

# Problem of Women and Child Trafficking in India on the rise – A Sociological Study

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**Abstract** - India has a very high dimensions of child trafficking. According to National Crime Records Bureau, New Delhi, (2020) as many as one child disappears every eight minutes. In many cases children are taken from their homes forcible to be bought and sold in the market. The trafficking of human's beings is observed to be more than crime it is a serious violation of human rights, children's rights, labor rights and importantly curtailment of fundamental rights. Women and Child trafficking has become highly lucrative and increasingly worthwhile as women and children are considered commodities who can be sold as several times over. With the easy sneaking into the borders and the advancement of technology child trafficking has expanded around the globe where the routes for trafficking children alter according to local conditions or supply and demand factors. It is no longer adequate to say that victims are trafficked from poor to the wealthier ones. According to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) fund report (2014) a large number of people who are reported missing in the country are actually trafficked. It says that at least 11,000 women and 5000 children are said to be missing in India. The report studied the data on missing persons from the across the states and major cities between 1996 and 2001 and fund a steady increase in the number of children missing in local police stations. According to the United Nations General Assembly, 1994, defined it as "The illicit and clandestine movements of persons across national borders, largely from developing countries with economies in transition, with the end of goal of forcing women and girls into sexually or economically oppressive and exploitative situations for profit of recruiters, traffickers and syndicate, as well as other illegal activities related to trafficking, such as forced domestic labour, false marriage, clandestine employment and false adoption." According to a NGO Aasha (2017), based in Delhi narrates that normally young girls from the villages of UP, MP, Bihar are tempted and lured by female aunts with the promise of a job in the city. Once these young girls reached Delhi, they used to be drugged and brought to the brothels. In the brothels they used to

be locked in dark rooms, threatened, beaten black and blue, started without food and water until she submitted to the brothel owner's demands. Very few children and women are rescued by the police.

**Index Terms** - Trafficking, Rights, Adoption, Smuggling, Employment, Children.

## INTRODUCTION

Despite being in existence for centuries, Child Trafficking has only in recent years has emerged as a major issue of global concern due to the worldwide agreement and co-operation to join hands in fighting this heinous crime. The trafficking of human's beings is observed to be more than crime it is a serious violation of human rights, children's rights, labor rights and importantly curtailment of fundamental rights. Child trafficking has become highly lucrative and increasingly worthwhile as women and children are considered commodities who can be sold as several times over. With the easy sneaking into the borders and the advancement of technology child trafficking has expanded around the globe where the routes for trafficking children alter according to local conditions or supply and demand factors. It is no longer adequate to say that victims are trafficked from poor to the wealthier ones. According to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) fund report (2014) a large number of people who are reported missing in the country are actually trafficked. It says that at least 11,000 women and 5000 children are said to be missing in India. The report studied the data on missing persons from the across the states and major cities between 1996 and 2001 and fund a steady increase in the number of children missing in local police stations. P.M.Nair, a senior police officer who coordinated the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) 2015 report says "Desertion is one of the

main reasons for trafficking.” The National Commission for Women reported that organized crime played a significant role in the country’s sex trafficking trade and that women and children who were trafficked frequently were subjected to extortion, beatings and rape.

Violence is not the necessary mode for child trafficking, as has been often misconceived, as the victims are tricked, deceived, forced sold by their parents or otherwise coerced into situations, which they later cannot escape from. Predominantly women and children are trafficked in or the sexual trade.

#### WHAT IS TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN?

In the absence of a common understanding, it becomes difficult to design policies, guidelines or even interventions to tackle this issue.

In simple words if we want to say “Illegal movement of any human being in any part of the world is trafficking.”

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According to the World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of children, Trafficking was taken to refer to the illegal moving and selling of human beings across countries and continents in exchange for financial or other compensation.”

The Preamble of the UN convention defines Human trafficking as “Procurement, enticement or leading away of a person for prostitution or sexual gratification of another person.”

