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Trafficking of Women in Nepal: An Intersectional Analysis of Organizational Narratives

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TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN IN NEPAL: AN INTERSECTIONAL ANALYSIS OF
ORGANIZATIONAL NARRATIVES

TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN IN NEPAL: AN INTERSECTIONAL ANALYSIS OF
ORGANIZATIONAL NARRATIVES

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Arts in Sociology

By

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ABSTRACT

In Nepal, sex trafficking is usually associated with poverty, illiteracy and gender discrimination. To better understand the discursive dimensions of sex trafficking, this research examines the organizational narratives of the Nepalese anti-trafficking workers using the analytical framework of intersectionality. This study finds that the anti-trafficking workers' organizational narratives are influenced by both personal and institutional narratives. In their personal narratives, anti-trafficking workers recognize the multiple forms of discrimination shaping the victims' experiences, but the intersectional discriminations are rarely addressed in the anti-trafficking programs or services implemented by the non-profit organizations. After having identified sex-trafficking victims as experiencing discrimination based on their gender, caste, age, class, and geographical location, this study concludes that the international and local organizations must incorporate an intersectional approach into their programs and services for sex-trafficking victims.

Keywords: Sex trafficking, Nepal, Intersectionality, organizational narratives.

This thesis is approved for recommendation
to the Graduate Council.

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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to my daughter Aditi. Thank you for being my Angel. I wish I could print rainbow on this page as you asked.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION	1
	A. Statement of the Problem	3
	B. Purpose of the Study	5
II.	CONCEPTUAL ISSUES AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	8
	A. Conceptual Issues	8
	1. Sex Trafficking and the Images of the Victims	8
	2. Existing Studies of Sex Trafficking in Nepal that are intersectional: Implication of Gender, Caste, Age, and Religion	10
	B. Theoretical Framework	17
	1. Organizational Narratives	17
	2. Intersectionality	19
III.	METHODS	24
	A. Epistemological Perspective	24
	B. Background	25
	C. Respondent Selection	27
	D. Data Collection	30
	E. Data Analysis	32
IV.	FINDINGS	36
	A. Organizational Narratives and Portrayal of Sex Trafficking Victims	36
	B. Intersectional Organizational Narratives	47
	1. Family Trends in Higher-caste and Lower caste victims	50
	2. Poverty among Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims	50
	3. Education Attainment among Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims	51
	4. Marital Status amongst Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims	52
	5. Mobility among Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims	53
	6. Cultural Experiences Amongst Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims	53
	7. Regain Status Among Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims	55
	8. Social Acceptance Among Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims	55

9. Prejudice Against Higher-caste Victims versus that against Lower-caste victims	56
10. Business trends Regarding Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims	56
C. Summary	57
V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	59
A. Recommendation	63
B. Limitations	65
C. Future Research	66
D. Appendices	67
A. Appendix A: Implied Consent and Interview Guides	67
1. Implied Consent	67
2. Interview Guides	68
B. Appendix B: Examples of Coding	70
References	75

I. INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking¹ is considered to be the dark side of globalization. Individuals who are trafficked are economically and socially vulnerable, hence easily exploited in the context of a global economy. People are pushed out of the countries that lack economic opportunities and pulled into more developed and wealthier countries (Jones et al. 2007). Such mobility can lead to labor exploitation, and human trafficking is one of the worst forms of such exploitation. Global human trafficking also involves smuggling people within the territory of one country or across the border to a neighboring country (Jones et al. 2007). The latter is especially the case with people who agree to be smuggled to other countries and end up in brothels or are coerced into some form of slavery (Martin and Miller 2000).

According to the U.S Department of State, about 80,000 people are trafficked globally across national borders. Fifty-six percent of the victims of trafficking are women, who are more likely to be trafficked for sex than for labor (U.S Department of State [USDS] 2010). In addition, the

¹ US “ Trafficking Victim Act” (TVA) 2000 defines severe forms of human trafficking as:

- a. Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or
- b. The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

A victim need not be physically transported from one location to another in order for the crime to fall within these definitions. (<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/142980.pdf>)

Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report states that, in addition to international trafficking, millions of people are trafficked within their own countries (USDS 2010).

The cases of internal trafficking often involve girls from rural areas being brought to cities where many end up working in massage parlors, hotels, or dance restaurants. Sex trafficking can occur illegally across national borders as in the case of trafficking of women and girls from Burma, Yunnan Province of China to Thailand, or within the national border, as in Cambodia where the sex industry depends on internal trafficking of “Khmer” women and girls (Beyrer and Stachowiak 2003).

Trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation, a dimension of human trafficking, is a common phenomenon practiced throughout the world. Even Nepal, a small Asian country nuzzled between China and India, is affected by this phenomenon. Although the exact numbers are not known, it is estimated that 5000 to 7000 Nepali girls are trafficked annually to India alone (Office of the National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Women and Children [ONRT] 2008:13). And, the TIP report states that Nepalese women are also trafficked to the Middle East for sexual exploitation (USDS 2010:246).

In recent years, efforts to combat human trafficking, including sex trafficking, have gained an important momentum as countries across the globe ratified anti-trafficking conventions (Dinan 2008). Importantly, although the government of Nepal prohibits slavery, the selling of human beings, and forced prostitution under the Human Trafficking Control Act of 1986, it has yet to

ratify the 2000 UN TIP Protocol (USDS 2010).² In 2007, the U.S. Department of State placed Nepal on a list of countries that do not meet minimum standards to combat trafficking. At the same time, the U.S. Department of State acknowledged that Nepal is making efforts to bring about some change in this area (USDS 2010).

In Nepal, sex trafficking is usually associated with poverty, illiteracy and gender discrimination. Nepali women are still discriminated against in many areas, in ways that include the procurement of citizenship, property, education, employment, health, and marriage based on their gender (Department for International Development [DFID] 2006). Few researchers such as Rajbhandari (2008) and Malla (2005) also suggest that sex trafficking victims experience multiple discrimination based on gender, caste and class. The fact that Nepali women are affected by multiple forms of discrimination and social exclusion must be considered while analyzing sex trafficking in Nepal. Social workers and organizations *must* consider the multiple discrimination experienced by the victims while analyzing sex trafficking, especially those who are directly involved with providing various services to the sex trafficking victims.

A. THE STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

During the 19th century, feminists constructed narratives such as “white slave trade” to raise the issue of involuntary prostitution which was an outcome of abduction and transportation of white

² UN TIP protocol: United Nations Trafficking in Person Protocol also known as Palermo Protocol has been initiated since 2003. “There are 95 nations as it members. This protocol seeks to prevent trafficking, protect victim and promote anti-trafficking cooperation among nation.” (www.usinfo.state.gov)

women for prostitution. Over the years, different institutions and groups came up with various narratives to explain the phenomenon of sex trafficking and provide alternative solutions to it. For instance, abolitionists argue that prostitution is the root cause for women's trafficking. Thus, an effective way to eradicate sex trafficking is by abolishing prostitution. Yet, other groups representing sex workers believe that prostitution is like any other work and should not be stigmatized. Thus, over time, different institutions, activists, and groups constructed various narratives on sex trafficking such as women's right, violence, sexual slavery, etc. (Cameron and Newman 2008; Desyllas 2007; Samarasinghe 2008, Doezema 2000).

Despite the differences, a common problem with these narratives is that they are constructed based on gender inequality only. Such narratives ignore the racial, ethnic, geo-political, and class dimensions. Existing research on sex trafficking also shows that gender-based discrimination and poverty and illiteracy rates among women are important factors contributing to the trafficking of women (Hennink and Simkhada 2004; K.C. et al. 2001; Terres De Hommes [TDH] 2003). Also, each country may have a distinct pattern of trafficking of women for sexual exploitation based on religious affiliations, economic development, etc. These differences should not be overlooked if scholars and practitioners are to adequately analyze the causes and effects of sex trafficking (George 2001) and to move beyond proposing programs based on the idea that "one size fits all" (Samarasinghe 2008).

To date, research on sex trafficking has been concerned with this phenomenon in terms of providing a general understanding of who is being trafficked, who is involved in trafficking activities, what factors influence trafficking, and what can be done to prevent it (Doezema 2005:63). Although various national and international organizations and researchers have

examined the issue of sex trafficking, it appears that existing analyses approach the subject matter by focusing on gender or social and economic factors, such as poverty and literacy rates, or migration and exploitation, associated with sex trafficking (Samarasinghe 2008; Rajbhandari 2008). Such studies do not examine the organizational narratives of the workers employed by the anti-trafficking organizations. Also, existing analyses do not allow us to understand, for instance, if the organizational narratives recognize the possibility that lower-caste women may be affected by sex trafficking differently than higher-caste women or lower-caste men, especially since the higher-caste women may be experiencing similar gender inequalities while the lower-caste men may be experiencing very similar economic pressures.

B. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In order to better understand the discursive dimension of sex trafficking in Kathmandu, Nepal, I examine organizational narratives using intersectionality. In analyzing the situation of sex trafficked victims, the organizations and/or their employees often construct narratives about their client or victims. The organizational narratives help to explain the images of the sex trafficking victims. When casual stories or narratives are constructed by marginalized or oppressed people then such narratives are often ignored or unheard. However, narratives constructed by people occupying privileged positions are often taken to be believable and important (Collins 1989; Loseke 2007). These organizational narratives can be carried over into the anti-trafficking policy-making process, which in turn will further shape organizational programs and services (Loseke 2007).

The overall purpose of this study is to encourage further development of intersectional analysis of organizational policies regarding important social issues, especially sex trafficking (Blum

2008; Murphy-Erby et al. 2009). In doing so, I first examine how the organizational narratives construct the images of the victims. Secondly, I examine whether or not such narratives demonstrate the understanding of multiple dimensions of discrimination, specifically gender and caste, experienced by the victims of sex trafficking.

This study addresses the following questions: In general, how do the organizational narratives portray the victims of sex trafficking? Do these narratives recognize the intersectional locations occupied by the victims, and if yes, what are the various intersectional categories of discrimination identified by the workers in their organizational narratives? To address my questions, I interviewed eight workers who are working closely with the victims of sex trafficking through four anti-trafficking organizations. I selected Nepal as the country in which to conduct my study. In recent years, Nepal has become a country of interest to many organizations and researchers working against human trafficking. Nepal has also been receiving funds and support from international organizations like the U.S. Department of State to eliminate sex trafficking (USDS 2007). There are over fifty NGOs that are working to fight against trafficking. In Nepal, the problem is rooted in developing flexible policies and programs (McNeill 2008). If the issue of sex trafficking is approached with appropriate methods then the anti-trafficking organizations may be in a better position to create better policies addressing the unique needs of differently positioned sex-trafficking victims.

This thesis is organized as follows: In Chapter II, I summarize extant research, focusing mainly on the images of sex trafficking victims presented by different scholars and anti-trafficking organizations. In addition, I discuss the existing sex-trafficking studies focused on Nepal. Next, I present two theoretical frameworks that inform my research: organizational narratives and

intersectionality. In Chapter III, I discuss the research method I used to conduct this study. I begin by sharing my experiences that motivated me to pursue this research. Then, I discuss how I selected the respondents for my research, data collection instrument, and coding procedures. In Chapter IV, I present the findings. Finally, I discuss the implications of my findings, make policy recommendations and summarize the limitations of my research. I conclude the final chapter by discussing future research.

II. CONCEPTUAL ISSUES AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

A. CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

Sex Trafficking and the Images of the Victims

According to the study by International Labor Organization ([ILO] 2005), although there is a strong connection between migration and trafficking, these phenomena cannot be treated as synonymous. A person may consent to move to different place, but until and unless “deception” is used, he/she cannot be considered as being a victim of trafficking. According to Samarasinghe (2003), the movement of people for illegal or exploitative work is considered trafficking, whereas migration, according to Nair and Sen (2005), is movement of people especially with an objective of finding a job.

Policies failing to differentiate migration from trafficking often make error by equating illegal immigrants as trafficked victims. Equating immigration with trafficking is likely to result in curbing the movement of “women and girls.” Such policies ignore individual’s decision to migrate and often consider immigrants, especially “women and girls,” to be traveling under false persuasion lured by an attractive job (Kapur 2008). Anti-trafficking programs and policies that do not make such distinction limits the right of women to decide their mobility by considering them as “lacking capacity to reason or choose or incapable of making decision” (Kapur 2008, Konard 2008). The movement of women and girls is limited considering them vulnerable or at risk of trafficking. The women’s movement is often assumed to be forced that ends in sexual exploitation (Sanghera 2005, Konard 2008). Such assumptions shape the image of women as being vulnerable and in need of protection. If a woman participates in her movement she is

considered to be “sexually promiscuous” and it is assumed that she no longer needs the legal protection (Konard 2008).

