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The role of non-governmental organisations in rehabilitating the sex- trafficked survivor and the implementation gap in India.

A dissertation submitted to the School for Policy Studies at the University of Bristol, in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Master of Science by advanced study in MSc. Public Policy in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law Candidate

Abstract

This study explores the non-governmental organisation’s rehabilitation strategies for sex trafficked survivors in India. It also investigates the gap in implementation efforts and the reasons behind it. Sex trafficking is a crime where mainly females are sexually exploited for financial gain. This study interviewed eleven individuals from non-governmental organisations and government bodies to build a holistic understanding of rehabilitation. It was revealed that a vast gap exists between rehabilitation discourse and implementation and the cardinal reason is an ineffective collaboration between the stakeholders. Other reasons are lack of public sector training and duplication of strategies by every other NGO because of lack of initiative and funding. The study concludes with policy recommendations for non-governmental and government organisations. One of the critical propositions is to appoint a mentor for the survivor and initiate an intensive community awareness programme. These recommendations are put forth to improve the lives of survivors and help NGOs accelerate their efforts toward successfully rehabilitating survivors. Also, this study fills the current rehabilitation academic research gap in India.

Author’s declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University’s Regulations and Code of Practice for Taught Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific references in the text, this work is my own work. I have identified all material in this dissertation which is not my own work through appropriate referencing and acknowledgement. Where I have quoted or otherwise incorporated material, which is the work of others, I have included the source in the references. Any views expressed in the dissertation, other than referenced material, are those of the author.

SIGNED: ………Nidhi…………………… DATE: ……07/9/22… (Signature of student)

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1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Sex work and trafficking are sensitive subjects about which a great deal has been written, often with more passion than objectivity, because they strike at the heart of our “beliefs about morality, justice, gender, and human rights” (George, Vindhya, and Ray, 2010, p. 64). Simply put, sex trafficking is the sexual exploitation of individuals for financial gain (Kempadoo et al., 2015). The trafficker takes advantage of the vulnerable situation of the trafficked person, and they are seasoned, which means they are kept in locked rooms and led to believe that they are only fit to sell their bodies (Brown, 2000). It becomes very difficult to break this belief of the survivor and poses a significant obstacle in all three efforts: rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration. Another significant barrier to ending sex trafficking is the debate over consent and legalising prostitution. One group contends that sex work should be treated as any other labour and that prostitution should be legalised. At the same time, another asserts that legalising prostitution encourages sex trafficking (Saunders and Soderlund, 2013). There are some issues in both debates discussed in this study, but the prolonged existence of debates has not provided any tangible solution and prevents the protection of human rights and the punishment of those who have committed crimes.

However, the prevalence of sex trafficking pushes us to think about rehabilitation strategies for those who are rescued. According to the United Nations, approximately 30 million women and girls have been victimised in Asia alone over the last thirty years (Kempadoo 2005). Within Asia, India is the largest country which serves as a source, transit, and destination country, and it is also a country where sex is taboo and sex work is stigmatised (Brown, 2000). The extreme stigmatisation in India further challenges stakeholders to ensure successful rehabilitation and reintegration. Thus, this research’s objective was to

comprehend India's rehabilitation efforts and navigate how the NGOs break the stigmatisation and uplift

the lives of survivors.

The academic literature addresses issues such as definition, trades and routes, the causes of sex trafficking, and rehabilitation and reintegration theory and implementation in various countries. The literature on rehabilitation suggests that at the global level, there is an increased acknowledgement and practice of moving beyond traditional approaches, which often includes rehabilitating individuals in isolation and providing vocational courses (which are highly gendered) and psychosocial therapies. The current discourse emphasises a community and rights-based approach where the NGOs collaborate with the community and understand each survivor individually. A review of academic literature on rehabilitation and reintegration in India revealed that very little research had been conducted on the implementation aspect of the rehabilitation discourse and the challenges NGOs face.

To fill the void, the study used qualitative methodology to investigate how NGOs work to rehabilitate and reintegrate survivors by interviewing both non-governmental organisations and government officials. This study's philosophical foundations were rooted in the intersectional feminist paradigm, which emphasises the experiences of women and other marginalised groups in academic research (Naples, 2016). Therefore,

the other research objective was to identify the gap in implementation and the causes of those gaps.

Furthermore, the researcher's interest in the topic stems from prior experience of working in the organisation's migration and refugee vertex, as well as an academic interest in migration and human rights issues.

The qualitative interviews revealed the rehabilitation models used by the NGOs, as well as the fact that they fall short in eradicating social stigma. Additionally, a discrepancy between discourse and implementation was observed. Though stakeholders acknowledge the current discourse and adopt it, implementation falls short. Even after asserting the urgency of moving away from traditional provisions, a lacklustre partnership between the government and NGOs creates a gap in implementation. To close the gap, research suggests measures for both. The significant measures and recommendations include the appointment of a single mentor for the survivor throughout the process, advocacy by NGOs, government

partnerships with schools, communities, media houses, and business corporations, an intensive community awareness programme, and, most importantly, training public sector employees and working to build trust between the government and NGOs. Additionally, this study adds to the scant literature on rehabilitation practices in India and encourages in-depth future investigations that take into account survivors' perspectives.

Overview: The following trajectory can be drawn for this study: An initial literature review was

conducted to provide context and background knowledge regarding sex trafficking and rehabilitation. This served as the foundation for choosing the methodology covered in chapter three and focusing on the research question. Thematic analysis, covered in chapter four, was used to analyse the research data.

Chapter five presents the researcher’s reflections and concludes with policy recommendations.

# CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This section provides a picture of existing academic research, government policies and programmes relating to sex trafficking. The review helped to frame research questions and to interpret the findings. To cover all aspects of sex trafficking, the sections are divided according to themes: problems in defining sex trafficking, existing scholarships, and the board theme of sex trafficking in Asia cover: channels and data on sex trafficking, nature, programmes and policies and rehabilitation models in theory and practice

### THE PROBLEM WITH THE DEFINITION

The question of definition is one of the most significant impediments to the efficacy of anti-slavery initiatives (Laczko, 2005; Piper, 2005). Studies that incorporate an explicit definition often employ the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) guidelines, which describe trafficking as (Nawyn, Birdal and Glogower, 2013):

“The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs”. (UNODC, 2004, p. 4)

The above definition is part of the Palermo Protocol, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2000, and UNODC assists countries in ratifying and implementing the protocol. The problem with protocol is its extremely broad and vague language (Huijsmans & Baker, n.d.; Bales, 2005), which leaves expansive room for subjectivity. The definitional problem makes it difficult to collect data because it is

unclear what constitutes sex trafficking. All things considered, this definition comes close to the ideal scenario of altogether banning sex work. In other words, it is "designed to facilitate cooperation between states to combat organised crime, rather than to protect or give restitution to the victims of crime" (Segrave and Milivojevic 2005, p.136). It pushes countries to criminalise sex work and move towards the reintegration and rehabilitation of every sex worker, both voluntary and involuntary, in the industry. This is aligned with the neo-abolitionist scholarship discussed in the scholarship section.

The difficulty in defining sex trafficking exists because of the following debates: the primary debate in determining what constitutes sex trafficking is about consent and, mainly, “whether non-coerced, adult migrant prostitution should be included in the definition of trafficking” (Gallagher, [2001](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00224499.2014.1002126?casa_token=Jco8QduZ74sAAAAA%3Az5w_HvEEnbxY2g6mKc-bXfFdPpZ9Bulc_PMy1YjQGAach6FELMpvJnelX1eTjw0FcujcOFQndrQ), p. 984). The other debate that arises while defining sex trafficking is whether prostitution and legal sex work are equivalent to trafficking and exploitation (Nawyn, Birdal and Glogower, 2013). For example, suppose women working in the sex industry face minimal employment opportunities in their home region or Country. In that case, they may be willing to tolerate trafficking situations if they earn more (or have been promised that they will eventually gain more) than they would have if they had not been trafficked. On the other hand, women with fewer alternatives may not need to be tricked, pressured, or forced into sex work to extract their labour, making trafficking less likely to occur when women are economically disadvantaged (ibid).

The lack of proper definition misses a huge section of the population which faces exploitation. Thus, it is critical to interview sex workers directly rather than depending on secondary sources such as police, NGOs, or media reporting (which are far more prevalent in the literature than research with possible trafficking victims). Detailing the many sorts of exploitation that sex workers face helps to know what types of deception, coercion, or force are most common and who perpetrates them (ibid). This will aid in eliminating particular experiences while broadening the term.

Overall, it has become a battleground between those who believe sex work can be a voluntary decision and others who believe it is always coerced. Despite the fact that human trafficking is illegal and a crime, when intervention and rescue occur, the survivor's willingness to continue in the same business presents a challenge in deciding on their rehabilitation and punishing the accused. The following section discusses the various types of scholarship that exist.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

Trafficking leads people to do forced work in agriculture, construction, food processing, restaurants, domestic work, entertainment and, most gruesome of all, in the sex industry (Segrave, Milivojevic and Pickering, 2019). In other industries, exploitation is clearly defined, but in the sex industry, there is much disagreement. There is a vast body of feminist literature on trafficking, much of which is connected to sex work and is broadly divided into the neo-abolitionists and the regulationist.

In their analysis of trafficking, the neo-abolitionists argue that consent is irrelevant. In their argument, the line between trafficking and sex work is erased (Saunders and Soderlund, 2013). Thus, they define trafficking as any practice that involves moving people within and across local, national, or international borders for sexual exploitation. They further believe that legal prostitution leads to trafficking and supports abolishing prostitution altogether. The Indian law is motivated by the same neo-abolitionist ideology, and this is reflected in its Immoral Traffic (prevention) act of 1956 (Kotiswaran, 2014). The ITPA makes all activities necessary to engage in sex work illegal, including soliciting, maintaining a brothel, subsisting on the proceeds of prostitution, acquiring a woman for prostitution, and enticing an inmate. However, it does not make sexual activity itself illegal. (Reddy, 2004). The act punishes both the brothel runner and the sex worker.

While on the other hand, the **regulationist** argue that the premise of sex work should be regulated and is not seen as a violation of human rights (George, Vindhya, and Ray, 2010). It does recognise the existence

of abuse in the sex industry, much like in any other industry. It considers a violation of human rights only if women don’t have control over their bodies, the choice is deprived, and they have poor income and working conditions. This scholarship argues for a border definition of trafficking that includes not only sex trafficking but other forms of forced labour and exploitation (Saunders and Soderlund, 2013).

However, when we approach this scholarship to formulate rehabilitation policies, it poses a challenge. It is difficult to distinguish between individuals who enter the industry voluntarily and those who are compelled to work there due to trafficking. A National Network of Sex Workers exists in India and advocates repealing the ITPA act, which criminalises prostitution and calls for identification and redistribution rights (worker's rights) (Kotiswaran, 2014; George et al., 2010). Most such groups, nevertheless, fail to challenge the fundamental systems that foster sex trafficking.

There are additional perspectives that give direction to the anti-trafficking debate. In particular, the human rights and the vulnerabilities of migrants are two legends that have gained some ground (Segrave, Milivojevic and Pickering, 2019). The migrant and border trafficking literature indisputably links migration conditions for trafficking and argues over the border controls that facilitate trafficking.

However, the recent scholarships differentiate between smuggling and trafficking. Smuggling is seen as the issue of protection of the state against illegal migrants, while trafficking is the issue of the safety of individual persons against violence and abuse (Ditmore and Wijer, 2003). Trafficking can occur within and across borders, while smuggling is understood as crossing national borders. This is not to say that the smuggled people cannot fall prey to being trafficked. Due to this complexity, it is very challenging to distinguish between those who are smuggled and those who are trafficked, which makes preventing sex trafficking even more difficult.

Today, sex trafficking has increasingly been observed as a human rights issue by international human rights organisations and NGOs (Wijers and Van Doornick, 2002). However, the polarised views of the different scholarships and the lack of clear definitions have limited the national and international efforts

to address trafficking (Segrave and Milivojevic, 2005). Thus, there is a need to move above the debate and focus on the state, and non-state responses in securing the human rights of the people trafficked into the sex industry and preventing future occurrences.

### SEX TRAFFICKING IN ASIA

The trafficking of human beings has attracted considerable public and political concern in recent years (Lee, 2007). Trafficking is modern-day slavery that ensnares between 12 million and 27 million people into forced labour or sexual exploitation. This means that the number of people in salve today is more than ever in history (Haker, 2011). Each year approximately 800,000 are trafficked across borders, 80 per cent of these are women, and 50% are minors (Brown, 2000). It is a profitable industry globally, and globalisation has exacerbated the situation by luring the vulnerable through new technologies and better money. It targets the weak, desperate, and especially migrants with few employment options.

