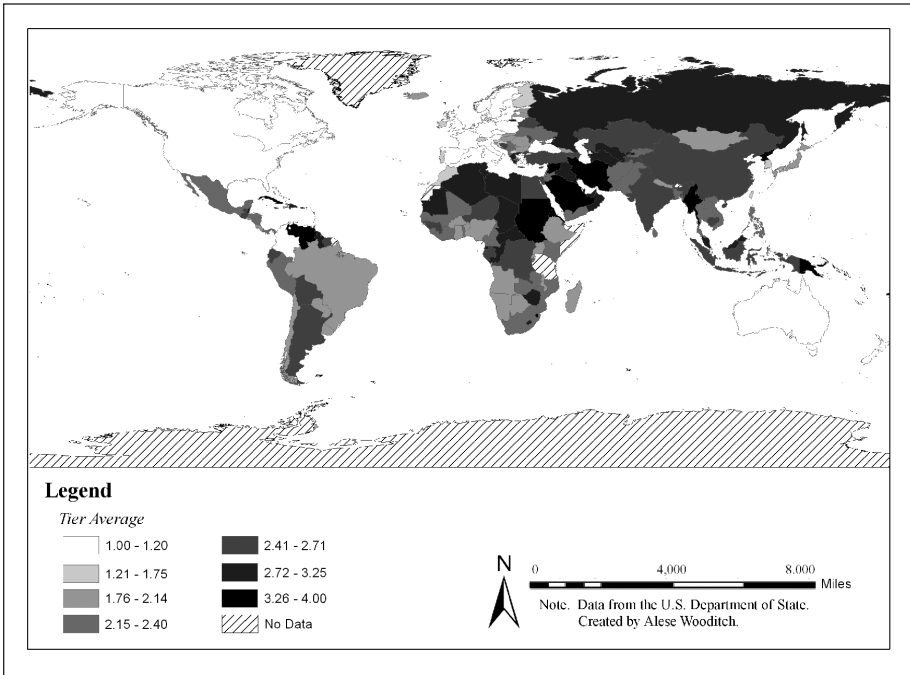


Figure 2. Average tier ranking in the trafficking in persons report (2001-2010)

explore predictors of tier average (See Figure 2) and anti-trafficking grants awarded (See Figure 3). These analyses will identify socioeconomic characteristics of those countries in need of funding alongside those countries that receive aid.

Analytic Strategy

A longitudinal assessment of the TIP Report will provide comprehensive insight into its ability to impact global policy. To test the first hypothesis, an interrupted time-series design will allow for an analysis and comparison of international anti-trafficking initiatives over the 10 years of its publication, as measured by tier placement (2001-2010). The treatment group for this study comprises all the countries included in the TIP Report. Each ranking is independent of the prior year. The tier rankings were coded as follows: Tier 1 = 1.0; Tier 2 = 2.0; Tier 2 Watch List = 3.0; Tier 3 = 4.0.

To test the second hypothesis, the amount of U.S. aid awarded will be examined each year by tier placement. Since the TIP Report is to be used to direct the grant awards process, it is anticipated that the amount allocated will be based on the country's tier ranking of the prior year. For the analysis, the cumulative amount of U.S. grant dollars awarded internationally was obtained from the U.S. DOS (2008a, 2008b) for all years

