

**Sexual violence and trafficking of women in Mexico: a qualitative analysis on
consequences¹**

Dr. Arun Kumar Acharya
Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales
Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León,
Av. Lázaro Cárdenas Ote. y Paseo de la Reforma S/N,
Campus Mederos C.P. 64930,
Monterrey, N.L. Mexico
Tel/Fax: +52(81) 83 29 42 37
Email: acharya_77@yahoo.com

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ABSTRACT

Trafficking of women whether internal or international for the purpose of sexual exploitation continues to be a major cause of concern to the international community. This phenomenon has affected all over the world and Mexico is not an exception country. During the last few years, internal trafficking of persons especially of women in Mexico has grown up at exponential rates due to increasing sex tourism. Thus, in this paper we have tried to analyze what are basic causes behind the internal trafficking of women in Mexico and how this phenomenon is leading health consequences. We have interviewed thirty internally trafficked women in Monterrey city during the year 2007-2011. The study found that; trafficking of women in Mexico is a multi-factorial phenomenon. Women trafficked from various states of Mexico and lured through false promises of employment, high quality living status in Monterrey, migration to USA among others. Once reached to city, they are enslaved and forced to work in sex market. Obtained information indicates that trafficked women are suffering a wide range of physical and sexual violence, with severe health (sexual and mental) consequences, which has direct implication to sexually transmitted diseases.

Keywords: Migration, Internal trafficking of women, Sexual violence, Health consequences and Sexually transmitted diseases, Monterrey, Mexico

INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking reflects the dark side of globalization. It is a booming trade in people that involves the use of improper means e.g. force, fraud, deception, coercion, or the abuse of power or authority to recruit or transport them within or across borders for the purpose of exploitation (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2008). The International Labour Organization calculated that currently 12.3 million people worldwide are victims of forced labour and 2.45 million of them are victims of trafficking. Forty-three per cent of trafficking victims are forced into commercial sexual exploitation such as prostitution, thirty-two percent are trafficked for economic exploitation and 25 percent are trafficked for mixed purposes (ILO, 2005).

Similarly in the years 2008 UNODC indicated that some 2.5 million people throughout the world are any given time recruited, entrapped, transported and exploited. This report also underline that trafficking in persons, whether for sexual exploitation or forced labour, affects virtually every region of the world and persons from 127 countries become exploited in 137 nations (UNODC, 2008)². Most victims of this modern-day slavery are women and young girls (international organizations indicates that it is 70 to 80 percent), many of whom are forced into prostitution or otherwise exploited sexually. They are forced to work in construction, farming, mining domestic and childcare work, while victims of sex trafficking are coerced into prostitution, pornography, sex tourism, marriages and the mail order bride trade.

In the year 2000, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially women and Children, and defined *trafficking in persons* as:

“...The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or others forms of sexual exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced

² <http://www.unodc.org/newsletter/en/perspectives/no03/page009.html> (Consulted 24.08.2011)

labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs...”.

On the other hand, literatures indicate that there is a high physical control over the trafficked women and girls as well as they suffer many kind of violence including physical assault, emotional abuse and verbal threat. These conditions lead women to a high risk of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, which increase the risk for contracting HIV. Also, they are often subject to violent or dangerous sex practices that allow the virus to more easily enter the body. According to Policing the National Body: Sex, Race, and Criminalization, A Project of the Committee on Women, Population, and the Environment (2002)³ numerous case studies have found that women in prostitution have significantly higher rates of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and infections (STIs), hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, and other sexual health problems. STDs of the upper and lower reproductive tracts, including syphilis, genital herpes, chancroid, trichomoniasis, chlamydia, and gonorrhea increase the HIV transmission rate in women two to ten times. The report states, HIV/AIDS is both a stark disease burden and also a biomarker of the gendered condition of women and of male sexual consumption.

Considering the above discussion, the principal aim of this research is to see how sexual violence suffered by trafficked women in Mexico especially in Monterrey Metropolitan Zone makes women vulnerable to greater health risks. This article has three specific objectives. Firstly, to analyze the socio-demographic profile of trafficked women. Secondly, investigate the major causes and mechanisms of women trafficking in Mexico focusing the study area Monterrey Metropolitan Zone. Finally, to examine the sexual violence suffered by the trafficked women in their profession, and how this lead to health suffering.

