

The Narratives of Former Entertainment Workers in Nepal: An Explorative Study of Becoming and Being an Entertainment Workers

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Abstract

This paper explores experiences as being and becoming of entertainment Worker in Nepal. Entertainment sectors, conceptualized here, a place where girls and Women are kept for sexual purposes. In doing so, the timing of events model, and narrative theory were applied to explore how events timing changes the life experiences of former entertainment Workers. Twelve former entertainment Workers were selected from NGO's who were rescued and helped by Youth for Transformation. The oral narration was taken as an interviewing method. Their problems and narratives as being Workers, and the process of becoming, off timing stages of entertainment workers intertwined in family system/sub-system or outside inter-personal system, were recorded, transcribed, analyzed, and discussed as informed by thematic techniques, and off timing stage model.

Following timing of events model and narrative theory, five off timing events led sequential patterns in clients' lifewere identified: a) chronic poverty and bigger family size led-sequences; b) single mother led-sequences; c) early child marriage led-sequences; d) love marriage led- sequences, and d) parent's death led-sequences. Likewise, research generatesthe client's construction of the four dominant themes were: a) stigmatization; b) enactment of social expectations; c) role mediation and feminization, and d) health condition.

Keywords: Events, Entertainment-sectors, Themes, Problems, Women

I. Introduction:

Entertainment sectors include the business mainly cabin restaurants, dance bars, massage parlors, guesthouses, lodges, 'bhattipasals' (small restaurants that serve alcohol), and 'dohori' restaurants (which play Nepali folk music) that offer a mixture of food, alcoholic beverages, song/dance and finally sexual jobs for their customer (The Freedom Fund 2017, Maiti Nepal 2010, 2019). In Kathmandu Valley, they are

generally concentrated in particular areas near bus terminals, truck rest stops, high concentration of entertainment establishments (Thamel, Kostaswor-Singamagal area, BalajuGongabu area (The Freedom Fund 2017, Maiti Nepal 2010).

It has been estimated in Kathmandu Valley alone, there are approximately four thousand cabin restaurants and three thousand dance restaurants employing 100,000 girls either directly as full-time employees or indirectly as part-time employees (Maiti Nepal 2010). In Nepal, around 40 thousand adults were engaged in the entertainment industries as sexual Workers (Shakti Samuha, 2008), about 73 percent of them are girls (Nepal Child Labor Report 2012). In the survey conducted by Raksha Nepal in 2006, the Majority of the respondents 91.5% were between the ages of 15-28 years. Extreme urban-rural poverty, family conflict, internal trafficking, peer influence, false hopes, and abandonment by society were the primary causes of those female Workers to live life as Workers and becoming Workers (Swatantrata Abhiyan Nepal 2017, The freedom Fund 2017, Maiti Nepal 2010).

Even though the entertainment sector offers several jobs, several studies by the Government of Nepal, and NGOs, and INGOs have highlighted Labor and sexual exploitation and engagement of minors which strictly prohibited by the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 2006/2000, and specific guidelines protecting women workers in night time entertainment industries (2008) (MoCWSC 2014). The entertainment Workers were forced to work midnighthours, and wear erotic uniforms and perform sexual offers as services (CWISH 2005 2017). almost one-fourth of entertainment Workers (Swatantrata Abhiyan Nepal 2017) and more than 50 percent of female Workers (CWISH 2005) face sexual harassment at the workplace. Following the Stockholm Declaration adopted at the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation, UN Protocol, and ILO, National Human Right Commission (NHRC 2013) strictly condemn such situations in Nepal.

The above-highlighted realities offer the entertainment sector as problem-creating areas, especially for those Women and girls who engaged there for their subsistence, mostly from a quantitative perspective. However, this paper attempts to understand and explore how the life of Women Workers in entertainment sectors unfold. In other words, the questions are how they become entertainment Workers, and what is it to be lived life as a Worker, which is a pertinent research gap in many reports and researches, which I have attempted to fulfill this paper.

In doing so, this paper attempts to show historically, their life struggle/social

problems in sequential order, and their current social status and problems of the worker, so proper needs assessment, intervention, policy, and program making will be benefited from research in future to support entertainment workers. One of the central concerns of social work discipline is an interdisciplinary approach to match appropriate extant conceptual co-ordinates with clients' world to alleviate their problems (Payne 2005), and this paper aims to explore and develop conceptual co-ordinates from clients' experiences by focusing on their being and becoming as entertainment workers in Kathmandu.

