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**A SURVEY
OF THE VARIOUS TYPES OF SOCIAL, PHYSICAL AND
OCCUPATIONAL OPPRESSIONS HEAPED UPON OUR
SEX WORKERS
BEFORE AND AFTER THEIR ENTRY INTO SEX WORK**

Conducted by DMSC

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HYPOTHESIS

It is a firm and long standing belief among the global and Indian elite, social scientists, policy makers, public opinion makers, dispensers of justice, activist feminist social workers, governmental and non-governmental development managers and, the agencies that provide funds for social welfare measures, that our sex workers face greater social, physical and occupational oppression as workers within the Sex Sector (SS), than the myriads of oppressions they face as daughters, wives, sisters, widows, divorcees, mothers and grandmothers, that is, as unpaid workers in the Domestic Sector (DS). It is held that our sex workers lead a very murky life with all sorts of stress, that there is no scope for enjoying their rights, that their occupation does not provide any job satisfaction and, that they have no scope for freedom of expression.

We propose to proceed from this belief that the level of oppression in the Sex Sector is greater than that in the Domestic Sector. This is our hypothesis. We wish to test it by interviewing a sample of persons who have worked and lived in the Domestic Sector during the earlier part of their lives and, are now working and living in the Sex Sector. The Sex Sector is the domain of Marketized Sexual Services. It has two principal sub-sectors: indoor (traditionally called brothel based and, outdoors (traditionally called flying or street-based). All sexual services provided in the Domestic Sector are unwaged, non-market. Many, perhaps most, of our sex workers live in the domestic sector and, provide unpaid sexual services to their husbands or Babus (live-in steady partners). This is true for both the indoor and the outdoor sub-sectors, of the SS. In other words, there is a significant overlap of all the social, economic, political and cultural features of SS and DS. This, however, does not mean that there are no relative autonomies of the DS and the SS.

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

This survey has been conducted by the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee (DMSC), A forum representing the interest of more than 60,000 sex workers of West Bengal, India. DMSC is active in promoting the Rights and Development of sex workers and their children. It runs various projects and, works in coordination with a few associate organizations. An important component of DMSC's activities is its attempt to devise various ways and means of resisting and neutralizing the various forms of social, physical and occupational oppressions heaped upon our sex workers. For these activities DMSC needs data on these oppressions. This is the background of this survey. The objective of the present survey is to collect and analyze such data and, to test the hypothesis indicated above.

METHOD

The objective indicates the focus of this survey. Interview of a sample of respondents has been carried it out. All of them volunteered and, had the right to withhold answers to specific questions. They also had the right to withdraw from the survey at any point of time.

The DMSC-TAAH team, a team of fully dedicated researchers was entrusted to carry out this study. The research team consisted of sex workers and, children of sex workers. Their total number was 5. **The sample size:** Sex workers, who had a past history of marriage, were considered for the study. A predetermined sample of 200 was found to be sufficient for this study, based on the existing research data on the incidence of violence in the domestic settings. **Sampling Technique:** A sampling design of two stages was adopted. To begin with all the indoor sex work sites of the cities of Kolkata and Howrah were registered. Out of these 10 sites were randomly chosen. Then these sites were divided into zones, based on the names of lanes and bye lanes. From each of these sites, subsequently, two such regions were picked up randomly. All sex workers working in these zones were enumerated. From among them, those who had a past history of marriage (married / separate / divorced), were considered fit to be included in the valid sample (of 207) for the said study. 7 persons from among them refused to provide any answer. **List of questions:** At first a list of questions was prepared and, then it was pre-tested among the target respondent sex workers. The list of questions was then modified in the light of the feedbacks received. Then the 5 data collectors-cum-compilers were trained in the art and craft of interviewing the respondents, with the aim of collecting the necessary information.

The data were collected from 10 sex work sites of Kolkata, West Bengal, during the months of August through December 2004. The data were entered manually. Subsequent analysis and presentation has been completed with the help of external, technically equipped persons. All percentage calculations have been rounded off at the second decimal place.

