Complex interacting socio-economic-political structures, processes and relationships, underscored by poverty, gender, caste, class and other concerns lay the ground for trafficking. There are two sides to this: the Demand and Supply side. On the demand side, structural adjustments and changes in the relative shares of economic sectors fuelled by globalization have caused changes in the International Division of Labour and Labour Market Demand. This has occurred in a context of sharpening structural inequities between regions and countries. The greater demand for trafficked women and girls, relative to men and boys, has largely occurred in response to this demand-driven reality. On the supply side, gendered development processes that marginalize women and girls from education and employment, thereby enhance gender inequities and feminized poverty. While globalization has created social and economic opportunities for educated middle class men and women, poor unskilled women workers have been among the first to suffer retrenchment and unemployment. They have, as a coping strategy, gravitated to and dominate the informal labour-intensive manufacturing and service sector at the lowest end of the economic hierarchy. Furthermore, the withdrawal of State subsidies for public services like health, and their privatization, has transferred the socio-economic costs and burdens of providing these to women, as caregivers. In a male privileged
culture, women and girls are more marginalized than men and boys from costly healthcare and education. More girls than boys are being withdrawn from school to assist in ‘feminine’ tasks of household management, family care and sub-contracted homework alongside their mothers, to augment family income. This reduces their opportunities for better jobs and makes them more at risk of being trafficked than men.

The supply factors which impact on trafficking have created exploiters and intermediaries like recruiters, transporters, middle-men, brokers, pimps, agents, sub-agents, escorts, money-lenders, owners, managers and organized crime networks who cater to this by preying on the vulnerabilities of the poor, low-caste women and girls, children, indigenous people, people affected by man-made and natural disasters and people with disabilities. Viewing trafficking in persons as a global market, victims constitute the supply, and exploiters represent the demand as exemplified in Figure 1.

![Figure 1: The Demand and Supply Model of Trafficking](image)

The in-depth understanding of the causal factors and the context of human trafficking will enable the learner to constructively engage in policy discussions and point to strategic interventions which strengthen the fight against trafficking. This Unit will examine the causal factors towards understanding why individuals, especially women, girls, children and the poor, are vulnerable to trafficking.

### 3.2 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the demand and supply model of trafficking;
- see prostitution as a system;
- describe causes of human trafficking at macro level;
- explain various supply factors which makes people vulnerable to human trafficking;
- describe the demand factors that propels human trafficking;
- explain the root causes of human trafficking in the Indian context; and
- explain who are most vulnerable to human trafficking in India.

### 3.3 UNDERSTANDING CAUSES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

As mentioned in the introduction to this Unit, complex interacting socio-economic-political structures, processes and relationships, underscored by poverty, gender, caste, class and other concerns lay the ground for trafficking. There are two sides to this: the Demand and Supply side. In other words, the cause of trafficking is two-dimensional.
UNIT 3 CAUSES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

One is the Demand Factor and the other is the vulnerability of the person trafficked or likely to be trafficked, also called in common parlance, the Supply Factor. It would therefore be wrong to say that human trafficking in any form is only demand driven. The supply factor too plays a prime role in trafficking of persons. Let us now study the Demand and Supply factors in detail.

3.4 CAUSES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING:
DEMAND FACTORS

The growing demand\(^1\) for trafficked people is one of the major causes for the expansion of the trafficking industry\(^2\). New sectors that have propelled its demand are commercial sexual exploitation for paedophilia, pornography and sex tourism; organ trade and unlawful engagement in military outfits working against the government. At the same time, old sectors which have been instrumental in facilitating its demand like prostitution, domestic servitude, and cheap contract labour in agricultural and construction sites continue to expand.

