

## CHAPTER - VI

### PSYCHO SOCIAL ASPECTS

Mane (1994) considers Mental and Emotional factors as important constituent factors of the lifestyle of an individual. The other determinant factors viz. the socio cultural and work related factors have already been described in detail in the previous chapters. This chapter aims to describe the psycho-social aspects of the respondents. An attempt is made to develop an insight in to the respondents' perception of the socio-cultural environment surrounding them, how they perceive their own self worth and what behaviour patterns they follow.

The major areas covered in this chapter are :

- 1) Respondents' Attitude towards customers.
- 2) Respondents' Attitude towards brothel keeper.
- 3) Respondents' Attitude towards law implementing machinery.
- 4) Occupational stress and adjustment of Respondents.
- 5) Self esteem of respondents.
- 6) Sex typology of respondents.
- 7) Their 'purpose in life' and
- 8) Individual and social values.
- 9) Religiosity among respondents.
- 10) Crisis and coping strategies.

According to Shaw and Wright (1967), "Attitude is a state of readiness, a tendency to act or react in a certain manner when confronted with certain stimuli".

Thus, the individuals' attitudes are present but dormant most of the time. Attitudes are reinforced by beliefs (the cognitive component) and often attract strong feelings (the emotional component) that will lead to particular forms of behaviour (the action tendency component).

#### **Attitude Towards Customers :**

Customer is an important counterpart of sex worker in flesh trade. Infact, sex workers are dependent on the customers for their survival in business. Constant flow of customers ensure demand for sex service, which in turn, ensures economic security for the sex service givers.

On the other hand, customers are the people who commodify a living human body and kill the 'person within' a sex worker. Every customer reminds a sex worker that she is just a 'thing', that can be bought in exchange of money. Ghosh (1996) has presented several quotations under the section titled 'women in sex trade speak'. The feelings of a sex worker are beautifully described by Evelina Globbe thus : "All of us have been subjected to a wide range of sexual abuse as a part of our job description. As for my well heeled clientele and their fancy hotel suits, all I can say is, whether you turn tricks in a car by the Holland

tunnel or in the Plaza Hotel, you will have to take off your clothes, get on your knees or lie on your back and let this stranger use you in any way he pleases. Then you have to get up, get dressed and do it again with the next trick, and the next.... The repeated act of submitting to the sexual demands of strangers whom we would not otherwise choose necessitates that we alienate our minds from our bodies. To be a prostitute is to be an object in the market place; a three dimensional blank screen upon which men project and act out of their sexual dominance. Thus, the word 'Prostitute' does not imply a 'deeper identity', it is the ABSENCE OF IDENTITY, the theft and the subsequent abandonment of self".

To understand the attitude of respondents towards customers in the present study, the researcher designed a scale containing ten statements; responses for each statement were measured on a five point scale. The split half reliability was 0.69. Based on her earlier research experience, the researcher included both positive and negatively worded statements that would enable her to cross check or confirm the responses and thus ensure accuracy. The findings were as follows :-

**Table - 73 : Attitude towards Customers**

Sr. No.	Attitude	Frequency	Percent
1	Negative	58	54.2
2	Positive	49	45.8
	Total	107	100

The mean score having been computed at 21.3, the respondents scoring less than mean suggested overall negative attitude towards the customers where as those scoring higher suggested overall positive attitude towards the customers. The standard deviation figure was 4.20.

Referring to the above table, it can be observed that majority (54.2%) of respondents had a negative feeling towards customers where as 45.8% of them showed positive attitude towards customers. The finding more or less confirms the feelings described by Evelina Globbe quoted in the earlier paragraph.

**Table - 74: Attitude towards Customers and Native State**

Sr.No.	Native State	<u>Attitude towards customers</u>		Total	Percent
		Negative	Positive		
1	Maharashtra	12	15	27	25.2
2	Gujarat	00	03	03	2.8
3	West Bengal	03	02	05	4.7
4	Andhra Pradesh	02	04	06	5.6
5	Nepal	40	18	58	54.2
6	Others	01	07	08	7.5
Total		58(54.2)	49(45.8)	107	100

The above table shows that chi-square is significant at 0.005 level of confidence hence there is a strong association between the native place / state of respondent and her attitude toward customer. Among respondents hailing from Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra and other states majority showed a positive attitude towards the customers. From those hailing from the East and North East - i.e.

from West Bengal and Nepal clear majority showed a negative attitude towards customer.

