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Children in Prostitution: A Study of Young Women in the Rehabilitation Centres in Malaysia

Lukman Z. Mohamad

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**A thesis submitted to the University of Durham for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**



School of Applied Social Sciences

2006

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Abstract

Child prostitution has been a major cause of concern in recent years. It is a global phenomenon, which has spread widely in both developing and developed countries. In Malaysia, child prostitution does exist, but it is a phenomenon that the public does not really acknowledge or understand. This study is an attempt to investigate the nature of child prostitution in Malaysia and to identify the key characteristics of victimized children to raise awareness of the phenomenon in the public, government, and NGOs. Two methods of data collection were used in this study; that is semi-structured interview and narrative interview. Altogether, 63 young women safeguarded from prostitution in two rehabilitation centres participated in this study as respondents. The findings suggest that the vast majority of prostituted young women in this sample are likely to: have experienced family dysfunction, family breakdown or domestic violence; be emotionally and physically abused during childhood; suffer from family problems and poor relationship with the family; leave school and home at an early age; and be sexually abused or exploited before they were drawn into prostitution. Ninety-two percent of the respondents entered prostitution between the ages of 13 to 17 years old. The youngest was nine years old. About 48 percent were engaged in prostitution after being deceived by 'boyfriends' who really acting as pimps and 38.1 percent were influenced by peers. Most of them 'served' sex to between 6-10 men per day, 'worked' seven days a week, and were abused by pimps and customers. About 83 percent used drugs, most commonly psychotropic pills and marijuana. The vast majority of them did not use any contraception during prostitution. Implications of the findings are discussed and suggestions made for an effective response to the problem and in aiding the young women in prostitution and the rehabilitation centres, as well as for further research.

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADMCPSEY	Assistant Deputy Ministers' Committee on Prostitution and the Sexual Exploitation of Youth
AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
CASA	The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University
ECPAT	Original name is End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism, but it was changed in 1996 to End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes
ECPC	Essex Child Protection Committee
EPU	Economic Planning Unit
FHOP	Family Health Outcomes Project
GMCL	Global March against Child Labour
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ILO	International Labour Office
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
NCMEC	National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
NGOs	Non-government Organizations
NIDA	National Institute on Drug Abuse
NPFDB	National Population and Family Development Board
PCA-NY	Prevent Child Abuse New York.
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RWG-CL	Regional Working Group on Child Labour in Asia
SCAN	Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect
SERI	Socio-Economic and Environmental Research Institute
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Diseases

UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WCCSEC	World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
WHO	World Health Organization
YAPI	Youth Advocate Program International
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Child prostitution started to gain attention as a major public concern in 1960s, around the same time as child abuse became a topical social problem (Weisberg, 1985). It is a global phenomenon, which spread widely in both developing and developed countries (Mahler, 1997; UNICEF, 2001a; Muntarbhorn, 1996a; WCCSEC, 1996; Ireland, 1993; Montgomery, 1998; Daniels, 2002; Flowers, 1998; Fallon and Tzannatos, 1998; Save the Children, 1996; ECPAT International, 2001; Bagley, 1999; Ennew, 1986; YAPI, 1998). Throughout Asia, Latin America and the countries of the North there have been increasing reports of growth in the number of children involved in prostitution (Save the Children, 1996; Ireland, 1993). There are many factors underpinning this growth, and these factors differ across the world, as does the scale of the problem. In some countries child prostitution as a phenomenon has existed for centuries, embedded in historical and cultural practices (ECPAT International, 2001, 2002). But in most countries, it is brought about because there are problems of socio-economic inequality, the subordination of women and children, and the perpetuation of attitudes and values that view children as economic commodities (WCCSEC, 1996; Save the Children, 1996).

Approximately, one million children around the world, mainly young females, are forced into prostitution every year and the total number of prostituted children now could be as high as ten million (Willis and Levy, 2002; UNICEF, 2003a). In 2000, about 1.8 million children worldwide were commercially sexually exploited (IPEC, 2002a). In the Asia-Pacific region, the number of children involved in prostitution and pornography in 2000 was reported to be about 590,000 (UNICEF, 2003a). Several sources indicate that Southeast Asia is the part of the Asia-Pacific region which has the largest child prostitution problem, involving an estimated 200,000-800,000 children in Thailand, 24,000-35,000 in Cambodia, 40,000-100,000 in Philippines, 42,000 in Indonesia and 20,000-40,000 in Vietnam (Meier, 2000; Willis and Levy, 2002; Montgomery, 2001; Future Group, 2001; Flowers, 1998). There are no statistical data available for the number of prostituted children in other Southeast Asia countries like



Myanmar, Brunei, Singapore, and Laos, but the phenomenon does exist in these countries (U.S. Department of State, 2000; UNICEF, 2001b, 2003b; Lim, 1998a).

Table 1.1: Estimated Number of Children Exploited through Prostitution

Country (city)	Numbers of Children
Southeast Asia	
Cambodia	24,000–35,000
Indonesia	42,000
Vietnam	20,000–40,000
Philippines	40,000 - 100,000
Thailand	200,000 - 800,000
South Asia	
Bangladesh (Dacca)	10,000
Nepal	28,000 - 40,000
Pakistan	20,000 - 40,000
India	400,000 - 575,000
East Asia	
China	200,000
Taiwan	40,000 - 60,000
South America	
Brazil	100,000 - 500,000
Colombia (Bogotá)	5,000 - 7,000
Dominican Republic	25,500
Paraguay	26,000
Venezuela	40,000
Europe	
Netherlands	1,000
Russia	20,000 - 30,000
North America	
USA	300,000
Africa	
Zambia	70,000

Source: Willis and Levy (2002), Meier (2000), Montgomery (2001), Future Group (2001), and Flowers (1998).

Malaysia is very much part of the sex tourist map in Southeast Asia. Hong (1985) reveals that some Malaysian holiday packages sold abroad use sex as bait to attract tourists as a marketing strategy. It is difficult not to say child prostitution will not be used as part of the strategy. Child prostitution does exist in this country, but it is nowhere near the scale of Bangkok and Manila (U.S. Department of State, 2000; Hong, 1985). Cordingley and Gee (1997) report that even though the Malaysian government purports to take an aggressive stand on moral issues, large numbers of young women under 16 are involved in prostitution. Abdul Hadi (1980) estimates that 2,000–8,000 young women below 21 years old were prostituted in the late 1970s. The ILO roughly

estimates the number of prostitutes in Malaysia during 1993/94 was between 43,000 and 142,000 (most likely closer to the upper limit) and they were mainly women. But there were also men (transvestites) and children (Lim, 1998b). According to Bruce (cited in Lim, 1998b), 2,626 women and girls were rescued from brothels, bars, massage parlours and houses of prostitution in the period of 1986-1990, and 50 percent of them were under 18 years, and the rest were between 18 and 21 years. He also states that teenage schoolgirls who were involved in prostitution also tried to recruit their classmates into sex rings, and eventually persuaded them to enter the profession. Rokiah (1995) reports that 1,401 young women below 21 years old were safeguarded from prostitution in 1991-1995. During the first six months of 1995, 92 young women were safeguarded and the youngest was 16 years old. Based on the statistics compiled by the Department of Social Welfare for a five-year period (1995-1999), the number of young women involved in prostitution and other vice-related activities was 4,315 cases (Sayed Abdul Rahman, 2000). Data from the Royal Malaysian Police shows that 1,493 young women were safeguarded from prostitution in the period of 1996-2000 (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2: The Number of Young Women Safeguarded from Prostitution by the Royal Malaysian Police

Ethnic	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Sept. 2000
Malay	86	67	88	113	86	175	161	128	94	38
Chinese	268	124	266	175	203	152	227	231	115	72
Indian	12	6	4	7	3	3	10	7	8	8
Others	26	7	17	30	9	16	6	6	19	17
Total	392	204	375	325	301	346	404	372	236	135

Source: Royal Malaysian Police (2000).

The statistics above give only a rough estimation of the scale of the phenomenon in the country. There are approximately 75,000 children living on the streets and 10,000 drug addicts and 5,000 runaways reported each year (West, 2003; Government of Malaysia, 1996; Badaruddin, 2002). Even if only a small percentage of these children are also involved in prostitution in order to survive, this means that the true figure of child prostitution in Malaysia is likely to be much higher than the official estimates in Table 1.2.

