Chapter – II

Literature Review
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2.1 The status of Sex Workers and their children

Historically prostitution was not a tradition and multi partner sex was not a banned way of life. After the transformation of the society into a ‘reformed’ one in the last century, multi partner sexual activity prevails as hidden and is considered as immoral. The conceptualization of prostitution as universal goes hands in hand with other important notions. One of the core notions behind the discourse of prostitution is its inevitability. It is considered to be inevitable, first, because it is a universal phenomenon and second, because of its intrinsic relation to what has been called the necessity to satisfy human needs or we can say to satisfy the male sexual desire. Male sexuality is portrayed as insatiable, instinctual and uncontrollable, reducing to an essentialist universal notion. Because of this, society is forced with the moral dilemma: how can male sexual desire be soothed without disheveling society’s moral fabric? Approached as a moral problem, it was condoned for the sake of the society’s wellbeing. It was only when the relationship between the prostitution and venereal disease was discovered, that it began to be regarded as a fully-fledged problem in need of a solution. Solution to the prostitution problems were borrowed from previous European attempts, which had been confined to declining whether it would be wiser to regulate or abolish it. The regulationist discourse departed from the aforementioned notions, claiming that this alleged social disease must be controlled and sought to introduce legislation to implement a regime of control. Their abolitionist adversaries, however, rejected all arguments derived from the regulationist discourse, and replaced them with others, calling prostitution an ‘illicit act’, a sign of society’s injustice, and calling for its total disappearance. Each discourse produced unyielding and narrow concepts which have continually been reproduced throughout the history (Nencel, 2001).

Till date at least in India there is a debate whether to abolish it or to keep it legal. Both have its own pro and cons which makes it harder for the people to decide and come to a conclusion. Prostitution has infused deep in the society. The reason for the continuance of prostitution in any civil society is the existence of various socio-economic, cultural, psychological and attitudinal factors which have allowed this. In the last two decades a specifically western discourse has developed which, among other things, supports the rights of the prostitutes, recognizes their work as a profession and
use the term ‘sex worker’ as ‘prostitute’ (Bell, 1994; Delacoste & Alexander, 1987; Pheterson, 1989, 1996).

The possibility of recognizing prostitution as a profession is fervently rejected. Prostitution might be described as ‘a job like any other’, but that is more often to counteract the notion of promiscuity intertwined in the construct of the prostitute, rather than a sign of professional recognition. The idea that prostitutes might be considered as the sex workers has not gone over at all well. Attempt has been made to recognize registered prostitutes as sex workers, but when this label is spoken out loud it often is accompanied by disbelieving smirk. Additionally, the women who prostitute do not call themselves sex workers and do not recognize the dimension of empowerment encapsulated in the term. They use the word prostitute without any problem. This is alternated with the ‘term women who prostitute’ in an attempt to accentuate the women and not the way they earn their living (Nencel, 2001).

In India, at the time of British imperialism sex workers were officially set up in cantonments for satisfying the lust of the British troops and were considered a necessity. The system of licensing brothels was partially suspended in 1884 and stopped in 1888 at least on paper as a result of the intervention of the Parliament. But apparently the brothel still continued to flourish where British troops were stationed under the patronage of the military authorities and the sex workers, living in the cantonment areas, had to undergo medical examination as before. Thus the licensing system continued under another name. A new cantonment act was however passed in 1889 and an amending act in 1893 which prohibited the compulsory and periodical examination of the sex workers. The result of abolition of the system of the medical examination was an increase in the number of cases of syphilis and gonorrhea among the soldiers. The system of medical examination acted apparently as a check on the spread of the disease, at least to some extent. Later on an act was passed on 1897 which gave power to the military authorities to remove brothels and prohibit public women from living or loitering near cantonments (Mukherji, 1986).

After independence the government in India led to the passing of law, namely the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 as amended in 1978 without any firm steps being taken to implement the stringent restrictive provisions rather than some measures for its eradication. But recently the threat of HIV/AIDS has alerted all to the needs of
its effective control and prevention. Thus the female sex workers are considered as high risk intermediary group. They are now receiving attention aimed at preventing and restricting the spread of deadly disease.

The first-ever Global Hub of the International Aids Conference, dubbed as Sex Workers Freedom Festival (SWFF) was successfully hosted by Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee in Kolkata, India along with the Global Network of Sex Work and Projects (NSWP) and the All India Network of sex Workers (AINSW). The programme was attended by many national and international dignitaries in addition to 500 sex workers across the Globe. The representatives of sex workers across the world demanded seven freedoms for creating a global platform for sex workers to get their rights and meaningfully participate in the fight to end AIDs (Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, 2013: 5-39). The seven freedoms of sex workers are:

1. Freedom of movement and to migrate.
2. Access to quality health services.
3. Freedom to work and choose occupation.
4. Associate and unionize.
5. To be protected by the laws.
6. Freedom from abuse and violence.
7. Freedom from stigma and discrimination.

Sex work is considered as a hazardous and stigmatized profession which involves stress that can be understood only by the workers involved in the trade (Shedlin & Oliver, 1993: 157-172; Sloss & Harper, 2004: 329-341). These daily stressors include victimization, difficult clients and police harassment (Alam & Hussain, 2013: 127).

The life of the women in the sex trade exemplifies material and symbolic exclusion. Women usually enter into this trade due to poverty and loss of family support. They live in a vulnerable position, with little money and social support to rely upon. These women enter a hierarchical sex trade, with madams and pimps often taking strict control over their working environment and keeping them away from other sex workers. They are vulnerable to arrest by police and have little resource to justify if exploited or abused by clients, madams or others. Symbolically, women who sell sex are marginalized in popular culture, for example, being presented in Bollywood movies as objects of men’s
lust and ultimately rejected in favor of the pure and innocent women (Sleightholme & Sinha, 1996).

In India, sex trade is regulated by laws which curtailed sex worker’s full citizenship rights. The working environment is mired with extortion, raids, eviction and detention of sex workers, arrest of customers etc. so it is not an easy proposition for them to live and work as sex worker. They are exploited by police and toughs, not only that they also suffer from regular humiliation and harassment and social discrimination from the mainstream society. The sex workers are trying to address their problem by having their own group. However, we cannot ignore the ongoing struggles that are taking shape in every day’s life in our real world. The struggle of sex worker to create a social and political space for a marginalized and stigmatized community could not be isolated for many such ongoing struggles in our society (Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, 2013: 5-39). Sex workers are rarely referred to as an occupational group of women who earn their livelihood by providing sexual services, rather they are referred to as women who poses threat to public health, sexual morality, social stability and civic order. The lives of the sex workers are intrinsically enmeshed in the complex social structure we live within and the powerful dominant ideologies which shape our moral and ethical values. They struggle against the conditions of material deprivation and social stigmatization. They are powerless abused victims with no resources and are seen as objects of pity. The sex workers are refused enfranchisement as legitimate citizen or workers and are banished to the margins of society and history.

Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee (2013: 5-39) mentions that sex work is a very tough occupation. It involves physical labor in providing sexual services to multiple clients in a working day. It is definitely not always fun. Then there are also occupational hazards like unwanted pregnancy, painful abortions, risk of sexual transmitted disease. In almost all red light areas housing and sanitation facilities are abysmal, the localities are crowded, most sex workers are quite poor and on top of it there are police harassment and violence from local thugs. Moreover, to add to the material condition of deprivation and distress, they have to take on stigmatization and marginalization- the social indignity of being “sinful”, being mothers of the illegitimate children, being the target of those children’s frustration and anger.
Sex workers are acutely aware of the stigma attached to their profession and they make significant efforts to hide their work from their families, children, landlords, neighbours, schools, parents of other children, and health care professionals (Alam & Hussain, 2013: 127).

The life of a sex worker is not as happy as it appears from outside. Her smiles and cheerfulness are not real. No one will care for a grave women and she has therefore to put on her smile even when she is suffering from some disease. Youth and beauty does not last long and with the decrease with her personal charms and power of attraction a sex worker finds her income gradually failing. When a sex worker becomes old and her charms are entirely lost and no hope remains of earning a living from their sale, she becomes a cook or maid servant of her younger sisters still in the prime of life or acts as procurers. Some of them take up the profession of panwalli (betel nut seller) which requires very little capital (Mukherji, 1986).

A sex worker is an outcaste. Even the leaders of society visit and caress her with warm embrace and kisses, but still she is not recognized in an open society. When she dies, there is nobody to mourn her loss-except perhaps one or two of her women friends. Sex workers remain socially stigmatized and legally near criminalized by the Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act. There are about 3 crores of estimated sex worker’s family in India which are headed by the sex worker (Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, 2013: 5-39). Sex workers look after everything for their family members which includes getting their children education, taking responsibility for sibling’s marriage, buying a property, supporting medical treatment for ailing parents etc. but strangely our society do not recognize that and have no respect for her and marginalize her as ‘bad women’ because of her occupation.

Why do women take up the occupation? Women take up sex work for the same reason as they take up any other livelihood option available to them. Some of them get sold into the industry and some join according to their will. Some of them may be bonded to the madam who has bought them for some months or years after which they gain a degree of independence within the sex industry. Whole of them end up in the sex trade after going through many experiences in life often unwillingly, without understanding all the implications of being a sex worker fully.
In the prehistoric age men and women cohabited in the manner of birds and animals. Sexual promiscuity prevailed within the limits of each tribal group. A man was no longer satisfied with sexual enjoyment only during certain seasons and wanted a partner of his own, whom he could enjoy at his sweet will and without fear of any other man touching her. The sexual impulse of man gradually became constant instead of periodic. The primitive women could have sexual relations with any man in her tribe. As long as these customs prevailed there could be no necessity of the sex workers class. With the introduction of the marriage, a man had to remain faithful to a single woman. But primitive nature for promiscuity remained. Prostitution has therefore been rightly described as a dark shadow out of the past falling now upon family life. The development of an occupation which required co-operative labor was also an important factor in the introduction of marriage system. For example, the wife and children are economic assets to the farmer. Apart from the economic utility of marriage, the desire to continue the line was also an important factor. The religious ceremonies connected with the sexual and economic union of the man and woman probably came at the later period of human civilization. The introduction of the marriage system was a discouragement to sexual promiscuity. But all sorts of sexual customs were found in India even after the introduction of the marriage system for e.g. the slaves captured in war served the purpose of the sex workers. When the princess was married, her maid accompanied her to her husband’s place and was treated as concubines. In time a class of women arose, who permitted the sexual use of their bodies for hire. The system of marriage and sexual purity of men and women are necessary in the interest of human society and civilization, even if we leave aside the religious side of the question. Long ago before the dawn of civilization, there was no system of marriage. Marriage is the product of civilization and prostitution is the bye-product of marriage (Mukherji, 1986).

Many of the girls move out from their home town to find employment and then drifted into prostitution. The development of commerce and industry caused the establishment of large mills and factories. Poor villagers both men and women flock to these industrial centers in search of job. At times the supply of labor so greatly exceeds the demand that wages hover about the amount just sufficient to keep them alive. The laborers have to work from early morning till evening. To such an over-worked, low paid, ill-treated women laborer, the temptation to enter brothel is very fast. There is much to sleep and practically no work to do; while there is prospect of better food and
clothing. The women laborers cannot work hard as the men and receive generally lesser wages than the men. The wages paid to the female laborer is generally insufficient for her maintenance and such women often find their way into sex trade (Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, 2013: 5-39).

The girls forcibly abducted from their home by ruffians are in most cases not taken back by their relatives and have thus no other alternative but to enter the brothel. A girl who has through an error of judgment slipped from the path of virtue and finds the way to her return home blocked is also a good victim for a brothel. The daughter of sex workers in most cases carries on the trade of her mother and sex work has become a hereditary profession to a class of women. A sex worker who has a daughter considers her as an asset and an insurance against old age. A mother, who is herself a woman of easy virtue, will possibly have no shame in inducing her daughter to such a vicious course of life. Brothel keepers and also sex workers sometimes buy infant girls for the purpose of adoption. The girls are generally bought from the poor families who are unable to maintain themselves and girls born as a result of illegal sexual relationship are generally got rid in this way. The sex worker who adopts a girl is called mother and not in frequently the girl treats her kindly in her old age through affection. Sometimes the girl is also virtually just a slave.

Mukherji (1986) writes the causes of demand for sex workers are as follows:

- The existence of large surplus of men over women. A large number of men migrate from the villages to the cities in search of a job and live in the numerous hotels, boarding houses and messes separate from their wives and relatives. The cities are expensive and people cannot afford to live there with their families unless the income is sufficiently high. The worker is thus forced to live there to earn money for wife and children far away. The result is the large number of male population living away from their healthy influence of home life; these are the people who are the best customers of the sex workers. It is seriously argued that brothels are a necessity for the sake of these people. But when a woman left by these men in their village homes can lead a righteous life and keep their sexual desire in check, why should not the men do the same.
Wherever there are temporary assemblies of large bodies of men, the sex workers are not slow to avail themselves of the opportunities. The settlement of sex workers in melas has become an acute social problem. These melas are organized on the occasion of some religious festival or as exhibitions for the encouragement of the local industries and agriculture. But in most cases the organizers construct huts and lend them to sex workers. Sex workers and gambling are the two tempting sources of pleasure to most of the illiterate villagers who are drawn from great distance to these melas. The owners of these melas which are held annually are generally unwilling to stop this practice as it is a source of great income to them.

