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Multifaceted Displacement and Trauma in *McCormick's Sold: A Critical Examination of Young Adult Trafficking*

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Page 30-40

Abstract

*This study explores the multifaceted displacement of young adult in Patricia McCormick's *Sold* from traumatic perspectives focusing on girl trafficking in Nepal. It examines why Young adult protagonist Lakshmi faces displacement, what types of displacement she encounters, and how she overcomes these traumatic experiences. This paper argues that *Sold* projects physical, emotional, psychological, cultural, social, economic, moral and ethical displacement of young adult protagonist Lakshmi. It argues that Lakshmi like young adult faces multifaceted displacement because of economic hardship, social and cultural practices, betrayal and deception, and lack of agency. This research reveals that Lakshmi's displacement has devastating impact like loss of innocence, psychological trauma, social alienation, erosion of identity, disconnection from cultural roots, economic exploitation, diminished future prospects, resilience and survival instincts and potential for redemption and recovery. It primarily focuses on the trauma Lakshmi confronted and ways of incapacitating the trauma. For that purpose, it employs the perspectives of Cathy Caruth's *Trauma as unclaimed experience* and Dominic LaCapra's *psychological trauma*. Ultimately, it hopes to pave the way for additional research on a range of topics related to girl trafficking in Nepal, South Asia, and other countries.*

Keywords: displacement, young adult, trafficking, unclaimed experience, psychological trauma

Introduction

Sold (2006), a young adult novel written by Patricia McCormick revolves around the milieu of South Asian, particularly the context of remote mountain village of Nepal where poverty, compulsion, illiteracy, patriarchy and hardship prevailed, reveals the narrative of prolonged problem of girl trafficking. It recounts the journey of thirteen-year-old helpless village girl Lakshmi sold by her stepfather from her place to an Indian 'Happiness House' or the brothel through Bimala Aunty and fake husband. Lakshmi experiences a bitter reality of life in the prostitution house owned by Mumtaz. Finally, an American rescue her from the hell. This novel raises issues of child trafficking, poverty, corruption, exploitation of women, gender inequality and psychological trauma. However, this study examines the traumatic experiences faced by a young adult Lakshmi because of her displacement from her own physical location. It unfolds various types of displacement confronted by Lakshmi and then scrutinizes traumatic experiences perceived by her. For this purpose, this paper mainly employs the traumatic viewpoints of Cathy Caruth, Judith Herman and Dominik LaCapra.

Displacement, in general, refers to the physical movement from one place to another either forcefully or willingly. Different kinds of displacement exist, including social, cultural, psychological, emotional, physical, and economic displacement. As *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition, defines, "Displacement is the act of displacing, or the state of being displaced. The difference between the original position of an object and its position some later time" (356). It simplifies that the displacement process or the experience of displacement itself. The variation in an object's position between its initial position and a later time. In *Sold*, the protagonist and narrator, Lakshmi, undergoes a harrowing form of forced displacement, torn from her native village and thrust into an alien and exploitative world, highlighting the brutal rupture from her cultural roots and personal identity. The research investigates the subsequent questions: What are the reasons for her displacement? What types of displacement does she encounter? Why do the young adults face such displacement? What are the impacts of displacement to Lakshmi? What traumatic experiences does she encounter, and what strategies does she employ to get past them?

Before addressing the aforementioned issues, it is important to first understand the concept of "young adults." The term can be interpreted in various ways. While literature typically defines young adults as individuals between the ages of twelve and eighteen, social sciences extend this range up to twenty-five. Young adults are characterized by emotional volatility, identity exploration, and a growing desire for independence. Although they may possess physical maturity, their emotional landscapes are often unstable, and they frequently find themselves in conflict with adult authority and expectations. In *Sold*, Lakshmi embodies the struggles faced by many young adults. She experiences multiple layers of displacement—emotional, cultural, and physical. Confronted by poverty, an abusive stepfather, patriarchal oppression, and the crushing weight of social reality,