The article is divided into two sections. First, the article describes the existing literature on sex trafficking, focusing mainly on violence and on health consequences. Next, the article analyzes results from field work carried out in Monterrey Metropolitan Zone, focusing on the socio-demographic characteristics of trafficked women, as well as causes, mechanism of trafficking, sexual violence suffered, and health risks faced by these women.

³ http://www.stopvaw.org/Trafficking_and_HIV_AIDS.html (Consulted on 23/01/2011)

LITERATURE AND FRAMEWORK

In the last two decades, however research in Mexico has shifted towards an understanding of heterogeneity of those involved in the sex industry, the broader social determinants of their health and well being, but till the date it is difficult to tell the exact number of women being trafficked into the prostitution business, some evidences existed where we can analyze how big this figure may be. For example, Teresa Ulloa, President of Regional Coalition Against Trafficking of Women and Children in Latin America and Caribbean stated that every day 400 women enter into prostitution⁴ in Mexico City, out of which 80% are against their will (González, 2003).

Esteinou (2011) in her study underline that Mexico is one of the main international corridors of sexual trafficking, where many agents and issues involved. In the same study the author describe that delegación Cuautemoc of Mexico City is one of the largest brothel area where 60 percent of city's sex worker concentrated. Esteinou found in her study that poor women from Hidalgo, Puebla, Oaxaca, Chiapas and Guerrero migrate to Mexico City in search of better life and later fall in trafficking network.

In another study, Acharya and Stevaneto (2005) found that every year nearly 10,000 young girl and women trafficked in Mexico to different cities like Mexico City, Cancun, Acapulco, Ciudad Juarez, Monterrey etc. for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The same study also underlines that only in Mexico in every 10 trafficked women 7 are trafficked inside the country and 3 are taken outside the country.

On the other hand, little research has been conducted on health status of commercial sex workers in Mexico. A study by (Alvarado-Esquivel et. al, 2000) on prevalence of Chlamydia trachomatis infection among 247 registered prostitutes of Durango City found that nearly 17 percent women were positive to infection. Whereas Uribe-Salas et.al (2003), studied a sample of 484 women working as sex worker in Tapachula, Chiapas found that 9.4 percent women infected with Treponema pallidum, 85.2 percent were with HSV-2, 0.6 percent with HIV, 11.6 percent with Neisseria gonorrhoeae and 14.4 percent with Chlamydia trachomatis. This study also indicates that Frequencies of HBcAb and HBsAg hepatitis B markers were 17.7 percent and 1.3 percent and the cumulative prevalence of treatable gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis was 27.4

⁴ This figure includes trafficked and non-trafficked women

percent. The study concluded that women's socio-demographic characteristics as well as their sexual behaviors are the basic causes of high prevalences of STI, except HIV infection.

A study conducted among commercial sex workers by Torres Mendoza (1988, 1990) in Guadalajara city of Mexico shows the prevalence rate of HIV positive as 0.4 percent, against the 1987 and 1988 study of the Dirección General de Epidemiología of Mexico carried out in six Mexican cities found the HIV positive prevalence rate as 0.9 percent to 5.2 percent (Dirección General de Epidemiología, 1989). Valdespino (1990) interviewed 3612 commercial sex workers in 20 Mexican cities and result indicates that 0.4 percent of women had HIV positive. In the year 1999 CONASIDA conducted a HIV positive test among 1915 commercial sex workers in Mexico City and found that the HIV positive prevalence rate is 0.36 percent (CONASIDA, 1999). All these researches have established to the fact that women working as commercial sex workers are very much exposed to the infection of RTI, STI and HIV/AIDS. Hence the problems need a better understanding about its intent and extent of the risk. Particularly in Mexico trafficking of women for the purpose of prostitution is becoming an increasingly lucrative business, where women from the poorest regions are particularly at risk of being abused (Acharya and Stevaneto, 2005).

