

Impacts, Causes and Consequences of Women Trafficking in India from Human Rights Perspective

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To cite this article:

Abdul Basit Naik. Impacts, Causes and Consequences of Women Trafficking in India from Human Rights Perspective. *Social Sciences*. Vol. 7, No. 2, 2018, pp. 76-80. doi: 10.11648/j.ss.20180702.14

Received: September 7, 2017; **Accepted:** September 23, 2017; **Published:** February 23, 2018

Abstract: Trafficking has been considered as one of the serious concerns nowadays. Every country has been impacted by the human trafficking throughout the World in spite of Socio-economic status, history or political setup. Human trafficking is the third largest organized crime after drugs and the arms trade across the globe. About 80% of the human trafficking across the world is done for sexual exploitation and the rest is for bonded labour. In Asia, India is considered as the focal point of this crime. International market has been created by traffickers for the trade in human beings based on high profits and demand for commercial sex as well as cheap labour. It is slavery because traffickers use violence, threats, and other forms of coercion to force their victims to work against their will. This includes controlling their freedom of movement, where and when they will work and what pay, if any, they will receive. The physical and mental health consequences of human trafficking are physical symptoms including: headaches, fatigue, dizzy spells, (back pain, memory difficulty pelvic pain, and gynaecological infections. Anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD]. Human Trafficking is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon and requires multidisciplinary approach. Any analysis of the root causes of human trafficking must take into account, human trafficking is a violation of human rights and any strategy to eliminate trafficking should be framed within a human-rights perspective by placing the victim at the centre. Victims of trafficking are used for commercial purposes; they are used like products and then thrown away. Gender discrimination further aggravates human trafficking. The objectives of this paper are to explore as well as understand the impacts, reasons and Preventive Measures of human trafficking and also deal with the social taboos associated with human trafficking from human rights perspective.

Keywords: Awareness, Diseases, Gender Discrimination, Impacts, Taboos and Trafficking

1. Introduction

Human trafficking is the illegal trade of human beings mainly for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and forced labour. It is the movement of men, women and children from one place to another through force, coercion or deception into situations of their economic and sexual exploitation. The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children [known as the Palermo Protocol adopted in November 2000] defines trafficking as

“.....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 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 service, slavery or practice similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organ.”

[UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children 2000]

This definition was adopted by the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, to which India is signatory. It is one of the first internationally accepted definitions of trafficking and it came into force from 25 December 2003. It provides a guiding principle for macro

conceptual understanding of the problem although it is argued that this definition is elaborated mainly in the context of crime control rather than with a focus on human rights. It does not particularly provide protection to prostitutes from prosecution for the acts they are forced to perform even though it talks about preventive measures, victim compensation, repatriation, etc. However, a wider perspective on trafficking cannot be developed unless the questions of human rights and political economy of trafficking are taken care of. But the Protocol lacks a clear definition of the term 'exploitation'. It also assumes a clear line between legal and illegal migration, whereas in practice this is a much more fluid process. Yet, this definition deals with the means of trafficking, exploitative consequences of trafficking, and more importantly the issue of force or coercion that separates the crime from migration and smuggling.

Exploitation of women against their free will is the main aim of human trafficking. According to various studies, most of the children particularly females, teenagers, orphans and women are the most prominent victims of human trafficking in India. This is because of widespread lack of education, employment, poverty, weak border immigration security systems and other social problems, hence, results increase in vulnerability; creates number of orphans; and advances human trafficking. India too is a major source, destination and transmits country for men, maid and children trafficked for the purposes of forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation. Men, maid and children in debt bondage are forced to in industries such as rice mills, sugar mills, juice mills, brick firms, agricultural and embroidery factories. Those from India's most disadvantaged social economic state are particularly vulnerable to forced or bondage labour and sex trafficking. Human trafficking is also caused by Gender discrimination. Hence, to eliminate this problem, women empowerment need to be promoted in an effective manner through women education.

Human trafficking affects every country around the world, despite socio-economic status, history, or political structure. An international market has been produced by the human traffickers for the trade in human beings based on high profits and demand for commercial sex as well as cheap labour. It is slavery because traffickers use violence, threats, and other forms of coercion to force their victims to work against their will. This includes controlling their freedom of movement i.e. when, how and where they will work.

Human trafficking is a booming international trade, making billions of dollars at the expense of millions of victims; many of them are young girls and children, who are robbed of their dignity and freedom. Although most of us have never witnessed this crime, it happens every day all around the world. Criminals profit while satisfying consumer demand. Victims are coerced to do what others would never freely do and they are paid virtually nothing for their pains. In a perverse commercialization of humanity, they are used like products and then thrown away. Gender discrimination further aggravates human trafficking.