Lakshmi is ultimately trafficked and sold to Mumtaz, the owner of a brothel in India. There, she endures profound trauma and navigates the devastating consequences of forced displacement, reflecting the broader challenges that many young adults face when their identities and bodies are violated by systems of exploitation.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Following the publication of *Sold*, it has received many critical approaches. Deepak Raj Joshi in "Interdiscursivity in McCormick's *Sold*: A Critical Analysis" unfolds numerous factors associated with girl trafficking in *Sold*. Joshi states, "Interdiscursivity is fashioned by the helpful and likely discourses of poverty, traditional patriarchy, submissive womanhood etc., sustaining and backing up the main discourse of girl trafficking into sex slavery" (19). He implies that the novel *Sold* employs interdiscursivity through the reinforcement of the primary discourse of girl trafficking into sex slavery, which is supported by the plausible and supportive discourses of poverty, conventional patriarchy, obedient womanhood, etc. Additionally, Joshi argues that Patricia McCormick's novel *Sold* explores multiple layers of meaning when read in the light of Paul Gee's seven building tasks of language. He underlines, "In spite of the fact that the novel has raised the issue of girl trafficking, it has some romanticization of native society, its poverty, patriarchal discourse convention with some misinterpretation" (24). He infers that Paul Gee's seven language building exercises provide context for understanding Patricia McCormick's novel *Sold*, which delves into several levels of meaning. Despite addressing the problem of girl trafficking, the book romanticizes aspects of native society, such as its poverty and patriarchal discourse conventions, often misrepresenting them.

Departing from interdiscursivity, Sherynn Delaneira Wongkaren & Delvi Wahyuni advocate the presence of female agency in *Sold*. Wongkarea and Wahyuni contend, "In education, society believe the men are higher meanwhile the women are far behind the men (81). They mean that in Nepal, society views men as superior to women in terms of education, even if women lag well behind men. So, the novel *Sold* depicts the vulnerable condition of women in terms of educational weightage. They furthermore argue, "The female characters in the novel *Sold* show agency. The agency in this analysis refers to the way women survive in the patriarchal society. This analysis also observe how the society construct gender discrimination in which the setting of the novel" (88). In *Sold*, the female characters exhibit agency. In this perspective, "agency" refers to how women manage to thrive in a patriarchal culture. Furthermore, this research looks at how society creates gender inequality in the novel's setting. This paper also notes the ways in which the novel's environment perpetuates gender prejudice. They imply that patriarchy is ingrained in Nepalese culture. Discrimination is accepted as the standard in Nepali society.

Agreeing with Wongkarea and Wahyuni, Samira Luitel also examines the novel from the feminist standpoint in "The Social World of Nepalese Women". Luitel clarifies, "The social situation of Nepalese women is complex and cannot be explained with a single paradigm. The differences are demarcated by the geographical region, economic situation, cultural and caste variations" (101). She admits that women's position is variable on the

basis of geography, economic status, cultural and caste set up. Luitel further claims, "The Nepalese socio-cultural environment is far from congenial to the holistic development of a girl child. She is unwittingly branded as inferior even before she is born" (107). She implies that the sociocultural context in Nepal is not conducive to a girl child's whole growth. Even before she is born, she is unintentionally labeled as inferior.

Harmonizing with the opinions of Wongkarea, Wahyuni and Luitel, Samidha Pokhrel adds more ideas of gender discrimination prevailed in Nepal in "Gender Discrimination: Women's Perspectives". As a male dominated society, Pokhrel confesses, "Nepal is not an exceptional in discriminating women. Discrimination against women in Nepal is related to the traditional culture and deeply rooted in the society; that establishes the hierarchical relationship between male and female" (82). She entails that Nepal, a society dominated by men, is not unique in its discrimination against women. The hierarchical relationship between males and females in Nepal is established by the traditional culture and societal roots of discrimination against women.

On the other hand, Shreedhar Gorathoki scans *Sold* through the lens of postmodern metafiction. While scrutinizing it, Gorathoki lists intertextuality, self-referentiality, boundary-blurring, parody, and irony as essential elements in "Postmodern Metafiction: A Study of McCormick's *Sold*." Gorathoki explicates:

Written in spare and evocative vignettes, this powerful novel renders a world that is as unimaginable as it is real, and a girl who not only survives but triumphs. The story ends as Lakshmi is writing for a kind-hearted American who promises her to rescue her from the hell-hole. In the denouement, Mumtaz is already nabbed by the police but Lakshmi's fate is left ambiguous. (2)

The novel portrays a world that is both real and unimaginable, and follows a girl who not only survives but also triumphs. It is written in brief yet dramatic vignettes. By the time the narrative closes, Lakshmi is writing for a good-hearted American who assures her that he would save her from the abyss. In the climax, Mumtaz has already been apprehended by the authorities, but it is unclear what will happen to Lakshmi.