THE LIST OF QUESTION USED

DATE

CODE

1. Area
2. Age at the time of interview
3. Level of Education
4. Marital Status at the Time of Entry into the Sex Sector (SS)
5. (a) Cause (s) of entry into the SS
(b) Work Experience in the SS (in years)
6. Types of Past and Present Contract experienced in the SS.
7. Age at the time of entry into the SS
8. Age at the time of Marriage
9. (a) Freedom of Movement in the DS
(b) Freedom of Movement in the SS
10. (a) Food and Dress related freedom in the DS
(b) Food and Dress related freedom in the SS
11. Types of oppression faced in the DS
12. Steps taken to save oneself from oppressions faced in the DS
13. Who helped you while you were fighting against oppressions faced in the DS?
14. Types of oppressions faced in the SS
15. Steps taken to save oneself from the oppressions faced in the SS
16. Who helped you while you were fighting against oppressions faced in the SS?

17. Has there been any change in the level of oppression faced by the sex workers of your area during the last 3 years?
18. Did anyone oppress you in the DS for not agreeing to engage in sexual activities? If yes, then indicate:
 - (a) The frequency of and,
 - (b) The type of oppressions faced.
19. Did/does anyone oppress you for not agreeing to engage in sexual activities after your entry into the SS?
If yes, then indicate:
 - (a) the frequency of and,
 - (b) the type of oppressions faced.
20. What are the types of difficulties you faced while rearing up your children in the DS and, in the SS?
21. Where were/ are you subjected to greater oppression? In the DS / SS?
22. Where did /do you enjoy greater freedom? In the DS / SS? In respect of what?
23. (a) Where were/are you happier: In the DS / SS?
(b) What sort of happiness?
24. (a) Where did/do you have greater sorrow? In the DS / SS?
(b) What sort of sorrow?
25. (a) Where did/do you find your life was/is better on the whole? In the DS / SS?
(b) Why?

FINDINGS

□ Age at the time of interview (Table 1)

Sr. No.	Age Range (in years)	Frequency	% of the sample
1.	< 19	1	0.50
2.	20-30	46	23.00
3.	30-40	65	32.50
4.	40-44	42	21.00
5.	>44	46	23.00
	Total	200	100.00

The survey shows that the age of the respondents ranged from < 19 years to > 44 years. 0.5% or 1 respondent was below 19 years in age. The majority (32%) were in the age range of 30-40 years.

□ Level of Education (Table-2)

Sr. No.	Level of Education and Schooling	Frequency	% of the sample
1.	Illiterate	76	38.00
2.	Just Literate	84	42.00
3.	Primary School Leavers	27	13.50
4.	Higher Secondary School Leavers	13	6.50
	Total	200	100.00

The survey shows that only 6.5% of the respondents had higher secondary school level education. The vast majority of them were either illiterate or just literate (clubbed together they are 80% of the sample).

□ **Marital Status at the time of entry into the Sex Sector (SS)**
(Table 3)

Sr. No.	Status	Frequency	% of the sample
1.	Still Married	110	55
2.	Widow	36	18
3.	Separated from/Deserted by Husband	54	27
	Total	200	100

55% of the respondents entered the SS when still married; the remaining 45% of them were either widows or separated from their husbands at that time. It is significant that 100% of the respondents were at least once married during their stay in the Domestic Sector (DS), before entering into the SS.

□ **Cause (s) of entry into the SS (Table 4)**

Many of the respondents mentioned more than one cause. A total of 411 answered were given by the respondents, as indicated in the table below:

Sr. No.	Cause (s) mentioned by the respondents	Frequency (in no.)	% of the total no. of answers (411)
1.	Poverty at Parents' Home	78	19.00
2.	Parents' Tyranny	1	0.25
3.	False Matrimonial Promise	2	0.50
4.	False Promise of Employment	9	2.20
5.	Husband's Tyranny	43	10.50
6.	In-laws' Tyranny	43	10.50
7.	Torture for Dowry	8	1.90
8.	Poverty at Husband's Home	25	6.10
9.	Desertion by Husband	66	16.00
10.	Husband had/has other Sexual Partner	46	11.20
11.	Divorce imposed by Husband	30	7.30
12.	Widowhood	37	9.00
13.	Husband arranged entry into SS	6	1.45
14.	Other Causes	17	4.10
	Total	411	100.00

The respondents came out with multiple answers. This highlights the fact that, there is no single cause for their entry into sex work. It also shows that almost all of them opted for this profession / occupation out of their own choices, barring those (2.70%) induced by the causes 3 and 4 ('False matrimonial promise' and 'False promise of employment')

□ **Work Experience in the SS (Table 5)**

Sr. No.	Duration (in year)	Frequency	% of the Sample
1.	< 1	5	2.50
2.	1 – 4	28	14.00
3.	5 – 9	35	17.50
4.	10 – 14	25	12.50
5.	> 14	107	53.50
	Total	200	100.00

The data suggests that 66% of the respondents had more than 10 years of work experience in the SS, the remaining 34% had less than 10 years of experience, of whom only a minority of 2.5% had less than 1 year of work experience.

