

## GIRLS TRAFFICKING: KNOWLEDGE AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN A SELECTED SCHOOL OF LALITPUR, NEPAL

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Human trafficking is a gross violation of human rights and fastest growing crime in the world. In Nepal, women and girls are becoming victims of trafficking. This study was conducted to assess the knowledge of girls trafficking among school adolescents. **Methods:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out among 111 adolescent students studying in Shree Chhampi Devi Secondary School, Lalitpur. Non-Probability purposive sampling technique was adopted and data was collected using self-administered structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed in descriptive and inferential statistics by using SPSS version 16. **Results:** The study revealed that nearly half (48%) of respondents had moderate knowledge, 28% had inadequate knowledge and 24% had adequate knowledge regarding girls trafficking. Significant association was found between level of awareness and ethnicity of the respondents with p value 0.042 whereas no significant association was found in between awareness level and age, gender, fathers' and mothers' education level ( $P > 0.05$ ). **Conclusion:** This study concludes that even in the school located nearby capital of Nepal, knowledge regarding girls trafficking remains moderate among high risk groups.

**KEYWORDS:** Adolescent, Girls Trafficking, Knowledge.

### INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking is a gross violation of human rights and a serious crime.<sup>[1]</sup> The United Nations defines human trafficking as "the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring 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 giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purposes of exploitation"<sup>[2]</sup>

Worldwide, approximately 600,000 - 800,000 people are trafficked across national borders annually.<sup>[3]</sup> An estimated 3.8 million adults were victims of forced sexual exploitation and 1.0 million children were victims of commercial sexual exploitation in 2016. The majority of victims are women and girls.<sup>[4]</sup> There are nearly 36 million victims of human trafficking in the world. Out of 36 million, nearly two-thirds, are from Asia. India, China, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Thailand are in the top 10 countries with the highest number of trafficking victims in the world.<sup>[5]</sup> North Korea,

Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, and Thailand lies on Tier 3, the worst ranking a country can receive for trafficking violations.<sup>[6]</sup>

Nepal has been classified as a Tier 2 country, meaning that the country's laws against human trafficking are less than satisfactory.<sup>[7]</sup> Although the actual magnitude of trafficking in persons from Nepal is unknown, some published figures suggest that between 5,000 to 7,000 Nepali women and girls are trafficked to India alone each year. The numbers of girls trafficked out of the country are now 10,000 to 15,000 yearly.<sup>[8]</sup> Trafficking in Persons from Nepal's Human Rights Commission estimates that around 35000 people, including 15000 women and 5000 girls, were victims of this crime in 2018.<sup>[9]</sup> Within Nepal, the victims are often trafficked from rural areas to the urban centers for sexual exploitation in places such as dance restaurants, massage parlors, carpet and garment factories, brick-kilns and others.<sup>[10]</sup> Case records documented by six rehabilitation centers in 2005 in Nepal of sex-trafficked women show that they were 16-

18 years of age and (77.2%) have no to little education.<sup>[11]</sup>

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

A descriptive cross-sectional study design was used to assess the knowledge regarding girls trafficking among adolescents.

### Study Area

This study was carried out in Shree Chhampi Devi Secondary School, Lalitpur, Nepal. It is one of the government school situated in Southern part of capital of Nepal.

### Sampling Technique

Non Probability purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. Boys and girls, who were between the ages of thirteen to nineteen years were included in the study. Total sample size was 111 adolescents, where

34, 19, 33, 25 were from class seven, eight, class nine and class ten respectively.

### Data Collection

Data was collected by using structured self-administered questionnaire which consist of socio-demographic information and awareness related questions. There were 9 questions for awareness and the total score was 45. The total percentage score was categorized as: 0-49% = poor knowledge, 50-74% = Fair knowledge and 75-100% = good knowledge.<sup>[12]</sup> Permission was taken from research committee of Patan Academy of Health Sciences, School of Nursing and Midwifery and administrative approval was obtained from Shree Chhampi Secondary School authorities before data collection.

### Data Analysis

Collected data was edited, coded and entered into SPSS 16 version and analyzed by using simple descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage) and inferential statistics (chi-square test).