The regular movement of tourists also creates a demand for the sex workers, and women are brought to these places to meet the demand. Some of the places of pilgrimage are also notorious for the number of their brothels. Some of the men who come for religious motive fall victims to these women.

Ports are also centre of prostitution. In Kolkata there are numerous brothels near the Khiderpur docks and sex workers of various nationalities may be found there. Pimps stand in the ports and usually meet the incoming streamers and direct them to the brothels.

Pornographic representation of women satisfies the voyeuristic pleasures of millions of men. From shaving creams to the bathroom fittings products are sold through attracting men by advertisements depicting women as sex objects. Nonetheless it opened up an avenue for women and her sexuality to be bought and sold in the market and not absolutely by free for the men.

Many female sex workers get pregnant willingly or even unknowingly but face dire situation raising the child. Sex workers have to go through various issues that hinder parenting such as poverty, lack of social support, substance abuse, homelessness, poor health, income insecurity and inadequate social support (Drake & Pandey, 1996: 1003-1018; Tracy, 1994: 534-540; Sloss & Harper, 2004: 329-341). Children signify eternal optimism in the human beings and provide potential for the development. Every nation whether developed or developing, links its future with the status of the child. Childhood
is interpreted as the synonym of innocence, freedom, truth and joy. It is the time when spared of rigors of an adult life, one hardly shoulders any kind of responsibility or obligations, but at the same time, it is also true that children are vulnerable, especially when very young. The development of the child is the complex phenomenon, which involves a complex relationship of different levels of social and environmental factors in the ecological framework. The fact that children are vulnerable they need to be cared and protected from the harshness from the world outside and around. A child of today cannot develop to be a responsible and productive member of tomorrow’s society unless and the environment, where he is blooming and learning, is conducive to his social, physical and mental health (Chaudhary, Vasabhai & Bhagyalaxmi, 2014: 404-406).

The sex workers and the children are in the state of exclusion where they are denied even the most basic human rights such as health and education. They are exposed to inhuman conditions like the obligation of using drugs, lack of access to water and sanitation, property rights and legal protection, extortion, trafficking and violence. In this context the children of sex workers are growing up in an unsafe environment and are exposed to the increasing risk of becoming potential victims of the dangerous sex trade. The children of sex workers live a life of shame due to their mother’s profession. They have to endure the disgrace attached to their birth and in most cases perpetuate the sin to which they owe their origin. They are isolated from the mainstream society.

The children of sex workers face risk, stigma and discrimination, as a result of their mother’s profession. Stigma is one of the root causes of the problem of the children of the sex workers. It creates barriers for securing safe home, child care, health care facilities and education, thus suffering numerous health problems. Due to stigma attached with their bloodline most are denied any rights and standard living. They live a life of malnutrition, unwanted teen pregnancy and various mental health problems. Also gender based violence, abuse and trafficking is very common for the children of sex workers. Various factors directly contribute to their vulnerability and marginalization. These are lack of education, inaccessibility of basic needs, no proper safe housing etc. Abuse and exploitation, discrimination and violence, stigma and marginalization are some issues they cross path daily. Lack of safe housing/shelter is a
common problem faced mainly by the street based sex workers and their children. Due to low income and identity exposure possibility force a sex worker to look for rentals in slums and in most cases children are either left unattended or someone takes the responsibility in return for a favor. This leaves the door open for opportunistic people who are eagerly waiting to take advantage. According to Alam & Hussain (2013: 127), the street based sex worker (mothers) inability to secure housing also meant that the children were sometimes left in the care of madams where they were subjected to verbal and physical abuse by the madams and forced to have sex with other clients.

Children born to sex workers, for a girl child sexual exploitation is common while boys are more likely to get engaged in criminal activities. The U.N. Declaration of the Rights of the Child (DRC) builds upon the rights that had been set forth in a League of Nations Declaration of 1924. The Preamble notes that children need special safeguard and care, including appropriate legal protection before as well as after birth. One of the key principles in DRC is that a child is to enjoy “special protection” as well as “opportunities and facilities, by which law and by other means,” for healthy and normal physical, mental, moral, spiritual and social development in conditions of freedom and dignity. Among other DRC principles, a child is entitled to a name and nationality; to an adequate nutrition, housing, recreation and medical services to an education; and for the physically challenged, to special treatment, education and care. Other principles are protection against neglect, cruelty and exploitation, trafficking, underage labor and discrimination. But whom and how the isolated children of sex workers demand these rights? Their isolation from society, ignorance and lack of awareness are often the cause of their difficulties (Pal, Mandal, Bhattacharya, Sharma, Akbar & Sarkar, 2011: 37-40).

The fulfillment of basic need of the children of sex workers like education helps to promote the development of children of sex workers enabling them to take up profession outside the circle in which they were born and thereby lead a normal life with gradual integration with the larger society. It helps the children to mainstream them into the larger society beyond their general representation in their stigmatized profession (sex trade). The children’s education depends on various factors like the sex workers (mothers) economic condition, parental education and relationship with the male, etc. The reason for drop out of children of sex workers from the school are poor economy and lack of mother’s support, marriage at early age and household pressure.
Some study shows that hiding of mother’s profession and giving proper care and
guidance and sometimes the effort of male partner helps the children to do well in their

Right to education is almost denied to the sex workers children. If the mother’s
identity is known the school authority will not take the application and even if they do
and later others find out the secret, they will keep humiliating the child so much that
the child will decide to leave the school on own their accord. Also the amount of
education expenditure is another barrier for the poor sex worker mother (Alam &
Hussain, 2013: 127).

The major problem of the children of sex workers is the problem of identity
(Adhikari, 2013: 219-225). Their identity is attached to stigma and discrimination in
the society we live. Even when the sex workers are provided with new option in life
and to leave the profession, it is a must to provide them with a new identity in the
society. If the old identity is disclosed then no matter whether they have left sex trade
or not, the whole effort of coming out from the stigmatized profession will go in vain.
Marriage is one of the most important social institutions in any society, but this remains
a painful experience for the daughter and the mother. As their identity is disclosed none
wants to marry the daughter and if the secrets are kept well hidden, at later dates when
revealed the daughter of the sex worker is abandoned by the husband and her in laws.
For the boy child, no one wants to keep relation with the child of a sex worker making
him isolated and taking away employment opportunity, which drifts him to criminal
activities (Alam & Hussain, 2013: 127).
2.2 Theoretical Framework

There was a controversy on the question of the mutual relationship between individual and society, but all have agreed that the relation between them is an intimate one. Society does not have its existence in the absence of individuals; it is the individuals which constitute society though society is larger than the sum of individuals and extends beyond the individual life span. Individual influences the society and the society makes individual cultured. Society and individual mutually influence each other and their existence and evolution depend on each other.