□ **Types of Past and Present Contracts:**

Experienced by the respondents in the SS

Past Contracts: experienced at the time of entry into the SS

(Table 6.1)

Sr. No.	Type of Contract	Frequency	% of the Sample
1.	Chhukri (Bonded labor of the Malkins or Labor Contractors)	36	18.00
2.	Aadhiya (Who can keep ½ of their income, the remaining ½ goes to the Malkins)	132	66.00
3.	Self-Employed (who can keep their entire income)	26	13.00
4.	Other Contractual workers (a varying part of 5-10% of the income of these sex workers go to the landlords/Malkins, the rest remains with them)	6	3.00
	Total	200	100.00

Present Contract (Table 6.2)

Sr. No.	Type of Contract	Frequency	% of the Sample
1.	Chhukri	0	0.00
2.	Aadhiya	44	22.00
3.	Self-Employed	142	71.00
4.	Other Contractual works	14	7.00
	Total	200	100.00

Out of the total number of 200 respondents 36 (18%) became sex workers as Chhukris or bonded laborers. All of them are presently out of that bondage. The percentage of Aadhiyas among them has come down from 66 to 22 and, that of the self-employed have

increased from 13 to 71, over the same period. The large increase in the number of self-employed workers points to changes that are occurring in the structure and dynamics of the SS. These changes need to be investigated for a deeper understanding of the SS.

□ **Age at the time of entry into the SS (Table-7)**

Sr. No.	Age at the time of entry	Frequency	% of the Sample
1.	< 18	58	29.00
2.	Just 18	15	7.50
3.	> 18	127	63.50
	Total	200	100.00

□ **Age at the time of Marriage (Table 8)**

Sr. No.	Age at the time of Marriage	Frequency	% of the Sample
1.	< 18	167	83.50
2.	Just 18	11	5.50
3.	> 18	22	11.00
	Total	200	100.00

It is evident from these two table (7 and 8), that the percentage of legally minors forced into unpaid sexual service in the DS (83.50) happened to be slightly less than 3 times higher than that of the legally minors who entered into in SS (29.00), a few years back.

The present age at marriage of the sex workers and, that of our people as a whole, need to be correlated with the age of the respondents at the point of interview (August-December 2004) and, at the point of their entry into the SS. In the case of our sample the age at the point of interview (as indicated in Table 1) happens to be < 19 only for 0.50% of the sex workers. The demographic profile of our legally minors providing unpaid sexual service in the DS and, paid sexual service in the SS needs to be investigated further and in greater depth in the interests of evolving suitable policies.

□ **Freedom of Movement in the DS (Table 9)**

Sl. No.	Movement	Frequency	% of the Sample
1.	Always free	22	11.00
2.	Sometimes free	56	28.00
3.	Never free	122	61.00
	Total	200	100.00

□ **Freedom of Movement in the SS (Table 10)**

Sl. No.	Movement	Frequency	% of the Sample
1.	Always Free	190	95.00
2.	Sometimes Free	7	3.50
3.	Never Free	3	1.50
	Total	200	100.00

Tables 9 and 10 show that only 11% of the respondents had total freedom of movement in the DS, Compared to 95% in the SS. A very large percent (61) had no freedom of movement in the DS, compared to 1.50% in the SS; it may reflect the scale of bonded labor in the DS and SS respectively. The sometimes free to move people (28% in the DS and 3.50% in the SS) reflect the levels of quasi-bondage in the DS and SS respectively.

□ **Food and Dress related Freedom in the DS (Table 11)**

Sr. No.	Food & Dress related Freedom	Frequency	% of the Sample
1.	Existed	58	29.00
2.	Did not exist	142	71.00
	Total	200	100.00

□ **Food and Dress related Freedom in the SS (Table 12)**

Sr. No.	Food & Dress related Freedom	Frequency	% of the Sample
1.	Exists	200	100.00
2.	Does not exist	0	0.00
	Total	200	100.00

It is significant that 71% of the respondents had no freedom to eat out of her choice or to dress according to their wishes in the DS, whereas all or 100% of them enjoyed this freedom in the SS.

