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HUMAN TRAFFICKING AS A THREAT TO PERSONAL SECURITY*

Abstract: *The subject of this article is human trafficking in the context of endangering personal security, with an individual as a referent object in need of protection. The author employs a literature review as the primary research method. The aim is to synthesize available scholarly literature and gain insights into existing theoretical generalizations and findings of empirical research examining human trafficking as a threat to personal security. Given the multidisciplinary nature of the subject, the analysis encompasses scholarly articles from various fields, particularly security studies and migration studies. The findings reveal that victims experience physical, psychological and sexual violence throughout different stages of the trafficking process, extending beyond the exploitation phase, as commonly acknowledged. The primary objective of employing various forms of violence is to maintain victims in a submissive and slave-like position, reinforcing the belief that escape is impossible. It is worth noting that researchers primarily focus on sexual exploitation, resulting in a larger body of work addressing women and girls as victims of human trafficking. Future research should aim to explore further other less visible forms of human trafficking, which may have equally severe implications for personal security. Additionally, the ongoing challenge of identifying these victims perpetuates the vicious circle of victimization. For holistic insights, it is necessary to examine this issue from a broader perspective on human security.*

Keywords: *human trafficking, personal security, human security, exploitation, violence.*

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INTRODUCTION

In the post-Cold War era, there has been a growing scholarly interest in human trafficking as a global security threat. Significant changes that have taken place in every aspect of life, along with the evolving security, political, and socio-economic circumstances, have compelled a shift from the traditional security paradigm. Consequently, non-military threats began to seize the attention of researchers. At the onset of the 21st century, academic interest in human trafficking gained further momentum due to international initiatives aimed at preventing and suppressing this criminal phenomenon. This criminal activity, known for generating significant profits and its intricate connection to other forms of organized crime, prompts authors to predominantly examine it within the framework of national and international security threats. Such an approach is shaped by traditional state-centric security perspectives. In this context, even though human security is primarily jeopardized, the security of individuals often receives less attention, hence the need to highlight this aspect of human trafficking research in this paper. While human trafficking affects all countries, available data underscores the vulnerability of individuals from underdeveloped regions and countries in transition. Human trafficking is characterized by high dark figure, with a large number of cases going undetected and victims of human trafficking being often treated as illegal migrants or prostitutes. It is precisely this strong association and intertwining with migration, smuggling, and prostitution that hinder the timely identification of trafficking victims and the provision of adequate (legal) protection. By gaining insights into various ways personal security is jeopardized, it is possible to expand the existing lists of indicators for identifying potential human trafficking victims. Simultaneously, this can contribute to enhancing the protective mechanisms for victims by comprehensively recognizing their needs and providing conditions for their well-being based on a human-centered approach.

The paper presents relevant theoretical insights and empirical research findings that have delved into the link between personal security and human trafficking. Subsequently, the text provides a concise overview of personal security, followed by an examination of the fundamental definitions and characteristics of human trafficking. The central section of the paper strives to address the core question guiding this study: What values of personal security are threatened by human trafficking, and in what ways?

THE CONCEPT OF PERSONAL SECURITY

In the period following World War II, research predominantly centered on national security. However, the discourse on security underwent a substantial

transformation after the end of the Cold War. This shift brought individual security concerns to the forefront. Broadening the security agenda brought non-military threats into the research spotlight while deepening the concept of security resulted in introducing individual security as a level of analysis, with the individual as the referent object in need of protection. The Copenhagen School, led by Buzan, played a pivotal role in this transition, using the terms “individual security” and “personal security” interchangeably.¹ Some authors, like Ejodus, discuss the lowest level of analysis centered on individual protection, but they prefer using the term “human security” over “individual security”.²

