

Challenges Faced by Female Commercial Sex Workers in Puducherry, India: A Qualitative Inquiry

Indian Journal of Gender Studies
1–15

© 2022 CWDS

Reprints and permissions:

in.sagepub.com/journals-permissions-india

DOI: 10.1177/09715215221082180

journals.sagepub.com/home/ijg



P. Swathisha¹ and Sibnath Deb²

Abstract

Sex work is considered one of the oldest professions in the world. In India, selling sex in private is legal, while all other activities related to sex work, such as pimping, brothel-keeping, are considered to be illegal. Despite their vulnerability to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, the research has been less focused on the other challenges faced by sex workers. This article aims to understand the major challenges faced by female commercial sex workers (CSWs) through a qualitative study covering 15 CSWs who work in Puducherry Union Territory in South India. The data were collected by using an in-depth interview guide, and the case study method. Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the data. The article discusses in detail the challenges CSWs face in terms of economical, psychological and social spheres of their lives.

Keywords

Commercial sex work, female sex worker, challenges, Puducherry

¹ Research Scholar, Department of Applied Psychology, Pondicherry University, Pondicherry, India.

² Director, Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, Sriperumbuthur, Tamil Nadu, India.

Corresponding author:

P. Swathisha, Research Scholar, Department of Applied Psychology, Pondicherry University, Puducherry, India.

E-mail: swathishahana95@gmail.com

Introduction

Even though commercial sex work is considered as one of the oldest professions in the world, it is highly stigmatised. The sex workers, including women, men and transgender people, are those who receive money or goods in exchange for sexual services and who consciously define those activities as income generating even if they do not consider sex work as their occupation (Overs, 2002). In India, The Immoral Trafficking (Prevention) Act accredits sex work that is carried out in private as legal, while soliciting in public places, such as maintaining a brothel and pimping, are considered to be illegal (Darji, 2019).

According to the existing literature, the major categories of commercial sex workers (CSWs) in contemporary India include brothel-based sex workers, *devadasis* (temple-based sex workers), street-based sex workers (also known as floating sex workers), all girls (phone-based sex workers), hijras and male sex workers (Nag, 2001). Brothel-based sex workers are those who sell sex with the help of a third party at 'homes' called brothels and who have to give a commission to the 'home' owners. The Devadasi system stems from a practice in which young girls, 'married to a temple or deity, are pushed into sex work. Floating or street-based sex workers who do not have a proper place to meet their clients roam streets and other public places, while call girls solicit clients through phone. Hijras are transgender sex workers. In addition to females and transgender workers, a sizeable part of the sex work industry includes male sex workers, on which less literature is available (Minichiello et al., 2015).

Considered a respectable profession in ancient times, the contemporary status of sex work in India is characterised by the assault on the dignity of the women, men and transgenders who earn their living by it, as well as by violence and discrimination from myriad institutions (Gadekar, 2015). At a rough estimate there are around three million CSWs in India, many of them are below the age of 18 years (Sahni & Shankar, 2011). Poverty is one of the major causes that push girls and women towards sex work, along with trafficking, tradition, poor educational status and the lack of alternative livelihood possibilities (Gadekar, 2015; Nag, 2001; Nagpal et al., 2017; Sinha, 2014).

CSWs face major challenges, including violence, discrimination and a lack of accessibility to public sector institutions and services such as legal aid and healthcare, the latter in particular characterised by delayed and inhumane treatment from health care professionals (Wanyenze et al., 2017). Confusion about and lack of access to legal services and fear of the authorities further serve to reinforce their social isolation (Gadekar,

2015; Selvey et al., 2018). Studies have also concluded the mutually reinforcing roles in which poor economic status and poor social status sustain one another (Gadekar, 2015; Panda et al., 2015).