Prostitution and sex trafficking are two different terms often associated with sex trafficking.

According to Samarasinghe (2008), prostitution represents “promiscuous” behavior that involves the selling of sex and emotional detachment from the client. It is also defined as the “act of having sexual intercourse” for material compensation, which can include cash, drugs, jewelry or other forms of tangible assets. Such definitions suggest “choice” made by women voluntarily to engage in sex work. However, many researchers and scholars argue that it is the “lack of choices” that forces women to opt prostitution as means to earn money (Samarasinghe 2008).

The idea of “consent” given by women is rejected by those who argue that women do not give consent to work as prostitutes because they are driven by external forces such as socio-economic conditions which often limit their “choices” (Piper 2005).

As implied by the above definitional disagreement, the relationship between sex trafficking and prostitution is highly debated. For instance, liberal feminists (Doezema 2000, 2005) are of the opinion that women can control their sexuality and thus prostitution need not be exploitative.

They argue that sex workers can control their sexuality more than other women and claim that women have the “right to control their body.” Sex work can be regarded as an occupation. And, if sex work is properly regulated by the government, such policies would increase the labor standards and reduce abuse, violence and exploitation. Government regulation of sex work could lead to decline of trafficking (Cameron 2008), which is defined as a movement of people accompanied by deception and/or force (Batsyukova 2007; Butcher 2003).

The notion of liberal feminism is found to be advocated by sex-worker activists (Doezema 2005) and organizations like Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women who argue that there should be clear distinction made between “forced prostitution” and “voluntary prostitution,” wherein the former term should be associated with violence and the later with work. In their view, the adults should be considered as capable individuals consenting to “sex and sex work.”³ They further add that “legalization and decriminalization” of sex work and the sex industry will decrease illegal activities and help control sex trafficking (Doezema 2000, 2005). Supporting this view, the governments of the Netherlands and German have legalized prostitution, making sure that the sex workers have “working hours, health and safety regulations” (Batsyukova 2007).

Existing Studies of Sex Trafficking in Nepal that are intersectional: Implication of Gender, Caste, Age, and Religion

In 2001, the International Labor Organization (ILO) published a study of “Trafficking in Girls with Special Reference to Prostitution” (K.C. et al. 2001). This assessment focused on trafficking in the context of Nepal. This assessment is based on the interview of girls who were grouped as vulnerable (N=100), commercial sex workers (N= 13), rehabilitated and reintegrated girls (N=72). The main objective of this study was to explore the nature and process of trafficking in children with reference to prostitution. It focused on root causes and the impact of trafficking. It also analyzed intervention programs. The respondents were 18 years of age and older in case of those who were interviewed at the rehabilitation center. But, they were below the age of 18 when they were trafficked.

³ According sex-worker activists, “consent” is not applicable in the case of minors.

Root causes of trafficking identified by ILO in 2001 were poverty, lax law enforcement, lack of employment opportunities and various social and cultural factors. But not all victims of sex trafficking were affected by poverty. This study also identified growing consumerism, mother's illiteracy, gender discrimination and traditional marriage practices as other factors effecting sex trafficking. Key findings of this study indicated that though sex trafficking has crossed across various caste and ethnic groups, yet there is high influx of lower-caste women such as Tamang. In this study alone, forty seven percent of respondents represented lower-caste Tamang. The 2001 ILO study states two ways or models of sex trafficking – “hard trafficking” and “soft trafficking.” If children in the worst form of child labor were trafficked from their working place by use of deception, coercion, fraud etc, then this process was termed as “hard trafficking” and later occurs with the consent of parents. In “soft trafficking” girls were considered “commodities” that could be bought and sold. Out of sixty seven respondents, forty were trafficked from the place where they worked; twenty seven were directly trafficked from their home. However, in the ILO (2001) study it was not possible to identify how many of them were trafficked with the “consent” of their parents.

The 2001 ILO research indicated that the girls were tortured mentally and physically. Ninety to ninety-five percent of their earning was taken by the brothel keeper. Even the process of returning home was not easy for these girls due to social stigmatization. It was found that many of those who returned home were even infected with HIV/AIDS.

In 2002, the ILO conducted two different studies related to trafficking. The first study was on “Internal Trafficking among Children and Youth Engaged in Prostitution in Nepal” (ILO 2002a) and the other was on “Cross Border Trafficking of Boys” (ILO 2002b). The objective of the first

(ILO 2002a) study was to analyze internal trafficking in Kathmandu in reference to children and youth prostitutes. According to ILO (2002a), often times trafficking is usually associated with trafficking of girls to India. There is lack of understanding about internal trafficking. Based on the patterns of recruitment, the ILO has categorized internal trafficking as long- distance and short- distance. The former is associated with trafficking of girls to Kathmandu from outside the valley whereas the latter is associated with trafficking within the Kathmandu valley. Long- distance internal trafficking may not be for sexual exploitation whereas short-distance is usually for sexual exploitation. The ILO further clarified external trafficking and internal trafficking by suggesting that they have different elements. In Internal trafficking coercion or abuse may not appear during the transportation period.

In the first ILO (2002a) study, 440 respondents were interviewed. Findings showed that 18.7% of respondent were minors. Hill ethnic groups represented 42.7% of the total sample; 50.2% of the respondents in this study could read and write. Common reasons for dropping out of school were based on family and economic problems. Higher numbers of children were based in street prostitution which represented 24.4%; 20.2% of them worked at restaurants and 9.9% in massage parlor as sex workers; 94% of them said that they were working at their own will. Their mobility was not restricted.

The second 2002 ILO study (ILO 2002b) of cross border trafficking of boys shows different trafficking trends in Nepal. For this study, the ILO collected information from seventy boys out of whom thirty returned to Nepal and forty were still working in India. The majority of the respondents were from Muslim community. Upon consent of their parents, they were being sent to work and earn money. The parents were not aware of condition of slavery. Of those

respondents who returned back to Nepal, 80% were illiterate and 87% came from the Muslim community. The respondent also reported that they were trafficked mainly for laborious work such as driving, embroidery. In the case of respondent still working in India, 62.5% were Hindu and 85% were illiterate. At work, 95% of boys reported to have faced abuse and harassment.

A more recent study by Hennink and Simkhada (2004) examined the trafficking of Nepalese girls to India. The objective of this study was to provide a better understanding of the process and context of sex trafficking. Towards this end, the authors examined: a) the characteristics of sex trafficked women and girls, b) the routes of entry and exit from sex trafficking and c) strategies for reducing risk of sex trafficking. The researchers used both qualitative and quantitative methods for which they interviewed the effected ones as well as used case records maintained by different organizations. During the first phase of their research, they interviewed eight key informants to provide an understanding of health and social issues surrounding sex trafficking. The key informants included NGO directors, coordinators of rehabilitation centers and health workers. During the second phase, the researchers collected case records of 202 women and girls who were sex trafficked and then returned back to rehabilitation centers in Kathmandu.

Hennink and Simkhada found that the majority of sex-trafficking victims in their study were 13 to 18 years old when trafficked. In terms of the victims' marital status, 30% were married and 60% were unmarried. Also, 72.7% of the victims were Hindu, 77.2% did not have an education, and only 15.3% had primary education. Among the victims, the majorities are from the lower-caste; only 16.8% of those who were trafficked belonged to the higher-caste. One of key finding was the girls were being trafficked by someone they knew. Specifically, 21.7% of the victims

reported that they were trafficked by their relatives and 44% by someone they knew who were not part of their family. This finding highlights the involvement of family members in trafficking of their own daughters.

Both direct and indirect trafficking methods were used by traffickers. Direct trafficking involves coercion and deception, whereby the traffickers trick girls into fake marriage, lure them with city life or abduct and then sell them directly to brothels. Indirect trafficking, on the other hand, occurs as women and girls migrate to urban areas for work where they are exploited and wind up in sex trafficking. The majority of victims in this study identified urban areas as the hub for recruiting girls for trafficking. Interviews also showed that women and girls migrated independently or with family. More than half of girls in this study were lured with promises of employment. For instance, carpet factories have become a hub for traffickers.

According to Hennink and Simkhada, the reintegration of the trafficked women and/or girls back to the family or community is a very difficult process. The victims are ostracized by society due to their involvement in sex work. Culturally, virginity at marriage is expected of women.

Besides, even the woman's family is likely to reject their reintegration as they fear that they will be socially excluded from the community because of their daughter's predicament. While many women/girls who return to Nepal become involved into different activities, including marriage and business, most of them go back to accepting prostitution because they are excluded by their families and communities and they need to sustain their livelihood.

In all, Hennink and Simkhada argue that the issue of trafficking must be examined from socio-cultural, gender roles, power differential and poverty aspects. Given the complexity of the issues, it is necessary to adopt anti-trafficking strategies at various levels. Such interventions should be

done a) at the community level, b) in urban areas where people migrate for work, c) during mobility such as migration or when at brothels and d) while women are moving back to their communities.

Research on trafficking in Nepal has also focus on health consequences of trafficking for its victims. According to the study by Poudel and Carryer (2000), the girls or women who came back from Indian brothels were suffering from HIV/AIDS. In many cases, the girls or women were returned back to Nepal after the brothel keeper came to know about their disease. In the year 1998, Nepal's National Center for AIDS and STD Control reported 1175 cases of HIV/AIDS. Organizations then estimated that almost 60-70 percent of girls returning from Indian brothels were infected by this disease. There is a lack of appropriate data to state how many trafficked victims have HIV/AIDS as most cases are not recorded or not even recognized by the concerned authorities.

In explaining the situation of trafficked women, Sapana Pradhan Malla (2005) suggests that a trafficked victim's experience is shaped by her multiple identity- race and gender. She further suggests that trafficking is an outcome of "an intersection between racial and gender discrimination." Both of these create "dynamics of power" wherein women of certain races or ethnic groups are more vulnerable. She also remarks that women from certain ethnic group are often the target of trafficking, sexual slavery, or prostitution.

Similarly, in its National Report, ONRT (2008) suggests that multiple causes shape and support the trafficking of women in Nepal. The causes vary from culture to culture, family to family, location etc. Organizations such as the Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) categorize these causes as "root"

and “immediate.” Root causes are associated with the structural factors, such as economy, society, religion, culture, inequality, gender discrimination, etc., whereas immediate causes are associated with the family and its problems such as violence, rape, incest, divorce, separation, etc.

According to Rajbhandari (2008), class, caste, and gender discrimination are manifested in different ways, including a limited access to education, skills training, health and other basic resources necessary for survival. A legal system based upon the patriarchal structure still denies women the right to receive citizenship or a passport without the support of a male family member. Caste-based division of labor and discrimination has even forced some women to adopt a higher-caste just to fit in the work environment. For instance, lower-caste women are found to change their caste to higher-caste in order to avoid discrimination at work. Rajbhandari (2008), in her article “Human trafficking in South Asia: A focus on Nepal,” adds that extant sex-trafficking research has demonstrated that social exclusion based on gender and discriminatory practices makes women more vulnerable to trafficking.

Rajbhandari (2008) postulates that social, economic, and geopolitical factors are responsible for trafficking, which also includes the patriarchal structure that has strong hold on women’s bodies and work. Economic factors, such as a lack of job opportunities, have pushed many to the urban areas. The other “push factor” she mentions is the discrimination that occurs in families and communities on basis of class, caste, ethnicity, or gender. Lower-caste people are looked down upon and discriminated against. Even other research Rajbhandari observed reveals that the majority of trafficking survivors face discrimination on the basis of class and ethnicity. One of the “pull factors” the author describes as responsible for trafficking of humans is the free market

economy which has increased rural mobility. There is a demand for girls in dance restaurants, clubs, and bars. Those who move from rural to urban area, and are in desperate need of work, end up being sexually exploited.

Although the above studies provide a complex portrayal of the victims' and suggest that victims' experiences are being shaped by multiple discrimination, there is lack of studies that focus on intersectional analysis of the organizational narratives. Since there is lack of studies focused on my research interest, the themes indicating the images of the victims and multiple forms of discrimination will be used as a priori codes.

B. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Organizational Narratives

In general, narratives are casual stories constructed and told by various people, groups, organizations, workers, etc. These narratives are told as fiction or as fact to make sense of certain issues concerning social life. According to Loseke (2007:665), "humans are drawn to stories so narratives are evaluated as believable and important tend to be effective in gaining support – for a social cause, a social policy, or a consumer product." Various stories are constructed and told. But usually, narratives constructed by people in power or authority tend to be heard and receive more attention by evaluating it as believable and important. On the contrary, the narratives constructed by marginalized people are often unheard (Loseke 2007).

According to Loseke (2007), narratives can be constructed at various levels of social life such as cultural, personal, organizational, and institutional. Cultural narrative is a collective representation of stories by disembodied actors such as media, activists, etc. For instance,

Moldovian media create the images of sex trafficking victims as commodities who are “imported” and “exported” (Guzun 2008). While the cultural narratives may or may not shape people’s lives, institutional narratives have ability to shape the social life of the people through social policy. For instance, in the 1980s and 1990s, the institutional narratives created the image of African-American welfare recipients as over-fertile, lazy, single, and so on. These narratives then provided legitimacy to of the welfare policy that enforced individual responsibility and employment (Hancock 2004). Besides, the institutional narratives define the social problems, discuss the problems and also identify the target population, who not only confront these problems but are also considered worthy of the benefits. Narratives, in this context, will restrain the target population by assigning them into fixed categories as worthy and unworthy. For example, the recipient who are considered worthy of welfare are often categorized as poor and those who do not fall in this category are considered unworthy of welfare (Loseke 2007). The personal narratives are the stories created by the social actors themselves. Finally, the organizational narratives are created by the workers or organizations involved with providing various social services to the needy people (Loseke 2007).

While the personal narratives are created by the victims themselves, organizational narratives are created by the workers in process of identifying the victims. Personal narratives reflect the victims’ own stories, whereas the organizational narratives reflect the stories told by the anti-trafficking workers about the victims. In my study, I focus on organizational narratives as these are created by organizations or workers in anti-trafficking programs about their clients who are victims of sex trafficking (Loseke 2007). According to Loseke (2007), while providing services, organizations go through the procedure of identifying the client and their needs. In this process, the workers construct unique images of the clients. These images (or narrative characters) are

based on the client characteristics, their problems and what they need. Such images also inform policies which contribute to shaping of organizational programs and services (Loseke 2007). For instance, the organizational narratives may inform organizational policy that the homosexual youth are emotionally, socially and psychologically at risk. Such policy shapes the programs and services for homosexual youth by focusing more on issues that is informed by the narratives (Mayberry 2006). Thus, organizational narratives play important role in shaping the services of the organizations.

Intersectionality

In the 1960s and 1970s, the modern U.S. women's movement raised the issues of gender oppression and inequalities. At the same time, women of color challenged feminist theories that examined only one dimension of inequality- gender. According to women of color, an adequate feminist theory should examine the combined effects of race, class, and gender oppressions (Landry 2007). Since then many feminist scholars have embraced the notion of intersectionality and its contributions to our understanding of "the relationship between multiple dimensions of social relation and social identities" (McCall 2005:1771).

Although intersectionality theory has gained momentum in recent years, its notion has been embedded in the earlier writings of African-American scholars like Anna Julia Cooper who has critically analyzed gender and race in her work. In her work '*A Voice from South*' Cooper projects ideas based on women's experiences, their social location, privileges, and oppressions (May 2004). In her writings, she describes encountering two restrooms while traveling, one stating "For Ladies" and the other "For Colored People." She was aware that while the former applied to white women, the latter applied to black men. Her own identity as a black female was

invisible (Cooper 1988). In her remarks, Cooper states that women of color occupying unique positions are confronted by two questions or problems caused by their gender and racial identity (Cooper 1988).

It was Crenshaw who coined the term “intersectionality” to explain the effect of race and gender in women’s lives. She used a traffic intersection metaphor to explain how gender and race intersect and cause multiple levels of oppression in women’s experiences (Crenshaw 1991). Specifically, in this metaphor, different forms of discrimination, such as race, gender, and class, are viewed as roads that structure the social, economic, and political aspects of women’s lives. The oppressive relations that result in disempowerment travel through these roads. As they travel, they often overlap and create intersections. Women who inhabit these intersections must negotiate the “traffic” that flows through to avoid injuries (as described by Patel 2004).

Intersectional theory focuses on the notion of simultaneity. According to this notion, gender, class, and race cannot be separated as they create interlocking inequalities/oppressions. “Gender, class and race are salient characteristics of each individual that accompany the individual into every interaction or experience” (Landry 2007:11). However, these characteristics may differ according to the different situations. According to King (1988:48), such characteristics vary depending upon the group under study. In some cases, one of the characteristics, such as gender, may be more significant whereas in some, class might be more significant. Collins (1993:560-61) states that all the characteristics may not be equally visible but they all are present as “categories of analysis” in analyzing the experience of the individual. Zinn and Dill (1996:326-27) argue that based on particular social location, the experience of these characteristic is different for different individuals. Thus, an analysis of particular group or individual is more

definite when various categories of oppression such as race, gender, class, age, etc., is studied together. This allows the researcher to get more accurate picture of the problem (Murphy-Erby et al 2009). According to Lorber (1998), “gender is constructed by a range of interlocking inequalities.” Therefore defining the subordination or experience of women has to be done along with other categories such as race, class, age, etc. (Murphy-Erby 2009).

In this context, it should be noted that identities such as race, gender, and class do not remain fixed. For instance, Weber (1998) posits that identity markers are socially constructed and contextual and their meaning changes over time. According to Weber, the meaning of identity markers emerges out of the group’s struggle in which one group subordinates the other over the available resources. Thus, the meaning of markers helps to explain how one can be “discriminated against” or be the subject of “discrimination” (Weber 1998).

Importantly, although these identity markers are often used in research, not all these markers play the same role across different societies (Manuel 2006). Depending on the nature of a society, other identity markers, such as caste, ethnicity, or nationality also affect people’s experiences and identities (Rao and Kelleher 2001). Although intersectionality posits that the multiple layered identities create unique human experience, it should not be assumed that one’s burden increases as the number of identity markers increases. Instead, intersectionality asserts that different combinations of identity markers produce a distinct experience in a person’s life (AWID 2004). In addition, identity markers contribute to social inequalities (King 1988; Landry 2007). Social inequalities are results of unequal distribution of resources. People are often deprived from gaining equal access to certain resources, positions, or services as they occupy certain ranks in the society (Kerbo 2003). The intersectional approach can therefore be used in

identifying and analyzing the social inequalities or multiple forms of discrimination confronted by marginalized groups of people (Chrenshaw 1994).

Managing and employing intersectionality in studying multiple dimensions of social inequality is a complex process. To overcome these complexities, McCall (2005:1773) defined three approaches, anti-categorical, intra-categorical, and inter-categorical, to conduct intersectional studies. The anti-categorical approach rejects the idea of analytical categorization of race, class, gender, and sexuality. The anti-categorical approach deconstructs these analytical categories and focuses on heterogeneity of social groups. McCall suggests that such deconstruction helps in diminishing inequality to bring positive social change (2005).

The second approach that McCall discusses is the intra-categorical approach. This approach focuses on particular social groups who are located at neglected points of intersection (McCall 2005:1774). The intra-categorical approach studies single groups across intersectional categories. When defining the parameters of the analysis, at least two criteria are selected to determine the groups on which this approach will focus. For example, a single group of women can be studied across multiple categories of class, age, race, and sexuality to define the experiences of women at particular social locations. In simpler terms, intra-categorical analysis allows us to study a single group at a particular social location, which is shaped by various categories of identity markers (McCall 2005:1784-1786).

Moving on to the last approach, the inter-categorical approach requires “provisional definition and use of existing analytical categories to empirically document relationship of inequality between social groups and changing configurations of inequality along multiple and confliction dimensions” (McCall 2005:1773). To put it differently, the inter-categorical approach measures

inequalities across the existing social groups (McCall 2005:1785). In this case different social groups are compared across various intersectional categories. For instance, we can take caste groups such as high caste and low caste, and compare and contrast them across various intersectional categories, such as class, gender, age, sexuality, etc. (McCall 2005).

Based on theoretical framework of organizational narratives and intersectionality, I will examine how the workers portray their clients. Further, I will examine if the workers recognize the multiple level of oppression experienced by the victims. Conducting such an intersectional analysis of the organizational narratives developed by anti-sex trafficking workers is critical given the fact that the narratives influence organizational policies which in turn affect programs and services provided to the victims (Loseke 2007). Further, I employ McCall's inter-categorical analysis as it allows me to examine if the organizational narratives also identify multiple groups including lower-caste and higher-caste women.

III. METHODS

A. EPISTEMOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

This study focuses on the organizational narratives that construct the images of sex-trafficking victims who are currently working in the Nepalese entertainment sector, specifically those who are located at the intersection of multiple dimensions of inequality. In this study, I ask “In general, how do the organizational narratives portray the victims of sex trafficking? Do these narratives recognize the intersectional locations occupied by the victims and, if yes, what are the various intersectional categories of discrimination identified by the workers in their organizational narratives?”

Since I am not aware of previous research on this topic, I designed my study as an exploratory research project (Babbie 2004), in which I examined organizational narratives constructed by workers participating in anti-trafficking programs in Nepal. In order to study these narratives, I employed qualitative research methods. Qualitative methods allow researchers to study small groups and acquire intimate information instead of drawing samples from the entire population (Ambert, Anne-Marrie; Patricia A. Adler, Peter Adler and Daniel F. Detzner 1995). Furthermore, I employed intensive interviews as a data-gathering method for this study. Intensive interviews are very helpful in collecting data from a small pool of respondents (especially in my study, where the number of respondents is eight). Furthermore, it allows in-depth exploration of the topic by interviewing the respondents who have extensive information on the relevant research topic (Charmaz 2006). In-depth interviews allow the respondents to share stories based on their day-to-day experiences (Charmaz 2006). Particularly in my study, the respondents have

extensive information on the victims of internal sex trafficking in Nepal and they share the victims' stories based on their daily experiences.

B. BACKGROUND

Over the years, the Nepalese sex-trafficking trends have changed. Instead of external trafficking to Indian brothels, sex trafficking has shifted to internal trafficking within Nepal's entertainment establishments, such as massage parlors, dance restaurants, cabin restaurants, etc. During my work for the Nepali Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) SAATHI and Change Nepal, which I undertook between 2005 and 2007, I observed that most of the massage parlors and cabin restaurants offered sex-related services. Most of these establishments had about four to six girls working for them. Many girls that I met during this period disclosed that they were working willingly at the entertainment establishments. But after my second or third meeting with the girls, a very different story emerged. The girls shared that they were initially deceived by their cousins or friends working in the entertainment sector. The girls were lured with good job offers and brought to the city. Once they came to the city, the girls were put to work in the entertainment sector where they became victims of the sex trade.

During this period, I met a girl named Kamala (pseudonym). Kamala had been working in the massage parlor for two years. She told me that she was initially brought to Kathmandu by her aunt, who promised her a good job and a good life. Later, she was forced into prostitution. She served about 5-7 clients a day. Her earnings were not bad but, ironically, they were controlled by her aunt. Kamala's story was not uncommon. Many other girls I met in various massage parlors and cabin restaurants shared similar stories. Common elements appearing in their stories were

deception, sexual exploitation, and lack of choice. Thus, my exposure to the issue of sex trafficking has motivated me to study this subject.

Additionally, over the last decades, the topic of sex trafficking has attracted the attention of philanthropists, feminists, social activists, donor agencies, researchers etc., from Nepal as well as from other countries. However, extant studies have not been able to capture the images of victims constructed by the workers participating in anti-trafficking programs. In other words, the narratives constructed by workers have not been covered in earlier research.

In Nepal, more than fifty NGOs are currently engaged in anti-trafficking programs (McNeill 2008). These organizations are found to be involved in advocating women's rights, providing prevention and intervention programs, and providing services such as shelter and rehabilitation to the victims of sex trafficking, along with various skill development programs. The existing programs and services are implemented based on the perception that sex trafficking results from gender discrimination and that women need to be economically empowered. This is the case despite the fact that the idea of multiple forms of discrimination was widely discussed during the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) in Beijing. Nepal was one of participating countries. The issue of multiple discriminations has also been raised in Nepal by both activists (Malla 2005) and researchers (Bishwakarma 2006; Shrestha 2006). However, it appears that the notion of multiple forms of discrimination has rarely informed the nature of the anti-trafficking programs and services implemented by the NGOs in Nepal. Thus, the issue of whether intersectional awareness of sex trafficking exists in the organizational narratives motivated me to pursue the present research.