Besides above contexts, Gorathoki alludes, "McCormick's *Sold* reflects the facts and fictions regarding the fabrication of the fiction and it helps to discard the willful suspension of disbelief. It means that the fiction explores its own status and nature as a fiction based on author's own research on Nepali girls trafficking in brothels in India" (13). He connotes that McCormick's *Sold* comforts to dispel the willing suspension of disbelief by reflecting the facts and fictions regarding the fabrication of the fiction. This indicates that the work examines its own position and nature as fiction, drawing on the author's personal investigation into the trafficking of Nepali girls into Indian brothels.

Conversely, Rasha T. Awad Al-Zubaidi and Salih Mahadi Al-Mamoori observe the novel from stylistic perspective. They attempt to look at lexical choices, grammar and syntax, textual organization, figurative language, modality and evaluation in *Sold*. Al-Zubaidi and Al-Mamoori claim, "Patricia McCormick writes *Sold* to exploit the world for paying attention to the wrong things" (2). They indicate that people often notice to the

incorrect things. They further argue, “McCormick’s novel *Sold* explores numerous layers of meaning. Although the story brings up the subject of girl trafficking, it also touches on native society, its poverty, and patriarchal discourse tradition with some distortion. Investigations of the treatment of women in Nepalese communities and the cost of human life are ongoing” (11). They simplify that *Sold* delves into multiple levels of interpretation. The novel discusses girl trafficking, but it also somewhat distorts native society’s poverty and patriarchal speech heritage. There are continuing investigations of the cost of human life and how women are treated in Nepalese communities.

Differing from stylistic perspectives, Karen Coats critiques the novel *Sold* from the standpoint of victims of the sex slave trade in “Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books”. Coats contends, “Readers can’t help but be moved by Lakshmi’s fate; she gives a powerful and heartbreakingly lyrical voice to the hope, hopelessness, and most of all, the humanity of the victims of the sex slave trade. A brief but informative author’s note follows the text” (182). She intends that Lakshmi’s tragedy never fails to impact readers; she offers the hope, despair, and most importantly, humanity of the sex slave trade victims a strong and tragically poetic voice. After the book is a succinct but instructive author’s note.

Adding more contexts, Andrea Sachs examines an intriguing novel *Sold* from the lens of global artefacts. She studies the growing universal issue of sexual slavery through this novel. In this book, Sachs unveils, “Just as brothel, Happiness House, smells of spices and cooking oil, perfume and cigarette smoke, McCormick’s novel has several scents, some lovely, some harsh. Having had success with self-mutilation and prostitution, she’s taking on a less physical anguish in her novel” (7). She illuminates that similar to how Happiness House, a brothel, smells of cooking oil, spices, perfume, and cigarette smoke, McCormick’s book has a variety of scents—some sweet and others terrible. She’s tackling a less physical agony in her novel after finding success with prostitution and self-mutilation.

Echoing Jeffrey Sachs, Alexa Sandmann highlights the grim reality of girl trafficking in countries like Nepal. In her commentary on *Sold*, Sandmann asserts: “An author’s note confirms what readers fear: thousands of girls, like Lakshmi in this story, are sold into prostitution each year. Part of McCormick’s research for this novel involved interviewing women in Nepal and India, and her depth of detail makes the characters believable and their misery palpable” (212). Sandmann underscores that the author’s note validates the reader’s worst fears—trafficking is not fiction but a devastating reality for countless girls. McCormick’s in-depth field research, including interviews with trafficked women in Nepal and India, lends authenticity to her characters and powerfully conveys the emotional and physical trauma they endure.

A review of existing scholarship on *Sold* reveals that, to the best of my knowledge, critics and scholars have yet to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the novel through the lens of trauma associated with the displacement of young adults. As such, the intersection of displacement and psychological trauma in the lives of young adults, as portrayed in *Sold*, remains a critical yet underexplored area of inquiry.