CSWs also face barriers in their personal lives, family life and within their communities (Beattie et al., 2013; Brown et al., 2006). Violence has a direct impact on stigma and mental health (Zhang et al., 2017). CSWs who are street workers, undocumented migrants, drug users, detainees and trafficked are also more prone to mental health issues such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and suicide (Maciotti et al., 2017). A still largely unmet need identified by many studies is services that are tailor-made to meet CSWs' needs that do not perpetuate the prevailing climate of stigmatisation that touch on all aspects of their lives (Lafort et al., 2016; Wanyenze et al., 2017).

This article aims to understand the major challenges faced by female CSWs in Puducherry, a Union Territory in the southern part of India. Based on a comprehensive study conducted by the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) in 2004, it is estimated that 1,400 women or girls are doing sex work in the Puducherry Union Territory (MWCD, 2014). As there is not much research-based evidence from Puducherry about CSWs, this article has an opportunity to serve as a baseline for policymakers and mental health professionals.

Methods

This qualitative study was conducted among 15 female CSWs who work in Puducherry, a Union Territory formed out of four former French-ruled territories in India, namely Pondicherry, Yanam, Mahe and Karaikkal. These areas are enclaves that straddle the states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. The sample was collected from Pondicherry alone, which is situated in the north-east of Tamil Nadu.

Through the assistance of the Society for Development Research and Training (SfDRT), a non-governmental organisation located in Puducherry which works under the National AIDS Control Society, we were able to approach potential participants and coordinate with them for data collection. Since it is a highly risky subject matter of inquiry, working with SfDRT professionals' assistance helped to ensure the investigator's own safety from the sex trade industry.

The study sought to understand how CSWs view their own situations, and with this in mind we adopted a methodology based on in-depth interviews and case study methods. These helped to highlight respondents'

unique insiders' perspectives, including the challenges they face at the economic, psychological and social levels. Since female CSWs in Puducherry are registered with SfDRT, a convenience sampling method was used to select those participants who were easy to reach. Subsequently appointments for interviews were made ensuring that these would be convenient for the participants. Their responses were recorded as per the convenience of the participants and subjected to further analysis.

Since the data were qualitative in nature, the thematic analysis was based on the six-phase framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The recording was transcribed in Tamil in the verbatim form and then translated into English. Line by line coding was conducted, and the codes were categorised under the major themes.

Permission from the Institutional Ethical Committee was taken to ensure that ethical considerations were followed at all stages of the research. In addition, informed consent was taken from the participants.

Results

Socio-demographic Details

The participants represent a diverse socio-demographic profile that is reflected in their age, educational level, relationship status and the nature of the sex work they are doing (see Table 1). The age of the participants ranges from 19 to 48 (mean = 33.73, SD = 7.7). A majority of them are either illiterate ($N = 6$) or studied up to 10th grade ($N = 7$). Two of the participants had completed the 12th-grade education. Considering their relationship status, a greater number of them are either separated or abandoned by their partner ($N = 7$), or widowed ($N = 3$). One participant is unmarried and the rest of them are married ($N = 4$). The duration of sex work the participants have engaged in ranges from 0.5 years to 10 years (mean = 3.4, SD = 2.49). The modes of sex work engaged by the participants are phone-based sex work ($N = 9$), home-based sex work ($N = 3$) and street-based sex work ($N = 3$).

Challenges Faced by CSWs

The challenges faced by the CWSs in Puducherry were identified broadly in three levels: economic, psychological and social (Figure 1). The economic challenges included insufficient income, additional financial

Table 1. Socio-demographic Details of the Participants

Socio-demographic details	Distribution of the sample (N = 15)
Age (in years)	Range: 19–48 Mean: 33.73 SD: 7.7
Education	Illiterate: 6 Up to 10th grade: 7 Up to 12th grade: 2
Marital status	Unmarried: 1 Married: 4 Widowed: 3 Separated or abandoned: 7
Duration in sex work (in years)	Range: 0.5–10 Mean: 3.4 SD: 2.49
Mode of sex work	Phone based: 9 Home based: 3 Street based: 3

Source: The authors.