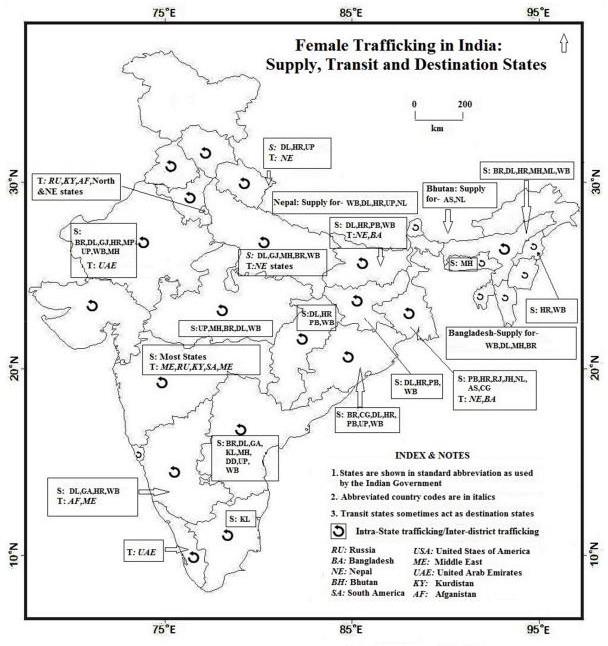
The trafficking of women for prostitution is a global phenomenon. However, Asia is worthy of special attention because it is here that the industry and trafficking networks are most sophisticated and well developed (ibid). Commercial sex is widespread in Asia; it is even more common than in the west. The difference is that it is a very, very quiet business (ibid). In Asia, India is a source, destination, and transit country for the trafficking of forced labour and sexual exploitation (Joffres et al., 2008). It is estimated that around 20 million people are part of commercial sex workers, and 80% of this population is trafficked (Dasra, 2013). Thus, this section looks over the channels, nature and how India prevents sex trafficking and rehabilitates the survivor.

#### Channels and data on Sexual trafficking in India

This section heavily relies on the systematic review conducted in the following paper, “Nature of sex trafficking in India: A geographical perspective”, Siddharth Kara’s work, and research carried out by Dasra ( philanthropy foundation). According to the systematic review, the estimated number of persons

trafficked for Sexual exploitation (SE) in India is around 2.7 million, an increase of 23% from an earlier estimate in 2015 (Joffres et al., 2008; Kara, 2009; Kempadoo et al., 2015. Apart from international trafficking, a huge network of traffickers exists that facilitates interstate trafficking.

* + - * **Interstate Trafficking**: Interstate trafficking represents 89% of trafficking for SE in India (Ali, 2005; Bandyopadhyay, 2012). The primary **supply states** include Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh. They are followed by Odisha, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, and Assam. Moreover, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar also have the dubious distinction of being the states that procure the highest number of minor girls and teenagers (ibid). The **biggest buyers** of minors include Maharashtra and West Bengal (Ford, 2014; George et al., 2010). Leading destinations include West Bengal (Kolkata), Delhi, Maharashtra (Mumbai), Gujarat, Haryana, and Punjab (the last two states being prevalent for ’arranged’ marriages in terms of bride trafficking) (Roy et al., 2018). Big cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad, and Chennai have the largest concentration of prostitutes (Silverman et al., 2007; Sohal, 2013) and destinated areas within the cities are: In Mumbai: Kamathipura and Falkland Road; in Calcutta: Sonagachi; in New Delhi: GB road (Kara, 2009). This information helped the research to recruit NGOs working in these areas and others. The map (1) below presents a detailed

picture of India's supply, transit, and destination state and also from and to other countries.

Source: Joffres et al., 2008

Map (1): The routes (updated) for prime supply, transit, and destination states.

* + - * **International trafficking:** trafficking from neighbouring countries accounts for more than 10% of trafficking for SE. ***Nepal and Bangladesh*** are the most prominent suppliers, accounting for 2.3% and 2.7% of the international traffic for SE into India (da Silva & Sathiyaseelan, 2019; Datta, 2011). An estimate said about 15,000–25,000 Bangladeshi

women and girls are trafficked annually into India (Deane, 2010; Rahaman, 2015). Total estimates of Bangladeshi persons trafficked for SE into India vary from 250,000–300,000 (Rahaman, 2015). Trafficked victims were initially kept in states like West Bengal, Assam, Odisha, or Tripura and later sent to new destinations, including New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Goa, or Pakistan (Karachi and Lahore) (ibid). India is also a place of transit for Nepalese and Bangladeshi women trafficked to Pakistan, Middle East Asia and for women trafficked from the Russian Federation to Thailand (Deane, 2010).

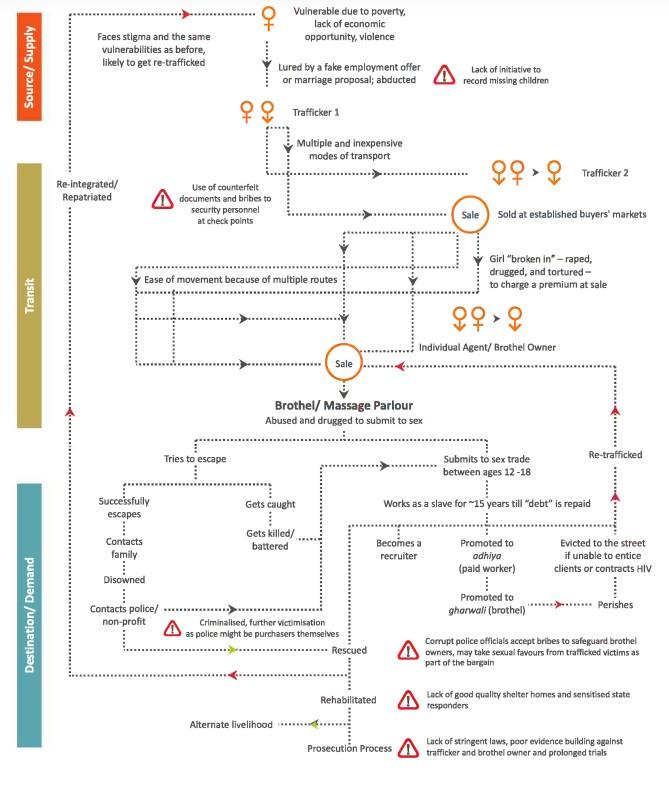
The literature also illustrated that India is a destination country for women trafficked from Bhutan, Myanmar, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Europe, Russia, and Thailand (Shrestha et al., 2015). Specific data for India as an international supply country are not available.

However, evidence suggests that children from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh are trafficked to the Gulf countries, England, Korea, and the Philippines for sexual exploitation (Shanley & Jordan, 2017). Likewise, the United Nations reported that India is very prevalent as a source for countries like Middle East Asian countries, the United Arab Emirates, Kenya, and the United States of America (White, 2007).

This intense and complex web of sex trafficking trade routes in India poses a challenge to both the government and non-government organisations to identify the survivors and the trafficker. It is also very challenging to prevent survivors' re-trafficking in such deeply embedded networks. Therefore, the alternative approach to preventing sex trafficking entails comprehending its root causes and how people end up in the hands of traffickers. Nevertheless, this literature review section aids in the researcher's decision regarding from where to draw the sample population.

#### The nature of sex trafficking (what happens after a woman/girl is trafficked):

The picture (1) below comprehensively describes how is person is trafficked and what occurs next in the sex business. It also detailed the system flaws and corruption that have allowed the abuse to continue. To comprehend the intricacies of sex trafficking in its entirety and offer effective interventions, it is necessary to understand the victim's journey from the time she is transferred from her home in the source region until the time she arrives at the destination, i.e., the last place of exploitation (Dasra, 2013).



Picture (1): Sex trafficking, the big picture Source: Dasra, 2013.

* + - * Vulnerabilities at source: Vulnerability factors include personal circumstances such as

“low levels of education, poverty and ignorance, and socio-structural forces such as globalisation, violence against women and natural disasters" (Dasra, 2013, p.10). These Vulnerabilities makes it easy for the trafficker to deceive people and exploit them. Most often all these factors intersect which each other and makes certain population easy target for exploitation.

* + - * Acquisition of sex slave (Kara, 2009): Along with kara, many other scholars agree on the

ways the purchase takes place: deceit (false offer of better job and life), sale by family (condition of poverty, desperation, and vulnerability), abduction (however, this is the least adapted way), seduction (false promise of love) and recruitment by former sex workers.

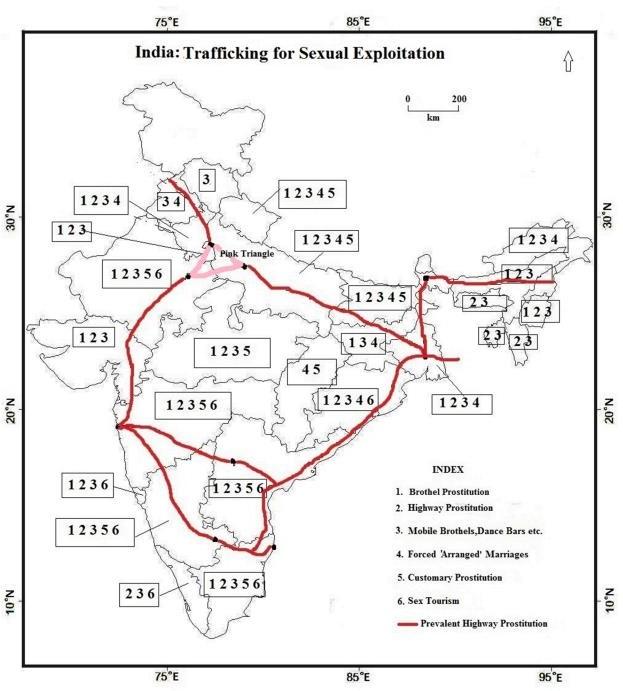
* + - * The exploitation: exploitation, in essence, starts as soon as the enslaved person is

acquired. The enslaved person is raped, tortured, starved, humiliated, and drugged during transportation (ibid). All this is executed to break the spirits of the enslaved person and make them believe there is no escape route for them. This whole process is termed seasoning in the book by Louise Brown (2000): it is achieved through different methods, i.e., the type of sex establishments, the manner in which the girl arrives at the destination and the character traits of the girl.

* + - * Types of prostitution: different types of prostitution reflect the magnitude of the problem.

The most common type of sexual exploitation involves young girls from economically backwards and socially marginalised groups (e.g., Dalits) (George et al., 2010). They are often ’recruited’ by brokers, sold to brothel owners (most of whom are ex-prostitutes), and forced into prostitution (Greer, 2013). Arranged marriages are also a form where young women and underage girls are ’married’ to grooms willing to pay poverty-stricken parents a dowry (Huda, 2006; Roy, Rai, & Nangia, 2018). Also, street prostitution is very

prevalent in some big cities. The map (2) below illustrates different types of prostitution and where it is prevalent. After brothel prostitution, highway prostitution and mobile brothels are most common.



Source: Joffres et al., 2008.

Map (2): Types and magnitudes (updated) of sexual exploitation in India.

This offers the research with an account of the causes of trafficking and how the victim is traumatised in the business. The above information was useful during the analysis of the findings in determining whether the organisations work to eliminate the root causes and, if so, what measures are available.

#### Rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration

In India, the government, police, and non-governmental organisations work together to protect women and girls who face violence and sexual exploitation (Kaikobad, 2021). The protection and prevention effort is divided into rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration (ibid). After a survivor is rescued, the police and court often refer the individual to NGOs and counsellors. The following explains the effort taken by each of these stakeholders:

Government: The Government of India does not fully comply with the minimum standards for

eliminating trafficking; however, it has made significant progress toward better aligning with the Palermo Protocol (2000) (Dasra, 2013). The government's major effort is focused on eliminating and preventing sex trafficking. To prevent trafficking, the Government has different Legislative and administrative practices in place:

1. Legislative Provisions: Although many laws focus on human trafficking, the following ones

specifically address trafficking for sexual exploitation.

* + A significant piece of law that addresses trafficking for sexual exploitation is **the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act (1956)**. Anyone who engages in trafficking for sexual exploitation is subject to punishment under the law. Prostitution and any businesses that support it are likewise illegal (Ministry of External Affairs, n.d.). In 2006, it was modified, and the provision that punishes prostitutes for soliciting clients was deleted.
  + **POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual offences act, 2012**) “protects children from sexual assault, sexual harassment, and pornography and provides for establishing Special Courts for the trial of such offences and matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.” (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2012). To implement this act, the child who is exploited is presented before the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) (which acts as a special court) and is further referred to an NGO. NGOs supports the child, take

care of the child’s well-being, act as informants, and spread awareness about child abuse (ibid). According to the act, NGOs and government support are given to the child until they turn eighteen and post-eighteen, the individual decides for themselves.