2. Methodology

This study is primarily based on qualitative literature survey method. It facilitates in depth analysis of the issues related to human trafficking in India and the crime against women in India. Extensive review of the literature provided useful insight about the various factors that are responsible for the human trafficking of Indian women. The present study is exclusively based on secondary data which has been collected from the various issues of annual reports, books, magazines, bulletins, other related documents and National Crime Record Bureau Reports. Information collecting from different sources was analysed in a qualitative way for taking inference.

Objectives of the Study

The main aim and objectives of this paper are to understand the impacts, reasons and social taboos incorporated with women trafficking in India and attempt to analyse its impact on Society, Preventive Measures and also to study how women education can bring awareness and knowledge about human trafficking.

3. Discussions

The main objective of this study is to identify causes and consequences of trafficking of women. In recent times the number of trafficked women in India has significantly increased. To realize the economic demand of themselves and their families, many young migrants are now becoming victims of human trafficking. Trafficking even if it has roots in economic demands of the victims, in addition, factors like poor awareness on recruitment processes, preference for quicker method of migration, prevalence of traffickers throughout the country who brainwashes young girls with false promises, and poor understanding on the risks involved in trafficking intersect and put women in trafficking networks. Social taboos which are attached to those women who have been rescued from the prostitution centres results back them to prostitution centres. As society is dominated with patriarchal mind setup so they do not allow them to live freely in society. The overlap of factors for trafficking of women is closely linked to the idea of intersectional-list feminist theory.

Causes and Consequences of Trafficking

Human trafficking is a global problem which results in a number of factors which include the widespread of poverty, lack of livelihood opportunities, deep-rooted gender discrimination, displacement, the demand for young girls (in part due to the fear of HIV/AIDS), the upheaval associated with natural disasters conflict in parts of the country and the profits to be made. In some cases, socio-cultural and religious factors have an impact on child trafficking, as where religious figures have made use of their position to traffic girls for prostitution. Frequently, trafficking is accomplished through the deception of girls and their families. In many villages in West Bengal it is reported that traffickers have obtained access to girls by pretending to be

grooms without dowry demands. In other cases, trafficking has been facilitated by relatives or friends of the victims, as well as teachers and placement agencies. Girls who have been exploited are also commonly used to lure girls from source area.

One of the major reasons that human trafficking has received such significant attention, particularly by human rights groups, is because of the egregious abuses reported to be perpetrated on victims. Those who are trafficked for forced sex work are frequently raped by one or more males as a form of "initiation" and or intimidation. They are often made to engage in high risk sex, such as intercourse without condoms, anal sex and gang rape. It is not unusual for women and girls to be held captive under lock and key, brought to and from the work venue, when not forced to live and work at the same location and work long hours with significant numbers of men to service each day.

To date, few prospective studies have been done on the health needs of trafficking survivors. A 2006 quantitative study in Europe documented the physical, sexual and mental health symptoms experienced by women trafficked for sexual exploitation [Hossain, M et al 2010]. In this survey of approximately 200 women, the majority reported high levels

of physical or sexual abuse before [59%] and during [95%] their exploitation, and multiple concurrent physical and mental health problems immediately after their trafficking experience [Hossain M et al 2010]. The most commonly reported physical health symptoms included fatigue, headaches; sexual and reproductive health problems [vaginal discharge, pelvic pain, and infection] back pain and significant weight loss. Follow-up interviews with the women revealed that mental health symptoms persisted longer than most of the physical health problems.

At each stage, women, men and children may encounter psychological, physical and sexual abuse; forced or coerced use of drugs or alcohol; social restrictions and emotional manipulation; economic exploitation, in escapable debts; and legal insecurities [Zimmerman C, 2007]. Risks often persist even after a person is released from the trafficking situation and only a small proportion of people reach post-trafficking services or receive any financial or other compensation. For people who are trafficked, health influences are often cumulative, making it necessary to take account of each stage of the trafficking process, as depicted by the conceptual model in Figure 1.