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Respondents' socio-demographic information.**

n=111		
Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
<b>Age (in years)</b>		
13-15	77	69.4
16-18	34	30.6
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	54	48.6
Female	57	51.4
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Newar	51	45.9
Magar/Lama/Tamang	30	27
Chhetri	22	19.8
Dalit	8	7.2
<b>Fathers' Education</b>		
Illiterate	31	27.9
Primary (1-5)	32	28.8
Secondary (6-10)	46	41.4
Higher secondary (11-12)	2	1.8
<b>Mothers' Education</b>		
Illiterate	83	74.8
Primary (1-5)	20	18.0
Secondary (6-10)	8	7.2
<b>Source of Information</b>		
Radio/TV	107	96.4%
Newspaper	103	92.8%
Relatives/Friends/Neighbor	59	53.2%
Family	44	39.6

Table 1 shows that majority (69.4%) of students were of age 13-15 years. Male and female were nearly half, 48.6% and 51.4% respectively. Regarding ethnicity, majority (45.9%) belonged to Newar and only 7.2 % were Dalit. Majority (41.4%) of respondents' fathers

had secondary level education and most (74.8%) of mothers were illiterate. Most (96.4%) of the respondents got information about girls trafficking from Radio/TV and 39.6% from family members.

Table 2: Respondents' knowledge on girls trafficking.

n=111		
Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
<b>Meaning*</b>		
Sell or purchase a girl for any purpose	89	80.2
Take girls for sex trade with/without benefit	75	67.6
Extract human organs illegally	31	54.1
Go in for sex trade	77	69.4
<b>Types of trafficking*</b>		
External	91	82
Internal	86	77.5
Don't know	13	11.7
<b>Causes *</b>		
Poverty	102	91.9
Lack of awareness	89	80.2
Open border	88	79.3
Unemployment	68	61.3
Internal conflict	24	21.6
Culture	4	3.6
<b>Purposes*</b>		
To take girls to work in sex trade	95	85.6
To take girls to work in restaurant and dance bar	86	77.5
To take out body organs like kidney and sell	75	67.6
To take girls for domestic labour	47	42.3
To take girls to work in factories in low payment	44	39.6
To take girls to work in circus	34	30.6

Note: \*Multiple Response

Table 2 reveals that highest proportion of the respondents (80.2%) stated a girl trafficking is the selling or purchasing a girl for any purpose and 54.1% stated it is an extract human organ illegally. Regarding types of trafficking, 82% mentioned external and 77.5% internal. Most of them (91.9%) responded that poverty as a cause

of trafficking and only 3.6% mentioned culture. Regarding purposes, 85.6% mentioned taking girls to work in sex trade as a main purpose of girls trafficking and the lowest (30.6%) responded taking girls to work in circus is the purpose of the girls trafficking.

Table 3: Respondents' knowledge on the indicative signs of girls trafficking.

n=111		
Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
<b>Signs of trafficking*</b>		
Someone offers good jobs	92	82.9
Someone offers job with attractive salaries in cities	83	74.8
Person proposing marriage but not talking openly about family	81	73
Someone offers valuable gifts/jewels unnecessarily	73	65.8
Someone tries to be closer	66	59.5
Someone offers to take a trip to city	58	52.3
Strangers or someone in your community praise your appearance	51	45.9
Register marriage	29	26.1
<b>Impacts *</b>		
Sexual exploitation	97	87.4
Sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS	91	82
Physical injuries or wounds	58	52.3
Fear and Anger	82	73.9
Labour exploitation	53	47.7
Unemployment	39	35.1
<b>Possible Traffickers *</b>		
Strangers/brokers	104	93.7
Neighbours	70	63.1
Relatives	73	65.8

Co-workers	38	34.2
Family members	23	20.7
<b>Preventive Measures *</b>		
Not to trust strangers	99	89.2
Avoid eating food stuffs given by the strangers	94	84.7
Consult senior before taking any decision for work and marriage	88	79.3
Do not follow what friends or others say	74	66.7
Do not share your information with others unnecessarily	65	58.6
Do not accept gifts by strangers	70	63.1
Keep your documents safely	62	55.9