The demand side of trafficking, which includes, for example, sweatshop or brothel owners, farmers, clients of sex workers, and all those people who hire domestic servants, is often neglected by trafficking prevention programmes. Activities tend to focus only on the supply side with a view to curtailing it, protecting victims, and prosecuting the traffickers. While some of these individuals are fully aware of the ill-treatment that occurs, many are ignorant to the severe abuse and exploitation involved in trafficking and are not aware that majority of the trafficking victims do not opt for that lifestyle out of choice, but are forced or coerced into it.

3.4.1 Demand for Sexual Exploitation

The main causes fuelling the demand for sexual exploitation are — prostitution, paedophilia, sex-tourism, pornography, child marriage, mail-order brides and entertainment events like lap-dancing.

The demand for commercial sex is high in many countries in which men routinely frequent brothels and other commercial sex venues. The high demand for sex creates extremely lucrative incentives for traffickers to recruit and entrap females, with the highest demand for young girls. Younger girls are known to command higher prices (and highest profits for traffickers) for commercial sex activities often because it is believed the younger girls are not inflicted with HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases. It is common for prostitutes to service up to twenty men a day because the demand for sexual services is very high and the profit accrued to traffickers is exceedingly large as well. International trafficking of females today is also aided by the internet. The usage of internet, in fact, has created new demand sources, such as importing of record-high numbers of women from Vietnam to Taiwan as “mail order brides.” Likewise, young women from Burma,

---

1 Sigma Huda, former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, defines ‘demand’ both as ‘end-users’ (buyers of trafficked people) and ‘traffickers’ (those who make a profit from selling people, i.e. recruiters, pimps, agents, middle-men, money-lenders, transporters, overseers, plantation, sweatshop and brothel owners). According to her, ‘demand created by prostitute-users is not the only factor that drives the sex-trafficking market’.

North Korea, Russia, and Vietnam have been purportedly trafficked into densely populated regions of China and India, where there is an increasing imbalance in the ratio of men to women. The women are promised a "real husband", citizenship, and a better life when they arrive in India or China. Tragically, many are reportedly trafficked as forced brides, concubines, and prostituted persons.

Sex tourism and child pornography sites have further increased the demand for commercial sex worldwide. Men from wealthier countries who travel can easily book "sex tours" on the internet or through travel agencies. These men ensure that they travel to less developed countries where they take advantage of young, vulnerable women and children without serious concern of prosecution by the local law enforcement agencies and officials. Child sex tourism is a particularly heinous crime in which individuals travelling in foreign countries engage in sexual activities with minors.

The growing acceptance for these demands gives impunity to traffickers and allows its unfettered growth. An example is the impunity granted to sex-traffickers like pimps and brothel managers who are hired as "peer educators" for the purpose of condom distribution. Such policies are targeted at protecting male buyers of prostituted sex from disease rather than protecting girls and women from the buyers. They have made acceptable the demand for prostituted sex "if condoms are used."

### 3.4.2 The Demand for Cheap Labour

There is also a strong demand for cheap labour where employers can pay less than the minimum wages or no wage at all. This can range from bonded labour in farms and plantations to contract labour working in clandestine military establishments and construction sites and of course in sweatshops and homes. The demand can be by profiteers – recruiters, transporters, middlemen and agents (who make up the demand side of trafficking chain) – and end users/buyers of sex, employers of women in domestic servitude, plantation owners, sweatshop owners, factory owners and military contractors. The strong demand for inexpensive labour can be seen in venues such as hotels and restaurants, and hidden venues such as agricultural fields, factories, sweatshops and private homes who hire the services of domestic servants and child care workers.

Of late, there is an increasing demand for trafficked labour in factories where trafficked persons become debt-bonded to factory owners or are coerced to work under slave-like conditions. Asia has become a center for low cost, labour-intensive, manufacturing operations. Competition between countries in South Asia has driven down the cost of labour even further, encouraging employers to resort to illegal practices like bonded labour so as to have access to exceptionally cheap labour.

