



## Human Trafficking and Status of Women Victims in South India

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### ABSTRACT

*Trafficking for sex trade has become the third majority crime in the world after arms and drugs. They are in the condition where they fail to enjoy their basic rights. In such critical condition, the present study looks into the status of their feelings, emotions and addictions. To achieve the objective the study adopts descriptive and diagnostic research design is adopted along with interview schedule as tool. The study reveals that these exploited women are having a very negative emotion towards mainstream society, been addicted to alcohol severely to manage themselves in exploitative situation and eagerly willing to adopt a mainstreamed lifestyle with all the limitation of the path.*

**KEYWORDS :** Trafficking, status of women, Sexual exploitation

Trafficking in persons means 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 if payments, or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. In fact, after illegal trafficking in drugs and weapon, human trafficking is the third largest international money making crime. It is not confined only to flesh trade in brothels, but also includes the selling and reselling of women through fake marriages and the abuse of women through the lure of jobs or a better living. Many studies have revealed that trafficking with women and girl children are taking place majorly for sex trade. The UN Protocol acknowledges that most trafficking is for prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation.

In this connection, the word Human trafficking has been used in the study to refer sex trafficking.

Human trafficking has become the worst form of exploitation of women which clearly violates fundamental rights/ human rights like the right to a life of dignity, the right to health and health care, to the liberty and security of a person and the right to freedom from torture, violence, cruelty or degrading treatment, the right to a home and family, the right to education and proper employment and everything that makes for a life with dignity. In the case of minors, it violates their rights to education, employment and self determination.

Human beings are animals called Homo Sapiens, who are the most civilized species, with rational thinking, non-nomadic urban way of life and existence bereft of barbaric instincts – the wont of jungle life. A human being has certain basic needs, which are biological and psychological in nature. Under biological needs of the human being, satisfaction of sexual urges stands as an important need, after the need for food, water, rest and protection. The sex motive, although not as essential for an individual's survival as food and water, constitutes a highly powerful psycho-social motive by resulting in the feeling of immense happiness and well-being of the individual. This motive is purely physical in non-human beings, but in human beings, it is governed by both physiological and psychological factors.

Therefore, sex in human beings has to be a proper blend of innate as well as acquired tendencies. When these biological needs turn into the business known as prostitution and take the shape of violence, known as commercial sexual exploitation through trafficking, the need arises for intervention to protect the human beings from this violence.

Many NGOs are working in the process of mainstreaming of such exploited women in southern India. The present study examines the status of exploited women in four states and one union territory of south India such as Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Pondicherry. This situation makes the intervention of NGOs quite noteworthy. To achieve the goal of mainstreaming the exploited women, NGOs have adopted certain interventions such as rescue,

rehabilitation, reintegration/repatriation, developmental, prosecution, follow-up, prevention, advocacy and research. Though rescue is not found to be as prominent as other interventions because of lesser legal support, the NGOs are putting good effort to mainstream these exploited women sincerely. Generally it is believed that the end result always reflects on the qualitative input. In this line, the present study focuses on comparing the status of sexually exploited women before and after the NGO intervention.

Most of the literature available on the issue consists of reports on studies, conferences and workshops focusing on socio-economic conditions of prostituted women. None of them provides information on the existing living standard of mainstreamed victims of sexual exploitation. It may be because the phenomenon has not received the attention it deserves and also because of the activity takes place in disguise. Infact, it is said that sexual exploitation for commercial purpose has existed in one form or the other in all classes based on patriarchal social order<sup>1</sup>. In certain literatures the authors have pointed out that there is always more than one cause which leads one to sexual exploitation.

When Indian cultural aspects are considered, it strongly protests against such exploitative practices. In this light, the present study aims to examine the status of commercially sexually exploited women in south India.

The objective of the study is to examine the status of sexually exploited women with related to addiction, emotional and adjustmental conditions. Generally, it is believed that the end result of interventions always reflects on the quality of intervention. In the present study, a comparison between the status of victims of sexual exploitation before and after the intervention of the NGOs is focused. It is so because the present situations of sexually exploited women are demanding strong interventions by the social workers and NGOs. As this matter deals with the futuristic situation between legalization of sex trade and upliftment of Indian culture through banning sex trade, it becomes important to understand the present status of such exploited women.