It is impossible to have accurate and reliable data on the number of children involved in prostitution in Malaysia because of the highly secretive nature of the

phenomenon (Estes and Weiner, 2002; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Miller and Jayasundara, 2001; GMCL, 1999; Future Group, 2001; UNICEF, 2003b; Swann and Balding, 2001). Like other parts of the world, child prostitution in Malaysia is criminal by nature and hidden from public view (Dorman, 2001; United Nations, 1996; Christian Aid, 1995; Spanger, 2002; Bagley, 1997; Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995; Ireland, 1993; Ayre and Barrett, 2000; ECPAT International, 2001; Amarasinghe, 2002; Anderson and O'Connell-Davidson, 2002; Boonpala, 1996). Under the Malaysian Child Act 2001 (Section 42 and 43), any person who is identified of selling, hiring or buying children for sex, or employing or using children for the purpose of prostitution, is liable to be charged with a fine not exceeding RM50,000, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 15 years, or both. Therefore, most of the prostitution activities operate clandestinely in off-street locations like health spas, saunas, beauty salons, bars, lounges, private residences, hotels, and other hidden locations involving, but not always, organized crime groups (Raymond et al., 2001; Klain, 1999; UNICEF, 2003b; O'Grady, 1994).

It is not simply that the debate about prostitution has changed, prostitution like other 'criminal activities', is expanding and growing (Scambler and Scambler, 1997; Kempadoo and Dozema, 1998; Elias et al., 1998; Weitzer, 2000b; Barrett, 1998). The number of children involved in prostitution ten years ago was small and male prostitution could be considered non-existent (O'Grady, 1994; Daniels, 2002; O'Neill, 1997; Barry, 1995). But, there are certainly males exchanging sex for money or resources in Malaysia today. However, I will only deal with female children and young women below 18 years old because at this time they make up the majority of those engaged in prostitution (O'Leary and Howard, 2001).

1.2 Gender Issues in Malaysian Society and Their Impact on the Current Research

Throughout the majority of the 20th century, Malaysian society was dominated by patriarchy. In many spheres, men were regarded as superior to women and they dominated all areas of Malaysian society – political, economic, religious, and social (Winstedt, 1981; Zainah, 2005; Andaya and Andaya, 1982). Thus, the vast majority of authority and leadership positions were filled by males (Dancz, 1987; Andaya and

Andaya, 1982). Recently, however, the dominance of men in Malaysian society has lessened somewhat and social structures demonstrate some progress towards better representation and involvement of women. For instance, currently in Malaysia, almost 70 percent of students enrolled in public sector higher education establishments are female. The proportion of women participating in the labour force stands at 47 percent and is rising. However, it is still the case that women are subordinated in the values of patriarchal system where power and authority resides with men (Zainah, 2005). Significantly, this means that women are defined predominately in terms of their traditional female role primarily as housewives. For too long, according to Zainah (2005), men in Malaysia have defined what it is to be a woman, how to be a woman, and what parts a woman should or should not play in society. Then men use religion to justify and confine women to these socially constructed limitations.

In the Malay community in particular, marriage is regarded as the cornerstone of the whole structure of the society. It is often believed to be a guarantee against all sorts of social problems, while divorce is seen as their ultimate cause (Muhammad, 1995; Kulasegaran, 2001; Badaruddin, 2002). Therefore, every adult male and female must marry and have his or her own family. In the Malay family institution, the husband dominates the family and the wife is expected to obey his rule and law (Andaya and Andaya, 1982; Zainah, 2005; Dancz, 1987; Winstedt, 1981). Husbands are superior, the primary authority, while wives and children are protected by them (Raja Rohana, 1991). Wives do not own the production of their labour; instead, the property belongs to their husbands (Coontz and Henderson, 1986). A good wife has been defined as one who serves her husband and fulfils her duty in maintaining the household chores and nurturing her family (Adioetomo, 1997; Dancz, 1987; Andaya and Andaya, 1982; Raja Rohana, 1991; Winstedt, 1981). In this case, according to Mohd Shahrizad (1996), Coontz and Henderson (1986) and UNDP (2006), women within the patriarchal system are oppressed by their subordinate role in the family and they cannot escape because they are bonded to their position.

In Malaysian society, there is no distinction made in the birth of a son or a daughter. The birth of either sex is seen as the will of God. Distinctions however, are made in the upbringing of the children (Raja Rohana, 1991; Winstedt, 1981). Female children, especially in Malay families, are given attention and protection more than male children. Two aspects of their life, virginity and feminine identity, are closely

monitored while they grow up. Thus, their socialisation process is limited only to the same gender. They are not allowed to move freely among boys or men, particularly when they approach puberty (Raja Rohana, 1991; Winstedt, 1981). Families are often afraid that their daughters will engage in sexual intercourse before marriage. This idea comes from a commonly held belief system that a female has nine *nafsu* (desires) and one *akal* (mind), whereas male human being has nine *akal* and one *nafsu*. In other words, females are viewed as having more desire to have sex than males. In my opinion, there is no evidence to support such a view, but the belief system is well established and fixed in Malaysian society (Azam, 1995; Muhammad, 1995).

Additionally, in relation to the socialisation process, families are often afraid to let their daughters mix closely with boys because they want to prevent their daughter from being a victim of sexual exploitation. Some are also afraid that their daughter may lose her feminine identity and be a ‘tomboy’ if she socialises with boys. In Malaysian society, a daughter is often expected to uphold traditional feminine values. Her mother becomes a role model and a main source of learning for these values. From an early age, a daughter is exposed to her mother’s duties in the household. This is akin to a grooming process to encourage her development into a ‘responsible daughter’. While responsibilities are also placed upon the son, he, by contrast, is allowed to enjoy a carefree freedom until such time when he takes over family responsibilities (Raja Rohana, 1991).

The obligation to protect a girl’s virginity from exploitation before she is married is often seen as one of the family’s biggest challenges. It is frequently viewed as a ‘burden’ that the families need to carry on, as a Malay proverb suggests that “it is easier to take care of a field of cows than to look after a daughter”. The ‘burden’, it is assumed, will end as soon as the daughter is married. Sex before marriage is strongly opposed and girls who get involved in sexual relationships before marriage often face more severe punishment and stigma from their families and from society than boys (Rashidah et al., 1995; Eng, 1997; Rastam et al., 2002). In many cases, even if she is a rape victim or was forced to have sex, the girl is still blamed for losing her virginity. In contrast, the male who exploited her is seldom brought to justice or to face social punishment. If he is caught by the girl’s family, often he is forced to marry the girl as a ‘punishment’. Cases like are rarely reported to the police because families are afraid that the community will find out that their daughter is not a virgin anymore. Of course, there

is an enormous double standard in operation here as the stigma and shame associated with pre-marital sex is not directed towards males. Men prefer to marry a virgin woman because virginity is a symbol of a 'good woman' (Rastam et al., 2002; Eng, 1997). A girl or woman who is not a virgin not only loses marriage prospects, but is also branded as a 'wild' girl, 'dirty', or 'slut' (Rashidah et al., 1995; Abdul Hadi, 1980). As a result of this, some girls have been forced by their families to marry men who were also their rapist (Rastam et al., 2002).

Like girls who lose their virginity before marriage, divorced women are also socially stigmatised by society. While people think that females should be protected because they are 'weak' – i.e. they cannot gain complete independent status without help from their male counterparts – they are also frequently blamed for their marriage failure, even though the right to end the marriage is not in her hands (ADB, 2002). In law that right belongs solely to her husband. When a woman is divorced, her status becomes lower, from that of a wife to a *janda* (divorcee), a term which has a variety of very negative connotations associated with it. *Janda* are assumed to have caused the troubles in the marriage, or a woman to have failed to perform adequately her role as a wife, mother, daughter-in-law, and lover to her husband (Rashidah et al., 1995). Often the *janda* is branded as incomplete, a 'slut', 'unmanageable', a 'sinner' and a woman with higher sexual needs (Abdul Hadi, 1980). The term *janda* can make a woman break down in tears when she is called by that name. On the other hand, a man who divorced his wife faces lesser stigma from society compared to a divorced woman (Rastam et al., 2002). The potential for him to re-marry after his divorce is greater than it is for a divorced woman. *Duda* (divorced man) may not only have one wife, but can have up to four wives. In Malay society, men have the right to be polygamous with up to four wives (ADB, 2002). Men with two wives are not uncommon and such men often speak proudly of this as a symbol of male status. Women, however, are not permitted to practise polygamy. Often men who practise polygamy state that they do so in order to protect women's welfare. Interestingly, while they are talking about women's welfare, they frequently choose 'pretty' and virgin women as young as 19, 20 and 21 years old as wives. Why do they not choose a *janda* who has five or ten children, for the sake of the woman's welfare, to be their wife? According to Raja Rohana (1991), these men simply marry for the sake of fun and convenience.