Note: \* Multiple Response

Table 3 reveals that out of the total respondents, 82.9% indicated that offering good jobs is the main indicative sign of girls trafficking whereas lowest (26.1%) mentioned register marriage as a indicative sign of girls trafficking. Most (87.4%) of the respondents stated sexual exploitation and 26.3% stated unemployment as impact of girls trafficking. Highest proportion of the

respondents (93.7%) stated strangers/brokers are the main possible traffickers and 20.7% stated family members. Most of respondents (89.2%) stated not to trust strangers as the main preventive measure of girls trafficking and 55.9% stated keeping the documents safely as the preventive measure of the girls trafficking

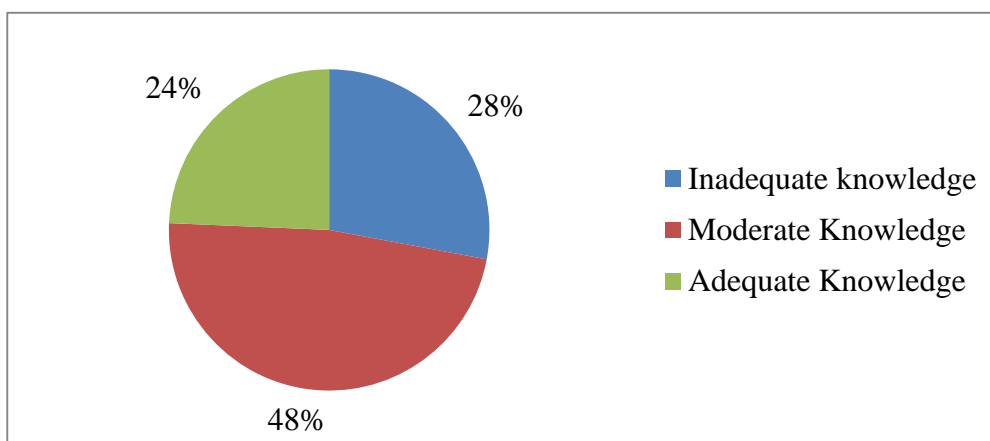


Fig. 1: Respondents' level of knowledge regarding girls' trafficking.

Figure 1 shows nearly half (48%) of respondents had moderate knowledge, 28% had inadequate knowledge

and 24% had adequate knowledge regarding girls trafficking.

Table 4: Association between Demographic Variables and Awareness regarding girls trafficking.

Variables	Level of awareness		P -value
	Inadequate knowledge	Moderate to adequate knowledge	
<b>Age (in years)</b>			
13-15	19(61.3%)	35(66%)	.418
16-18	12(38.7%)	18(34.0%)	
<b>Gender</b>			
Female	17(54.8%)	20(37.7%)	.098
Male	14(45.2%)	33(62.3%)	
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
Chhetri	4(12.9%)	13(24.5%)	.042
Dalit	6(19.4%)	2(3.8%)	
Janajati	2(6.7%)	38(71.7%)	
<b>Fathers' education level</b>			
Illiterate	6(19.4%)	19(35.8%)	.087
Literate	25(80.6%)	34(64.2%)	
<b>Mothers' education level</b>			
Illiterate	21(67.7%)	40(75.5%)	.302
Literate	10(32.3%)	13(24.5%)	

Note: *P*-value under chi - square test < 0.05 – Significant (*S*)  
*P*-value under chi - square test > 0.05 – Non significant (*NS*)

Table 4 shows association between demographic variables and level of awareness regarding girls trafficking. Significant association was found between level of awareness and ethnicity of the respondents with *p* value 0.042 whereas no significant association was found in between awareness level and age, gender, fathers and mothers education level (*P* > 0.05).

## DISCUSSION

In this study majority (69.4%) of students were of age 13-15 years. Male and female were nearly half, 48.6% and 51.4% respectively. Majority (45.9%) belonged to Newar ethnicity and most (74.8%) of mothers were illiterate. Regarding the sources of information about girls trafficking, most (96.4%) of respondents got information from radio/TV which is in line with the study conducted in Sindhupalchowk, Nepal where most (76%) of the respondents got information from Radio/TV.<sup>[13]</sup> In line with this, 64%, of the study participants mentioned television, as sources of information in the study done in Bahir, Ethiopia.<sup>[14]</sup>