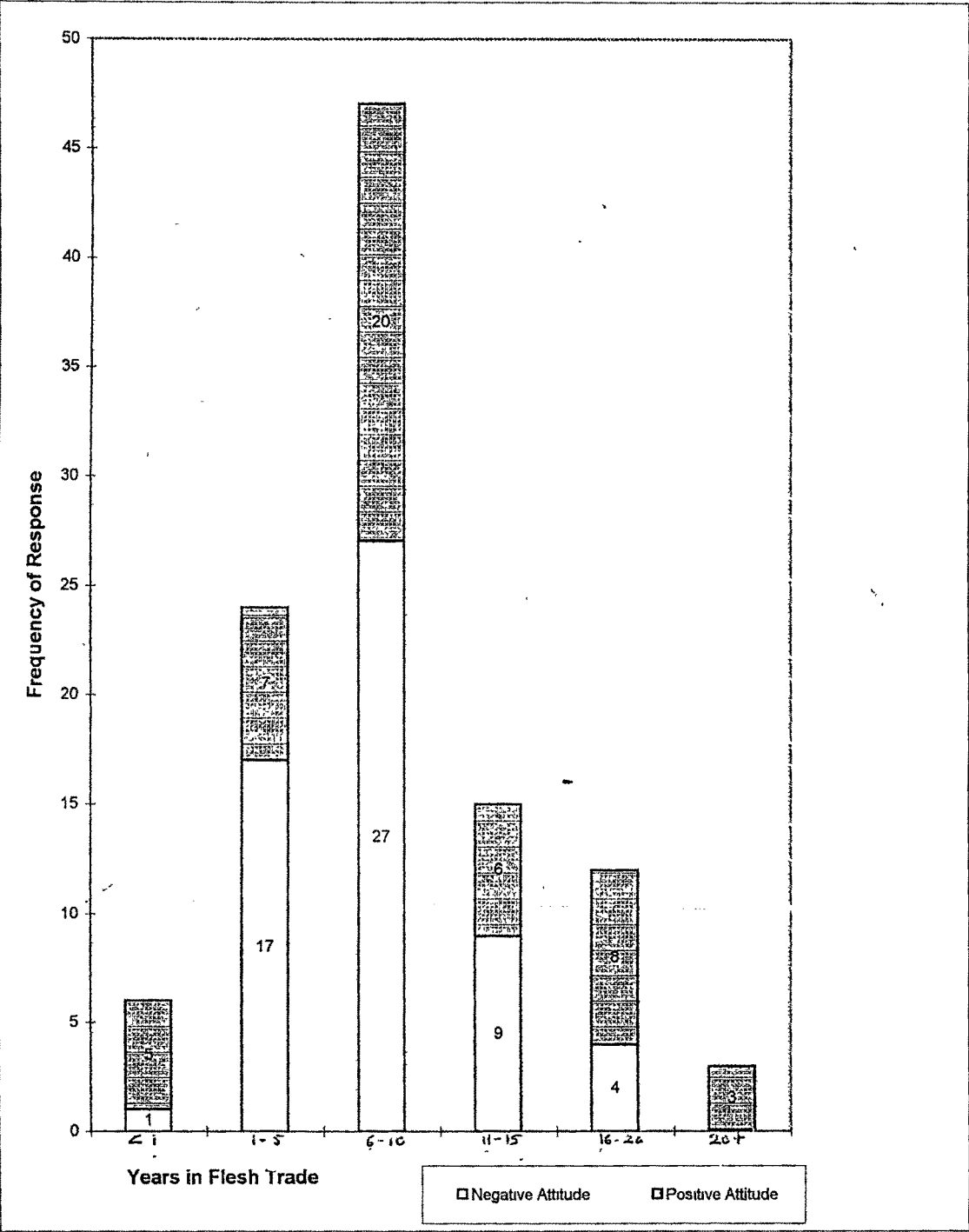
It may be said that in Maharashtra and Southern states, prostitution has some socio-religious sanction. The sex worker-customer relationship is institutionalized (e.g. Devdasi - Zulva) whereas sex workers from Nepal and West Bengal are driven to prostitution by sheer economic compulsion. It is obvious that they see customers as a party to their exploitation or victimization and hence do not possibly show equal acceptance of customers as their counter parts from Western & Southern India show.

**Table - 75: Attitude towards Customers and Years in Sex Trade**

Sr.No.	Years in Trade	Negative	Positive	Total	Percent
1	Less than 1 year	01	05	06	05.6
2	1 to 5 years	17	07	24	22.4
3	6 to 10 years	27	20	47	43.9
4	11 to 15 years	09	06	15	14.0
5	16 to 20 years	04	08	12	11.2
6	More than 20 years	00	03	03	2.8
Total		58(54.2)	49(45.8)	107	100

Referring to the above table it can be seen that chi-square is significant at 0.03 level of confidence which suggests a strong association between respondents' years in flesh trade and their attitude towards customers. As the table shows, among the respondents who had recently entered flesh trade and those who had spent more than 15 years in trade, majority showed positive attitude toward

**GRAPH : Frequency bar showing Respondents' years in Flesh Trade and their attitude towards the customers**



customers. Whereas from those in the mid phase of their career as sex workers majority showed negative attitude towards the customers. The possible reason for this could be that in their first year of flesh trade and at the fag end of their career as sex workers, respondents feel unsure and insecure about their survival in business. These are the years when they are specially conscious about their dependence on the customers for their survival. Once the sex worker is established in the business and is getting steady clientele, she perhaps feels secure. By this time she learns the tricks of the trade and realizes that just as she is dependent on the client, the client is dependent on her for fulfilling his needs.

It is only when she becomes old that she again realizes her dependence on her customers. Thus, in the beginning of their career, as well as towards the end of their career as sex workers, the respondents, out of the feelings of gratitude possibly develop a positive attitude towards the customers whereas in the middle phase of their career, majority of them showed negative attitude.

#### **Attitude Towards Gharawali (Brothel Keeper) :**

The brothel organization and hierarchy has been discussed in the earlier chapter on research setting. The economic and business arrangement of the sex workers with the gharawali has been covered under the section business related information.

Here, attempt has been made to assess sex workers’ attitude towards gharawali. As already stated earlier, many sex workers work under a gharawali and even those, who operated independently in business, shared business affiliations with one or the other senior gharawali. This was mainly to ensure protection against police actions and also against threats received from other antisocial elements.

Joardar (1984) commenting on the relation of the prostitute with the brothel keeper writes, “The relation between the Mashhi (brothel keeper) and a prostitute can never be a pleasant one, only because the Mashhi exploits the prostitute in every possible way. In the presence of the mashhi, a prostitute seems to be very loyal and in her absence, she has no respect for her, rather she abuses her like anything. It is very difficult for a prostitute to be out of the clutch of the Mashhi because she often tortures the prostitutes... if she can know that she was trying to start independent business”.

**Table - 76: Attitude towards Gharawali**

Sr. No.	Attitude	Frequency	Percent
1	Negative	55	51.4
2	Positive	52	48.6
	Total	107	100



The above table shows that 51.4% i.e. majority of respondents had a negative attitude towards gharawali where as 48.6% of respondents showed positive attitude towards gharawali. The difference in the number of respondents showing positive and negative attitude however is relatively thin. This could be because gharawali on one hand posed restrictions on respondents' freedom and took away a big share in their hard earned income. On the other hand, whenever the respondents faced crisis related to their health, monetary crisis, emotional crisis or legal crisis, gharawalis went to their rescue and provided them shelter and security. It was obvious that respondents shared a mixed - love-hate nature of relationship for the gharawali.

#### **Attitude towards Police and Judiciary :**

Prostitution per-se is not a crime in India. Having adopted abolitionist approach, the laws against prostitution viz. some sections of Indian penal code and the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act are stricter for traffickers in flesh trade. Prostitutes themselves are viewed more as victims of fleshtrade rather than as law breakers and hence only practising prostitution in or near a public place and soliciting for the purpose of prostitution are punishable acts. The punishment to prostitutes are lighter and girls rescued from brothels have an option to seek shelter in rescue homes.

