



MYSTREY BEHIND HIDE AND SEEK GAME OF A SEX WORKER: A CASE STUDY OF SAIJU

¹MEENA CHANDARANA

¹Women Welfare Officer

¹Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli

Personal History

Saiju (Name Changed) is a sex worker from Surat City situated in Gujarat, India. Both her mother as well as her maternal grandmother were sex workers in the same red light area of Surat.

Saiju's mother and Maternal Grandmother

Her maternal grandmother started and ended her career as a sex worker at the red light area of Surat but her mother started it from Rajkot and ended up in Surat. Her maternal grandmother was not aware about her daughter's profession of being a sex worker in Rajkot. Her maternal grandmother could handle her sons but she could not stop her daughter (Saiju's mother) from getting indulged in this profession.

Saiju's mother's name was Hamida (Name Changed). She was alcoholic and was also habituated to gambling by playing cards. She was handicapped by one leg. She had 'Polio' but she was very beautiful. She was earning more than enough in Rajkot in spite of being handicapped. After realizing that so many sex workers were coming to Rajkot from Surat for the same profession, she thought to shift to Surat again. After coming back to Surat, Saiju's mother got married to Gotu (Name Changed), a Bengali man. He was not interested in Hamida, he was only interested in her promise. Hamida had promised to gift him a new auto rickshaw if he married her. They were not happy with each other after marriage. He would walk on other side of the road than Hamida when they went out together for certain work. He probably suffered from inferiority complex that he had married a handicapped woman. On the other hand, Hamida become pregnant by Gotu and had given birth to Saiju but destiny was not in favor of Saiju. At the age of six years, she lost her mother (Hamida) due to HIV/AIDS. After the death of Hamida, Gotu got a chance to remarry with a person whom he could choose without any condition. Gotu got remarried with a lady called Nazma (Name Changed).

Compelling factors for entering the sex trade

After getting married to Nazma, Gotu (Saiju's father) had started to live separately and Saiju was left to stay with her maternal grandmother at Chakla Bazaar red light area in Surat. Saiju was not taken care of by, her maternal grandmother nor by her own father, after the death of her mother. The sex profession was not at all new for Saiju. Saiju had been born and brought up in the red light area of Surat. She spent her childhood over there. She slept hungry for so many nights. She felt alone and neglected most of the times. This may have affected her mind and she started to give kiss at the age of only 10 years for Rs. 1, 2 and 10. She was even ready for a sexual relation at that tender age. She was encouraged by her grandmother to continue it as her grandmother was not able to earn a single penny because of her age and because of red light area's evacuation.

Ways of attracting clients by Saiju

At the age of 13, Saiju went to a CD/Cassettes shop and asked to play a song as she wished to purchase a CD. She listened to three songs and then started to sexually appeal the shopkeeper. She started to touch his private parts. He was a gentleman though, so he denied indulging further and asked her to leave him alone. Saiju got angry and couldn't bear that someone rejected her for sex so she started screaming and accused the shopkeeper of teasing her for having sex. People of that area got together. They all knew about Saiju's nature and also knew shopkeeper's decent nature so they scolded Saiju.

Saiju and her hide and seek game

She was brought back by Suhani who is Saiju's relative, living in that area and also pursuing sex trade. Suhani persuaded Saiju and told her to stay with her. Saiju replied positively. She asked for Suhani's permission to go to meet her maternal grandmother and promised to come home by evening. Suhani gave her the permission but she didn't come back. She ran away from her grandmother's home too by evening. Someone told Suhani that he saw Saiju standing near Udhana Darwaja. Suhani could understand why she went there. It is a contact/pick up point of Sex workers. Suhani was aware about it as she also pursued the same profession. Someone told her that she was at Majura gate. Now Suhani was worried as to, from where she could find Saiju, as she had taken responsibly of taking care of her. Saiju's father, Gotu counseled Suhani and not to get worried as he was aware about his daughter's nature. He told her that she did the same thing so many times so he had kicked her out of his house.

Suhani was still worried. She gathered young boys of the area where she was residing and had given them an offer. She promised to pay for snacks to all young boys who would try to find out Saiju and also promised to give Rs. 1000 cash money to whoever would bring Saiju by that night. On the same night, at about 2 am, (Maksud Lungi), one of the 'Bhai' of Surat called Suhani and gave her the information about Saiju. He informed her that he had seen Saiju and also asked Suhani about dropping her at her home. Suhani replied in positive for dropping Saiju at her home. As per the promise, he dropped her to Suhani's home. Suhani thanked him and he left from there. After lots

of inquiry as to how Saiju reached up to the Maksud Lungi's Gang, she came to know that Sajjad, one of the 'Bhai' working under Maksud Lungi, had only kissed Saiju and didn't do more than that. Saiju was only 12-13 years of age at that time when this whole incident happened.