C. RESPONDENT SELECTION

I used purposive sampling to select my respondents. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that purposive sampling is useful in those cases when we have an idea about our population and the purpose of the study. Babbie defines purposive sampling as “a type of non-probability sampling in which you select the units to be observed on the basis of your own judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representative” (2004: 183). Furthermore, according to Patton (2002), purposive sampling allows the researcher to acquire an in-depth understanding of small groups of people whose knowledge is rich relative to defining the issues that meet the purpose of our study. In this context, purposive sampling best suits my study as it allows me to study small group of respondents and, at the same time, to acquire rich information.

In order to select my respondents, I used two types of purposive sampling strategies: criterion sampling and snowball sampling (Patton 2002). Criterion sampling involves selecting respondents that meet certain criteria (“A set of predetermined characteristics of the respondent is identified for the in-depth interview”) (Patton 2002:238). For instance, in my study, the predetermined character of respondents includes: i) respondents with the experience of working with the victims of internal sex trafficking for a minimum of six months; ii) respondents such as outreach workers, counselors and officers (who maintain direct contact with the victims of sex trafficking on a daily basis); iii) respondents who are also involved in identifying the victims’ problems and providing various solutions and services to them; and iv) respondents who are involved in representing the victims and their narratives.

The second strategy I used in selecting my respondents was snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is used for locating information-rich respondents (Patton 2002:237). In snowball

sampling, information-rich respondents are found by asking someone else who has rich information about the issue or who knows other people involved in the issue. The snowball process begins with identifying a person who has such information and asking them to identify others who have similar information. The chain continues and the sample gets bigger and bigger.

For my study, I communicated with the program coordinator of Change Nepal. From him, I acquired information regarding possible respondents. He referred me to two staff members working at Change Nepal. I contacted them and later interviewed them for this study. One of the respondents from Change Nepal referred me to another worker at Helpline. The same respondent also referred me to yet another worker from Sakthi Samuha. I contacted and interviewed both workers. Furthermore, I came in contact with the program coordinator of Saathi. She referred me to one of the outreach workers working for this organization. I also called and interviewed her. The outreach worker further referred me to other three workers at Saathi. I was also able to contact and interview all of them.

The respondents for my studies are outreach workers, counselors, and field officers/supervisors working for NGOs such as Saathi, Change Nepal, Helpline, and Shakti Samuha.⁴ Outreach

⁴ Saathi (<http://www.saathi.org.np/>) has been implementing cross-border anti-trafficking programs since 2003. It has, also, been working in another program that is focused on creating safe working conditions for women and girls working in the entertainment sector. Change Nepal (<http://www.changenepal.org.np/>) has also been working in the entertainment sector since 2003. It is basically focused on self-employment and educational programs. Besides, Change Nepal also provides health aid to sex workers. With the experience of running vigilant centers, rescuing and providing shelter to the victims of sex trafficking, Helpline is now involved in raising

workers are the first persons to come in contact with the victims. Outreach workers make door-to-door visits to cabin restaurants and massage parlors. They disseminate information regarding the organization's programs and services. At the same time, they acquire information about the girls who are working in the entertainment establishments. Using guidelines provided by their NGOs, after a few visits, the outreach workers identify the specific individuals who should use the services and programs provided by the NGOs. The outreach workers also refer victims to the counselors.

After the victims have been identified and referrals made, the counselors come into contact with sex-trafficking victims at the counseling center. Counselors record case histories of each victim. Counselors deal with the psychological, emotional, and other problems experienced by the victims. Counselors are in regular contact with the victims and they maintain detailed information about the victims and their experiences. Unlike outreach workers, the counselors do not necessarily visit the establishments. They make field visits only when victims cannot make it to the counseling center.

Other respondents, such as field officers or supervisors, are stationed at the offices but they make frequent visits to the entertainment establishments as well as to the sex-trafficking victim-oriented training centers. Field officers collect field reports and detailed information on the victims from outreach workers and counselors. Subsequently, they submit their reports to the

awareness within the entertainment sector. Shakti Samuha (<http://www.shaktisamuha.org.np>) is another NGO represented by a respondent. Shakti Samuha was established in the year 1996 by victims who survived sex trafficking. Currently, it provides services to the victims who are affected by external and internal sex trafficking.

project head. Sometimes victims' problems need specific attention. In such cases, field officers make face-to-face contact with the victims to take care of the issue.

In sum, the respondents in my study are middle-level NGO personnel who work closely with the victims and anti-trafficking organizations. They occupy an important position between the victims and the organization; they have ample information regarding both the victims and how the anti-trafficking organizations work. In their professional capacity, the respondents also represent the victims and articulate problems faced by the victims to the outside world, including the anti-trafficking organizations and the external entities such as the government, the media, the public, and donor agencies. To identify and/or to represent the victims, these workers construct specific narratives characterizing both the victims and their situations.

D. DATA COLLECTION

The data for this research came from interviews with eight respondents, including four counselors, two outreach workers, and two field officers/supervisors. Out of eight, only one of the respondents was male, while the remaining seven respondents were female. Similarly, three of the respondents represented higher castes while the remaining five represented other indigenous or ethnic groups. In order to represent my respondents in the discussion section, pseudonyms are given to each respondent. The interviews were conducted via telephone. I made long-distance calls to Nepal. Each interview lasted from one hour to ninety minutes. The first few phone calls to each respondent were devoted to building a rapport so that they would be comfortable during the interview. I also asked them for the convenient day and time for the interview. In addition, I requested that they would be available for one to two hours on the interview day because long-distance calls are not always easy to complete. The respondents were

also asked to provide interviews from a location where they would not be interrupted. Some respondents took the phone calls in their offices while others spoke from home, depending on where they felt comfortable.

Some respondents were at first confused about the interview and asked me to provide a sample of questions. In order to make them feel comfortable with the interview process, I sent the implied consent text along with a sample of my questions. On the day of the interview, I talked to my respondents about issues of confidentiality and their rights (see attached “informed consent”). The interviews were conducted from June 2009 until November 2009. The interviews were audiotaped with respondents’ permission. Interview questions were originally written in English and subsequently translated into Nepali during the interviews. The interviews were then transcribed verbatim and translated back into English (see attached “interview guide”).

In my interviews, I used open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are used to give respondents opportunities to provide their own answers. Such questions are usually asked when rich information is required (Babbie 2004:245). Open-ended questions helped me in gaining detailed information regarding the narratives that workers constructed about their clients. The open-ended questions focused mainly on two issues. The first set of questions dealt with respondents’ work experiences, programs and services provided to sex-trafficking victims, how the respondents deal with sex-trafficking victims, efforts to recognize the specific needs of victims based on their caste, etc. To acquire this information I asked questions such as: “Can you share your work experience regarding the sex-trafficking victims you encountered in the last six months? How do you handle the victims? What kind of program does the organization have for

the victims of sex trafficking? Is there any effort by the organization to recognize the needs of victims who are facing discrimination based on caste?"

The second set of questions dealt with the information that the workers have about the sex-trafficking victims based on their work-related experiences. Some of these questions are general, seeking the basic information regarding sex trafficking victims; other questions were designed to acquire information regarding workers' knowledge of the various levels of oppression confronted by sex-trafficking victims. To receive such information I asked the following questions: "Can you tell me about their experiences at their present job? Do they feel that they are pressured at work? What is a typical day at work like for them? Do the victims tell you what they like the best about their job? What do they like least about their work? Have you encountered cases where victims or their families have faced privilege/ discrimination based on caste? Can you tell me about such incidents?"

The data collected in the interview process allowed me to understand the overall image of sex-trafficking victims as portrayed by the anti-trafficking workers in their organizational narratives. Discrimination/privilege-based questions further allowed me to understand if the workers identified various categories of discrimination in constructing the images of the victims. Such questions helped me to understand if the workers' organizational narratives included intersectional components.

E. DATA ANALYSIS

The open-ended questions extracted stories which were rich in data. The data were further categorized into codes. Coding is the process by which large chunks of data are labeled with a shorter name that describes the meaning of the data. Codes remain close to the data, enable the

researcher to understand the meaning of the data, and tell the researcher what is happening in the data (Charmaz 2006; Babbie 2004). According to Bryant and Charmaz (2007), coding helps the researcher give a concept to the data. However, I used a funnel approach and applied *a priori* codes informed by the literature on sex trafficking. Next, I analyzed the data line-by-line to look for themes that appeared in earlier studies. At this point, I also looked for the emergent themes (Charmaz 2006).

Specifically, during the very first stage of coding, *a priori* codes were used to confirm previous themes that appeared in the literature reviews and the theoretical framework. First, I examined the findings of these previous studies and found that concepts such as deception, emotional detachment, agency, etc. were used to describe sex trafficking. Second, words like discrimination, inequalities, oppression, etc. were established as *a priori* codes from the theoretical framework.

Moving to the second stage of coding, *a priori* codes were applied in analyzing the transcribed data line by line. Any data carrying themes similar to the earlier studies were identified. That is, some of the *a priori* codes were also confirmed in the interviews. First, I examined the transcribed data to see if it mirrored themes from earlier literature. If it did, I identified that data by using an *a priori* code. For instance, the lines “but do not tell the village girls that they work in a cabin” from transcribed data and the line “Direct trafficking involves coercion and deception, whereby the traffickers trick girls” from the literature, both represent the idea of “deception.” So such data which represents themes from the literature is labeled with a concept that synthesizes the notion of “deception”. Similarly, concepts such as lure, abuse, exploitation,

mobility, someone they know, etc. are used as causal conditions for trafficking by these eight workers. At this stage the data are identified and coded line by line into *a priori* codes.

Besides, there are other data which are not identified as *a priori* codes. Such data represent new concepts, which I categorized as my emergent codes. Data such as “Some are addicted to drinking and smoking” represent a new concept and are therefore labeled with the new code “habituated.” Likewise, segregation, support siblings’ education, etc, represent emergent codes.

After the data were analyzed line by line with *a priori* codes, the codes were identified as focused codes to represent a larger segment of data illustrating similar themes. According to Charmaz (2006), focused codes are used “to capture, synthesize and understand” the main themes from line-by-line codes. Focused codes explain larger segments of the data. The most significant theme or repeated codes from line-by-line coding are organized as focused codes (Charmaz 2006). In my analysis, line-by-line codes were incorporated into one focused code to represent a large segment of data. For instance, the *a priori* code “abuse,” derived from extant literature, is also identified when analyzed line by line. Furthermore, “abuse” is also identified as one focused code to represent a large section of data with similar meanings.

In all, focused codes which include both *a priori* codes and emergent codes grasp how the organizational narratives portray the sex workers as victims (such as poor, young, illiterate, deception, lack of knowledge, denial, oppression, commodities, etc). The *a priori*, focused, and emergent codes were further examined to see if they recognize various intersectional categories. In doing this, the codes representing themes such as gender discrimination, caste discrimination, oppression, exploitation, etc, were examined to detect the presence of multiple levels of discrimination. This allowed an analysis of whether the workers’ narratives identified one

dimension of inequality (such as gender or caste only) or if they identified their narratives based on intersectional categories of inequality, such as gender and caste.

Finally, to understand the frequency of certain codes in the interviews, I listed in an Excel® spreadsheet the *a priori* codes and focused codes. All of the respondents were listed across, six of the respondents identified sex-trafficking as a way to achieve “economic mobility,” and this is also discussed in the literature on sex trafficking.

IV. FINDINGS

All the names used in this chapter are pseudonyms given to maintain the confidentiality of the respondents. Here, the findings of this study are grouped into two categories, each pertaining to one of two research questions. The first is “How do the organizational narratives portray the victims of sex trafficking?” The second is “Do these narratives recognize the intersectional locations occupied by the victims and, if yes, what are the various intersectional categories of discrimination identified by the workers in their organizational narratives?” Based on these questions, the findings are categorized as: A. Organizational Narratives and Portrayal of Sex Trafficking Victims; B. Intersectional Organizational Narratives.