However, sudden police raids in brothels, arrests and court cases by police cause a lot of disturbance for the prostitutes. They are not only deprived of their day's earnings but the price - both official (e.g. bail/fine) and unofficial (Hapta or instalments to police as bribe) payments made by the pimps or brothel keeper to rescue a girl from police is ultimately recovered from her later. Even when they are arrested, the cheap comments and filthy language used by police attack their human dignity. This is why most respondents try to avoid police. At times customers complain to the police and accuse the sex workers for robbing them of their money or other possessions (e.g. wrist watch etc.) when they visit sex workers. Police beat up the girl - (Researcher observed one such incident). The sex worker, in such case has no option but to tolerate the police's behaviour. In the words of one of the respondents, "we can not argue or raise our voice against the police as doing so would not only cause us trouble but could also invite trouble for our gharawali. We are compelled to maintain good relations with them also because at times we need police's help to handle rough or drunkard customers --".

Thus, by and large, presence of police is accepted as a necessary evil by those in flesh trade. Researcher herself witnessed instances, full of paradox : where on the sight of police, sex workers rushed inside their 'kholis' and closed the doors out of fear and she also witnessed a very friendly behaviour of some of the gharawalis with the police. Some sex workers even sympathised with the

police and explained to the researcher - “woh bhi kya karen? Unko bhi aankade dikhane padte hai bade saab ko!” - meaning “What can they do, they too have to meet their target and show the arrest figures to their Superiors!”. In short, as the researcher could observe, the relationship shared by the sex workers and the police was down to earth - reality oriented.

However, to probe the respondents’ attitude towards police and judiciary as law implementing agencies, researcher used a five point scale with ten indicators. The results are as follows :-

**Table - 77: Attitude towards Police and Judiciary**

Sr. No.	Attitude	Frequency	Percent
1	Negative	48	44.9
2	Positive	59	55.1
Total		107	100

Majority of respondents showed an overall positive attitude towards the legal machinery. Where as 44.9% of respondents showed a negative attitude towards police/judiciary. Those having negative attitude were ones who had experienced harassment from the police - either demanding money or ill treatment / beatings from police.

Those having positive attitude had either successfully evaded arrests or more or less accepted police’s authority and hardly argued with them and hence

did not experience much harassment. It was as if an invisible boundary line (code of conduct) existed and in normal circumstances deviations within permissible limits were tolerated by both the parties - sex workers and police.

It must be noted, however, that this findings were after the Gujarat high court's intervention based on a petition by the sex workers to seek protection against harassment by police (Times of India, 1997).

### **Occupational Adjustment :**

Sex work is a very peculiar kind of occupation. On one hand, it is accepted as an oldest profession of the world and on the other hand, it is shunned by even the most modern societies. Despite the high social and moral cost one has to pay for accepting this occupation, millions of women and girls are attracted to it perhaps for one simple reason - the capital cost or investment required to start this occupation is zero.

Whether one has accepted sex trade voluntarily or by force; is she able to adjust in her work environment ? Does she find her work pleasurable and rewarding ? Does she like the people with whom she is required to deal with every day or does she feel like a fish out of water ? Does her work provide her an opportunity to progress ? All these, together determine the extent to which a respondent has successfully adjusted in the occupation of sex work.

The researcher tried to measure the level of occupation adjustment of respondents. The finding was as follows.

**Table - 78: Occupational Adjustment of Respondents**

Sr. No.	Level of Adjustment	Frequency	Percent
1	Low	58	53.8
2	High	49	46.2
Total		107	100

The respondents' occupation adjustment was measured on a five point likert type scale having total nine indicators. Those respondents scoring less than mean were classified as having low occupational adjustment where as others scoring higher than mean were categorised as those having higher level of occupational adjustment. As the above table reveals, majority of respondents showed low level of occupation adjustment, the mean score being 26.49. In other words, majority of the respondents had difficulty in adjusting with the nature of their work due to one or the other reason.

**Table - 79: Respondents' Occupational Adjustment and mode of entry in Flesh Trade**

Sr. No.	Entry in Flesh Trade	<u>Level of Occupational Adjustment</u>		Total	Percent
		Low	High		
1	Forced	13	2	15	14
2	Voluntary	45	47	92	86
		58 (53.8%)	49 (46.2%)	107	100

The above table shows association between respondents' mode of entry into flesh trade and their occupation adjustment level. Among the 15 respondents who were forced to accept flesh trade against their will, a very high majority (13 out of 15) showed low level of occupational adjustment, where as among the 92 respondents who entered flesh trade of their own will, majority (47 out of 92) showed relatively higher occupation adjustment level. It is obvious that they were mentally prepared to earn through sex trade and hence could adjust better in occupation. Those who had been subjected to torture and force to accept flesh trade were not mentally prepared for the type of work and work environment and hence showed low level of occupation adjustment. This validates the hypothesis stated in methodology that "lower the willingness to enter flesh trade, lower the occupational adjustment".

### **Occupational Stress :**

R.S. Schuler (1980), in his work on 'Organizational Behaviour and Human Performance' explains stress as a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constrain or demand related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be uncertain or important. The various stressors or situations that are more likely to cause stress in a work place are :

- (i) Role Ambiguity,
- (ii) Role Conflict,
- (iii) Role Overload
- (iv) Role Shrinkage.

Though the work of Schuler was in a very different background, the stressors described above can easily be related to the present research set up. Workers in sex industry are likely to face almost all these stressors. It is important, however, to know whether respondents perceive these situations as stressful.

**Table - 80: Occupational Stress Among Respondents**

Sr. No.	Stress Level	Frequency	Percent.
1	Low	54	50.5
2	High	53	49.5
Total		107	100

The table shows that Respondents' distribution is almost equal among low and high scoring categories. Those scoring low stress level are more by only one number. In other words the number of respondents showing higher occupation stress was almost equal to those showing relatively lower occupational stress.

It may be possible that those who were relatively new in the flesh trade and were inducted into it by fraud or force found sex work more stressful. In absence of any better options, however they compromised soon with their fate and perhaps

developed a defensive shield which protected them against the stress produced by the nature of their occupation.