There are anecdotal accounts of trafficked child labourers used as domestic workers, but this sector is poorly understood as a locus of child and trafficked labour abuses. There is resistance in many Asian countries to address the issue, as middle-class professionals are strongly implicated in hiring child labour in their homes, whether trafficked or not. Children are also trafficked into begging syndicates, camel jockeying in the Gulf States, and other sectors of entertainment such as circus shows in India.

### 3.4.3 Organ Trade

Traffickers also lure people including children to donate organs by offering big sums of money. In NCT of Delhi last year, during investigation of kidney transplant cases, the Police uncovered the murky role of some doctors, hospital managers and members of Authorization Committee, who were acting in consonance with the traffickers. The
Introduction to Human Trafficking

Organ Transplant Act, 1994, establishes an Authorization Committee to grant approval based on fulfillment of specified technical and medical requirements. The Act has been ineffectual and proper implementation is wanting in many States and Union Territories. Due to stringent rules regarding organ transplantation in other countries, India along with China, has become a big centre for organ transplantation.

Self Assessment Question
1) What are the major demand driving factors of human trafficking?

3.5 CAUSES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING: SUPPLY FACTORS

For millions of children, women and men in India it is their vulnerability – who they are, where they live, and how they make a living – which is a major cause for their being trafficked. Vulnerability – to trafficking – starts with the inequality caused by sex, caste, discriminatory cultural practices/traditions and poverty. Corruption, greed and political indifference allow these vulnerabilities to endure. Sometimes law and State institutions also perpetuate and reproduce these inequalities.

Many victims of trafficking simultaneously experience the intersection of overlapping oppressions of caste, class, and gender amplifying the obstacles they face and their inequality. Many potential victims live in ‘ghetto like’ structures within segregated areas away from the general population. This has severe implications in terms of their access to security, livelihoods, health and education and other State welfare programmes/schemes. Government functionaries are reluctant to provide mandatory services for housing, nutrition, and other such basic services in these localities. Hence, while on the one hand women, men, boys and girls are dealing with poverty and survival issues, on the other they are not receiving the basic State services which could have alleviated some of their daily problems like access to children’s education of all age groups, provision of safety measures to ward off rape and other forms of violence among girl children and women, addressing day-to-day concerns of health, provision of clean potable drinking water, provision of proper hygiene and sanitary conditions, and dignified livelihoods including work opportunities for income generation.

3.5.1 Sex and Gender

Sex refers to the biological (genital & reproductive) distinctions between males and females that are fixed at birth and do not generally vary among human communities. Gender refers to differences in social roles, responsibilities, attributes and conduct deemed socially appropriate for men and women, and to ideas about how behaviour and activities should be valued or censured. Characteristics and roles associated with males and masculinity in most societies are more highly valued and rewarded than those associated

with females and femininity. Existing gender relations thus tend to be marked by male
dominance and female subordination, which is not biologically, but largely socially
determined. Prevailing gender stereotypes and women’s lower valued social roles restrict
their interactions and mobility, and marginalize them from access to ownership and
control over material/non-material resources. For example, women’s gender roles of
domesticity upheld in some societies as a social ideal for them, confine them to the
unpaid care economy in the household. Lacking a paid economic role, women are
dependent on male relatives for basic needs, access to property and other economic
resources that ensure a sustainable future. Death, disability or unemployment of their
male kin or the latter’s withdrawal of support, render women – even those in relatively
affluent households – economically marginalized and vulnerable. When women engage
in paid employment or community work, they tend to be drawn into ‘women-oriented’
jobs – extensions of conventional domestic roles. They are paid and rewarded less
than men for the same jobs, as their lower valued domestic work and status defines the
value of their public sphere activities. Women’s needs and concerns thus stem both
from the peculiarities of biology, their lower valued social roles and consequent
marginalization relative to men.

Gender does not exist in isolation, but interacts with other hierarchical social categories
such as class, caste and ethnicity. This raises the question of differences not just between
men and women, but between different categories of women arising out of their different
social positions, with poor, ethnically marginalized women being the worst off. Thus,
systems of power such as gender, caste and class often get interlinked and ensure the
exclusion and subordination of women and girls in India on account of prevailing
stereotypes and their lower valued social roles, inferior status and position.