The child’s personality depends to a large extent upon his social environment. It is in society that his/her sense of self develops. This makes me curious to learn how the children of sex workers see themselves and identify themselves in a society where sex work is regarded as immoral and is illegal. These children are members of multiple social territories—within their own territory they share their histories with other children; in the territory of the school and neighborhood their perceived identity is isolated because of their social history. It is indeed very difficult for them to be obvious of the social position in the larger society given the level of stigma, prejudice and bias present.

There is a reflective truth that within a child lies the element that will eventually form the adult. A child is born with certain natural traits but much of his character, quality and specification depends upon the environment and type of inputs that have been provided to him on time and adequately. The process of socialization plays a very important role in the personality development of the child. Father and mother both take care of the children but at all stages it is the mother who naturally devotes much of her time to their care. There are also evidences that identity formation varies with parenting style (Berzonsky & Adams, 1999: 557-590; Marcia, 1980: 348). The mother’s role in the socialization of the child is generally considered paramount. But what if the mother is a sex worker and with a child whose father is unknown. Will that mother give equal love, care and attention as the other mothers who give planned birth to the child out of love and marriage? How would that child identify himself/herself or how would the world identify this child?
I

Sociologist George Herbert Mead believed as has been established in the study of personality and identity that people develop self-images through interactions with other people; that the self is the reflection of how others perceive one and the ways in those perceptions are processed by the person. He argued that the self, which is the part of a person's personality consisting of self-awareness and self-image, is a product of social experience (Mead, 1934). Therefore, socialization is very important for the formation of personality.

**Socialization** is a lifelong process of shaping an individual’s behavior patterns, values, standards, skills, attitudes and motives to conform to those regarded as desirable in a particular society (Hetherington & Parke, 1975: 133). Socialization helps an individual acquires knowledge to behave in accordance with social traditions and norms. Through socialization the individual learns his responsibility towards others in a society. It is the cultural process of learning to participate in group life that begins at birth and continues throughout life. It is the process of absorbing the attitudes, values and customs of a society. It describes the way in which pressures from parents, peers, teachers, other adults and the media encourage acceptable behavior. As a result of this pressure, children learn to behave in culturally approved ways, paying at least lip service to the dominant values, ideals and motivations of the groups that include them. The “we feeling” in the community is acquired through socialization. Man becomes what he is by socialization.

Socialization starts from birth and individuals influence each other by means of imitation, suggestion and sympathy. In society they are influenced by many processes such as praise and blame, cooperation and conflict, submission and ascendancy. These help to develop the personality and identity of an individual. The ‘self’ of an individual develops only due to socialization. Every social relationship of the individual contributes to the process of socialization. The agents of socialization into which one is present determine to a great extent the life of an individual.

The family is the primary and chief agent of socialization for most people, especially in the first five years of their life. The family provides the child with his/her
first social contact with the social world and it is through it that the correct patterns of behavior are internalized and learnt. However, learning is done in an informal manner and the right (or wrong behavior) is approved (or rejected) through rewards and punishment. The family has a very significant role to play during socialization since it is the only one that allows that adjustments are made when necessary since there are strong emotional ties and motivations that are fused during such informal learning. It is the family environment which forms his good habits or the negative habits. Juvenile delinquents mostly hail from families which at one time or other suffered from hindrance in the fulfillment of social relations. Man behaves in the society according to whatever he has learnt from the family. The preface writer on Women of the street, a searching book on London prostitution, has stated that the problem of the prostitution is the problem of the parent-child relationships. The children are spoiled when family contentment and peace are lacking. Many similar circumstances give birth to many thieves, murders and prostitutes (Sharma & Sharma, 2002: 163-166).

Besides parents, many individuals and institutions exert pressure on the individual to adopt socially approved values. The family is certainly the most influential regulator of socialization, however. The family helps the individual form basic patterns of responsiveness to others, in return the individual form the habitual style of relating to others. The most basic, primal lesson for later life relationships is learned in the infant’s experience of attachment. Attachment here is defined as “the intense, enduring, socio-emotional relationship an infant form with the parent or the care giver” (Zimbardo & Weber, 1997: 133).

In the study of attachment by the Development psychologist Mary Ainsworth, Ainsworth put young children in a variety of situations, such as separating them by a barrier from their mothers, or introducing a stranger when their mothers were nearby (Ainsworth, 1989: 709-716). Ainsworth found that the children’s responses indicated they were either securely or insecurely attached. Securely attached children felt close to their mothers, safe and more willing to explore and tolerate a novel experience-confident that they could cry out for help or to be reunited with their missing parent. Insecurely attached children acted in one of the two ways: with anxiety and ambivalence or with avoidance. The anxious-ambivalent children cried with fear and anger when separated, and proved difficult to console even when reunited with their
mothers. The avoidant children initially acted as if they were unconcerned of the absence of their mothers, not crying when she left and not reacting to her return. Avoidant children may be showing the effects of repeated rejection, no longer seeking attachment because their efforts have failed in the past (Shaver & Hazan, 1994: 110-130).

Cognitive social learning theorist (Bandura, 1986: 359-373; 1989: 729-735) contends that it is simpler to regard the parent as a model, whom the child copies, than as identification figure in the Freudian sense. In this view, children imitate models who are warm, powerful and competent- as most parents seem to their children. Instead of seeing themselves as similar to the parent and trying to react as they think the parents would, they simply imitate the parent’s actions and statements. The aspect of parental socialization actually sets the ground rules for the child’s socialization because from what children see and experience, they draw conclusions about the nature of the world and the people in it. These conclusions form the basis of social cognition, which refers to the children’s understanding of themselves, other people and society. Children learn about the nature of the world from the environment provided by the parents. The environment provides certain experiences and withholds others. Parents may take the children to amusement parks or always leave their child at home. The way parents treat the child and the way they perceive the child contribute to the way the child thinks about herself or himself. If parents overprotect a child, for example, the child often may feel in need of protection although he or she actually needs no outside assistance. An overprotected boy may, for example, be unprepared to negotiate difficulties with peers or to take responsibility for his own academic performance. Similarly, a little girl who is treated as if she was fragile, cute and incompetent may come to see herself in those terms.

When the child grows a bit, he leaves the protection of his home to go out and plan, during this time the child is influenced by his peer group. With peer group the children participate in making the rules rather than having rules handed down by adults. The peer group provides an alternative to adult standards and adult authority.

Secondary Socialization occurs usually in more formal situation, which is not personal. Secondary socialization comes to take over when agents of primary socialization seems to decrease in their influence. When a child reaches school age,
he/she starts to widen his/her socializing cycle via school setting. Here learning is more of formal type since there is an obvious transition from an environment of personal and intimate relationship to one which is more impersonal. The child in school along with the education is influenced by the personalities of his teacher and his friends. At school, talents are evaluated on the basis of sets of standards and requirements. The school helps the child to adapt to social order through the hidden curriculum and functions in order to prepare the latter for a stable adult life. Moreover, the school is specialized to impart certain technical, intellectual skills and cultural heritage of society so that the individual is able to integrate society.

