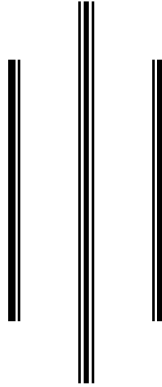
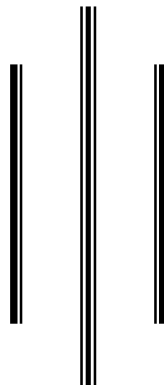


TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY
FEMALE SEX WORKERS IN KATHMANDU: LIVELIHOOD
ASSETS AND THEIR VULNERABILITY



A Thesis
Submitted to the Central Department of Geography, Faculty of
Humanities and Social Sciences, in the partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
In
GEOGRAPHY



Submitted By
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July, 2009

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Head of the Department

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Supervisor

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External Examiner

(Thesis Committee)

DEDICATION

*I dedicate this piece of my academic endeavor to my parents **Late. Ani Raj Joshi** and **Hema Joshi** who never attended formal education but always toiled for making me what I am today.*

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Abstract

Much has been researched on socially accepted or desirable livelihood strategy of different occupational caste and ethnic groups but there is very limited study of urban poor women that have adopted socially, culturally and legally undesirable livelihood strategy. Many poor women in urban areas have adopted sex trade as a main way of earning livelihood and struggling with low quality of survival. Thus, this study attempts to explore the livelihood of Female Sex Workers (FSWs) in Kathmandu. Particularly, this study examines the socio-economic background, motivational factors, social perception, livelihood assets and vulnerability context of FSWs' livelihood. The analysis is based on field survey of 50 FSWs that were collected from different sites of Kathmandu metropolitan city namely Ratnapark, Gongabu, Thamel, Gausala-Chabahil and Kalanki area in January-February 2009. It is found that FSWs are quite young as well as uneducated and victimized by domestic violence and sexual harassment. Overwhelming majority is migrant. They are from variety of castes and ethnic backgrounds and majority of them are divorced or separated. Motivational factors of the FSWs are complex and interconnected. Together with poverty, political conflict, unsuccessful conjugal life, domestic violence and sexual harassment have led many women into sex trade. Sex trade is regarded as social evil and societal perception is quite negative towards FSWs and their profession. They have no livelihood assets that are described in sustainable livelihood framework and their own physicality is main livelihood asset of the FSWs that is not explained in the framework. Thus, the livelihood framework is incomplete to assess the livelihood of FSWs. The livelihood of FSWs is vulnerable and unsustainable so concerned authorities and agencies should provide them stable source of income and state should regulate sex trade and specify red light area in certain sites of the urban areas.

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MADAN RAJ JOSHI

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
DFID	(British) Department for International Development
DICs	Drop-in-Centres
et.al.	Alli,aliae (Latin Word), and other
etc.	Et Cetrea
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FSWs	Female Sex Workers
GIS	Geographical Information System
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDS	Institute for Development Studies
i.e.	That is
IFAO	International Fund for Agricultural Organization
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NLSS	Nepal Living Standard Survey
NRs	Nepalese Rupees
SLA	Sustainable Livelihood Approach
SLF	Sustainable Livelihood Framework
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VDC	Village Development Commiittee
WCED	World Commission on Environment andDevelopment
YCL	Young Communist League

Glossary

Bari	Un-irrigated land
Beshya	Prostitute
Bhaloo	A slang word for Prostitute
Bhatti Pasal	A traditional bar
Bhuse Chulo	An oven that uses dusts for fire
Brahman	Highest caste in Hindu caste system
Chalchalan	Activities (Here)
Chhakajam	No movements of vehicle
Chhetri	Second highest caste in Hindu caste system
Dalal	Brokers or middleman
Dalit	Lowest caste in Hindu caste system
Dashain	The greatest festival of Hindus
Khet	Irrigated land (Generally paddy land)
Khoriya	Slash and burn agriculture
Mahashivratri	The greatest festival of Lord Shiva
Randhi	Beshya
Rasanpani	Food (Here)
Tihar	The second biggest festival of Hindus.