In the preceding section, I have outlined the overwhelming and continuing nature of unequal gender relations in Malaysian society. Of course, many of the above issues are centrally concerned with women's sexual behaviour and the subordination of women's sexuality within a male dominated, patriarchal society. These issues also strike at the heart of the current research with its emphasis on the prostitution of young women. In relation to prostitution, it has long been recognised by feminist groups that male domination over subordinate females is a root cause of both adult and child prostitution (Ennew, 1986; Jacobson, 2002; Hughes, 2000b; Truong, 1986; Delacoste and Alexander, 1998; Edlund and Korn, 2001). Feminist commentators have argued that patriarchy, oppression and discrimination against the female gender in society underpin the entry of women and children into prostitution (Barry, 1995; O'Neill, 2001; Jeffreys, 1997; Alexander, 1998; Brock, 1998; Edwards, 1997). Indeed, some authors suggest that prostitution is the manifestation of male subjugation over females (Elias et al., 1998; Kempadoo and Doezema, 1998; Scambler and Scambler, 1997). Women and children are said to be involved in prostitution as a response to their oppressed position in society by patriarchal domination (Baumeister and Vohs, 2004; Delacoste and Alexander, 1998). O'Connell-Davidson (1998) also claims that prostitution is a straightforward expression of patriarchal domination. Given the analysis offered above, it is clear that Malaysian society, with its strong patriarchal nature, provides fertile ground for the oppression of women and children through prostitution.

However, the relationship between prostitution and male domination over subordinate females is not straightforward. Prostitution is an inherently gendered issue, with almost all customers, pimps and abusers of prostituted females being males (Weitzer, 2000b; Bruce, 1996; Jeffreys, 1997; Yates et al., 1991; Barry, 1995; Silbert, 1986; Beyer, 1996; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998; Willis and Levy, 2002; O'Neill, 2001; Weisberg, 1985; Cusick, 2002). However, as a single explanatory factor, the presence of gender imbalances in a patriarchal society is not enough to explain how individual women and children become involved in prostitution. The majority of women and children within the patriarchal system are not involved in prostitution. Therefore, other factors are likely to impact and interact specifically on the vulnerability of victims in relation to prostitution involvement. The exploration of such factors therefore is the focus of this current study.

Of course, as prostitution is a gendered issue, so conducting research into it is an inherently gendered activity. My identity as a male researcher has been at the forefront of this research from its earliest inception to the completion of this thesis. I am very conscious that most researchers into prostitution across the world are female. Indeed, some people might question the legitimacy of a man writing about a phenomenon which is tied up with male power and the abuse of male sexuality. Additionally, in this study, I have chosen to focus specifically on young women involved in prostitution in Malaysia and therefore there is a clear gender difference between subjects and researcher. Two points are important to emphasise. First, theoretically, I believe that it is not contradictory for men to be involved in research into masculinities. A number of feminist theorists and researchers have long since advocated the appropriate involvement of men in areas traditionally viewed as 'women's work' as a way of redressing the male silence on the question of male abuse of power. As such, my choice of research topic as a man reflects my own deeply felt desire to address the shortcomings of knowledge and responses to child prostitution in my country. Simply leaving this for other female researchers in the Malaysian context would be, in my view, unethical and unsupportable.

Second, I am, however, aware of the limitations brought to this research by my position as a man. The research is conducted under strict ethical guidance and with ethical approval with specific regard to the impact of gender in data collection procedures. As it is clear that many prostituted young women would be unwilling to, or uncomfortable in, discussing their experience with a man, particularly given their own prior negative experiences of men, the study was planned and conducted so that female research assistants were responsible for direct interviewing, with my careful support and supervision. This is discussed in more detail in the methodology chapter below, however is offered here as an illustration of how gender issues are at the forefront of the study. In many instances, these ethical and gender sensitive approaches came about as a result of my direct action and awareness as a researcher (and through discussion with my supervisor) and were not explicitly required by those supporting or enabling this research in Malaysia.

1.3 Contesting the Idea of (Child) Prostitution in the Malaysian Society

All forms of prostitution are illegal in Malaysia. It has been denounced as an ‘absolute disgrace’ in society, and in religious circles it has been condemned as a sin (Mikhail, 2002; Nagaraj and Yahya, 1998). Despite public rejection, however, this activity has grown alongside the national economy and has prospered quietly in hidden places without much public acknowledgement (Brown, 2001; Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995, 1998; Barnitz, 2000; Abdul Hadi, 1980, 1987; Lim, 1998b). Almost all cities and small towns have this phenomenon, though it has developed differently in different parts of the country (Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995, 1998; Abdul Hadi, 1980, 1987). In Malaysia, prostitution is acknowledged as a female issue – an issue of women who sell their bodies to men for money (Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995). The women involved are viewed in a particular light, either as depraved individuals in a functioning society or oppressed characters in a base world (Montgomery, 1998). Often, they are considered as ‘morally and physically dirty’, the lowest social class in the society, ‘deviants’, ‘damaged’, or ‘shady’ people who are promoting ‘immoral’ and ‘perverted’ activities, contravening norms of acceptable femininity, and suffering a ‘whore’ stigma (Pheterson, 1986; Weitzer, 2000a; Farley and Kelly, 2000; Edlund and Korn, 2001; Brock, 1998). This is the popular image of prostitution in most people’s mind.

Child prostitution is also not a new phenomenon in Malaysia. But, it is a phenomenon that the public does not really know and understand. In fact many claim it does not exist (Sereny, 1985; O’Grady, 1994). Sources like Abdul Hadi (1980), Lim (1998b), Nagaraj and Yahya (1995), Rokiah (1995) and the Royal Malaysian Police (2000), however, contradict this view. People fail to realise its existence because child prostitution is seen as no different from adult prostitution. Children in prostitution are assumed to have the same moral values and attitudes as prostituted women and they are also ‘selling’ their bodies to men for money. Most people believe that children as well as women in prostitution choose to break the law and deserve whatever happens to them (Hofstede et al., 1999). No distinction has been made between the two groups of females in terms of their age, power, cognitive and psychological ability, as well as maturity. Like prostituted women, children in prostitution also have been stigmatised, marginalized, criminalized and treated abusively by the society (Shaw and Butler, 1998; U.S. Department of State, 2000). From a historical point of view, the negative

perception towards individuals in prostitution is considered a reverberation of what was said by Abdullah Munshi, the well-travelled teacher who was the first local author to report about prostitution in Malaysia (specifically in Kelantan) in 1838. During his visit to the state, he saw a few young women approaching the traders' boats in the evening and he believed they were prostitutes due to their semi-naked appearance; dressing in a sarong from the neck to the feet without a shirt, and wearing flowers from the top of their hair in a bun to the knee. He did not ask who the young women were, but he viewed them as prostitutes and explicitly condemned them as filthy and shameless (Kassim, 1960).

In my opinion, the way Abdullah observed the young women is incorrect. Even if the young women were prostitutes, he should have asked them the reasons why they became prostitutes. Physical appearance is not definitive evidence of prostitution. A number of historical accounts indicate that there are at least four factors why women and young women were involved in prostitution during the traditional/colonial period: i.e. they were forced, lured, kidnapped, or entered prostitution because of poverty. For example, J.W.W. Birch, a British Resident in Perak, stated that many *dayang* (escort ladies) to Sultan (Regent) Abdullah were engaging in prostitution with the local people in the places where the Sultan visited in order to support their life (Sullivan, 1878). That happened because they were given only a little food and few wages (ten cents per day) for their job as escort ladies. Sir Cecil Clementi Smith (British Governor in the Straits Settlements in 1887-1893) also noted that many of the 'pretty' female young slaves became concubines to their owners (Aminuddin, 1966). However, 'unattractive' slaves were forced to prostitute and part of their earnings was handed over to their owners.

A historical record in 1825 (earlier than Abdullah Munshi's) mentions that prostitution in Malaysia at that time was due to the economic growth in plantations and tin mining sectors (Warren, 1993; Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995, 1998; Andaya and Andaya, 1982). Economic growth in Perak and Selangor caused a large number of male labourers from China and India to be brought into the states, which resulted in a demographic imbalance between male and female in the areas concerned (Hui, 2001; Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995, 1998). According to Hui (2001), in 1823 there was one woman to every eight men in the colony and, as the years passed, the gap grew even larger. For example, in Singapore (Singapore was a part of Malaysia until 9th August 1965), the ratio of women to men in 1833 was 1:9, 1:12 in 1850, and by 1860 the ratio

was 1:15 (Hui, 2001). As a consequence of this imbalance, there was an increase in the trafficking and exploitation of women of various ages for the purpose of prostitution by *hui* (secret society) (Warren, 1993; Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995, 1998; Hui, 2001). There were at least three *hui* in the Straits Settlements – Ghee Hin, Ho Seng and Hai San – and all were offshoots of the Triad Society in China (Andaya and Andaya, 1982).

The trafficking of children and women inevitably led to much abuse: lures and tricks were used to deceive reluctant parents and kidnapping was common (Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995, 1998). The largest group of women and young women supplied by traffickers to brothels in Singapore was Chinese. Also included were Japanese, European, Indian, Eurasian, Malay and Thai women and girls (Hui, 2001; Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995, 1998; Andaya and Andaya, 1982). Many trafficking victims felt that they did not have a choice, since they were tricked into the sex trade and/or subjected to the influence of procurers and keepers (Hui, 2001). Many were also impeded from freeing themselves of their bondage.