II. Objectives of Study

To address the research gap that is to construct theory or conceptual frame to address the need for qualitative expression to understand the realities of entertainment Workers. For this purpose, the paper has three objectives. The first one was a general objective, and the last two were specific objectives.

1. To explore the timing of the events led narratives of former entertainment Workers;
2. To explore how former entertainment Workers become entertainment Workers.
3. To explore the dominant themes that emerged when living life as entertainment Workers.

III. Literature Review

Rather from eclectism is an approach taken to comprehend multiple ongoing life situations of entertainment workers i. e. devising multiple concepts and theories to explore and explain the themes and event-led sequential development of Workers. The paper comprises two parts of the literature review: one is theoretical and conceptual, and the second is empirical. In contrast to normative-stages-models of the life course, the timing-of-Events model is more appropriate to understand how dynamic social situations conditioned individual life/inter-personal life or family life, as well as an understanding of self and world (Neugarten and Neugarten, 1987) i. e. events that occur earlier or later than usual are off time in which rapid social change undermines the predictability normal courses of development i. e. normative stage development processes.

Similarly, narrative theory (Walsh J. 2010) focuses on personal narratives that determine one's understands of the self and the world. This theory assumes personal experience is fundamentally ambiguous, people arrange their lives into stories to give them meaning, new experiences are filtered

in or out of a storyline depending on whether they are consistent with the ongoing life narrative, life narratives are co-constructed with significant norms that contribute significantly to life narratives where some storylines are dominant and other are suppressed and people are capable of developing new, and empowering stories. The major concepts are narrative, deconstruction, reauthoring/reconstruction. The narratives are authored by a person about his or her life, including the past, present, and future, in which objective and subjective experiences are selectively arranged.

Likewise, empirical reviews include, reports and researches prepared by MoCWWS (2014), Swatantrata Abhiyan Nepal (2017), The freedom Fund (2017), NHRC (2013), CWISH (2005 2017), Nepal Child Labor Report (2012), Maiti Nepal (2010 2015 2019), governmental reports, policy reviews, and besides that, feminization, role substitution, and stigmatization processes as informed by empirical cases were so relevant with explored themes and event timing patterns to explain and understand the being and becoming of entertainment Workers in Nepal.

IV. Research Methods, Design, and Tool

In this paper, a qualitative approach was applied to generate narratives from the participants. By making research explorative in design, twelve informants were selected from NGOs who were rescued and helped by NGOs i. e. Youth for Transformation. Their stories of problems, off timing stages in life, narratives, and their being and becoming (i. e. the process of becoming and not becoming entertainment Workers) intertwined in inside family system/sub-system or outside in inter-personal system were recorded and transcribed. Each participant's stories is a unit of analysis, the oral narration was adopted as an interviewing method. The tape recorder, notebook, checklist were used to records the conversation, life stories they experience as being Workers and in times of becoming Workers. The stories cover the stories from their childhood, family, marriage/love affairs, migration, becoming Workers, being Workers, and post rescued/recovery phases in historical and contemporary view. Each story was transcribed to the development of sub-themes. These sub-themes were then condensed to high themes condensed to dominant themes and patterns to explore the becoming and beingness of former entertainment Workers. And finally, exploration of the dominant themes and patterns was viewed as a research-based developed conceptual and theoretical part to understand the problems, needs and relevant treatment to be addressed the problems of Women to resolve their social problems in light of other researches and reports. The analysis was

largely based on a thematic technique that is coding, decoding, theme condensing, theme categorizing, theme linking, etc. processes to build dominant themes, and patterns. The findings were presented categorizing under two areas of entertainment Workers: dominant themes and event-led-sequential patterns to understand their life.

