

Awareness Regarding Girl Trafficking Among Adolescent Girls of Selected Schools, Nepal

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Abstract:

Background: Girl trafficking is a major social issue with an estimation of 4 million girls bought and sold worldwide and in Nepal between 5,000 and 7,000 girls is trafficked every year across the border to India. The aim of the study was to assess the awareness regarding girl trafficking among adolescent girls of selected schools.

Materials and Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional design was used to conduct study among 115 respondents selected by using stratified random sampling technique. Self administered structured questionnaire was used for collecting data. Obtained data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results: Among 115 adolescent girls, only 70(60.89%) were adequately aware about girl trafficking. Television was the most reported sources of information (82.6%), and 98(85.2%) respondents said that girl trafficking is included in their curriculum. Awareness regarding girl trafficking is significantly associated with that education, mother's occupation, awareness on presence of law and being involved in any social awareness program ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: This study has shown that nearly half of adolescent girls were unaware regarding girl trafficking and awareness is influenced by grade, mothers' occupation, presence of law and information sources. So, various awareness programs should be conducted in local level to increase awareness regarding girl trafficking among adolescent girls.

Keywords: adolescent girl; awareness; trafficking

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I. Introduction

Girl trafficking is defined as the moving, selling or buying of girls for prostitution within and outside a country by improper means such as force, fraud or deception, abuse, power or position for monetary purpose with or without the consent of the person subjected to trafficking¹. This proves that perpetrators target those people who are jobless and have low economic status which is common in developing countries like Nepal^{2,3}. In Nepal, victims are trafficked from rural to urban areas for prostitution such as bar, massage, parlor, carpet and garment factories and other domestic purpose⁴. About 5,000 – 10,000 girls and women are trafficked every year from Nepal with the estimates of that over 60% of those trafficked in prostitution are adolescent girls in the age group of 12 – 16 years.^{5,6,7} A shift from opportunistic exploitation to more sophisticated activity have expanded the destinations beyond neighboring countries to Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Malaysia, Japan North Korea, South Korea, Australia and other countries with India and Sri Lanka becoming well established transit points.⁸

Nepal is a developing country where the literacy rate is 65.9% with huge number of populations being unemployed (42%) and living below poverty line (38%)⁹. This high rate of unemployment, low economic status, poverty, low educational status and gender inequality are the biggest contributing factors to women and girls becoming victim of trafficking and approximately 36% of all trafficking are victim below age of 16 years.¹⁰ There are very few studies that explain about the awareness regarding girl trafficking so this study aimed to find the awareness regarding girls trafficking among adolescent.

Trafficking has become the fastest growing sector of organized crime within the United States and is likely to hold a similar ranking worldwide (Leslie,2018).¹¹ The magnitude of girl trafficking has increased over the years in Nepal but is difficult to ascertain due to lack of reliable statistical information. According to working agencies in Nepal in anti- trafficking activities in Nepal, there is increasing tendency in trafficking among middle class women who are being trafficked to Gulf countries under the veil of attractive salaries. The trafficked people are abused physically, emotionally and mentally throughout their life span. The child victim below age of 16 years is approximately 36 percent of all the trafficked victims in Nepal.¹² The study conducted on Sindhupalchowk district of Nepal revealed that seventy-six percent of sampled students reported that they

were aware of sex trafficking and 94.6 percent indicated media (i.e., radio or television) as the primary sources of their knowledge. Fifty-one percent mentioned relatives/friends as mediators of sex trafficking, 60.4 percent reported promise for better jobs as the primary attraction behind sex trafficking and 48.6 percent mentioned adolescent females as the most vulnerable group for sex trafficking.¹⁰ Another community based cross – sectional study revealed that 60% of the participants reported that they had heard or read about sex trafficking. Television (64%), friends (46%) and radio (39%) were the most frequently mentioned sources of information about sex trafficking. About 87 percent and 74 percent of the participants mentioned friends and brokers as responsible person for trafficking respectively. Having a TV at home, completing grade 10 or more taking training on gender issues and living together with parents were factors found associated with awareness on girl trafficking in Ethiopia.¹³ Human trafficking is often the failure of the parents to provide education to girls to complete the higher school level and to equip them with life skills mostly in South east Asia because of patriarchal societies that undervalue of women thus rendering them susceptible to being trafficked. Young women are **trafficked** because of poverty, fewer education, parents engaged in agricultural sectors and overall unequal treatment of women and the family totally dependent on children.¹⁴In the study conducted by Shittu, Idowu, Oyedele and Oyelade (2015) among 250 respondents of secondary school showed that male and female students of secondary schools in Oyo metropolis are to a great extent, aware of the ways by which human can be trafficked and know about the modalities of human trafficking and preventive measures against its further occurrence which even life. Counseling and awareness to adolescent at school, adolescents' parents to educate them on various ways human can be trafficked and different organization should intensify effort on preventive strategies against girl trafficking.¹⁵