A. ORGANIZATIONAL NARRATIVES AND PORTRAYAL OF SEX TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

In narrating the story of victims of internal sex trafficking, all of the anti-trafficking workers portray the victims as having been “lured” into the entertainment sector mostly by “someone they know.” Various incentives, such as a well-paid job, good food and clothes, a comfortable, urban life, access to schooling, etc., are used by traffickers to lure the girls. From the eight interviews I conducted, the term “lure” was brought up 30 times and the trafficker was described as being “someone they (the victims) know” 24 times. These issues are also discussed in earlier studies by Hennink and Simkhada (2004) and Kapur (2008). Outreach worker Suresh shares: “Those who come to the valley lured by friends or relatives end up in the entertainment sector; I consider them to be internally trafficked.” Similarly, counselor Nura says that “Traffickers are [the victim’s] own relative or some acquaintance”.

The anti-trafficking workers also think that the victims are “deceived” by people from their own community. The word “deceive” appears 14 times in eight of the interviews I conducted. I also found the word “deceive” in earlier studies by ILO (2001, 2002) and Hennink and Simkhada (2004). Regarding deception in internal trafficking, counselor Prabi explains:

They go to the village and tell the other girls that there is good work in the city: “If you come I will arrange good work for you.” These girls lure the village girls. And the village girls trust them and run away from home. They come to the city, call the same friend and this friend puts the girl from the village to such work.

All anti-trafficking workers, in this interview, say that victims are usually “unaware of the exploitation.” ILO (2001), in depicting cases of external sex trafficking, asserts that victims are not aware of the nature of the work. A similar theme is explored in a study by ILO (2002 a) that discusses cases of internal sex trafficking. In my study, all anti-trafficking workers share that the victims are unaware of the nature of the work. The victims know that they will be working in the entertainment sector, but they are not aware of the exploitation that takes place within the entertainment sector. In my research, the term “unaware of the exploitation” was brought up 16 times during interviews with the anti-trafficking workers. The anti-trafficking workers’ narratives describe victims who have come into the entertainment sector to make a living. Although the victims are identified as being there of their own free will (with the victims assuming that the job is based on customer service), they have no idea about the exploitation that takes place inside the entertainment sector. Counselor Bina explains:

They are there of their own will but without knowing about cabin restaurants and dance restaurants. They are there to earn money. The environment out there is not good. They do not know that they have to maintain various sexual relations.

Similarly, the term “abuse” is presented 17 times in the interviews, while the term “exploitation” is presented 32 times. The terms “abuse” and “exploitation” are also found in earlier studies by

ILO (2002a, 2002b), Cameron (2008), Sanghera (2005) and Konard (2008). In analyzing the organizational narratives, with one exception, I found the remaining anti-trafficking workers portray the victims as being “abused” and “exploited.” Abuse and exploitation are identified as occurring slowly. First the girls are brought to work as helpers and then are slowly pushed to entertain male clients. During the process of entertaining clients, the girls are abused and exploited by their male clients and ultimately forced to have sex, report anti-trafficking workers.

Regarding abuse and exploitation, counselor Nura shares that:

They have to fulfill customers’ demands. Some customers may offer to go out with them. Some customers ask to have sexual relations with them, even when they do not like it. Some customers even abuse the girls, and some girls are verbally abused while walking down the road.

According to the organizational narratives in my study, “labor exploitation” is also experienced by the victims. The victims often end up giving huge shares of their earnings to the employer or owner of the establishment in question. Outreach worker Mala notes that the girls in the sex trade get only 25% of their earnings, while the remaining 75% is taken by their employer. The issue of “labor exploitation” is also found to be discussed in earlier studies such as ILO (2001 and 2002 b).

Likewise, the issue of “mobility” is found to be discussed in earlier studies. ILO 2002 (a) represents mobility in the cases of child prostitutes in Nepal, and studies by Kapur (2008) and Konard (2008) use this issue to discuss the limited rights of women. In my study, I found the majority (5 out of 8) of the anti-trafficking workers to use the term “mobility” to discuss the movement of victims in and out of the entertainment sector. The term “mobility” is brought up 13 times in the interviews by the anti-trafficking workers. The victims’ mobility is not confined

or controlled. Counselor Nura shares that the victims of internal trafficking are not held captive, as in the case of external trafficking. Nura further shares:

In India, it is required to live inside the brothel. There is a little difference seen here. Here [Kathmandu] one can move freely. They are required to stay in only when they are on a customer's time, or else they are free. That is the reason why they do not feel that they are victims of trafficking.

However, three of the anti-trafficking workers in this study have identified the victims as experiencing slave-like conditions. This theme is represented 6 times during the interviews. The “slave-like” conditions identified by some anti-trafficking workers include being confined within the entertainment sector (until the full value of the damaged merchandise is paid the victims are forced to remain within the entertainment sector and work for the owner), and/or being kept as an illegitimate wife through fake marriage, etc. “Slavery” is also discussed in earlier studies by ILO (2001) to indicate the slave-like conditions of girls trafficked to India. Similarly, in another study by ILO (2002 b,) the slave-like conditions of boys trafficked to India are discussed.

In my study, I also found that the organizational narratives portray the victims to be involved in selling sex. Earlier studies by ILO (2001, 2002 a) also present a similar theme. All of the anti-trafficking workers in my study say that girls working in the entertainment sector are involved in “sex work.” The girls are forced to fulfill the sexual desire of their male clients. Field officer Mira says that the majority of massage parlors are engulfed by prostitution. Another outreach worker adds that, within cabin restaurants, there is a high demand for sexual activity. The term “sex work” is presented 27 times throughout the interviews. Half (4) of the anti-trafficking workers also note that the girls involved in this industry exhibit themselves in very revealing clothing and glossy make-up to attract male clients. This portrayal is expressed 5 times in the interviews.

The organizational narratives also present the victims of sex trafficking as “young” “village” “girls” of lower “socioeconomic status.” This idea is also prevalent in earlier studies such as ILO (2001), Hennink and Simkhada (2004), ILO (2002a) and ILO (2002 b). Except for one respondent, 7 out of 8 anti-trafficking workers in this study present the victims as being of a young age. The majority of the victims are identified to be thirteen to twenty-five years of age. Very few victims are identified to be above twenty-five years of age. According to the workers’ narratives, younger girls are more in demand. The issue of victims’ youth is identified 20 times throughout the interviews. Counselor Kriti shares:

They are usually from thirteen to twenty-six years of age. Very few girls are thirteen years of age, maybe two or three of them. But the maximum age ranges from seventeen/eighteen to twenty/twenty-two years of age.

All of the anti-trafficking workers identify the victims as coming from rural “villages,” especially from those villages which are near Kathmandu and are densely populated by Tamang communities, but which lack basic amenities such as roads, electric power, etc. Outreach worker Mala says that “Most of the girls are from Nuwakot, Chitwan and Dhading.” From the interviews, I found that the issue of girls coming from rural “villages” is brought up 22 times by the respondents. The anti-trafficking workers also share that victims live within segregated communities back home. Half of the anti-trafficking workers say that higher-caste communities and lower-caste communities are physically segregated. Anti-trafficking workers note that higher-caste communities have access to all the necessary resources (compared to Tamang communities, which are deprived of all the basic amenities). Such segregation is clearly visible in the villages of Sindupalchowk, Makawanpur, Ramachhap, etc. Urmila shares one of her field visit experiences: “When we went for a field visit, we found that the Tamang village is

segregated from the Brahmin village. There is a huge difference between these two communities.”

In terms of socioeconomic status, I found that the organizational narratives portray the victims as “poor” 34 times and as “uneducated” 39 times throughout the interviews (compared to “unemployed,” which is mentioned 12 times). All of the anti-trafficking workers strongly believe that the victims come to the entertainment sector due to poverty. Counselor Bina shares that “Some victims are so poor that they do not have sufficient resources to make a decent living.” Another issue associated with the victims depicted by the majority of anti-trafficking workers in this study is that of lack of education. Outreach worker Urmila says that, compared to boys, girls are less likely to be sent to school. Another worker, counselor Prabi, says that very few girls have even a primary-level schooling. She further adds that “Most never went to school.” Except for one respondent, all of the other anti-trafficking workers in this interview report that the victims were either unemployed or working menial jobs prior to coming into the entertainment sector. The possibility of getting a job, making money, and being independent is what attracts girls to the entertainment sector, say the anti-trafficking workers.

In narrating the victims’ stories, the anti-trafficking workers present the victims as having an unsatisfactory family life. Some are in the entertainment sector because of coming from a “poor family” or a “large family”, and some because of domestic violence. A similar theme is echoed in various studies by ILO (2001, 2002 a, 2002 b). Although poverty is not clearly defined or identified by the anti-trafficking workers, all of the anti-trafficking workers in my research represent victims as coming from poor families; a few of the respondents in this study said that although some victims’ families may own some land, the income from agriculture is not enough

to sustain all family members. The majority (5 out of 8) of the anti-trafficking workers share that the victims usually come from large families. “They have a minimum of five to seven members in their family. Due to the many members in the family, it is difficult to provide a sufficient amount of food or clothes for all,” shares field officer Mira. I found the term “large family” to be brought up 6 times by the respondents, compared to “poverty” which was brought up 34 times. A few (3 out of 8) anti-trafficking workers in this study also recognize victims as facing domestic violence. Counselor Nura shares that “Good family environments, such as those with no domestic violence, with good relations among parents and children, in such families there are lesser chances of being affected by trafficking.” Likewise, 4 out of 8 of the anti-trafficking workers share that victims tend to come from single or separated (parent) families or from families with stepparent. The issue of “domestic violence” is brought up only 6 times, while the issue of single parents or stepparents is brought up 6 times throughout the interviews.

The anti-trafficking workers, in their organizational narratives, also share that most of the victims’ families are unaware of the exploitation that occurs in the entertainment sector. In the eight interviews I conducted, I found the issue of the “obliviousness of families” to be presented 10 times by four of the anti-trafficking workers. One of the earlier studies (ILO 2002 b) discussed families not being aware of the slave-like conditions (in the case of boys’ trafficking). The narratives in this study recognize that the majority of the families do know that their daughter is working in the entertainment sector. What they do not know is the extent to which their daughters are exploited. In this study, field officer Mira explains that “Their families do not know what sort of work they do but they send their daughter along with villagers who come back from the city.” Similarly, counselor Bina shares that “In some cases, parents bring them to work. But they do not know about the restaurant. They just bring them thinking that their daughter will

get a job.” Only one of the anti-trafficking workers did not say much on this issue. This worker said that although victims’ families have all the information about what goes on inside the entertainment sector, they still send their daughter to work to support the rest of the family. Outreach worker Urmila shares that “In some case parents do know that their daughter is working in a cabin, yet they come to collect money every month to meet their household expenses.”

According to the respondents, the victims’ families are unaware of the exploitation because victims do not share information about their work or the about the exploitation that goes on in the entertainment sector. About seven of the anti-trafficking workers shared this information in their narratives. Counselor Bina notes: “Almost 90% of the girls do not tell their family that they work in such a restaurant.” Another worker, Mala, says that “They do not reveal to their parents that they are doing such work. They tell them that they are working in a garment factory.” This issue of denial is brought up seven times throughout the interviews. This theme was not found in the earlier studies.

In my study, I also found that the organizational narratives further portray the victims of sex trafficking to as having “psychological issues.” In the interviews I conducted, about 5 out of 8 anti-trafficking workers share that the victims have various “psychological issues,” including stress, fear, and anxiety. This issue is also present in earlier studies (ILO 2001, 2002 b). These “psychological issues” were referred to 9 times in the interviews I conducted. The victims are reported to have lower self-esteem and are described as mentally disturbed. The victims are sometimes in need of psychiatric therapy. Counselor Bina shares:

Some have psychological problems and are in need of counseling; they come with various problems. Some are mistreated by their husband, physically abused; some get abused by owners or customers while working at the entertainment sector. Facing various problems they come here.

All of the anti-trafficking workers identify the victims as undergoing “pressure” at work. In eight of the interviews, I found the issue of “pressure” to be presented 14 times. The pressure to get more money from male clients, the pressure to look good and entice the male clients, the pressure to consume more alcohol to increase the bill, the pressure to work during illness, etc., are among the most common work pressures that anti-trafficking workers discuss in their narratives. In earlier studies (ILO 2001; ILO 2002 a), “pressure” was represented as “peer-pressure” or “force.” The earlier studies did not discuss the issue of pressure in a way that is similar to what I found in my research.

I also found that, in their narratives, the anti-trafficking workers talk about the verbal threats that the victims face. About 3 out of 8 anti-trafficking workers share that the victims often face “threats” from employers, boyfriends, clients, or villagers. This issue is presented 8 times in the interviews I have conducted. In a study by ILO (2002 b), “threats” are identified as occurring during the initial stage of trafficking, not during the work period. In my study, threats are usually associated with unveiling the victims’ work identity to the public. Fifty percent (4) of the anti-trafficking workers did not talk about such threats in their narratives, while one anti-trafficking workers did not see victims as confronting such threats and, thus, represents the victims as being free from such threats.