Another possibility is that the stress faced by respondents before coming to sex trade was so high that most of them find their present life (while in sex trade) less stressful as compared to their previous life. In other words, sex trade was a better option for them.

### **Self Esteem :**

The Researcher adopted Rosenberg's (1965) self esteem scale which was designed to measure the self acceptance aspect of self esteem. It consists of ten items revolving around liking and/or approving of the self. It was specifically designed to be unidimensional for the ease of administration. Robinson (1973) sees this feature as both a strength and a limitation of this test.

Researcher attempted to measure how each respondent viewed herself in terms of her self worth. This was done with a five point rating scale having ten different indicators.

**Table - 81: Self Esteem Level of Respondents**

Sr.No.	Level of Self Esteem	Frequency	Percent
1	Low	52	48.6
2	High	55	51.4
Total		107	100



The above table shows distribution of respondents according to their self esteem - mean score being 33.21. Though majority was found to be holding high self esteem, it was by a thin majority. A significant number of 48.6%, (though forming minority) showed low self esteem. More than 48% of respondents' perception of self worth was below the mean level.

**Table - 82: Self Esteem and Native State of Respondents**

Sr.No.	Native State	<u>Self Esteem</u>		Frequency	Percent
		Low	High		
1	Maharashtra	06	21	27	25.2
2	Gujarat	00	03	03	02.8
3	West Bengal	03	02	05	04.7
4	Andhra Pradesh	04	02	06	05.6
5	Nepal	33	25	58	54.2
6	Others	06	02	08	07.5
Total		52(48.6%)	55(51.4%)	107	100

Referring to the table it can be seen that Chi square is significant at 0.009 level of confidence. Hence there is a strong association between native place of respondents and their self esteem level. Further it can be seen that among the respondents belonging to Maharashtra and Gujarat, majority had higher self esteem where as among respondents coming from rest of the country and Nepal, majority showed low self esteem.

The compulsion to live away from their places of origin perhaps created an insecurity in the minds of the respondents resulting in to low self esteem.

Respondents from Maharashtra and Gujarat had an option to visit their native place without much difficulty as Surat is located close to the Gujarat - Maharashtra border line. Irrespective of the fact whether they actually visited their families frequently or not, the familiarity with the region and availability of easy option to visit their home place indirectly might have led to a sense of security, and hence majority of respondents from these states showed a relatively higher self esteem level.

#### **Sex Typology of Respondents :**

Society transmutes male and female with masculine and feminine through the process of sex typing. It is generally believed that for healthy growth of personality, strong gender identification is necessary. For proper adjustment and social adaptation, gender identity is thought to be essential.

However biological theory emphasizes that no human being is a pure unisexual organism. One's sexuality is determined by the relative predominance of one sex over the other. The concept of bisexuality is not uncommon in Hindu philosophy. It is well reflected in the concept of "Ardhanarishwar" which sees male and female as complimentary to one another.

The concept of Androgyny (Bem, 1974) emphasizes that it is possible for a person to be both aggressive and compassionate, instrumental and expressive,

masculine and feminine. Masculinity and femininity are seen as matters of degree. In the present research, Bem's Balance Model is used to determine sex typology of respondents. Here, sex typed individuals are those who are predominantly masculine or feminine. The non sex typed are those who balance masculinity and femininity in them. Bem labelled them as Androgynous. Bem's Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) consisted of forty traits. Researcher used a five point scale to rate the respondents. After computing the total score for each respondent on masculine and feminine traits the median was computed for both the scales. Respondents were classified in four categories as follows :

- (1) Androgynous : Respondents scoring high (above median) in both Masculinity and femininity.
- (2) Stereo typed : Respondents scoring low on masculinity and high on femininity.
- (3) Cross Sexed : Respondents scoring high masculinity and low femininity.
- (4) Indifferentiated: Respondents scoring low on femininity as well as masculinity.

**Table - 83: Sex Typology of Respondents**

Sr.No.	Sex Typology		Frequency	Percent
1	Undefined \	(LF-LM)	36	33.6
2	Stereo typed	(HF-LM)	13	12.1
3	Androgynous	(HF-HM)	17	15.9
4	Cross Sexed	(LF-HM)	41	38.3
Total			107	100

(F = Feminine, M = Masculine)

The above table shows out of four categories of sex typology, the frequency is highest in the cross sexed category which means that 38.3% of respondents have scored less than median on femininity scale and more than median on masculinity scale.

33.6% of respondents fall in undefined category having scored low on femininity scale and also low on masculinity scale.

Those in stereotyped category (High female - low male) 12.1% and Androgynous category (High female and high male) 15.9% were relatively less in number.

It must be noted that both cross sexed and undefined categories suggest femininity score lower than median (63.0). In other words more than 71 out of 107 respondents have scored lower on femininity scale.

Considering that all respondents are women and are in sex trade in which gender/sex is a major factor it is indeed a finding that requires further probing.

The possible reason for low score on femininity could be that after having realized their vulnerability as women (which compelled them to be subjected to sexual exploitation) these women have consciously or sub consciously assumed masculine traits to prevent further exploitation or to prevent emotional breakdown. Researcher could observe that though physically respondents tried their best to project their femininity by wearing revealing clothes and heavy make up, their

behaviour was quite harsh and rude with customers as well as colleagues. It was as if they were always defensive, “on their guards”. Through their aggressive behaviour they were trying to build a protective shield around them to prevent further exploitation.

**Purpose in Life :**

Purpose in life test of Crumbaugh, (1968) is an attitude scale designed to measure the degree to which a person experiences a sense of meaning and purpose in life. The original test consisted of 20 items rated from low purpose to high purpose. Its reliability reported split half correlation of 0.85.

One validation of this test consists of its ability to separate successfully functioning individuals in society from individuals diagnosed as neurotic. It does correlate significantly with depression and anomie scale (Robinson, 1973).

Researcher adapted this scale to suit the need of the present study.

**Table - 84: Respondents' Purpose in Life**

Sr.No.	Purpose in Life	Frequency	Percent
1	Low	43	40.2
2	High	64	59.8
Total		107	100

The above table reveals that majority of respondents i.e. 59.8% of them have scored high on a 2 point scale measuring their 'purpose in life'. The mean score was computed at 14.99. This reveals a positive trend. It is good to note that majority of respondents find their life worth living.