The AIDS epidemic is concentrated primarily among men who have sex with sex workers as well as with men (MSM) and people who inject drugs. According to Mexico's National Center for HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control (CENSIDA), there is a high rate of HIV prevalence among the female sex workers (FSWs) as well as among both injecting drug users (IDUs) and women. A study by Patterson et al. during 2004–2006 showed HIV prevalence in Tijuana and Ciudad Juarez, cities on the U.S. border, was 6 percent among FSWs and 16 percent among IDUs.⁵

On the other hand, there is a growing approach of national public health to sexually transmitted infection and HIV/AIDS, which recognizes that women's vulnerability to HIV is integrally connected with discrimination and violence. Data indicates that in the year 2006 in general in Mexico there were 109,125 personas living with HIV positive which increased to 114,725 cases in 2007 and in 2010 total cases of

⁵ www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/aids/Countries/lac/mexico.html (Consulted on 23/01/2011).

HIV positive cases reaches to 144,127, where 2.8 percent of all these identified cases live in Nuevo León (CONASIDA, 2010). This information provides a glimpse as to how the country is experiencing a serious epidemic of sexually transmitted infection, like HIV. One of the important factors as we have seen in earlier discussion of this increasing number is unprotected heterosexual behavior and the growing sex market in various Mexican cities. Thus, main objective of this paper is to explain the dynamic of women trafficking in Mexico especially in Monterrey city, as well as in this study we have tried to outline the health implications of women trafficking in Mexico. Researches on trafficking for example, Esteinou, 2011, Roe-Sepowitz and Katsulis, 2011, Zimmerman et.al 2008, GAATW, 2001 and Acharya, 2011 have identified that this phenomena is associated with a high health risk primarily causes due to lack of access to services, isolation, and exploitative working conditions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Trafficked women are treated as hidden population, thus it is very difficult to adopt a specific research methodology during the field works. In this kind of research it is difficult to fix a research methodology to locate this population.

In this study, I have adopted various methods to identify the trafficked women in Monterrey Metropolitan Zone. Before the initiation of the field study, first we⁶ went to down town area of the city, where brothels are located. Once we entered to a brothel, we talked with a woman. Later we paid her 300 pesos (US\$30) and took her to a private room to talk with her personally. We mentioned her about our project that we want to interview some trafficked women, she felt very surprise and initially declined to help us but after convincing her, she agreed to help. Whenever she was getting information on a trafficked woman she was giving us information that in which brothel she works. After collecting the information we were proceeding to indicated brothel. Once we reached the place, we were going directly to the indicated woman and asking her about the interview after production of our identity. As we know there is constant vigilance by the pimps and traffickers it is not possible talk long time with women in front of all. So when the woman does not have with client we were paying solicited amount and taking her to a

⁶ I went with one of my student who was collaborating with me in this project.

private room located in brothel as a “client”. This method we also adopted to keep hidden our identity in front of the pimp and traffickers, and once getting into the room we were taking her interview.

Moreover, at the beginning of interviews many times we offered to women to come our house or to other hotel or restaurant, but they always responded with a no. They used to tell “...*it is our area; it is not possible for us to go out from this place, because madrina (madam) do not permit us to work in other places....*” As these women are not allowed to go out from the hotel, it made us to act as a client. Once we were inside the private room, we were taking her interview which lasted around 30 minutes. After completion of interview, we were requesting her to help me to find out other trafficked women like her and subsequently using this method (snowball) we interviewed 30 trafficked women during the year 2007 and 2011. Apart from this, we have also collected some information on pimps, such as how they trafficked women and how they exploit them.

TRAFFICKED WOMEN IN MONTERREY

Research on trafficking suggests that false promises of improved economic opportunities as well as marriage are some of the common tactics used to traffic girls and young women (Silverman et. al 2007), also studies indicates that economic, social and political factors mainly causes vulnerable situation for trafficking of women (Leiter et. al, 2006, Huda, 2006). Similarly, in our study we have seen that women who trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation tend to exhibit a series of causes. Obtained results from the interviews with trafficked women in Monterrey shows that; it is a combination both push and pull factors. Analysis indicates that trafficking is complex in nature and these factors are basically interdependent and interconnected. From the interviews we have found that push factors that contributing trafficking are: poverty, lack of employment opportunities, gender based violence, deserted by husband, ethnic conflicts, infertility and domestic violence. On the other hand, pull factors that are responsible for trafficking are such as; better quality of life in Monterrey, employment opportunities, better health facilities and migration to USA.