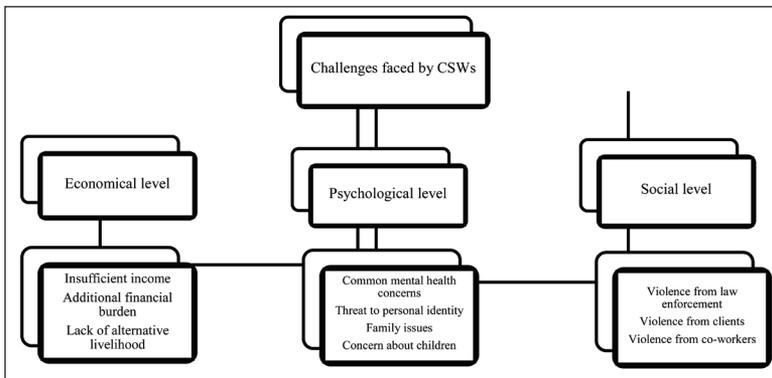


Figure 1. The Challenges Faced by CSWs in Puducherry Identified by the Investigators

Source: The authors.

burdens such as debt and house rent, and lack of access to alternative livelihoods. The psychological challenges involved mental health concerns, fear of threats to their personal identities, family issues and concern about their children. The social challenges included violence

from various sources including law enforcement agencies, clients as well as co-workers.

Economic Level

Insufficient income: One of the main reasons why women enter into sex work is their lack of adequate access to economic resources. In most cases, CSWs, either widowed or separated from their spouses, are the only sources of income for the whole family. Poverty also pushes young girls into such work:

Many small girls are coming to this field... The sad reality is their parents knowingly send them into this work; they come to this activity even before they know what sex is about. Poverty is the reason for sending children for sex work. (Jaya, 35)*

*The text in the parenthesis denotes pseudonym of the participants and age in years.

Sex work, however, does not generate enough income to meet daily needs. The amount CSWs get per customer varies from ₹400 to ₹3,000, the average monthly income of CSWs in this study is generally less than ₹10,000 per month (the range being between ₹6,000 and ₹20,000. In the words of one woman:

Somehow we are meeting the two ends of life. Some days we won't even get a single rupee. (Rama, 48)

This financial insecurity is reinforced by the nature of the types of sex work they are engaged in. Most do not have a regular work schedule and customers they can depend on; sometimes they will get clients, at times they might not get a client for many days. Most of them go for work once or twice a week. All CSWs who operate from home-based situations have to pay a commission to the housekeeper as well as another CSW if the deal came through them. As a consequence, the actual money in hand can be minimal.

If I get ₹1500, I have to give ₹500 or 600 as commission. (Phone-based CSW, 38)

Additional financial burden: Debt, house rent and living costs are identified as the major additional financial challenges facing CSWs. The majority of them do not possess their own houses and have school going

children. They are also worried about building their own homes in order to move towards a financially stable life.

I am staying in a rented house; I didn't pay rent for six months. My husband has taken debt and left me, still, I am paying off it. (Rina, 37)

Lack of alternative livelihood: All of the participants reported that the lack of alternative sources of income is the fundamental reason for not quitting the sex industry. Poor educational status and lack of awareness of other jobs also make CSWs stick to the profession.

I didn't even complete primary education. What job can I get other than this? If I get any other job I won't earn more money than I am earning through this. (Gita, 27)

There is a scarcity of other jobs. I have tried many other jobs, like daily wage work in companies and as a housemaid. But I didn't get enough income from those jobs. Also, there are other physical difficulties like pain, injuries, and fatigue in other jobs. (Ammu, 24)

Psychological Level

Common mental health concerns: The common mental health concerns faced by CSWs are the fear of others finding out what they do, followed by anxiety, shame about the job, concern about children and concern about others' perceptions. The thought of 'what if someone comes to know' is a source of anxiety and fear. Participants also reported that they feel guilty about their chosen profession, a sense of frustration about life, lack of peace, insecurity, fear of rejection and experience suicidal ideation.