Even though Abdullah's writing and his critical opinions of prostitutes were expressed 167 years ago, we still hear their echo in contemporary society and read similar versions of his criticism in articles written by today's new generation of authors. For example, Muhammad (1995) argues that prostitution is a manifestation of moral degradation among women and girls. He believes young women involved in prostitution are people who abuse their freedom, have no feelings of shame and dignity, and are ignorant:

Prostitution is a manifestation of moral degradation among women and girls. The civilised society considered this activity as a form of deviance towards women and those involved are morally depleted ... When the activity is associated with girls, it is of course related to the freedom they sought, and their loose relationship of moral values held by the society. They have no shame and dignity, and hardly think of their involvement as endangering themselves, even though news on HIV infection is reported everyday by the mass media.

(Muhammad (1995: 22-23) translated by the author).

Here, Muhammad (1995) gives a very simplistic opinion of the young women. Does he not think that adult who uses a young woman for sex should be considered more shameless since he exploits the vulnerability of the young woman for sexual

pleasure (Benoit, et al., 2003; Legal Assistance Centre, 2002)? The exploitation affects a young woman; robs her of self-dignity or self-worth (Goldstein, 1987; Weisberg, 1985). Prostituted children should not be accused as ignorant. Due to their lack of knowledge, maturity and awareness, they do not fully understand the risks of their own actions and behaviour including the risk of being infected by HIV (Barnitz, 2000; Lim, 1998a; Flowers, 1998; Hofstede et al., 1999). In the case of HIV infection, adults who use the children's bodies for sex should take responsibility, not the children themselves (Johnson 1992; Voss, 1999; Saikaew, 1996; Flowers, 1998; O'Neill, 1997, 2001).

Another bias and critical opinion of prostituted young women in Malaysia was by Azam (1995). He accuses the young women in prostitution of being lazy people without any work skills except for fulfilling a man's pleasure. To solve their dilemmas, he suggests that these young women should be given technical skills and training in order to create new habits, then be provided with better-earning jobs, in order to free their souls from the their dark past:

[Prostitutes] mostly are girls who think they have no other way [to live] except through prostitution. They are lazy and do not have any [work] skills other than the skill of pleasuring a man's lust ... Cheap prostitutes who are scattered anywhere should be freed from the dilemma. [They] should be given technical skills and trainings to stem a new habit. Then, [they] should be provided with a better-earned job. Continuously, [they] should be motivated in order for them to be independent. [Finally,] their soul should be freed from the dark image of the past.

(Azam (1995: 14) translated by the author).

Azam's view (1995) is rather strange, showing his confusion and level of understanding of the issue. Does he not realise that children under the UNCRC should be protected from any kind of hazards impairs of their social development? By giving them technical skills, trainings, and jobs in preference to education, they are not freed from exploitation. Instead of being victims of sexual exploitation, they would then run the risk of becoming victims of economic exploitation.

Abdul Hadi (1987), like Muhammad (1995) and Azam (1995), also describes young women in prostitution as individuals who are immoral and who use prostitution as a way of getting easy money to achieve a higher standard of living. He believes young women who have low educational attainment involve themselves in prostitution

because they are attracted to the huge amount of money gained in such a short period of time in this ‘profession’ without the need for high academic achievement. In reality, many young women from relatively economically stable families and who have good educational backgrounds are also involved in prostitution. Such young women, it is suggested, are being exploited sexually by those people (pimps, boyfriends, relatives, and members of organized crime) who want to make enormous sums from prostituting them (Cordingley and Gee, 1997; Dodsworth, 2000; Bruce, 1996; Hofstede et al., 1999; UNICEF, 2001a).

Most women became prostitutes not because they are poor, but prostitution is an alternative to easily achieve high level of lifestyle. For an 18 years old girl who has educational level only at standard six, prostitution is a good source of income. Through prostitution, she can get a lot of money within a few hours. These girls work hard to earn as much money with minimum effort spent.

(Abdul Hadi (1987: 50) translated by the author).

Like many commentators in Malaysian society, all three of the authors cited above look only at the moral perspective of the women and children involved in prostitution, accusing them of voluntarily choosing to be prostitutes. Their opinions are full of prejudice, insensitive and lacking in academic rigour. They view the phenomenon superficially and fail to relate to the real issues behind the involvement of these women and children. All of them see prostitution as an entirely female issue and put the blame entirely on females for the existence of prostitution in Malaysia. What about men? Do they have no role in the involvement of women and children in prostitution whatsoever? Muhammad (1995), Azam (1995) and Abdul Hadi (1987), like many others in Malaysian society, turn a blind eye to men’s role in prostitution. In all parts of the world, prostitution would not exist if there was no demand from men, since they are the ones buying sex from prostituted women or children (Brooks-Gordon and Gelsthorpe, 2003a; Austin, 2003; Marttila, 2003; O’Connell-Davidson, 2001; Saphira and Oliver, 2002; Ireland, 1993; Johnson, 1992; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Bruce, 1996; Dodsworth, 2000; ECPAT International, 2002). To this day, men are still responsible for sustaining prostitution activity as the ‘oldest profession in the world’ (O’Neill, 2001). Worse still, men are rarely subjected to legislation and moral punishment. On the other hand, women or children have been seriously stigmatised for having sex with

them (Barry, 1995; Ennew, 1986; O'Neill, 1997; Goldstein, 1987). Weitzer (2000a) says promiscuous females are often defined as 'sluts', whereas male promiscuity is a 'badge of honour'. Purely a double standard, and as long as this double standard exists and the social structure surrounding prostitution prevails, the phenomenon will continue to survive and females will remain the 'oldest victims' in prostitution (Truong, 1986). Neland (cited in Davis, 2000) also remarks that as long as a man's sexual fulfilment is more important than a woman's, there will be prostitution, and as long as we create the prostitution market we will have to create the victims that will be sold there:

As long as the current sexual double standard exists, and as long as a man's sexual fulfilment is more important than a woman's, there will be prostitution. We will create a market each day where flesh can be bought, used, and abused to insure male sexual release. As long as we create the market we will have to create the victims that will be sold there.

(Neland (1998) cited in Davis, 2000: 141).

Like in the traditional or colonial period, many women and children who are involved in prostitution now, do so involuntarily and are sexually exploited by individuals such as relatives, pimps, agents of prostitution syndicate and boyfriends (McIntyre, 1999; Flowers, 1998; Nadon et al., 1998; Klain, 1999; McMullen, 1987; Sereny, 1985). The story of a 12-year-old Indian Muslim young woman who was found in a local brothel, as told by Karen Radzi, an executive director of IKHLAS (a drop-in centre that operates in the Chow Kit working-class area of Kuala Lumpur) below provides a clear evidence that prostitution in Malaysia is not simply a moral issue, but is actually a more pronounced issue of children's victimization:

She (12-year-old Indian Muslim young woman) ended up there (in prostitution) because her father was in debt. He had decided to pay off his bills by trading in his daughter. The price for sex with her was \$20 to \$25, but she was given to the clients the seasoned girls rejected -- the rough, bullying types. As a result, she was often in a lot of pain. The pimp's solution was to give her heroin. So, she's 12 years old, she's being prostituted and she's hooked on heroin. Good God! But at least we got her out of there.

(Cordingley and Gee, 1997: 4).

When morality is the tool used to examine the problem of prostitution, of course such incidents will be overlooked by the society. The perspective deals with only those individuals who sell their bodies, but not those who victimised them. More so, when it generalises all individuals in prostitution, both women and children, as morally alike – immoral, morally depleted, damaged and shameless. Now is the time for a change. Society should no longer use stereotypical morality as the measuring tool to understand prostitution. Morals of women and children are different as both are behaviourally, psychologically, and cognitively different (Lim, 1998a). Therefore, the involvement of children should be considered differently, or looked at from different context or perspective, from the involvement of women. Even though both are victims of sexual exploitation and treated as ‘sexual objects’, many studies however report that the victimization of children is more serious than that of adults (Barry, 1995; Ennew, 1986; O’Neill, 1997; Brock, 1998; Flowers, 1998; Dodsworth, 2000; Cusick, 2002; O’Connell-Davidson, 1998; Montgomery, 2001; Davis, 2000; Barrett, 2000; Lim, 1998c; Barnitz, 2000; Jesson, 1993; Muntarhorn, 1996a; Truong, 1986).