The concept of human security gained prominence in the 1990s, giving substance to the notion of individual security. It should be emphasized that the establishment of this concept in security studies at the end of the last century does not mean that the idea of individual security is relatively new. In fact, “the concept of human security has its roots tracing back to the Enlightenment era when personal freedoms were contrasted with the absolutist rule”.³ Attracting significant attention in both academic and political circles, human security rose to prominence with the release of the 1994 Human Development Report. This report defined human security as protection from persistent threats and disruptive forces in everyday life, essentially framing it as freedom from fear and freedom from want.⁴ Within the academic community, two primary approaches have emerged for interpreting human security: *the maximalist approach*, which comprehensively defines human security across seven dimensions (personal security, political security, economic security, health security, community security, food security, environmental security), and *the minimalist approach*, which narrowly defines human security as protection from violence and related threats (personal security).⁵ As Bajpai observes, personal security underscores the imperative of safeguarding physical safety from violence and criminal activities, with women and children being singled out as particularly vulnerable categories.⁶ In summary, it is imperative to consider not only objective indicators of security but also the subjective experience of safety.

While a universal definition of a threat remains elusive, a review of the literature suggests that a threat materializes as an undesirable event that causes

¹ Barry Buzan, *People, States & Fear*, Boulder 1991, 35.

² Filip Ejodus, *Međunarodna bezbednost: Teorije, sektori i nivoi*, Beograd 2012, 212-213.

³ Ivica Đorđević, *Ljudska bezbednost – Globalni kontekst i primena u Srbiji*, Institut za uporedno pravo, Beograd 2013, 75.

⁴ Milan Lipovac, Luka Glušac, „Perspektive koncepta ljudske bezbednosti“, *Kultura polisa* 2/2011, 60.

⁵ Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, Anuradha Chenoy, *Human security: Concepts and implications*, Routledge, London 2007, 48-49.

⁶ Kanti Bajpai, *Human security: Concept and measurement*, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame 2000, 15.

adverse consequences by exploiting a vulnerability.⁷ A human factor or *force majeure* can initiate an unwanted event that ultimately endangers or destroys a certain value. Speaking of danger, which manifests as a challenge, risk, or threat, Ejodus defines a threat as a clear intention to harm or destroy a particular value.⁸ Regardless of the approach they advocate, as the primary direct threats to personal security authors cite war, intrastate conflicts, terrorism, crime, human trafficking (especially of women and children), the use of child soldiers, and drug trafficking, while the deprivation of basic needs, serious illnesses, and accidents are considered indirect threats.¹⁰ Therefore, the dehumanization of individuals through human trafficking is identified as one of the most serious threats to personal security.

THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

When it comes to defining human trafficking in academic circles, there is no universal definition that encapsulates the various elements of this criminal activity. A review of existing literature indicates significant variation in definitions among authors. These differences stem from their theoretical perspectives, a commitment to specific conceptual solutions, and in some cases, personal beliefs aimed at achieving particular political objectives. In this regard, Jennifer Lobasz's approach is intriguing, as she defines human trafficking as a "fundamentally contested concept".¹¹ According to her perspective, human trafficking is a social construct, and the meaning of this term is closely tied to a specific political context. As highlighted by sociologist Velibor Lalić, human trafficking inherently raises questions of freedom, particularly given the enslaved status of victims.¹² While some perceive human trafficking as a form of slavery,¹³ others contend that it arises as a result of migration pressures at closed state borders.¹⁴ The absence of a single and clear definition of human trafficking often leads to conflation with prostitution and smuggling. In contrast to these practices, human trafficking ex-

⁷ Douglas Landoll, *The security risk assessment handbook: A complete guide for performing security risk assessments*, Auerbach Publications, Boca Raton 2006, 22-24.

⁸ F. Ejodus, 36-37.

⁹ It is evident that Ejodus is talking about direct threats, but they can also be indirect, and intention is not necessary for their existence.

¹⁰ K. Bajpai, 40-41.

¹¹ Jennifer Lobasz, *Victims, villains, and the virtuous constructing the problems of "human trafficking"* (Doctoral dissertation), University of Minnesota, Minnesota 2012, 3.