Analyzing traumatic experience of the protagonist of *Sold* due to displacement stands as a challenging task. It demands core thrust of trauma theories. For that purpose, this study primarily employs the viewpoints of Cathy Caruth regarding trauma as unclaimed experience, Dominick LaCapra about the conflict between acting out verses working through and Judith Herman regarding trauma and recovery. Caruth published *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* in 1996 in which she defines the trauma narrative and history. She reasons, "The narrative of trauma, then, as the chronicle of a belated experience, far from telling of an escape from the reality- the escape from a death, or from its testimonial force rather attests to its endless impact on a life" (43). Thus, rather than providing an escape from death or its referential force, the story of trauma serves as an account of a delayed event that attests to its unending influence on a person's life.

Caruth further takes the reference of Freud to connect trauma's impact in individual's life activities. For Caruth, Freud describes trauma as "the reaction to a sudden or unexpected threat of death that happens too soon to be fully known and is then endlessly repeated in restoration and dreams that attempt to relive, but in fact only miss again, the original event" (529). This quote implies that trauma, according to Freud, is the body's reaction to an abrupt or unexpected danger of death that occurs too rapidly to be fully understood and is then continuously repeated in dreams and reenactments that try to recreate the original incident but ultimately fail to do so.

In *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, Judith Herman offers a foundational framework for understanding the psychological impact of trauma, particularly in the context of sexual violence and abuse. She emphasizes that trauma is not confined to a single catastrophic event but is marked by a profound disruption of the survivor's sense of safety, trust, and connection to others. As Herman states, "*Shock is not limited to a single, overwhelming event. It disrupts the survivor's sense of safety, trust, and connection to others. It leads to a feeling of helplessness and powerlessness*" (25). Trauma, in its complexity, deeply impairs an individual's psychological stability, often stripping them of a basic sense of control over their body, life, and environment.

Integrating the process of recovery of trauma, Herman unfurls it in three stages. She reassures, "The central task of the first stage is the establishment of safety. The central task of the second stage is remembrance and mourning. The central task of the third stage is reconnection with ordinary life" (106). She streamlines that establishing safety is the primary goal of the first stage. The main objectives of the second phase are grieving and remembering. Getting back in touch with everyday life is the main goal of the third stage. However, the process of recovery of traumatic experiences almost remains incomplete. She explicates, "Resolution of the trauma is never final; recovery is never complete. The impact of a traumatic event continues to reverberate throughout the survivor's life cycle" (148). She contemplates that healing from trauma is a lifelong process that never ends. A traumatic event's effects last the entirety of the survivor's life cycle.

Assimilating the process of recovery and adding further content of traumatic events, Dominik LaCapra emphasizes on the Working Through and Acting Out in Writing History, Writing Trauma. LaCapra admits, "Acting out and working through which are interrelated modes of responding to loss or historical trauma" (p.65). He entails that acting out and working through are two related ways to deal with loss or past trauma. LaCapra underlines the multifaceted associations between acting out and working through. He acknowledges, "Various modes of signification provide relatively safe havens for exploring the complex relations between acting out and working through trauma" (23). He clarifies that diverse signifier modalities offer somewhat secure spaces to investigate the intricate connections between trauma processing and acting out.

By integrating the theoretical perspectives of Cathy Caruth, Judith Herman, and Dominick LaCapra, this paper examines the complex and layered traumatic experiences of the protagonist in *Sold* as a result of multifaceted displacement. Caruth's concept of "unclaimed experience" provides a framework for understanding how Lakshmi undergoes deep psychological and emotional trauma following her forced separation from her homeland. Herman's exploration of trauma and recovery highlights the profound difficulty of healing once trauma has taken hold, emphasizing the long-lasting impact of sexual violence and exploitation. LaCapra's distinction between "acting out" and "working through" further illuminates the novel's portrayal of trauma, revealing how *Sold* captures the oscillation between paralysis and the painful process of coming to terms with suffering.

Understanding Lakshmi's Displacement: A Trauma-Centered Analysis of *Sold*

In *Sold*, Patricia McCormick presents a harrowing narrative of young adult trafficking, told through the voice of Lakshmi, a thirteen-year-old Nepali girl who endures forced displacement and profound trauma. Lakshmi's journey begins when her stepfather sells her to Mumtaz, the owner of an Indian brothel, through the manipulations of Bimala Auntie and a deceitful man posing as her husband. This act of betrayal forcibly removes Lakshmi from her serene mountain village, plunging her into an alien environment of exploitation. The resulting physical displacement shatters her sense of security, disorienting her emotionally and psychologically. As Judith Herman states, "A secure sense of connection with caring people is the foundation of personality development. When this connection is shattered, the traumatized person loses basic sense of self" (34). Lakshmi's displacement initiates a rupture in her personal development and identity, destabilizing her sense of belonging and selfhood.