The use of a morality perspective also fails to see children as vulnerable, not fully developed sexually, mentally and physically, and where sexual exploitation is likely to impair and damage their development as well as violate their (Cusick, 2002; Lee and O’Brien, 1995; Lim, 1998a; WCCSEC, 1996; Barrett, 1997; Dodsworth, 2000; Barry, 1995; Klain, 1999; UNICEF, 2001a). Furthermore, such a perspective prevents people from viewing prostitution as not a ‘proper’ place for children to grow up and to enjoy their childhood (Lee, 2001; Postman, 1994). If people do not change their perspective, this may affect the children involved who will continue to suffer from victimization, as the shield of protection is not available to them in society. People may carry on seeing prostitution as ‘the same old dirty story’. The reasons why children are involved in prostitution, who are they, and how they lead their life, have never before been addressed in Malaysia. We owe these children their rights to live in a good environment to enjoy their childhood (Lee, 2001). We should not be vulnerable to future claims that we are irresponsible in allowing child prostitution to continue, as O’Grady writes:

If the world lasts into the 22nd century, future historians may well ask how it could be that human society at the end of the 20th century was so

irresponsible that it could let several million children be kept in slavery to serve the sexual appetites of adults.

(O'Grady, 1994: 7).

Essential in redressing the problem is the need for information. What we should fear the most is ignorance and lack of knowledge about the issue of children's involvement. Whilst most people know about the problem at some level, it may be that they do not want to hear about the details of such victimization and are uncomfortable with the stigma attached to it (Barnitz, 2000; Lanning, 2001). As one prostituted young woman interviewed by Appelqvist (2001: 5) says: "As long as people are ignorant and frightened, this (child prostitution) can carry on".

According to Montgomery (1998, 2001), child prostitution is quite clearly a *moral* issue, but it is one that is more related to the society than the children involved in it. When children are involved in prostitution, part of the blame should be put on society itself. Do we as a society really care about children's rights and provide enough protection to avoid their involvement in prostitution? If children are found in prostitution, we should admit that we failed to give them adequate protection and we should re-assess our social system, values and ethics as a whole. The blame cannot rest with the individual children concerned as their involvement does not occur in a vacuum; it involves a more widespread culture of exploitation, sexual or otherwise (YMCA et al., 1995). Protection from any kind of exploitation, including prostitution, is a basic need of every child that we, as a society, should provide.

I would like to conclude this part, which has stressed our collective responsibility to protect children from prostitution with a story told by Mettanando Bhikkhu, a Buddhist monk from Thailand, cited by Peter Piot (1996), Executive Director of UNAIDS, in his keynote speech at the First WCCSEC in Stockholm.

A woman approached a Buddhist monk, and said:

"When I was 12, my parents, who were very poor, sold me to a brothel and I have had to do this work ever since. I must beg your forgiveness for my sin".

The monk replied:

"There is no need to beg forgiveness from me. It is I and the world who should beg your forgiveness, for we have not done enough to protect you. Please forgive me and the world for having failed to protect you in the first place".

(Mettanando Bhikkhu, a Thai Buddhist Monk).

1.4 The Need to Research Child Prostitution in Malaysia

In Malaysia, there is no NGO like Barnardo's, the Children Society, Save the Children, or ECPAT that are directly involved in public education around children in prostitution. Many NGOs in the country like Women's Crisis Centre (WCC), *Darul Saadah*, *Asrama* Good Shepherd, Mercy Welfare Society, and *Asrama Seri Murni*, to name a few, are involved only in the practical aspects of providing counselling, legal advice, emotional support and temporary shelter to children in crisis. Campaigns to raise public awareness of the phenomenon and to stop child prostitution have been neglected. The Malaysian Association for the Protection of Children (MAPC) claims its work is to maintain and promote knowledge on the protection of children in all aspects. At governmental level, according to the ECPAT International (2002), the Malaysian government, like those of Brunei, Singapore and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, continues to state that the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) (child prostitution, child pornography and trafficking of children for sexual purposes) is not a problem in the country. It is believed that the phenomenon is not considered a problem because of national embarrassment (Barnitz, 2000). The government's position is, however, contradicted by the work of Cordingley and Gee (1997), Abdul Hadi (1980, 1987), Lim (1998b), Rokiah (1995), the Royal Malaysian Police (2000), and Nagaraj and Yahya (1995, 1998) as mentioned earlier. Malaysia is one of the countries that has already ratified the Agenda for Action to combat the CSEC of 20th December 2001 which was agreed during the Second WCCSEC in Yokohama, Japan, that is five years after the First WCCSEC in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1996 (ECPAT International, 2004). No National Plans of Action (NPA) have been provided so far on this issue and there is no governmental attempt to raise awareness of this issue in Malaysia. The government does, however, provide five rehabilitation centres to safeguard children who are detained as a result of prostitution.

In terms of research, child prostitution is relatively neglected in Malaysia. Very few studies have been done on the subject (Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995). Few researchers appear interested in studying this area, maybe because prostitution is regarded as an unrespectable or unpleasant 'profession' and its undesirability can also be seen to reflect on researchers themselves (Ennew, 1986). Sometimes, those who conduct research in this area expose themselves to the charge of 'academic voyeurism' or are viewed themselves as little more than 'pimps' (La Fontaine, 1990; O'Neill, 2001). Additionally, this subject is difficult to study, particularly with regard to access issues, as the phenomenon is illegal, clandestine and criminal (Ireland, 1993; Weitzer, 2000a; Montgomery, 2001). Researchers who wish to collect information sometimes have to face harassment, intimidation and verbal or physical threat (ECPAT International, 2001).

Given this overall neglect of child prostitution in Malaysia in terms of policy, public awareness and research, as outlined above, it is my view that the current study is important for at least five reasons. First, we need to make the phenomenon clearly understood by all agencies and at different levels in society, so that agencies can become fully aware of the problem and can develop appropriate responses to protect and support the children. Most people in Malaysia depend almost entirely on the media for information about (child) prostitution (Abdul Hadi, 1987). However, the media rarely raises the issue and, when it does, is guided by concerns for profit or political ends, often substituting understanding for sensationalism and moral outrage (Montgomery, 1998; O'Neill, 2001). Oon EE Seng, a Malaysian journalist, suggests that the media in most Asian Countries turns a blind eye to child prostitution because of the notion that sex trade is essential to the local economy and to encourage tourism (International Federation of Journalists, 1998). Hong (1985) says that tourism in Malaysia is not regarded as an industry per se, but as a vehicle for development and for enhancement of the quality of life. In relation to both statements, Lim (1998a) and UNICEF (2001a) report that between two percent and 14 percent of the annual gross domestic product (GDP) in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines come from prostitution. The media has to destroy the myth that the misery of children can lead to a secure economic development (International Federation of Journalists, 1998).

Second, we lack reliable information in Malaysia about the number of children in prostitution and their demographic characteristics (Anderson and O'Connell-

Davidson, 2002; Ayre and Barrett, 2000; Barnitz, 2000). The dearth of good information about the subject is recognised by a number of official bodies locally and internationally (Save the Children, 1996; Hamby and Finkelhor, 2001).

Third, we need to learn a great deal more about the lives of the children involved: who they are; how they became involved with prostitution; what the consequences are for them both in the long and short term; the methods used to recruit them; the procedures used to retain them; and their needs for services and support (O’Leary and Howard, 2001; UNICEF, 2001a; Klain, 1999). In this case, their rights need to be regarded with utmost seriousness and their voices must be heard in the fulfilment of those rights (UNICEF, 2001a). According to Klain (1999), understanding the scope of sexual exploitation through prostitution – its incidence, dynamics, and consequences for children – is vital in establishing effective social service responses. Furthermore, Spangenberg (2001) states that presenting the suffering of these children can work to change current attitudes toward prostituted children and the prevailing view that they are responsible for their own exploitation.

Fourth, we need to learn how we can better help the children escape prostitution and rebuild their lives, and, importantly, how we can prevent children from being involved in the prostitution industry in the first place (Jesson, 1993; O’Leary and Howard, 2001; Daniels, 2002).

Fifth, child prostitution is a global issue and is a concern to the international community (Ireland, 1993). It is also a complex crime activity involving, sometimes, international crime networks (Cordingley and Gee, 1997; UNICEF, 2001a). For that reason, Malaysia should not push this issue aside without having it properly researched and should combine its own efforts with that of other countries in the international community (ECPAT International, 2000). It is important for the country to have clear information about the phenomenon, about how serious it is locally and how it is related to other countries globally.

1.5 Research Objectives

The concern underlying this research is to assess the existing state of young women who are victims of prostitution in Malaysia and to raise awareness and consciousness

among the public, the government, and the NGOs towards the phenomenon. Seven objectives have been underlined in order to achieve this, as listed below:

- i. To investigate factors contributing to young women entering prostitution.
- ii. To identify the key characteristics of victimized young women and child prostitution activity in Malaysia.
- iii. To learn about the life of the young women during prostitution.
- iv. To find out about the person(s) behind the involvement of the young women in prostitution.
- v. To identify the degree of victimization suffered by young women and ways in which they cope with the victimization during prostitution.
- vi. To give an opportunity to young women to speak about their experiences in prostitution.
- vii. To provide recommendations as to help to reduce and to protect young women from further victimization through prostitution.