**Table - 85: Purpose in Life and Native State of Respondents**

Sr.No.	Native State	<u>Purpose in Life</u>		Total	Percent
		Low	High		
1	Maharashtra	03	24	27	25.5
2	Gujarat	00	03	03	2.8
3	West Bengal	03	02	05	4.7
4	Andhra Pradesh	02	04	06	5.7
5	Nepal	31	27	58	54.2
6	Others	04	04	08	7.5
Total		43(40.2%)	64(59.8%)	107	100

The above table reveals that chi-square is significant at 0.005 level of confidence which shows a strong association between native place of respondents and their score of purpose in life scale. Among the respondents from Maharashtra, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh majority showed a positive score on purpose in life scale where as among the respondents hailing from West Bengal and Nepal majority have scored low on purpose in life scale. Their majority is however, thin. This may be so because these respondents are far away from their homeland, and were compelled to detach from their cultural roots. The respondents belonging to other states were equally distributed among the low and high scores.

**Table - 86 : Purpose in Life and Sex typology of Respondent**

Sr.No.	Sex Typology	<u>Purpose in Life</u>		Total	Percent
		Low	High		
1	Undefined (LF-LM)	24	12	36	33.6
2	Stereotyped(HF-LM)	02	11	13	12.1
3	Androgynous (HF-HM)	05	12	17	15.9
4	Cross Scored (LF-HM)	12	29	41	38.3
Total		43	64	107	100

The above table shows a strong association between respondents' sex typology and their score on purpose in life scale. The chi-square is significant at 0.001 level of confidence. Out of the four sex typologies, majority among three categories viz. stereotyped (i.e. high female-low male), androgynous (i.e. high female-high male) and cross sexed (i.e. low female and high male) showed a higher score on purpose in life scale. Whereas majority scored lower among the undefined (low female - low male) category.

It may possibly be interpreted that those having confused personality were confused about their purpose in life as well - or vice versa.

#### **Values :**

Values are relatively more basic than attitudes. One's thinking, feeling and actions are governed by the values that he/she upholds.

The term value is defined as "the 'emotional weight' positive or negative that we attach to our perception of a situation, measuring its relative desirability

(personal preferences) and/or its relative goodness (culturally prescribed preferences)” - Values generally concern goals whereas norms concern means, although the ways by which means become ends in daily life (and vice versa) show that there can not be a rigid distinction (Storer, 1972).

Acuff et al. (1973) define values as “Concepts, goals or activities defined as important in a society - things worth being or doing or having - what is wanted, what is best and what is desirable or preferable”.

The projective test of individual and social values by A. Hafeez and Shakeela Begum from Pareek and Rao’s (1974) Handbook of Psychological and social instruments was referred and adapted keeping in mind the peculiarities of present research set up and research population. The original test was in the form of statements and words aiming to measure individual values (covering ambition, courage, initiative, determination, fame, adventure, perseverance, power, wealth) and social values (consisting of harmony, love, sympathy, tolerance, peace, service, co-operation and sincerity).

The split half reliability of the adapted scale was 0.7.

**Table - 87 : Individual and Social Values of Respondents**

Sr.No.	Value Score	Frequency	Percent
1	Low	55	51.4
2	High	52	48.6
	Total	107	100



The test contained ten indicators, to be measured on a five point scale. The mean value was computed at 32.53. Those scoring higher than mean were rated higher on the value scale. The above table reveals that 48.6% of respondents scored higher on value scale where as those scoring less than mean were in majority as they formed 51.4% of the total population. The fact that they have chosen to compromise with the prevailing social and moral values by accepting flesh trade indicates that either due to their personality make-up or due to their social environment, respondents were compelled to deviate from the expected normative patterns.

**Table - 88: Value and Type of Family**

Sr.No.	Type of Family	Value Score		Total	Percent
		Low	High		
1	Nuclear	40	47	87	81.3
2	Joint	15	05	20	18.7
Total		55(51.4%)	52(48.6%)	107	100

Referring to the above table, one can see a strong association between the type of family and their value score level as the chi-square is significant at 0.019 level of confidence. Among the respondents hailing from nuclear families, majority scored higher on value score whereas among those who came from joint families, majority scored lower than mean on the value scale. This reverses a general belief that those who are brought up in a joint family have gone through

better socialization process or that in nuclear family, a child's socialization is not as healthy and complete as in a joint family.

**Table - 89: Respondents' Values and Years in Sex Trade**

Sr.No.	Years in Trade	<u>Individual and Social Values</u>			
		<u>Frequency</u>		Total	Percent
		Low	High		
1	Less than one	4	2	06	5.6
2	1 to 5	15	9	24	22.4
3	6 to 10	18	29	47	43.9
4	11 to 15	09	06	15	14.0
5	16 to 20	09	03	12	11.2
6	More than 20	00	03	03	2.8
Total		55	52	107	100

The above table shows a strong correlation between the individual and social value score of respondents and the number of years in trade. The chi-square is significant at 0.046 level of confidence. Among the respondents whose duration in flesh trade ranged zero to five and eleven to twenty, the majority scored lower than mean score whereas among those who were in trade for six to ten and more than twenty, majority scored higher than the mean value. One can observe a pattern. In the initial period till five years, the value score of majority of respondents is on lower score. After having stabilized in trade, majority is shifted towards a higher value score. Again, between years eleven to twenty, the majority is on lower score

but for those having spent more than twenty years in trade, the majority is on the higher value score side.

**Table - 90: Individual and Social Values and Sex Typology**

Sr.No.	Sex typology	<u>Value Score</u>		Total	Percent
		Low	High		
1	Undefined (LF-LM)	31	05	36	33.6
2	Stereotyped(HF-LM)	12	01	13	12.1
3	Androgynous (HF-HM)	6	11	17	15.9
4	Cross Scored (LF-HM)	06	35	41	38.3
Total		55	52	107	100

The chi-square being significant at 0.00 level of confidence, the above referred table shows a strong association between the respondents' sex typology and their value score. Among those respondents who fall in undefined and stereotyped sex typology a very high number have scored lower on the value scale where as those among androgynous and cross sexed, majority has scored higher on the value scale.