1. Administrative interventions: some of its efforts are also directed toward rehabilitation and

reintegration:

* + The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) has established 194 Integrated Anti-Human Trafficking Units (IATHUs), which are responsible for law enforcement and rehabilitation (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2012).
  + There are many programmes that provide support to the survivor; one such flagship program is the Ujjawala program, which seeks to protect and rehabilitate female sex trafficked survivors (Ministry of women and development, 2016). This scheme has five components: Prevention, rescue, Reintegration, rehabilitation, and repatriation (ibid). However, these schemes lag in funding, staff, and implementation efforts.
  + Government also signs memorandum with other countries: In June 2015, India and Bangladesh signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on bilateral cooperation for the prevention of human trafficking in women and children, as well as the rescue, recovery, repatriation, and reintegration of trafficking survivors (Ministry of External Affairs, n.d.).

However, Numerous agencies are involved in anti-sex trafficking activities, leading to growing issues of accountability, coordination, implementation, and effectiveness in addressing the multi-disciplinary nature of anti-sex trafficking (Dasra, 2013).

Police: Police are at the core of accountability when it comes to both prosecution and protection,

especially as they are one of the first responders to rescue victims (Dasra, 2013). However, the conviction rate is very low due to corruption and stigmatisation and attitudes toward sex work.

Non-Governmental Organisation: Due to the government’s resource and capacity constraints,

NGOs play an essential role in rehabilitation and reintegration. While there is a consensus that survivors should receive rehabilitation services, definitions of rehabilitation tend to be subjective, and the basic provisions for successful rehabilitation continue to be contested (Locke, 2010). There is continued debate over where to draw the line between providing assistance and creating dependency, providing mandatory care, violating rights and privacy, and creating protective environments and inhibiting freedom and autonomy (ibid). The NGOs usually faces issue with survivor who are above eighteen. The following paragraphs discuss how rehabilitation occurs in India and problems in the existing approach:

* Integrating with families: Integration can be defined as successfully returning a survivor to their

original family and back into the community. The absence of income-generating possibilities, shame, and prejudice have largely limited NGOs' efforts to reintegrate the survivors into their families and communities (Kempadoo, 2005). Returning survivors frequently experience rejection from their families and communities, harassment, and perhaps rape (ibid). Formerly trafficked women and girls claim that their families have prevented them from visiting or sharing meals with their neighbours (Terre des Hommes, 2005). Increased HIV/AIDS awareness has the unintended effect of stigmatising returning sex trafficked survivors twice: first, for being a prostitute and, again, for being presumed to have the disease (Samarasinghe, 2012). If welcomed back into their communities, survivors nevertheless face considerable difficulties adjusting (Locke, 2010). If survivors cannot sustain themselves financially when they return home, they may be forced to migrate once more to survive (Kempadoo 2005). Many survivors are re- trafficked as a result of this (kara, 2009).

* + Vocational training: Providing vocational training is typically the other conventional

rehabilitation strategy (Wiese,2017). A successful reintegration may need economic rehabilitation as a necessary first step. As economic desperation is one of the reasons for their victimisation, conditions that encourage trafficking would still exist if the victims returned home without receiving any vocational training (Pandey, 2013). In contrast, one interviewee strongly asserted that vocational training does not benefit sex trafficked girls because of the particular trauma, confinement, and stigma they encounter compared to beneficiaries from other backgrounds, such as shelter home residents dealing with various forms of marginalisation. This draws attention to an issue with vocational training since it occurs much too frequently without taking into account the embodiment that each sex trafficked survivor experiences, which results in rehabilitation outcomes that are not always fulfilled (Wiese, 2017).

* + Psychosocial rehabilitation: this entails providing services to help survivors recover from

the physical and mental trauma they have experienced. Some NGOs employ different therapy methods, like an organisation in Kolkata uses Dance Movement Therapy (DMT), which has been demonstrated to boost survivors' self-esteem and sense of agency (Kaikobad, 2021). However, the literature doesn’t mention many NGOs that employ non- conventional alternatives.

These approaches are considered less effective in providing the survivor with normal life, and some researchers have shown that there has been a shift in rehabilitation discourse. For instance: Locke (2010), in his research, highlights the shift, and these have been adopted by NGOs. The shifts in the discourse are as follows.

1. Community-based approach - shift from institutionalisation to community-based rehabilitation. NGOs try to network with community stakeholders to stop the survivor's re- victimisation.
2. Collaborative approach- instead of working in isolation, engaging with various sectors of civil society to take advantage of outside resources while raising awareness and sensitising and facilitating the process of community integration (Locke, 2010)
3. Empowerment model – a shift from where survivors are simply fed, clothed, and sheltered to where they are motivated to take leadership roles, earn income, and become independent
4. Rights-based model- this is based on increasing the survivor’s voice and participation in the rehabilitation process.

Although NGOs have adopted the aforementioned shifts in India, no literature investigates the practice of this discourse. As a result, this study investigates whether a gap exists between adopting and applying the much-discussed discourse to the spirit. It also examines what other shifts are being discussed among the above-mentioned stakeholders and their implementation.

# CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Chapters one and two helped to establish the research question and choose the appropriate research method. As Bryan (2001) puts it, selecting a method that produces accurate results is very important. The research aims to (i) understand the rehabilitation practice of sex trafficked survivors in India and how NGOs break the stigmatisation of sex work and (ii) identify the gap in the implementation of rehabilitation discourses. Following a review of the literature, this study determined that the qualitative approach was appropriate for extracting findings to the study's overarching questions. Thus, this chapter will cover a logical justification for employing a qualitative approach, how the research is designed, a section on data analysis, ethical considerations, and ultimately, the method's reliability and validity, as well as its apparent shortcomings.

### RESEARCH RATIONALE

This research is based on the understanding that methods are not neutral tools but are tied to how researchers understand social reality (Bryman, 2016). Thus, the world is viewed through a gendered lens, and such research is termed feminist research (Hesse-Biber, 2013). One of the primary goals of feminist

research projects is to promote social justice and social transformation; these projects seek to investigate and rectify the many disparities and social injustices that continue to harm and negatively impact women's lives and their families (ibid). It aims to amplify the NGOs' efforts to improve the survivors' lives and tries to emphasise the experiences of women and other marginalised groups in academic research (Naples, 2016).

The study further employed the intersectional feminist paradigm defined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) within the feminist research approach. She describes it as “a prism for seeing how various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other” (UN Women, 2020). To discover how to

best assist sex trafficked survivors, it was necessary first to understand said victim; hence, an intersectional theory of feminism was worth employing because it asserts that all causes of a problem must be addressed, including sex, ethnicity, class, and so on (Nordahl, 2019). It entails investigating patriarchy's authority and its role in the construction of the social structure. Thus, in all, this approach helped in understanding the construction of social institutions that creates classes and how it intervenes in disempowering the survivors.

Through this theoretical perspective, the study further chose a methodology which captures the different experiences, understanding, and interpretations (Gray, 2014) of how the third sector understands rehabilitation and integration. The analysis of experience was based on the rehabilitation models the NGOs implement. Typically, Qualitative research is used to uncover the intricacies of lived experiences

and social phenomena that defy statistical analysis, manipulation, and simplicity (Creswell, 2007). Thus, this research followed in the footsteps of qualitative research. The qualitative interviews gave voice to the experiences of survivors (women) through NGOs and deconstructed how multiple factors like class, ethnicity and sex affect the effective integration of survivors. The method kept experiences, activities, interactions, and behaviours in context (Gray, 2014).

### RESEARCH METHOD

Within qualitative research, the semi-structured interview was the most appropriate method to understand

how the third sector perceives rehabilitation and reintegration and how they act on it. The study chose to do semi-structured interviews over other types of the interview because of the following benefits: (i) it efficiently guided the study, allowing participants to freely describe the rehabilitation model implemented by them and use specific case studies as an example to show what factors worked in favour of the survivor and why. (ii)This method enabled the researcher to ask follow-up questions as needed to gain a more in-depth understanding (Nordahl, 2019), and (iii) and most important of all, it provided the researcher access to the ideas, thoughts, and memories in the words of the respondents rather than in the

words of the researcher (Reinharz, and Davidman,1992) and, (iv) it allowed the respondent to open up and get comfortable along the process. On the other hand, as structured interviews are rigid in their interview questions and neglect the respondents' responses in own words, this would adversely effected how various NGOs and other stakeholders perceive social reality and how these perceptions affect rehabilitation. Furthermore, structured interviews would have acted as a barrier to developing a relationship with the respondent, which was critical in this study because it dealt with sensitive issues.

The interviews were conducted using the guide, which helped direct the conversation to the intended goals. However, there was some difficulty in employing the semi-structured method as it was very easy to ask leading questions putting off the respondent and getting impacted by the pre-existing notions that judged what was worthy of discussion (Nordahl, 2019). The negative impact was minimised by less intervention while the respondent was speaking and using the guide to stay on the topic. Another shortcoming of this procedure was redirecting the respondent to the subject within the time allotted for the interview. Also, the respondents' perception of the interviewer may have harmed the information provided; factors such as gender, age, and knowledge of the research objective may have influenced how comfortable a person was with disclosing information (Newton, 2010). To reduce this effect, the respondents were briefed about the research objective and confirmed that their personal information will be anonymised completely. This was done to avoid frightening the NGOs while obtaining accurate information.

### SAMPLING

The sampling method for this project is purposive and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling is defined

as “A type of nonprobability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected based on the researcher’s judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representative” (Babbie, 2020, p.193). As the study required people with experience in volunteering to rehabilitate survivors or work for it in any capacity inside non-governmental organisations, the purposive sampling method was appropriate. It

allowed choosing individuals with more than a year of experience. The rationale is that the more experienced people participated, the better the study was able to investigate its questions in depth and develop a better understanding.

Initially, the study had planned to interview six NGOs and two independent social workers. However, the first interview and the snowball effect enabled the study to include stakeholders from the government sector, i.e., police, lawyers, and a member of the Child Welfare Committee (CWC). Eleven individuals were interviewed: members from 6 NGOs, One Indian Police Officer (IPS), one advocate, a member from CWC and two independent social workers. It was also important for the study to include a variety of stakeholders as it helped in comprehending how the government sector supports rescue and rehabilitation and works in collaboration with the third sector. To provide context, police and lawyers are the initial stakeholders that work in providing justice to the survivors. CWC is a committee under the women and child development department that works for children in need and protection. Interviewing government authorities also helped reveal information and awareness gaps between different stakeholders.

The NGOs and other stakeholders covered in this study operate in states like Delhi, Mumbai, Northeast, Karnataka (Bangalore), Hyderabad, and Kerala, and one is an international NGO. The literature provided the foundation for assessing which areas to include and exclude. These cities serve as destinations for women trafficked for sexual exploitation in India.

Gatekeepers were employed to reach out to these different NGOs and stakeholders. Two of them were employed because of the paucity of time, and the researcher needed to connect with as many NGOs as possible in a short duration. These two gatekeepers helped fast-track the process of connecting with large numbers of NGOs and other stakeholders, and further, the NGOs were short-listed according to the research need. Also, these gatekeepers are involved in impact-related programs such as linking disadvantaged students to appropriate resources, collaborating with the government, and working towards rescuing and rehabilitating survivors. One of the gatekeepers also participated in the research as an

Interviewee. An official email (see appendix four) with all the research information: including the objectives, consent letter, ethics application, and interview guide, was sent to the gatekeeper to keep them updated on the study's progress. Furthermore, they sent the introductory email to everyone in their connection who fit the research needs and based on the responses; those participants were personally contacted those who confirmed their participation through the gatekeeper.

However, as the researcher was not trained to interview survivors, the study restricted itself to interviewing people who work with them and for them. The other disadvantage is a small size; nevertheless, in-depth investigation through interviews provides rich information for the study's analysis.

### DATA COLLECTION

As previously stated, data was gathered using semi-structured interviews directed by an interview guide. Initially, the gatekeeper was interviewed to improve the guide and identify the structure and process gaps. Based on this pilot interview, a few suggestions were made to the guide. See appendix three for both the original and revised interview guide.

As the researcher was based in Bristol, all the interviews were conducted through Zoom. Each interview was for about 35-40 minutes, and some extended up to 50 minutes upon the participant’s permission.