Once the trafficker bring out the woman from her place of origin, many time they put them in different intermediaries places and used to give different kinds of training, which includes how she have to work, the way of negotiation with clients, kind of dress she have to use, how she have to perform the sexual relation(s) and including other rules and regulations of brothel; like not to go out from the brothel without the permission of owner, not to talk and give any self personal information as well as of others to anybody, among others.

As it is stated; that women were lured through the false promises like employment with good remuneration as well as exotic life in United States which in reality does not existed. Most of them were come to know about the real work at the place of intermediary or destination. After coming across the real purpose of migration, they did not accept job, for which both pimps and traffickers obligate them through using various kind of violence. This aggression did not end at that place, it continues till the woman stayed in the brothel. Many women cited that after leaving from house, their life has been converted into a life of violence. This kind of violence has lots of impact basically on the health of women.

The study found that out of thirty trafficked women nineteen were from rural and eleven were from small towns and cities. Trafficked women in Monterrey were significantly younger (see table 1), out of thirty women twenty seven (90 percent) were less than 25 years old, whereas it is surprising to see that out these women twenty two women (73 percent) were less than 20 years old, and if we analyze this data we can see that 13 women (43 percent) were less than 15 years. This indicates an important characteristic of this illicit market, where only young women are taken into consideration. Basically, pimps do not prefer the women who are older in age. According to one brothel owner: “...woman after the 25 years old is consider as older and aged for this industry and also clients do not prefer this kind of woman....”. She explained most of the time clients used to tell her: “...the aged women do not have the same passion as a 15 years have....”.

Table 1 about here

When it came to educational attainment of trafficked women, nearly half of them (fourteen women) were never gone school and rest of them were educated up to primary and above primary level. In term of their marital status, twenty two women said that they were unmarried; six women were single mother but currently not living with their children, whereas only two women said they were married and now separated because of family violence. This reflects that majority of the trafficked women were single and unmarried. It shows another characteristics of this sex market, where only young unmarried women are preferred. A pimp cited: “...*I do not want to buy a married woman even a divorced, because for me she is just like a used cloth, where she does not have the same smell like a new one...*”.

On the other hand, it is important to point out that the brothel is treated as a market, where victim are treated as a commodity, and in this place each aspect depends on the loss and gain. For example, if a pimp buys a woman of twenty years old married or divorced, she is less preferred by clients, which signify pimp cannot obtain her optimum earning from the woman. Also, this woman can work in the brothel maximum 4 to 5 years (as women more than 25 years old consider as old in this business). Whereas if a pimp buys a woman of 15 years old or less, she can easily put her in job for minimum 7 to 8 years, also this young woman will be highly preferred by clients and receives more clients, which will generates a high profit to pimp. So, in total a brothel owner will earn more money when buys an unmarried-young woman than an elder married woman.

Looking into the other demographic characteristics of the trafficked women, this study found that majorities of women (26 out of 30) were mestizo ethnic group (Spanish mixed race) and rests of them were indigenous. The question is: *why more women were mestizo?* After the conversation with pimps, traffickers and women the study concludes that mestizo women are highly preferred by the clients because of their white skin color. One pimp says: “...*clients do not want to have the sex with dark skin girl, they do not prefer indigenous women, though I can buy an indigenous woman in a cheaper price than a mestizo, but on her my (economic) gain is very marginal...*”. In Mexico in general the Spanish mixed people have fair skin whereas the indigenous have the dark skin. This

indicates one more attribute of this market. It also found that most of these trafficked women were from a fragmented or dysfunctional family. In this study we have defined a fragmented or dysfunctional family is one in which the parents are separated and living separately. This is usually because the parents are divorced or one of the family members has a serious problem that that impacts every other member of the family (Barbagli, 1987 en Esteinou, 2008).