□ **Type of Oppression faced by individuals in the DS (Table 13)**

Most of the respondents mentioned more than one type of oppression. The respondents (n=200) provided a total of 444 answers. These multiple responses are indicated in the table below.

Sr. No.	Type of oppression	Frequency	% of 200
1.	Beatings	134	67.00
2.	Verbal Abuse	139	69.50
3.	Thrown out of house	28	14.00
4.	Forced to do domestic work	32	16.00
5.	Forced Marriage	9	4.50
6.	Denial of Food	53	26.50
7.	Forced to provide sexual services	12	6.00
8.	Confinement in a room	1	0.50
9.	Others	36	18.00

Beatings and verbal abuse was found to be the most common mode of oppression in the domestic sector. No less than 26.50% of women in the domestic sector were denied food on more than one occasion.

□ **Steps taken by individuals to save oneself from oppression faced in the DS**

(Table 14): Multiple Responses

Sr. No.	Steps Taken	Frequency	% of 200
1.	None	100	50.00
2.	Registered a complaint at the Police Station	14	7.00
3.	Took the complaint to the local rough guys	35	17.50
4.	Sought help from the office of the locally powerful political party	37	18.50
5.	Tried other options	36	18.00

A clear 50% of the respondents could not muster any courage to respond against oppression in the DS. Support sought from police was as low as 7% only.

□ **Help received by individuals from various quarters while fighting against oppressions faced in the DS (Table 15): Multiple Responses**

(From the 100 respondents who took some steps according to Table 14 above)

Sr. No.	Help Received from	Frequency	% of 100
1.	Everyone around (collectively)	3	3.00
2.	Locally powerful political party	17	17.00
3.	The Police	12	12.00
4.	None	47	47.00
5.	Others	32	32.00

It is clear from tables 14 and 15 above that 50% of the respondents could/did not take any step against the oppressions faced in the DS and, of the remaining 50% who took some steps, 47% did not get any help from any quarter, i.e. (50 + 47 of 100) % or 94% of our respondents were completely helpless against social and physical oppressions in the DS. This fits with their lack of freedom of movement (Table 9) and lack of food and dress related freedom (Table 11). The police did not come to the assistance of 2 (or 14.28%) of the 14 persons who approached them for help. The locally powerful political party failed to help 20(or 54.05%) of the 37 respondents who approached them. The local rough guys refused or could not help 35 or all (100%) of those who approached them for help. 4 (or 11.11%) of the 36 who tried other options also did not get any help from anyone. This shows that our DS exists within a very weak civil and political society. It speaks volumes about the rule of law in the land when less than 7% of the oppressed women of the DS approach the police and, not all of them get help. It clearly exposes the level of callousness in the police department

and of near total civic apathy, where only in 2.70% of the cases the local civic collective asserts itself in defense of the oppressed women in the DS.

□ **Types of oppression faced by individuals in the SS (Table 16):
Multiple Responses**

Sr. No.	Types of oppression	Frequency	% of 200
1.	Beatings	65	32.50
2.	Verbal Abuse	76	38.00
3.	Thrown out of House	10	5.00
4.	Forced to do domestic work	2	1.00
5.	Denial of Food	41	20.50
6.	Forced to provide sexual services	14	7.00
7.	Confinement in a room	1	0.50
8.	Forced to pay money to rough guys	78	39.00
9.	Non payment of dues	15	7.50
10.	Others	70	35.00

It is clear that 4 out of the 10 types of oppressions listed above, namely, beatings, verbal abuse, denial of food and, forced to provide sexual services, which are common physical oppressions of both the DS (see Table 13) and the SS. The social oppressions in the SS are: being thrown out of house, forced to do domestic work, confinement in a room and, forced to pay money to rough guys. Non-payment of the dues of the sex workers is a clear case of occupational oppression, accounting for 4.05% of the elicited answers. The classification of the remaining 18.60% of the others (Sr.No.10) remains undetermined. This indicates that the grey area of oppression happens to be larger in the SS compared to the same in DS (8.10%; see Table 13). This grey area of undetermined forms of oppression needs further investigations.