The other agent of secondary socialization is the mass media. The mass media exerts a powerful socializing influence but the extent of its effects is difficult to measure. Mass media transmit information in an impersonal manner which is all the time conducted in a one-way flow since the audience are passive receivers, although the mass media is perceived as empowering us with wider information, knowledge about the wider world, it becomes clear that it also harms its audience and receivers. By concentrating and stressing on certain topics, the media can create, manage and control our impressions of what should be seen as real, important and normative. All these agents of socialization show us how they influence the behavior of an Individual and in formation of their identity.

Sharma & Sharma (2002: 163-166) writes that the need for socialization for the development of an individual is best described by Gesell in his work *Wolf children and Human child*. In 1920, in India, two children were found in a wolf’s den, of which one was eight years old and the other was six. The six-year-old child died the lapse of only a few months while the other continued to live for six years. The girl was named Kamala. She walked on all fours, growled like a wolf and could not speak. She did not know how to behave like a human due to the absence of socialization. She was taught to speak, wear clothes and eat. In this way she could learn some human behavior due to the influence of socialization after a period of some years.

Socialization within families is a bilateral process influenced by characteristics of both parents and children (Kuczynski, Marshall & Schell, 1977: 23-50; Valsiner, Branco & Dantas, 1977: 283-305). This socialization helps in acquiring values which influence the process of identity formation. From the perspective of adolescent identity
formation, value system develops through a process in which adolescent adopt an ideological stance juxtaposed to that of their parents. The value system is the key element in the stable occupational, relational and ideological commitments that constitute the adolescents emerging identity (Knafo & Schwarts, 2004: 439-458).

II

The other important aspect of my study is “Identity”. Identity as defined in the dictionary is “the condition or fact of being some specific person or thing; individuality” and claims Latin root, ‘idem’, or the ‘same’. Erikson, who first used the term to denote the precise developmental goal, called it a sense of investigating sameness and continuity. Identity is people's concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others. Identity refers to the process of self-development through which we construct a unique sense of ourselves and our relationship to the world around us (Erikson, 1980).

The physical changes of adolescence turn children into men and women. Sexual development has wide psychological and social consequences, but the gradual transformation of the dependent child into independent adult may be even more important. Moving out of the sheltered world of the childhood into the unprotected terrain of adulthood brings new risk and new opportunities. As a prospect of striking out on one’s own becomes real, the personality that developed in late childhood faces an inevitable test. The joys and pains of life arise from the confrontation of the needs of a developing personality and the demands of society. Out of the inevitable conflict emerges an identity that reflects the adolescents’ sense of self.

One important component of self-concept is self-esteem, which refers to the positive feeling about oneself acquired through experiences of relatedness, competence, and self-direction across the life course. “A high level of self-esteem in intrinsically satisfying and pleasurable” (Germain and Gitterman 1995: 818). One’s self concept begins to build in infancy through identification with and incorporation of the care givers perceptions, expectations, and affirmations of oneself, and through successful experiences of eliciting from the environment responses appropriate to ones needs. Later, in toddlerhood, the self-concept is reinforced by experiences in exercising ones beginning independence with the caregiver’s approval and pleasure, as in eating,
playing, exploring, walking and talking. Self-esteem and self-concept are subject to
greater opportunities and greater threats as children move in larger social groups where
their personal and cultural characteristics will be judged, it will either be appreciated or
rejected by others. Both self-esteem and self-concept continue to develop over the life
course. Sometimes people may have high self-esteem or low esteem. Low self-esteem
is often associated with depression, inadequacy and inferiority. On the other hand, some
self-critical awareness is a type of information one uses for self-improvement and
social sensitivity.

From about the age 6 to the onset of puberty at about age 12 i.e. the middle
childhood, youngsters develop more realistic concepts of themselves and of what they
need to survive and succeed in culture. They become more independent of their parents
and more involved with other people, particularly other children. Through interaction
with their peers, they make discoveries of their own attitudes, values and skills. But the
family remains a vital influence. Children have been profoundly affected by new
patterns of family life, as well as by other societal changes. We may (like the
psychologist William James) think of the self-having two sides: the “me” that is the
object of our thoughts about ourselves and the “I” that does the thinking. The self-
concept is the sense of our self also known as identity. The content of our self-concept
is our knowledge of what we have been and done; its function is to guide us in deciding
what to be and do in the future. Our self-concept then helps us understand ourselves
and also to control or regulate our behavior (Markus & Nurius, 1984).

The sense of self grows slowly. It begins with self-awareness: the gradual
realization (beginning in infancy) that we are beings that are separate from other people
and things, with the ability to reflect on ourselves and our actions. Self-awareness
crystallizes in the first moment of self-recognition, around 18 months of age, when
toddlers recognize themselves in the mirror. The next step is self-definition: identifying
the inner and the outer characteristics we consider significant in describing ourselves.
At about age 3, children think themselves mostly in terms of externals- what they look
like, where they live, what they do. Not until about age 6 or 7 do children begin to
define themselves in psychological terms. Children develop a concept of who they are
(the real self) and also of who they would like to be (the ideal self) with self-definition.
By the time they achieve this growth in self-understanding; young children have made
significant progress from parental control towards increasing self-regulation. The ideal self-incorporates many of the “should” and “ought’s” children have learned and helps them control their impulses for the sake of being considered “good”. A large gap between a children’s real self and ideal self is a sign of maturity and social adjustment (Maccoby, 1980). Children who set high standards for themselves seem aware of the difference between what they are and what they would like to be, and working towards the goal of the ideal self helps children mature. The sense of self might seem the most personal thing in the world. But most theoreticians and researchers see self-concept as a social phenomenon, “the meaning ground of the individual and society” (Markus & Nurius, 1984).

Middle childhood seems to be the appointed time for the meeting. Children peer into the looking glass of their society and blend the image that they see reflected there with the picture they already have of themselves. Children are now able to do more than they could earlier. They also have more responsibilities: home-work, rules at home and at school, and perhaps some care of younger brothers or sisters. Children begin to regulate their behavior not only to get what they need and want (as they did earlier) but also to meet other people’s need and wants. As children internalize society’s behavior standards and values, they coordinate personal and social demands. Now they voluntarily do things (like home work and sharing) that at an earlier age they would not have done without prodding. As they strive to become functioning members of the society, children must complete several important tasks in the development of the self-concept (Markus & Nurius, 1984). Therefore, the years between 6 and 14- middle childhood and early adolescence- are a time of important developmental advances that establish children’s sense of identity. For this reason, I have taken the age group of 6-14 years for my research.

Many theories of development have aspects of identity formation included in them. Two theories stand out in regards to this research: Erik Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development (specifically the identity versus role confusion” stage of his theory) and James Marcia’s identity status theory.