Despite all these issues, the victims continue to work in the entertainment sector. Counselor Urmila notes that, the shorter the victims are exposed to the entertainment sector, the easier it is in rescuing them from such exploitative work. The longer the victims work in the entertainment

sector, the more they become used to the environment. I found this idea to be expressed 4 times in my interview by two of the anti-trafficking workers. This theme is not found in earlier studies.

Counselor Urmila further explains:

What happens is if the girls are new to cabin restaurants, like 1 to 6 months, then it is easy to withdraw them from this environment, provide training and give them job placement. The girls are also able to thrive in a new work environment. But those sisters who have been working in the entertainment sector for a longer period, they get used to all things in cabin restaurant such as alcohol, cigarettes, spending money, etc. Therefore, it is hard for them to leave the entertainment sector.

In my study, I found that the organizational narratives represent the victims to as continuing work in the entertainment sector because of having accepted the new environment and new life. Earlier studies (ILO 2001, ILO 2002b) note that the victims are attracted to money and/or a better lifestyle. This is identified as happening before victims are trafficked. In the interviews I have conducted, the victims are said to be attracted to money, habituated to alcohol, addicted to drugs, and to have escaped the harsh village life. This represents the situation after the victims are trafficked and are working in the entertainment sector. About 7 of the anti-trafficking workers share that the victims are attracted to the business of moneymaking. Counselor Bina shares: “Working at an establishment center gives them easy money. In other places it is hard, they have to wash dishes.” The victims make more money in the entertainment sector than they would make in the labor market. So the victims continue to work in the entertainment sector. I found the issue of “attraction to money” to be brought up 16 times in my interviews.

The majority (5 out of 8) of the anti-trafficking workers also share that the victims are habituated to drinking alcohol, having access to huge amounts of money, having sex, having nice clothes, etc. Getting all these things would be very difficult once they leave entertainment sector. So, due

to their changed habits, the victims remain in the entertainment sector. “They start playing with money. It five rupees today, next day it is ten. They get used to having money,” shares field worker Mira. Counselor Nura also explains that “Maybe some are habituated to drinking alcohol.” A few anti-trafficking workers believe that the girls cannot get out of the business due to their addiction to drugs and alcohol. This narrative is represented by 3 of the anti-trafficking workers. Outreach worker Mala says that “They get habituated to sex, plus they also fall into drug addiction.” I found that the issue of “addiction” was brought up 3 times during the interviews, compared to “habituation” which is brought up 10 times by the anti-trafficking workers.

With one exception, all the anti-trafficking workers also depict the victims as having adapted to the changed lifestyle. Counselor Bina shares “Day after day they do the same thing and get used to it.” This same numbers of workers, in my study identified the victims as staying in the entertainment sector to escape the harsh life back home. Counselor Kriti shares a victim’s saying: “I cannot go back to the village and face the hardship again, carry heavy loads again. It is better this way.” I found this issue of “adaption to a changed lifestyle” discussed 19 times, while the issue of “escape from a harsh village life” was discussed 17 times throughout the eight interviews I have conducted.

From the interviews that I have conducted, I found the issue of “economic mobility” to be raised 9 times 6 of the anti-trafficking workers. They recognize the victims’ desire to remain in the entertainment sector for their economic mobility. All of the anti-trafficking workers share that the victims continue to work in the entertainment sector as they need to support their family, while 3 of them identified the victims as having supported their “sibling’ education”. Counselor

Bina shares: “I have met five to six cases where they support their younger sibling’s education. They also send money home or buy stuff for the family.” The issue of “financial support for the family” is raised 21 times, compared to that of “supporting a sibling’s education,” which is mentioned only 5 times throughout the interviews that I have conducted. ILO (2002 b) also talks about “family support” but it does not talk about the need to “support a sibling’s education.”

In sum, I found that the organizational narratives portray the victims of internal sex trafficking as having been lured and deceived by someone they know. The anti-trafficking workers represent the victims as being unaware of the real work conditions; and, once they enter the entertainment sector, they are abused and exploited. Mobility is a privilege for those who work in the entertainment sector, but some of the victims face slave-like conditions. The majority of the victims are depicted as “young girls” of “lower socioeconomic status”. Most of the victims migrate from rural “villages” to the city for economic mobility. The victims often have several family issues and selling of sex is the easiest way to make money. Earning money from selling sex allows the victims to support their family and themselves. Psychological issues, work pressure, threats, coercion, etc. are commonly expressed in the organizational narratives depicting the victims of internal sex trafficking. Adaptation to the changed lifestyle, being habituated to various objects, addiction, attraction to the business of moneymaking, the escape from harsh village life, the need to support family or to finance a sibling’s education, etc. keeps the victims working in the entertainment sector.

B. INTERSECTIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL NARRATIVES

Focusing on the issue of internal sex trafficking, the organizational narratives portray girls as being affected by sex trafficking more than boys. From the interviews that I have conducted,

none of the anti-trafficking workers identify boys as victims of the sex trade. In earlier studies by ILO (2002b), boys are reported to be trafficked for labor exploitation. Field officer Suresh projects a similar narrative. According to him, the boys from eastern part of Nepal are reported to be trafficked on their way to the international labor market. Similarly, the organizational narratives also recognize that the majority of girls are trafficked from rural parts of Nepal. None of the anti-trafficking workers identify the victims as being internally trafficked from the capital city, Kathmandu. Besides, the organizational narratives also represent the majority of victims as being from lower-castes. Comparatively, fewer girls from higher castes are identified as being trafficked internally to the entertainment sector.

Though trafficking is a widespread phenomenon in Nepal, lower-caste or indigenous people are more often trafficked than higher caste people. Suresh, a field worker, also says that indigenous girls from the western part of Nepal are trafficked as they go to work as Kamalari.⁵ Gurung and Sherchan people⁶ are reported to be trafficked from the western part of Nepal. Tamang girls, from the central part of Nepal are affected more by sex trafficking. Similarly, yet another

⁵ Kamalari is the practice of sending young Tharu girls to work in private homes. These girls are highly subject to sex trafficking: <http://southasia.oneworld.net/todayshadlines/un-urges-end-to-nepals-kamalari-practice>.

The Tharu people are an indigenous tribe in Nepal: <http://www.nefin.org.np/indigenous-nationalities/categorization.html>.

⁶The Gurung and the Sherchan are indigenous people in Nepal. <http://www.nefin.org.np/indigenous-nationalities/categorization.html>

indigenous group of people, the Rai and the Limbu,⁷ from the eastern part of Nepal, are also subjected to sex trafficking. Regardless of location, it is usually people from disadvantaged group or lower castes who are highly affected by sex trafficking. Counselor Nura shares:

“Looking at the community, very few Brahmin/Chettri are trafficked. The majority of girls who are trafficked to the entertainment sector are from the Tamang community.” All of the anti-trafficking workers share similar narratives about the victims.

Organizational narratives in this study recognize gender and caste inequality as beginning right at home. Males are given preference over females. Urmila, a female outreach worker, shares her experience while visiting victims’ villages: “They say that it would have been better if the staff approaching them were male.” Such gender preference can be clearly seen as rooted in cultural practice based on patriarchy, which gives preference to sons over daughters (Rajbhandari 2008). Similarly, the organizational narratives recognize caste discrimination to be highly rooted in the victims’ communities, where the cultural practice of designating people as “untouchables” is still practiced amongst both higher and lower castes. However, in terms of caste inequality or discrimination, the anti-trafficking workers share that such issues are not identified within the entertainment sector.⁸

⁷ The Rai and Limbu are also indigenous people in Nepal (above resource).

⁸ The stigma towards lower castes or the cultural practice of untouchables seems to be invisible within such establishments. This is due to two important reasons anti-trafficking workers share regarding the non-existence of caste discrimination within entertainment establishments. Firstly, all girls are treated as commodity for men’s sexual satisfaction. Secondly, lower-caste girls are

Regarding gender and caste, I found the organizational narratives to represent the experiences of the victims of sex trafficking as follows: Family trends in higher-caste and lower-caste victims, Poverty among higher-caste and lower-caste victims, Education attainment amongst higher-caste and lower-caste victims, Marital status amongst higher-caste and lower-caste victims, Mobility among higher-caste and lower-caste victims, Cultural experiences amongst higher-caste and lower-caste victims, Regain status among higher-caste and lower-caste, Social acceptance among higher-caste and lower-caste victims, Prejudice against higher-caste victims versus that against lower-caste victims, and Business trends regarding higher-caste and lower-caste victims.

Family trends in Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims

In terms of family, the organizational narratives represent girls from large, extended families as experiencing more pressure to support their family than girls from smaller, nuclear families.

Large families are observed more in lower-caste Tamang than in higher-caste Brahmin/Chettri. Counselor Urmila notes that “Tamang still practice polygamy. One man has two wives and from two wives they have many children.” Having a large family puts extra financial burdens on families. So it is more likely for girls from lower-caste Tamang to be sent to work to support their family than higher-caste Brahmin/Chettri girls.

Poverty among Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims

I also found that all of the anti-trafficking workers identify victims as poor. Higher-caste girls are less affected by poverty than lower-caste Tamang girls. Counselor Nura says that higher-caste

found to change their caste to a higher caste to avoid such discrimination. Changing caste diminishes all the problems rooted with the issues of caste discrimination.

girls are more educated and so are their families. Thus they are financially well-off compared to lower-caste Tamang girls. Lower-caste Tamang girls usually come from very poor families.

Field officer Subash shares: “Lower-caste girls are trafficked due to financial conditions. Mainly due to financial conditions there is domestic violence. Higher castes take it more as entertainment. They already have most of the stuff. They do not have a hard life.”

Some women who are from well-to-do, higher-caste families willingly come to the entertainment sector to earn money and to be able to look after their children after they are abandoned by their husbands. Such cases are not identified for lower-caste Tamang girls. Tamang girls are usually poor and they come to the entertainment sector to financially support their parents and siblings.

Education Attainment amongst Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims

Organizational narratives present girls as being excluded from formal education in order to support their families. Both higher-caste and lower-caste girls are identified as deprived of education. In both the communities, boys are more likely to be sent to school than girls. In higher-caste communities, most of the families send their daughters to school. But boys are more likely to be sent to the boarding school and girls to the government school. In the Tamang communities, both boys and girls are less likely to attend school when compared to the higher-caste communities’ boys and girls.

The organizational narratives in my study recognize that Tamang boys more likely to attend school (at least till primary level, i.e., 5th grade) than Tamang girls, who are excluded from this privilege. The majority of Tamang girls in the entertainment sector are illiterate. Six out of eight anti-trafficking workers share this narrative. Their narratives are somewhat similar to the study by the Nepal Living Standard Survey [(NLSS) 2004], which shows a huge gender disparity in education. The literacy rate for males (15 years and above) is found to be

64.5%, whereas the literacy rate for females in the same age group is 33.8%, per a 2003/2004 report (NLSS 2004). Though 91.4% of household access to a primary school is within a 30-minutes' walk, this facility is more likely to be within access of boys than of girls. About 75% of the anti-trafficking workers in this study shares that victims are discriminated against when it comes to education based on their gender and caste. Counselor Nura shares:

To a certain extent even caste plays an important role in the trafficking of women in Nepal, because higher-caste people, to a certain extent, are financially strong. They are more educated. But lower-caste people are financially weak and their level of education is low. Due to this they are a little backward. There is a certain role that caste plays in trafficking. Though higher-caste girls are trafficked, numerically it is lower-caste girls who are trafficked more. It is higher-caste girls who came forward based on education. Due to this they are also financially strong. The lower-caste have remained at a lower status from the beginning and couldn't move forward in terms of education and finance.

Marital Status amongst Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims

The organizational narratives recognize that the majority of girls who are trafficked come from lower-caste Tamang communities. Looking at the victims' communities (especially villages such as Sindupalckhowk, Makawanpur, Ramachhape, etc, which have Tamang communities) the anti-trafficking workers share that at least one girl comes from each Tamang house. The majority of Tamang girls are reported to be single. "Tamang girls are usually unmarried," reports Prabi. It is easier for lower-caste victims to go back to their community, get married, and settle down. Even the concept of remarriage is more acceptable in the Tamang community. But higher-caste girls/women who enter this sector are usually separated from their husband and remarriage is not possible to due to the social stigma. Prabi says: "Well they [lower-caste Tamang girls] can marry easily but Brahmin/Chettri [higher-caste] cannot because of social stigma."