I have thought of killing myself many times. It is only for my children that I am still living. My parents didn't care about me, they just got me married off. If they couldn't raise a girl child, they shouldn't have given birth to me; even if they kill me it would be fine. (Ammu, 24)

I have a constant fear of honour, fear of getting caught and fear of losing my husband. We didn't register the marriage so I am worried about what if he comes to know about my profession and leaves me. (Raji, 30)

I have fear about what if my son-in-law's family comes to know about my job, what will they think: we got a prostitute's daughter. And then my daughter's future will also be ruined. (Rama, 48)

There are, however, positive aspects to this kind of work. One participant reported that after coming into the sex industry she started feeling a sense of financial autonomy, independence and responsibility towards family.

After coming to this field, I realised that as a result of my earnings there was no need to depend on anyone. Now I have a responsibility towards my family and I am also not dependent on anyone, I stand on my own legs. (Jaya, 35)

A threat to personal identity: CSWs make an effort to keep their personal and work lives separate. They protect their identities by keeping a different name, called a ‘field name’ for their professional work, lying about their jobs to family members and others in the community, and maintaining another work other than sex work. The majority of the participants’ families had no idea that they are working as CSWs, and those whose families knew about their work kept quiet about it.

I said I am working in a hospital as a cleaning staff and I have night shifts. So there will be no problem with going for sex work in the night also. (Hema, 37)

None of the clients know my real name and identity; I use only my ‘field name’, and never disclose anything about myself. (Jaya, 35)

Family issues: Many of the CSWs come from broken families and had stories to tell about their experiences. Two-thirds of the participants are either separated or widowed or legally divorced. For those who are married, there is no financial or emotional support from the spouse, and physical abuse is common. One participant reported that she was forced into sex work because of torture she suffered at the hands of her spouse.

Even if I didn’t do any wrong my husband makes up stories about my having extra-marital relations with others, so why shouldn’t I sleep with someone? (Gita, 27 years)

Some participants reported how their spouses’ alcohol addiction fuelled intimate partner violence. The same woman says,

My husband is a drunkard; even when he is around we feel as though he is not present. He used to beat me on the road. Once he removed my clothes and beat me brutally. He didn’t even take care of our children, we were literally starving. (Gita, 27 years)

The family members of CSWs who were aware of their work also keep a distance from them. Either they do not stay in touch with the CSWs or they do not show any warmth towards them. None of them have given any clue about their work to their children and they feel harbour concern about the children coming to know about their profession.

Concern about children: With the exception of one participant, all the women had children. The hopes and worries of CSWs centre around their children. It is in order to educate their children that most CSWs stick to the profession. For single parents, children are the reason for living. A major worry is that children will come to know about what their mothers' do as their jobs.

I have a daughter; I am scared that she will come to this field once she matures. Somehow I have to quit this job before she grows up. (Meera, 23)

I can't think about my children coming to know about my job. Even if someone simply makes comments about me my son will fight with them. So what if they come to know, this is our bread and butter. (Gita, 27)

All the participants reported that their major concern is to see their children get a proper job and financial security. Most of the participants have an educational level of less than a 10th grade, and this reinforces the importance of providing their children with an education. One participant reported that she got separated from her children because of her profession.

My husband came to know about it. He said if I take care of our children they will get spoiled. I didn't see them for years. (Suma, 38)

Social Level

Violence from law enforcement: Nearly half of the participants had no experience of violence from law enforcement personnel. Nevertheless, many had experienced different forms of abusive behaviour, such as the police demanding money and material goods, asking for free sex, making unnecessary comments and calling undignified names such as 'prostitute', 'slut', threatening, making unnecessary troubles in work, making fake raids and filing fake cases. Physical violence includes unnecessary beating even in public spaces.