Figure 1 about here

FORM AND FREQUENCY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST TRAFFICKED WOMEN

Much of the available empirical research on trafficked women and commercial sex indicates that women experience high levels of violence, including, but no limited to, physical assaults, sexual assaults, verbal threats or abuse, psychological abuse (Lowman, 2000, Raymond, 2004, Acharya, 2011). However, some researchers analyzed that violence is ubiquitous in all forms of prostitution (Barry, 1995, Binh, 2006); others believe that the incidence of violence varies enormously in different prostitution venues. Also, it may vary from one brothel owner and trafficker to another.

While this new emphasis on the domination of power and suppression in trafficking of women is long overdue. This study suggests that we need to proceed cautiously when assessing claims about the frequency and nature of the violence perpetrated by pimps and traffickers. During the interviews and analysis, it is clearly found that the incidence of both physical and sexual violence at the hand of traffickers and pimps is common in the life cycle of these trafficked women, which do not have any limit. In table 2, I have analyzed the women who were exposed to any kind of violence in four different categories, i.e. Never, At least once, Multiple times and Frequently in the past six months at the time of interview.

Table 2 about here

From the interview we have observed that; violence against these women were subjected to was an intrinsic part of the sexual exploitation. Traffickers and pimps used violence for many reasons and purposes. As it discussed, violence was first used to initiate women into prostitution, and to break them down so that they would do the sexual acts. After initiation, at every step of the way, violence was used for sexual gratification of the pimps and traffickers, as a form of punishment, to threaten and intimidate women, to exert the perpetrator's own dominance, to exact compliance, to punish women for alleged "violations," to humiliate women, and to isolate and confine women.

On the other hand, when we analyzed the information on type of violence faced by the trafficked women, we found that trafficked women in Monterrey have faced a wide range of violence, such as abused verbally, locked inside the room without alimentation, threaten by pimps to kill them, forced to have sex with more than one client at a time and also slapped by pimps as well as by clients. Whereas, women also said that they have faced violence such as beaten with objects by pimps, drag by cigarette, raped by pimps, and some time pimp put chili powder in their eyes and vagina. Some women were intended to burn by pimps, threaten to kill by pimp and also stabbed by them. This indicates that women faced physical and sexual violence everyday and some time the intensity of these violence are also high which caused severe wound or injury to woman. A woman indicated during the interview: *"...for us violence is common, it is nothing new, we are habituated on this, here we do not have right on our body, here we treated just like an animal, it is madrina (madam) who decide all for us, when we have to work, with whom we have to work, what to do or not, when we have to eat, sleep etc., all these depend on her, we do not have right to tell a 'no', if we do not follow her words she just use her power in many ways, for her our life is nothing, in this place her dog has more respect than us..."*. Thus, once the women obligate to enter to this profession her life each time in danger. In sum, these kinds of exploitation construct them as victims and risk them fall into health illness.

Figure 2 about here

On the other hand, the study found that trafficked women suffered different grades of suffering (sexual and social) in Monterrey. I have divided this grade into three categories according to their age after the entrance of trafficking network, such as: Extreme Sexual suffering (less than 20 year), Psychological and Sexual suffering (20 to 25 years) and Social suffering (after 25 years). Data obtain from the field indicates that women of less than 20 years are exposed to an extreme grade of sexual exploitation both by pimps and traffickers, because they are very young in age, so owner intends to earn more money from them. During the discussion a *madrina* (madam) confess that: “*a jovencita (young women) is a golden hen for me. As far as she is young, I have to exploit her as much as possible to earn my money. Once she grown up (after 20 years) clients will not prefer her so I cannot gain more money*”.

Once a woman becomes 20 years old, the sexual exploitation against her reduces significantly. Because she has already worked for many years in the brothel, also pimp feels that she is less preferred by clients which is a loss in term of revenue as I have cited earlier, so pimp intend to replace her with other young woman. To substitute her, pimp commences to abuse her psychologically as well as verbally-physically, so that trafficked woman may leave the brothel on her own. Moreover, woman also faces racial discrimination by traffickers and pimps. For example, a woman of 23 years said: “*now madrina (madam) do not like me, everyday she is scolding me, beating me and discriminating me with other young women, telling that now I am an “una vaca vieja” (old cow), clients do not like me, whenever I am trying to do good she is not satisfied with me. I have already worked with her more than seven years, now where I will go...she has already spoiled my body and my life...I do not know what to do now and where to go...*”.