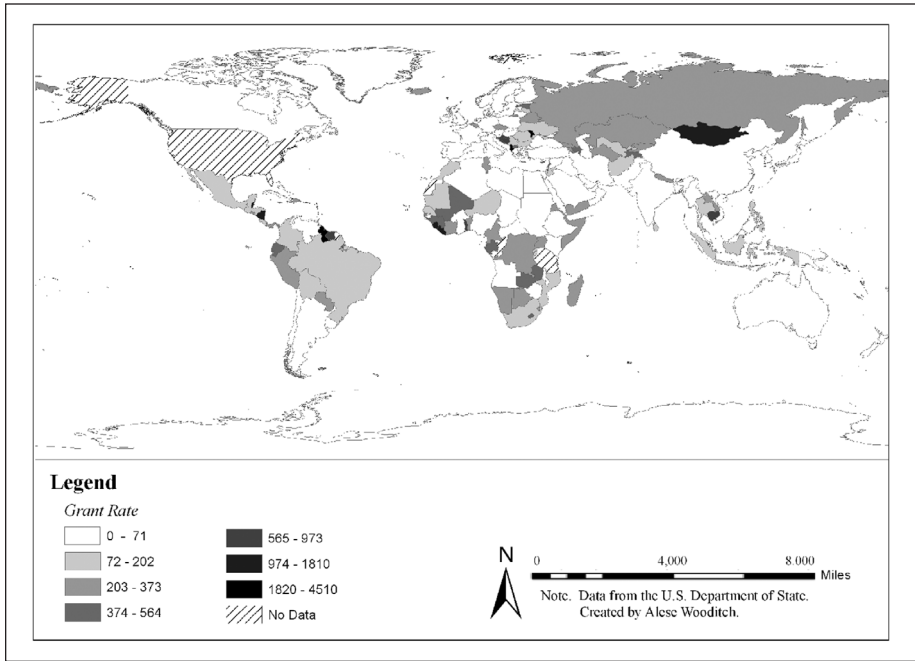


Figure 3. The rate of U.S. grants awarded internationally (2003-2009)

available. The total grant dollar awarded yearly was summed for each country (2003-2009). Those grants aimed at global efforts, rather than targeting initiatives within a specific country, were excluded from analyses. When one grant was awarded for efforts across multiple countries, the total grant amount was divided by the number of recipients.

To identify predictors of tier placement and anti-trafficking grants, factors were selected based on Bales' research (Bales, 2007) on the predictors of human trafficking. For the current study, measures of push and pull factors were obtained from the UN statistical database, Transparency International, and Freedom House for the most recent year available. The conceptual model was constructed using global measures that operationalized push and pull factors, as discussed by Bales (2007). More specifically, the independent variables measure migration pressure (e.g., the number of asylum applications by origin country, tourist arrivals per capita), the standard of living (e.g., crude death rate, education index, health expenditures, food production index), gender inequality (e.g., gender empowerment measure, female-to-male ratio), economic well-being (e.g., gross domestic product per capita, Gini index, percentage employed), government corruption (e.g., Corruption Perceptions Index), and rate of globalization (e.g., the percentage of population using cellular phones, average rate of change in carbon dioxide emissions) for each country represented in the TIP Report.

In constructing the actual model in the analyses, some of the measures from the conceptual model were excluded because of collinearity. The variables described below are those used in the actual analyses.

The independent variables for the study were primarily selected from the UN statistical database: the education index is composed of the adult literacy rate and the gross enrollment ratio for primary, secondary, and tertiary schools; the Gini index measures the stratification of income within a country; the percentage employed reflects the proportion of the total population employed; the average dollar amount of health expenditures per capita; the crude death rate reflects the number of deaths per 1,000 population per year; the asylum rate is the number of visas filled by the origin for individuals seeking refuge; and the number of tourist arrivals per 1,000 population. The Corruption Perceptions Index score, another key independent variable, was obtained from Transparency International (2008). This score provides a measure of the overall extent of corruption in the political and public sectors over a 2-year period (2007-2008). The evaluation of the perceived extent of corruption in 180 individual countries is on a scale of 0 = *highly corrupt* to 10 = *uncorrupt*. Independent variables were also obtained from Freedom House (2009), which measures an individual's extent of freedom within a country across two domains—political rights and civil liberties. Only civil liberties will be included in the analysis as it was highly correlated with the political rights index. The civil liberties measure reflects the expression of beliefs, organization rights, rule of law, and personal autonomy within each country.

Analyses

Longitudinal Assessment of Tier Placement

A Friedman two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate differences in tier average from 2001 to 2010. Only those countries with tier rankings for each year could be included in the analysis. The test was significant $\chi^2(9, N = 79) = 26.550, p < .01$. Kendall's coefficient of concordance was .037, which indicates strong differences in tier rankings between years. Next, follow-up pairwise comparisons were conducted with a Wilcoxon's test, a Least Significant Difference procedure that determines whether the observed differences between years are statistically significant. The test also controls for Type I errors across comparisons at the $p < .05$ level. The results indicate a significant difference in tier ranking between years from 2001 through 2004 (2001-2002 = $p < .01$; 2002-2003 = $p < .05$; 2003-2004 = $p < .001$). Although the Friedman test indicates that tier rankings varied significantly over time, this correlation is due to the change in tier average from 2001 to 2004. After these years, tier average leveled off; tier rankings between years for 2004 through 2010 were statistically insignificant. As the number of countries included in the TIP Report has increased each year, tier rankings from 2004 to 2010 were assessed to increase the number of countries included in the analysis. This time frame was selected because 2004 was the initial year of the Tier 2 Watch List. The change in tier placement was reassessed for these years using Friedman two-way ANOVA. The test was statistically

insignificant χ^2 (6, $N = 131$) = 6.416, $p = .378$. This indicates that tier placement has remained stable between years 2004 and 2010. Even after excluding Tier 3 countries, the Friedman two-way ANOVA still indicates no statistically significant change in tier average. The results of these tests fail to reject the null hypothesis.