II. Material and Methods

A descriptive cross- sectional study was conducted in school of Nawalparasi, enrolling 115 adolescent girls. Data was collected from July 14, 2019 to July 27, 2019, in two weeks of periods.

Study Design: Descriptive cross-sectional research design to identify the awareness regarding girl trafficking among the adolescent girls

Study Location : Vishwa Jyoti Higher Secondary School and Nepal Model Higher Secondary School of Nawalparasi district , Nepal

Study Duration: Two weeks from July 14, 2019 to July 27, 2019

Sample size: 115

Sample size calculation:

Required sample for the study was calculated by using the formula, $n = z^2pq/d^2$ (Corchran, 1997)

where,

n = the desired sample size

N = the population size which is 161

P = prevalence rate which is 0.76 (Shrestha & Karki, 2015)¹⁰

Z = the standard normal deviation at a confidence level set at 95% which is 1.96, Sampling error (d) is 0.05

$n = (1.96)^2 \times (0.76) \times (0.24) / (0.05)^2$

Now sample (n) is 280.28

Adjusting above formula for finite population

$n = n$

$1 + \frac{(n-1)}{N}$

$n = 280.2831 \times 161 / 161 + 279.2831$

≈ 102.4921

To reduce the non-response error, 10% sample was added

Therefore, the desired sample was 115.

Subjects and selection methods:

Probability, proportionate stratified random sampling (where grade 8,9 & 10 were taken as strata and required sample were drawn from each strata by table method) was obtained for selecting the respondents.

Probability, proportionate stratified random sampling for Vishwa Jyoti Higher Secondary School

Grade 8 = $24 / 88 \times 63 = 17.18$ (17)

Grade 9 = $33 / 88 \times 63 = 23.62$ (24)

Grade 10 = $31 / 88 \times 63 = 21.84$ (22)

Probability, proportionate stratified random sampling for Nepal Model Higher Secondary School

Grade 8 = $22 / 73 \times 52 = 15.67$ (16)

Grade 9 = $17 / 73 \times 52 = 12.10$ (12)

Grade 10 = $34 / 73 \times 52 = 24.21$ (24)

Inclusion criteria:

1. All the adolescence girls ages between 13-19 years of grade 8,9 &10 of two school Vishwa Jyoti Higher Secondary School and Nepal Model Higher Secondary School, Nawal parasi during the period of data collection
2. All those adolescence girl willing to participate in the study.

Exclusion criteria:

1. All those girls who were below 13 years and above 19 years of age.
2. Those adolescence girl who are not mentally healthy.
3. Those adolescence girl who are not willing to participate in the study.

III. Procedure Methodology

Prior to data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the Chitwan Medical College Institutional Review Board (CMC-IRC). As the participants were adolescents, informed written consent was taken from the Principal of Vishwa Jyoti Higher Secondary School and Nepal Model Higher Secondary School after confirming the permission from respective parents. Further, informed verbal consent was taken from each participant after clear explanation of the objectives of the study. Data collection in single school was done in same day at separate rooms by researchers themselves with co-operation of school administration. After keeping the selected participants in the separate rooms, each researcher in the assigned room explained well about the objectives of the study and asked for voluntary verbal consent whether to participate in the study or not. All selected participants were found willing to participate in this study. After clear explanation of the directions to fill the self administered structured questionnaire, each researcher distributed the questionnaire themselves and answered their queries if any during this period. Data data was collected within 15 -20 minutes of given time. Respondents were not allowed for discussion to prevent contamination. After completion, participants were requested to pile up their filled questionnaire on the table and were collected later on. Non-respondents were kept outside of the class to prevent the discussion among the students.