### **Religiosity :**

Religion is an important sub-system of society. It not only provides security against fear of the unknown but also becomes means for socialization. It provides a structure for one's spiritual development. It influences one's attitude

towards life. Conversely, one's life experiences may also influence one's level of faith in a particular religion. Stressful situations and frequent negative life experiences may be reacted differently by different persons - some tend to cling to the religion more strongly whereas some persons may completely lose their faith in the supernatural power.

Researcher would like to quote an incident which led her to probe in to the religiosity of the respondents.

Before starting pre testing and actual data collection, researcher had paid several visits to the red-light area under study and specially made it a point to meet the leading brothel keepers, without whose co-operation data collection was not possible. Researcher usually was made to sit in the 'girasthi room' i.e. room for personal use of the brothel keeper where customers were not allowed to enter. A portion of the same room was used as kitchen and sex workers working under that brothel keeper would have their meals there.

During one such visit by the researcher, a sex worker came in to have her lunch. Researcher observed that before starting her lunch she closed her eyes, folded her hands and said prayer. After she finished her lunch, again she offered 'pranam' to the 'Anna Devta' i.e. food - which is regarded as a form of God among Hindus.

Researcher could see that the religion is so deep-rooted in our culture that even a woman branded as ‘deviant’, living in the so called immoral world did not miss to perform a ritual which all most all religious Hindus follow !

Researcher realized the need to probe in to this aspect of respondent’s lives.

The researcher studied the religiosity questionnaire by Brown (1962) which was a modified version of the Thouless scale for studying certainly of religious beliefs. It was designed to study functional relationships between religious beliefs and other psychological variables. Its sub areas consisted of orthodox beliefs, general religious beliefs, opinions, facts, miscellaneous institutionalization and individualism. Since the test items did not suit the Indian cultural set up, researcher designed a test with 9 items to be measured on a two point scale. The split half correlation came to .7.

**Table - 91 : Religiosity Level of Respondents**

Sr. No.	Score	Frequency	Percent
1	Low	71	66.4
2	High	36	33.6
Total		107	100

The overall score on Religiosity scale showed that religiosity level was low in cases of 66.4% of respondents and 33.6% of respondents scored high on religiosity scale. The mean score being 11.9. This means that majority of

respondents had less faith in religion. This could be because their faith in God was shaken because of constant sufferings in life. For them, God and religion were more or less the same.

**Table - 92 : Respondents' Belief in God**

Sr. No.	Belief in God	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	95	88.8
2	No	12	11.2
Total		107	100

One's faith in God may depend on many factors. Early childhood socialization and life experiences are two such factors. Faith in God may be transmitted by family through 'Samskaras' by means of rituals. Life experiences can reinforce one's faith, thus, helping one to retain his/her faith. However constant negative life experiences may lead one to question the existence of god.

The above table reveals that majority of respondents believed in God; but little more than ten percent of respondents have clearly denied their belief in God or any supernatural power. Those who did not believe in God said that they had lost their faith in the 'so called God' and questioned his existence in the world which is full of injustice.

One of the indicators of one's religiosity is whether one worships his/her deity every day.

**Table - 93 : Whether Respondents Worship Regularly**

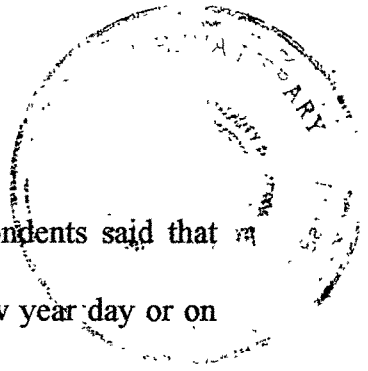
Sr. No.	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Worships Regularly	56	52.3
2	Do not Worship Daily	51	47.7
Total		107	100

As seen in the table, majority of respondents worshipped their deity everyday. They made it a point to remember their respective deities at least once - usually by lighting an earthen lamp, candle or incense sticks or just by closing their eyes and saying prayers.

However not all those who believed in God went through this daily ritual. Thus the fifty one respondents who do not worship include twelve who did not believe in God as well as thirty nine who believed in God but did not go through the daily ritual, except only on selected auspicious days.

**Table - 94 : Whether Respondents Visit Temple/other Religious Place on Special Occasions**

Sr. No.	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Visit temple/other religious place of worship	82	76.6
2	Do not visit	25	23.4
Total		107	100



As seen in the table, more than three fourth of the respondents said that they visited Temple/Durgah/Church on special occasions like new year day or on auspicious days of their respective religions. The popular local places of worship were the 'Amba mata' temple located on the bank of the river Tapi, 'Mahadev' (Lord Shiva) temple, 'Kali' or 'Kalika' temple, Saibaba temple, Khwaja Dana Durgah located relatively nearer to the red-light area or even 'Kim' (a town located on the outskirts of Surat city) Durgah. Some Nepali women said that they made it a point to visit Lord Buddha's temple at Bombay whenever they went to Bombay. They usually visited local Shaiva temple as most Nepal based girls had high faith in 'Pashupatinath' - a form of Lord Shiva.

One very important finding was that certain places of worship - like the two Durgahs and Saibaba temples were visited by most respondents irrespective of their own religion.

Similarly, Hindu sex workers living and working with a Muslim brothel keeper and vice versa was quite common. In other words, religion was not a barrier in their daily transactions and relationships.

Out of the twenty five respondents who never visited any place of worship twelve had no faith in religion or God but the rest explained that they are 'fallen women' engaged in a 'dirty work' and did not want to spoil the sanctity of temple/durgah and hence never went there.



**Table - 95 : Whether Respondents Observe Fast**

Sr. No.	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Observe Fast	32	29.9
2	Do not Observe Fast	75	70.1
Total		107	100

Observing fast is another way of expressing one's faith in religion. Hindu respondent especially observed fast on a selected day every week, over and above certain occasions in a year - mainly in the month of 'Shravana' according to the Hindu calendar. Similarly Muslim respondents observed fast in the month of Ramzan. However, majority of respondents said they never followed such practice either because they could not remain hungry for a long time or because they were engaged in 'dirty work' which could not be washed away by any amount of fasting. Thus about seventy percent of respondents did never observe fast and thirty percent of them observed fast on selected days regularly.