One day one policeman took a cell phone from one of us and didn't return it immediately. When we went and asked about it he beat and threatened us. He

made unnecessary comments about us. We can't do anything, after all, they are in power. (Rama, 48)

Once they came inside as they came for a raid and they saw the alcohol bottles that I kept for myself. They searched my shelves, and they found the condom kit. They made a big issue out of it. (Suma, 38)

Violence from clients: While clients cannot be generalised as either violent or supportive, CSWs have reported experiencing physical, sexual and emotional violence, as well as financial abuse. Physical violence includes beatings and physical torture. Sexual violence includes painful sex, forced sex, forced oral and anal sex, having sex in uncomfortable positions, sex without a condom and group sex. Emotional abuse includes inhumane treatment, vulgar comments and threats including life threats on one's life. Financial abuse includes not paying for sex and taking money and valuables from CSWs. They also mentioned about alcoholic clients.

Some clients will give trouble. They will come after drinking alcohol and won't pay. They will take us somewhere, at times leaving us in an unknown place if we ask for money they will beat or make life threats. (Mina, 40)

Violence from co-workers: CSWs also reported facing violence from other CSWs, especially those whose work is street based. It includes physical violence like beating in public and financial abuse like not giving back money. At times they portray the other workers in a bad light in order to steal their clients.

Co-workers are so competitive, they are jealous of others getting business and they fight for 'hot spots' also. At times there will be physical fights as well. Once someone beat me in public till my clothes got torn. (Rama, 48)

Discussion

The primary challenges faced by CSWs in Puducherry are basically found to be in three domains, including economic level, psychological level and social level.

Economic issues were identified as the major reason for a woman to debut into the sex industry and staying in the same. Insufficient income, additional financial burdens such as house rent, debt, loans and lack of alternative livelihood make the life of CSWs worst. Socio-demographic factors such as educational status and marital status also play a key role.

Due to the lack of education, the CSWs are unable to find a job that gives more income than sex work. Being separated or abandoned by the spouse, getting divorced and the death of the husband make the women to eventually choose sex work as their profession. Gadekar (2015) and Iaisuklang and Ali (2017) had come up with similar findings from Miraj town and Shillong, respectively. A financially stable life is said to be an unmet dream for the CSWs at present.

The psychological issues faced by CSWs are said to be a largely avoided area in research, the existing literature looking at the psychology of sex workers from a clinical perspective only. It is identified that the participants are having fear of being caught by others, followed by anxiety, shame about the job, concern about children and concern about others' perceptions. On top of that the thought of 'what if someone comes to know' makes them anxious and fearful in general. They also feel guilty about the profession, frustration about life, lack of peace, insecurity, fear of rejection and suicidal ideation. Studies had identified CSWs as a vulnerable population to psychiatric issues such as depression, PTSD, anxiety, mood disorders and deliberate self-harm (Deb, 2008; Iaisuklang & Ali, 2017; Jayasree, 2004; Maciotti et al., 2017). Similarly, the psychological distress, hopelessness, powerlessness and overall psychological health were largely ignored areas by researchers (Zhang et al., 2015).

The personal identity of CSWs is found to be in threat due to the nature of the profession. Since sex is a taboo word in society, the people who sell sex are also considered without dignity. The participants tend to protect their identity by finding other field names and hiding their profession from family. Those whose family members are aware of their profession were not extending support to them. The only hope that they have is raising their children and assuring them a good future; at the same time, it becomes a concern not to be identified as a child of a sex worker due to the stigma attached to the profession. Studies concluded that, CSWs tend to hide their professional identity from the institutions that their children are studying. About female children they possess the fear of the child becoming a sex worker, so they tend to marry off them as early as possible (Pardeshi & Bhattacharya, 2006).