A gender perspective on trafficking addresses the sex and gender-specific differences
and inequities in the magnitude, causes, impacts and consequences of trafficking, including
differential and discriminatory policy, legal and programme impacts on trafficked men
and women. It grounds these in a combination of biological differences and socially
constructed gender and other interacting hierarchies. It is difficult to find accurate sex-
disaggregated data on the magnitude of trafficking. But available evidence and general
consensus suggests that women and children in India as elsewhere are the majority of
trafficked persons.

3.5.2 Caste/Ethnicity

In India — where the caste system and similar forms of social stratification continue to
exist even today — families and children of dalits and other low caste groups are still
found in relationships of bondage to landowners belonging to upper castes, in spite of
existing laws that prohibit slavery and caste discrimination. As mentioned earlier, bonded
labour is found in agriculture, domestic work, brick kilns, glass industries, tanneries and
many other manufacturing and construction industries. Children, women and men of
certain castes are delivered to abusers in repayment of a loan or other favours — real
or imaginary — given to the parents or guardians of the victim. This form of trafficking
has escalated in India, more so in the wake of many natural calamities. In the process,
victims end up working like slaves, never knowing when their debt will finally be
considered paid.

Several studies reveal that majority of the trafficked persons are from marginalized
Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Class Communities including

Report of the Expert Group on Strategies for Combating the Trafficking of Women and Children
denotified criminal tribes. Similarly, in some States of India where inter-generational prostitution continues to be the norm, and mothers are forced to pass on prostitution to their daughters, mostly belong to low-caste communities like Nats, Kanjars and Bediyas.

3.5.3 Poverty

India is one of the most populous countries in the world. Around 40 percent of its population is living below poverty line. As per the Planning Commission of India, poverty in India is significantly a rural phenomenon. The rural poor have limited access to education, health care, land, livestock, well-paid jobs and other facilities. Their main source of income is agricultural wages or casual non-farm jobs. A large percentage of them are landless or near-landless, the livestock they own is of poor stock, and they are often denied better opportunities for social reasons, such as caste.

Traffickers are therefore easily able to lure them to false promises of well-paid, legitimate jobs, residency status in more prosperous cities/countries, or simply the promise of sending wages back home as inducements and deceptions to obtain initial agreement to offers of travel and employment.

3.5.4 Organized Crime

As mentioned in one of the earlier Units, trafficking is now considered to be the third largest source of profits for organized crime, behind drugs and guns, generating billions of dollars annually. It is also connected to other criminal activities, with profits from trafficking in persons used to finance illicit arms and drugs trading. The reasons for the increase in this phenomenon are multiple and complex. However, in general, this criminal activity has taken advantage of the freer flow of people, money, goods and services to extend its own international reach. It feeds on poverty, despair, war, crisis, ignorance and women's unequal status in most societies. The globalization of the world economy has increased the movement of people beyond and across borders, legally or illegally, especially from poorer to wealthier countries.

For purposes of trafficking a range of actors are involved from family members/relatives to local pimps to initial recruiters, other agents, escorts, brokers and the ultimate owners and managers who pay large sums of money for the acquisition of concerned persons. Of late, gangs and larger organized crime networks are significantly involved in the marketing of human beings for exploitation. Trafficking in human beings is lucrative because unlike drugs, which are sold and quickly consumed, a human being can be used and sold multiple times for repeated profit. According to one of the government reports of United States of America, human trafficking generates more than $9.5 billion in annual revenue. It is the fastest growing criminal activity in the world today, and at its present rate of expansion, it will very soon surpass profits made by criminal networks through the sale of guns and drugs. The organized criminal syndicates, in a way, have institutionalized this modern form of slavery today.

