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Title: Human Trafficking and Nepal: Regional and National initiatives

Human trafficking is a global issue; a form of modern slavery prevalent almost in every part of the globe in some way or other. Nepal being one of the underdeveloped countries in South Asia has been facing the issue of human trafficking since decades. The fact that we have been unable to eradicate the issue is something to be concerned about. We often get to hear the news about human trafficking every now and then on national newspapers or social networking sites which basically motivated me to take a deep look into the issue.

For my presentation, I had three research questions; causes of human trafficking, anti-trafficking laws implemented to combat against human trafficking and the factors despite anti-trafficking laws contributing to the issue. I responded with poverty, illiteracy and lack of job opportunities being the major causes and factors leading to human trafficking. I discussed the initiatives led by Nepal government, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the role of non-profit organizations in combating against the issue. I also discussed the 2015 earthquake in Nepal which massively affected the country economically, corruption prevalent especially in Nepal- India border, large number of brokers and consultancies as well as flexible law against human trafficking which are contributing to the issue. I concluded my presentation with some of the suggestions; providing job opportunities in rural areas, increment in police stations, especially in Nepal-India border, leveling up the requirements for brokers and consultancies and backing up non-profit organizations with heavy donations.

Several comments were made on the presentation. They were helpful for me to give a proper conclusion to my paper. I was suggested to focus on particular cases and incidents on how the factors (poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment) have actually acted as a petrol in the burning issue. Adding to that, I was recommended to compare rich and poor areas of Nepal and the level of human trafficking within those areas, a proper analysis of historical events and comparison between the events in the past and present time. For instance, an area which was previously affected by the issues of human trafficking and whether the issue is still relevant in those areas or not. If not, then does it have to do with economic development of that particular area and if the issue is still relevant even after the economic development; what are the factors that are still resulting human trafficking.

Similarly, I was also advised to study the relationship between Nepal and India when it comes to human trafficking and examine micro and macro components. A deep study of networks focusing on India as well; how the victims are taken to India, which part of India host the largest number of victims and what other areas besides brothels, victims are forced to be engaged in. I was also advised to look for newer evidences and informations besides the one I listed. Likewise, a comparison of older and newer laws and policies by the Nepal government was also suggested. A proper interview within the area affected by human trafficking to achieve detailed information was also mentioned during the session.

All in all, being able to participate in the seminar was an unique experience and a reference to future presentations and an opportunity to extend networks with scholars focusing on South Asia.