V. Results and Finding

Finding:Pattern: Five Dominant Events led Sequences

Two major conceptual tools had applied here to explore the sequences of entertainment Workers. One is life course perspectives (Gold and Linda K 1991), and another is the timing of events model (Neugarten and Neugarten 1987). Following them, five off timing events led to sequential patterns of clients' world/to life had been identified, and sequences led to interactions/narratives in family system/sub-system-personal system were analyzed. The research found: a) chronic poverty and bigger family size led sequences; b) single mother-led sequences; c) early child marriage led sequences; d) love marriage led sequences, and e) parents' death led sequences, and each event led sequences had their respective consecutive orders.

A) Chronic poverty and bigger family size led sequences

From the narration of the interviewee, it was found that chronic poverty and bigger family size

Here in all paragraphs, all those italics phrases denote the sequences of clients' life. of clients' family was highly associated influenced negatively in the clients' life. Here, chronic poverty and the bigger family size were associated with an Economic crisis of the family. Low income of the family, scarcities of needs, drop out, no leisure time, unemployment, dependence, the burden of obligation, stresses, crisis, and so on were basic characteristics of clients life and clients families. And to find out the possible solutions to all these problems clients untimely shifted from their rural setting to urban setting. Even in the urban setting, more problems emerged than resolved in the client's life. Indirectly excluded from primary group bonding, marriage-parenthood-marital crisis, cheap work, and low wages, mental problems, higher demands of needs and low fulfillment, and so on were the basic characteristics of clients' situational world in an urban area. In these circumstances, clients were largely dependent on secondary group networks to survive in urban areas, and becoming of entertainment Workers paved the way from secondary group network, secondary group and becoming entertainment Workers was the

third stage of clients'. When clients became entertainment Workers many problems emerged were: engaged in sexual activities for money, strange feeling, misbehave and abuse, frustration, and pain, acceptance of situation and indifferences, stigma, sense of duty towards family, hopelessness, and regrets, conflicts, and tortures, degrading health conditions and so on. And finally, they were rescued and helped by NGOs, which brought organizational assurance, skills and resources transfer, self-actualization in their life.

B) Single mother led sequences

Clients living with single mothers had many social problems in their life. Aging mothers, living in the slum, Economic crisis, scarcities of basic needs, shame and embarrassment, dropout, excluded from societies, and so on were the clients' situations of everyday life. In these circumstances, a sense of duty towards mother and for better future with no option they had joined the entertainment sectors. In the entertainment sectors, fancy dreams, goods and clothes, and a good sum of money was offered and lured. When clients became entertainment Workers they faced unbearable problems were: misbehave and abuse, frustration, and pain, acceptance of situation and indifferences, stigma, sense of duty towards family, hopelessness and regrets, conflicts and tortures, degrading health conditions, and so on. As entertainment Workers, they had to satisfy many customers. Meeting and contractual bonding with customers were proven fatal in cases of clients. Those customers arranged the parties, and clients were offered sexual benefits. And finally, they were rescued and helped by NGOs, which brought new life, self-esteem, independence from their support of skills, training, and resources in collaborative ways.

C) The early marriage led sequences

Early marriage was common practice in a rural setting unaware of how many problems it brings in life sequences. Clients were found to be married at an early age, and problems associated were: highly dependent on family and husband, adjustments, gender discrimination, maternity problems and early parenthood, the burden of responsibilities, the crisis of basic needs, and stresses. And coping with all these problems were found to be challenging in the clients' life. Finding easy and effective remedies for these problems was difficult to realize in a rural setting in their everyday struggle. The rural-urban shift was found only options for those parents in research. In an urban area, new and additional problems/situations were found to be associated with clients' life. They were immensely challenging. Exclusion from primary bonding, marital crisis, cheap work and low wages, mental problems, higher demands of needs and low fulfillment, and so on were the basic characteristics of clients' situational world in an urban area. When clients became

entertainment Workers many problems emerged were: misbehave, and abuse, frustration and pain, acceptance of situation and indifferences, stigma, sense of duty towards family, conflicts, and tortures, degrading health conditions, low pay, the offer of sexual benefits, and so on. In this situation, while they worked they developed contractual bonding with customers who arranged sexual benefits and contracts to clients'. And finally, they were rescued and helped by NGOs, which brought organizational assurance, skills and resources transfer, self-actualization in their life.