In India, Araria, Purnea, Katihar and Kishanganj form the Golden Triangle of trafficking. Indian organized crime, led by individuals based in Dubai, is involved in the international trade of girls and men from India, Nepal and Bangladesh to major urban centres, particularly Mumbai, Delhi, Patna and Kolkata as well as to some other Middle Eastern countries.

Self Assessment Question

2) List out the major supply factors of human trafficking.

3.5.5 Other Factors

A range of other factors relating to supply side which impinge on trafficking is as follows:

a) Impact of Globalization and Liberalization

The impact of globalization and liberalization has compounded the problem of trafficking. It has severed the traditional social-economic fabric and has made children, women and men vulnerable, making them commodities in the market.

b) Human-created Catastrophies, Conflicts and Natural Disasters

This has forced communities to move, often en masse to meet their basic needs. When individuals within those communities have no skills or education, and are exposed to health risks, their capacity to secure sustainable livelihoods is limited, and their risk to trafficking heightened. These situations tend to create a skewed demographic balance in favour of women, the aged and children, and a sharp increase in woman-headed households. The disintegration of ‘normal-time’ family, community and State support systems, prompts women to flee in desperation with their children in search of physical and economic security, rendering them more vulnerable than men to traffickers.

c) War/Armed Conflict/Political Strife

The degree to which war and armed conflict greatly increase people’s vulnerability to trafficking has only recently been recognized. This interrelationship operates in a range of ways during times of turmoil. Chaos, impunity, State weakness or collapse, lack of border controls and the brutalization of elements within societies allow human trafficking to flourish. As a result —

- Government strategies to reduce human trafficking are likely to be given a low priority.
- Normal immigration procedures and border controls are disrupted. Breakdowns in governance may facilitate corruption among officials and provide openings for organized crime to take control of various markets, including the trade in arms, drugs and people.
- Normal employment is frequently disrupted, leaving people in a precarious economic situations and more likely to look at options that would otherwise be considered unnecessary or risky. People may become more inclined to consider the option of migration as a means to find employment and earn an income.
- The desire for a safe and secure environment may also prompt people to consider means of migration.
- The influx of troops may lead to an increase in prostitution, which may include trafficked prostitutes. This may actually be more acute during reconstruction.
· Anti-government groups/outfits may abduct children and recruit them as child soldiers and may also use trafficked people to undertake other undesirable dangerous tasks.

d) Climate Change

As climate change and environmental mismanagement create a proliferation of droughts, floods and other disasters, there is increasing pressure on rural land, making it more difficult for people to get enough to eat. Other than this, heavy rains followed by floods destroy homes and property. As such, more people are vulnerable to trafficking, because of their poverty or location. The Kosi floods and the massive recruitment of children from the affected districts — Araria, Purnea, Katihar and Madhepura are a case in point.

2004 TSUNAMI AND TRAFFICKING

In the aftermath of 26 December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, there were sporadic reports of rape, sexual abuse, kidnapping and trafficking of persons in areas devastated by tsunami. Thousands of orphaned children were vulnerable to exploitation by criminal elements seeking profit from their misery. In response, the Central and concerned State Governments, international and non-governmental organizations, paved the way for the prevention of human trafficking, in particular, child trafficking, an integral component of disaster-relief planning.

e) Displacement

Alienation of internally displaced people from land and resources has increased vulnerability to trafficking. Although trafficking seems to imply people moving across continents, most exploitation takes place close to home. Movement is not a necessary perquisite for trafficking and a teenager who is moved out of the ‘mother’s community’ into the ‘brothel community’ is considered trafficked though she may be exploited on the same bed she was born. Children born in brothels or farms are pulled into the bondage of prostitution or farm work without any kind of movement taking place.

The World Refugee Survey conducted by the Indian Social Institute of Delhi, attributed that internal displacement in India is due to political causes, including secessionist movements; identity-based autonomy movements; local violence, such as caste disputes and riots fuelled by religious fundamentalism and environment and development induced displacement.

f) Migration

Widening visible disparities within populations have resulted in people migrating from poorer to more prosperous venues and traffickers are dipping in the “sea of migration” with post-migration trafficking emerging as a new and growing trend from India.