Suhani was worried about Saiju's stay at her own house as her own children came for vacation from hostel at that time. Suhani was scared of Saiju's behavior. She did not want to make Saiju stay with her children. Suhani explained about the whole incident to Gotu, father of Saiju. On the other hand Irfan, Suhani's husband fought with Suhani as she had made Saiju stay at her house and she did not have a good character.

Suhani asked Gotu to send Saiju to hostel/ Madresa near Kosamba to deal with Saiju's running away tendency. Gotu agreed and they dropped her there for religious study but Saiju was not at all interested in religion, rather she was fond of sex. She couldn't think of anything except sex. She ran away from the Madresa on the same night when they dropped her there. Suhani came to know about it. She was again tensed. She couldn't understand what to do and what not to do. She again asked the boys of that area to find out Saiju. She again promised for breakfast and cash as a reward.

She came to know that majority of the rickshaw drivers of Surat knew Saiju very well. Then she realized that she must be working as a street based sex worker and so she runs away frequently at night only. She advised Gotu, Saiju's father, to get her married off. He agreed as he was tired of her frequent escape/run-aways. She got married at Satalashana village which is near Ambaji in Gujarat. Her husband was a two wheeler mechanic. On the first morning, after marriage, Saiju was not found in her in-laws home. She again ran away. Saiju's parents were informed that Saiju had gone away somewhere without informing her in-laws. Her in-laws again informed that she came back from somewhere after two-three hours.

It was surprising where she had gone in a new village. She went to the house of the Maulvi who performed rituals of her marriage from the groom's side. She went to his house for having sexual relation with him. It was informed by that Maulvi that Saiju came to his home and was appealing for sex to him. Her in-laws called Saiju's parents and asked them to take her back with them. Saiju was at her own place and city in a day after marriage.

On the same night of coming back from Satalasana, Saiju ran away at night. Again her parents tried to find her out. Again young boys of that area were informed to find out Saiju with the same promise of reward. One boy, after enjoying sexual relation with Saiju came to Suhani to drop Saiju and asked for reward. She was scolded and told to go anywhere any time at any place as they were tired of Saiju's behavior. Saiju was still a minor at that time.

Saiju's start-up as street based sex worker

As Suhani and Saiju's parents allowed Saiju to do anything she wanted, Saiju started sex trade from the same day. She started to stand at Majura gate, Athwa gate for contacting customers. Her father was tired of her frequent escaping act. She used to offer both oral and anal sex. She progressed in the business and started to work as an agent of sex workers. She went to Maharashtra for sex trade for earning more. She earned a lot as she was offering both oral and anal sex services along with normal sex. Other sex workers were unable to attract the customers ever since Saiju started sex trade there. She was giving Rs.10 for room rent when she served her customers. Only Rs. 50 was the charge which she was taking for all types of sex service. After working in Maharashtra for years, she one day realized that she was earning less than the sex workers of Surat so she decided to come back to Surat. She asked Suhani to bring her back to Surat. Suhani asked Gotu, Saiju's father, for the same. He replied her that let her do what she wants to do. He did not wish to take any responsibility of Saiju as she was not at all listening to him.

Suhani had left the sex trade so she denied working under her but she could have managed of her standing at Majura gate for customers at night from her own contacts. Here also she became famous for her "special" sex services. Other sex workers were not getting as many customers as Saiju was getting.

One day, the boys who were residing in her neighborhood became her customers and took her to Dumas. They had sex one by one with her for the whole night on an open land. Saiju was injured on the back side after having sex with them. She went away with those boys on their bikes. At home, Suhani and Gotu were searching her. Someone told them that she was in Kim, a village near Surat while someone told some other place.

Reasons of Saiju's ran away very frequently at night

She was then found and was brought for counselling at Sahyog, local NGO working for sex workers. Here the secret of her frequent run away was uncovered. She was addicted to Charas and Ganja so she was not only going for sex at night but went searching for drugs (Psychotropic substances).

On one day, one of the 'Don' of Surat came to kill Saiju; Suhani saved her from him too. The 'don' left Saiju alive on the request of Suhani as that was knowing very well that Suhani was the personal sex worker of one of the main man of an ill famed gangster at one time.

Discussion:

The whole case study somewhere indicates that Saiju may have psychological impact of her mother and grandmother's profession. Her pathetic childhood history and lack of love and affection led her to take the unsafe and unhealthy path in life.

Saiju may have indulged in the said profession by her own wish but her empty stomach and loneliness had somewhere impinged her mind to adopt such life. She ran away frequently because of addiction to drugs which compelled her to behave so. She took to sex work, as she had learnt that behavior from her very childhood. It can be observed that her mother's death and her father's remarriage had compelled her not to believe in marriage. Her grandmother's age and empty stomach had compelled her too to indulge in such profession. She may have got addicted to drugs to get rid of her emotional disturbance. Family mal-adjustment had compelled a 10 year child to start sex work. It's pathetic to note this but it's a reality which the researcher came across through this case study.

NOTE: All names of a person in this case study are changed to maintain confidentiality of the Respondent.