Only those NGOs' time- limit was extended who wanted to share more information. All the interviews were conducted only when the participant was available. One NGO’s interview was conducted twice because of a poor network and was re-recorded. During the analysis, both recordings were transcribed and used. Also, due to the subject's sensitivity, as evidenced by medical literature, extra precaution was taken to ensure no one was harmed. Participants were made aware of all the psychological risks, such as anxiety when discussing the subject and emotional distress from reliving the events. To reduce the harm, breaks were given to the participants wherever they felt uncomfortable with the question or felt too overwhelmed

while narrating any individual case. Additionally, the respondent always had access to the support list (see appendix five) in case they encountered unmanageable distress.

### DATA ANALYSIS

In the case of qualitative data, the analysis begins during the data collection phase (Rocks, Carson, & Gilmore, 2007). Data analysis is defined as a three-step process: data reduction, data display, and deriving conclusions (Miles and Huberman, 1994). They further define data reduction as selecting, focusing, reducing, abstracting, and transforming data appearing in written-up fields or transcriptions (ibid). This procedure began with interviews; all the interviews were recorded after seeking permission and transcribed using Otter (transcription software). The transcription only included the key conversation and excluded the rest. This was done to save time and be more efficient. The following step is data display, in which data is conveyed in a compact form that the reader can understand. It employs tools such as maps, tables, graphs, etc. The final step is to serve data-driven conclusions.

In this study, all these three steps were performed using thematic analysis. Several researchers (Aronson 1995; Boyatzis 1998; Attride-Stirling 2001; Joffe 2011) have offered descriptions and recommendations on how to conduct various types of thematic analysis. In this study, the method described by Braun and Clarke (2006) has been employed because it is the most widely used way of thematic analysis in qualitative literature (Clarke and Braun, 2017). It is defined as a method that involves searching across data collection to detect, analyse, and report on repeating patterns (Braun and Clarke 2006). It is a data description approach but also involves interpretation in selecting codes and generating themes. The procedure consists of six steps.

1. Familiarizing with data: Data familiarisation is the repetitive and active reading of the complete data set. Along with reviewing and re-reading the transcribed data, comments and notes made during the interviews were also reviewed. This supplemented the transcribed sheets because the notes and comments

included all additional marks and any points of view that transcribed sheets missed. This stage served as the foundation for the entire data analysis process.

1. Generating codes: Boyatzis (1998) defined a code as the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way. To generate codes, an inductive technique was applied to reveal the general patterns in the rehabilitation process, and coding was performed by using both latent and semantic approaches.
2. Themes: Using codes, broad themes were framed, and as an inductive approach was used, the themes identified are closely linked to the original data and reflective of the entire data set (Braun and Clarke 2006).
3. Review themes: In this step, all the codes and the data extracts were reviewed to check if they fit into relevant themes (ibid).
4. Defining and naming themes: Once the themes were reviewed, the definition and narrative description of each theme, noting why it is relevant to the larger research issue, were provided. The names of the themes included in the final report were checked to verify that they are concise, sufficiently describe the complete data set, and accurately answer the research question (ibid).
5. Producing the report: This is the final stage in which all the analysis done thus far was compiled in report form and presented in the form of themes and sub-themes.

This entire data analysis procedure took a lot of repetition of reading and rereading codes and themes; therefore, the study used Otter for transcription and Nvivo (computer software) to relieve the project of manual coding. This saved time and made the project more efficient because NVivo was able to instantly rearrange and reorganise coding and node structure (all the related codes were combined in one node).

For example, by simply clicking a few buttons, nodes might be deleted, copied, moved, and combined

without altering the sources (Zamawe, 2015). Furthermore, with the help of NVivo, all files were maintained in one location, eliminating the trouble of handling papers.

### ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In terms of ethics in social research, proper procedures were followed. In accordance with the School of Public Policy's ethics protocol, an authorised ethics form was received from the Research Ethics Committee, and the form is attached in appendix six below.

As the research involved the sensitive issue of sex trafficking, extra effort was put in to ensure no one, including the researcher, was affected in any sort as a result of this study, and all the participation was completely voluntary. Throughout the study, consent forms (see appendix two for consent form) were used to ensure that any involvement was fully voluntary, and interviews were only conducted after the participant signed the consent forms. Participants were provided with information forms that contained a brief on research objectives and methods, and they were also advised of any potential risks associated with their involvement. In addition, at the start of every interview, each participant had access to all the assistance they would require if they were affected by the interview questions. During the pilot interview, it became apparent that short breaks of 10 seconds were necessary for both the interviewee and interviewer to process the information before moving on to the next question. These breaks also helped the respondent to calm themselves and avoid emotional stress.

Before every interview, all the necessary facts and the research’s academic objective was iterated to all the participants. Furthermore, if a participant wished to withdraw from the procedure at any time, they were able to do so, and all their information will be destroyed after the submission of the dissertation. To safeguard the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents, all participants were recognised using codes, and any quotations from the respondents and the organisation were used only with their agreement.

In this research, every participant gave their permission to quote their words and the location of the organisation. All the interviews recorded with the respondents' permission and transcribed are kept in a secure file accessible only to the researcher. All the recordings will be destroyed once the research is completed and submitted.

### RELIABILITY and TRANSPARENCY

The concept of reliability is focused on the idea that the findings of the research question will be the same if re-tested. However, with qualitative research, the conclusions are derived through interviews, and there are no predefined responses to the same questions. This test-retest procedure may also sensitise the respondent and influence the responses (Joppe, 2000). However, additional qualities that are believed to be quite comparable to reliability are credibility, transparency, and trustworthiness (Golafshani, 2003).

To ensure the credibility, transparency, and trustworthiness of this research, there was a constant effort to be conscious of any biases and practice reflexivity (explained in the next section) throughout the procedure. Furthermore, because the interviewees are part of an NGO, there was the possibility of the participant overestimating the work they accomplished and concealing the difficulties they experience in assuring rehabilitation, which may undermine the study's dependability and reliability. To avoid this, the participants were informed explicitly of the purpose of the academic research and assured that no names would be used unless the organisation permits them to use their identities. This increased the research's credibility, dependability, and trust.

### REFLEXIVITY

Reflexivity brings reliability and validity to the qualitative study and aids in turning the challenge of subjectivity into an opportunity (Finlay, 2002). It represents one's attitudes, ideas, and behaviours while conducting research, as well as how these may have influenced the research (Hammond, 2014). It is a method that acknowledges that the researcher is a component of the research and that their own biases

may affect the study's validity. Thus, the researcher presents their account of the study and self- introspection through reflexivity. According to Teh and Lek (2018), it is one of the methods that qualitative researchers can use to ensure the rigour and quality of their work; it is the gold standard for gauging reliability.

In relation to this project, my interest in the subject of sex trafficking originates from previous experience working in the migration area at an organisation. Furthermore, the migration module in the master's program has piqued my interest in the issue. The review of the literature benefited this study by limiting the research topic and filling a gap in the literature on the rehabilitation of sex trafficked survivors in India. Discussing sex is still taboo in India, and I'm curious to explore how this taboo intersects with providing sex-traffic survivors with a normal life. The main goal of this research is to empower the underprivileged and bring about social transformation through policy recommendations.

To maintain the quality of the interview, I adopted a semi-structured interview pattern. This allowed me to avoid imposing my point of view on the participant and allow them to express themselves freely. Also, to keep track of my own biases, I was consistent in making a note of every idea that came to me and in the end, I used those notes to introspect and discriminate between my thoughts and data acquired through interviews. Moreover, throughout the methodology section, I have explicitly stated the rationale behind the research to ensure transparency and provide the reader with a clear description (Dodgson, 2019).

### GENERALISABILITY

This paper acknowledges that small qualitative investigations are not generalisable in the traditional sense, but they do have redeeming qualities that put them above that need (Myers, 2000). As a result, this study does not attempt to generalise its findings and argues that humans attach meaning to the objective world, that their valued experiences are located within a historical and social context, and that many realities can exist (Benoliel, 1984; Tesch, 1990).

The study provides an in-depth glance into NGO efforts to rehabilitate sex trafficked survivors. Given that the interviewees are experienced, their descriptions supply the study with rich investigations, resulting in enough specifics for the reader to grasp the idiosyncrasies of the situation (Myers, 2000). To further argue against the need to generalise the research findings, it should be understood that the study of human affairs will always be context-dependent, thus ruling out the possibility of constructing theories and generalising the findings (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Social sciences are not about producing hard theories but learning; as put in the words of Hans Eysenck (1976, p. 9), ‘sometimes we simply have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at the individual cases--not in the hope of proving anything, but rather in the hope of learning something!’ Therefore, the aim of the research was to find and learn about context-dependent knowledge rather than the vain search for universals (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

### STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

There are some strengths and limitations to the research. One of the study's strengths is that the snowball sampling allowed the study to include both government and non-governmental organisations, and their participation provided a holistic understanding of how the rescue and rehabilitation model is planned and implemented in collaboration with each other. This also helped the study to conduct an analysis of gaps in the entire system and not only restricted to non-governmental organisations. Another source of strength is the study method, i.e., qualitative interviews provide detailed information about the study and the opportunity to observe the participant as they respond. Furthermore, this method goes beyond the need to generalise the findings and focuses on learning about the human phenomenon, which is critical in developing policies to improve the lives of survivors.

However, the study has some limitations, one of which is the use of a purposive sampling method. It is possible that the study overlooked people with more knowledge when purposively selecting the sample population. Another limitation was the language barrier; the study was unable to include people who spoke languages other than English and Hindi. It was difficult to hire a translator or use such software due

to time and resource constraints. Another limitation of the study is that it does not directly interview the survivors due to researcher capability and ethical constraints. However, it attempts to comprehend the model with the assistance of the organisations and stakeholders who work for and with them.

# CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter focus on presenting the findings on the participant's understanding and implementation of rehabilitation and reintegration. This understanding of rehabilitation was revealed through a detailed explanation of the rehabilitation model that the NGOs practice. Thus, the themes that emerged from the interview were key elements in the rehabilitation model and the gaps recognised by them. These two themes are further divided into sub-themes to provide clear answers to the research questions: the implementation gap in rehabilitation discourse and why the gap exists.

Table (1): presents the information of the respondents.

*(Note: \* represents second organisation from the same location)*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Participant | Location | Profile |
| NGOs | New Delhi | Programme Coordinator |
| New Delhi\* | Founder and director |
| Mumbai | Social worker and research assistant |
| Hyderabad | Founder |
| Bangalore | Ex-consultant and founder |
| International (New York) | Partnership manager |
| Independent Consultant | North India | Consultant stakeholders on community awareness |
| Northeast India | Professor and consultants on community awareness |
| Lawyer | Mumbai | Criminal lawyer (specialises in human trafficking) |
| Police | Kerala | Indian police officer (IPS) |
| CWC | New Delhi | Ex-member of CWC |

### KEY ELEMENTS IN THE REHABILITATION MODEL

While discussing the rehabilitation model, the participants were also asked about the key elements of a successful rehabilitation model. Every participant provided a different list of elements; however, one common element recognised by all was that the model should be designed with the individual's needs in mind. This is consistent with the recommendations made by various scholars and discourses in the literature review. Other less common components included vocational training, education, medical and psychological therapy, community awareness for successful reintegration, and public sector training. This section will take each element and present data on how these NGOs and other stakeholders implement it and whether there is a gap between what is considered a key element and if the same is implemented.

#### Individual needs

As one of the aims was to explore whether there is a gap in implementing the rehabilitation model, one of the follow-up questions asked was if they designed the model considering the needs of the individual. As mentioned earlier, every participant agreed that one key element to a successful model is approaching rehabilitation on a case-to-case basis. One of the NGOs responded to the question in the following way:

*‘one key element I believe for successful rehabilitation is understanding every victim separately. Each of these girls is a person; she has had her own set of pain and trauma. Yeah, most of them have had a similar story and trajectory of how they've been trafficked. But every person deals with trauma very differently. So, every NGO should help the victim become a survivor by drawing a model in which the victim has the majority say’* Mumbai-based NGO.

However, the same NGO implements a model framed in a top-down structure. This NGO's model is bifurcated into two sections: one caters to children/minors, and the other for any survivor above eighteen. The NGO described the model in which children under fourteen were given mandatory education and,

after fourteen, put into one of the vocational courses like beauty parlour course, jewellery or card making. Women above eighteen are put into paying guest house-like homes to expose them to how it is to live in shared accommodation and handle finances on their own; along with this; vocational training is given.

Though the aim of teaching women the skill to live independently is essential, it overlooks the needs of the individual and the courses provided are highly gendered. It assumes that education is secondary to these women and financial independence is primary. Out of the six NGOs interviewed, only one NGO design’s an individual-centric plan to some extent. While taking a survivor in the shelter home, this NGO understands the needs of the individual and accordingly arranges for facilities that would best suit the survivor. In one of the examples stated, the NGO mentioned:

*‘The girl had come to our shelter home when she was 17, and after a few months, she realised she wanted to be a nurse, and then we provided her with a scholarship to pursue her interest. Of course, it is tough to secure funding, but we try our best to support the victims as much as we can’* International NGO.