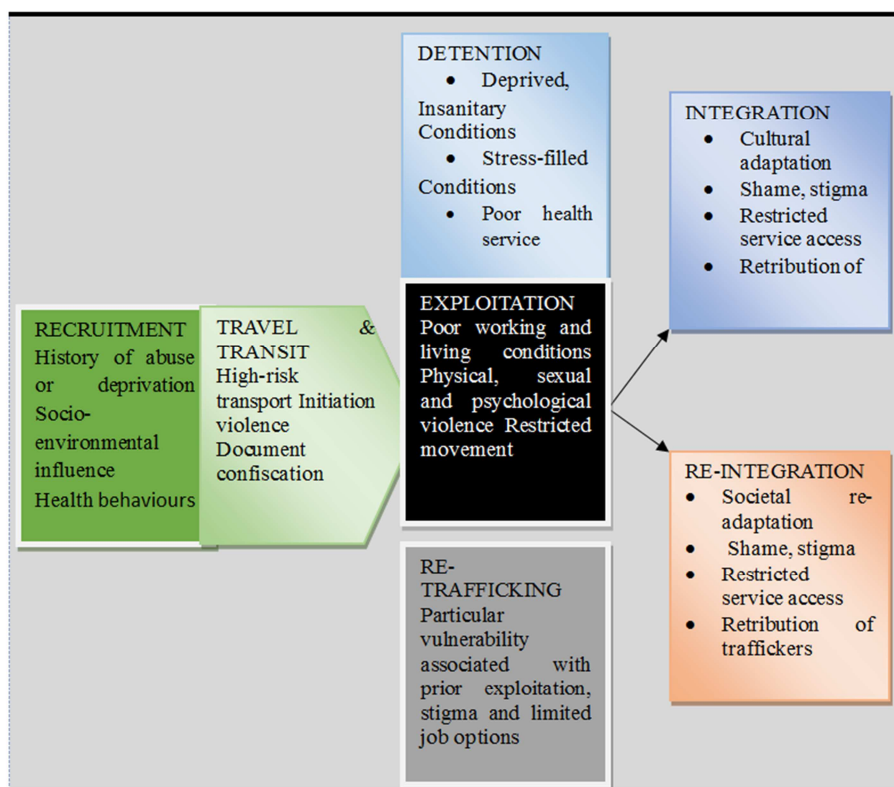


Figure 1. Shows Influences on health and well-being at various stages of trafficking.

Human trafficking is the illegal trade of human beings mainly for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and forced labour. Recently, human trafficking is especially popular for the purpose of extraction of organs. Trafficking is a lucrative industry. It is second only to drug trafficking as the most profitable illegal industry in the world. Thousands of people suffer from various forms of human trafficking and

this problem needs effective solutions. The most popular form of human trafficking is for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Fake job offers are a common way to obtain women in India. In general, sex trafficking victims are found in horrible circumstances and easily targeted by human traffickers. Individuals, circumstances, situations defenceless to traffickers comprise homeless persons, runaway teenagers,

refugees, displaced homemakers, job seekers, kidnap victims, tourists, and drug/alcohol addicts. Such people are often extremely vulnerable and cannot protect themselves. It is far more difficult to attract grown up men to the forced labour but traffickers manage to recruit men using various threats and forced debts. The problem of human trafficking is very urgent in the majority of the countries of the world. Especial India is a bit less complicated.

Reasons behind expansion of human trafficking in India:

The most essential factor that has been acknowledged as the main driving force behind human trafficking is poverty. Though, caste based discrimination, lack of resources, lack of human and social capital, social insecurity, gender discrimination, commodification of women, social exclusion, marginalisation, inadequate and outdated state policies, lack of governance, nexus of police and traffickers, unemployment, breaking down of community support system, cheap child labour, child marriage and priority to marriage, attraction of city life, corruption, employment trade, migration policies conflict and lack of awareness among the victims are also some other factors leading to human-trafficking. One of the promising push factor which results in human trafficking is Globalization. According to the report of the International Organization for Migration, that 90 percent of the victims trafficked as sex slaves who experienced domestic violence before they were trafficked. The decreasing sex ratio and the increasing demand of women in women starve areas would also been considered as a factor behind bride trafficking in India. There are also certain other factors that are responsible through direct and indirect means and mode but, all kind of these push factors forced the victims to get further exploitation, vulnerabilities and to become object of this modern kind of slavery throughout their life span.

Prevention of human trafficking in India

Human trafficking is a complex concern and there is no only solution which will resolve all problems and which will be able to prevent human trafficking. In general, approaches for prevention should deal with the main causes of trafficking. Some of the suggestions are as under which to somehow decline the rate of human trafficking are as under:

1. Prevention of human trafficking programmes should examine the socio-cultural and economic conditions, identify the vulnerable groups, address the root causes of trafficking and other forms of exploitation and abuse which includes discrimination, social and economic marginalization, violence and abuse, as well as armed conflict and organized crime.
2. Both long term and short term measures should be taken to reintegrate those victims taking into account the child's age and experiences. A supportive child-friendly services network should be established that offers protection to child. Adequate education and information, including training on life skills, is another important component of a protection system, which helps build self-esteem, empowers the child to make informed decisions following the trafficking experience,

and prevents re-trafficking.