Erik Erikson (1902-1994) maintained that children develop in a predetermined order. Instead of focusing on cognitive development, however, he was interested in how much children socialize and how this affects their sense of self. Erikson’s belief is that
throughout each person’s lifetime, they experience different crisis or conflicts. Each of these conflicts arises at a certain point in life and must be successfully resolved for progression to the next of the eight stages. The particular stage relevant to identity formation takes place during adolescent, called “Identity versus Role Confusion” (Erikson, 1968: 165). Erik Erikson said that establishing a strong, clear sense of identity is a critical part of life (Erikson, 1980). Acquiring stable and mature value system is an important part of the identity formation in adolescents (Erikson, 1968: 165). Before adolescents commit themselves to a particular value system, they may explore their parents’ values and then evaluate and compare those values with other ideological alternatives (Marcia, 1966). Identity status was derived from Erikson’s theory of identity, and the two theories do share some themes in common (Waterman, 1998: 591-621).

Achieving identity is the key task of adolescents. Some theorists believe that the key developmental task for the adolescent is answering the question “Who am I?”. In Erik Erikson’s developmental theory, the core conflict of adolescent is the tension between role confusion and identity. Seeking identity involves searching for continuity and sameness in oneself- trying to get a clear sense of what one’s skill and personal attributes are, to discover where one is headed in life, and to believe that one can count on recognition from ‘significant others’. The adolescents who form as a sense of identity gains two benefits, according to Erikson (1968: 165) they are “a feeling of being at home in one’s body” and “a sense of psychological well-being”.

In search for an Identity, the adolescents also tackle the question, “What do I really believe in?”. With the development of formal procedures, the adolescent can appreciate and cultivate abstract values and principles. Abstract thinking makes it possible to love freedom and have greed. By blending abstract ideals with the information drawn from admired models in real life, the adolescents can generate a broad collection of possible roles. In the best of cases, by the end of adolescence, the adolescent chooses the best role which begins to take a shape of satisfying self-definition.

Adolescence marks the transition from childhood to adulthood; it requires the redefining of some basic social relationships. Relationships with family members at this time involve increasing independence for the adolescent and usually involve increased conflict, too. Relationship with peers may become much more intimate and
vital then they were in childhood. Finally, relationships with the opposite sex have new over-tones of sensuality. All these shifts combine together to make the social world of the adolescent’s complex and electric.

In relationship with adolescents and their parents, a central theme is often that of testing limits. Most teen-parent arguments concern the timing of rights and responsibilities (Hartup, 1983: 474). Teenagers see themselves as becoming adults and look for the freedom and privilege of becoming an adult. Also, the emergence of formal procedures and more advance moral reasoning means that the adolescent can think reasonable alternatives to parental rules. As these alternatives come to the teenager, parents can expect less automatic obedience and more resistance. These are the signs of adolescent’s cognitive growth and should be respected as such. Parents who respond to disagreements with open discussion are encouraging their children to do the same and thus to practice a valuable social skill. Some studies suggest that self-reliance, independence and social responsibility are most effectively promoted by parents who are flexible and encourage discussion- if the parents also hold their youngsters to clear consistent standards (Baumrind, 1980: 639-652). This parental style, unlike extreme parental dominance or extreme permissiveness, gives the adolescent some decision-making experience while ensuring a degree of guidance and control.

In most families, adolescent girls have to struggle much harder for their independence than the boys. Teenage girls report more conflicts with their parents that the teenage boys, and the conflicts reported more often involve emotional outbreaks. Parents seem to place more restrictions to their daughters than their son, their worry much about their daughter’s safety and especially about their sexual activity and the risk of becoming pregnant. Their daughters, unfortunately, see these restrictions as protections. One of the most common explanation teenage girl give for their conflicts with their parents is that their parents do not respect their maturity (Konopka, 1976: 474).

Boys conflict with parents tend to involve more objective issues of authority and privilege, such as access to the family car. Boys are more likely than are girls to report that they are disciplined primarily by their fathers and they receive affection more from their mothers. The boy’s relationship with his mother and father appears to shift significantly around the time of puberty. Steinberg (1979) observed that just prior to
puberty, mothers and fathers seem to have about the same influence over their son’s behavior. With the advent of puberty; boys act more assertively towards their mothers; some tension and coolness persist between mother and son into mid-adolescence, with mother and son reluctant to differ to each other. As the mother son tension persists, the father’s role seems to shift to that of mother’s ally. Fathers show increased efforts to restrain their son’s assertiveness, but with only partial success. With puberty completed, boys seem clearly more influential in family decision making than they were prior to puberty. For most adolescents, though, the influence of family clearly interacts and competes with the strong influence of peers.

Peer group membership assumes more importance during adolescents than at any other period of life. A peer group can provide a refuge and a source of support for youngsters in conflict with their families. Moreover, being part of a clearly identified group can help answer the question, “Who am I?” For these and other reasons adolescents spend more time with other adolescents. A study which used beepers to contact adolescents at random times (Larson, 1977: 475), found that they spend more time talking with peers than doing academic work, being with their families, or being alone. The structure of peer group seems to change over the course of adolescence (Dunphy, 1963: 230-246). For teens around the age of 13 or so, the peer group is usually a circle consisting of half a dozen of fewer youngsters of the same sex. These circles then begin to interact with circles that include members of the opposite sex thus forming a mixed sex group. Gradually, two, three or four circles merge into larger groups. By late adolescence, group unity has begun to weaken, and loosely linked groups of couples have begun to form. One obvious advantage of this sequence is that both boys and girls use the initial security of their first own circle of the same sex to move-cautiously, nervously, step-by-step into contact with members of the opposite sex.

Another structural feature that the adolescent peer group that changes during adolescence is the dominance hierarchy (Savin-Williams, 1980: 75-85). In middle of later childhood, youngsters who are skillful in directing play and games emerge as leaders. With the transition to early adolescence, the dominant youngsters are those with athletic and social skills and those who show the physical factors are no longer so important; the leaders tend to be those whose are bright, creative and well-liked.
There are differences between sexes in the struggle to define identity. Carol Gilligan (1982) has studied women in several contexts and has come to a conclusion that women define themselves less in terms of achieving a separate identity and more in terms of relationships with other people. They judge themselves on their responsibilities and on their other ability to care for others as well as for themselves. Their identity is achieved more through cooperation and less through competition. Marcia modified his original interview’s to explore issues of female identity (Marcia, 1980). He added questions about attitudes towards premarital intercourse, women’s role and lifestyles. The results were surprising. Whereas the men in moratorium most closely resembled those who had achieved identity, the women who seemed closest to achieve identity to achieving identity were those in foreclosure. Marcia points out that society pressures women to transmit social values to the next generation. Therefore, because of this, stability of identity is important for women. Thus, it is just as adaptive for them to achieve identity early in life without much effort on their own parts to struggle to forge their own identity. Marcia also maintains that women do not wait to develop the capacity for intimacy after they have achieved identity, as in Erikson’s male-based pattern; for women identity and intimacy develop together. These conclusions support other research indicating that intimacy is more important for girls than for boys, even in grade school friendships (Blyth & Foster-Clark, 1987; Bukowshi & Kramer, 1986). Therefore, this research includes both male and female as a part of study.