¹² Velibor Lalić, *Trgovina ljudima u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Defendologija centar za bezbjednosna, sociološka i kriminološka istraživanja, Banja Luka 2007, 11.

¹³ Arun Kumar Acharya, "Trafficking of Women in Mexico and Their Health Risk: Issues and Problems", *Social Inclusion* 1/2015, 105.

¹⁴ Omar Mahmoud, Christoph Trebesch, "The economics of human trafficking and labour migration: Micro-evidence from Eastern Europe", *Journal of comparative economics* 2/2010, 173.

cludes an element of voluntariness, it can be domestic (unlike smuggling, which entails cross-border movement), and it is conducted for the purpose of exploiting victims through some form of coercion.¹⁵ The lack of proper differentiation can result in secondary victimization due to inadequate responses from security providers.

Nonetheless, it is important to emphasize that authors unanimously agree that human trafficking represents a grave violation of human rights and a victim's dignity.¹⁶ Hence, irrespective of the theoretical standpoint they adopt, researchers often rely on the definition found in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children: "Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs".¹⁷ Although human trafficking constitutes a highly intricate process, it can be delineated into three fundamental phases: recruitment (often involving friends, relatives, and fraudulent job offers, among other methods), transportation, and the exploitation of victims.¹⁸

The etiology of human trafficking is exceptionally complex. While there is no precise profile of a human trafficking victim, various socio-economic factors (such as poverty and economic migration), cultural elements (specific traditional practices and customs), political conditions (porous borders, corruption, wars), and individual circumstances and characteristics (such as gender, age, lifestyle, disrupted family relationships) can render individuals vulnerable to human trafficking.¹⁹

Owing to its clandestine and illicit nature, measuring the extent of human trafficking is challenging, making it difficult to provide accurate assessments of this phenomenon. Authors rely on estimates from international organizations,

¹⁵ Саша Мијалковић, *Трговина људима*, Беосинг, Београд 2005, 70-72.

¹⁶ Alja Klopčič, "Trafficking in human beings in transition and post-conflict countries", *Human Security Perspectives* 1/2004, 10.

¹⁷ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime [*Протокол за превенцију, сузбијање и кажњавање трговине људским бићима, нарочито женама и децом, којим се доцњује Конвенција Уједињених нација против транснационалне организоване криминала*], UNTS v. 2237 (p. 319), adopted on 15 November 2000, entered into force on 25 December 2003, the Republic of Serbia ratified the Protocol, "Official Gazette of the FR Yugoslavia" – International Treaties, No. 6/2001 [„Службени лист СРЈ” — Међународни уговори, бр. 6/2001], art. 3, para. (a).

¹⁸ V. Lalić, 24-32.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 35-41.

particularly the International Labor Organization, whose recent estimates cite a figure of 50 million victims, a number surpassing the 2016 estimates by as much as 10 million.²⁰ The increase in the number of victims is closely tied to political and socio-economic developments that have unfolded since the late 20th century and in the early years of the 21st century. This period witnessed the dissolution of the USSR, a deterioration in the living standards in numerous Eastern European countries (commonly recognized as source countries), and the liberalization of borders, alongside increased cross-border mobility driven by globalization. As a result, scholars pinpoint globalization as a significant factor that substantially facilitates human trafficking.²¹ Furthermore, a positive correlation between the outbreak of the global coronavirus pandemic in 2020 and an increase in human trafficking has also been observed but remains insufficiently examined.²²

The primary driver of this criminal activity is the enormous profit generated from the sale and exploitation of victims. As per available estimates, human trafficking for sexual exploitation yields an annual income ranging from \$99 billion to \$150 billion, while labor exploitation accounts for an additional \$51 billion.²³ The core principles of this illicit activity revolve around the dynamics of supply and demand, and an increase in its scope occurs when traffickers assess that the benefits will outweigh the costs and risks of discovery.²⁴

IMPACT OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS ON PERSONAL SECURITY