The Relation Between Grants Awarded and Tier Placement

A series of one-way ANOVAs was conducted to determine differences in the amount of U.S.-based anti-trafficking aid by tier ranking (See Table 1). Due the fact that the U.S. government will only fund those countries with a clear commitment to combating human trafficking, Tier 3 countries were excluded from the analysis. In 3 of the 7 years assessed, having a low tier average was statistically associated with a higher amount of total grant dollars awarded for 2003 ($F = 4.30$; $df = 67, 1$; $p < .05$), 2004 ($F = 4.60$; $df = 99, 1$; $p < .05$), and 2009 ($F = 4.73$; $df = 134, 2$; $p \leq .01$). This is in partial support of the second hypothesis. Although the amount in 2005 approached significance, there was no association between the funds awarded between 2005 and 2007 to the tier placement of the prior year. This may be due to the large percentage of the grants being awarded to Tier 1 countries.

As noted, the U.S. government has committed to funding only those countries that make an effort to curb human trafficking. The rule is not always clear-cut, however, given that some Tier 3 countries have received anti-trafficking grants. This is of importance because failing to allocate aid to Tier 3 countries may preclude those in most need. Because of this, another series of one-way ANOVAs was conducted including Tier 3 countries, depicted in Table 2. The amount of grants awarded between tiers was statistically different for only 2009 ($F = 4.00$; $df = 147, 3$; $p < .01$), yet Tier 3 countries only received 4% of the funds during the same year. Tier 1 countries received a higher percentage of aid than Tier 3 countries in 2006 (18% vs. 4%) and 2007 (14% vs. 13%). The analysis indicates that the U.S. government is less likely to award anti-trafficking grants to Tier 3 countries than those that are higher ranking.

Predictors of Tier Average and U.S. Awarded Grants

For the next analyses, tier placement for each country was averaged across all ranking years. Ordinary least squares (OLS) regression provided an opportunity to assess the impact of push and pull factors on tier placement and anti-trafficking initiatives, as illustrated in Table 3. The OLS diagnostics, as indicated by the constant and R-squared ($R^2 = .592$), demonstrate goodness-of-fit of the model. The strongest predictor of tier average is the extent of civil liberties within a country ($p < .001$), with lower ranked countries being significantly less likely to grant civil liberties. Tier 1 countries on average spent more per capita on health expenditures than lower ranked tiers ($p < .05$). Tier 2 and Tier 3 countries are also more likely to have perceived corruption among public officials and politicians ($p < .001$).

In Table 3, OLS regression was used to assess predictors of anti-trafficking funds awarded internationally. The logarithmic transformation of grant dollars awarded was

Table 1. Summary of One-Way Analysis of Variances for the Amount of U.S.-Funded Grants and Tier Average (Precluding Tier 3)

Grant year	Funds FY 2003		Funds FY 2004		Funds FY 2005		Funds FY 2006		Funds FY 2007		Funds FY 2008		Funds FY 2009	
	Tier 2002	Tier 2003	Tier 2003	Tier 2004	Tier 2004	Tier 2005	Tier 2005	Tier 2006	Tier 2006	Tier 2007	Tier 2007	Tier 2008	Tier 2008	Tier 2009
Tier 1	US\$85,344 (13%)	US\$121,103 (13%)	US\$71,543 (4%)	US\$267,278 (17%)	US\$249,109 (16%)	US\$14,285 (1%)	US\$9,306 (1%)	US\$14,285 (1%)	US\$14,285 (1%)	US\$14,285 (1%)	US\$14,285 (1%)	US\$14,285 (1%)	US\$14,285 (1%)	US\$9,306 (1%)
Tier 2	US\$550,392 (87%)	US\$797,095 (87%)	US\$777,101 (40%)	US\$483,929 (34%)	US\$648,524 (40%)	US\$704,928 (35%)	US\$645,159 (75%)	US\$704,928 (35%)	US\$704,928 (35%)	US\$704,928 (35%)	US\$704,928 (35%)	US\$704,928 (35%)	US\$704,928 (35%)	US\$645,159 (75%)
Tier 2 Watch List	—	—	US\$1,097,400 (56%)	US\$682,023 (48%)	US\$706,416 (44%)	US\$1,286,800 (64%)	US\$204,172 (24%)	US\$1,286,800 (64%)	US\$1,286,800 (64%)	US\$1,286,800 (64%)	US\$1,286,800 (64%)	US\$1,286,800 (64%)	US\$1,286,800 (64%)	US\$204,172 (24%)
Total awarded	US\$635,736 4.296	US\$918,198 4.593	US\$1,946,044 2.910	US\$1,433,230 1.093	US\$1,604,049 1.094	US\$2,006,013 2.575	US\$858,637 4.730	US\$1,604,049 1.094	US\$1,604,049 1.094	US\$2,006,013 2.575	US\$2,006,013 2.575	US\$2,006,013 2.575	US\$2,006,013 2.575	US\$858,637 4.730
F	67,1	99,1	119,2	125,2	133,2	131,2	134,2	133,2	133,2	131,2	131,2	131,2	131,2	134,2
df	0.042**	0.035**	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	0.010***
Significance														