Migrant labourers lack access to information and knowledge, thus making it very difficult for them to switch jobs in case of dissatisfaction with the current employer. Because of their optionless situation, these labourers lack bargaining power and thereby fail to negotiate reasonable pay scales and fair working conditions with the contractors.

Most migrants live in open spaces; make shift shelters or illegal settlements, which lack the basic infrastructure and access to civic amenities. They have no local ration cards which can provide them their food at subsidized rates through the Public Distribution System. They are highly prone to occupational health hazards and also vulnerable to epidemics.
Since the migrants are mobile, their children have no crèche facilities or access to schooling. They do not come under the purview of either the local government or NGO programmes who cite the problem of monitoring and leave them outside the scope of development interventions.

Additionally, labour migrants from India are primarily from the most marginalized sectors of society, namely Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. These migrants are entirely without legal protection or social security. They are “invisible”, are not acknowledged and are denied access even to basic amenities in most of the cases. They have no identity in the places where they live and no voice in the places they have left behind. Their migration offers a very fertile ground for traffickers for want of adequate information or protection.

Data shows that intra-regional and domestic trafficking are the major forms of trafficking in persons in India though victims are also trafficked between countries. The movement of young girls from South Asian countries like Nepal and Bangladesh to brothels in India is common, according to Amnesty International. Jogbani in Araria is one of the main transit points. There is further movement to the Middle East as well as other destinations.

Easy mobility and faster modes of transportation has made movement of people from one location to another also very simple. Trains, trucks, cars and buses facilitate the movement of trafficked people from one place to another in such a fast manner that often family members cannot keep up with the speed of traffickers in tracing loved ones.

### g) Newer Technologies

In recent times, invention of new technologies has made the trafficking of children, women and men easier and well thought-out. The World Wide Web includes the world sex guide, which is a virtual grocery store where men, women and girls of many countries can be selected for sex tourism. These websites provide detailed information on sex tours including where to find prostitutes, hotel prices, taxi fares and the sex acts that can be bought. As internet is a medium virtually without mediators or borders, illegal or harmful acts committed on it entail fewer risks. It is infinitely more economical, accessible to procure women and children. Men can completely objectify and classify women and children according to colour, firmness of skin and compliance to men. Through the internet, the dehumanization of women as sexual objects has reached unimaginable levels.

### h) Social Attitudes

Many South Asian countries are characterized by social exclusion based on gender, ethnicity, caste and class. This holds true for India as well. These characteristics of social exclusion are reinforced by tradition and are institutionalized in areas such as education, health and access to development resources. These social factors make people vulnerable to trafficking.

### i) Discriminatory Cultural Values and Practices

Discriminatory cultural values and practices, based on a person’s caste or ethnic identity, also play a leading role in facilitating trafficking. For example, in India, contrasting evaluations of a son’s and daughter’s role/status in patrilinial family systems, generate a culture of son preference. In addition, daughters are perceived as a liability to the natal family encumbered with marrying them off early and appropriately, ensuring their pre-
marital sexual purity, providing hefty marriage expenses and other material resources on auspicious occasions to the daughter's marital kin. When an opportunity presents itself, poor families in particular may be willing to trade unwanted women and girls with little thought for their rights or future well-being. Examples are: sale of women and girls into marriage, willingness to marry women/girls off even to strangers who make no monetary demands, thus predisposing them to trafficking, sale of women and girls into prostitution when sexuality acquires an attractive market value. Many a times, women and girls are manipulated by consumerism and perversion of family values to fulfill family needs and consumption in the name of cultural tradition—duty, care, and gratitude—even if it means being sold into prostitution.