The impact of human trafficking on personal security is widely regarded by most authors as a direct threat to an individual's physical and psychological integrity and life. In this context, based on an analysis of existing academic literature, it can be stated that authors conceptualize human trafficking as a threat to personal security through various forms of exploitation and violence. Given that violence is deployed to sustain the subordinate status of victims, authors frequently operationalize the compromised personal security of victims through various forms of violence, including sexual (such as rape and other forms of sexual abuse),

²⁰ Joan Reid, Bryanna Fox, "Reforming the Criminal Justice Response to Human Trafficking Victims and Offenders: An Introduction", *Victims & Offenders* 3/2023, 393.

²¹ See Arun Kumar Acharya, Adriana Salas Stevanato, "Algunas consideraciones teóricas acerca del tráfico de mujeres en el contexto de la globalización", *Revista de Ciencias Sociales* 2/2008, 220-239.

²² See Elizabeth Such *et al.*, "The Risks and Harms Associated with Modern Slavery during the COVID-19 Pandemic in the United Kingdom: A Multi-Method Study", *Journal of Human Trafficking* 2023, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23322705.2023.2194760>, 3 June 2023.

²³ J. Reid, B. Fox, 393.

²⁴ A. K. Acharya, A. S. Stevanato, 235.

physical (comprising assault, torture, strangulation, and even murder), and psychological violence (encompassing humiliation, threats, manipulation, and intimidation), while some authors also incorporate a range of deprivations (sleep, food). The degree of violence depends on several factors, particularly the purpose or form of exploitation.

An analysis of existing studies, which seek to examine the scope and severity of violence endured by victims of human trafficking, reveals the prevalence of diverse forms of abuse across all stages of the trafficking process, commencing from recruitment and transportation. This exposure to violence often persists even after victims have exited the human trafficking network, frequently due to challenges in the reintegration process. The authors generally acknowledge the role of violence in establishing control over victims, particularly during the phase of exploitation. However, there remains a divergence of opinions concerning the degree and frequency of such violence.

Violence during the recruitment phase may or may not be encountered. Authors observe that the use of force for recruitment is notably less common in comparison to alternative recruitment methods, such as deceptive job offers.²⁵ Emotional manipulation plays a particularly significant role in attracting victims.

The lives of trafficking victims, as a fundamental value of personal security, are particularly endangered during the transportation phase since traffickers seek to evade immigration authorities and conceal their criminal activity by all means.²⁶ This phase is accompanied by the use of physical violence, threats, sexual violence, and even the death of victims if they attempt to escape and seek help.²⁷ Velibor Lalić cites a case where several women, who were victims of human trafficking, were thrown into the sea near Taiwan after traffickers received information that the ship on which they were held would be inspected by authorities.²⁸

On a daily basis, victims are subjected to verbal and psychological abuse, death threats, sleep and food deprivation, which have proven to be more effective mechanisms for keeping victims submissive than extreme physical violence.²⁹ However, it is worth noting that the majority of studies primarily focus on the sexual exploitation of victims, mainly women and girls. On the other hand, research on human trafficking for labor exploitation relies more on indicators of

²⁵ A. Klopčič, 11.

²⁶ A. K. Acharya, 104.

²⁷ Ligia Kiss *et al.*, "Paper: violence, abuse and exploitation among trafficked women and girls: a mixed-methods study in Nigeria and Uganda", *BMC Public Health* 22/2022, <https://bmcpublihealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-022-13021-2>, 5 June 2023.

²⁸ V. Lalić, 28.

²⁹ A. K. Acharya, 108; See Susie Baldwin, Anne Fehrenbacher, David Eisenman, "Psychological coercion in human trafficking: an application of Biderman's framework", *Qualitative health research* 9/2015, 1171-1181; Siddhartha Sarkar, "Trafficking of Women and Girls for Sex Trade from Nepal to India", *Challenge* 5/2016, 434-458.

labor exploitation than on examining the prevalence of violence. As a result, data in this field are relatively scarce, but they still indicate a significant presence of physical violence. However, it often happens that authors generalize their findings regarding the level of violence, without distinguishing between different forms of exploitation, leading to a false image of the extent and prevalence of violence.