Similarly, the organizational narratives in this study also recognize that higher-caste victims are often abandoned their husbands. Lower-caste Tamang victims do not have this problem, as most

of them who come to the entertainment sector are single. And even if they are separated or divorced, their marital status does not prevent remarrying. According to Prabi, “Brahmin community girls come because they are not treated properly by their husbands.”

Mobility⁹ among Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims

Organizational narratives also represent mobility to be experienced differently by higher-caste and lower-caste victims. Anti-trafficking workers share that mobility is more accepted for lower-caste victims than for higher-caste victims. As Nura says:

In the Brahmin/Chettri community, if some girls move out of the house their family does not accept them back. So due to this fear the girls from this caste do not go out. They do not easily go out or go with someone due to the fear of not being accepted by the family. Compared with the higher castes, in the lower castes they can marry more than once, go out for work and stay out and come back home. It is not hard to accept them. But in the Brahmin/Chettri community, if someone goes out, there is a whole issue and interrogation about where they went and what they did. They do not take these things lightly.

There is a cultural difference between the higher-caste Brahmin/Chettri and lower-caste Tamang girls, shares an anti-trafficking worker. The higher-caste girls are not allowed by their family to go out and work but in lower-caste Tamang girls going out to find a job is commonly accepted.

Cultural Experiences amongst Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims

The organizational narratives recognize a huge cultural difference based on the caste of the victims. “In the Matwali¹⁰ caste, alcohol consumption is common among girls. But in our caste

⁹ “Mobility” here refers to as movement from victims’ place of origin to a city to find a job (as defined by most of the anti-trafficking workers).

drinking is not commonly accepted,” says Nura, who represents a higher caste. A similar response is given by Kriti, who is Tamang: “We are of the Matwali caste. We drink alcohol.” Due to this flexibility lower-caste victims feel less pressure at work when customers offer them alcohol. But, for higher-caste victims drinking alcohol presents a moral dilemma, as they do not typically consume it in their culture.

Another cultural difference between higher-caste victims and lower-caste victims (as represented by the organizational narratives of anti-trafficking workers) is the adoption of clothing that is not typical of one’s cultural background. Higher-caste victims are more likely to adopt modern, Western styles of dress. Outreach worker Urmila shares: “In the Brahmin/Chettri community, they even have started wearing pants and kurtha [a modern Indian dress], but the Tamang still wear the same traditional dress.” So when the girls are forced to wear revealing clothes by the owners, higher-caste girls are less likely to feel stress than lower-caste girls.

The other cultural difference that I found in this study (as represented in the organizational narratives) is the involvement of family members. Tamang families are often said to send their daughter to work in the entertainment sector. Anti-trafficking workers explain that using children as surplus commodities is commonly practiced in lower-caste Tamang communities. Almost every house in Tamang communities has a daughter who works in the entertainment sector.

Mala points out that “Tamang castes have been trafficked from earlier days, even when there was no internal trafficking.” Though there are families who are not aware of their daughter’s work or

¹⁰ In the Nepali caste system, the Matwali are the liquor-drinking caste. They are below higher-castes and above the untouchables. The Tamang are placed in the “Matwali” category (Jacobson 2000).

of the exploitation, most of the families in Tamang communities send their daughter to work in the entertainment sector. This practice is less observed in high-caste victims' families, as their families do not approve of their daughter's moving away for work.

Regain Status among Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims

According to the anti-trafficking workers, while the lower-caste victims are not discriminated against in their communities, caste-based discrimination does take place in their villages. In this context, the victims not only try to hide their real caste identity but also try to appear as if they belong to a higher caste. Bina who is also a counselor shares that "It is due to that discrimination only that they lie about their caste here." Three out of eight anti-trafficking workers represent this narrative. Similarly, anti-trafficking workers also identify lower-caste victims to regain their social status once they are able to find a job in the city. They work and earn in the entertainment sector, go home and show off. They support their family financially and even support their sibling's education. For that they even get respect from their family and community. One of the anti-trafficking workers share this narrative. Urmila shares: "For some, they get respect even when they say that they earned money by working in a cabin." The higher-caste victims are not identified to change their caste. Similarly, regaining status is also not reported to be experienced by higher-caste.

Social Acceptance among Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims

Earlier research by Hennink and Simkhada (2004), show that victims are ostracized by the larger society. In this study, I found the organizational narratives to represent a different view of society and its acceptance of the victims. According to the workers' narratives, the social acceptance of the victims is highly influenced by the communities and is based on caste. In the

case of Tamang victims, they are easily accepted back into their lower-caste community. They even get respect as they bring money to the family. Counselor Prabi reports that “One girl from each house in the village works in the entertainment sector. Even if they know, no one talks about it in the community and they do not take it as bad.” In sum, the lower-caste victims are more easily accepted back into their families or communities. This is so because working in the entertainment sector is not out of ordinary in those communities. However, this is not the case for higher-caste girls, mainly because in the higher-caste communities, the girls’ geographic movement is questioned and not socially accepted.

Prejudice against Higher-caste victims Versus that against Lower-caste victims

The organizational narratives do not identify any social prejudice against higher-caste victims. But, in the case of lower-caste victims, social prejudice is present according to by the anti-trafficking workers in this study. There is historical evidence of the involvement of Tamang families in selling their daughters (ILO 2001). This trend has continued to the present day. Anti-trafficking workers share that the involvement of many Tamang families in the selling of their daughters has resulted in development of such social prejudice against lower-caste Tamang people. Kriti explains, “What I have seen is the prejudice that people have against the Tamang. May be they have developed this feeling in their mind that the Tamang are a caste that sells their daughter.”

Business Trends regarding Higher-caste and Lower-caste victims

A few anti-trafficking workers, in their narratives, discuss an interesting trend based on caste. In her narrative, field officer Mira notes that, “Tamang girls usually start working as employees.

After working for a while, the Tamang girls become owners of entertainment establishments and recruit other girls from their village to work in their massage parlor.”

Tamang girls, who enter the entertainment sector as victims are, later in life, found to invest their earnings in similar businesses. They are even found to be involved in the trafficking of girls from their own village. Lower-caste Tamang victims are found to invest more years of their life in the entertainment sector when compared to higher-caste Brahmin/Chettri victims. In the case of higher-caste victims such a trend is not identified. The organizational narratives recognize that higher-caste victims tend to work in the entertainment sector for a shorter period than lower-caste victims. The higher-caste victims usually work for two to three years, and thus make enough money to invest in other business that is free from sexual exploitation.

C. SUMMARY

The organizational narratives represented by the anti-trafficking workers recognize gender and caste as main intersectional categories that create a unique experience for the victims of internal sex trafficking in Kathmandu (AWID 2004). Findings in this study show that (according to the organizational narratives), social- economic status, age, geographic location, marital status, gender, and caste not only increases girls experience of discrimination but it also increases the possibility of being internally sex trafficked. Girls in Nepal are more likely to be trafficked for sex than boys. Similarly, lower-caste Tamang girls are more likely to be trafficked than higher-caste Brahmin/Chettri girls.

Findings show that the anti-trafficking workers’ narratives recognize that there are huge disparities in education and family income in Tamang girls compared to higher-caste Brahmin/Chettri girls. Findings also suggest that lower-caste victims have less access to basic resources than higher-caste victims. Lower-caste victims are also found to have larger families

than higher-caste victims. Lower-caste girls are more likely to be single and to have more access to mobility than higher-caste victims. My findings also suggest that the anti-trafficking workers' narratives identify the lower-caste victims as being socially accepted and as gaining status by working in the entertainment sector. In contrast, higher-caste victims are more often found to be married or separated and having less access to mobility when compared to lower-caste victims. Higher-caste victims are often ostracized by their society and are not easily accepted back to their society as are lower-caste victims (according to the anti-trafficking workers).

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

By examining the organizational narratives, we are able to understand not only how the anti-trafficking workers portray the victims of sex trafficking, but also whether the workers have an understanding of how various intersectional categories, such as gender and caste, together create different experiences for the victims of internal sex trafficking in Kathmandu, Nepal. In this study, I found that the anti-trafficking workers' narratives portray the victims of sex trafficking as being deceived, exploited, abused, young, poor, rural, female, etc. Some of these images mirror the themes from earlier studies, while some emerge as new themes.

The general representation of the victims of internal sex trafficking via organizational narratives is similar to the themes presented in earlier studies by ILO (2001, 2002 a, 2002b), Hennink and Simkhada (2004), Piper (2005), ONRT (2008), and Rajbhandari (2008). For instance, in my study the anti-trafficking workers depict the victims of sex trafficking as being “abused.” The notion of abused victims is also identified in earlier studies by ILO (2002a), and ILO (2002b). Similarly, the anti-trafficking workers also identify the victims as being “exploited.” Similar themes are identified in earlier studies by Sanghera (2005), Cameron and Newman (2008), and Kornard (2008). Furthermore, an earlier study by ONRT (2008) shows that organization like IIDS and UNIFEM identify sex-trafficking victims' problems as being associated with “family issues” such as domestic violence, divorce, and separation. In my study, the anti-trafficking workers also present similar narratives regarding the sex-trafficked victims. They represent the victims as having “family issues,” such as domestic violence, separation, and stepparents, to deal with.

This study also identifies some narratives which are not consistent with earlier studies. For instance, earlier studies by Sanghera (2005) and Konard (2008) talk about policies that often limit women's economic mobility by restricting their geographic movement. The anti-trafficking workers in this study do not talk about policies that limit the geographical movement of women and girls. Yet another study by ONRT (2008) suggests that women's mobility becomes a public concern and is often limited or decided by various authorities such as family, community, and state. In my study, I found that the anti-trafficking workers depicted the victims' mobility (geographic movement) as being either free or controlled by family and communities (based on the caste of the victims in question). In the case of higher-caste girls, the anti-trafficking workers identified geographic mobility as being controlled by families and communities when compared to lower-caste Tamang girls, whose mobility was easily accepted by their families.

Moreover, this study's findings are not consistent with the themes presented in the earlier studies such as Doezema (2000, 2005), who are of the opinion that women can give consent to sell sex and still have control over their bodies. These researchers suggest that sex work can be regarded as an occupation and need not be exploitative. However, the anti-trafficking workers' narratives, in my study, portray the customer and the owner/employer of the cabin restaurant or massage parlor as controlling the women's bodies. Women and girls are depicted as sex slaves, as physically and mentally abused, and as sexually exploited. Similarly, studies by Batsyukova (2007) and Butcher (2003) identify the victims of sex trafficking as being forced into the sex trade. Contrary to this notion, the anti-trafficking workers in my study portray the victims as being deceived but not forced. The victims enter the entertainment sector of their own free will but without knowledge of the exploitative work conditions.

Additionally, there are other emergent themes that I found in this study. The anti-trafficking workers also share that the victims continue working in the entertainment sector as they adapt to their changed lifestyle. Earlier studies (ILO 2001, 2002 b) recognize the victims as being attracted to economic opportunities. But these earlier studies depict the situation of the victims prior to trafficking whereas, in this study, the anti-trafficking workers depict the victims' situations after they are trafficked into the entertainment sector. According to the anti-trafficking workers, the victims adapt to the new life within the entertainment sector despite the abuse and exploitation they face.

In analyzing the intersectional dimensions of organizational narratives, I found that the anti-trafficking workers identify multiple levels of discrimination experienced by the victims of sex trafficking. Consistent with the themes discussed in earlier studies (ILO 2001, Malla 2005, Rajbhandari 2008) which note that the victims of sex trafficking experience caste and gender discrimination, the anti-trafficking workers portray the victims of internal sex trafficking as experiencing multiple levels of discrimination based on their gender and caste. For instance, in the narratives I examined there is a recognition that the lower-caste Tamang girls who are victims of sex trafficking are more likely to experience poverty than are higher-caste girls. Similarly, lower-caste Tamang girls have less education when compared to higher-caste Brahmin/Chettri girls who are victims of sex trafficking. Because of poverty and lack of education, the lower-caste girls are more likely to face unemployment than are the higher-caste girls.

In addition to gender and caste, the anti-trafficking workers' narratives also identify other categories such as age, class, and geographical location as interacting and shaping the

experiences of sex-trafficking victims. For instance, it is more likely for young, poor, lower-caste Tamang girls from rural areas to experience discrimination than higher-caste girls representing the same categories. Similarly, lower-caste Tamang girls from the above categories are more likely to be used as commodities than are higher-caste Brahmin/Chettri girls.