To achieve the objective of the study, a Descriptive and Diagnostic research design was adopted. With the help of 32 NGOs in South India 300 such exploitative women were considered for the study. Out of 32 NGOs, 08 belong to Karnataka, 12 belong to Andhra Pradesh, 05 belong to Kerala, 08 belong to Tamilnadu and 01 from Pondicherry. Through each organization 10 victims were selected on random sampling method and interviewed to elicit their opinion using interview schedule. The collected data were analysed by adopting Descriptive Statistics and Repeated Measure ANOVA tests with the use of Statistical Presentation System Software (SPSS 17.0 version).

### Results and Discussion:

The condition of victims of sex trafficking in India is appalling. They are caught in the chain of pimps, gundas and other antisocial elements in the society with the police on the other side. Classified as

criminals, these women find it difficult to raise their voices against basic human rights violation. But it has resulted in different forms of negative influences on their body and mind. The present study highlights such aspects of exploited women.

**a. Unpleasant feelings of sexually exploited victims**

It is observed through the study that sexually exploited women are having very uncomfortable feelings towards society as well as the relationships. They have a very negative attitude towards the society which they blame as a reason for them being exploitative situation. The same was tested in the study and got the below result.

**Table - 1.1 :Mean pre and post- test scores on total unpleasant feelings of victims :**

States	Sessions				Change/ Gain
	Pre-test total		Post-test total		
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
AP	28.0583	1.75037	25.9083	1.61919	2.15
KA	28.0000	1.58114	25.8961	1.68261	2.1039
TN	27.5833	1.80669	26.1667	1.72879	1.4166
KL	27.7600	1.84678	26.1400	1.37039	1.62
PC	27.7000	1.94651	26.4000	1.71270	1.3
TOTAL	27.8959	1.74258	26.0063	1.61871	1.8896

(Source: Primary data – survey)

**Table – 1.2: Result of repeated measure ANOVA for Mean pre and post- test scores on scores of total unpleasant feelings of victims (within and between subject affects)**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	P value
Within subject effects					
Change	233.556	1	233.556	75.554	.000
Change * state	16.102	4	4.025	1.302	.269
Error(change)	964.466	312	3.091		
Between subject effects					
Intercept	230053.865	1	230053.865	8.907E4	.000
State	1.141	4	.285	.110	.979
Error	805.843	312	2.583		

(Source: Primary data – Analysis)

In total unpleasant feelings, between pre-test to post-test scores a non-significant difference was observed (F=75.554; P=.000) irrespective of the states, where a decrease of 1.8896 (pre- 27.8959, post - 26.0063) scores was noticed. However, when the decrease in the scores of total unpleasant feeling were analyzed state wise, again a non -significant F value (F= 1.302; P=.269) was obtained (Table 1.1). In between subject effects, non-significant F value was observed for states (F= .110; P=.979) and the effect between state were found to be non-significant (Table 1.1).

The results reveals that the women victims are strongly having the unpleasant feelings towards the society. It is observed during the study that many NGOs in respective states have intervened to rescue and rehabilitate these women. With such intervention, though there is slight change observed in the states, more in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, the overall result communicates that there is no much reduced unpleasant feelings of the victims is noticeable. Social stigma is the strongest reason behind the results notices.

**b. The victims dependency on alcohol:**

Victims forced into sex slavery are often subdued with drugs and

subjected to extreme violence; they undergo physical and emotional damage from violent sexual activity, forced substance abuse. In many circumstances, the victims are forced to entertain 4 – 24 clients a day. To help them more easily cope up with the situation, the women often turn to sedatives. During their monthly periods and even during pregnancy, when a woman needs to be relaxed, the delicate physical state of victims is ignored and she is still expected to entertain the usual number of clients. In such circumstances, dependency on alcohol was made compared between the present conditions and pre-trafficked condition.

**Table 2.1 :Mean pre and post- test scores on victims rate of dependency on alcohol:**

States	Sessions				Change/Gain
	Pre-test total		Post-test total		
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
AP	7.1417	4.44442	4.3250	4.04421	2.8167
KA	5.1875	4.55652	3.6125	3.88601	1.575
TN	6.3509	4.29489	4.1404	3.93899	2.2105
KL	5.8800	4.38290	5.8000	4.22819	0.08
PC	6.3000	4.57165	6.7000	4.08384	-0.4
TOTAL	6.2808	4.48133	4.4196	4.07182	1.8612

(Source: Primary data – survey)

