



THE FELLOW

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Congratulations, Changes, and Fond Farewells

We are happy to mark the completion of another successful year of the PhD program in social welfare at SP2! Thank you all for your continued interest and support, without which we could have not made such success possible.

This is a good opportunity to highlight several noteworthy events and to acknowledge those who helped make them a success. First, a proposal of a multi-paper dissertation has been approved by the Graduate Group. We hope this option will allow PhD students in our program the flexibility to choose what best fits their topic and writing style, and, thus, to produce dissertations of a higher quality. We thank Dr. Jeffrey Draine, Dr. Susan Sorenson, and doctoral candidate Rosemary Frasso for their excellent work in preparing this proposal. Second, the PhD students' web pages have been updated and are now up on the SP2 website (make sure to check it out!). We hope the updated web pages will help prospective students and others get a better grasp of our program. Third, we enjoyed five excellent colloquia this year in various areas, including mental health, international social work, and immigration. We thank Maayan Schori and Mary Zhou for their dedication in organizing these seminars and look forward to welcoming two new Colloquium representatives next academic year. Finally, with the culmination of yet another volume of the Fellow, the devoted work of its editor, Kristie Thomas, also comes to an end. Special thanks go out to Kristie for making this great initiative showcasing our achievements possible these past two years. We welcome Maayan Schori as the new Fellow editor and wish her luck as she steps into this important position.

In addition to expressing thanks, this is also a time to offer congratulations. First, to our very own Dr. Phyllis Solomon, who has been selected for the Provost's Award for Distinguished PhD Teaching and Mentoring! We are so lucky to have her as a teacher and mentor in our program; she painstakingly



Dr. Phyllis Solomon poses with PhD students Mary Zhou, Francis Barchi, and Jonathan Lukens

ensures that we make a sound first step toward a long and never-ending journey in research. Second, to our colleagues – Mona Basta, Julie Cederbaum, Melissa Dichter, Kerry Dunn, Tae Kuen Kim, Tawandra Rowell, and Karen Zurlo – who will be graduating in the coming months and setting out on new and exciting paths. They have been pillars of the SP2 community, and they will be missed.

As always, we thank Dr. Ram Cnaan for his continued guidance and support for all of the PhD students. We wish you all a productive and rejuvenating summer, and we hope to see the results of your efforts in the next issue of the Fellow.

- Sungkyu Lee and Itay Greenspan, DSSC Co-Chairs

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publication of PhD students
at the University of
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PEER REVIEW

We all work hard writing papers for class, and many papers are worthy of more than just a letter grade. *The Fellow* provides an outlet to share unpublished manuscripts, essays, book reviews and editorials with colleagues in an effort to distribute ideas, spark debates, obtain feedback, encourage journal submissions, and support interdisciplinary collaborations. Full references are available upon request to the authors.

Juvenile Prostitution Prevention: Identifying High-Risk Juveniles

by Mary Zhou/qieshu@gmail.com

The Problem: Juvenile Prostitution

A juvenile prostitute is a minor (under the age of 18) who exchanges sex favors for money or other things of value. As estimated, there are between 200,000 and 300,000 juveniles in the streets of the U.S. who are actively involved in, or are at high risk of getting involved in prostitution [1]. The majority of these juvenile prostitutes are female [1].

Life in prostitution is detrimental to female juveniles as well as to society. Juveniles face severe violence, and are at risk of developing numerous mental health and health concerns, such as sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), HIV/AIDS, and pregnancy [2]. As substance abuse is common, these juveniles may give birth to babies with complications. This may jeopardize their babies' health and further burden the already overwhelmed child protection system [3, 4].

For several years, resources have been put into intervention programs that target juveniles who are already in prostitution. However, their success has been minimal due to high recidivism rates. On the other hand, the "successful" programs admit they have been "creaming" the most promising clients. Although data is not available on how many juvenile prostitutes remain in the trade as they grow up, studies show that the majority of the adult prostitutes had started as juveniles [2]. One of the reasons the interventions fail is that juvenile prostitutes are a highly mobile group. Many service providers rely on police referrals or aggressive outreach into the red-light districts to get juvenile prostitutes into service. However, they know little about the juveniles' history, and hence cannot apply the most suitable intervention in a timely manner. Sometimes, before they are able to get the juvenile to disclose anything, the juvenile has already run away.

Compared to intervention programs, prevention programs have received less attention, but have the potential to achieve greater results. If we can stop juveniles before they enter the sex trade, considerable harm can be avoided. Further, if we can identify these juveniles before they run away from home, we will be able to get more information about them from their family, school, social worker, doctors, and other people or agencies with whom they are involved. This information will allow service providers to do faster assessments and connect juveniles with suitable programs.

Juvenile Prostitution: Risk Factors

Empirical studies have identified four personal risk factors that are strongly associated with juveniles' participation in prostitution: childhood sexual abuse (CSA) [5-10]; dysfunctional family [2, 11], homeless experiences [2, 12, 13], and substance abuse [13]. Preliminary qualitative

studies and experts indicate that active recruitment plays a crucial role in a juvenile's initiation into prostitution [1, 14].