1.6 Term and Definition of Child Prostitution

It is necessary to define some terms that will be referred to throughout this thesis. To define child prostitution for the purpose of this research, it is better to first look at the definition given by previous researchers or scholars. In general, child prostitution refers to the use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other considerations (ECPAT International, 2001; Gray et al., 2002; Duong, 2002; Cusick, 2002; Barnitz, 2000; WHO, 1996; WCCSEC, 1996; Klain, 1999; Azaola, 2000; Hosey and Clune, 2002; UNICEF, 2001a; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Save the Children, 1996; McIntyre, 1999; Lim, 1998a; Appelqvist, 2001; Lee and O'Brien, 1995). Some researchers or organizations define child prostitution in more details, as follows:

Child prostitution is the act of engaging or offering the services of a child to perform sexual acts for money or other consideration with that person or any other person.

(United Nations, 1995: 5).

Child prostitution is the sexual exploitation of a child for remuneration in cash or in kind, usually but not always organized by an intermediary (parent, family member, procurer, teacher, etc.).

(Muntarbhorn, 1996a: 9).

Child prostitution is the sexual exploitation of the vulnerability of children for cash or some other form of pay and it may involve an intermediary like a pimp.

(Spangenberg, 2001: 2).

Child prostitution is the act of offering the sexual services of a child or inducing a child to perform sexual acts for any form of compensation, financial or otherwise.

(Willis and Levy, 2002: 1417).

The act of engaging in sexual intercourse or performing other sex acts with a child in exchange for money or other considerations (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, affection, etc.).

(Roman et al., 2002: 11).

The use of or participation of persons under the age of 18 in sexual acts with adults or other minors where no force is present, including intercourse, oral sex, anal sex and sadomasochistic activities where payment is involved.

(Flowers, 1998: 69).

A form of sexual exploitation of young [people] where they have needs that would compromise their ability to provide any form of informed consent to such activity.

(ECPC, 2000: 4).

The various definitions of child prostitution above show that the phenomenon is not easy to define. No single definition above can be considered right, wrong or the best. The phenomenon in Malaysia might be different from other parts of the world, thus it is better for this research to have its 'own definition'. Even the Malaysian Child

Act 2001 does not define child prostitution. Instead in Section 2, it provides a broad definition of prostitution as we can see below:

"Prostitution" means the act of a person offering that person's body for sexual gratification for hire whether in money or in kind; and "prostitute" shall be construed accordingly.

(Section 2, Child Act 2001).

Considering the circumstances above and also the attempt to develop child prostitution definition in Malaysia, this research will expand the existing definitions to add further detail specifically for the Malaysian context:

An exploitation of a child below 18 years for sexual intercourse or any type of sexual gratification (oral sex, anal sex, etc.) with any person, where money or other types of rewards that have monetary value (food, drink, drug, shelter, etc.) are being given directly to the child or indirectly to another person who is responsible for or who controls the child.

In this research, a 'child' refers to a 'young woman' under 18 years old. The word 'child' and 'young woman' will be used interchangeably. Adults who use or procure a child in prostitution for sexual gratification are defined as child abusers, and those who perpetrate, force or coerce children for profit are defined as pimps. Here, child prostitution also means youth prostitution, juvenile prostitution, teen prostitution and adolescent prostitution, as long as the young woman who is involved in this activity is below 18 years old. The use of the term 'child prostitution' in this research is neither to sensationalise nor to romanticise the problem of those children affected by it. The term informs the nature of the activity in a way that no other term allows (Brown and Barrett, 2002). Some researchers like Bagley and Young (1995) argue that child prostitution should be distinct not only from adult prostitution, but also from adolescent or juvenile prostitution. According to them, 'child prostitutes' (young women of around 12 or younger) are 'used' because of their innocence and their lack of secondary sexual development. In contrast, 'adolescent prostitutes' (young women aged 13 and over) are sought due to their nubility and their newly acquired secondary sexual characteristics. They also stress that 'adolescent prostitutes' differ from 'child prostitutes' because the 'adolescent prostitute' is usually masquerading not as a child, but as a woman. Bagley

and Young's idea to divide children in prostitution into sub-category of age is relevant in research because we can observe how prostitution significantly affects children at the very young age (pre-puberty) and those at the teen age (post-puberty). O'Connell-Davidson (1998) however, disagrees with the idea and states:

It makes no difference whether we draw the boundary of childhood at eighteen, fourteen or even ten, for the vast majority of child prostitutes of whatever age are actually integrated into the mainstream sex industry which serves all prostitute users, rather than working in some isolated 'market niche' that cater solely to the desires of 'paedophiles' or child molesters.

(O'Connell-Davidson, 1998: 12).

At this stage, the Bagley and Young's idea, even though is good, will not be applied in this research, as the priority is to give the general knowledge and to create awareness among the agencies in Malaysia about the phenomenon.

Elsewhere, it has been proposed that prostitution should be viewed within the context of work or labour and this has led to terms such as 'sex work', 'sex worker', 'sexual labour' and 'erotic labour' being used rather than the labels of 'prostitution' or 'prostitute' (Kempadoo and Doezema, 1998; Alexander, 1998; Delacoste and Alexander, 1998; Boyle, 1995; Ssewakiryanga, 2002; Brock, 1998; May et al., 2000; Sycamore, 2000). Such labour related terms imply that such forms of sex are a condition of labouring, work that anyone should be able to engage in at a fair wage with the full benefits of the welfare state (Barry, 1995). The terms are also seen as less stigmatising and having fewer negative connotations than 'prostitute' and 'prostitution', as they draw attention to the occupational and professional status of women and men who sell sex services (Cusick, 2002). O'Neill (2001) however believes that the use of these terms is to shift the discourse around prostitution away from issues of morality and deviance towards that of prostitution as a form of work. However, such terms dismiss the exploitative nature of child prostitution and disregard the inverse nature of power relationships between adults and children (Barrett, 1997, 2000). When we are discussing the issue of payment being made for sex with children, this is abuse and we should not legitimise it by considering it as paid 'work' (Cusick, 2002; Barry, 1995). Based on these arguments, the terms 'sex work', 'sex worker' or any term to naturalise child prostitution or to make child prostitution less exploitative will not be used in this

study. It is not only because these terms are inappropriate in the context of children, but also because it might lead some people or agencies to misunderstand and misjudge what child prostitution is all about. As Leidholdt (1998) comments in her paper presented at the United Nations Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery below:

- i. When governments, particularly those of poor countries, recognize prostitution as 'sex work', they can reduce their unemployment rate and increase their gross national product by moving unemployed women and girls into organized prostitution. If this happened to poor women and girls, organized prostitution, sex tourism and sex trafficking will increase.
- ii. When prostitution is accepted by a society as 'sex work', it becomes even more difficult for poor women and girls, socialized into an ethos of self-sacrifice, to resist economic and familial pressures to enter prostitution.
- iii. When prostitution is recognized as 'sex work', legalization follows; pimps, sex industry cartels, and sex businesses openly flourish, regulated only by the demands of the marketplace.
- iv. When prostitution is legitimized as 'sex work', the message sent to men and boys that purchasing the body of a woman or girl for sex is no different than buying a pack of cigarettes. With no social stigma attached to buying prostitutes, the demand for prostitution escalates.
- v. When prostitution is regarded as 'sex work', women and girls internalize the message that the female body is a marketable commodity. Girls begin to see prostitution as a career option; unaware that sex work is a trap that will deprive them of control over their lives.
- vi. When prostitution is legitimized as 'sex work', the values and dynamics of prostitution spill over into other areas of society, influencing the valuation and treatment of women and girls and lowering their status.

(Leidholdt, 1998: 4-5).

For all the above reasons, child prostitution in this research is regarded as a form of sexual exploitation. This research therefore does not consider children in prostitution as child prostitutes. They are rather prostituted, exploited, abused or victimised children. These terms will be used throughout this research interchangeably to emphasize that

child prostitution is a crime perpetrated by adults, not by children. The use of these terms also serves to highlight the rights of children in prostitution for protection from all forms of abuse, exploitation and threats of harm (Spangenberg, 2001).

1.7 Research Standpoint

The UNCRC 1989 is the most comprehensive human rights treaty and the most universally accepted human rights instrument in history (UNICEF, 1999; Klain, 1999). Under Article 34 UNCRC, every child has to be protected from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, all appropriate measures have to be taken to prevent:

- i. The inducement or coercion of children to engage in any unlawful sexual activity.
- ii. The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices.
- iii. The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

(United Nations, 1989).