This example indicates that considering individual needs is not impossible; it can be achieved provided there is willingness and availability of funds. The government sector too acknowledges the gap when a police officer was interviewed; their response was as follows:

*‘With any government programme, whatever we do, we take the programme, and we build some SOPs (Standard Procedures), and we go about implementing those SOPs without looking into how the victim has come into that framework, see …, as it truly every victim has their own story So what I was emphasising also is that the basic policy of rehabilitation has to be highly individualistic, it can't be institution run or based on SOPs, So you can't have a tailor-made rule or a policy as we have now in the country’* IPS Kerala.

Overall, there is a recognition of the need to frame models on an individual basis. Even so, few organisations follow it, and governments run the entire process from rescue to rehabilitation and reintegration without taking individual needs into account.

#### Vocational training and education

Every NGO that participated includes the provision of education and vocational training in their model. In this, as the member of CWC (government official) stated:

‘*If the child is below 14, you know, right to education is applied, and the child is given free education, and if the child is more than 14 years, then education is secondary for him or her because…. they were deceived because of financial problems, so then we just give them the opportunity to enrol in the vocational courses and that education is given with-in non-formal education and through the National Institute of open schooling’* CWC Member.

The right to education, which ensures free education to anyone below fourteen in India, benefits many people, but the restricted age associated with it limits access to education for children over the age of fourteen who cannot afford it. Moreover, it becomes even more challenging for survivors above fourteen to enrol themselves in school because of their vulnerable position and, most often, their poor financial position. The CWC provides exceptional training and education to children aged between 14-21 to only those who are extremely brilliant. Others are enrolled in informal education or some vocational course; these courses and informal education are often delivered via distance learning, thus making the survivor even more excluded from society. It is agreed that the government's role is limited due to resource constraints, and the non-profit sector supports the government by taking care of the education and vocational training of the survivors. They, too, struggle with finances and other resources to provide a survivor with quality education and necessary skill-based vocational training. NGOs continue to provide

outdated training like making cards and jewellery. Further opportunities with these skills are narrow, and the survivor struggles to make a living.

There are some positive examples where NGOs try to move beyond the typical approach of having only a few courses available. One of the NGOs in Delhi provides opportunities for survivors to learn leadership, management, and financial skills. The respondent from this NGO stated one successful example:

*‘A minor was rescued by us when she was thirteen, and she was given all sorts… of training. She was very much interested in helping the other victims. Now she leads one of our shelter homes, and she is completing her degree here in Delhi’* Delhi-based NGO.

Though there are some good examples, this is not the general approach of all NGOs. Furthermore, none of the participating NGOs offers technical skill training to survivors. In this ever-expanding digital world, technical skills such as basic computer skills and internet browsing have become an essential part of daily life. Teaching these skills is critical for assisting survivors in fully integrating into the real world. Overall, there is a gap between what is deemed necessary and what is actually implemented. It is critical to understand that to achieve true empowerment and development; it is essential to provide every survivor with the opportunity to learn essential skills and gain minimum exposure to the real world.

#### Medical and counselling support

This component is considered extremely important because it gives survivors the likelihood to become successful survivors and recover from traumatic experiences. Since there is a possibility that the survivor can be carrying Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and could have other physical injuries, medical attention is necessary. Counselling assistance is critical because it allows survivors to relieve pain and overcome the guilt of the experience. However, there is a significant gap in putting this critical component in place. The act requires CWC to provide support personnel to survivors, but these

individuals are frequently from non-governmental organisations and are not efficiently trained to counsel survivors. A few NGOs also confirmed that the assistance is only for a limited time before the survivor enters the shelter homes. One non-governmental organisation expressed its concern in this regard:

*‘The academic research on understanding human experiences and helping them heal wounds is not very successful when it is implemented on the ground. Also, I will tell you that the short-term support given to victims is sometimes of no use… as a small incident can trigger the residual trauma, and the victim goes back to the previous stage’* Hyderabad-based NGO.

A few NGOs also expressed concern about trauma. The system is designed in such a way that the survivor is required to narrate what she went through repeatedly as the record statement is made. This prevents the survivor from forgetting the experience and adds to the existing trauma. One respondent stated that:

*‘The system is designed in such a way that the victim is more traumatised after rescue than before. The victim is brought before the court or CWC to present their exploitation case, and their statements are recorded. What happens here is that the victim is repeatedly asked to refresh her memory of the trauma, and by the end, they feel even more tormented’* Mumbai-based advocate.

This necessitates more counselling support for a longer period of time. To summarise the findings, counselling assistance is provided by less efficient individuals for a shorter period. The government believes that a few therapy sessions can help a survivor cope with the trauma and that NGOs will provide any additional therapy or counselling sessions. However, most non-governmental organisations (NGOs) lack the capacity and ability to counsel such cases.

One of the participants also commented on the doctors' insensitive attitude. Even now, doctors have a hostile perception of their patients. One of the independent consultants (North India) stated that she most often has to be present during the medical examination to ensure that the doctors do not make any insensitive remarks. Overall, a lack of basic support causes survivors to feel insecure and excluded from society. There is still a lot of work to be done in terms of training people who act as support people or counsel survivors.

#### Community Awareness

All government and non-government stakeholders perceive reintegration as full acceptance by family and society. Reintegration, on the other hand, is extremely difficult and frequently results in re-trafficking.

The government prioritises reintegration with family over rehabilitation in shelter homes because they believe returning to family and loved ones allows the survivor to begin living a normal life, feel socially included, and become a survivor champion. However, sometimes the emphasis on reintegration by the government sector overlooks the potential threat of domestic violence against the survivor. The member of CWC quoted:

*‘We try to put the child back at home, and if the home is not the best place for them, then we make sure that the child is in the same city they belong to. This would increase the chances of children rebounding with their native place or relative’* CWC Member

The argument is reflective of the recommendation that floats in the academic literature; however, reintegration is a big challenge because Indian society stigmatises sex work and doesn’t accept sex trafficked survivors. The CWC and other government bodies are trying to spread awareness of the human rights of the survivor and also about safe sex. But, sometimes, these campaigns are counter-productive as society sees the survivors as carriers of STDs, considers that they would demoralise society, and further

rejects their acceptance. There is a need for the campaigns to be revised and operated in a way that has fewer unintended negative consequences.

The role of NGOs in spreading community awareness is very limited. Out of the six NGOs interviewed, one of the NGO's partners' organisations works on spreading awareness, and the others accept the rejection from the families and allow the survivor to live in shelter homes. The partner organisation's method is that before reintegrating the survivor, the organisation speaks to the family and the whole society (if the survivor is from a village) and to a community (if from urban areas). They provide counselling to society, local NGOs, and schools to ensure that the survivor emerges as a triumphant survivor and is provided with all the necessary opportunities given to any other child/woman in the community.

However, the same person confirmed that the work done is significantly less in the following words:

*‘Right, there is some work that's happening in the communities by NGOs, but it is very, very less’*

Hyderabad-based NGO.

The same respondent mentioned a case in which an NGO successfully rehabilitated, meaning the survivor started living on her own. She started her own noodle point business after she left the shelter home.

However, after a few months, when society became aware of her past, the customer footprint began to decline, and she eventually returned to the brothel. These cases demonstrate the importance of community awareness and rehabilitation to go hand in hand in improving the lives of sex trafficked survivors. It is also critical to recognise that social change does not happen overnight. Those single interventions, such as counselling communities and single campaigns run by the government, will not be successful, as one respondent mentioned:

*‘But again, human tendency, how much ever you talk only and until you are in that situation, or you face the depth of the waters until you're sinking until it comes to you. And the way you respond when it comes to your doorstep has to be different. Again, it comes back to the same resistance, and all have that… So one time interventions of conversations can't be helpful, but it has to go hand in hand’* Hyderabad-based NGO*.*

When speaking with an independent consultant, they stated that reintegration is very smooth and easy in Manipur (a state in Northeast India) because the society is based on community solidarity, and failure is accepted. According to the consultant, such good examples can be used to learn from and implement in other parts of the country. Overall, there is an acknowledgement of the importance of community-led approaches and awareness campaigns; however, as of now, no intensive campaigns are carried out by any stakeholder.

#### PUBLIC SEC TRAINING

Only four of the eleven respondents mentioned public sector training in some way: an international NGO, an IPS officer, an NGO in Delhi\*, and an NGO in Bangalore. The rationale was that the stigmatisation of sex work and sex trafficked survivors in society are carried into these public sector bodies, and the very people who are part of it come from the same community. This stigma causes public sector employees to be insensitive when working with survivors. As a result, there is a need to train these officials on how to handle such cases sensitively, as a single negative comment made by them can have long-term consequences for the survivor.

Many NGOs believe that public sector training is critical to rehabilitation because the journey to rehabilitation begins the moment the victim is identified and rescued. As a result, everyone involved must be properly trained. Two NGOs work in training police officers among the participants: an international NGO and an NGO in New Delhi\*. The training includes the use of sensitive language and ethical

behaviour. One non-governmental organisation uses a concept known as ethical storytelling, which is how we talk about vulnerable populations, such as how we define the problems they face and what words we use. For example, the organisation teaches the public sector to use words like intervention rather than rescue. Moreover, they also train other NGOs on how to use the survivor's identity while quoting their cases or using pictures. The NGO stated:

*‘For example, if I have to..., as an NGO, do fundraising, let's put something else there instead of the survivor's photo with me giving her a piece of bread because I'm exploiting her condition.*

*NGOs must exercise with … extreme caution in both their words and actions’* International NGO.

Also, due to resource constraints, the same NGO trains the trainers so that the maximum number of people can be covered. Again, there are only limited NGOs that train the public sector.

The theme answers the research question of the difference in implementation efforts and discourse. To summarise, although the government and NGOs have a keen understanding of the crucial elements, they lag in their implementation.

### GAPS

This theme answers the why part of the research question. Participants identified some limitations that act as roadblocks in their efforts to work to the best of their abilities to improve the lives of survivors. This theme is further subdivided into sub-themes: victimisation, the relationship between the government and non-governmental organisations, finance and funding, and autonomy harms (freedom after eighteen). The gaps are not limited to these sub-themes; these were the significant factors identified by nearly every NGO and Independent Consultant. This section will reveal the findings on each sub-theme and whether these NGOs provided any suggestions to fill the gaps.

#### Victimisation

Victimisation is defined as when a person is mistreated because they claim to be the victim of discrimination or when another person assists the victim who has faced/faces discrimination and oppression (Coutinho, 2014). The majority of the NGOs that took part reckon that victimisation still exists in the system and survivors are still required to provide evidence of their exploitation. As a result, the survivor feels estranged, making it difficult for the NGO to build trust with the survivor and convince them that the organisation cares about their welfare. The participant commented,

*‘So the first is that, like, just gaining the trust of these victims is very, very difficult. And with police being there, they become, you know, really, they get very, very afraid of, you know, thinking that they may go to jail, that the police may put them to jail, and they actually feel guilty as well’* Mumbai-based NGO.

Similarly, another respondent commented,

*‘The procedure of producing a survivor in front of CWC or normal court generates the feeling of guilt within the survivor, and they think they were in a far better situation in Brothels’* Delhi- based NGO.

Also, one of the participants spoke at length about how the system affects the survivor for years. To summarise her response, the system takes longer than the time stipulated to provide justice on a single case, and if the survivor faults on their statement in these years, she is not considered a victim. This traumatises the survivor for life.

The NGOs provided an alternative to the system of producing the survivor before the court, but they were unable to offer a tangible solution to the issue. Instead of using the court system, a case could be handled in a setting that resembles a home, giving the survivor the impression that the system is on her side rather than against her. It would make the survivor feel less guilty and trust the system. They also suggested that the government should train its employees to end the mistreatment of the survivors.

#### NGO and government relationship

The relationship between NGOs and the government is not very positive. In the interviews, many NGOs and independent consultants hinted at the government’s cynical attitude towards them. On the other hand, the state official also mentioned that they had to be extremely careful when selecting NGOs because many of them serve as a cover for money laundering. While the government's caution is understandable, a little more faith should be shown in these NGOs. The following was the conversation that was recorded on both sides:

*‘NGOs are also not transparent or good. We have to put in a lot of effort… to investigate which NGOs are good … because we sometimes find that these NGOs themselves work as traffickers’* CWC member.

*‘Government doesn't want to own us because they think that we're provoking the government officers or we are agitating against them, or we are against their own work policy … and all of that’* Hyderabad-based NGO.