On the other hand, the absence of sexual and physical violence does not imply the absence of human trafficking; coercion can be enacted through other means such as psychological manipulation and threats, which can have severe consequences for the victim's mental health.³⁰ Victims' resistance is frequently diminished when threats are aimed at their loved ones and family members, and in the same way, victims are conditioned to perform their tasks proficiently and generate sufficient income.³¹ Traffickers frequently employ threats by exploiting the victims' vulnerable position, insinuating that their connections within the police force will recapture them should they attempt an escape, and they also manipulate the fear of victims being treated as criminals and illegal migrants by security forces, effectively dissuading any endeavors to break free from the pernicious cycle of human trafficking.³² A sense of insecurity is pervasive and it is perpetually upheld through an unsafe living and working environment.

Starting from the fact that violence is a basic characteristic of human trafficking, Heidi Stöckl and her colleagues conducted research on a sample of 10,369 human trafficking victims.³³ To gain insight into the prevalence of abuse in the human trafficking process and describe documented cases of violence among victims, the authors used the largest database of human trafficking victims, the IOM Victim of Trafficking Database (VoTD). The findings of the research indicate that violence is highly prevalent (physical and/or sexual violence was present in over 50% of cases) and that it has a distinct gender dimension, specifically, there are patterns of violence. Younger victims (18-24) were exposed to a higher degree of violence compared to all other age groups, which may indicate potential resistance to traffickers or that other categories were more compliant. Young women and girls were more frequently subjected to both physical and sexual violence, as well as individuals who experienced some form of deprivation and/or forced drug and alcohol use. Furthermore, a higher degree of violence was observed among victims of trafficking for begging and in the sectors of production and agriculture. As the results showed, in as many as 75% of cases, traffickers used threats to

³⁰ Siân Oram *et al.*, "Prevalence and risk of violence and the physical, mental, and sexual health problems associated with human trafficking: systematic review", *PLoS medicine* 5/2012, <https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1001224>, 1 June 2023.

³¹ S. Baldwin, A. Fehrenbacher, D. Eisenman, 1175.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Heidi Stöckl *et al.*, "Human trafficking and violence: Findings from the largest global dataset of trafficking survivors", *Journal of Migration and Health* 4/2021, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666623521000404>, 1 June 2023.

individuals and their families as a means of control, especially towards the victims of international trafficking who used counterfeit documents, while the level of violence was significantly higher in the case of domestic trafficking victims.³⁴ In this study, a particularly interesting observation is the positive correlation between a victim's relatively higher socio-economic status prior to entering the human trafficking chain and a higher degree of violence experienced during the human trafficking process. This is a significant finding because poor economic conditions, low standards of living, and poverty are frequently identified in the majority of research as some of the most significant factors contributing to individuals' vulnerability.³⁵

Due to the analytical purpose of this paper, the insights gained into the examined topic will be further delineated through an exploration of the diverse exploitative practices to which victims of human trafficking are subjected.

Diverse forms of exploitation experienced by victims of human trafficking

Sexual exploitation serves as the comprehensive term encompassing a spectrum of activities to which victims may be coerced, including forced prostitution, sex tourism, pornography production, and more. The predominant focus of research in this domain is on women and girls as victims.³⁶ When it comes to the temporal dimension of sexual exploitation, the duration varies on a case-by-case basis, yet a significant correlation emerges between the victim's age and the duration of sexual exploitation. Younger victims typically endure longer periods of exploitation, substantiating the heightened demand for girls and young women in this context.³⁷ In this regard, Kimberly McCabe offers a typology of victims subjected to sexual exploitation. She distinguishes between a) victims who entered the trafficking chain through coercion, force, or deception, and b) women who initially engaged in prostitution but eventually found themselves entangled in a situation of involuntary exploitation.³⁸ There are numerous debates about prostitution and human trafficking, and these phenomena are often intertwined, which can have serious consequences for trafficking victims. Prostitution is considered to be a socially undesirable phenomenon that carries the stigma of both the community and providers of social services and security. This can lead to secondary

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ See Olubukola Adesina, "Modern day slavery: poverty and child trafficking in Nigeria", *African Identities* 2/2014, 165-179.