Moreover, trafficked women (of 25 and more years old) forcefully leave the brothel, tries to have a normal life like others in the society. But their earlier profession makes them difficult for social adaption. As Mexican society is a very conservative, the cultural taboos make hard the women for social assimilation. Returned trafficked women suffer a wide range of discrimination such as isolation, bad luck to see their face in early

morning etc., for which some prefer to suicide and some again prefer to return to prostitution as a madam or as a lower category sex worker.

SEXUAL ACTIVITIES AND CONDOM USE BY TRAFFICKED WOMEN

Sexual activities and condom use by trafficked woman are very important as these are closely related with their health. This encompasses the problems of HIV and STIs/RTIs, unintended pregnancy and abortion, infertility and cancer resulting from STIs, and sexual dysfunction. The sexual activities of women in commercial sex can be assessed through the number of clients they receive in a day and according to their typical sexual relation. To get a complete idea on sexual behavior of trafficked women, some questions were being asked during the interview.

The information collected on number of clients received in a day by the women indicates that; out of thirty women, seventeen women received ten to fifteen clients per day, whereas nine women said they received at least 8 to 10 clients every day, and only four women said they received less than 8 clients per day. The study found that there is differential characteristic pattern that dictate the quantity of clients seen by women. It has found from the interviews that as the age of the women increase the number of clients per day decrease. It is because of client preference as it has been noted earlier in this discussion. Similarly, the clients also do not prefer the women who were working many years in the brothel because the client assume that woman working as prostitute for a long time may have been infected by diseases. Also a customer confessed “...*if I want to eat a fruit, I should eat it before it ripen....*”.

Apart from the above, in order to perceive the sexual activities of trafficked women I asked some questions, for example, whether women obligate their clients to use condom during the sexual relations? The study found that, women seldom asked their clients for condom use, because it is madrina/padrino who obligates women to have sex without condom with an intention to earn more money. When a woman has sex without condom, the client pays more money. As this is an order for woman it is impossible her to negotiate with client for condom use. For example, Tania, a woman of 12 years said, *every day I received around fifteen clients, and during the sexual relation when I asked clients to use condom they refused. They replied me: they have paid extra money to*

madrina for this service. If I said won't interested to have sex without condom, they immediately complain to madrina, and in this case madrina started beating me and also she punish me many ways till I accept her demand. Every day, I have sexual relation at least with 10 clients without using condom.

Moreover, the sexual behaviors of these women indicated that they practices a wide range of sexual activities at a time as per as demand of clients. Women were said, frequently (everyday) they practice vaginal and oral sex with clients. Whereas there were women who indicated that occasionally practices anal sex with clients and very rarely some clients demands both anal and vaginal sex (see figure 3).

Figure 3 about here

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Sexual behaviors of trafficked women contribute to their reproductive and sexual ill-health in number of ways including unwanted pregnancy, forced abortion as well as sexual transmitted diseases, whilst, actual or threatened violence, physical or sexual, also reduce the ability of women to control risk within a sexual encounter. Trafficked women experiencing violence may be forced to accept high number of sexual partner, and have little control of the choice of sexual partner and limited capacity to negotiate condom use (Decker et al, 2009).

In their study, Decker et al (2009) analyzing the sexual behaviors and living situation concluded that; trafficked women who forced to sexual exploitation may conceive unwanted pregnancies as a result of limited access to contraceptives or inability to negotiate their use, and also may have forced to have abortion. Similarly, in our research we have seen that; out of total twenty five women interviewed, 17 were exposed to unwanted pregnancy and had gone for abortion. Among them eleven women reported that at least once they had received abortions since their trafficking, whereas six women reported receiving an abortion more than twice. In very few cases women receive the abortion in a clinic; typically this only happened only when the madam came to know about the pregnancy in a very later stage. While in other cases, women reported that,

when their madam came to know about their pregnancy after two or three weeks she gave medication designed to terminate their pregnancy.

On the other hand, under the circumstance of intense physical and psychological violence, deficient in nutrition, insufficient physical rest results the illness and suffering among the trafficked women. The most common illness symptoms among the trafficked women are fever, backache, and sleep disorder. Some women indicated that they have irregular menstruation, stomach and back pain during menstruation, some have heavy bleeding during menstruation, pain during intercourse, bleeding after intercourse, lower abdominal pain, abnormal vaginal discharge and burning sensation while urine pass. Thus, the results obtained indicate that trafficked women face serious health threats.

