



Kamathipura, Mumbai's Street daughters are curious to come under the shadow of "Beti Bachao Beti padhao" campaign: Between the whirlwind of possibilities and impossibilities. – A research study

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Abstract

Indian law has failed to protect the rights and safety of people in Prostitution and Sex work. Not only does it take a moralistic approach, but it is also ambiguous, leaving sex workers vulnerable to abuses by police, government officials and petty criminals.

While human rights violation is common throughout India, they are particularly prevalent in the lives of people involved in prostitution and sex work, discrimination against sex workers in India is as much an issue as the discrimination faces by other marginalized group along lines of class, caste, race, or religion. Sex work is not treated as work but as a dirty and immoral lifestyle, threatening to taint the "Innocent" public. The result of this stigma is the denial of basic rights for both sex workers and their families: Women cannot access good health care and are often subject to abuse, violence and exploitation by police and government officials, while these children face harassment in schools and the workplace.

Today time has changed where every matured mother of a girl child sees the dream of being her daughter as an active member of the mainstream of the society and for it, she tries her best to give her a good education from her childhood. This research paper identifies the major human rights issues facing by people involved in sex work in India in the area of law, health, safety and education and emphasized the fundamental role that stigma and marginalization play in these abuses. This research paper is also highlighted that at present every little girl of kamathipura streets in Mumbai has keen interest to come under the direct shadow of the government of India's great campaign of "Beti Bachao Beti padhao" because the female children of sex workers are facing many problems in achieving pre-schooling to further high education due to discrimination and non-co-operation of society and government sector.

Lack of education is a major inhibitor among both sex workers and their children. My study has shown that women in sex work have considerably lower levels of education than surrounding population. In my study of the community in Kamathipura sex workers found that less than 5% of women have been to school of any kind, and less than 40% of that 5% have finished high school and only 2% further higher education.

But the stigma against a woman in sex work is not limited to the woman herself: it carries down to her children regardless of their own profession or lifestyles. Children of sex workers repeatedly report discrimination, ostracization and isolation felt on account of their's work. Many are embarrassed by their home lives. This has had significant effects on their education, as the drop out rate in this community is particularly very high. Children abandon school for myriad reasons, ranging from failed test scores to harassment by Teachers and classmates. This harassment is incredibly debilitating for school aged children. Many have reported during my study that teachers take them aside and inquire about their mother's "Rate" undoubtedly this harassment leads to lower self esteem and a lack of motivation in school.

Keywords

Whirlwind, Beti Bachao, Beti padhao, Possibilities and impossibilities, Playhouse, Plugged, Dockhands, Trafficked, Brothels, Empathetic.

INTRODUCTION

Kamathipura (also spelled Kamthipura) (1) is a neighbourhood in Mumbai, India known as red light area for prostitution. It was first settled after 1795 with the construction of causeways that connected to erstwhile seven Islands of Mumbai. Initially known as Lal bazar, it got its name from the Kamathis (workers) of other area of the country, who were labours on construction sites.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE AREA

Before the completion of the Hornby vellard project in 1784, which built a causeway uniting all seven Islands of Mumbai under William Hornby, Governor of Bombay (1771-1784), plugged the great beach in Mahalakshmi, while the subsequent Bellasis Road causeway joined Mazagaon and Malabar hill in 1793. This resulted in several low-lying marshy areas of Mumbai flats like Byculla, Tardeo, Mahalakshmi and Kamathipur opening up for habitation.

Thereafter starting 1795, Kamathis (workers) of other areas of the country working as labours on construction sight began setting here, giving the area its present name. It was bounded by Bellasis Road on the north, by Gaodevi on the south and the name road across Falkland Road (2,3). At one point during this period, it was home to a Chinese community, which worked as dockhands and ran restaurants. By the late 19th century, it all changed (4).

Till then, as previous 1864 census figures for Mumbai indicates other areas had a larger population of prostitutes like Girgao (1, 044), Phanawadi (1323), and Oomburkharee (1583) compared with Kamathipura (601) all which declined after 1864 (5). This small region boasted the most exotic consorts. In the 19th and 20th centuries a large number of women from continental Europe, Japan and China were trafficked into Kamathipura where they worked as prostitutes servicing soldiers and local alike (6,7). Gradually, social stratification also took place. A busy road in Kamathipura was known as Safed Gully (White Lane) owing to the European prostitutes housed here during the British raj.

