

Women's Trafficking in Pakistan: Intersecting Vulnerabilities and Repeated Exploitation

Human trafficking is a global malaise that degrades human beings to the level of disposable commodities and has become one of the most profitable illegal enterprise generating billions of dollars annually. According to the United States Department of States, Pakistan is an origin, transit, and destination country for trafficking in women, men, and children. Although many scholars have studied and highlighted human trafficking as a gendered phenomenon, the dominant focus of literature on women's trafficking has been on women's vulnerability to sexual exploitation. In this study, drawing upon the experiences of female victims of trafficking in Pakistan, I discuss diverse forms of trafficking and argue that the phenomenon of women's trafficking is situated within a continuum of violence that intersects with entrenched structural inequalities and make women of particular social positions more vulnerable to exploitation, often repeatedly, by others. Moreover, due to the narrow scope of anti-trafficking legislation in Pakistan, many of the trafficked women are not identified or treated as victims of trafficking which makes them susceptible to revictimization and further exploitation.