Earlier in this discussion we noted that trafficked women have unsafe sexual behaviors. They do not have access to good medical facilities, if they have any health problem, the madam is the only indicate person who takes them to a clinic (which are usually located near the brothel). The information obtained during our field work suggests most of these clinics are fake ones. There are numerous drug stores located near to brothel, where they sell imitations of many medicines as well as medicine with expired dates at a cheaper price. If a woman reports to madam her health problems, first madam provides some kind of medicine and in the case of emergencies she takes them to clinic. But, before going to clinic, the madam tells them not give any identification and also threatens the women about the consequences of mentioning anything to the doctor. After returning from the clinic, madam never shows the bill for how much she spent in the clinic and typically informs the woman she spent a lot of money which must be repaid by taking more clients. The poor women accept what the madam claims as they do not have other option.

MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Many studies on women trafficking stated that; women trafficked for sexual exploitation suffers severe emotional and mental health disorder; which ranges from chronic anxiety, sleep disturbances, depression, mental distress, substances uses etc. (Zimmerman et al., 2008, Tsutsumi et al., 2008). To get information on mental health condition of trafficked women, we have asked some questions on psychological behaviors and their emotional

feelings to analyze their mental distress. In this study, we have gathered information regarding their psychological behaviors and emotional feelings in two instants, such as: frequently and occasionally. Information indicates that; all the thirty women presented frequently some kinds of mental distress, whereas, when we analyze their occasional mental distress and psychological behaviors. We observed that these women are suffering from a severe mental distress, which has close risk to their life. In the figure 4, I have presented the mental distress of trafficked women at the time of working and past one month.

Figure 4 about here

Some studies indicate that use and abuse of substances is more among trafficked women, because they experiences high grade of sexual violence (Risley, 2010, Acharya 2008, Kaukinen and DeMaris, 2005). In our study we have also found that trafficked women frequently encounter some kind of substance abuse. Drugs, alcohol and smoking cigarettes are principal substances uses by the trafficked women. When we asked about the reasons of taking substances; women were replied, they use to forget physical and emotional pain, to get relief from stress, to work longer hour as well as also to take more clients to pay off the debt. From the study we have seen that, some women were forced to drink alcohol or take drugs or smoke cigarettes, while some trafficked women choose to use drug, alcohol and cigarettes to relieve stress. Our research found that, for many women substances uses turn as a coping mechanism and they are also addicted to it, as a woman named Olga said: *“everyday, I take around 8-10 glasses of cervezas (beer); some are paid by clients and some I buy. Without cerveza, I cannot live; it has become “cup of coffee” for me. Even when I go to bed, I take a small cup of tequila, believe me it helps to sleep peacefully. Some of my friends use tachas (synthetic drugs), but I do not like it as it test bad. My friends have recommended me to consume tachas, as it gives immediate relaxation, but I have not yet tested...”*.

CONCLUSION

This paper has explored related causes behind the trafficking of women in Mexico and also how this phenomenon affecting the sexual reproductive health of trafficked women

as well on their mental health. It has seen from the study that the health consequences are commonly severe among trafficked women. The trauma of sexual coercion and assault at different stages of their life cycle leaves many of these women with severe loss of self-esteem and autonomy. This indicates that trafficked women do not have liberty to make the sexual and reproductive health decisions for themselves.

From the study, it is perceive that; trafficked women in Mexico are in serious problem in every aspect. Not only do they run serious risks of physical and sexual violence, but they have also been stigmatized as carrying the main responsibility for the spreading of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Basically, these women's ability to protect themselves from STDs and HIV/AIDS is drastically weakened by the threat of the madam's violence. The kinds of violence trafficked women face result from the risk to women of being exposed and forced to have unprotected sex. Their ability to negotiate condom use by their male partners is inversely related to the extent or degree of abuse in their relationship.