³⁶ See Cindy Miller-Perrin, Sandy Wurtele, "Sex trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of children", *Women & Therapy* 1-2/2017, 123-151.

³⁷ S. Sarkar, 454.

³⁸ Kimberly McCabe, "Common forms: sex trafficking", *Human trafficking: Interdisciplinary perspectives* (ed. Mary Burke), Routledge, New York 2013, 137.

victimization of the victim or the failure to identify her as a victim.³⁹ In this context, advocates for the legalization of prostitution are becoming increasingly vocal, believing that this approach will reduce human trafficking for sexual exploitation. However, research findings mostly suggest the opposite outcome of what is expected: the legalization of prostitution tends to increase demand, thereby increasing the scope of trafficking in women.⁴⁰

Regarding the research design of existing studies on trafficking for sexual exploitation, qualitative research, such as case studies, dominates in this field, which is significant for gaining in-depth insights into the various ways that trafficking endangers the values of personal security. These studies are often limited in geographical scope, focusing on specific countries or smaller spatial units within them. The majority of studies concentrate on Southeast Asian countries, followed by Africa and Latin America, which is not surprising given that these regions are particularly affected by human trafficking. Moreover, in the context of sex trafficking, the European Union (EU) has been acknowledged as the leading region, with specifics of the process varying between member states.⁴¹ Donna Hughes highlights a concerning issue: children constitute one-fifth of the sexually exploited victims in the EU.⁴² It is particularly worrying that there are almost no studies addressing the sexual exploitation of boys and men, despite reports from various organizations indicating the existence of this aspect of trafficking. The sexual exploitation of boys is notably present in Afghanistan, which can be linked to their cultural practice called “Bacha Bazi”. Although the vast majority of authors warn that human trafficking for sexual exploitation of women is the most prevalent form of this criminal activity,⁴³ it is important to keep in mind that this form of abuse is also the most visible, and to some extent, there is reporting of this criminal activity. This is not the case with other forms of human trafficking, which are often neglected in academic debates and studies, and they remain undocumented and invisible to security providers as well.

When it comes to human trafficking for the purpose of labor exploitation, the concept itself is rather ambiguous, marked by a lack of precise definitions,

³⁹ See Ramona Vijeyarasa, “The State, the family and language of ‘social evils’: re-stigmatizing victims of trafficking in Vietnam”, *Culture, health & sexuality* S1/2010, S89-S102.

⁴⁰ Seo-Young Cho, Axel Dreher, Eric Neumayer, “Does legalized prostitution increase human trafficking?”, *World Development* 1/2013, 67-82.

⁴¹ Donna Hughes, “Trafficking in human beings in the European Union: Gender, sexual exploitation, and digital communication technologies”, *Sage Open* 4/2014, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244014553585>, 3 June 2023.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Authors can also be biased in their assessments and research, especially if they strongly adhere to certain theoretical approaches, such as feminism, which perceives women as the sole victims. See Lauren McCarthy, “Human trafficking and the new slavery”, *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 1/2014, 221-242.