□ **Table 16.1: Comparison of oppression in DS (Table 13) and SS (Table 16)**

Sr. No.	Type of oppression	In SS	In DS	χ^2	ρ
1.	Beatings	65	134	46.24	0.0000000
2.	Verbal Abuse	76	139	38.66	0.0000000
3.	Thrown out of House	10	28	8.40	0.0037448
4.	Forced to do domestic work	2	32	27.03	0.0000002
5.	Denial of Food	41	53	1.68	0.1945715
6.	Forced to provide sexual services	14	12	0.04	0.8392769

From the table 16.1 it is very clear that beatings, verbal abuse and throwing out of houses and being forced to do domestic work is much higher in domestic sector in comparison to sex sector which are statistically significant.

□ **Steps taken to save oneself from the oppression faced in the SS**

(Table 17): Multiple Responses

Sr. No.	Steps Taken	Frequency	% of 200
1.	None	111	55.50
2.	Registered a complaint at the Police Station	4	2.00
3.	Took the complaint to the local Rough guys	2	1.00
4.	Sought help from the office of the locally powerful political party	2	1.00
5.	Informed DMSC	45	22.50
6.	Sought help from other sex workers	37	18.50
7.	Tried other options	11	5.50

□ **Help received from various quarters while fighting against oppressions faced in the SS (Table 18): Multiple Responses**

(From 89 respondents who took some steps according to table 17 above)

Sr. No.	Help received from	Frequency	% of 89
1.	Everyone around (collectively)	3	3.37
2.	Other Sex Workers	37	41.57
3.	Locally powerful political party	1	1.12
4.	DMSC	42	47.19
5.	The police	6	6.74
6.	The labor contractor or the landlady	6	6.74
7.	The steady partner (Babu)	2	2.25
8.	None	4	4.49
9.	Others	3	3.37

It is clear from the Tables 17 and 18 that 55.50% of the respondents could/did not take any step against the oppressions could/did not take any step against the oppressions faced in the SS, of the remaining 44.50% who did take some steps, only 4.49% did not get help from any quarter, i.e.

about 75% of our respondents were completely helpless against physical, social and occupational oppressions in the SS. This data reflects the generally oppressed conditions of women in our society both in the DS and in the SS. The only difference being this that of the women who took some steps in the DS (100-47) % or 53% and, in the SS (100-4.49) % or 95.51% got some help from some quarter. The higher level of help received by the respondent sex workers in distress due to various kinds of oppression is largely the product of their higher level of mobilization and collectivization, as indicated by the following sources of help in Table 18: other sex workers (41.57%), DMSC (47.19%) and, the labor contractor/landlady (6.74%). The locally powerful rough guys helped none of the 2 who approached them for help. The locally powerful political party also failed to help 1 out of 2 or 50% of those who approached them for help. Other sex workers showed 100% solidarity with their sisters-in-trouble (37 out of 37). DMSC could not help in 3 out of 45 or 6.65% of the cases. This is an interesting datum for the DMSC leadership to ponder upon: sex workers' mobilization and sensitization process has begun to outstrip the mobility and sensitivity levels of the DMSC leadership/functionaries. The role of the local civic collective's assertion in defense of oppressed women is weak both in the DS (3%) and SS (3.37%). Only 2% of the women in SS sought police help against oppression, compared to 7% of them in the DS; only 6.74% of the women from SS received some help from the police, compared to 12% of those from the DS (see Table 15 and 18). The data shows that the traditional civil and political society is weak both in the DS and in the SS. However, there are indications of the emergence of a new civil society around our respondents from the SS: compare the facts that 50% of our oppressed women in the DS did not get any help from any quarter in their fight against oppression and, this was true only for 4.49% of the women in the SS. This gap of (50-4.49) % or 45.51% is a definite measure of a rising sense of collective civic responsibility in the DMSC-sensitized part of the SS.

□ **Changes, if any, in the level of oppression faced by the sex workers,
during the last 3 years, in the respondents' areas**

(Table 19)

Sr. No.	Level of oppression	Frequency	% of the sample
1.	Same	1	0.50
2.	Increased	1	0.50
3.	Decreased a little bit	26	13.00
4.	Massive Decrease	172	86.00
	Total	200	100.00

When 99% of a sample of respondents from 10 different sex work sites of a city reports decrease in the level of oppression and, 86% thinks that the decrease is massive, then that is a clear indicator of improved security perception over 3 years time.