Office of Drugs Control and Crime Prevention of UN defines Child Trafficking as “The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of 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.”

Observation of the definitions clearly reveals that trafficking is the sale and purchase of children, as is their movement from one place to another or issue of migration especially illegal migration. Definition of child trafficking includes some degree of involuntariness on the part of the person being trafficked, either through the employment of deceit or fraud. Coercion or actual force it is a abuse of authority. Involvement of exchange of money or any other form of consideration. Subjection to situations of abuse and exploitation.

#### CHILD TRAFFICKING: INDIA ON THE WATCH LIST

In recent years, the Indian subcontinent has emerged as a hotspot in the South Asian region for trafficking in persons. Child trafficking is after all, a billion-dollar business and is the third largest global source of profit from organized crime, after arms and drug trafficking. Child trafficking is characterized by low investments and high returns; the business of human trafficking is on a fast growth route. Given the seriousness of the problem, the Indian authorities in restriction trafficking has been clearly inadequate. This inadequate response was once again confirmed by the US State Department report which was released on 2017 Trafficking in Persons. The report not only pointed out that India is a hot bed of child trafficking, at the same it has criticized the Indian Government for not complying fully with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. Consequently, US state department placed India on its “Watch List” for the second consecutive years on the grounds that it has not made significant efforts to address this serious issue.

According to the US report (2017), the India’s law enforcement agencies efforts remained weak and seriously insufficient as compared to the huge trafficking problem it has faced. The US state department has pointed out that rampant corruption among law enforcement officials, which hopeless efforts to combat trafficking effectively. While collusion with these low level border guards and traffickers is well-known, there have been reports of senior police officials tipping off brothels about impending raids. Mark Taylor, who was charged with

the preparation of this annual report and who visited India earlier this year, pointed out how the number of convictions for trafficking increased 11 folds from 2014 to 2017.

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

While the government is tackling with the problem, the situation is becoming increasingly worse. The United Nations United Nations Development Fund for Women UNIFEM funded report states categorically that India is one of the worst-affected countries as far as trafficking of women and children is concerned. There are however no firm figures to illustrate the scale of trafficking since most of the Trade is underground and goes unreported. Rough estimates suggest that the number of trafficked persons ranges between two three million in India. Women and children are among the worst victims as they are far more vulnerable to exploitation and sexual abuse. According to United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (2015) policy consultant Meera Mishra who studied the problem of child traffic in India, "Statistics or no statistics, there is no denying that the situation in the Indian sub-continent is very grim. According to her report which was submitted to UN in 2017 reported that thousands of women and children are trafficked from neighboring Nepal and Bangladesh, Sri Lanka for purposes of marriage or employment, but end up leading lives of bondage. These children and women are finally ended up in the brothers of Mumbai Red Light areas, Delhi and Kolkata. Many even ended in dance bars, sweatshops, factories or even in the homes of well do families. According to a NGO Aasha (2017), based in Delhi narrates that normally young girls from the villages of UP, MP, Bihar are tempted and lured by female aunts with the promise of a job in the city. Once these young girls and women reached Delhi and other major cities of India, they used to be drugged and brought to the brothels. In the brothels they used to be locked in dark rooms, threatened, beaten black and blue, starved without food and water until she submitted to the brothel owner's demands. Very few children and women are rescued by the police. At the same time there are thousands of women who are not so lucky not being rescued from the brothels are pushed into the prostitution racket. Trafficking of young girls from Nepal and Bangladesh is widespread, these Nepali and

Banagladeshi women and girls are favorite because of their fair skin. Abject poverty and growing uncertainty of their future has pushed women to look beyond the borders for work. On the other hand, there is also the notion that having sex with virgins is an insurance against HIV/AIDS. This has further pushed up the demand for Nepali women, the younger the better. It is estimated that 30 to 40 per cent of the women in India's red-light areas are from Nepal. Women and children from India are trafficked to the Middle East, again with the promise of well-paid jobs, but invariably find themselves living like bonded laborers. Their passports are confiscated, they are denied their rightful wages, beaten with brooms and rods, and even raped if they try to escape.

#### Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the socio-economic background of children.
2. To investigate the level of harassment meted out by the children.
3. To describe the attitude parents of the children.
4. To explore the sociological consequence of child trafficking.

#### Research Methodology of the Study

The present study has been undertaken after analyzing the problems of child due to trafficking. The lack of employment is their native states, force women and children into illegal migration, through migrant trafficker's offers package deals. After visiting Karnataka's Mysore Districts Nazarbad Police Station, Ashokpuram Police Station, Mysore Police officers of the station has given vital inputs about the child trafficking and trafficker's modus operations.

#### Sources of the Data

The present study has been undertaken on the basis of primary and secondary sources. Primary data are collected after visiting Nazarbad and Ashok Puram Police Station, Mysore District, Karnataka. Secondary sources for this study has been collected from the child welfare home Mysore, books and magazines.

#### REASONS FOR CHILD TRAFFICKING

1.BEGGING: The children with a handicap are more vulnerable in a situation, where trafficking is for the purpose of beginning. Poverty and handicap is the

ideal combination for the children to be trafficked in the belief that the handicap will induce sympathy in the hearts of the persons who give alms. At the same time child beggars at serious risk of being deliberately maimed in order to increase his or her earning potential. For example, during the period of Ramzon festival child beggars are trafficked to Saudi Arabia by mafia gangs in order to gain easy begging money.

**2.ORGAN TRADING:** Although very little information is available on this aspect of trafficking, newspaper reports and police personal reports clearly indicates that trafficking of children for organ replacements for persons who can afford to buy them is a lucrative business for the traffickers.

**3.DRUG PEDDLING AND SMUGGLING:** According to the senior police officials of Delhi Police, use of children for drug peddling is a common because of children are less suspected. Drug mafias first make the children in addition of drugs then they are initiated into drugs and then used as conduits for drug peddling or smuggling. For instance, a study carried out by a NGO called Butterflies (2017), a Delhi based NGO, reveals that girl children as young as nine or ten are lured into drugs and sexually abused them. Later this girls used as couriers, as they are rarely frisked by the cops.

**4.TRAFFICKING FOR DOMESTIC WORK:** This is a highly unorganized sector and also an invisible one. Children are often brought into employment by family, relatives and friends. While some of them are brought to work as friendly gestures, there are times when these children are sold and trafficked.

**5.TRAFFICKING FOR LABOUR IN INDUSTRY:** Children are trafficked from ne state to another to be employed in industries like carpetweaving, silk-reeling, fishing etc. Children from Madhya Pradesh and Bihar are trafficked to Uttar Pradesh weaving industries where large scale weaving looms have setup. Young girls from Andhra Pradesh are trafficked to Kerala to the shrimp industry. Similarly, children from Tamil Nadu are trafficked to Shimoga for fishing.

**6.ENTERTAINMENT:** Trafficking of children, especially young girls for entertainment as part of

dancing bars. Nautanki in North India, Jatra in the East have been going to be popular place for dance bars. Young girls are trafficked to these popular places, where they dance in clubs and hotels or many times they are taken into circus as acrobats. For instance, it has been found that Nepali girls are lured to join Indian cities under the pretext of getting to learn work and also study. Unfortunately, the parents of these girls never find them their children again as the circus is always travelling.

**7.CAMEL RACING:** Only young boys are trafficked to serve as camel jockeys. Young boys are tied to the back of the camels during a race so that they do not jump off in fear. The camels are made to run down a track. Children who fall risk being trampled to death by the other camels on the track. If these young children are refused to ride on the camels, they are beaten and forced to ride. The boys from India and Bangladesh had been lured and smuggled away from their families with the promise of high-paying jobs. Normally these boys were between 9-11 years of age and had been brought by persons whom they identified as Uncles. In 1993, Camel Jockey Association of the United Arab Emirates finally prohibited the use of children. But new evidences proves that the rules are being blatantly ignored.

