

Concept of Women Trafficking in India

Aateka Bano^{1,*}

Abstract

Women have been trafficked around the world since ancient times. Women were not considered human beings and were denied their basic human rights. Human trafficking has become an easy business to get high economic profits from, which is easier than arms and drug smuggling. Globally, 70% of women are trafficked, of whom 50% are under the age of 18. Somewhere in the increasing cases of trafficking of women in India, social neglect of women, gender inequality, and evil practices like the dowry system have played a role. Women have been exploited in many ways from the Vedic era to the British period; even today, this exploitation has not ended, but the earlier form of exploitation has taken a dreadful form. In the form of earlier exploitation, as women have been considered subservient to men, even the women of the royal family were also victims of exploitation. At that time, women were struggling with evil practices. Also, some new types of exploitation have registered their names in these types of exploitation, like trafficking of female organs and surrogacy. Most of the women are lured by the lure of a high salary and quick income, and they are sent to neighboring countries for the purpose of prostitution, domestic slavery, or forced labor. One of the reasons for the increase in women's trafficking in present times is making friends on Facebook or WhatsApp, falling in love, and getting cheated.

Keywords: Forced labor, sexual exploitation, sex trafficking, tough culture situation, UNODC global report on trafficking, world day against trafficking

INTRODUCTION

Women's trafficking has been practiced since ancient times in all parts of the world but, for the most part, has not been considered serious. Certain sections of society were exploited and deprived of their basic human rights. Women, in particular, were not considered human beings and were dominated by male members of society. Women and young girls were trafficked in ancient times for the purpose of being domestic slaves, slaves, or prostitutes [1].

POSITION OF WOMEN DURING THE VEDIC AGE

Women were subject to male dominance and supervision throughout their lives; as the control of the father of the child, as the control of the husband of the wife, and as the control of the son of the widow. Human rights violations have existed since the Vedic era.

It is said that the smuggling of women was mainly for the meat trade during the Vedic period. They are considered to be two sides of the same coin. The trade and smuggling of meat have thus become integral parts of Indian culture. During the 6th century, most of the written *Puranas* refer to the presence of dancing girls dedicated to temples, and this is evidence of the existence of women who are exploited in the name of the god.

*Author for Correspondence

Aateka Bano
E-mail: aateka83@gmail.com

¹Associate Professor, Glocal Law School, Glocal University, Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh, India

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POSITION OF WOMEN DURING THE EPIC AGE

Two epics written during this era show the pathetic conditions of girls and, therefore, the suffering undergone by women. A lady was given

as a prize to the winner of the battle, competition, or betting. Her position in society was that of a commodity which may be bought and sold and a material for betting. There is a reference to dancing girls and prostitutes of loose morals within the country of the Ramayana, which testifies that ladies in those days may have needed to be traded as pleasure-giving commodities with the exception of a few. There is a reference in the Ramayana that ladies were considered commodities and subjects of delight, and there was the practice of dedicating girls to the temple with few exceptions. Men had the right to suspect the fidelity and righteousness of girls without properly analyzing the particular truth. Women were expected to be chaste and modest, which did not apply to men. This might be proved through instances in the Ramayana. Sita, after being rescued by Rama, after killing Ravana, suspected Sita's chastity. She had to revive the fireside ordeal to prove her chastity. She was again sent to exile because the subjects of the kingdom suspected her chastity [2].

Rama, so as to please his subjects, had sent his wife to the forest. This instant clearly shows that even in our ancient literature, women had neither equality before men nor the right to oppose injustice when it was inflicted on them.

In the Valmiki Ramayana, though it is considered a popular epic within the Hindu scriptures, it is sad to notice that ladies are depicted as subordinate to men and have no right to boost their voices against the lads, despite being constantly subjected to humiliation and violations of their human rights. This epic has been considered sacred and ladies are expected to think of Sita as a model in their lives. It is a pity that Sita and other goddesses did not oppose such an act by Rama. This pitiable condition continues, and it is accepted even today with no valid reason [3].

In the Mahabharata, the sufferings of Kunti, Draupadi, and Gandhari, the feminine characters, show that ladies belonging to royalty were also not in a better position than girls of lower strata. These women were compelled by circumstances to sacrifice their interests for the sake of the kingdom and its men. There are a number of references in the Mahabharata where women were sent as wedding dowry alongside the bride; women were treated as slaves with no right to hunt for any relief or any remedy.

Within the epic Mahabharata, where girls are depicted as commodities with no right to exercise fundamental rights, King Virata, to celebrate his success within the battle directed "public women" to entertain the lads who had assembled to celebrate the victory. There is also a reference to the many kings who sent women as gifts to entertain the lads assembled to participate in the Ashvamedha ceremony (horse sacrifice) performed by King Yudhishtira [4].

Brahmins who performed Shradha (funeral) got thousands of pretty maids as gifts as consideration for their work. It is reported that of the maids gifted, only a few were ready to find husbands, and most of them became sex workers making them susceptible to paying taxes regularly at a fixed rate to the state. There is also a reference to a number of sex workers who were appointed by the state to figure as state spies.