Social challenges faced by CSWs were identified as violence from various sources such as law enforcement, clients and co-workers and intimate partners. The nature of violence includes physical violence such as beating, public fights and physical torture, sexual violence including forced sex, group sex, forced oral and anal sex, sex with uncomfortable positions and sex without condom, emotional abuse including threats, fake raids, unnecessary trouble making, making vulgar comments and

inhumane treatment, and financial abuse includes not paying for sex and taking valuables from CSWs. The majority of them are having issues with spouses including intimate partner violence and alcoholism. Many studies identified law enforcement as one of the major sources of violence towards CSWs (Aborisade, 2019; Nelson, 2019; Zhang et al., 2015). There is a suppressive approach towards CSWs by law enforcement which is associated with brutality, human right violation and extortion (Salihu & Fawole, 2020).

All the challenges identified in the present study are interrelated when the issue is addressed on a wider canvas. Zhang et al. (2015) concluded the distress faced by CSWs in China is a result of poverty, lack of social support, violence and isolation, and the distress leads to maladaptive coping behaviours such as gambling, smoking and drug abuse. Likewise, the violence can hinder general well-being and livelihood (Salihu & Fawole, 2020). Tailor-made policies and schemes particularly for CSWs will be helpful for addressing these issues up to an extent. There should be a multilevel support system connecting various domains from which the CSWs are facing challenges including controlling law enforcement personnel from using CSWs.

Conclusion

CSWs are an extensively marginalised social group, and they are facing challenges in different spheres of life including economical level, psychological level and social level. All these spheres are interconnected and the effect on one sphere would be affecting the other one. This study identified the lack of a support system for CSWs all the way from familial to community to government levels. The lack of professional mental health support and financial support was also identified. Also CSWs are said to be unaware of the need for mental health support. CSWs require tailor-made action plans and policies to support them including alternative livelihood and financial schemes such as economic schemes, pensions and scholarships for their children. Policymakers and mental health professionals can be taken these findings to develop need-based interventions and to design in-depth research.

Acknowledgements

The authors acknowledge the participants and the staff of the NGO Society for Development Research and Training (SfDRT) for their assistance in data collection.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

References

- Aborisade, R. A. (2019). Police abuse of sex workers in Nigeria: Evidence from a qualitative study. *Police Practice and Research, 20*(4), 405–419.
- Beattie, T. S. H., Bradley, J. E., Vanta, U. D., Lowndes, C. M., & Alary, M. (2013). Vulnerability re-assessed: The changing face of sex work in Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh. *AIDS Care, 25*(3), 378–384.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101.
- Brown, J., Higgitt, N., Miller, C., & Wingert, S. (2006). Challenges faced by women working in the inner city sex trade. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research, 15*(1), 36–53.
- Darji, P. (2019). *Prostitution in India – Read its causes, legality, and law*. <https://www.myadvo.in/blog/prostitution-in-india-read-its-causes-legality-and-law/>
- Deb, S. (2008). Mental dispositions of commercial sex workers (CSWs) with HIV/AIDS. *Journal of Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, 34*(Special Issue), 90–100.
- Gadekar, U. (2015). Socio-economic status and health challenges of female sex workers of Miraj town, India. *International Research Journal of Social Sciences, 46*(6), 68–71.
- Iaisuklang, M. G., & Ali, A. (2017). Psychiatric morbidity among female commercial sex workers. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry, 59*, 465–470.
- Jayasree, A. K. (2004). Searching for justice for body and self in a coercive environment: Sex work in Kerala, India. *Reproductive Health Matters, 12*, 58–67.
- Lafort, Y., Greener, R., Roy, A., Greener, L., Ombidi, W., Lessitala, F., Haghparast-Bidgoli, H., Beksinska, M., Gichangi, P., Reza-Paul, S., Smit, J. A., Chersich, M., & Delva, W. (2016). Where do female sex workers seek HIV and reproductive health care and what motivates these choices? A survey in 4 cities in India, Kenya, Mozambique and South Africa. *PLoS One, 11*(8), e0160730.
- Maciotti, P. G., Grenfell, P., & Platt, L. (2017). Sex work and mental health. In Sanders, T., Cunningham, S., Platt, L., Grenfell, P., & Maciotti, P. G. (Eds), *Reviewing the occupational risks of sex workers in comparison to other 'risky' professions*. <https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/criminology/people/teela-sanders/BriefingPaperSexWorkandMentalHealth.pdf>