- Did anyone oppress you in the DS for not agreeing to engage in sexual activities?**

(Table 20.1)

Sr. No.	Answer	Frequency	% of the sample
1.	No	142	71
2.	Yes	58	29
	Total	200	100

- Types of oppression faced for not agreeing engage in sexual activities in the DS**

(Table 20.2)

The 58 persons who were oppressed for refusing to engage in sexual activities in the DS gave multiple answers to the question about the type of oppressions they faced (total 62 answers) as indicated in the table below.

Sr. No.	Type of oppression	Frequency	% of 58
1.	Beatings	5	8.62
2.	Forced to engage in sexual activities	56	96.55
3.	Tying down	01	1.72

- Did anyone oppress you in the SS for not agreeing to engage in**

Sexual activities (Table-21.1)

Sr. No.	Answer	Frequency	% of the sample
1.	No	191	95.50
2	Yes	9	4.50
	Total	200	100.00

- **Sector wise comparison of oppression faced by individual respondents for non-compliance with sexual demands of partners (Table 21.1.1)**

Sr. No.	Situation	In DS	In SS
1.	No forced sex	142	191
2	Oppressed for non-compliance with sexual demands	58	9

$\chi^2 : 41.31 \quad \rho : 0.0000000\epsilon\dots$

- **Type of oppression faced for not agreeing to engage in sexual activities in the SS**

(Table 21.2): single response by all 9 oppressed

Sr. No.	Type of oppression	Frequency	% of the total No. of answers (9)
1.	Beatings	2	22.20
2	Forced to engage in sexual activities	6	66.70
3.	Other	1	11.10
	Total	9	100.00

It is evident from the Table 20.1, 20.2, 21.1 and 21.2 that compared to 29% of the respondents oppressed in the DS, only 4.50% (or less than 1/6th of those in the DS) of the

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respondents were oppressed for refusing to engage in sexual activities in the SS. This shows that sexual advances related oppression is 6 times higher in the DS, compared to such oppression in the SS. Further, the level of sexual refusal related beatings is more than double in the SS (22.20%) compared to such violence in DS(8.05%), while instances of rape or forced sexual activities happen to be (90.35 - 66.70)% or 23.65% higher in the DS. The remaining forms of oppression are not comparable. On the whole it is remarkable that sexual activity related freedom/choice is (95.50 - 71) % or 24.50% higher in the SS compared to the same in DS.

□ **Types of Difficulties faced while rearing up children in DS and SS (Table 22)**

Sr. No.	In	Difficulties related to			
		Lack of Money	Lack of Time	Entry into school	Total
1.	DS	76(82.60%)	7 (7.60%)	9 (9.80%)	92 (100%)
2.	SS	24 (27.30%)	59 (67.45%)	5 (5.25%)	88 (100%)

Lack of money was the greatest difficulty for the respondents in DS (82.60%); whereas lack of time is their greatest difficulty (67.45%) in SS, while rearing up their children. It is significant that like all wage earning mother the sex workers too have less time for their children, when compared to the same for the unwaged mother of DS. It is also interesting that our respondents had greater difficulty (about double) in respect of their children's entry into school when they were in the DS, compared to the same in their present existence in the SS. If this happens in spite of the social stigma attached to sex work in our society, then certainly their increased economic security in the SS may provide part of the needed explanation.

□ **Where were/are you subjected to greater oppression: in DS/SS?**

(Table 23)

Sr. No.	In	Frequency	% of the sample
1.	DS	177	88.50
2.	SS	17	8.50
3.	Both	6	3.00
	Total	200	100.00

□ **Where did/do you enjoy greater freedom: in DS/SS?**

(Table 24.1)

Sr. No.	In	Frequency	% of the sample
1.	DS	3	1.50
2.	SS	185	92.50
3.	Both	12	6.00
	Total	200	100.00

□ **Greater Freedom in respect of what?**

(Table 24.2): Multiple Responses

Sr. No.	Freedom	Frequency	% of the total no. of answers (340)
1.	From Physical Torture and/or Verbal Abuse	68	20.00
2.	Of Movement or freedom from confinement at Home	68	20.00
3.	From Fear	15	4.40
4.	From control in sexual life	6	1.75
5.	From Dependence on or Bondage to others	43	12.65
6.	From Lack of Food	36	10.60
7.	From Lack of good clothes	28	8.25
8.	To freely interact with everyone	27	7.95
9.	From Forced Labor	12	3.50
10.	From Poverty	24	7.00
11.	From Forced sexual activities with Husband	6	1.75
12.	From Lack of Space	2	0.60
13.	From the Diktats of the steady Partner or Babu	3	0.95
	Total	340	100.