The research instruments consisted three parts

Part I : Questions related to Socio-Demographic Related Questions

Part II: Questions Related to Information Sources

Part III: Question Related to Awareness Regarding Girl Trafficking

Validity and reliability

The questionnaire was peer-reviewed by all authors. Also, two academic experts on Women's and reproductive health and two individual recently working in girl trafficking project reviewed the questionnaire for content validity and appropriateness of questions. Further validation was done through pretesting which took place similar setting one month prior. The instrument was tested for reliability which yielded reliability coefficients (cronbach's alpha) of 0.71 in awareness level. The items in the study instrument showed a good internal consistency.

Data analysis

The collected data were organized, coded and entered in statistical package for social science (IBM SPSS) version 20 then analysis was done by using descriptive statistic and inferential statistic. The descriptive statistic of qualitative data was presented by frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation where inferential statistic i.e. Chi-Square test to find out the association between level of awareness regarding girl trafficking and selected variables.

IV. Results

This study was conducted to assess the awareness regarding girl trafficking among female adolescents. Among 115 female adolescents, 48(41.7%) belong to age group <15 yrs. It was found that 33(28.7%), 36(31.3%) and 46(40%) of them were studying in grade 8, 9 and 10 respectively and majority of respondents 105(91.3%) follow Hindu religion whereas more than half of respondents 70(60.9%) were Brahmin/Chhetri. Two thirds of the respondents 87(75.7%) had nuclear family and almost all of respondents' father 112(97.4%) and mother 103(89.6%) were literate. Regarding sources of information about girl trafficking majority of the respondents 95(82.6%) and 89(77.4%) reported television and school as major source. Most of respondents 105(91.3%) had heard about organization working for girl trafficking, 91(79.1%) agreed with the statement of presence of law for girl trafficking in Nepal and 84(73.0%) had watched movies related to girl trafficking. Less than half 47(40.9%) of respondents only involved in social awareness programme related to girl trafficking and 98(85.2%) of respondents were taught about girl trafficking in curriculum. Awareness on different variables of Girl trafficking among adolescent girls are shown here in Table 1.

Table 1 Respondents' Awareness Regarding Girl Trafficking Group

n=115

Variables	Correct Response	
	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Introduction		
Girl trafficking is the process of selling of young girls into prostitution.	108	93.9
Girl trafficking is minor problem of our country.#	98	85.2
Girl trafficking and prostitution are same things.#	81	70.4
Developing countries have high number of girl trafficking.	72	62.6
Causes		
Girl trafficking is most common in urban cities.#	67	58.3
Poverty directly causes the girl trafficking.	104	90.4
Literacy leads to the girl trafficking.#	94	81.7
Unemployment prevent the case of girl trafficking.#	74	64.3
Lack of education leads to girl trafficking.	109	94.8
Risk group		
Adolescent girls are free from the risk of girl trafficking.	103	89.6
Purpose and Agent		
Trafficked girls are taken for higher education. #	98	85.2
Trafficked girls are taken in sake of marriage.	63	54.8
Traffickers took the girls for domestic work.	88	76.5
Family member can also be traffickers.	86	74.8
Effects		
Victims of trafficking have low chance of getting sexually transmitted infections.#	102	88.7
Girl trafficking promote the health of girl.#	103	89.6
Girl trafficking leads to mortality and morbidity of victims.	94	81.7
Physical abuse and assault are a result of girl trafficking.	93	80.9
Management		
we should discriminate the girl who became victims of trafficking.#	110	95.7
Psychological support should be given to the victims of girl trafficking.	100	87.0
Maiti Nepal is organization which works to save the victim of girl trafficking.	107	93.0
Shakti Samuha works against ChaupadiPratha.#	36	31.3
Prevention		
Bhadra 19 is the national anti-trafficking celebration day in Nepal.#	47	40.9
Gender discrimination is taught in school. #	80	69.6
Strangers are safe to talk. #	100	87.0
Avoiding unsafe situation can prevent girl trafficking.	77	67.0
Anti-trafficking programme can increase the case of girl trafficking.#	79	68.7
Parents must guide their children about social problems.	104	90.4

#Negative Response

Among the 115 respondents, 60.89% were only adequately aware about girl trafficking as mentioned in Table 2.