To sum up, some of the organizational narratives include themes are consistent with the themes from the earlier studies, while others are not. Importantly, the similarity I found in the organizational narratives and earlier studies is likely to stem from the presence of the broader institutional narratives (Loseke 2007). International organizations,¹¹ in their institutional narratives, are found to use terms such as fraud, deception, exploitation, force, young girls, selling sex, etc. to define sex trafficking and its victims. I found earlier studies (ILO 2001; ILO 2002 a; ILO 2002b) to be guided by such definitions and international standards in identifying the victims. On the other hand, international organizations also financially support most of the anti-trafficking programs in Nepal. In implementing the anti-trafficking programs, the workers are guided by the definitions and international standards provided by such organizations. In this process the anti-trafficking workers are likely to be influenced by the institutional narratives in that they have to follow the guidelines when identifying the victims. Such indirect relationships can be inferred for the similarity of themes across the earlier studies and the organizational narratives coming from the anti-trafficking workers.

¹¹ United Nations (ILO 2001), USDS (USDS 2010), ILO (convention No. 182), South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation, Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women, International Movement Against all forms of Discrimination and Racism, etc. (ILO 2002 b)

However, there are some organizational narratives in this study that I did not find in earlier studies. These narratives emerge out of the stories told by the victims of sex trafficking. The anti-trafficking workers work closely with the victims of sex trafficking and are influenced by the personal narratives that are told by the victims. Through the personal narratives, the anti-trafficking workers depict other aspects of the victims that are not identified in the earlier studies. The anti-trafficking workers identify various intersectional categories (gender, caste, age, class, and geographic location) of discrimination experienced by the victims. Based on these categories some victims experience discrimination while others do not. In other words, the intersectional categories increase the experience of discrimination for some of the victims who occupy social locations that are shaped by their gender, caste, age, and geographical location.

All in all, the anti-trafficking workers' organizational narrative is influenced by both personal narratives and institutional narratives. The anti-trafficking workers stick close to the institutional narratives; as counselor Nura puts it, "We represent the organization we work for." On the other hand, the anti-trafficking workers are also influenced by the personal narratives. However, there is a lack of representation of personal narratives in the organizations' programs and policies. It appears that the anti-trafficking workers recognize the multiple forms of discrimination shaping the victims experiences but it is rarely addressed in the anti-trafficking programs or services implemented by the non-profit organizations in Nepal.

A. RECOMMENDATIONS

Uniform guidelines and standards provided by international organizations in identifying the victims often ignore the fact that the victims of sex trafficking experience discrimination based on their multiple identities created by their gender, caste, age, class, and geographical location.

The organizational narratives and earlier studies influenced by such institutional narratives stereotype victims' problems as the outcome of gender discrimination. It also ignores the fact that victims of sex trafficking experience discrimination for many reasons, which are shaped by the mixture of their gender, age, caste, class, and location. The organizational narratives, however, which are influenced by the personal narratives, identify sex-trafficking victims as experiencing discrimination based on their gender, caste, class, age, and geographical location.

This study suggests that there is a gap between the narratives coming from the victims and the narratives of the international organizations. Effective measures should be taken by all the parties involved in anti-trafficking programs to narrow this gap. Having identified sex-trafficking victims as experiencing discrimination (based on their gender, caste, age, class, and geographical location), an intersectional analysis of the victims must be incorporated by international organizations and local organizations in their narratives. The victim's identification and standard guidelines must include intersectional analysis.

Incorporating an intersectional approach would enhance the operation of anti-trafficking programs. For instance, the programs and services provided by the organizations focus on gender empowerment. Despite the program's efforts the victims who are provided with such services and training end up going back to the entertainment establishments. Implementing an intersectional analysis would allow the service providers to diminish such problems and to develop better programs. It would help the service providers to pin down the specific needs of the victims which emerge from their intersectional locations and identities. A better, intersectional approach-based program could look into the specific needs of higher-caste victims and lower-caste victims instead of putting both of groups together and providing both of them

with similar service. Using an intersectional approach in victim identification, a specific program can be designed for victims who are poor, young, lower-caste, and from rural areas. For them reintegration programs with educational and financial support programs will be better. Some programs will not work for victims from higher castes, who are usually married and from better socioeconomic conditions than lower-caste victims. For higher-caste victims, family acceptance is not easy. So reintegration might be a failure. So, keeping this in mind for higher-caste victims, urban resettlement programs can be more effective. Similarly, by analyzing other intersectional identities of victims, specific needs can be better analyzed and programs can be designed accordingly.

B. LIMITATIONS

Since it is an exploratory research project, there are several limitations to my study. A greater number of respondents could have resulted in more information on the issue of sex trafficking. This study was based on phone interviews. Other types of interviews, such as face-to-face interviews, could also have helped in obtaining better responses. Similarly, the distance and the time difference between the researcher (me) and the respondents caused some discomfort for both parties in setting up interview times.

With regard to the long-distance telephone calls, the connection was sometimes poor and both parties ended up being exhausted and frustrated due to the difficulty of making and waiting for the phone calls. Sometimes during the interview, due to the poor quality of international connections, the questions or the respondent's answers had to be repeated. Although the interviews went smoothly, the participants did not respond in the exact English words that I present here. The interviews were conducted in Nepali and translated back to English.

I initiated this research because I was exposed to the issues regarding sex trafficking in Nepal. There were times during the interviews when I thought “I know this,” but I did not let my bias show. Rather I continued to listen to the respondents’ stories. Also, during the interview, I occasionally said “yes,” but not as an indicator of agreement. Instead, I used the word to continue the conversations and to let the respondents know that I was still listening to them.

C. FUTURE RESEARCH

This research has implications for the future of organizations that help victims of sex trafficking in Nepal. Future research on personal, organizational, and institutional narratives can narrow the gap between the victims and the organizations providing services. This study can also help the organizations to pin down the specific needs of their clients and, at the same time, help to tailor their programs to meet these needs. Similarly, having identified various intersectional categories such as gender, caste, class, age, and location as shaping experiences of the victims, the researchers, sociologists, and policy-makers must incorporate these categories into their future studies. This will allow them to have a clear understanding of the multiple discriminations faced by the victims.

D. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: IMPLIED CONSENT AND INTERVIEW GUIDES

Implied Consent

I would like to thank you for your participation. Before we begin, I would want to be sure that you realize that I am conducting this interview for my graduate thesis. The information you provide is being used for a graduate research course in which I conduct research on “Trafficking of Women in Nepal: An Intersectional Analysis of Organizational Narratives.” This interview requires you to share information about your work and the experience of your client.

There is no physical risk involved in this research but some questions may cause you discomfort. You have option to keep your name confidential. In this case you will be given a pseudonym. I want to confirm that you have willingly agreed to give this interview. You maintain the right to stop this interview anytime and choose not to participate. There won't be any penalty of dropping out of interview. I would also like to inform you that this interview is taped and make sure that you don't have any objection to recording our conversation.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study you can contact me at XXX-XXX-XXXX or email me at bmahat@uark.edu. You can also contact my advisor Dr. Anna Zajicek at 011-479-575-5149. If you have any questions regarding your rights as research subject, please contact the University of Arkansas Institutional Review Board at 011-479-575-3845.

Interview Date:

Name of Interviewer:

Location:

Means of Interview:

Interview Guide:

Section 1

- 1. Can you tell me about yourself including your name and what you do?**
- 2. Can you share information about the organization you work for?**
- 3. How do you define your work? Can you give me some information about your job including your responsibilities? How long have you been working in this area?**
- 4. How long have you been working for the present organization?**
- 5. Can you share your work experience for last six months regarding sex trafficked victims you encountered and how long have you been working with them? How do you handle them?**
- 6. What kind of program does the organization have for the victims of sex trafficking?**
- 7. Is there any effort by the organization to recognize the need of victims who are facing discrimination based on caste?**

Section 2

- 8. Can you tell me about the victims? Their age, caste, ethnicity, where they come from, where do they live and how long have they been in the city?**
- 9. Can you tell me about their family composition?**
- 10. Can you also tell me what their parents and siblings do?**
- 11. Can you also tell me if the victims have to support their family's financial need? Have you ever encountered such case? Can you tell us about some incident that you encountered?**
- 12. Can you tell me about their condition back home? What did they do before coming to the city? Can you share this with me?**

- 13. Can you also tell me why and how did they come to the city? And who brought them to the city?**
- 14. Can you tell me about their experience at their present work? Do they feel that they are pressured at work?**
- 15. What is a typical day at work for them?**
- 16. Do the victims tell you what they like the best about their job? Can you share this with us?**
- 17. What do they like least about their work?**
- 18. If they had to describe their work, how did they best describe it in five words?**
- 19. Did anyone deceive or coerced the victims to come to the city and work? If can you tell me about such case?**
- 20. Is there anything that stops the victims from going back to their family? Is there any risk associated with them leaving their work? Please explain.**
- 21. Have you encountered case where victims or their family has faced privilege/ discrimination based on caste? Can you tell me about such incident?**
- 22. In your experience, do you think caste plays significant role in trafficking of women in Nepal?**
- 23. Can you tell me about how the experience of lower caste and higher caste victims are similar or different?**

I would like to thank you for sharing your experience with us. I am sure that the information you provided will help further in making better plans and policies.

APPENDIX B: EXAMPLES OF CODING

First Stage: I used a funnel approach and applied *a priori* codes informed by the literature and theoretical framework on sex trafficking.

Literature Review	A Priori Code
<p>Anti-trafficking programs and policies that do not make such distinction limits the right of women to decide their mobility by considering them as “lacking capacity to reason or choose or incapable of making decision” (Kapur 2008, Konard 2008).</p> <p>The movement of women and girls is limited considering them vulnerable or at risk of trafficking. The women’s movement is often assumed to be forced that ends in sexual exploitation (Sanghera 2005, Konard 2008).</p>	<p>Lacking capacity to reason or chose</p> <p>Incapable of making decision</p> <p>Sexual exploitation</p>

Second Stage: I analyzed the data line-by-line to look for themes that appeared in earlier studies.

Transcribed Data	Codes
<p>US- mainly in cabin restaurant girls are sexually exploited. Main reason for client to come to cabin is not to eat food. 80 rupees worth beer is charged 200 rupees. They mainly come for sexual satisfaction...in cabin male client would pull, bite, called girls to satisfied their need...the girls didn't like such work..</p>	<p>Exploitation</p> <p>Commodities</p>

Third Stage: Looked for emergent themes

Transcribed Data	Emergent theme
<p>Even if they leave this job and get into a good job but do not get good money, there is higher chance for them to return back to the same sector. They earn lots of money in this sector. They are used to playing with money. They do not get similar amount of money at other job. There is certain designation and they are paid accordingly only. The amount they get in cabin or massage, they do not get else. Due to lack of money they get back to same sector.</p>	<p>Habituated Adaption to the changed lifestyle</p>

Fourth stage: Codes identified as focused codes to represent a larger segment of data

Line by line (a priori codes)	Focused Codes
<p>The trafficker lures them and tell them it is little further. Something is mixed in the food and given to the girls. Something to make them unconscious. Then they are taken across the border. In case of Internal trafficking, they enter the entertainment sector thinking they will earn and make a living. Whether in restaurant or massage parlor, after they enter , exploitation starts slowly even when they work as waiter. Slowly abuse starts and they fall into trafficking.</p>	<p>Deceived/ Lure</p>
<p>75% are such cases. They are deceived by saying that they will get job. They could either work as domestic helper in the morning and the evening and pursue school in day, or job at other office. By saying this they are brought and later forcefully put to such work. 25% come under wrong influence of friends. Some also came since they have to take care of their kids</p> <p>Since they are from poor family and are uneducated, agents offers their family by saying “ I will provide job to your daughter with job.” Then they bring them here. Some also come under their friend influence. But most are here because of poverty and lack of education.</p>	

Organizational narratives and portrayal of sex trafficking victims:

Codes	No. of Respondent	No. of times codes appear	Earlier studies
Lure	All	30	Hennink and Simkhada (2008) Kapur (2008)
Someone they know		24	
Accepted new environment	7 out of 8	16	Earlier studies talk about period prior to being trafficked.
Attracted to money	3 out of 8	10	
Habituated to alcohol	7 out of 8	19	
Adapted to change life style	7 out of 8	17	
Escape from harsh village life			

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