***p < .05. **p ≤ .01.

Table 2. Summary of One-Way Analysis of Variances for the Amount of U.S.-Funded Grants and Tier Average (Including Tier 3)

Grant year	Funds FY 2003	Funds FY 2004	Funds FY 2005	Funds FY 2006	Funds FY 2007	Funds FY 2008	Funds FY 2009
	Tier 2002	Tier 2003	Tier 2004	Tier 2005	Tier 2006	Tier 2007	Tier 2008
Tier 1	US\$85,344 (6%)	US\$121,103 (10%)	US\$71,543 (3%)	US\$267,278 (18%)	US\$249,109 (14%)	US\$14,285 (1%)	US\$9,306 (1%)
Tier 2	US\$550,392 (41%)	US\$797,095 (62%)	US\$777,101 (28%)	US\$483,929 (32%)	US\$648,524 (35%)	US\$704,928 (34%)	US\$645,159 (72%)
Tier 2 Watch List	—	—	US\$1,097,400 (39%)	US\$682,023 (46%)	US\$706,416 (38%)	US\$1,286,800 (62%)	US\$204,172 (23%)
Tier 3	US\$694,909 (52%)	US\$355,608 (28%)	US\$855,482 (30%)	US\$64,070 (4%)	US\$233,870 (13%)	US\$73,290 (4%)	US\$32,154 (4%)
Total awarded	US\$1,330,645	US\$1,273,806	US\$2,801,526	US\$1,497,300	US\$1,837,919	US\$2,079,303	US\$890,791
F	2.316	2.801	2.012	1.554	1.075	2.355	4.003
df	85,2	112,2	128,3	137,3	144,3	146,3	147,3
Significance	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	0.009**

***p < .01.

Table 3. Predictors of Tier Average and U.S. Grants Awarded Internationally

Independent variables	Tier average		U.S. grants	
	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β
Employment (%)	-0.771 (.403)	-.111 [†]	0.015 (.031)	.039
Civil liberties	17.63 (3.11)	.441***	-0.490 (.234)	-.219*
Food production index	-0.086 (.266)	-.020	0.018 (.021)	.072
Gini index	0.453 (.436)	.061	0.022 (.033)	.051
Asylum rate origin country	-3.36 (12.75)	-.015	1.015 (.997)	.081
Female to male ratio	-0.649 (.610)	-.076	0.083 (.047)	.171
Health expenditures	-4.69 (2.35)	-.139*	-0.407 (.171)	-.222*
Education index	19.15 (28.24)	.051	1.51 (2.16)	.070
Corruption index	-10.80 (2.90)	-.308***	-0.765 (.218)	-.390***
Crude death rate	-2.10 (1.27)	-.122	-0.065 (.098)	-.065
Tourist arrivals	6.37 (2.56)	.136	0.143 (.231)	.053
Population			0.170 (.209)	.072
(Constant)	350.26 (77.49)		5.43 (6.09)	
R^2		0.580		0.237

[†] $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

used because of a skewed distribution. To control for the size of the country, total population was included in the model. With an R^2 of .237, a smaller portion of the variance in anti-trafficking aid was explained in comparison to tier average. Civil liberties, health expenditures, and corruption perceptions, which were also significantly associated with tier average, served to predict the amount of antitrafficking funds awarded. The findings indicate that countries are more likely to receive aid if they have greater civil liberties and have fewer health expenditures at the $p < .05$ level. The United States also allocates more anti-trafficking aid to highly corrupt countries ($p < .001$). Last, the population of the country was statistically insignificant, which indicates that the United States does not award a higher amount of funds to more populated countries.