Table 2 Respondents' Level of Awareness Regarding Girl Trafficking

n=115

Variables	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Adequate	70	60.87
Inadequate	45	39.13

Mean±S.D=21.53±2.70, min=14 max=28, Possible min=14,max=28

Association between different variables and awareness in girl trafficking among female adolescents are here shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Association between Socio-demographic Characteristics and level of Awareness regarding Girl Trafficking

n=115

Variables	Level of Awareness		χ^2	p-value
	Adequate	Inadequate		
	No.(%)	No.(%)		
Age in years				
<15	32(66.7)	16(33.3)	1.162	0.281
≥ 15	38(56.7)	29(43.3)		
Religion				
Hindu	65(61.9)	40(38.1)	0.543	0.461

Non-Hindu	5(50)	5(50)		
Ethnicity				
Brahmin&Chhetri	43(61.4)	27(38.6)	0.023	0.878
Janjati& Dalit	27(60)	18(40)		
Living with				
Parents	66(60.6)	43(39.4)	0.089	0.765
Relatives	4(66.7)	2(33.3)		
Types of family				
Nuclear	55(63.2)	32(36.8)	0.828	0.363
Joint	15(53.6)	13(46.4)		
Grade				
8	18(54.5)	15(45.5)	13.52	0.001*
9	15(41.7)	21(58.3)		
10	37(80.4)	9(19.6)		
Father's Education				
Literate	68(60.7)	44(39.3)	0.043	0.835
Illiterate	2(66.7)	1(33.3)		
Mother's Education				
Literate	65(63.1)	38(39.9)	2.074	0.15
Illiterate	5(41.7)	7(58.3)		
Hearing about organization working against girl trafficking				
Yes	67(63.8)	38(36.2)	4.382	0.036*
Known about presence of law for girl trafficking				
Yes	61(67)	30(33)	6.954	0.008*
Watched any movies related to girl trafficking				
Yes	52(61.9)	32(38.1)	0.140	0.708
Involvement in anti social awareness programme				
Yes	22(46.8)	23(53.2)	6.598	0.010*
Awareness about inclusion of girl trafficking topic in curriculum				
Yes	63(64.3)	35(35.7)	3.248	0.072

* Significant Level $p < 0.05$

V. Discussion:

Regarding the awareness level about girl trafficking the findings of the study revealed that 60.87% of adolescent girl were adequately aware, which is similar to the study conducted by shrestha, Karki, Suwal & Copenhagen (2015) which showed 76 % of the respondent were were aware regarding the girl trafficking .¹⁰ Regarding inclusion of social issues such as girl trafficking in curriculum, in this study 85.2% respondents felt need for the inclusion of this topic in curriculum which is supported by the study done by Wong(2011)¹⁶ which showed that 76% of respondents' felt need curriculum to include topics related to social issues such as girl trafficking. The study revealed that 95.7% of respondent heard about girl trafficking which is supported this by the study conducted by Azage(2014)¹⁷ where 60% of total respondents reported that they heard or read about girl trafficking. In same study respondent living together with parents show association with awareness regarding sex trafficking but in this study, there was no any association between level of awareness and living with parents. Regarding the source of information the study revealed that , 54.8% of respondent said radio was source of information about girl trafficking whereas study conducted by Gosswami(2017)¹⁸ showed that 13% of respondent said radio were source of information this might be due to more access to radio sources. The study showed 80.9% of respondent agreed with the statement that Physical abuse and assault are the result of girl trafficking which is strongly supported by qualitative study conducted by Simkhada (2018)¹⁹. In this study 89.6% respondents agreed that adolescent girls are more prone for trafficking whereas in shrestha, Karki, Suwal

& Copenhagen (2015) ¹⁰study 48.6% of respondent mentioned adolescent female as the most vulnerable group for sex trafficking which might be due to lack of education .

VI. Conclusion

Based on findings it is concluded that nearly half of the student have inadequate awareness regarding girl trafficking. Adolescent girls' level of awareness is associated with socio-demographic characteristics such as their grade, mothers' occupation, information factors, having information about organization working for victim of girl trafficking and involvement in social awareness program. The risk group for girl trafficking is adolescents, so it is essential to identify the level of awareness among them to plan for effective awareness programme which alternatively help in decreasing girl trafficking due to change in age and lack of mentorship and supervision of adolescents vulnerable for trafficking.

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