Beyond physical relocation, Lakshmi undergoes cultural displacement. Her journey from a rural community to an urban brothel presents unfamiliar customs, language, and expectations, amplifying her psychological dislocation. Cathy Caruth's trauma theory supports this reading: "Trauma theory often divides itself into two basic trends: the focus on trauma as the 'shattering' of a previously whole self and the focus on the survival function of trauma" ("Trauma and Experience" 465). Lakshmi embodies both these trends—her selfhood is fractured, yet she survives by clinging to fragmented memories and adaptive detachment. When Bimala Auntie prepares her for the city, Lakshmi remarks, "I

feel more naked than dressed inside it" (McCormick 72). Her exposure in the unfamiliar attire signals her psychological vulnerability. Similarly, upon encountering a language she cannot comprehend, she narrates, "Some of the words are familiar, but most of them rush like the huts and shops and huts and shops, making my head hurt from the speed of this city talk" (74). These moments underscore the alienation that cultural displacement generates, as Lakshmi becomes estranged not only from her homeland but also from her ability to interpret and respond to her new environment.

Lakshmi's increasing isolation is reinforced by her loss of voice and emotional suppression in the brothel. Herman emphasizes, "The core experiences of psychological trauma are disempowerment and disconnection from others" (90). Lakshmi's trauma manifests in her inability to communicate: "I try to speak, but there is no voice in her throat after all these days with no one to talk to" (McCormick 114). Even simple cultural confusions, such as mistaking sweet yogurt for poison, trigger distressing memories of her mother: "The lassi must have had some strange poison in it" (119). This homesickness reflects her cultural uprooting and its emotional toll.

The theoretical frameworks of Dominick LaCapra further illuminate Lakshmi's trauma. He explains that individuals "reliving [trauma's] scenes may be tragically incapable of acting responsibly or behaving in an ethical manner involving consideration for other as others" (28). Similarly, Lakshmi expresses confusion and mistrust: "I don't understand this city. It is full of so many bad people. Even the people who are supposed to be good" (McCormick 159). Her inability to interpret urban morality and behavior stems from her fractured psyche and dislocated self.

Lakshmi's emotional displacement is especially acute. She feels disconnected from her past, her family, and the self she once knew. In the brothel, she confesses, "Each morning and evening Mumtaz comes, beats me with a leather strap, and locks the door behind her. And each night, I dream that Ama and I are sitting outside our hut...and she is twining my hair into long dark braids" (109). This juxtaposition of abuse and memory represents her internal fragmentation. As Herman reiterates, trauma shatters the "secure sense of connection with compassionate people," leaving the victim emotionally adrift (34).

Lakshmi also employs dissociation as a coping mechanism—a process that Caruth interprets as "acting out" in trauma survivors. Lakshmi notes, "I pretend I am not there...And when I open my eyes again, I am nothing" (McCormick 172). This statement demonstrates a psychological split between the self enduring abuse and the self-yearning for safety. Her increasing mistrust heightens her emotional displacement: "I know better now than to trust people who say they want to help her" (153). This refusal of relational vulnerability reveals the long-term effects of betrayal by her stepfather, Bimala Auntie, and her traffickers.

In addition to emotional and cultural dislocation, Lakshmi experiences severe psychological displacement. She forgets the sensory experiences of her past life, a symptom of trauma-induced memory loss. As Herman articulates, trauma victims often

“alternate between feeling numb and reliving the event” (1). Lakshmi laments, “I can no longer remember the sound of the monsoon rain or the smell of the jasmine in the garden. The days blur together, and I feel lost in time” (McCormick 123). This loss of temporal and spatial awareness reflects her psychological unraveling.

Feelings of guilt and shame further erode Lakshmi's identity. She internalizes blame for her situation, confessing, “I promised Ama I would bring us good fortune, but instead, I have brought her disgrace” (187). This distortion of responsibility signifies psychological displacement from rational self-appraisal and emotional grounding. Her trauma disorients both her external reality and her internal identity. Lakshmi's social displacement is also evident in her loss of familial and communal identity. She declares, “Here, in this strange place, I have no name, no family, and no village. I am simply one of the girls” (140). Lacking personal markers of identity, Lakshmi becomes anonymous, depersonalized, and socially erased. Even among the other girls, she feels imprisoned and linguistically estranged: “The girls laugh, but their language is strange to me” (143).