Limitations of Study

The findings of this research must be viewed in light of its limitations. The number of countries in the TIP Report has increased annually, yet the dataset cannot be considered exhaustive or complete because there are unranked nations. In addition, the sample size was restricted to only ranked countries for all years reviewed. The study examined change in tier ranking and did not identify and control for intervening variables that may have affected anti-trafficking initiatives. Even though there was a statistically significant change in tier ranking between years, it may not be attributed to the U.S. DOS's TIP Report. Although this study identified predictors of tier average, the weight of political ideology was unaccounted for in the regression model.

Discussion and Conclusion

The first purpose of this study was to determine if tier average improved over time. To this end, a longitudinal assessment of the TIP Report was conducted across the 10-year span of its publication. The purpose of this report is to encourage, and call attention to, the progress of anti-trafficking efforts in the international realm, with the expectation that global endeavors will increase yearly. This assertion, however, was unsupported. The data indicate that anti-trafficking initiatives overall, as measured by tier placement, have remained fairly stable. There could be several reasons for this finding. First, anti-trafficking initiatives have not increased since the initiation of the TIP Report. It may be that some countries have taken considerable initiative to combat human trafficking; however, when reviewing initiatives as a whole, these efforts are offset by the large portion of countries that have not. Second, anti-trafficking initiatives have increased overall, but the efforts are insufficient to raise tier placement. It may be argued that the tier classification system has reduced a complex phenomenon into a simplified, four-point scale. Tier rating is, in essence, an imperfect measure of antitrafficking initiatives, given that such a nebulous scale cannot yield a valid indicator of real-world events. As previously discussed, the methodology of the TIP Report has evolved over time. This may have made it more difficult for a country to improve its overall tier ranking, which would explain the statistically significant change in tier placement among the first few years of its publication. Another consideration is that tier placement is conflated by political ideology.

The final aim of the study was to determine if anti-trafficking aid is prioritized to lower ranked countries. In partial support of Hypothesis 2, anti-trafficking funds were significantly awarded to lower ranked tiers that have shown a clear effort to address human trafficking, but for only 3 out of the 7 years reviewed. This suggests that the TIP Report has not served to guide grants awarded for most years. This was especially evident with Tier 3 countries. The OLS regression uncovered additional information about those countries in need and those that actually received funding. Only three factors consistently predicted tier average and anti-trafficking aid—civil liberties, health expenditures, and perception of corruption. Ideally, the characteristics of lower ranked countries and those that receive the most funding should be the same. The relationship

between the dependent variables and civil liberties was counterintuitive to this premise. Although countries with lower civil liberties are more likely to be Tier 2 and Tier 3 countries, the United States awarded more funding to those countries with higher civil liberties.

As previously noted, the TVPA has prohibited the allocation of anti-trafficking funds to countries that have legalized prostitution, but does the legalization of prostitution promote sex trafficking? Perhaps the legalization or decriminalization of prostitution hinders a trafficking market. For instance, the strict regulation of a brothel may provide the oversight necessary to identify trafficking victims. In contrast, it may be argued that legalized prostitution may exacerbate certain types of human trafficking, such as sex tourism. There are theoretical arguments on both sides of the perspective (Hodge & Lietz, 2007; Jeffreys, 2010; Poulin, 2003; Raymond, 2004; U.S. Congress, 2002). However, given that little research has been conducted in this area and the need for rigorous research methods, it is premature to prohibit anti-trafficking aid to those countries in need of support.

Policy Implications

In the former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's letter in the TIP Report (U.S. DOS, 2007a, 2007b), she stated that "[t]he power of shame has stirred many to action and sparked unprecedented reforms" (p. 3). Similar statements have been made from governmental officials and throughout the TIP Reports, highlighting the success of this policy in promoting international change. The findings of this study, however, leave these claims unsupported. This may not be the result of failed policy but rather a failure to implement policy. The guidelines outlined in the TVPA with regard to preventing human trafficking need to be followed, such as a transparent tier classification system that strictly ranks countries based on compliance with minimal standards. Then, noncompliant nations need to be sanctioned, without being overshadowed by U.S. diplomacy. The inverse relation between tier average and anti-trafficking funds may be due to the influence of political ideology on tier placement or because the U.S. government is not using the TIP Report as a guide to target resources. Regardless of this disconnect, the analyses indicate that anti-trafficking funds may not be allocated to those countries in most need of aid. The issue may be assuaged if the offices that determine tier placement and anti-trafficking aid are integrated. This is akin to the common practice of police departments locating their crime analysis and intelligence units in separate locations.