The psychoanalytic studies of early child development show the profound effect of the parenting process of the personality, temperament, and effective attachment. The psychoanalytic perspective provides an important basic for understanding self-identity and identification with adults as prerequisites for moral development. The child’s sense of trust in his or her parents and environment is shaped by early life experiences. Attachment, or the lack of it, and the rapport-building experiences of the young child’s first years in turn shape his or her school behavior. The basic foundation for the sense of self and for one’s relationship to others and the environment are firmly established by age three. The child’s dependency and the development of attachments and identity with parents, and later teachers, provide the basic ingredients for the individual’s expectations with regard to authority, responsibility and privilege. The extent to which the parenting process facilitates trust, identification, attachment, independence and self-worth will either promote or retard the child’s progress. The child who sets up a defense
against all authority will have a diminished capacity to take another’s point of view or to deliberate in socially conflicting situations. Similarly, parents who exploit the infant’s dependency with excessively overprotection behavior will impair the development of autonomy, and likewise cripple the child’s capacity to function and develop. Failures to respond to the feelings or emotions of others are another problem. When a child manifests dependency behavior for a much younger child, it shows the sign of unfulfilled needs. Dependency and indifference to others often present troublesome behaviors in school.

Theoretically speaking, the identity literature has relied largely on Marcia’s (1966: 551-558) identity status paradigm. Because Erikson’s concept of identity is so complicated, assessing an adolescent’s progress on this developmental task is extremely difficult. Researchers found a way to get around the problem. They began classifying an adolescent’s progress towards identity formation in terms of his or her status on the tasks of selecting an occupation and forging religious or political beliefs—clearly major components of identity. Building on Erikson’s theory, James Marcia (1980: 348) proposed that adolescent’s identity took one of the four forms: foreclosure, moratorium, diffusion or achievement. The four identity statuses are determined by the presence or absence of the two elements which according to Erikson are crucial in the formation of identity i.e. exploration (originally called crisis) and commitment. 

**Identity Crisis** is defined as a period of identity development during which the adolescent is choosing among meaningful alternatives along the pattern of personality and the characteristics that surround the core of personality. It entails seeking out, elaborating and utilizing potential identity alternatives. It refers to some period of re-thinking, sorting through and trying out various roles and life plans. **Commitment** refers to the degree of personal investment the individual expressed in a course of action or belief. It entails the decision to accept particular alternatives as part of the self-orientations in various life domains like religion and politics. The four identity statuses are:

**Identity foreclosure:** adolescents have made a commitment to an identity but have not yet experienced a crisis, they have uncritically accepted the values and expectations of others. Foreclosure involves committing to an identity prematurely without exploration or choice. The adolescent is pursuing occupational and ideological goals,
but the goals have been chosen by others—either parents or peers (ideological goals may be religious or political or both). This occurs when teenagers accept traditional values and cultural norms, rather than determining their own values. In other words, the person confirms to an identity without exploration as to what really suits him or her best. For instance, teenagers might follow the values and roles of their parents or cultural norms. They might also foreclose on a negative identity, the direct opposite to their parent’s values or cultural norms (Berger, 2014). People in foreclosure have made commitments, but instead of considering alternative choices (going through a crisis), they have accepted other people’s plans for their lives. A girl becomes a sex worker because her mother was one, or a man becomes a farmer like his father. “Foreclosures” are characterized by rigid strength: they tend to be happy and self-assured, sometimes smug and self-satisfied, and to have a strong sense of family ties. They believe in law and order, like to follow a strong leader, and become dogmatic when their ideas are threatened.

**In Identity Moratorium**, the adolescents are in the midst of a crisis, but whose commitments either are absent or are only vaguely defined. He or she is in identity crisis. It is a stage of ambivalent struggle. Currently in the process of making decision, they seem to be looking for commitment and will probably achieve identity. They tend to be lively, talkative and in conflict. They are close to the other-sex parents and are competitive and anxious. They want intimacy and understands what involves but do not necessarily have intimate relationships. It is the status of those who are currently exploring alternatives actively in an attempt to arrive at identity choices, but who have not yet made commitments. This postpones identity achievement by providing temporary shelter. This status provides opportunities, either in breadth or in depth.

**Identity Achievement**: identity is said to be achieved when adolescent undergo crisis and make a commitment. It refers to the status of individuals who has developed relatively firm commitment after exploring extensively during a crisis period of struggle and doubt. People in Identity achievement have spent a great deal of time actively thinking about the important issues in their lives (that is, they have gone through the crisis period), they have made crucial choices, and they now express strong commitment to those choices. “Identity achievers” are characterized by flexible strength: they tend to be thoughtful, but not so introspective that they cannot do
anything. They have a sense of humor, have high self-esteem, function well under stress, are autonomous, are capable of intimate relationships, and are open to new ideas while maintaining their own standards.

Finally, **Identity Diffusion**: during this identity status, there is low commitment to an identity as well as low exploration. Where adolescents have not yet experienced a crisis or made any commitment. The adolescents may have attempted to deal with these issues (or may have ignored them) but has made no choices and is not particularly concerned about making such commitments. Identity diffusion also known as role confusion is opposite to identity achievement; in this status the individual has not yet resolved their identity crisis. The adolescents in this status may be seemingly carefree people who have avoided commitment or aimless floaters. Drifting and careless, they tend to be superficial or unhappy and often lonely because they have no truly intimate relationships.

The main psychosocial challenge of adolescence is to move from identity diffusion to achievement of a firm identity (Erikson, 1950). Adolescents who attain the identity achievement status are characterized by greater self-definition, constancy, and sense of psychosocial well-being than those still in the ‘identity diffusion’ status (Waterman, 1998: 591-621). Adolescent in the identity statuses characterized by exploration, identity achievement and moratorium seek and utilize identity-relevant information and show relatively high openness to experience. They are likely to gather information about the values and ideas of teachers, peers, popular role models etc., in addition to information about their parent’s position. The high exploration statuses are associated with high openness to experience. The two low exploration statuses, foreclosure and diffusion, tend not to explore identity relevant alternative, showing a low openness to experience. Foreclosure adolescent are high in the normative identity style characterized by the tendency to conserve existing self-construction rather than to reshape them with new information or ideas. They may fasten on a particular view of their parents’ values without exploration. Identity diffusion is associated with the tendency to avoid dealing directly with personal problems and basic identity questions. They tend not to seek to understand their parent’s values and expectations (Knafo & Schwartz, 2004: 439-458). Acceptance of perceived parental values is greater among the adolescents who are close to their parents and identify with them. Foreclosure
adolescent tend to have the closest relationships with their parents, whereas diffused adolescent have the most distant relationships. Moratorium adolescent tend to experience conflict with their parents. Finally, identity-achieved adolescents tend to have positive, if moderately ambivalent relationships with their parents (Marcia, 1980). With the successful resolution of identity crisis, identity achievers may establish better relations with their parents (Waterman, 1998, pp. 591-621). Thus the order to closeness with parents is, on average, identity diffusion (least one), moratorium, identity achievement and foreclosure.