It is important to note that at the current time in Mexico about 144,127⁷ persons are living with deadly virus of HIV (CONASIDA, 2010). Most of the studies reveal that there is a pervasive attitude that stigmatize and blame prostitutes for the spread of disease and identify the sex workers as major source of sexually transmitted diseases this has resulted in prostitution being seen as the cause of disease rather than the consequence of economic marginalization. Inevitably, it has also helped to draw attention away from male sexual behavior, and put the onus of disease prevention on the women. While much of the literature has focused on the potential of sex workers to infect others with HIV and they are often treated as diseases transmitter, little has been written about the need to protect sex workers from abuse and disease. As such cultural norms need to be addressed. More attention needs to focus on the demand side of trafficking, comprehensive education programs need to be implemented towards the "Johns" the men who frequent the brothels on the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS. Safe sex practices and the use of condoms need to be promoted. Legal reform also needs to take place, tougher trafficking legislation needs to be implemented and enforced and police need to be trained and educated that these women are victims of severe abuse.

⁷ see <http://www.censida.salud.gob.mx/interior/cifras.html>

On the other hand, this study documents the level of sexual and physical violence against the trafficked women and it underlines the need to address safety for sex workers, who are caught up with issues of legality and stigma. Likewise, the broader economic and social conditions, the disparities in wealth and the feminization of poverty which create the necessity for trafficking have been neglected, and must be addressed if women are to have other viable options to support themselves and their family. Better work conditions, comprehensive social programs and safety nets that protect women from poverty need to also be implemented.

These days, trafficking of women cut across a variety of social and economic conditions and has become deeply embedded in various cultures around the world, and therefore millions consider it a way of life. This kind of violence against women rarely results in easily managed consequences that can be addressed with a prescriptive or band-aid approach. Trafficking harms women in insidious ways that create health hazard. The physical and mental health consequences are not a side effect of trafficking, but a central theme. As such programs for victims need to encompass not only advocacy, awareness and shelter but also focus on the psychological and physical health needs and provide education and rehabilitation to transition back into a normal existence.

From this study we can conclude that, trafficking of women in Mexico needs a comprehensive approach in economical, social and political spheres to combat the problem, and it is also necessary to addresses both supply and the demand side of trafficking to obtained a positive result.

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TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: Age of trafficked women in Monterrey Metropolitan Zone

Age	Number of women	Percentage of women
Less than 12 years	5	16.7
12 to 15 year	8	26.6
16 to 20 years	9	30.0
20 to 25 years	5	16.7
More than 25 years	3	10.0

Source: Information obtained from field work

Figure 1: Demographic profile of trafficked women in Monterrey Metropolitan Zone

Age Young & Less than 20 years old	Education Illiterate Up to primary level	Marital status Unmarried Married & Single mother
Ethnicity Mestizo (Spanish mixed)	Place of origin Rural & small town	Family type Fragmented family

Source: Information obtained from field work

Table 2: Violence faced by trafficked women in Monterrey Metropolitan Zone

Categories of violence	Number of women	Percentage of women
Never	1	3.3
At least once	3	10.0
Multiple times	7	23.3
Frequently	19	63.4

Source: Information obtained from field work

Figure 2: Index of violence faced by trafficked women in Monterrey Metropolitan Zone

Frequent violence	Occasional violence	Rare violence
Abused verbally	Struck with objects	Burned their body
Hit	Burned by cigarette	Cut with knives
Kicked	Raped	
Punched	Put chili powder in their eyes and vagina	
Threatening of death		
Forced to have sex with more than one client at a time		
Locked inside the room without food for days		

Source: Information obtained from field work

Figure 3: Typical sexual activities of trafficked women in Monterrey Metropolitan Zone

Frequency	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely
Sexual behavior	Vaginal Oral & Vaginal	Anal	Anal & Vaginal

Source: Information obtained from field work

Figure 4: Typology of mental distress symptoms presented by the trafficked women in Monterrey Metropolitan Zone

Frequently	Occasionally
Crying	Attempt to suicide
Feeling tired	Beaten own body with an object
Hopeless	Caught own hand with a knives
Anger	Attempted to kill others
Depressed and sad	
Feeling of sever tension and nervousness	
Quarrel with clients, friends and owner	
Loss of appetite	
Feeling severe headache	

Source: Information obtained from field work