It is noteworthy that a larger part of the responses relate to the basic freedoms form physical torture and/or verbal abuse (20%), of movement (20%), from bondage/dependence (12.65%), from lack of food (10.60%) and clothes (8.25%), from poverty (7%), from forced labor (3.50%), from forced sex with husband (1.75%) and, from lack of space (0.60%). Together these add up to 84.35% of the total responses, indicating the concrete meaning of freedom in the domestic and professional life of our respondents.

Where were/are you happier: in DS/SS?

(Table 26.1)

Sr.No.	In	Frequency	% of the sample
1.	DS	10	5.00
2.	SS	189	94.50
3.	Both	1	0.50
	Total	200	100.00

□ **What sort of Happiness?**

(Table 26.2): Multiple Responses

Sr. No.	Happiness	Frequency	% of the total no. of answers (307)
1.	Of all sorts	19	6.15
2.	Owing to greater sexual pleasure	19	6.15
3.	Of having better food	53	17.25
4.	Of having better clothes	42	13.70
5.	Of having a means of subsistence	21	6.75
6.	Of having the ability to help/feed/spend money on others	24	7.80
7.	Of having the ability to spend money freely	29	9.45
8.	Of being able to move about and talk freely with everyone	47	15.30
9.	Of having the opportunity to interact with customers of various types	24	7.80
10.	Of being able to save some money for the future	4	1.30
11.	Of being able to assert my self-identity as a sex worker	2	0.70
12.	Of having a greater right to choose about anything	17	5.55
13.	Of being my own boss	1	0.35
14.	Of being deserted by a cruel husband	2	0.70
15.	Of having a father for children	1	0.35
16.	Can not pinpoint	2	0.70
	Total	307	100.00

The Table indicates the major parameters of happiness of the respondents. These are : Sexual pleasure (6.15%), better food (17.25%), better clothes (13.70%), having a means of subsistence (6.75%), ability to spend money on others (7.80%), ability to spend freely (9.45%), freedom of movement and of speech (15.30%), opportunity to interact with various customers (7.80%), greater right of choice (5.55%) and, a sum total of all of these plus may be some more (6.15%). These concrete measures of the respondents' perception of happiness add up to 95.90%.

□ **Where did/do you have greater sorrow: in DS/SS?**

(Table 27.1)

Sr. No.	In	Frequency	% of the sample
1.	DS	189	94.50
2.	SS	9	4.50
3.	Both	2	1.00
	Total	200	100.00

□ **What sort of sorrow?**

(Table 27.2): Multiple Responses

Sr. No.	Sorrow on account of	Frequency	% of the total no. of answers (224)
1.	Husband's relations with his other sexual partners	23	10.25
2.	Beatings by husband and torture at in-laws' place	55	24.50
3.	Death of Mother/Father	2	0.90
4.	Widowhood	17	7.60
5.	Desertion by/divorce from Husband	44	19.60
6.	Poverty at Parents' Place	11	4.90
7.	Forced Marriage	5	2.25
8.	Idleness of Husband	2	0.90
9.	Not having children	1	0.45
10.	Forced entry into sex work	3	1.35
11.	Husband forcing into sex work	3	1.35
12.	Being Foolish	1	0.45
13.	Husband's insanity	2	0.90
14.	Hunger	19	8.50
15.	Forced sexual activities	6	2.65
16.	Shock of having to adjust with the life of a sex worker	2	0.90
17.	Fall in the number of customers	1	0.45
18.	Betrayal by extra marital lover	1	0.45
19.	Child being taken away by deserter husband	1	0.45
20.	Death of child	1	0.45
21.	Inability to meet all the child related needs	1	0.45
22.	Husband's low income	3	1.35
23.	Lack of love in family life	8	3.55
24.	Lack of Peace	4	1.80
25.	Lack of appreciation by anyone	4	1.80
26.	Lack of freedom	3	1.35
27.	Can not say what	1	0.45
	Total	224	100.00

The above table indicates that the major sources of the sorrow experienced by the respondents are/were related to marital sexual jealousy (10.25%), physical and verbal oppression in married life (24.50%), widowhood (7.60%), poverty at parents' place (4.90%), lack of love in family life (3.55%), lack of peace (1.80%) and lack of appreciation (1.80%). These perceived sources of sorrow together account for 82.40% of the responses. It is note worthy that most of these sorrows and the remaining ones have their roots in the DS.