3. A uniform system to identify children who have been subject to abuse and exploitation, whether as a result of trafficking or otherwise should be made. This identification should be addressed by both the government and civil society as well. Quality services should be available and accessible to all children, independent of identification. Services should respond to children's rights and individual needs.
4. To empower children, access to information and education is must for the prevention of human trafficking. These must be aimed at empowering children to make informed choices and protect themselves, which entails informing children about trafficking and other risks of exploitation and abuse, including the risks of migration. Other issues needing attention include discrimination, risky behaviour, gender stereotypes, sexuality and abusive relationships.
5. Empowering child victims of trafficking which include building children's self-esteem through education, information on human rights, trafficking and other protection concerns, and also through ensuring children's meaningful participation in decision-making processes. They should be recognized as social agents with the right to express their opinions freely. Care should be taken of child's mental health.
6. Children who have been trafficked need long-term support. Activities for their care, protection and reintegration need to be carried out within a holistic framework. Close contact with and support to the child's family are needed to ensure that the child is adequately protected when he or she returns home.
7. Children's own initiatives against this menace should be appreciated and there is a need to make police stations children friendly so that faith in the system and self confidence would be boosted.

4. Suggestions

First of all raise awareness about human trafficking by different sources like media both print as well as visual and inform people about this crime and mobilize people to stop it. Try to know the rare facts about human trafficking. Empowering women improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, eradicating poverty, improving education and developing a global partnership for development. Society in general and police, doctors, and also their parents particular should treat these victims as human beings and psychologically motivate them in such a way so that they will live a new and happy life again.

Strengthen prevention—warn vulnerable groups and alleviate the factors that make people Vulnerable to trafficking, such as poverty, underdevelopment and lack of opportunity Enrich knowledge—Deepen understanding of the scope and nature of human trafficking through more data collection and analysis, joint research initiatives and the creation of an evidence-based report on global trafficking

trends Having knowledge regarding state laws Having knowledge regarding health care professionals, social services professionals and law enforcement professionals Keep learning about trafficking, its victims and its survivor. In order to attract the attention of the public and to protect children and teenagers from the threat of human trafficking an important aspect of prevention of Human Trafficking is education: making sure people are aware of the existence, as well as the nature of human trafficking. Education further helps empowerment of women by developing "Intrinsic Capacity, inner transformation of one's consciousness to overcome barriers, access resources and traditional ideologies". Education is crucial in halting the flow of women, children and men into forced bondage. It is through education that we can elicit the most direct influence in the fight against human trafficking. Promotion of Technical Education also helps to reduce the problem of human trafficking. Technical education emphasizes on the acquisition of employable skills and therefore well placed to train the skilled and entrepreneurial workforce that developing countries needs to create wealth and emerge out of poverty. Technical education can be delivered at different levels of sophistication; can respond to the different training needs of learners from different social economic and academic backgrounds and prepare them for gainful employment and sustainable livelihood. The ultimate aim technical education is employment. This means it has to be linked with job market and therefore enhance its social economic relevance. Where there is employment, poverty level goes down, which therefore means the vulnerability to human trafficking will be reduced. Therefore, promotion of Technical Education among women is also necessary to reduce the serious problem of human trafficking.

5. Conclusion

Human trafficking thrives because it generates lot of money and the desire to improve the standard of living and social status leads to trafficking. Human-trafficking is one of the worst criminal activities that spread its infection over the planet. It is one of the wicked acts that have made the lives of millions as worse as the hell. This kind of modern slave trade has washed away the humanity among those who are being involved. The moral values, ethos and sense of belongings as a member of same human race has been restricted by the individual interest and pleasure. The victimization of poor and vulnerable masses has excluded them from the human race and commodified them like animals and vegetables in the market. The right and access to justice has no significant meaning and worth for them. The procedures, process, means, methods as well as the rate of involvement is increasing in this crime each day due to lack of resources, highest demand in the market, very few income options and

impotent legal watch system. It is, thus, imperative to have a careful watch and monitoring mechanism as well as strong interventions and commitment through which we can attempt to clean out this crime across the globe.

Trafficking in India is completely dominated by the issue of CSE, [Commercial Sexual Exploitation] so much so, that trafficking as a distinct crime does not get highlighted. Sometimes it is almost entirely ignored. Though there is a large amount of information available, but the reality of the trafficking in women and children in India continues to be hidden. Taboos which are associated with the human trafficking should be removed by gender sensitization programs as these victims do not find it easy to marry as various hurdles are attached to such marriages. Their basic human rights should be preserved and treated them as respectable human beings not alienated from the society. Marriage is an institution which is seen as sacred and people who remain unmarried do not get the same status as married people in the society.

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