**Self Assessment Question**

3) Describe displacement and migration as a cause of trafficking.

j) **Vulnerabilities of Children**

The overwhelming majority of children vulnerable to trafficking are those belonging to poor families with few or no skills or assets, often working as seasonal labourers or in factories or construction sites. Those most 'at risk' are:

- Children separated from their families or having dysfunctional family backgrounds (e.g., orphans, victims of abuse, unaccompanied children, children of single-parent, or children living by themselves on account of both parents being in jails due to conflict with law);
- Economically and socially deprived children (children in difficult circumstances, children of unemployed parents, poor rural and urban children, slum children, and those without access to education, vocational training, or a reasonable standard of living);
- Children from other marginalized groups (e.g., certain minorities, internally displaced persons)

k) **Governance**

Governance is the system of government policies and programs necessary to perform a number of vital functions. For example:

- making decisions and coordinating policies;
- establishing an enabling environment for public and private sector growth;
- delivering important sets of goods and services; and
- promoting equality and equity.

The poor are more vulnerable to weak governance and increased risks of being trafficked. Contributing factors in this respect include absence of effective legislation, policies, and institutional structures in addressing human trafficking; poor law enforcement.

---

combined with corruption (e.g., police, border officials, politicians being bribed by traffickers); and exclusion of poor and vulnerable groups from basic social and economic services (e.g., women, indigenous people/low castes).

Self Assessment Question
4) List out the vulnerability factors causing human trafficking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supply Factors (Push Factors)</th>
<th>Demand Factors (Pull Factors)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Sex and Gender</td>
<td>• Prostitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Caste/Ethnicity</td>
<td>• Paedophilia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Poverty</td>
<td>• Sex Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Organized Crime</td>
<td>• Organ Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• War/Armed Conflict/Political Strife</td>
<td>• Begging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Climate Change</td>
<td>• Child Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Displacement and Migration</td>
<td>• Cheap Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Newer Technologies</td>
<td>• Domestic Servitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social Attitudes, Discriminatory</td>
<td>• Contract Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cultural Values and Practices</td>
<td>• Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vulnerabilities of Children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Governance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6 THE ROOT CAUSES OF SEX TRAFFICKING IN INDIA

- The growing demand for prostituted women and children, fuelled by globalization, liberalization, pornography, and sex tourism promotion. These are the most immediate causes of the expansion of the sex industry without which it would be highly unprofitable for pimps and traffickers to seek out a supply of women, girls and children. Due to demand, trafficking destinations have moved from traditional ‘red-light areas’ to tourist destinations, holiday resorts, business centers, etc. These industries also give men moral and social permission to abuse women and children, portraying prostitution as harmless fun and as something men indulge in to enhance their masculinity.

- The low status of women and girls has made them vulnerable to recruiters, traffickers and pimps who prey on their subordinate social, personal and economic situations. Isolation and lack of access to education and jobs, has made it easy for traffickers to abuse the vulnerability of women.

- Exclusion, stigma, violence and discrimination of socially marginalized groups are few of the main factors as to why the supply of vulnerable women and girls for exploitation does not stop.

- Feminization of poverty and unequal development has lead to creation of pockets of poverty and islands of prosperity.
Self Assessment Question

5) Describe the root causes of human trafficking in India.

3.7 TRAFFICKED AND PROSTITUTED PERSONS IN INDIA

It is well documented that majority of the trafficked persons are women and girls from developing countries. Countries whose economies are either unstable or in transition, or countries which are facing long-term violent conflict. All these, along with other multiple forms of discrimination and conditions of disadvantage, contribute to the vulnerability of women and girls being trafficked and driven into prostitution.

The majority of the trafficked belong to the economically and socially marginalized groups of India. The NHRC study on Trafficking in Women and Children in India amply illustrated that 94% of their respondents were from India, 1.1% from Bangladesh and 2.9% from Nepal. The NHRC study also revealed the following facts:

- **Teenage girls from poor families**: The age profile of the trafficked victims presented an important dimension. Most adult women narrated that they were trafficked when they were young and had dreams of living a respectable life. Additionally, the increasing numbers of children, especially girls, being rescued in the few raids conducted by the police showed that there is a rapid growth in the number of children exploited for prostitution and other forms of exploitation. Children, especially from poor families, are most vulnerable to trafficking.