**8.TRAFFICKING FOR MARRIAGE:** Young girls from poor families are taken in marriage to another state or country. Adhikar, a human rights groups based in Bhubaneshwar, Orissa discovered that a number of girls were being taken as brides from Orissa after paying bride price and married to young men in Jhansi. At the same time, from Bangladesh, women are trafficked out to India for marriage to Indian men. There are reports by NGS's that in Chapainabaganj alone, over 10,000 women have been trafficked to Lucknow, Firozabad and other places in India. Hundreds of Bengali women and teenage girls are routinely brought into the Kashmir Valley every year to be sold to aspiring grooms between Rs. 5,000 to Rs.25,000 to the prospecting grooms who are often poor, old and physically challenged.

**9.DOMESTIC SERVICE:** Children usually girls from poor, rural families and sometimes as young as six to ten years old, may be recruited by a special agency, normally played by friend, known person, sent by their

parents adopted or kidnapped. In Nepal, India, Syria poor families from rural areas place their daughters and in return receive a cash advances. Child domestic workers who live with their employer families are often subjected to horrendous working conditions, extended work hours, physical and sexual abuse.

10. **TRAFFICKING FOR SEX:** There was a growing pattern of trafficking in child prostitutes from Nepal and from Bangladesh, 6000 girls from Nepal and 10,000 girls from Bangladesh annually. Girls as young as 7 years of age were trafficked from economically depressed neighborhoods in Nepal, Bangladesh, and rural areas to the major prostitutions centers of Mumbai, Kolkotta and New Delhi. Mumbai based NGO Aasha Kiran, estimates that there were approximately 1,00,000 to 2,00,000 women and girls working in brothels in Mumbai and 40,000 to 1,00,000 in Kolkotta.

#### SUGGESTIONS

1. A detail research has to under taken to know the extent and nature of the problem of child trafficking.
2. Fund and launch public awareness campaigns, highlighting relevant laws pertaining to the child trafficking.
3. Aggressive law and Police agencies must be setup to act swiftly on the child traffickers.
4. Train and sensitize law enforcement agencies on the child trafficking issue.
5. Ensure border and airport officials to report any suspected cases of child trafficking immediately to the higher authorities.
6. Enhance punishment for the child traffickers with minimum sentence of 15 years with rigorous jail.
7. Provide shelter, counseling, medical and legal assistance to victims.
8. Support and fund the NGO's working with child victims.
9. Video Conference is allowed in the trial of crimes. This ensures not only anonymity but also protection to the victims and witnesses.

#### PUNISHMENT FOR IMMORAL TRAFFICKING

1. The penalty for traffickers was prescribed by the Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act (ITPA). If the offense had been committed against a child

under 16 years the punishment was imprisonment for 7 years to life.

2. If the victim was a minor, the punishment was from 7 to 14 years.
3. Other penalties under the act range from minimum terms of imprisonment of 1 year for brothel-keeping.
4. 7 to life imprisonment for detaining a person with or without consent for prostitution.

#### CONCLUSION

Victims of trafficking were subject to threats, including emotional blackmail, violence and confinement as well as the threat of apprehension by authorities, detention, prosecution and deportation. The National Commission for women reported that organized crime played a significant role in the country's sex trafficking trade and that women and children who were trafficked frequently were subjected to extortion, beatings and rape. Infact child trafficking is a secret business, the operators of the heinous crime are well educated and operate with meticulous plan. The police and other law enforcement agencies has to operate in a swift way to arrest this problem. Fast-track courts has to be set up in all the districts to try the offenders and give fast judgements. The sentence period for the child traffic in the present scenario is just 7 years it has to be extended up to life term. At the same time awareness has to create by NGO's in a regular basis in villages where poor parents are ready to send their children with the traffickers for monetary benefits.

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