- Minichiello, V., Scott, J., & Callander, D. (2015). A new public health context to understand male sex work. *BMC Public Health*, 15, 282. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-015-1498-7>
- Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD). (2014). *Resettlement schemes for sex workers*. Press information Bureau. <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=103218>
- Nag, M. (2001). Anthropological perspectives on prostitution and AIDS in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 36(42), 4025–4030. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4411265>
- Nagpal, A., Tajdar, A., Siddiqui, M. A., Hassan, M., Gaur, S., & Hashim, M. (2017). Beyond the brothels: A qualitative study of the destitute female sex workers of Central Delhi red light area. *Journal of Geographical Studies*, 1(1), 26–36.
- Nelson, E. E. (2019). The lived experiences of violence and health-related risks among street sex workers in Uyo, Nigeria. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2019.1648872>
- Overs, C. (2002). Sex workers: Part of the solution. An analysis of HIV prevention programming to prevent HIV transmission during commercial sex in developing countries. https://www.who.int/hiv/topics/vct/sw_toolkit/115solution.pdf
- Panda, R., Sutar, A., & Bakshi, M. (2015). Commercial sex work and commercial sex workers in India: A new perspective. In Mohapatra, A. (Ed.), *Development issues in India: Policies and perspectives* (1st ed., pp. 100–121). Mangalam Publishers & Distributers.
- Pardeshi, G., & Bhattacharya, S. (2006). Child rearing practices amongst brothel-based commercial sex workers. *Indian Journal of Medical Sciences*, 60(71), 288–295.
- Sahni, R., & Shankar, V. K. (2011). The first pan-India survey of sex workers: A summary of preliminary findings. https://www.sangram.org/resources/Pan_India_Survey_of_Sex_workers.pdf
- Salihu, H. A., & Fawole, O. A. (2020). Police crackdowns, human rights abuses, and sex work industry in Nigeria: Evidence from an empirical investigation. *International Criminal Justice Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1057567720907135>
- Selvey, L. A., Lobo, R. C., McCausland, K. L., Donovan, B., Bates, J., & Hallet, J. (2018). Challenges facing Asian sex workers in Western Australia: Implications for health promotion and support services. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 6, 171. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2018.00171>
- Sinha, S. (2014). Reasons for women's entry into sex work: A case study of Kolkata, India. *Sexuality and Culture*, 19(1), 216–235.
- Wanyenze, R. K., Musingusi, G., Kiguli, J., Nuwaha, F., Mujisha, G., Musinguzi, J., Arinaitwe, J., & Matovu, J. K. B. (2017). 'When they know that you are a sex worker, you will be the last person to be treated': Perceptions of female

- sex workers in accessing HIV services in Uganda. *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, 17(11). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12914-017-0119-1>
- Zhang, L., Chow, E. P., Su, S., Yiu, W. L., Zhang, X., Iu, K. I., Tung, K., Zhao, R., Sun, P., Sun, X., Yuan, L., Muessig, K. E., Tucker, J. D., & Jing, J. (2015). A systematic review and meta-analysis of the prevalence, trends, and geographical distribution of HIV among Chinese female sex workers (2000–2011): Implications for preventing sexually transmitted HIV. *International Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 39, 76–86.
- Zhang, L., Li, X., Wang, B., Shen, Z., Zhou, Y., Xu, J., Tang, Z., & Bonita, S. (2017). Violence, stigma, and mental health among female sex workers in China: A structural equation modelling. *Women's Health*, 57(6), 685–704.