- **Women and girls from disadvantaged circumstances**: A vast majority of the respondents came from poor families. Only one-fourth of the respondents had a monthly family income of Rs. 2,000 and above; 47.5% had an income below this level, and 27.7% were not able to give details.

- **Women and girls from marginalized groups (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes)**: The socio-economic background of trafficked victims showed that almost one-third of the victims, 32.3%, were Scheduled Castes, 5.8% were Scheduled Tribes, 21.9% were from Other Backward Classes and 17.4% from other castes. The rest were unable to recall their caste status. Thus, a large majority of the respondents (60%) belonged to socially deprived section of the society.

- **Women and girls from drought prone areas or areas affected by natural disasters or human made disasters**: 68.6% of trafficking victims came from rural areas, 21.6% from urban centres and 9.8% from urban slums. Exploitation of women and girls in disaster situations is a well-known, documented and reported phenomenon. Disasters increase vulnerability of women and girls, which is shamelessly exploited by the traffickers. Economic policies such as declining agricultural subsidies further increase the urban-rural divide.

- **Girls, who are victims of incest, paedophilia**: Women and girls who reported to have lost their virginity outside the realm of marriage were seen as "immoral".
These victims of incest and child sexual abuse, under social and customary pressures, took to prostitution either on their own or by others for lack of options. It was found that a staggering 69.8% of victims of trafficking had their first sexual experience as children, i.e., when they were below 18 years of age and that their first sexual experience had been forced on them by someone known to them.

- **Victims of child marriage or women who were married at a very young age**: 71.8% of the respondents had been married when they were children (i.e., when they were under 18 years of age). This suggests that child marriage is among the key factors that make women and girls vulnerable to trafficking.

- **Women and girls from isolated districts where the illiteracy rate was found to be high**: 70.7% of trafficked victims were either illiterate or barely literate. Only 13.6% of the victims had received education up to the primary stage and around 15% beyond the primary stage. A mere 0.4% of the respondents were graduates or above. In the same study 60.8% of them also revealed that their first sexual experience was forced on them, and 63.8% accused a host of persons including the school staff, teachers, and persons in positions of authority or who enjoyed their trust like friends, priests, fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law, counselors, police officials or domestic help of perpetrating the abuse.

### 3.8 SUMMARY

- Causes of human trafficking are inter-related and include political, economic, regional and cultural issues.
- Causes of human trafficking are best understood by the approach of demand and supply.
- Factors of supply focus on the victims and explain the vulnerability of people.
- Factors of demand for sex, cheap labour, crime syndicates and the like explain the drive factors of human trafficking.
- In India women and children from poor families and marginalized communities are at a greater risk of trafficking.

### 3.9 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1) Describe the relevance of understanding the causes of human trafficking and examine the demand and supply approach in understanding the cause of human trafficking?

2) What are the causes of demand leading to human trafficking?

3) Describe the factors of supply causing human trafficking?

4) Describe the pattern of trafficking in India and who all are at greater risk of trafficking?

### 3.10 ANSWERS AND HINTS

**Self Assessment Questions**

1) Refer to Section 3.4.

2) Refer to Section 3.5.

3) Refer to Sub-section 3.5.5.
Introduction to Human Trafficking

4) Refer to Sub-section 3.5.5.
5) Refer to Section 3.6.

Terminal Questions
1) Refer to Section 3.1.
2) Refer to Section 3.4.
3) Refer to Section 3.5.
4) Refer to Section 3.7.

3.11 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS
5) Sally Cameron and Edward Newman, Trafficking in Humans: Social, Cultural and Political Dimensions, United Nations University Publication.