□ **Where did/do you find that your life was/is better on the whole:**

in the DS/SS? (Table 28.1)

Sr. No.	In	Frequency	% of the Sample
1.	DS	4	2.00
2.	None	5	2.50
3.	Both	4	2.00
4.	SS	187	93.50
	Total	200	100.00

□ **Why? (Table 28.2): Multiple Responses**

Sr. No.	Reason	Frequency	% of the total
			No. of answer (445)
1.	Greater overall Freedom	114	25.70
2.	Financial independence	51	11.55
3.	Ability to take care of other family members	41	9.20
4.	Freedom to raise children on one's own strength	38	8.65
5.	Greater sexual Pleasure	30	6.75
6.	Greater Peace	26	5.85
7.	Customers give and get sexual satisfaction	27	6.05
8.	No humiliation	8	1.80
9.	Pleasurable work related transactions	9	2.00
10.	No bondage/dependence	22	4.95
11.	Ability to play the role of the head of the family	20	4.50
12.	Ability to build one's own house	9	2.00
13.	Could purchase land	8	1.80
14.	Having the opportunity to know many people	6	1.35
15.	Having the experience of more and many kinds of love	5	1.10
16.	Ability to protest against injustice	4	0.90
17.	Husband/steady partner behaves well	4	0.90
18.	Ability to save for the future	4	0.90
19.	Having the feeling of being bolder now	2	0.45
20.	Having various rights in the SS	2	0.45
21.	Could buy back sold goods	1	0.20
22.	Ability to separate good from bad	1	0.20
23.	Having the feeling of being more intelligent now	1	0.20
24.	Just feel good	1	0.20
25.	No love, hence no suffering from betrayal	1	0.20
26.	Life is SS is different from life in DS	1	0.20
27.	Ability to take decisions freely	1	0.20
28.	Life is more sophisticated in the SS	1	0.20
29.	Can not say why	7	1.55
	Total	445	100.00

Bulk of the reasons offered by the respondents as to why they find their lives to be better on the whole, come under various kinds of freedom and ability: over all freedom (25.70%), financial independence (11.55%), ability to take care family members (9.20%), freedom to have pleasurable transactions without humiliation (sr. no. 7-9 together) (9.85%), freedom to raise children independently (8.64%), ability to have greater sexual pleasure (6.75%), more peace (5.85%) back of dependence on others (4.95%), ability to play the role of the head of the family (4.50%), freedom to have more and many kinds of love (1.10%). These reasons together account for more than 88% of the answers and, all of them are traceable to the respondents' life in the SS.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings indicate that the level of physical oppression of women, especially of the wives and widows in our DS, happens to be about 25% higher than the level of physical oppression heaped over sex workers in the SS (see Tables 13 and 16). The level of social oppression heaped over sex workers, on the other hand, happens to be about 9% higher than the social oppressions faced by the same women as wives/widows in the DS. About 4% of the respondent sex workers reported to have faced some occupational oppression (e.g. non-payment of dues). The over all level of oppression thus remains higher in the DS. The levels of helplessness in the face of oppression in the DS (73.50%) and in the SS (75%) are almost the same. What is striking, however, is the 45.51% higher civic mobilization of our respondents in the DMSC-sensitized areas of the SS (see the remarks after Table 18). This is also testified by the higher levels of various kinds of concrete freedoms enjoyed by the respondents in the SS (see Tables 10, 11, 12, 25.1, 25.2, 26.1, 26.2, 28.1 and 28.2).

These findings invalidate the widely held view and, our hypothesis that the level of oppression heaped upon our women in the Sex Sector is generally higher than that in our Domestic Sector. These finding may offer a framework for understanding the continuous outflow of unwaged housewives/widows/deserted women from the DS, into the SS. Some of the findings also indicate the tasks in front of DMSC (see Tables 2,8,16 and 18) and its weakness (see Table 18) in respect of the ongoing struggle against various forms of social, physical and occupational oppressions heaped upon our sex workers.

Any future, in depth and, more compressive research in this area must widen the sample base and, further fine-tune the questions, for eliminating the scope for indefinite answers as far as possible.