which makes operationalization, comparison, and generalization of findings challenging. Common ground among various definitions is the absence of the victim's consent, the presence of coercion, and the imposition of penalties to compel individuals into certain labor activities. The boundary between labor exploitation as a form of human trafficking and other forms of labor abuse that may fall under labor law is particularly unclear.⁴⁴ Victims of trafficking can be found in various exploitative situations, and some common indicators include unpaid overtime work, reduced wages or complete lack of compensation, retention of personal documents, restricted freedom of movement, exposure to hazardous working conditions without safety procedures, lack of free time, as well as inadequate healthcare, accommodation, and nutrition.⁴⁵ False promises of legitimate employment are the most common recruitment method. Physical violence and threats are also prevalent, and victims are often controlled by threats of being arrested as illegal migrants.⁴⁶ This form of human trafficking is mainly present in the textile industry, construction, the service sector, factories, plantations, and farms.⁴⁷ Relatively few studies focus on forced labor in households, which is the least visible form of labor trafficking, and as some authors point out, it is widespread and often involves the exploitation of children.⁴⁸ Several studies have highlighted a positive correlation between human trafficking for labor exploitation (including children) and global economic openness.⁴⁹ "Poverty and inequality in wealth distribution force workers to migrate and accept jobs in poor conditions, subjecting them to exploitation. Additionally, employers' demand for cheap labor and the involvement of organized criminal groups in recruiting and exploiting workers have created an environment for human trafficking for the purpose of labor exploitation."⁵⁰ Human trafficking for labor exploitation is almost inseparable from labor migration,⁵¹ so

⁴⁴ Samir Rizvo, Eldan Mujanović, „Trgovina ljudima radi eksploatacije radne snage: političke dileme“, *Kriminalističke teme* 1-2/2014, 39.

⁴⁵ Monika Smit, "Trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation. The case of the Netherlands", *Trends in Organized Crime* 2-3/2011, 190; See Ana Maria Buller *et al.*, *Labour exploitation, trafficking and migrant health: Multi-country findings on the health risks and consequences of migrant and trafficked workers*, International Organization for Migration, Geneva 2015.

⁴⁶ M. Smit, 194.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 188-189.

⁴⁸ O. Adesina, 165-166.

⁴⁹ See Jenny Bryson Clark, Denese McArthur, "The Political and Economic Transition from Communism and the Global Sex Trafficking Crisis: A Case Study of Moldova", *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 2/2014, 128-144; Dursun Peksen, Shannon Lindsey Blanton, Robert Blanton, "Neoliberal Policies and Human Trafficking for Labor: Free Markets, Unfree Workers?", *Political Research Quarterly* 3/2017, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1065912917710339>, 2 June 2023.

⁵⁰ S. Rizvo, E. Mujanović, 39.

⁵¹ See Jiyoung Song, "Redefining Human Security for Vulnerable Migrants in East Asia", *Journal of Human Security* 1/2015, 45-56.

victims of trafficking are often treated as illegal migrants,⁵² further contributing to the low visibility of this phenomenon and relativizing the position of labor exploitation victims compared to those who are sexually exploited. It should be noted that most authors analyze data from international organizations' reports, which further reinforces the perception of the widespread nature of trafficking for sexual exploitation in comparison to labor exploitation. Additionally, these reports primarily focus on international trafficking, neglecting domestic human trafficking.

Even fewer studies delve into organ trafficking. This form of human trafficking occurs when organs are taken from a victim through deception or coercion, without their knowledge during a medical procedure, or when victims have consented to sell their organ(s), but were deceived regarding payment.⁵³ The illicit market for human organs continues to expand as the demand for organs surges each year, while the number of donations remains stagnant, so vulnerable groups, including the impoverished, homeless individuals, illegal migrants, refugees, and children, are increasingly falling prey to organ traffickers.⁵⁴ In the realm of research, while it is acknowledged that the violent extraction of organs is particularly prevalent in conflict situations, the primary focus of authors centers on cases where donors initially agree to sell an organ but are deceived in the process.⁵⁵ Men predominantly opt to sell an organ, either to attain economic security or due to being trapped in debt bondage.⁵⁶

Other forms of human trafficking, including trafficking for begging, forced marriages, involvement in criminal activities, trafficking of women for childbirth, or trafficking of children for participation in armed conflicts, although acknowledged, have received considerably less scholarly attention. These forms are often mentioned in passing, with a notable absence of in-depth analyses that could offer valuable insights.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As a complex and multidimensional issue, human trafficking threatens all levels of security. However, it is noticeable that a large number of papers analyze this phenomenon as a threat to national and international security. Prior to impact-

⁵² See Nicola Piper, "A Problem by a Different Name? A Review of Research on Trafficking in South-East Asia and Oceania", *International migration* 1 □ 2/2005, 203-233.