It is important to note that almost all who did observe fast refrained from working i.e. providing 'sex service' on the fasting day. Some superstitions also prevailed against working on the sacred days. E.g. As narrated by one respondent, by mistake, once she called out to a man who was passing by her entrance on Saturday - which happened to be her 'upvas' i.e. fast day. She had forgotten that she was not supposed to work on that day and merely followed her daily routine of

sitting on the threshold of her room and inviting passers by. On that Saturday, the man whom she called out, went a few steps ahead, turned back, came close to her and slapped her so hard that she almost lost her consciousness. By the time she collected herself, the man had disappeared. According to the respondent, the man looked so weak and thin that it was beyond his capacity to hit her. Hence she ‘realized’ that it was none other but ‘Shani Deva’ (God Shani) who came to punish her because she disrespected him by inviting a customer on the sacred day of her ‘Upvasa’ !

These superstitions beliefs are spreaded possibly to preserve sanctity of the occasion. The positive effect of such superstition is that at least once a week such woman gets some rest and even her gharawali did not force her to entertain a customer on the day of her fast.

**Table - 96 : Whether Respondents Keep ‘Vrat’**

Sr. No.	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Keep ‘Vrat’	18	16.8
2	Do not keep ‘Vrat’	89	83.2
Total		107	100

‘Vrat’ is a religious vow of doing something or abstaining to do something either on all or on selected days as a token of respect or worship.

The above table reveals that very few respondents i.e. only 16.8% kept one or the other type of 'Vrat'. This could be because of the traditional belief that whoever takes such 'Vrat' has to continue it for ever. Breaking the religious vow brings bad omen, hence persons with strong determination only would take such a vow.

Out of the eighteen respondents who did keep 'Vrat', the Hindus usually kept the Vrat of 'Shivratri' or 'Ganesh Chaturthi' or 'Shravan Somvar' which are considered to be highly auspicious days. Muslim respondents usually kept 'Badaroza' of Ramzan month.

**Table - 97 : Respondents' Belief in Religious Rituals**

Sr. No.	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Believe in Rituals	23	21.5
2	Do not believe in Rituals	84	78.5
Total		107	100

More than two thirds of the respondents said that they did not believe in performing rituals where as a small minority did express faith in performing rituals. While probing further, most of the respondents expressed that their present living condition does not permit them to go through all religious rituals which they used to perform in their previous family settling. They, therefore, adopted a more practical approach towards life and hence did not attach too much importance to

performance of rituals. Many of them also clarified that ‘non performance of rituals’ did not mean that they have lost their faith in the almighty. It just meant that they had given up the customary formalities associated with certain occasions, and that they did not feel guilty if they are unable to perform such rituals.

**Table - 98 : Whether Respondents get support from Religion in times of stress**

Sr. No.	Religion support	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	68	63.6
2	No	39	36.4
Total		107	100

As seen in the table, majority of respondents got support from religion in times of stress. However, though forming minority, a significant number i.e. more than thirty six percent of respondents said that they did not gain much support from the religion in times of stress. Some tried to explain their response by saying that stressful situations were a part of worldly affairs and one should not expect religion or God to come to their rescue. Whereas majority believed that religion gave them the strength to bear the stress without losing their mental balance. Some even perceived ‘stress’ as God ‘testing’ their faith in him.

### **Crisis and Coping Strategies :**

Crisis means a time of great danger or difficulty. Webster's dictionary defines crisis as an unstable or crucial time of state of affairs or an emotionally significant event or radical change of status in a person's life. Crisis is likely to be subjective in nature and therefore may depend on one's perception, personality, coping abilities and access to support system. For the purpose of this study, the term 'crisis' is used to refer to any event or happening that caused stress in respondent's life.

In previous sections, it is seen that most respondents had accepted to work as brothel based prostitutes because of some social or economic crisis in their previous life. Did accepting sex work help them to overcome these crises ? Did it induce further crisis? Did it merely change the nature of their crisis ? The researcher tried to find answers to these questions.

It must be noted that the discussion that follows is limited to (i) major crisis (other than their day to day problems) (ii) occurring either immediately preceding or after their entry in to flesh trade.

**Table - 99 : Respondent's experience of Major Crisis**

Sr. No.	Crisis	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	101	94.4
2	No	06	5.6
Total		107	100

More than 90% of respondents said that they experienced some or the other kind of crisis after they took up flesh trade. Only a small number i.e. 5.6% of them said that they had no stressful experience after they started working as sex workers.

In other words, taking on to flesh trade did not bring an end to their difficulties, pains or miseries.

**Table - 100 : Distribution of Respondents according to Health Related Crisis**

Sr. No.	Nature of Crisis	Frequency	Percent
1	Short term health problems	72	67.3
2	Long term health problems	17	15.9
3	Not Applicable	18	16.8
Total		107	100

Majority of respondents i.e. 67.3% faced health problems of severe nature but of short duration e.g. diseases like high fever, typhoid, malaria, phalsipherum etc. Whereas 15.9% of them were having long term illnesses like asthma or high blood pressure. 16.8% of them never faced health related crisis.

**Table - 101 : Strategies Adopted to cope with Health Related Crisis**

Sr. No.	Coping Strategy	Frequency	Percent
1	Applying home remedies/self medication	24	22.4
2	Consulting quacks	05	4.7
3	Consulting qualified medical practitioners	52	48.6
4	Any other	08	7.5
5	N.A.	18	16.8
Total		107	100

Nearly 50% of respondents consulted qualified medical practitioners in private or government hospitals. 22.4% of them resorted to home remedies or opted for self medication. As noted earlier, certain brand of tablets (e.g. Vicks Action 500) were quite freely used by respondents mainly for treating fever. These were freely available in nearby provision stores. In case of severe headache or leg pain, respondents used to tie a piece of cloth tightly. A small number of respondents admitted having consulted quacks where as 7.5% of respondents said they could get relief after tying 'black-thread' or 'taviz' from certain religious places like 'Durgah'.

The fact that in times of severe illnesses majority of them consulted and took treatment from qualified professional was a positive trend.