Also, due to mistrust between NGOs and the government, non-profits use additional resources. NGOs perceive that government employees will be inefficient and use private resources. To state one case:

*‘We appoint private lawyers instead of government lawyers … because government lawyers are also not best … they don’t come on time or use harsh language’ Delhi*-based NGO.

This mistrust results in inefficient use and wastage of resources. Government lawyers can be trained, and other measures can be implemented, such as holding lawyers accountable if they are inconsistent. Overall, it is critical that all stakeholders collaborate and work together when dealing with issues such as sex trafficking. The government should avoid pestering and disappointing genuine non-governmental organisations. Nonprofits should also make every effort to report any discrepancy in NGO-related activities.

#### Funding and finance

The lack of funding in the NGO sector is a much-discussed gap; however, it continues to persist. The research was unable to conduct a thorough investigation into the methods used by NGOs for fundraising and how they are funded. It was discovered that almost all participants were not very forthcoming with information about their donor organisations or individuals. They maintained the confidentiality of the financial information. Still, they did mention how challenging it is for non-profit organisations to raise funds, which limits their ability to offer survivors the education and skills they need, such as mainstream skill-based courses.

Another way non-governmental organisations help survivors is through compensation paid by the government after it has been determined by the court that the survivor was exploited. NGOs believe this amount helps them and the survivors in the initial days, but many problems are associated with it. One of the NGOs responded:

‘*It is good that the government gives aid which gives … you know... stability but only for a short period. Just giving five lakhs at this time is just not enough for the person to survive in the long term’* Delhi-based NGO.

The same NGO explained that the government had made some changes in the compensation scheme, which has adversely affected the survivor. She said:

*‘So if the victim cannot prove that she's a victim, the money will be taken back from them’* Delhi- based NGO.

The government official also addressed the financial assistance provided. The government official stated that the survivor's situation determines the compensation given, and if the survivor requires education, 2000 rupees per month is provided for up to two children per family. However, this small sum does not address the underlying issues of poverty, and the persistence of poverty will result in lingering chances of re-trafficking. NGOs believe that the government must increase the compensation amount and work to establish a solid support network for the survivors. They suggested that the government should not look at it as seed money, meaning an initial amount by the government would be invested by the survivor, and that would sustain them. The government should understand that they are vulnerable and require longer financial support to sustain themselves.

#### Autonomy harms

According to the Majority Act of 1875, any person above eighteen is considered mature enough to make their own decisions, and the same applies to any adult survivor. This act allows them to decide for themselves if they want to live in care, i.e., in shelter homes or live on their own. Usually, this autonomy is harmful as the survivor is structurally limited to do anything on their own as they lack education and essential skills and, moreover, are in a vulnerable position to look after themselves (Canning, 2017;

Pemberton, 2015). The NGOs, too, perceive this as a significant challenge while working for the benefit of the survivor. The concerned responded:

*‘It is very difficult to work with women when you're in your full consciousness, right? Where trauma can be very active, and influences can be very active, the victim is brainwashed to think that they are good only to sell their body and make men pleasing, right? So it's very difficult to break all of that... As they have been seasoned for so long… like the majority of their life…’* Hyderabad- based NGO.

To summarise, the majority of participants believe that there is a delicate balance that NGOs must navigate when working with adult survivors because even if one single woman reports that she has been kept in shelter homes against her will, the NGOs can be accused of exploitation and face legal challenges. One of the independent consultants proposed a solution that NGOs could use. She suggested that before admitting any woman, NGOs present her with a detailed explanation of the pros and cons of living independently and taking support from an NGO. As the trafficker always tries to stay in touch with the victim to bring them back into sex work, NGOs should also provide thorough counselling on the likelihood of re-trafficking. The proposed solution may be beneficial if the NGOs have trained counsellors and do not impose themselves on the survivor.

# CHAPTER FIVE: REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### REFLECTIONS

The research began with understanding the critical elements and shifts in a rehabilitation model discussed by Wiese (2017) and Locke (2010). Further, it sought to explore if the discourses are put into practice by implementation organisations like NGOs and other government stakeholders. It was revealed that the gaps across elements are persistent, with some organisations doing better than others. In order to identify why these disconnections persist, the NGOs were asked to comment on the reasons for these gaps. Overall, the underlying reason for the disconnect is an ineffective collaboration between different stakeholders.

Instead of complimenting each other's efforts, the stakeholders sometimes exist as supplementary options for the survivor to choose from. For instance: the choice between government lawyers or private lawyers and the choice to register a case or seek the help of an NGO without filing a case (The law restricts the movement of those involved in the case until a decision is made if the survivor is from another country, which forces the survivor to leave the country with the aid of an NGO without registering a case). Thus, the first step towards building a successful model and environment for the survivor is for the stakeholders to collaborate effectively.

Also, most of the NGOs duplicate the model of others with the consideration that the existing models are best suited in the environment of resource constraints and other challenges. To date, NGOs function in a traditional manner and are restricted to providing traditional vocational courses. There is an underlying

assumption in these NGOs that a basic life where a survivor eats, sleeps, and does monotonous work is sufficient. Lack of innovation and determination to bring a change restricts the NGOs from helping the survivor in full capacity.

Furthermore, the language used during the conversations was one of gratification. Most NGOs operate with a sole-giver mentality and an enormous amount of self-praise, often leaving survivors more dejected than ever. In one of the conversations, a respondent stated that *‘we are not God... You can understand … that we cannot do everything... We sometimes have to tell the survivor that this is what they have, and no one will accept them outside society…we are all they have... They need to cooperate with us’* This cannot be generalised, but the presence of such mindsets in NGOs that are thought to be entirely altruistic undermines the effort to fight for human rights and dignity. Therefore, all NGOs must conduct regular internal inspections of their organisations and remain true to their objective. One method for self- inspection could be for NGOs to outsource a survey that analyses the organisation's internal behaviour and attitudes.

The discussion also revealed that the majority of these NGOs operate in the form of boarding schools,

where survivors are expected to adhere to a strict timetable. This framework can sometimes act as a pushing factor rather than a pulling factor. The model takes the survivor's colourful and lively life and replaces it with a colourless and mundane one. The survivor was used to getting ready, applying make-up, and talking to so many people in brothels and other brothel-like situations. In the shelter homes, they do all the mundane tasks with no opportunity to dress up and no social life. Furthermore, while in the brothel, they saw the exchange of money every day, regardless of how much they earned, whereas here in the shelter homes, they see no money. This affects their psyche and drives them back into sexual exploitation. There is a considerable need to revamp the model NGOs adopt and develop a framework that is inclusive of giving survivors the social lives they deserve.

The research used an intersectional feminist perspective, which is understanding the world through and for women. While rehabilitating and reintegrating sex trafficked survivors, NGOs recognised in a symphony that the effects of class, ethnicity, and culture that construct social institutions have multiple effects on an individual. However, in practice, the experiences of various women are grouped together as "sex trafficked survivors," and the complexities and nuances in individual lives are ignored (Hacock, 2007). This obscures non-profit organisations' efforts to achieve true social justice by challenging the class structure and understanding how different factors affect individuals in myriad ways. In all, the NGO's vision is limited to challenging the notion of men as the dominant gender to women and women's position in society relative to men. Moreover, not even a single NGO mentioned how the class and background of the survivors affect reintegration. NGOs are stuck in challenging gender relations and leave out all other factors that hinder successful reintegration.

Another observation was that these NGOs continue to use the term "victim." A victim is someone who

has suffered a loss or has been killed (kelly, 1993). In comparison, the term survivor refers to someone who physically survived the exploitation. Using the term "victim" reflects how NGOs regard women as passive victims of sexual exploitation. It is critical to recognise that men kill many women; many may feel that aspects of themselves have been destroyed, and many have suffered losses (ibid). However, the term "victim" obscures the other side of women's victimisation: the active and optimistic ways in which “women resist, cope, and survive” (Kelly, 1993, p.163). As the goal is to bring about social transformation, an attempt was made near the end of the interview to explain the difference in terminology and why they should use the term survivor rather than a victim. This highlights that tremendous work is required to bring an actual change to the ground.

The reflections and findings help the research tremendously to comprehend the gaps and suggest measures at the NGO and government levels.

### MEASURES AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Measures for non-governmental organisations

* + - 1. The findings and reflections reveal the gap that exists in discourse and practice in the rehabilitation model. The following measures are suggested for the NGOs:
         1. The model should be **highly individualistic** (Wiese, 2017), which means that the NGO

could develop guidelines for designing models on a case-to-case basis. The guidelines should include essential services, such as education, curricular activities, and vocational training, in collaboration with the government. However, the specifics of each of these services should be determined by the survivor's requirements. The NGOs should also try to learn from existing models. For instance, Call for Freedom is a non-profit organisation based in South Dakota (USA) that offers promising services to sex-trafficked survivors based on trauma-informed and survivor-centred principles (see more in Edwards et al., 2021). This model is structured in a way that caters to each survivor’s most essential and basic demands.

* + - * 1. NGOs should conduct **model evaluations** on a quarterly or yearly basis. The assessment

could be done by analysing the model's impact based on survivor reviews. Again, this evaluation could be outsourced; for instance, a different organisation carries the evaluation through observation or other experiments. These would give the opportunity for the NGOs to revise their models and always move with time.

* + - * 1. The whole system lags in providing the survivor with a person whom she can trust and someone who acts as a guardian. In the process, the survivor interacts with a different group of people; for example, the person who rescues them differs from the person who rehabilitates them. As a result, NGOs struggle to gain the trust of survivors. A **single**

**mentor** could be assigned to the survivor as soon as they are located and the intervention

starts, and the mentor could maintain contact with them for as long as the survivor needs it. This is another way that NGOs could help while working along with the Government. The survivor could always turn to this one mentor as a guardian and ask for help.

Additionally, the mentor must be a skilled individual who can easily collaborate with the government and NGOs on their mentee's behalf.

* + - * 1. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) must continue **advocating on behalf** of the

vulnerable population to the government. The non-governmental organisations (NGOs) could lobby the government to increase financial compensation, reduce red tape (bureaucratic procedures that cause unnecessary delays), demand a special court, and other provisions that improve the lives of survivors. Among the participants, none does the advocacy work.

#### Measures for the government

Government is the key stakeholder that can facilitate a drastic change in how the rehabilitation model is implemented. The government could adopt the following measures:

1. Move past victimisation by ensuring **regular training** of the anti-human trafficking unit. Also,

the government could end the system of producing survivors in front of courts. This could be replaced by home-like establishments where the government bodies' representatives reach out to

the survivor or their representatives. It would enable the survivor to feel empowered and to gain the survivor’s trust.

1. **A community awareness programme** is a very necessary step that the government should work

on. Along with the one-time intervention in the communities, the government can work with media houses to spread continuance awareness on sex trafficking, the reintegration process of the survivors and their human rights.

1. The government should also work on **building partnerships with other stakeholders** like

schools, universities, and business cooperations that would collaborate to provide a normal life to the survivor.

#### General recommendations

* + - 1. Change in use of words, for instance, survivor instead of victim, and intervention instead of rescue in the laws and general usage.
      2. Government should review and update its policy regularly
      3. Build a better infrastructure in government shelter homes that can provide basic facilities
      4. NGOs to avoid rigid timetables and try to provide social life to the survivor by organising festival functions and group activities
      5. NGOs and governments need to trust each other and work in collaboration.
      6. Also, apart from general counselling, the survivors should be provided with career counselling which helps them make decisions for themselves.
      7. Work on making them feel inclusive - mandatory training on technical and financial skills.
      8. The government anti-trafficking projects are funded mainly to help the survivors return home, but that often results in the survivor being re-trafficked. Therefore, there is a need to work on understanding push factors and eliminating the root causes.

LIMITATIONS

The study was limited to how non-governmental organisations (NGOs) assist women survivors in rehabilitation and did not include any other gender. Contrary to popular belief, a large number of gay, lesbian, and transgender (LGBTQ) people are targeted by sex traffickers (Boukli and Renz, 2018).

However, NGOs in India primarily focus on rehabilitating women and girls, further limiting research into LGBTQ rehabilitation frameworks. Nevertheless, the continuing focus on only women survivors is also very important because, according to statistics still, women are a major target of sex traffickers. This presents an opportunity for further research that could focus on covering all genders, which would fill another research gap on the sexual exploitation of the LGBTQ community.