Childhood sexual abuse (CSA) is the most commonly studied risk factor. The observed CSA rates among juvenile prostitutes range from 20% to 95% [7, 15, 16]. Among the incarcerated population, those who have prostitution experiences also have a higher CSA rate than other female offenders [12, 17]. Even among college and community sample, CSA is also associated with higher rates of sexual risk-taking behaviors, which contributes to sexual revictimization in adolescence and adulthood [18-23].

Previous descriptive studies have found the following dysfunctional family components to be associated with juvenile prostitution: parental absence [2, 24-26], physical and psychological abuse of the juvenile [2, 16, 27], witnessing domestic violence [2, 15], parental substance abuse [2, 28], and prostitution activities in the family, which usually involves mother, sisters, aunts, or other relatives [2].

Running away and being thrown out are strongly associated with prostitution [2, 9, 12]. Also, younger age of first homeless experiences and greater times of running away increases probability of initiating prostitution [2, 29].

Substance abuse is common among prostitutes. However, it is hard for retrospective studies to establish the temporal order between prostitution initiation and substance use. Therefore, whether it is the financial problems caused by substance use that lead a juvenile to prostitution or it is the life in prostitution that introduces juveniles to substances is left undetermined. So far only one prospective study has been conducted. Results show that although drug abuse is not an independent predictor, it increases the risk of prostitution initiation among homeless youth [29].

Evidence shows that only about 2% to 50% of runaway and throwaway juveniles engage in prostitution [30-33]. Observations from professionals in the field and preliminary qualitative studies suggest that it is most likely that juveniles are recruited with force, fraud or coercion by pimps and other recruiters [1, 14]. These people actively frequent "bus and train stations, shopping malls, downtown tourist sites, university districts, shelters and other social agencies serving homeless youth" to search for "new flesh" [1].

Conclusion

It must be noted that most of these studies are retrospective interviews with adult prostitutes who started as juveniles and are now incarcerated. Hence, these risk factors may not apply to all juveniles who participate in prostitution. However, these studies do capture the most vulnerable group – those who enter the trade, fail to leave voluntarily and/or fail to respond to existing interventions, and end up as adult offenders. If we can identify this high-risk group while they are still young, we may be able to provide them with programs to prevent them from entering the sex trade in the first place. This will allow us to hopefully reach some of the juvenile prostitutes who fall through the cracks of the current intervention system.

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Logistic Regression: Part 1

“Form follows function” is a famous principle associated with modern architecture and industrial design in the 20th century. This principle stipulates that the shape of a building or object should be primarily based upon its intended function or purpose. I would like to slightly modify this phrase to read “statistics follows data.” Why do we need various statistics? Well, one important reason is that data we want to analyze have different characteristics. Every statistics have some assumptions regarding how data are structured or shaped. Thus, in order to select appropriate statistical methods, we need to understand the characteristics of data we wish to analyze. In particular, since data consist of variables, we have to first look at the features of those variables.

Today, I deal with the logic of logistic regression, one of the most widely used statistics. Why do we need this special regression model? How do we interpret the results? We all know that when we have a dichotomous dependent variable (e.g. employment: 0, unemployment: 1, or Democrat: 0, Republican: 1), we have to use a logistic regression. Simply, logistic regression is one type of regression model, in which a dependent variable is expressed by a “logistic” (or sometimes called logit). The term logistic refers to the combination of “log” and “odds.” Then why do we need to express a dichotomous dependent variable with complicated form, such as logistic?

Basically, regression models assume a “linear” relationship between independent and dependent variables. One unique feature of a linear relationship is that theoretically there should be no upper or lower bound. However, a dichotomous dependent variable ranges from 0 to 1, having both upper and lower bounds. Thus, in order to use regression analysis, we have to remove the upper and lower bounds of a dichotomous dependent variable. Then, how can we do that? The concept of logistic holds this secret. As mentioned above, the logistic is the logarithm of the odds. Hence, we have to understand these two concepts, odds and logarithm in order to appreciate the logic of logistics.

“Odds” is another way to quantify the chances that an event will occur. We usually use “probability” to represent the chances of event. An example might be helpful to understand the concept of odds; let’s suppose that there are four job training programs. The table shows the results of each program after six months. What is the “probability of employment” of program A? Yes, it is 0.8 (or 80%) because out of 100, 80 persons are employed. Since a probability of an

event (in this case, employment) is represented by a real number in the range from 0 to 1, it is very easy to understand the meaning of probability. One limitation of probability, however, is that it has upper (1) and lower (0) bounds. In our example, the probability of employment of program C is 1 (or 100%) and that of program D is 0 (or 0%), respectively.