**Table 2.2: Result of repeated measure ANOVA for Mean pre and post- test scores on victims’ dependency on alcohol (within and between subject affects):**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	P value
Within subject effects					
Change	124.595	1	124.595	7.456	.007
Change * state	166.411	4	41.603	2.490	.043
Error(change)	5213.535	312	16.710		
Between subject effects					
Intercept	9702.660	1	9702.660	506.743	.000
State	231.369	4	57.842	3.021	.018
Error	5973.896	312	19.147		

(Source: Primary data – Analysis)

With regard to the victims dependency on alcohol, between pre-test to post-test scores a significant difference was observed (F= 7.456; P=.007) irrespective of the states, where a decrease of 1.8612 (pre- 6.2808, post – 4.4196) scores was noticed. However, when the decrease in the scores of victims of dependency on alcohol were analyzed state wise, again a significant F value (F= 2.490; P=.043) was obtained (Table 3.2). In between subject effects, significant F value was observed for states (F= 3.021; P=.018) and the effect between state were found to be significant (Table 3.2).

The above result supports the severe alcoholic addiction among sexually exploited victims. In spite of NGOs intervention, good number of women are under the influence of alcohol which again represents the exploitative situation they are living in.

**c. The victims discomforts in getting along with the people:**

The unpleasant feelings the sexually exploited women carrying and the social stigma that is existing are resulting in isolation of these women from mainstreamed society. Instead of welcoming them into the healthy society, the current society is playing a violent role in rejecting them so that the exploited victims can make their own group away from the mainstreamed society. The study focused this sensitive area and got received the below results.

**Table 3.1: Mean pre and post- test scores on victim's comforts in getting along with people:**

States	Sessions				Change/ Gain
	Pre-test total		Post-test total		
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
AP	8.9167	1.64793	9.1167	.70034	0.2
KA	8.4286	1.03146	9.0390	.74236	0.6104
TN	8.3509	0.76745	9.0877	.74476	0.7368
KL	8.4000	0.80812	9.1900	.72061	0.79
PC	8.4000	0.84327	9.1000	.84327	0.7
TOTAL	8.5955	1.25837	9.1035	.72360	0.508

(Source: Primary data – survey)

**Table 3.2: Result of repeated measure ANOVA for Mean pre and post- test scores on the victim's comforts in getting along with the people (within and between subject effects)**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	P value
Within subject effects					
Change	29.034	1	29.034	29.623	.000
Change * state	9.760	4	2.440	2.490	.043
Error(change)	302.855	309	.980		
Between subject effects					
Intercept	24389.340	1	24389.340	2.245E4	.000
State	11.197	4	2.799	2.577	.038
Error	335.708	309	1.086		

(Source: Primary data – Analysis)

With regard to comforts of victims of sex trafficking in getting along with the people, between pre-test to post-test scores a significant difference was observed ( $F= 29.623$ ;  $P=.000$ ) irrespective of the states, where an increase of 0.508 (pre- 8.5955, post – 9.1035) scores was noticed. However, when the increase in the scores of victims comforts in getting along with the people were analyzed state wise, again a significant F value ( $F= 2.490$ ;  $P=.043$ ) was obtained (Table 3.2). In between subject effects, significant F value was observed for states ( $F= 2.577$ ;  $P=.038$ ) and the effect between state were found to be significant (Table 3.2).

The results reveals that the victims of sex trafficking are having very huge uncomfortable zone in getting along with the mainstreamed society. This is the direct result of social rejection towards them which could become a major hurdle in eradicating the problem of sexual exploitation in future. But in case, such mental and emotional conditions of these victims represents the pathetic mind set of the current Indian society.

**d. The victims relationship with family:**

In spite of the feelings and comfortness of victims of sexual exploitation, the family plays a huge role in providing moral and physical support to such sufferings. The study intended to examine the relationship the victims has with her family. The relationship always mutual in nature. Here this theory indirectly communicates the support extended by the family to the victim.

From the result, between pre-test to post-test scores a significant dif-

ference was observed ( $F= 373.026$ ;  $P=.000$ ) irrespective of the states, where an increase of 1.5142 (pre- 5.2429, post – 6.7571) scores was noticed. However, when the increase in the scores of victim's relationship with family were analyzed state wise, again a significant F value ( $F= 4.872$ ;  $P=.001$ ) was obtained (Table 4.2). In between subject effects, significant F value was observed for states ( $F= 1.829$ ;  $P=.123$ ) and the effect between state were found to be significant (Table 4.2).