**Table - 102 : Emotional Crisis Experienced by Respondents**

Sr. No.	Crisis	Frequency	Percent
1	Guilt feeling	16	15.0
2	Rejection by spouse / parents	16	15.0
3	Death of family member	24	22.4
4	Ill treatment of gharawali	08	7.5
5	Betrayal by lover	13	12.1
6	Any other	01	0.9
7	N.A.	29	27.1
Total		107	100

29 out of 107 respondents said they never experienced emotional crisis. Out of the rest, 22.4% experienced a major emotional crisis on account of death of

a beloved family member. Rejection by spouse or parents and betrayal by fiancée or lover were other reasons that caused emotional crisis. A significant number i.e. 15% of respondents said that they felt guilt for having accepted a lowly and immoral occupation for survival. The guilty feeling was more strong especially when they newly entered the flesh trade and hence it created an emotional crisis for them.

**Table - 103 : Coping Strategies Adopted for Emotional Crisis**

Sr. No.	Coping Strategies	Frequency	Percent
1	By rationalising	16	15.0
2	By Desensitizing self	24	22.1
3	By blaming destiny	32	29.9
4	By seeking others' support	06	05.6
5	Not applicable	29	27.1
Total		107	100

As seen in the above table, highest number of respondents overcame their crisis by projecting it on to their destiny. One can see an indirect impact of 'karma' philosophy of Hinduism. Respondents said that their misdeeds of previous 'Janma' resulted in to badluck in present birth which brought them to this 'dirty world' of flesh trade. Others tried to justify their work by saying it was the only option open to them for the survival of self and of their dependants.

As many as 22.1% of the respondents said they could overcome their emotional crisis by desensitizing themselves consciously towards the injustice they suffered in life. A very small number (5.6%) of respondents were fortunate



enough to receive emotional support from others which helped them to minimise the ill effects of emotional crisis.

In otherwords, by using one or the other type of defense mechanism, respondents had equipped themselves to survive their emotional crisis. 27.1% of them faced no emotional crisis which can be interpreted as their complete acceptance of reality. They possibly were emotionally strong enough to take the life as it came.

**Table - 104 : Monetary Crisis Faced by the Respondents**

Sr. No.	Nature of Crisis	Frequency	Percent
1	No money for food	09	08.4
2	No money for medical treatment	12	11.2
3	No money for rent	52	48.6
4	No provision for dependants	18	16.8
5	Any other	01	0.9
6	Not applicable	15	14.0
Total		107	100

Barring 15 respondents out of 107, all admitted of having faced monetary crisis related to one or the other type of their survival needs. The above table reveals that majority of them (48.6%) faced problems regarding payment of rent to the brothel keeper or the landlord. 16.8% of respondents could not provide for dependent family members. 11.2% of them had problems in paying for their medical treatment. 8.4% could not afford their most basic need i.e. food. Thus,

inspite of sacrificing their social status, flesh trade could not generate sufficient income even to meet with their basic needs.

**Table - 105 : Coping Strategy to meet Monetary Crisis**

Sr. No.	Strategy Adopted	Frequency	Percent
1	Compromising with needs	39	36.4
2	Seeking help from others	35	32.7
3	Availing credit facility	05	04.7
4	Borrowing from money lenders	10	9.4
5	Any other	03	2.8
6	Not applicable	15	14.0
Total		107	100

It is clearly evident that the respondents were managing their financial crisis either by cutting down their need fulfilment or by incurring debt. 36.4% respondents compromised with their needs e.g. instead of having two meals a day, eating only once, or moving to some cheaper accommodation. Almost half of the respondents incurred debt in one form or the other i.e. by borrowing from friends, colleagues, gharawali or buying things on credit or by borrowing from money lenders. Only 2.8% of them tried to raise additional income by doing 'aaya kam' or knitting woollen scarfs etc.

**Table - 106 : Legal Crisis faced by the Respondents**

Sr. No.	Nature of Crisis	Frequency	Percent
1	Police Raids	37	34.6
2	Court Case	09	08.4
3	Conviction/Judicial Custody	18	16.8
4	Any other	02	1.9
5	Not applicable	41	38.3
Total		107	100

Practising sex work on commercial basis in or near a public place and soliciting for customers are not permitted by law. The Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, 1986 prescribes punishment for offences committed under the Act both by prostitutes themselves and also by persons other than prostitutes. It is obvious that at one time or the other, respondents failed to avail protection of their leaders for preventing their arrest in the police.

As the above table shows, 38.3% of respondents could successfully escape from legal proceedings. 34.6% of them however, were caught in police raids, 8.4% had to face court proceedings and 16.8% of respondents said they were convicted in the court and had undergone punishment. A small number i.e. 2 respondents even faced legal crisis on account of their involvement in other I.P.C. offences e.g. stealing money from customers or causing injury/hurt to customers in a fight.

Though the law is relatively softer towards sex workers, any legal proceedings was seen as a crisis by the respondents as any entry as an accused in the police records meant a negative labelling and also it costed them high either in form of bribe to the police or payment to a lawyer.

**Table - 107 : Coping Strategies used by Respondents to Handle Legal Crisis**

Sr. No.	Strategy	Frequency	Percent
1	By quietly surrendering	35	32.7
2	By Bribing the police	19	17.8
3	Preventing arrest by paying regular Instalment to police	11	10.3
4	By Hiring Lawyer	01	0.9
5	Not applicable	41	38.3
Total		107	100

It is interesting to note that majority of respondents chose to surrender quietly and to undergo the punishment once they were arrested by the police. As one respondent explained frankly, 'it is an understanding between us (i.e. respondents and police). We do not blame them because we understand that on paper they have to show it to their superiors that they are taking actions against us. If we co-operate them during such arrests, they too, will reciprocate by not disturbing us all the while !' The fact that 38.3% of them had never been subjected to any legal difficulty seemed to support this statement. In fact, the other 10.3% of respondents were more clear in their expression who said they

prevented their arrest by 'keeping the police happy' by paying regular instalments through their brothel keepers. 17.8% of respondents said that they usually co-operated with the police at the time of raid but could manage their freedom before case papers were made by 'paying the price' to the concerned police functionary. Only one respondent said she hired lawyer's service as she was accused of a more serious offence of theft.

The researcher learnt that mentally, every respondent was anticipating legal crisis at one time or the other during their life as a sex worker.

The preceding chapters contained analysis of quantitative data and were supplemented by researchers' qualitative observations.

The next chapter presents selected case studies to enable the reader to understand the plight of women sex worker in totality.

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