The transformation of Lakshmi from a daughter with dreams to a commodified object intensifies her social dislocation. Caruth argues, “This understanding of trauma thus corresponds to the deterministic model of the repetition of violence that constitutes the first interpretation of the traumatic nightmare” (“Unclaimed Experience” 485). The brothel's daily ritual of abuse transforms Lakshmi into a symbol of repetitive victimization. She explains, “They dress me in a red silk skirt, paint my lips and cheeks, and say that I am a ‘new’. But I feel nothing but fear. I am not a woman. I am a girl” (McCormick 132). Her imposed identity contradicts her internal sense of self, accentuating her displacement.

Despite her suffering, Lakshmi begins the process of “working through” her trauma, as theorized by Caruth: “Working through trauma involves the effort to articulate or rearticulate affect and representation...to some viable extent counteract...acting out” (81). Lakshmi recounts, “I have been beaten here, locked away, violated a hundred times and a hundred times more. I have been starved and cheated, tricked and disgraced” (McCormick 182). In naming her pain, Lakshmi initiates the process of reclaiming her voice and identity, navigating the long path from victimhood to survival.

Conclusion

This research has illuminated the multifaceted dimensions of displacement experienced by Lakshmi, the thirteen-year-old protagonist of *Sold*, through a trauma-centered lens. It critically examines the cultural, emotional, social, psychological, and physical dislocations that pervade her narrative, highlighting how such disruptions severely impact the development and well-being of young adults. The novel powerfully demonstrates how adolescents like Lakshmi are vulnerable to manipulation, betrayal, and systemic exploitation at the hands of adults and oppressive circumstances.

Culturally, Lakshmi is thrust into a world of unfamiliar dress, language, and customs, where her traditional identity is invalidated. These cultural ruptures trigger profound trauma as she finds herself voiceless and invisible in an alien urban and brothel environment. Her isolation is exacerbated by her inability to comprehend or participate in

the cultural codes of her new surroundings, leading to feelings of confusion, loneliness, and dehumanization. Emotionally, Lakshmi suffers a destabilization of her inner world. Her trauma manifests in disorientation, emotional numbness, and the loss of a coherent self. She struggles to recognize people, places, and even her own sense of being. The emotional toll of her surroundings—marked by abuse, fear, and mistrust—further fragments her psyche, resulting in a dissociated, traumatized self incapable of grounding in time or space.

Physically, Lakshmi's forced displacement from her home village into the brothel marks a violent rupture from everything she knows. Separated from her mother, friends, and familiar environment, she endures physical confinement and sexual violence, experiences that sever her from the rhythms and routines of her former life. This physical dislocation is not merely spatial; it erodes her identity, agency, and bodily autonomy. Socially and psychologically, Lakshmi becomes an object of commodification. Stripped of familial ties and communal belonging, she is forced into a life of servitude where her value is reduced to economic utility. Her repeated exposure to betrayal, exploitation, and isolation fuels deep psychological distress and mistrust. The so-called "Happiness House" becomes a site of systemic erasure, where her social identity is obliterated and replaced with one of forced submission.

Ultimately, this study underscores how the layered displacements experienced by young adults like Lakshmi lead to lasting trauma and identity disintegration. The novel foregrounds the power imbalance between adults and young people, revealing how adult neglect, abuse, and commodification can silence and destroy adolescent lives. It calls upon society to recognize the grave consequences of trafficking and displacement, particularly for vulnerable girls from impoverished backgrounds.

Therefore, this research advocates for urgent social, educational, and policy-level interventions. Adults must take ethical responsibility for the protection and empowerment of youth, rather than contributing to their marginalization. Society must uphold the bodily autonomy and rights of individuals to foster an environment of dignity, justice, and humanity. Finally, this paper invites further research and action to expose the pervasive trauma inflicted by girl trafficking and to dismantle the systems that perpetuate adolescent displacement. Addressing these injustices is not only a moral imperative but also essential to building a more compassionate and equitable world.

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