The TIP Report needs to provide a more thorough account for each country's anti-trafficking initiatives. The TVPA emphasizes prosecution, protection, and prevention of human trafficking, yet tier rankings fail to indicate which priority the country is deficient on. Oftentimes, this information is omitted from the country's narrative. ICF International (2009) also stated that the number of Tier 1 countries has increased and the number of Tier 3 countries has decreased since the first TIP Report. However, although the number of countries that has joined Tier 1 may have increased, it does not

mean the tier placement of these countries has improved. For instance, in recent years, Luxembourg has joined other Tier 1 countries, yet prior to 2005 the country was unranked (U.S. DOS, 2010). The analyses in this study adjusted for this consideration by only including ranked countries for all years reviewed.

A more practical approach to assessing foreign governments' efforts would be to implement a more comprehensive tier classification system, as it may be too crude a measure to gauge anti-trafficking initiatives. Rather a four-point scale, a country can receive a score from 0 to 100 based on the following four anti-trafficking priorities: prosecution, protection, prevention, and data collection and research. These four criteria may be weighted by distributing the largest amount of points to the most important initiatives, such as 40 points for prevention, 25 for protection, 25 for prosecution, and 10 for data collection and research. The United States also needs to outline objectives within each category, for which the country must meet to obtain the maximum amount of points. For instance, a prosecution index may be composed of prohibiting all forms of the TIPs, prescribing sufficiently stringent punishments commensurate with other grave crimes, demonstrating prosecutorial efforts, successfully convicting traffickers, banning the suspension of sentences for those convicted, and implementing laws that prevent the prosecution of victims.

There remains a need for the grant awards process to have clear funding priorities. Restructuring the tier classification system would also promote an evidence-based approach to funding anti-trafficking. For example, a country may receive a score of 71 out of 100 points: prevention (21 points), protection (19 points), prosecution (23 points), and data collection and research (8 points). The U.S. government would then allocate the majority of anti-trafficking aid to prevention initiatives (as the country received the lowest proportion of the total score for that index), followed by protection efforts. To further identify those countries in need, the tier score can be weighted to capture the extent to which a country serves as a source or destination for victims. For example, if a country is a primary source country for trafficking victims, prevention of trafficking would be viewed as tantamount in comparison to a destination country. Unfortunately, this is currently unrealistic given that the accuracy and reliability of data is limited by methodological difficulties in measuring hidden populations. Thus, further research needs to continue to develop an understanding of the causes of human trafficking and contributors to low anti-trafficking initiatives.

For those Tier 3 countries under sanction for failing to meet minimal standards outlined in the TVPA, the United States has suspended all aid with the exception of humanitarian and trade-related assistance. This should not include anti-trafficking grants. Even though several countries are under threat of sanction for failing to meet the TVPA's minimum standards, only five countries have continually been sanctioned. These countries are also the least likely to receive U.S. anti-trafficking aid: Cuba, Iran, Myanmar, North Korea, Syria, and Venezuela. The selective application of economic ramifications contradicts the rationale for drafting sanctions because the purpose of these is not meant to be retribution, but rather a tool to modify international policy. The suspension of aid has been ineffective in motivating these countries to take action. The

process of awarding grants based on progress seems like a smart practice, yet the implications of this policy include cutting off funding to countries that are often high source countries. This creates an inevitable flow of victims to destination countries, whose anti-trafficking efforts are limited to reactive measures. Also, the suspension of aid has been more of a punishment for the trafficking victims rather than to the government. Until a strategy that motivates unwilling countries is implemented, the United States can reduce the incidence of trafficking in origin countries, despite the recipients' lack of initiative, by awarding grants based on need rather than compliance with U.S. standards. Future research should explore how best to disseminate aid within noncompliant nations.

It is clear that although some countries have taken noticeable effort to reduce the TIPs, other countries have not. The present study provides a preliminary understanding into the adoption and funding of anti-trafficking efforts that serves as a platform for anti-trafficking policy reform. Additional inquiry, with varying methodical approaches and data sources, into the effectiveness of the TIP Report will overcome the lack of outcome evaluations and direct discussion toward an evidence-based approach to funding anti-trafficking initiatives.

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Bio

Alese Wooditch is a doctoral student in the Criminology, Law and Society Program at George Mason University. She is currently a Graduate Research Assistant at the Center for Advancing Correctional Excellence. Her research interests include human trafficking, offender rehabilitation, and crime and place.