In Vishnu Samhita, there is a mention of the trafficking of girls, which states that it was an unpardonable sin to entice a woman far away from her parents and subject her to sexual exploitation (prostitution), and people who murder a pimp or procurer are exempt from any penance or punishment. There was also a restriction imposed on people from taking food cooked by sex workers.

1. Penalties for seduction are to be increased.
2. Enforcement authorities tend to have more power to require the minor girls within the brothel into their custody.
3. To supply the commissioner of police with the facility to exclude procurers, pimps, and managers of brothels from his jurisdiction This 1923 Act is taken into account as being first in nature and having created a public.

4. Awareness of the necessity to rescue minor girls from brothels and supply them with secured shelter homes. This act also provided for the rescue of women under sixteen years of age who were to be produced before the court, and as per the writ, placed in suitable custody [5].

ENACTMENT OF ACTS AGAINST TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN

This landmark Act, to suppress immoral trafficking in women and girls, has acted as a catalyst for other states to enact similar laws on this serious crime. They are:

- The Uttar Pradesh Minor Girls Protection Act VIII of 1929,
- The Madras Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act V of 1930,
- The Bengal Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act VIII of 1933,
- The Uttar Pradesh Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act VIII of 1933,
- The Bombay Devadasi Protection Act X of 1934,
- The Punjab Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act IV of 1935,
- The Mysore Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act VIII of 1936,
- The Madras Devadasi (Prevention and Dedication) Act XXXI of 1947,
- The Bihar Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act II of 1948,
- The Saurashtra Prevention of Prostitution Act VII of 1952,
- The Hyderabad Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act of 1952,
- The Travancore-Cochin Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act IV of 1952,
- The Madhya Pradesh Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act of 1953,
- The Ajmer Prevention of Prostitution Act, 1953,
- The All-India Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956.

All these acts, taken by different states within the country, with reference to the suppression or prevention of immoral trafficking show the magnitude of the problem that was prevailing at that point. The UN charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, mention the rights of girls and the obligation of the state to safeguard their interests. The priority of covering vulnerable sections of society was already taken into serious consideration by each state within the country with 47 states enacting suitable legislation for preventing or suppressing the immoral trafficking of girls. The states have taken all measures to combat trafficking, but thanks to various lacunae, the matter could not be effectively addressed. This example still prevails in spite of Immoral Trafficking Prevention, has been drafted after carefully analyzing the pros and cons [6].

WOMEN TRAFFICKING IN INDIA

One study estimated the presence of at least eight million trafficking victims in India, the majority of whom are bonded labors. Intergenerational bonded labor continued, whereby traffickers transferred the outstanding debts of deceased workers to their parents, siblings, or children [7]. Human trafficking, an issue affecting mainly women and girls, is deeply rooted in India. Although it is difficult to measure the exact scale of the issue due to its hidden and illegal nature, it is reported throughout the country every year, according to government statistics [8].

TRAFFICKING

The 2020 UNODC is the fifth of its kind mandated by the General Assembly through the 2010 United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. It covers 148 countries and provides an overview of patterns and flows of trafficking in persons at global, regional, and national levels, based primarily on trafficking cases detected between 2016 and 2019. As UNODC has been systematically collecting data on trafficking in persons for more than a decade, trend information is presented for a broad range of indicators.

As with previous years, this edition of the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons presents a global picture of the patterns and flows of trafficking, alongside detailed regional analyses and country profiles [9].

WORLD DAY AGAINST TRAFFICKING

World Trafficking Day is celebrated every year on July 30 to make people aware of trafficking around the world. The purpose of this day is to inform and educate the people of the world about the crime of trafficking in which women and children are exploited for sadistic tasks, like forced wage labor and sex. Trafficking generates more than \$150 billion in criminal revenue each year, with more than 25 million victims of child and women's abuse through sexual exploitation or coercion around the world. This represents a massive security issue and promotes serious problems, like corruption and terrorism [10].

CONCLUSION

The position of girls from Vedic age to British age shows that ladies were mainly subjected to sexual exploitation in comparison to other sorts of exploitation, and particularly the sources prove that ladies were either transferred from one person to another as commodities. In a male-dominated society, it was believed that women were born to serve them and had no right to revolt for violation of any rights. It is clear from the knowledge collected from various sources regarding the position of girls till date that ladies are regarded and treated as commodities, and therefore, the material of exploitation. Women are susceptible to violations of their human rights, like slavery, domestic servitude, and prostitution. The opposite offences, like trafficking in purchasable organs and surrogacy have developed recently. Trafficking of girls always does not end in exploitation within the sort of prostitution. It is one of the sorts of exploitation women are forcibly used into by the traffickers for their own gain.

Men, women, and children are trafficked in India for diverse reasons. Women and girls are trafficked within the country for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and forced marriage, especially in those areas where the sex ratio is highly skewed in favour of men [11].

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