D) Parental Death led Sequences

Parental death was associated with multiple crises that clients faced in their life. Economic problems, bonding problems, the fulfillment of basic and secondary needs, neglected by society, decision problems, and marriage problems, and so on were not coped with by the clients in day-to-day situations. And escaping from a rural setting, proven to be an option remains for those clients. The rural-urban shift was a coping strategy for many clients, however, they had faced similar generic social and psychological problems in urban areas. Single and unmarried status of Women in an urban area having no secure employment means vulnerabilities of clients' life. Clients were found to have engaged entertainment sectors and making contractual bonding with customers for sexual benefits. Similarly, different clients lived their life different, however, while they worked in entertainment sectors, the problems they faced was generic like Others which this paper mentioned above, and while they worked with the customer, similar generic problems were associated with them. And while they were suffering from such challenges and vulnerabilities in life, NGOs rescued and helped them.

E) Love marriage led sequences

Love marriage can also lead to miserable life situations where people cannot cope with them. Clients' were found to be happy and joyful in their early life phase, however, when they moved to an urban setting, their joyful life changed and became miserable. In an urban setting, like others, they faced similar generic problems. And when they moved into parenthood, new problems emerged. Parenthood is a normal life stage in clients' world, however, and meanwhile when their husband left them then it is off-timing stages in their life. When husbands left them lonely, stressed, confused, abused, disbelief, and trauma were the major psychological mental conditions and problems. In meantime, Economic crisis, the fulfillment of needs, absence of bonding and support, and day-to-day suffering were the problems that characterize the life of clients. Without help, no supports and securities, and no employment, no options were the conditions of clients. In these circumstances, they joined the entertainment sectors and had contractual bonding with customers, and finally rescued and helped by NGOs. When they joined the entertainment sectors

and had bonded with customers, they all had similar social and psychological problems which are mentioned above.

In sum, except one group of clients who were found to living in an urban setting, whereas the remaining four groups of clients were first found to be living in rural areas and then migrated in urban areas. The point, this paper, try to raise is that all four groups of clients show a similar pattern of sequences of life transition, and social and psychological problems in their life except the first event and sequences were: rural-urban shift, joined entertainment sectors, contractual bonding with customers, and rescued and help by NGOs.

Dominant Life Themes of Clients

Dominant life themes of clients' are those themes that are central and meaningful to arrange and organize their life, which defines, describe, and explain their social and psychological problems, and living conditions. It is about clients' selves and the world, their empathies and perceptions which are narrated and constructed from the lived experiences. The narrative theory assumes that personal narratives determine one's understands of the self and the world (Walsh 2010). Walsh write:

personal experience is fundamentally ambiguous, people arrange their lives into stories to give them meaning, new experiences are filtered in or out of a storyline depending on whether they are consistent with the ongoing life narrative, life narratives are co-constructed with significant norms that contribute significantly to life narratives some storylines are dominant and other are suppressed and people are capable of developing new, empowering stories. (Walsh 2010)

The major concept of the narrative theory are; the narrative, deconstruction, re-authoring /reconstruction (Walsh 2010). In this part, the research paper uses the framework of narrative theory to build major themes and to describe and explain the clients' selves and lived world. These built-up themes were taken as major concepts to understand the life of clients' where the life of clients revolves around them, and these narrated high themes were reduced as an extant concept found in social work and other disciplines. There were the four major high themes: a) stigmatization, b) enactment of social expectations, c) role mediation and feminization, and d) health crisis.

a) Stigmatization

In narratives of clients', the research found clients were suffered from the problems of stigma. Hiding their identity as a prostitute, sex Worker, and entertainment Worker was a major challenged they faced in society. They constantly fear of revealing their identity even by changes in their family and society, in that case, they

can be labeled as a prostitute. In a previous life, worked as a sex Worker remained as stigma, shameful, and degraded status which were the images and meaning they constructed and internalized, and thus they feared negative attributes which people can recall on them. In such situations, they feared separation by the society, communities, neighborhood, family, workplaces, and individual, and status loss and discrimination. These feelings of self-stigmatizing processes were working on them, and its impact was living constantly under the psychological fears of revealing their previous identity in the future, and loss of status and discrimination. Thus, self-stigmatizing processes and their impact on the clients' selves were dominant restructurings the psychological and social patterning of clients' day-to-day livings. Erving Goffman Writes:

“Stigma as an attribute that is deeply discrediting. . . and reduced the bearer from a whole and usual person to a tainted discounted one” (Goffman 1968a).