⁵³ Danijela Frangež, Ales Bučar Ručman, "Specific forms of human trafficking in Slovenia: overview and preventive measures", *Police Practice and Research* 3/2017, 232.

⁵⁴ Alireza Bagheri, "Child organ trafficking: global reality and inadequate international response", *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy* 2/2016, 239.

⁵⁵ See Farhan Navid Yousaf, Bandana Purkayastha, "I am only half alive: Organ trafficking in Pakistan amid interlocking oppressions", *International Sociology* 6/2015, 637-653.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 645-646.

ing society, the state, and the international system, human trafficking directly imperils individuals, including their personal safety and well-being, hence the need for heightened attention to this facet of endangerment. As the findings of previous research have shown, the central phase of human trafficking is exploitation, with victims being exposed to various forms of violence (physical, sexual, psychological) throughout the entire trafficking process. Authors generally agree on the negative consequences, while debates persist regarding the severity and frequency of violence, as well as the prevalence of specific exploitative practices. It is worth noting that researching human trafficking comes with numerous methodological challenges, especially concerning the issue of sample representativeness, which can result in a false image of the actual state of affairs. Given the entanglement of human trafficking with issues like migration and prostitution, it becomes evident that this field is highly politicized, which undoubtedly affects both research efforts and the findings of some studies. Most studies are unidimensional, concentrating solely on one form of exploitation or one specific category of victims, often sidelining other forms of human trafficking that warrant more significant attention. Trafficking in women for sexual exploitation is the most extensively researched form, which can be attributed to its visibility, greater accessibility for sampling within the population, and the dominant feminist theoretical approach that initially shaped the academic discourse on human trafficking. The increasing demand for cheap labor underscores the necessity to refocus research efforts on this form of human trafficking, particularly emphasizing forced labor within households. In conclusion, the lives of individuals and their physical integrity are dominant values threatened by human trafficking, although not the only ones. Therefore, there is a need to adopt a broader concept of human security.

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Трговина људима као претња личној безбедности

Сажетак: Предмет истраживања овог рада јесте трговина људима у контексту угрожавања личне безбедности у чијем средишту је појединац као референтни објект којем је потребна заштита. Аутор се ослања на прећуд литературу као основни методолошки приступ с циљем синтезе досадне академске траже и стицања увида у постојећа теоријска ошћавања и налазе емпијских истраживања која трговину људима иштују као претњу личној безбедности. Мултидисциплинарна природа предмета истраживања услова је анализу научних радова из различитих области, а посебно студија безбедности и студија миграција. Налази постојећих истраживања указују на то да су жртве изложене физичком, психичком и сексуалном насиљу током различитих фаза процеса трговине људима, а не само током фазе експлоатације. Основни циљ примене различитих видова насиља јесте одржавање подрећеног и ројског положаја у којем се жртва нашла и оснаживање уверења да нема излаза из те ситуације. Приметно је да се истраживачи првенствено фокусирају на сексуалну експлоатацију. Ошуда, највећи број радова се бави женама и девојчицама као жртвама трговине људима. Будуће студије би требало да се фокусирају на истраживање осталих облика трговине људима који су мање видљиви и имају ите или озбиљније последице по безбедност људи. Проблем идентификације тих жртва је и даље присутан, те оне остају у зачараном кругу виктимизације. За холистичке увиде потребно је овај проблем истражити у контексту људске безбедности схваћене у ширем смислу.

Кључне речи: трговина људима, лична безбедност, људска безбедност, експлоатација, насиље.

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