The lane is now known Cursetji Shukalaji Street. The most well-known brothel in the area Pila house is the hybridisation of its original word Playhouse. The first venereal disease clinic of Bombay was opened in 1916 being taken over by BMC in 1925. Nearby Bachchuseth ki wadi on Foras Road was famous for its Kothewalis or Tawafis and Mujras (8).

When India gained independence Indian sex workers moved into the area. In recent decades larger numbers of Nepali women and girls have also been trafficked into the district (9). Over the years under India government rule, the sex industry in Kamathipura continued to flourish. Trafficking and economic circumstance also brought women from different parts of the country there. Eventually it becomes Asia's largest sex district (10). The brothels in the area are crowded. Sex workers wait outside to pick up customers and then rent an available bed. The estimated 3000 buildings in the area are largely dilapidated; safe drinking water and sanitation is scarce as well (11).

Some historical sources point out that the origin of slums, subsequently the red-light areas of Mumbai including Kamathipura is related to land acquisition, from the indigenous population who were evicted from their farmlands and cattle fields and forced to live in congested conditions to facilitate the development of the industrial harbour city. In the early stages, people accumulated in the new slums partly depended on construction contracts, later as men became employed due to lack of jobs more women began to engage in sex work in order to survive. Gang activity also increased in the area in 1970s and early 80s, Bachchu Wadi at Kamathipura was frequented by gang leaders from the Mumbai underworld (12).

In 2005, with a statewide ban on dance bar, many dancing girls, who could not find other means of income, moved to prostitution to survive in Mumbai's red-light districts like Kamathipura. According to police in 2005, there were 100, 000 prostitutes working out of 5 Star hotels and Brothels across Mumbai (13). The area is also home to a small cottage industry of about 200 women who make a living rolling beedies (hand rolled Indian cigarettes) (14).

DEMOGRAPHICS

Kamathipura is divided into roughly 14 lanes and divided according to regional background of the workers. Most of the workers came from other India states (14). There is little interaction between areas which makes it harder for social organisations to organise them into a movement or union. Further, lack of public opinion, political leadership or social activism which is empathetic towards them means a tough time forming unions. The area had 55, 936 voters in 2007 (15).

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research study is a qualitative study therefore real field observation and interviews of the stakeholders are necessary in this regard but to be a red-light area field observation and interview were very difficult task for a female member. However, I did not lose my confidence and I entered in the area and found some facts and realities as under: -

In 2010, Robin Chauraysia founded the Kranti organisation a non-governmental organisation (NGO) specifically working to educate and empower girls who were born in Kamathipura Mumbai's red-light district. The social worker stated that here over 10000 women from all over India and nearby countries such as Nepal and Bangladesh were work as prostitutes. Most have been trafficked, sold by relatives, or trapped by men who promised them a better life in Mumbai. New arrivals to Kamathipura are often kept captive and blackmailed into staying. Chauraysia's goal in starting the Kranti organisation was to give these girls the same opportunities and education as more fortunate children and help them grow up to become leaders.

When it come to getting an education woman in India often face obstacles. But as the girls who were given a second chance with Kranti spread their message of revolution, they prove that it is possible for children of any background to succeed with the right support.

Prerana (NGO)

When we moved around the place, we found that the young children were given drugs and made to sleep while the little doors ones were pushed into prostitution. The mothers did not have any alternative. That is when Prerana came up with the night care centre for these children. Preeti Praveen Patkar of Prerana claims that children are left at the centre are encouraged to study well and be professionally established. The children staying at this shelter study in municipal school in their premises till class VII and then move on to other schools and colleges in their nearby vicinity.

Drawback of these institution

The main drawback of these institutions is lack of funds which is the duty of the civil society and government of India and particular state government. Therefore, this became only cumin in the camel's mouth because problem is very large, and remedy is very less. But these institutions had an important role in the problem solution schemes.

A third institution also came forward in the help of these helpless girls was RSM foundation. It also works for the rehabilitation and providing education. The social workers of this NGO helped me in completing my research study because mostly sex working mothers rely upon this NGO at that time. I knew all the problems of these sex women and daughters.

SANJAYLEEA BHANSALI'S GANGUBAI KATHIYAWADI FILM – 2022

I saw this film thrice and noted all the important contents of the film. The film is about Gangubai kothewali whose life was documented in the book Mafia queens of Mumbai written by S Hussain Zaidi. The film depicts the rise of a simple girl from Kathiawar (Gujrat) who had no choice but to embrace the ways of destiny and swing it in her favour.

BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO CAMPAIGN

It is a campaign launched by the government of India. It mainly targets the clusters in UP, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Punjab, and Delhi. Though the half part of this campaign was failed but still it is active and other part (Beti Padhao) is a very good part to be implemented in all over India for all types of female children.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Despite constitutional mandate fundamental rights and directive principals of the constitution discrimination in education is being continue in the education of the street girls of Kamathipura and other red-light area places in our country. Initial observation of the researcher is that Beti Bachao campaign has already failed due to gender ratio unchanged, but next part of the campaign Beti Padhao can be fully utilised in the education to the street girls of Kamathipura which deserves in the national interest.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the necessity of education in Kamathipura street daughters.
- To assess the need of implementation of Beti bachao Beti padhao campaign in the streets of Kamathipura.
- To find out the challenges in implementation of Beti bachao Beti padhao campaign in Kamathipura.

IMPORTANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Prime minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision for India is that the goal of "Amrit kal" is to create an India where the level of facilities is not dividing the village and city, Man and Woman, Girls, and Boys, where the government does not interfere unnecessarily in the lives of citizen, where there is world's every modern infrastructure for all. To achieve these goals, he gave the slogan of Sab ka Saath, Sab ka Vikas, Sab ka Vishwas and Sab ka prayas. So, the spirit of this slogan also must reach to the doors of the Kamathipura street daughters. Also, this research work would provide a base to the further research in this field.

METHODOLOGY

This research study was very tough in its nature because being a Qualitative method following methods of research were very important to complete for the best findings of this research study.

- Field observation.
- Interview session of female sex workers.
- Interview sessions of the daughters of the sex women.
- Surrounding environment of the female sex workers.
- Mental observations of female sex workers.

For above we took full help of an NGO and mix up with the stakeholders emotionally and collected all the required data.

DATA ANALYSIS

After 16 sessions of the interviews of the stake holders we drew a real picture of the problem which is very different to the story of Bhansali's film Gangubai Kathiwadi.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Findings of the study are fully based on the statements of stake holders which is self-explanatory. Here I am reproducing the statement of a female sex worker and her daughter, which concludes the findings of this research study.

1. "I am a sex worker, but my daughter will not become one."
2. "Oh! God, please protect our little kids."
3. "Even if I have to sell my own blood, I will do it to educate my kids".
4. "My daughter is Nine, she dreams of becoming a doctor or an IPS officer" and it is my duty to full fill the dream of my daughter.
5. "I shall never think that any daughter should adopt the same profession of her mother."
6. "Ab to main buddhi Ho Gayi meri aur koi Nahi dekhana chahata."
7. "Today we felt guilty conscious of our past and present deeds."

8. "Please help and shelter our Kids."

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Children born and brought in red-light district are more often subjected to abuse within their homes and are ostracized in social spaces. Due to the nature of the trade, female children are particularly vulnerable in my study conducted, the focus group discussions revealed that mothers felt helplessness when a client touched, molested, or teased their daughters verbally.

Keeping in mind the problem faced by sex workers and their children alike, assess to education for sex workers and more importantly their children imperative. Access to quality education and skill building exercises would help to break the vicious cycle of poverty they tend to get stuck in.

Children have also reported that teachers take them aside and inquire about their mother's "Rate". This harassment and social ostracization faced by them coupled with a lack of resources is the major cause of the high dropout rate.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR IT

Constitutional safeguards and lack of implementation is responsible of it. Under Article 21 A of the Indian constitution 6-14 years of age are guaranteed free and compulsory elementary education. Further the directive principles of state policy are also instructive in this regard. Under Article 39 (E), the government has the obligation to protect children against entering occupations that are unsuited to their age or strength due to economic necessity. Under Article 39 (F) they have the right to "Equal opportunities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and guaranteed protection of child and youth against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment."

Further India also signed and ratified the United Nations convention on the rights of the Child (1989), which broadens the right to through its four core principles: -

- Non-discrimination.
- The best interest of the child.
- The right to life.
- Survival and development of the child to the maximum extent possible.

Thus, the obligation of the government is not simply to provide access to education. It is also mandated to take the necessary steps to reduce dropout rates and eradicate barriers such as discrimination and poverty. Despite this no visible efforts have been made by the government to ensure the main streaming of the particularly vulnerable section. It is also advisable that government must provide proper financial help to those NGO's who are working in this hard field.

At the end a stigma exists only in so far as we as a society continue to perpetuate it. Combining forces with civil society and organisations it is essential to put pressure on the government to address this issue in a more meaningful manner, so that we take one small step in the journey of inclusive education and brighter future for all.

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