Similarly, Link and Phelan (2001) define “stigma as a process consisting of five interrelated components (labeling, stereotyping, separation, status loss and discrimination, and exercise of power), when they cover, results in status loss and discrimination for members of stigmatized groups” (Hellner and Gitterman 2011). In research, it is found that clients suffer from the constant fear of these components and the possibility in any way to be revealed their previous identity.

b) Enactment of social expectation

In research, it was found that clients' were obliged in performing many roles which their gender does not allow them to perform. Either in a rural area or urban area or many situations/circumstances, all clients were performing many roles which were negotiated with existing roles. These roles were identified by Others than it was usual roles. These roles were identified, challenges the existing roles, negotiated new roles and re-negotiated existing roles, defined by others, and role integration, (Major 2003), and all were the processes of forming roles for the enactment of social expectation of their families by the clients' (Goffman 1968b). Thus role restructuring/patterning remained the high theme in clients' life to cope with existing multiple problems.

c) Role mediation and Feminization

Clients' were found of doing role mediation in various situations and settings. Role mediation means switching the roles of males (Major 2003). And feminization includes role mediation plus a female-headed family (BRIDGE 2001). Most of the males who were either father or husband of clients were found of discriminatory,

exclusionary, violent, idles where clients' had to mediate the roles of male counterpart and control the family's psychological, social and cultural aspects, miserable sufferings, hardship/crises/circumstances under their headship. And roles mediation and feminization were the lived experiences of clients remain as a coping strategy and conditioning aspects of adjustment in their struggle phases of life. Thus, it was perceived and experienced high theme which they had constructed in every off timing stages of their life.

d) Heath condition

Narratives revealed that they continuously lived vulnerable, oppressed, exploited, threaten, risky, and struggling lives which directly and indirectly hampered their psychological and physical well-being, and which were understood as health problems (Heller and Gitterman 2011). Many life transitions and changes, traumatic life events, unsupportive social environment were found to cause and influence stressors and distress the clients'. Feeling and suffering hopelessness, anxieties, pain, beaten injuries, sick and illness, morbidities, and so on were found numerously in narratives of clients. Thus, health was found always a major issue to struggle with, and living with miserable health conditions were perceived and lived themes of clients which gave inescapable psychological and physical pain to clients.

VI. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper brings the life stories of a former entertainment Worker who worked as a prostitute in the entertainment sector. Along with that, this paper organized their narratives establishing sequential patterns, building up dominant themes or theirs's meaningful life concepts around which they lived and suffered.

Following the life course perspectives and timing of events model, five off timing events led sequential patterns of clients world/life had been identified were: chronic poverty and bigger family size led sequences, single mother-led sequences, early child marriage led sequences, love marriage led sequences and parents' death led sequences, and each event led sequences had their respective consecutive orders. Likewise, research generates four major dominant themes of clients' from qualitative approaches were: stigmatization; enactment of social expectations; role mediation and feminization; and health condition.

In particular, as Goffman's illustration of stigmatization processes in society, entertainment Workers in Nepal after post-rescue/recovery phases along with collaborative care support offered and trained by the Youth for Transformation still face many psychological problems regarding stigma-tizatoin. Similarly, processes of feminization and role substituting i. e. to lead their life independently in all

spheres, and as being the 'breadwinner' have been found in between becoming, being, and not becoming entertainment Workers. Likewise, many reports prepared by INGOs, and NGOs did not have attempted to demonstrate tentative timing event led sequences of entertainment Workers. However, they have attempted to find out cause and effect, primarily focusing on the income and poverty of entertainment Workers. This paper elucidates the transactional interactional relationship intertwined in the family/sub-family system and outside the family inter-personal system in the sequential pattern which adds more conceptual and theoretical ideas to understand the life of entertainment Workers. Also, the paper found and argues these Women were suffering from many health-related problems with one chronic health problem. Government, local line agencies, NGOs, and INGOs should think of this as an urgent and primary problem that needs to resolve with the long-term provision, program, and services. Finally, findings provide additional relevancies to existing literature and reports to better understand real-life situations and explore the needs of suffered Women that should be urgently addressed.

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