**Table 4.1: Mean pre and post- test scores on victim's relationship with family:**

States	Sessions				Change/ Gain
	Pre-test total		Post-test total		
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
AP	5.2167	.52153	6.8333	.77061	1.6166
KA	5.1750	.41415	6.9000	.73948	1.725
TN	5.3158	.46896	6.7368	.74466	1.421
KL	5.3200	.47121	6.4800	.64650	1.16
PC	5.3000	.48305	6.2000	.42164	0.9
TOTAL	5.2429	.47832	6.7571	.74693	1.5142

(Source: Primary data – survey)

**Table 4.2: Result of repeated measure ANOVA for Mean pre and post- test scores on the victims relationship with family (within and between subject effects)**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	P value
Within subject effects					
Change	146.958	1	146.958	373.026	.000
Change * state	7.677	4	1.919	4.872	.001
Error(change)	122.916	312	.394		
Between subject effects					
Intercept	11168.239	1	11168.239	3.022E4	.000
State	2.704	4	.676	1.829	.123
Error	115.296	312	.370		

(Source: Primary data – Analysis)

The results declare an improved relationship between the victim and family. This is the fruit of NGOs intervention. The counseling extended by the NGO personnel has given result where the victims have created with space to breath.

**e. The sexually exploited women's attitude towards mainstreaming:**

The word mainstreaming here used in terms of withdrawing oneself from exploitative situation and adopting the socially accepted way of life.

With regard to the victims attitude towards mainstreaming, between pre-test to post- test scores a significant difference was observed ( $F= 2.033$ ;  $P=.155$ ) irrespective of the states, where an increase of 0.1357 (pre- 11.4385, post – 11.3028) scores was noticed. However, when the increase in the scores of victims attitude towards mainstreaming were analyzed state wise, again a significant F value ( $F= 7.421$ ;  $P=.000$ ) was obtained (Table 5.2). In between subject effects, significant F value was observed for states ( $F= 1.352$ ;  $P=.251$ ) and the effect between state were found to be significant (Table 5.2).

**Table 5.1 :Mean pre and post- test scores on the victims attitude towards mainstreaming:**

States	Sessions				Change/ Gain
	Pre-test total		Post-test total		
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
AP	11.6833	1.36575	11.1167	1.58874	0.5666
KA	11.5375	.79466	11.0625	1.48702	0.4750
TN	11.1579	.70177	11.2281	1.65850	0.0702
KL	11.0800	.72393	12.0400	1.74917	0.9600
PC	11.1000	.73786	12.2000	1.75119	1.1000
TOTAL	11.4385	1.05250	11.3028	1.64098	0.1357

(Source: Primary data – Survey)

**Table 5.2: Result of repeated measure ANOVA for Mean pre and post- test scores on the victims attitude towards mainstreaming (within and between subject effects)**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	P value
Within subject effects					
Change	3.741	1	3.741	2.033	.155
Change * state	54.606	4	13.651	7.421	.000
Error(change)	573.978	312	1.840		
Between subject effects					
Intercept	41177.022	1	41177.022	2.283E4	.000
State	9.750	4	2.437	1.352	.251
Error	562.644	312	1.803		

(Source: Primary data – Analysis)

The results reveals that victims are always shown interest towards mainstreamed life style. Though during the interview have expressed the threats from various sources towards the mainstreamed life, they are willing to adopt it. This condition indirectly represents their painful life situation. Further, the insecurity feeling towards the safety of their daughters also make them to think about the mainstreamed life. Here plays an important role of NGOs where the efforts need to be put in seriously to mainstream such victims.

**Conclusion:**

The women in sex trade are the most oppressed group and have been kept far from the mainstream people. All the rules and laws are against to these women and they neither have the power nor the necessary means to change their lifestyles or rise in society. Because women in the flesh trade are not in the position to enjoy basic human and civil rights, they are frequently the targets of inhuman violence. Thus, there exists a strong need to empower these women in order that they may lead the simple human life to which they are entitled.

The results of the study reveals that the victims of exploitative situation are having a very negative emotion towards the social and are unwilling to have relationship with the mainstreamed society. But the exploitative situation they are undergoing and the insecure feeling about their girl children also making them to express their willingness to come out of the situation. With the data, it can be observed that victims of suffering badly from the sexual exploitation racket, it is also seen that the NGO intervention is making them

Though state wise results do not highlight much difference in the response, we can observe in overall result that the women are in highly exploitative situation and willing for a mainstreamed lifestyle. Further, the study proves that there is a good chance to improve the standard of living of commercially sexually exploited women through better intervention techniques implemented in various angles.

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