Title: Socio-Cultural and Structural Realities Shaping Post-Trafficking Social Reintegration Experiences of Human Trafficking Victims in Bangladesh

Authur names: Md. Riaduzzaman, Md. Mahmudul Hasan, Arif Ullah, Soriya Zahan Emo, Kazi Manna Yeasmin, Kazi Rabiul Islam & Mohammad Sazzad Ali Sakib

Abastact: This article examines the challenges and possibilities of social reintegration for survivors of human trafficking in Bangladesh, focusing on how gendered norms and systemic barriers shape their experiences. Despite the legal guarantees of the PSHT Act 2012, survivors often struggle to rebuild their lives due to stigma, economic exclusion, and weak institutional support. Employing a phenomenologically informed qualitative design, the study conducted 49 in-depth interviews with survivors, social workers, and experts. Thematic analysis revealed that reintegration is profoundly gendered: female survivors are frequently labeled as "immoral" or "dishonored," while male survivors are stigmatized as "failures" if they return without financial success. Families acted as both protective and constraining forces, with women facing conditional acceptance tied to honor and men pressured to remigrate. Livelihood insecurity, limited psychosocial care, and fragmented NGO interventions emerged as major barriers, compounded by underfunded shelters and ineffective legal aid. However, survivors demonstrated resilience through strategies such as selective disclosure, faith-based practices, and entrepreneurial efforts. Family acceptance, peer networks, and NGO support were identified as key protective factors. By applying stigma, social support, and resilience theories, the study contributes new insights into reintegration as a socially embedded and gendered process, while empirically enriching scholarship through the triangulation of survivor, practitioner, and expert perspectives. Policy implications indicate the need for survivor-centered, gender-sensitive, and structurally supported reintegration models. These findings support global commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s41134-026-00454-7