Regarding knowledge on meaning of girls trafficking, 67.6% stated as taking girls in sex trade which is supported by the findings of the study conducted in Nepal,<sup>[15]</sup> in which 66.7% of the girls viewed as taking girls for sexual exploitation. In regard to the types of trafficking, 82% stated external trafficking and 77.5% mentioned internal trafficking. These findings are contradicted with the findings of the study conducted in Nepal in which 35% of adolescent girls are “trafficked and sold in big cities”.<sup>[16]</sup>

Similarly, in this study, the respondents mentioned that the most common causes of girls trafficking are poverty, lack of awareness and unemployment by 91.2, 80.2% and 61.3% respectively. This finding is in consistent with the findings from the study conducted in Sindhupalchowk, Nepal (62.2% and 58.6%)<sup>[13]</sup> and Nigeria (77.2% and 68.4%)<sup>[17]</sup> where the respondents mentioned poverty and lack of awareness respectively. In accordance with this, study conducted in Ethiopia revealed that about 50% and 45% of the study participants mentioned unemployment and poverty respectively as reasons for being trafficked.<sup>[14]</sup>

Regarding the purposes of girls trafficking, 80.2%, 77.5%, 42.3% and 30.6% of the respondents stated that purpose of girls trafficking is for sex trade, to work in restaurant and bar and for domestic labor respectively. These findings is in concordance with the findings of the study conducted in Sindhupalchowk, Nepal where the main reason for trafficking was for prostitution (64%) and domestic work (33.3%).<sup>[13]</sup> Similarly, a study done by Shakti Samuha, Nepal among the trafficking survivors, 32% were trafficked for sexual exploitation,

27% for circus performance, 22% for domestic work and 19% for working in restaurants.<sup>[18]</sup>

In regard to signs indicative of girls trafficking, majority (82.9%) of the respondents mentioned that offering good jobs, 74.8% stated someone offering job with attractive salaries in cities, 73% stated person proposing marriage but not talking openly about family, 65.8% stated someone offering valuable gifts/jewels unnecessarily. and These findings are contradicted by a study done by CREPHA<sup>[15]</sup> in which indicative signs were: jobs with attractive salaries in cities (56%), sympathizing with a problem and suggesting marriage to solve it (30%), offering a trip to the city (17%) and trying to be closer (10%).

In this study, Majority (87.4%) noted sexual exploitation and 82% mentioned HIV/AIDS as major impacts of girls trafficking followed by physical injuries or wounds (52.3%). These findings are contradicted by a study done in Sindhupalchowk where 40%, 30.6%, 11.7% and 3.6% respondents identified physical abuse, social discrimination, sexual abuse and mental abuses respectively.<sup>[13]</sup> This findings is also in contrast with the study done in USA, where highest proportion (82%) of the respondents mentioned mental health problems mainly anxiety and depression as the major impacts of trafficking.<sup>[19]</sup>

Regarding the possible traffickers of girls trafficking, 93.7%, 63.1%, 65.8% and 20.7% stated strangers/brokers, neighbors, co-workers and family members respectively. These findings are supported by study done in Bahir, Ethiopia where friends (87%) and brokers (74%) were mentioned as mediators for sex trafficking.<sup>[14]</sup> Similarly, in a study done in Nepal CREPHA, 69.9% stated strangers, 14.2% neighbours and 12.5% family members. In regard to the preventive measures of girls trafficking, 84.7% stated not to eat food stuffs given by the strangers which is supported by the finding of CREPHA (2003) in which 95.8% mentioned the same.<sup>[15]</sup>

Regarding knowledge level, 48% had moderate knowledge, 28% inadequate knowledge and 24% adequately knowledge. This is supported by study done in Mongolia where 40.6% had adequate knowledge, 52.3% had inadequate and 7.1 % had not heard about it<sup>[20]</sup> and study done in Thailand, China, India and Japan where awareness of girls remains low as 40%.<sup>[21]</sup> In contrast with this, study done in five districts of Nepal: Sarlahi, Lamjung, Myagdi and Palpa (2008) revealed that 76.4% had lack of awareness.<sup>[18]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The study revealed that nearly half of respondents had moderate knowledge, more than on fourth had

inadequate knowledge and nearly one fourth had adequate knowledge regarding girls trafficking. Significant association was found between level of awareness and ethnicity of the respondents where as no significant association was found in between awareness level and age, gender, fathers and mothers education level.

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