Another aspect of identity formation is the process of individuation (Baumrind, 1991). As adolescents deal with identity, they separate themselves emotionally from their parents and transfer some of their affection to their peers. Those who fail at this task and remain emotionally dependent on their parents generally have a foreclosed identity. Others may become emotionally detached from their parents but fail to become self-reliant or autonomous (Ryan and Lynch, 1989: 340-356). Because they are not emotionally independent, they rely too much on their peers. When this happens, emotional distance may be accomplished by lowered school achievement, early sexual experience, and the use of drugs. Ideally, the adolescent is neither enmeshed in the family nor totally detached; instead, he or she has struck a balance between the two positions and has become individuated (Cooper, Grotevant, & Condon, 1983). The individuated adolescent is still attached to parents but not dependent on them, responsive to parental needs and wishes but autonomous.

III
How a child’s development is affected by their social relationships and the world around them is answered by the Ecological systems theory developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner, 1979: 37-41). He believed that the person’s development was affected by everything in their surrounding environment and proposed that development is the joint function of the person and all levels of the environment.

He divided the person’s environment into five different systems that ranged from the immediate face to face setting to the remote setting of the larger culture.
The innermost structure, the microsystem is the immediate setting surrounding the person, the system closest to the person and the one in which they have direct contact which includes the family, the school, the religious institution, the playground, the daycare center. Relationships in a microsystem are bidirectional. In other words, your reactions to the people in your microsystem will affect how they treat you in return. This is the most influential level of the ecological system theory. Each microsystem includes the people present as well as the physical and symbolic features of the setting that invite, permit, or inhibit activity (Bronfenbrenner, 1986: 723-742).

The interrelations between microsystems make up the mesosystem. Recognizing that the experiences that a child has at school or on the playground affect what a child does at home and vice versa. The mesosystem is where a person’s individual microsystems do not function independently, but are interconnected and assert influence upon one another. These interactions have an indirect impact on the individual. One example of a child’s mesosystem would be the relationship between the child’s mother and the teacher. If the mother takes an active role in the child’s school, such as attending parent/teacher meeting. This brings a positive impact on the child’s development because the different elements of the child’s microsystem are working together. On the other hand, if the different elements of the microsystem work against one another the child’s development could be affected in a negative way.

The mesosystem links settings that include the child, the third system known as exosystem. It refers to the setting that does not involve the person as an active participant, but still affects them. This includes decisions that have bearing on the person, but in which they have no participation in the decision making process. An example would be a child being affected by a mother (sex worker) making lot of money by attending many clients or losing money by receiving few or no clients.

The developmental processes that occur within a microsystem are in good part defined and limited by the beliefs and practices of society, and so the final and large structure affecting development is the macrosystem, which is society’s blueprint for a particular culture or subculture. The macrosystem involves the cultural environment in which the person lives and all other system that affect them. It comprises of social classes, ethnic or religious groups, and particular regions or communities that share
similar belief systems, values, social and economic hazards, or life styles. This system can either have a positive or a negative effect on the person’s development.

The chronosystem refers to the patterning of environmental events and transitions over the life course. For example, divorces are one transition. An example with reference to my study would be a child being affected by the mother’s (sex worker’s) decision to leave the sex trade and participate in other income generating occupation.

This theory has formed a foundation for this study because this theory was developed in response to the concern that the most developmental studies isolated children from their natural settings and therefore missed the interaction between children and environments which is very essential as development is a joint function of a person and all levels of the environment.

IV

When a study is made on single-parent families, they generally focus on the problems and so on, in their search, may miss possible benefits. Robert Weiss (1979: 97-111), after interviewing children and parents concluded that life with a single parent also has its positive aspects. He discovered that in families with school-age and adolescent children, the experience can lead to greater responsibility, self-sufficiency and maturity. In these families, each child is expected to perform his or her task to keep the household running—and most do. These children have more power than children in a complete family.

Children find more problem than growth in the single-parent family. When they are given early responsibility over their own behavior, the possibility of problem behavior increase. Whether the single parent is divorced, widowed, or separated or has never married, the results are the same at every socioeconomic level. Children who live in single-parent families are more likely to commit deviant acts than those in two-parent families. Researchers believe that the reason to the difference is the high degree of permissive parenting in single-parent families (Dornbush & Gray, 1988).

Another problem is the lack of role model for heterosexual relationships. The children miss the chance to see successful interaction between men and women (Lamb and Bronson, 1980). Other effects depend on the sex of the child and the parent, boys
are more likely to have problems when mothers are the custodial parent, girls when fathers have custody. On the basis of these findings, it is said that the boys do better when living with their fathers and girls with their mothers (Santrock, Warshak & Elliot, 1982).

Constant differences appear between children who have fathers and those who do not. 60 percent of children in families headed by single mothers are living below poverty level (Dornbush & Gray, 1988). Many single mothers are under acute stress, and it affects their behavior with their children (Weinraub & Wolf, 1987). Researchers have found that the level of cognitive and social stimulation in single-parent homes is lower than that in two-parent households, perhaps because children in single-parent homes get less adult attention (MacKinnon, Brody & Stoneman, 1982; 1392-1399; Medrich, Roizen & Rubin, 1982). Some studies find that boys without fathers have trouble developing self-control. They tend to be more aggressive and may run the risk of becoming juvenile delinquents (Guidubaldi, Perry & Cleminshaw, 1983). Therefore, there are differences in parenting style and accordingly the children are affected. For the present study a focus has been made on both parent (sex worker and their counterpart) but major attention has been given to the sex workers because the identity of the children of sex workers is completely attached to their mother.

The literature on the children of sex workers, by contrast, is very small, largely qualitative and ethnographic, specific vulnerabilities that have been documented affecting children of sex workers which include: separation from parents, sexual abuse, early sexual debut, introduction to sex work as adolescents, low school enrolment, witnessing mother’s sexual interaction with clients and social marginalization. The research on sex workers and their families tends to have a particular focus on girls and their potential for sexual abuse, early sexual debut, witnessing adult sexual activity, grooming to enter the trade and trafficking. Sex work is often handed on from parent to child, as the family trade in some cases or out of real or perceived lack of other options (Beard, 2010). Research on the situation of the children is extremely limited. None of the researches cited above looked specifically at the children’s identity and their limiting and restricting factors.
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