Since child prostitution is a form of exploitation of a child for sexual intercourse or other acts of sexual gratification, the UNCRC therefore regards the phenomenon as a violation of child human rights and the children involved in it as victims of fundamental human rights abuse (Lim, 1998a; Muntabhorn, 1996a; Hughes, 2000b; Klain, 1999; GMCL, 1999; Willis and Levy, 2002; Boonpala, 1996; Ennew, 1986; UNICEF, 2003a; Department of Health et al., 2000; Barry, 1995; Hay, 2004). The UNCRC considers that children must be protected from prostitution because they are at a vulnerable stage of development, are physically and mentally immature, and need special safeguards, care and protection (WHO, 1996; Christian Aid, 1995; Lim, 1998a; Cusick, 2002; Lee and O'Brien, 1995; Barrett, 1997; Spangenberg, 2001; United Nations, 1989; Barnitz, 2000). Additionally, prostitution does not allow children to prepare themselves to live as individuals in society, or brought up in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance,

freedom, equality and solidarity (United Nations, 1989). Instead, it deprives children of good health, education, training, childhood, and even to the briefest moments of leisure and play (Lim, 1998a; UNICEF, 2001a).

Furthermore, children cannot consent to be 'prostitutes' because they do not have the requisite capacity to make such decisions (Barnitz, 2000; Ssewakiryanga, 2002; Willis and Levy, 2002; Boonpala, 1996; Muntarhorn, 1996b; UNICEF, 2001a). They also do not enter into this form of sexual exploitation through their own free will or because of economic or moral choice (Saikaew, 1996; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Hofstede et al., 1999; WCCSEC, 1996; Klain, 1999; Department of Health et al., 2000; Swann, 1998a). Adults may chose prostitution as a career deciding for themselves what is good and bad for their life (Jeffreys, 1997; Edwards, 1997; Gould, 2001; Brock, 1998; Sycamore, 2000; Boyle, 1995; Delacoste and Alexander, 1998; Voss, 1999). But, children do not 'choose' a life of prostitution. They lack awareness and have limited social, emotional, and intellectual development to understand fully their actions and make responsible choices (Lim, 1998a; Swann, 1998a; Saphira, 2002; Hofstede et al., 1999; United Nations, 2000b). Instead, they are lured, coerced, enticed or forced into a life of prostitution by adult due to their immaturity, helplessness, and weakness (Hofstede et al., 1999; Ennew, 1986; Boonpala, 1996; O'Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor, 1996a; UNICEF, 2003a; Department of Health et al., 2000; Voss, 1999; Gould, 2001; Dorman, 2001). Although some children may claim to be acting 'voluntarily', in reality this cannot be considered voluntary or consenting behaviour (Department of Health et al., 2000). For the vulnerable and often victimised children, there may be too few alternative options to choose from (Jeffreys, 1997; Duong, 2002).

2 Understanding Child Prostitution Globally

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines and discusses what is known about child prostitution with regard to the available literature and most recent studies. Its purpose is to construct a solid base of knowledge for the current research and to ensure a better understanding of the contradictory issues surrounding children's involvement in prostitution. A multidisciplinary approach to the literature is employed in this chapter because child prostitution, as we know, encompasses complex economic, cultural, social, and political phenomena. This chapter also highlights the need to eliminate the problem, to protect children from prostitution and to reduce their vulnerability towards all forms of sexual exploitation. Overall, this chapter provides a comprehensive review of literature focusing the following issues: a profile and pattern of children who are vulnerable to prostitution; recruitment processes through which children enter prostitution; profiles of individuals who are recruiting and buying sex from children; the prevalence of abuse and violence in child prostitution; the problems of substance abuse; and the consequences of prostitution for children.

2.2 Children Vulnerable to Prostitution: Profiles and Patterns

The age of children lured into prostitution varies. Many are only 11 or 12 years old, and some are as young as five, six or nine years old (ADMCPSEY, 2001; Flowers, 1998; Klain, 1999; Dorman, 2001; United Nations, 2001; Aral and St. Lawrence, 2002). A survey by ECPAT in New Zealand has identified that of the 194 prostituted children interviewed 10 percent are 12 years old or under, 15 percent are 13 years old, 20 percent are 14 years old and 30 percent are 15 years old (Saphira, 2002; Saphira and Oliver, 2002; Saphira and Herbert, 2004b). In a Costa Rican survey, 48 percent of young women in prostitution are 12 years old or younger (UNICEF, 2001a). Kamala et al. (2001) report that the majority of young women (N=246) in Tanzania entered prostitution between 9 to 17 years old. At least three percent are forced into prostitution

at a very young age, below 10 years old. Estes and Weiner (2002) however found the largest group of children in prostitution are young people aged between 12 and 14. Melrose et al. (1999) also indicate that 48 percent of 50 respondents in their study are young women below 14 years old and the youngest among them are 11 years old. In another study, Skidmore (2000) reports that the most common age of young women at the point of their first street prostitution act is between 12 and 15 years old. Raphael and Shapiro (2002) also found that one-third of 222 respondents entered prostitution for the first time before the age of 15 and 62 percent of them are involved before their 18th birthdays.

In a Bangladeshi survey, the majority of 298 prostitution-involved children are at 13-16 years of age and the mean age of entry into prostitution is 14 years old (Heissler, 2001). Silbert (1986) also reports that 68 percent of 200 respondents entered into prostitution at 16 or younger with the average age of first prostitution as 13. In another study, Swann (1998b) found that 49 percent of 84 prostituted young women in the Barnardo's Street and Lanes Project (SALs) in the United Kingdom are at the age of 16 or under. McIntyre (1999) reports that 75 percent of 50 sexually exploited children interviewed started prostitution before the age of 16, and 86 percent are involved before the age of 18. An Australian survey also found a somewhat similar finding with the Bangladeshi survey. Of the 3,704 children engaged in commercial sexual activity over the period of a year, the majority were identified at the age of 13-17 years (Grant et al., 1999). In a Vietnamese survey, 89.3 percent of 122 children in prostitution were found to be between 15 to 17 years old (Duong, 2002).

Several sources however report the vast majority of children involved in prostitution in their early to mid teens – young women between 14 to 18 years of age (Barrett, 1998; Flowers, 1998; IPEC, 2002a; Giobbe, 1992; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Hosey and Clune, 2002; Saphira and Glover, 2004). A few scholars agree that young women at the average age of 14 years are the most vulnerable and the greatest risk to prostitution (Heissler, 2001; Saphira and Herbert, 2004a; Melrose et al., 1999; McIntyre, 1999; Hofstede et al., 1999; Schetky, 1988; Weisberg, 1985; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Nadon et al., 1998). Many of them have been targeted by coercers whether they are living with their own family, looked after away from home, or have runaway (Department of Health et al., 2000). Some research suggests that because of the scare of the AIDS endemic, the average age of children in prostitution might have dropped to 13 or

younger (Flowers, 1998; Klain, 1999; Piot, 1996; Barnitz, 2000; Khodyreva, 2002; Save the Children, 1996; United Nations, 2001).

Children in prostitution come from everywhere, village, inner cities, suburbs and small towns, and from many backgrounds (Klain, 1999; Flowers, 2001). Some may come from families with severe problems, but this is not necessarily so (Department of Health et al., 2000; Bagley, 1999). Some may be running away from home, and some may come from families who no longer want them or who felt they could no longer handle them (Bittle, 2002; PCA-NY, 2001; Bell and Todd, 1998). Others may be expelled from school, school dropouts, have been sexually or physically abused, or homeless (Appelqvist, 2001; Saikaew, 1996; Hosey and Clune, 2002; Klain, 1999; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Bruce, 1996; Dean and Thomson, 1998). In terms of socio-economic class, no class of children is immune from the reach of prostitution. They come from all socio-economic classes, races, and ethnic groups (Flowers, 2001). Studies show that there is not only lower class children involved in prostitution, and that middle and upper class young people are increasingly entering into prostitution too (Weisberg, 1985). Furthermore, there is no single pattern that can explain how children are drawn into prostitution. The root causes of children involved into prostitution are multiple and complex (Muntarhorn, 1996a). However, to make the discussion easier, as well as to know in detail who these vulnerable children are, this chapter develops a profile of children based on characteristics frequently identified in the scholarly literature. In general, children in prostitution may fall into one or more of the following five groups. It is important to state that these categories are not mutually exclusive but often interlinked.