Furthermore, the study's recommendations will only be effective if all stakeholders work together with active willingness and collaboration. There is an urgent need for rehabilitation and intensive community awareness programmes to work in tandem. Another limitation of the study is that it may be influenced by social desirability bias. In a nutshell, social desirability bias occurs when a respondent answers a research question to appear politically correct and present the best version of themselves (Grimm, 2010). In this study, NGOs frequently chose to answer questions in a way that portrayed them favourably. However, the study attempted to mitigate its effects by confirming their anonymity and disclosing the purpose of the research to the NGOs. Along the way, the government stakeholders were cautious, but the effects were mitigated by assuring them of anonymity.

# 6. CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

To summarise, the study sought to learn how sex trafficked survivors are rehabilitated and reintegrated into an Indian society where sex work is frowned upon. The study used a feminist lens to interview members of implementing bodies such as NGOs and government officials to investigate the issue further. The literature review provided information on rehabilitation discourses; however, it was discovered that there is a literature gap in analysing if these discourses are put into practice (Edwards, 2021). To fill the gap, the study focused on how NGOs design rehabilitation models in accordance with discourse and, if gaps exist, what are the reasons for them.

During the interviews, it became clear that there is a significant gap in implementing the current rehabilitation discourse [the discourse is given importance because it serves as a window for theory and power in social sciences]. The study used themes to answer the research question, and the underlying reason for the discrepancy is an ineffective collaboration among stakeholders and an understanding of what works best for each survivor. Aside from that, there are gaps in language usage and overall training of the public sector and NGOs for handling sensitive cases. The study provided policy recommendations and measures for implementing NGOs and the government. Nonetheless, these measures will only be effective if all stakeholders collaborate and work together.

In the future, this study could serve as the basis for NGOs to develop their understanding of the gaps they and their contemporaries face and implement some key recommendations. Furthermore, this research addresses very sensitive and important issues that could assist the government in shifting some of its

attention from focusing on punishing the accused to working on rehabilitating survivors and preventing sex trafficking. Also, this study has the potential to broaden its scope and include survivors in order to report on the need for survivor-led model reviews.

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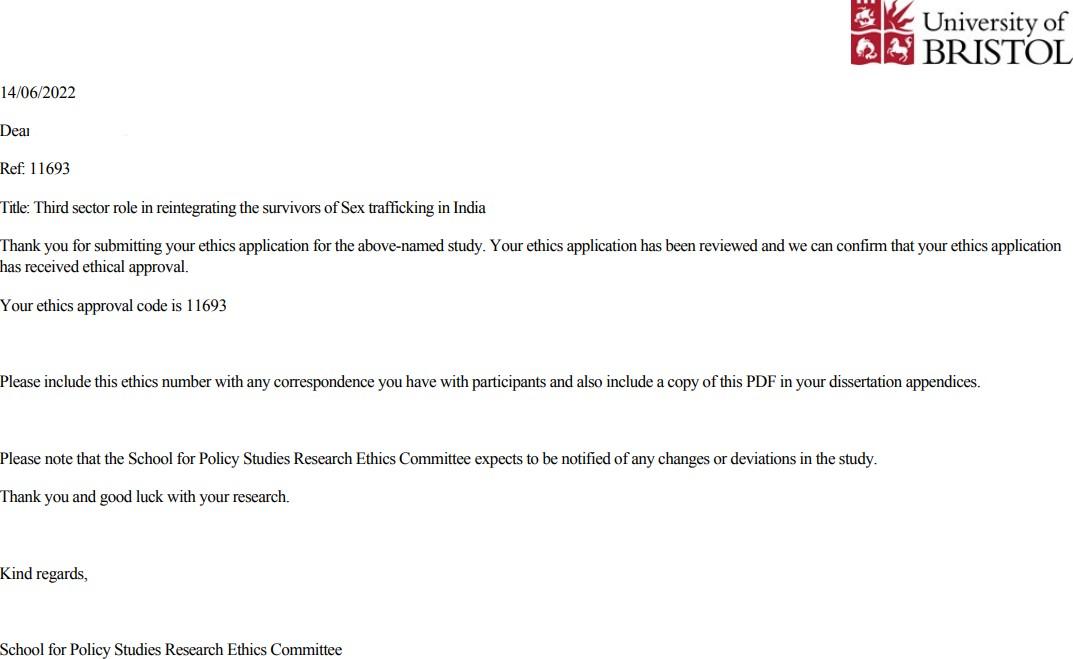
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# APPENDICES

## Appendix one: Ethics approval form



Appendix two: Consent form

**Consent form**

**Informed Consent for : *Third sector’s role in reintegrating the survivors of sex trafficking in India***

##### Please tick the appropriate boxes

1. **Taking part in the study**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| I have read and understood the study information dated **[**19/07/2022**]**, or it has been read to me. I have been able to ask questions about the study and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction |  |  |
| I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason. I understand that if the information has been anonymised, it may not be possible for the data to be withdrawn. |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| I understand that taking part in the study involves a semi-structured interview which will be conducted through online mode. These interviews will be recorded, transcribed into text and later it will be destroyed after successful completion of the research. |  |  |
| I understand that taking part in the study has psychological risks such as anxiety, sleep deprivation, and altered behavior as it involves discussing the integration of survivors of sex trafficking. |  |  |

##### Use of the information in the study

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| I understand that information I provide will be used for the dissertation project at the University of Bristol and if considerable findings are discovered maybe later published |  |  |
| I understand that the information I provide will be kept confidential unless it suggests that someone is at risk of serious harm. |  |  |
| I understand that the data I provide will be stored securely at the University of Bristol until [name] has been awarded their degree. |  |  |
| I agree that my words can be quoted anonymously in research outputs. |  |  |

1. **Signatures**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of participant [IN CAPITALS]** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Signature:** |  |
| **Date:** |  |

##### If the participant is unable to sign, the witness can do so for them in the box below

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| I have witnessed the accurate reading of the consent form with the potential participant and the individual has had the opportunity to ask questions. I confirm that the individual has given consent freely. |  |
| **Name of witness [IN CAPITALS]** |  |
| **Signature** |  |
| **Date** |  |

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant and, to the best of my ability, ensured that the participant understands to what they are freely consenting.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of the researcher [IN CAPITALS]** |  |
| **Signature:** |  |
| **Date:** |  |

## Appendix three: Interview guide

1. original

##### Open-ended questions and follow-up questions will be asked based on the answers. About the person

* 1. Position
  2. Role
  3. The work profiles

##### Sex Trafficking and integration

1. Orgainsation knowledge on identifying the victims of sex trafficking
2. How do you build a relationship with the survivors?
3. What approach does the Ngo practice in their efforts in reintegrating the survivors back into mainstream society?
4. How does the NGO decide on the needs of the individual?
5. The problems they face in the reintegration
6. Along with this, some questions will be related to if the NGO can differentiate between successful and non-successful integration.
   1. if successful, what factors ensure successful integration
   2. What kind of social relationships matter?
7. How do (Ngo name) prevent re-trafficking?

##### Government policies

1. if any policy/program of the government helps them in the process and
2. What do you suggest the government should do?
3. Revised interview guide

##### Open-ended questions and follow-up questions will be asked based on the answers. About the person

* 1. Position
  2. Role
  3. The work profiles

##### Sex Trafficking and integration

1. Orgainsation knowledge on identifying the victims of sex trafficking
2. How do you build a relationship with the survivors?
3. What approach does the Ngo practice in their efforts in reintegrating the survivors back into mainstream society?
4. How does the NGO decide on the needs of the individual?
5. The problems they face in the reintegration
6. Along with this, some questions on if the NGO can differentiate between successful and non- successful integration.
   1. if successful, what factors ensure successful integration
   2. What kind of social relationships matter?
7. How do (Ngo name) prevent re-trafficking?
8. What other measures NGOs adopt to improve the lives of the suvirvor
9. Do NGO's consider sex work to be voluntary? If so, do they consider consent?

##### Government policies

1. if any policy/program of the government helps them in the process and
2. What do you suggest the government should do?

The same questions about sex trafficking were asked from the individuals in government organisation. The other questions were on:

* 1. How many programmes are launched to raise community awareness?
  2. What financial aid does the government provide?
  3. Provisions for survivors older than 18

## Appendix four: Mail sent to gatekeepers

Subject: request for recruiting participants for my research Greetings of the day,

I am , student of MSc Public policy at University of Bristol (UK). I am conducting research on the ‘Role of the Third sector in the rehabilitation of survivors of Sex trafficking in India’. For this, I aim to interview people working closely in this area. For instance, heads of NGOs,

people volunteering for this cause for at least more than one year and other stakeholders involved in the cause. In this, I require your help in contacting and recruiting relevant participants.

The objective of the research is to help NGOs accelerate the process of rehabilitation through better government policies. I intend to furnish all the details required at any stage to you and

also provide you with a copy of my findings towards the end. Also, in this mail, I have attached the consent form and the information sheet, which clearly mention the objective of the research.

It would be helpful if you accept my request and assist me in finding the volunteers for the Research.

I will eagerly wait for your approval Thank and regards,

## Mail sent to participants

Greetings Ma'am Divyanissi,

I hope this email finds you well. I am Nidhi Jain, a public policy student at the University of Bristol. I am writing to express my gratitude for the support in my research. I am approaching with the help of the Executive Director at Red Rope (Ms. Chrysolyte)

Research brief:

**Research Title**: the third sector's role in reintegrating the sex trafficked survivors

**Objective:** To understand the gaps in rehabilitation frameworks different NGOs use and what policy gaps they recognise.

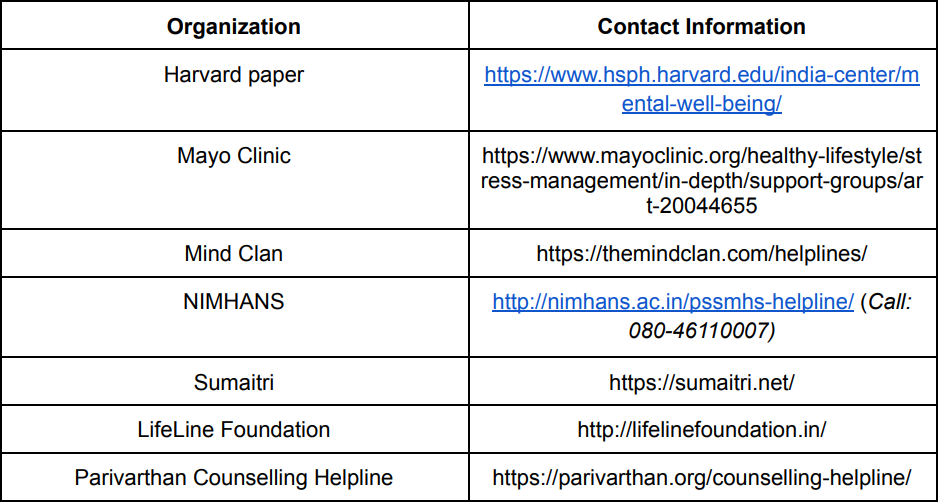
**Research method**: Qualitative interview

**Platform:** we intend to use zoom, and the interview will not last for more than 40 minutes Your participation will be valuable to my research.

I am waiting to schedule an interview with you. I have furnished all the documents related to the consent letter, university ethics approval, and further information on the research for your perusal.

Thanking you in anticipation Regards,

## Appendix five: List of support services



Appendix Six: University of Bristol ethics form



**University of Bristol Research Ethics Application**

**Investigator information**

Application Submitter Details

Title

Miss

First Name

Nidhi

Surname

Jain

Faculty

Faculty of Social Sciences and Law

Department

School for Policy Studies

School

School for Policy Studies

Telephone

Email

[nidhi.jain.2021@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:nidhi.jain.2021@bristol.ac.uk)

Preferred Name or Also Known As

Nidhi Jain

Faculty

Social Sciences and Law

School / Department / Centre

School for Policy Studies

Please select the Research Ethics Committee (REC) to review your research ethics application:

School for Policy Studies Research Ethics Committee

Is this a student project? (I.e. Is the ethics application submitted as part of your student qualification?)

Yes

Please declare your level of study

Taught Masters

Supervisor Contact Details

Title

Dr

First Name

Vicky

Surname

Canning

Department

Policy Studies

Faculty

Faculty of Social Sciences and Law

Email

[victoria.canning@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:victoria.canning@bristol.ac.uk)

Supervisor Details (if external to the University of Bristol)

Please provide their name, organisation details, email address and telephone number.

Please provide details of any other researchers/collaborators involved in the study.

Anticipated Start Date

Anticipated End Date

To proceed to the next page select 'Next' in the Actions tiles.

To save your application for completion and submission at a later date please select 'Save' in the Actions tiles.

30/10/2022

31/05/2022

Study Title

Third sector’s role in reintegrating the survivors of sex trafficking in India.