On the other hand, the “odds” is defined as the ratio of the “probability of event” to the “probability

Program	A	B	C	D
Employment	80	100	70	0
Unemployment	20	100	0	50
Total	100	200	70	50

of no event.” In the program A, the probability of employment (event) is 0.8 and therefore the probability of unemployment (no event) is 0.2 ($=1-0.8$). Thus, the “odds of employment” are 4 ($=0.8 / 0.2$). An odds of 4 means that we expect four times as many employment events as unemployment events. Then, what are the “odds of employment” of program B? Yes, it is 1 ($=0.5 / 0.5$). That is, the odds of 1 means that the “probability of employment” equals to the “probability of unemployment.” Now let’s calculate the odds of program C. The probability of employment is 1 and the probability of unemployment is 0. As we know, when a denominator equals 0, a fraction itself becomes infinity. Therefore, the odds of employment of program C are infinity ($=1 / 0$). How about program D? Since the probability of employment is 0 and the probability of unemployment is 1, the odds are 0 ($=0 / 1$). This shows that the odds have a lower bound of 0, like probability. This example shows that while transforming the “probability” to an “odds” removes the upper bound, making 1 to infinity, the odds still have a lower bound of 0, like probabilities.

Now we have to remove this lower bound of the odds. That is why we have to take the logarithm of the odds. Next time, we will see the magic of logarithm as well as how to interpret log-odds, or logistics.

** Tae Kuen Kim is a Ph.D. candidate & author of “Applied regression: Data analysis for social science.”*



Did You Know...

The Penn Women’s Center, located at 3643 Locust Walk, has a special room designated for nursing. The nursing room, which contains a couch and a crib, is open to all students and faculty and can be reserved for private nursing (or nap!) time. New moms and dads take note!

PUBLICATIONS

Tennille, J., Solomon, P. L., Fishbein, M., & Blank, M. B. (in press). Elicitation of cognitions related to HIV risk behaviors in persons with mental illnesses: Implications for prevention. *Journal of Psychiatric Rehabilitation*.

Caplan, J. M., **Cullen, S. W.**, & **Matejkowski, J. C.** (2009). Understanding the impact of severe mental illness on parole release decisions. Prepared for the University of Pennsylvania Collaborative on Community Integration of Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center.

FUNDING

Samira B. Ali was awarded a Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (FLAS) for AY 2009-10 by The South Asia Center. This fellowship will offer her the opportunity to enhance her Urdu language skills through class work.

Manisha Joshi received a seed grant from The Evelyn Jacobs Ortner Center on Family Violence at SP2 for a research project titled "Strangulation in intimate partner violence: An exploratory qualitative study."

Manisha Joshi received the GAPSAs-Provost's Award for Interdisciplinary Innovation for her study entitled, "Attitudes towards wife-beating among women in Tajikistan: An empirical investigation using Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2005."

Mary Zhou received the GAPSAs-Provost's Award for Interdisciplinary Innovation for her study entitled, "Exploring the Experiences of Volunteer Teachers in Rural China."

FACULTY POSITIONS AND POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

Julie Cederbaum accepted an assistant professor position in the School of Social Work at the University of Southern California.

Melissa E. Dichter accepted a post-doctoral fellowship in Health Service Research at The VA Center for Health Equity Research and Promotion (CHERP) in Philadelphia, PA.

Tae Kuen Kim accepted an assistant professor position in the School of Social Work at Adelphi University.

Karen Zurlo accepted an assistant professor position in the School of Social Work at Rutgers University.

PRESENTATIONS

Jemmott, L. S., Jemmott, J. B., Hutchinson, M. K., **Cederbaum, J. A.**, & O'Leary, A. (2008, October). Research into practice: STI/HIV risk-reduction interventions in clinical practice settings. Poster presented at the 2008 American Public Health Association Conference, San Diego, CA.

Kim, T. K., & Jang, S. (2009, January). A multilevel analysis of organizational justice and intention to leave in social work organizations. Paper presented at the 13th Annual Conference of the Society for Social Work and Research, New Orleans, LA.

Kim, T. K. (2009, March). A typology of the poor: Focusing on poverty duration and the number of poverty spells. Korean Study Colloquium, Center for East Asian Study, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA.

Klusaritz, H., Cronholm, P. F., Neil, R. A., & Dougherty, T. (2008, October). A commitment to our community: Integrating a multidisciplinary home visit component into an urban Family Medicine residency curriculum. 7th International Conference on Urban Health, Vancouver, BC.

Lee, S., **Matejkowski, J. C.**, & Wong, Y. L. I. (2009, January). Social networks of persons with serious mental illness: Structure, transactions, and satisfaction. Paper presented at the 13th Annual Conference of the Society for Social Work Research, New Orleans, LA.

Matejkowski, J. C., **Cullen, S. W.**, & Caplan, J. M. (2009, January). Understanding the impact of severe mental illness on prison program participation and parole release decisions. Paper presented at the 13th Annual Conference of the Society for Social Work Research, New Orleans, LA.

Thomas, K. A., **Joshi, M. J.**, & Sorenson, S. B. (2009, March). Age is but a number: Intimate partner violence against women during adolescence and early adulthood. Poster presented at the Society for Advancement of Violence and Injury Research (SAVIR) Conference, Atlanta, GA.

Sorenson, S. B., & **Thomas, K. A.** (2009, March). Views of intimate partner violence in opposite- and same-sex relationships. Paper presented at the Society for Advancement of Violence and Injury Research (SAVIR) Conference, Atlanta, GA.