**Brief study outline**

Brief Project Outline (up to approximately 300 words)

Project Outline Background

The United Nations Protocol on Trafficking defines sex trafficking as "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of persons" by using "force[,]... coercion, abduction, fraud, [and] deception" to control and exploit another person, including, but not limited to, sex exploitation (UNODC, 2000). Trafficking is a modern day slavery that ensnares between 12 million and 27 million people into lives of forced labour or sexual exploitation. This means that the number of people in salve today are more than the ever in history (Haker, 2011).

However, Asia is worthy of special attention because it is here that the industry and trafficking networks are most sophisticated and well developed. Commercial sex is widespread in Asia, in fact, it is even more common than in west (Brown, 2011). Especially, India is a source, destination and transit country for trafficking of forced labour and sex trafficking. It is estimated that around 20 million people are part of commercial sex workers and 80% of this population is trafficked (Dasra, 2013).

Research objective

The purpose of this study is to investigate the involvement of the third sector in the integration efforts of survivors of sex trafficking in India. It aims to close a study gap on how society sees survivors of sex trafficking and how the NGO may improve its integration strategy through improved government policies.

Methods

The research will conduct semi-structured interviews with the use of an interview guide. Participants will include important stakeholders working to promote survivors' rehabilitation (NGOs), the general public (to gauge public perception of survivors), and cooperators who support the cause (in order to understand in which the way the funds are channelised).

To proceed to the next page select 'Next' in the Actions tiles.

To save your application for completion and submission at a later date please select 'Save' in the Actions tiles.

**Checklist questions**

Checklist Questions Please read the guidance note below

**SPS RESEARCH ETHICS**

**APPLICATION FORM: U/G and TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS**

This form must be completed for each piece of research carried out by all undergraduate and taught post-graduate students in the School for Policy Studies.

Students should discuss their proposed research with their supervisors who will then approve and sign this form before forwarding to the relevant dissertation convenor (or in some cases unit convenor or programme director) who will approve the form on behalf of the SPS REC when they are happy with the contents.

**Failure to get approval prior to conducting any fieldwork** may result in the University taking action for research misconduct – the outcome of such action may be that you are unable to submit your fieldwork findings for assessment and **your degree may not be awarded.**

Once your study is approved, you must follow the plan described in this form. You should remember that ethics is an on- going process, ie your ethical thinking is not ‘done’ when your form is signed. It is about how you act as a researcher. You should remain reflexive throughout the research process and think about how the research is impacting on your participants and yourself. You should refer to this completed form throughout your research process to make sure you are remaining within your ethical approval. If you wish to change your research plan, then you must discuss this with your supervisor. If the change is very small your supervisor can approve the change. However, if the change is more significant, you will need to ask for an amendment to your ethical approval. Your supervisor and dissertation convenor must approve this change in writing. If you do not get approval for changes, then you won’t have ethical approval for the change, and it may result in the University taking action for research misconduct.

**Who needs to provide Ethics approval for your project?**

The School will only consider those projects which do not require ethical approval from elsewhere. As such, you should make sure that your proposed research does not fall within the jurisdiction of [HMPPS (Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/her-majestys-prison-and-probation-service/about/research) or the NRES system. e.g. does it involve staff or offenders or does it involve [NHS patients, staff or facilities](http://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/ethics/).

Social care research projects which involve NHS patients, people who use services or people who lack capacity as research participants need to be reviewed by a Social Care Research Ethics Committee. Similarly, research which accesses unanonymised patient records (without informed consent) must be reviewed by a REC and the National Information Governance Board for Health and Social Care (NIGB).

Any application to an external body should be discussed with your supervisor.

**Terminology used in this form:**

1. **Primary research** includes any research that collects new data such as interviews, focus groups, observations, online surveys, new data collected via a social media post etc.
2. **Secondary analysis/literature review** relates to the re-analysis of data that already exists such as analysis of publicly available documents or tv programmes, analysis of existing social media posts, reviews systematic or otherwise, or statistical analysis of analysis of publicly available datasets etc.

Please select the method of data collection below. This will determine the sections of the form you will need to complete in the next page. Tick all that apply.

Primary research data collection

Secondary data analysis

Systematic review

Face-to-face data collection

Working with children and vulnerable people

To proceed to the next page select 'Next' in the Actions tiles.

To save your application for completion and submission at a later date please select 'Save' in the Actions tiles.

**Study design and background**

School for Policy Studies Research Ethics Application Form

To ensure that your research ethics ethics application is reviewed and validated for completeness, please complete all sections shown below.

Please ensure that **all participant facing study documentation** has been provided for review.

Please select your programme:

Disability Studies: Inclusive Theory and Research (MSc) Health and Wellbeing (MRes)

Nutrition Physical Activity and Public Health (MSc) Public Policy (MSc)

Policy Research (MSc) Social Work (MSc)

Social Work Research (MSc)

Date dissertation is to be submitted

12/09/2022

* 1. Who are your potential participants? Please include the type of participant and how many of these participants you are aiming to include in your sample.

The people participating in this research are:

* + 1. Members of the Ngo working for reintegrating the survivors of sex trafficking
    2. Any individual volunteering for the cause for more than a year
    3. Cooperated who support the cause

I need to interview 6 NGOs, 5 volunteers and 2 cooperates.

These NGOs are all from Mumbai, Delhi, and Hyderabad. The literature study provides the foundation for choosing these locations. In India, these cities serve as destinations for women trafficked for sexual exploitation. Using the purposive sampling method, I aim to interview members from the following organisation:

1. Rescue Foundation (Delhi)
2. Prajwala (Hyderabad)
3. Prerana (Mumbai)

The gatekeeper will assist me in contacting these organisations, and I intend to use the snowball approach to recruit members of three additional organisations, each from a different city. Due to time and resource restrictions, I expect to interview members of six organisations; however, the research will conduct comprehensive interviews with these organisations to gain a deeper understanding.

* 1. Recruiting your participants. Please select all that apply

I am using publicly available contact details

I am using a ‘gatekeeper’ to contact participants

I confirm that I am attaching the information I will provide the gatekeeper about the research

If you are using Facebook, Twitter or other social media platform, please confirm that you have read the guidance on the SPS website (see the i icon for the link to the guidance)

If the ‘gatekeeper’ is a Facebook group/other administered platform, please confirm that you will approach the administrator of the group for permission to use the group to post information about your study.

If applicable, please provide the details of the ‘gatekeeper’ being used:

Rishikumar Singh

President of Society For Positive Initiative (New Delhi) rishikumar@councilofroyalroots.com

* 1. Anonymity and Confidentiality. Complete the below declarations.

I confirm that I will anonymise the information collected and keep it confidential unless there is a risk of significant harm. I will make this limit to confidentiality clear to participants.

Yes

* 1. What materials are you using to recruit participants

Please provide any recruitment material used to recruit potential participants to take part in your research for review.

Documents

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Document Name** | **File Name** | **Version Date** | **Version** | **Size** |
| Participant Recruitment | Recuritment\_Support (1) | Recuritment\_Support (1).docx |  |  | 105.1 KB |

Have you provided copies of all recruitment material with your ethics application for review?

Yes No

* 1. Data collection methods

1. In Person - Please tell us what data collection methods you are using. Please tick all that apply.

Face to face interviews Focus group interviews

Observations (please describe the type of observation)

1. Online Methods - Please tell us what data collection methods you are using. Please tick all that apply.

Online survey

Online live in-person interviews

Online interviews by email or messaging etc. Telephone interview

Data collection using social media

How long will the involvement take the participant for each activity?

The semi structured interview will last for 35-40 minutes for each individual and may stretch for 50-55 minutes if the person interviewed hold significant amount of experience.

Please upload your interview or focus group schedule/topic guide/observation schedule/height/weight recording form or online survey etc...

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Document Name** | Documents  **File Name** | **Version Date** | **Version** | **Size** |
| Topic Guide | Interview\_Guide 1 | Interview\_Guide 1.docx |  |  | 7.6 KB |

1. Other methods - Will the study require data collection via other methods? E.g. the researcher taking height and weight measurements.

No

* 1. Providing information about your research to participants

Upload the information sheet/my online survey that includes all the information about the research.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Document Name** | Documents  **File Name** | **Version Date** | **Version** | **Size** |
| Participant Information Sheet | Information\_sheet (1) | Information\_sheet (1).docx |  |  | 47.7 KB |

Do you confirm that you have attached an information sheet/my online survey that includes all the information about the research?

Yes

* 1. Informed Consent

Informed Consent Declaration. Please tick all that apply.

I will obtain written/online/electronic consent for informed, voluntary participation I will record verbal and transcribe the participants’ verbal consent

I have adapted the standard consent form and my consent document is attached. (This can be part of the online survey). I will not be able to obtain written consent

Please upload any participant, parental/guardian consent form(s), transcripts, including any consenting statements included as part of an online survey.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Document Name** | Documents  **File Name** | **Version Date** | **Version** | **Size** |
| Consent Form | Consent form | Consent form .docx |  |  | 21.9 KB |

* 1. Impact of your research on participants

Clearly state any potential risk to participants and how you will address this risk.

The study of sex trafficking is sensitive, as evidenced by medical literature. Participants in this procedure may have psychological risks such as anxiety when discussing the subject, sleep deprivation from reliving the events, and emotional distress. To reduce any harm, I have designed the interview in semi-structure format, this will allow the participant to lead the discussion according to their comfort. To prevent this risk, I intend to openly identify all potential risks to the participant, urge them to stop the interview if they feel too overwhelmed, and offer them with a list of resources to help them with their well-being.

Upload any documents describing suitable support services available to participants.

Documents

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Document Name** | **File Name** | **Version Date** | **Version** | **Size** |
| Distress Protocol | support for participants | support for participants.pdf |  |  | 47.0 KB |

* 1. Your physical safety

Your physical safety declaration. Please tick all that apply.

I confirm that I will use the public/community venues described in question\* for my face to face fieldwork. I confirm I will take my charged, with credit/contract minutes mobile phone with me

I confirm that I will notify a trusted person of the location of my face to face fieldwork and when I am expected to return. I will contact them when I have left the participant.

* 1. What will you do if you have too many participants?

I confirm that I will thank unneeded participants for their interest by email/letter. If necessary, my supervisor will check this communication.

Not applicable

Data Management - How will you manage your data?

Data Management Declaration. Please select all that apply.

I confirm that that data collected/used will be stored on the University of Bristol server.

I confirm that paper documents will be stored in a secure draw or cabinet until they can be scanned and stored on the university server

I confirm that I will dispose of any paper documents securely

I confirm that I will keep my data until after I have been awarded my degree: I will then destroy all data collected, including electronic audio and document files and shred hard copy transcripts.

Your emotional wellbeing (To be completed by all students whether you are doing primary reseasrch including fieldwork or secondary analysis).

Clearly state any potential risk to you as the researcher and how you will address this risk.

I am conscious of the sensitivity of the problem of sex trafficking, as well as how the narration, extensive research, and case studies might have a psychological impact on me. It has the potential to disrupt my sleep and increase my anxiousness. To counteract any negative impacts, I intend to remain aware of my emotions and seek student well-being assistance at all times. In addition, I shall notify my supervisor of any unexpected changes in my emotions or well-being.

Student Declaration

I certify that the statements made in this request are accurate and complete, and if I receive approval for this project from my supervisor/unit convener I will conduct my research as stated.

I agree to inform my advisor/supervisor/unit convener in writing of any emergent problems or proposed procedural changes and that I will not proceed with the research until any proposed changes have been reviewed and approved.

I have attached all the relevant documentation necessary to carry out this research.

I am aware that this form and, if necessary, REC approval from the SPS REC must be included in an appendix in my dissertation.

**Signatures**

To proceed to the next page select 'Next' in the Actions tiles.

To save your application for completion and submission at a later date please select 'Save' in the Actions tiles.

Please upload any other documents that you think may be relevant to your research. There is no limit to the

number of documents you can upload.

Any other

information

Supporting information Please provide any additional information in relation to your study that you think may be relevant.

**Supporting Information**

**Applicant signature**

**Signed:** This form was signed by Miss Nidhi Jain (nidhi.jain.2021@bristol.ac.uk) on 07/06/2022 14:53

**Supervisor Signature**

Once you have completed your ethics form and uploaded all related documents ask your supervisor to review your ethics application by clicking this button.

**Signed:** This form was signed by Dr Vicky Canning (victoria.canning@bristol.ac.uk) on 08/06/2022 09:18

As the named supervisor on this research ethics application, by signing this form I confirm that:

I have reviewed this form;

I approve the information in this form and do not think higher level approval is necessary;

If appropriate I have sought advice from the SPS REC, this advice has been heeded and approval has been given;

If appropriate this form will be examined by the SPS REC or an application made to a NHS REC.