2.2.1 Children with Histories of Abuse

It is widely believed that many young women who are involved in prostitution have a history of childhood abuse particularly sexual abuse (Seng, 1989; PCA-NY, 2001; ECPAT International, 2000; Bell and Todd, 1998; Hosey and Clune, 2002; Weisberg, 1985; Dorman, 2001; McClanahan et al., 1999; Davies, 2001; O'Grady, 1994). Many sources report that childhood sexual abuse is linked directly to the involvement of young women in prostitution (Shaw and Butler, 1998; Widom and Kuhns, 1996;

Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Bagley, 1985, 1999; McClanahan et al., 1999; Patton and Morgan, 2002; Grant et al., 1999; Adedoyin and Adegoke, 1995). Estes and Weiner (2002) state the relationship between child sexual abuse and child prostitution is direct, powerful, and long lasting. In many studies, 65-95 percent of young women in prostitution are reported victims of childhood sexual abuse, particularly incest and sexual assault (Lucas et al., 2000; Farley and Kelly, 2000; Spangenberg, 2001; Peterson et al., 2002; Nadon et al., 1998; Johnson, 1992; Walker, 2002; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Hatty, 1992; Hosey and Clune, 2002; Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997; Roman et al., 2002; Hwang and Bedford, 2004; Leidholdt, 2003). Typically, sexual abuse has been endured repeatedly and most of the victims become involved in prostitution as a consequence of this (Nadon et al., 1998; Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997; Johnson, 1992; Farley and Kelly, 2000). One study found that, before they entered prostitution, 78 percent of prostituted young women were forced to submit to sexual intercourse before age 14 and another study found that 90 percent of them had been sexually molested (Saphira, 2001). Silbert (1986) reports that 61 percent of 200 respondents experienced sexual abuse. Victims ranged between three and sixteen years old with the mean victimization age of 10 years old. Two-thirds of the victims were sexually assaulted by father figures: 33 percent were abused by their natural father; 30 percent by a step or foster father; four percent by a mother's common law husband; and ten percent by strangers.

In New Zealand, 57 percent of young women in prostitution were sexually abused during childhood (ECPAT New Zealand, 2003). In Nigeria, 50 percent of 150 children in prostitution experienced childhood sexual abuse (Adedoyin and Adegoke, 1995). In Thailand, 73 percent of prostituted young women interviewed have a history of incest and 64 percent have a history of physical abuse/violence during childhood (United Nations, 2000c). In Costa Rica, UNICEF (2001a) found that close to 79 percent of prostituted young women were sexually abused before their 12th birthday. Swann (1998b) reports that 40 percent of 84 prostitution-involved young women in one city in Britain have experienced childhood sexual abuse and all of them have experienced violence. McClanahan et al. (1999) identified that more than one-third of 1,142 respondents had a history of childhood sexual abuse; the mean age of first abuse was 10.6 years. Those who have childhood sexual abuse experiences have substantially higher rates of ever prostitution (44.2 percent) and of routine prostitution (34.6 percent).

Farley and Barkan (1998) report that 50-60 percent of respondents in street prostitution have experienced childhood sexual abuse before they are 16 years old. Bagley and Young (1987) found that 73 percent of 45 respondents are victims of sexual abuse, 67 percent have experienced emotional abuse, and 62 percent are physically abused during childhood. Most of them had been abused before they were 12 years old and all experienced at least two types of maltreatment i.e. physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. The researchers suggest that prior to entering the street life these young women experienced twice as much sexual abuse than the general population, involving force and threats.

Mansson and Hedin (1999) indicate that 70 percent of 23 'former prostitutes' interviewed reported they had a difficult childhood including sexual abuse, emotionally negative parents, and other types of social problems. Widom (1996) who examined the case histories of 908 victims of childhood physical/sexual abuse and neglect in relation to the criminal behaviour reveals that childhood sexual abuse victims are more likely to become involved in prostitution than other child maltreatment victims. In further research, Widom and Kuhns (1996) report that there is an association between childhood sexual abuse, neglect, and female prostitution, but childhood physical abuse was only peripherally associated with involvement in the sex trade. However, several studies report that childhood physical abuse is more commonly experienced by prostituted young people than sexual or emotional abuse. Davies (2001), for example, indicates that 75 percent of young women engaged in prostitution reported they were physically abused, whereas only 41.6 percent were sexually abused during childhood. Hwang and Bedford (2004) also report that a lack of support at home was a common theme among 90 percent of participants interviewed, and most of them described a history of physical (73 percent) and/or sexual (55 percent) abuse at home. McIntyre (1999) found that three-quarters of 50 sexually exploited young people have experienced childhood physical abuse. In another source, Flowers (2001) reports that two in every three young women were physically assaulted during childhood in their homes. Farley and Kelly (2000) also report a high incident of childhood physical abuse in their sample as 90 percent respondents said they were physically abused during childhood. Silbert (1986) found that 62 percent of respondents experienced childhood physical abused and two thirds of these victims stated that the beating was not related to anything that they did. A Survey in New Zealand by Saphira (2001) reveals that over 68

percent of prostituted young women interviewed were physically abused and 64 percent were sexually abused during childhood. In another study, Hunter (1994) found that childhood emotional abuse is considered more significant in relation to the involvement of young women in prostitution than childhood sexual and physical abuse. She reports that of the 123 survivors of prostitution, 85 percent reported having a history of incest, 90 percent a history of physical abuse, and 98 percent a history of emotional abuse during childhood.

According to the United Nations (2001), victims sexually abused by parents or other close relatives are more traumatized than those whose perpetrator is outside of the family. This is because the perpetrator is someone they trusted and therefore their abuse leads them to lose confidence and restricts their ability to form trusting relationships. In the long-term, this could impair their future emotional and social development. Bagley and Young (1987) argue that sexual abuse or incest trauma can foster long-term psychiatric dysfunction of which prostitution was symptomatic. Silbert (1986) found that all respondents interviewed felt terrible about the experience of childhood sexual abuse, and reported that the abuse negatively affected the way they felt about men, sex, and themselves. Thus, 70 percent of them reported that childhood sexual abuse affected their decision to become a prostitute. Saphira (2001) suggests that child sexual abuse and more particularly incest ‘trains’ young women for prostitution. She argues that the father, in effect, forces the daughter to pay with her body for affection and care that should have been freely given. In doing so, he destroys the protective bond between parent and child and initiates his daughter into prostitution. The social learning theory can explain more about the relationship. According to the theory, childhood sexual exploitation teaches the victim to view herself as sexually degraded – as ‘loose’, ‘dirty’ and/or ‘damaged goods’ (Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997). Prostitution thus become an option for self-revenge for what they feel about themselves as they believe they have nothing left to lose (United Nations, 2000a).

I turned my first date when I was fifteen years old. My father had been molesting me for years, threatening me. I wanted out. Hooking was very liberating. I had control over my life for the first time. It was great!

(Erica, a prostitution survivor, cited in Hosey and Clune, 2002: 27).

Some scholars however argue there is no causal link between child prostitution and childhood sexual abuse, as evidence by the fact that most young people who have experienced sexual abuse do not subsequently become involved (Sereny, 1985; Bittle, 2002; Robertson and Toro, 1998; Hosey and Clune, 2002; Jesson, 1993; Nadon et al., 1998; Seng, 1989). It is generally true that not all sexually abused victims have severe reactions that result in their involvement in prostitution, and vice versa, not all victims who engage in prostitution were sexually abused during childhood (Bagley, 1999; Bittle, 2002; Jesson, 1993). However, it is important to keep in mind that the cycle of sexual victimization for many prostituted children has begun during childhood (Widom, 1996; Hosey and Clune, 2002; Flowers, 1998). Besides that, the involvement of childhood sexual abuse victims in prostitution cannot be seen from the narrow perspective of choice – they choose or willingly to get involved in prostitution because they were sexually abused, and because they have experience of sex. This is not the question. In the case of children, the involvement in prostitution is not about the decision-making process of the victims. It is about the sexual exploitation of children. Whether children experience childhood sexual abuse or not, they are vulnerable to prostitution and those who were sexually abused during childhood are particularly more vulnerable (Hunter, 1994; Dodsworth, 2000; Bittle, 2002; Ireland, 1993; Jesson, 1993; Shaw and Butler, 1998). Over 50 percent of children involved in prostitution are not by choice but because they are forced into the sex trade (Kidd and Kral, 2002). For many children in prostitution, their own histories of abuse and neglect have projected them onto a pathway of vulnerability, disadvantage and risk. Therefore, the link between childhood sexual abuse and child prostitution, whether direct or indirect is clear.

2.2.2 Runaways

Another significant group of young women in prostitution concerns runaways i.e. children under 18 years of age who leave home without the permission of their parents or legal guardian. In this case, runaways also include ‘throwaways’, young people who are forced to leave home or who are not actively sought after when they do leave home (Peterson et al., 2002; Dorman, 2001). Even though both groups of children are terminologically different, they are in similar situation, as both are not living with their

parents or legal guardian. It is estimated that several hundred thousand to over two million children run away from or are thrown out of their homes each year, at least half of them turn to prostitution in order to survive (Roman et al., 2002; Flowers, 2001; Cohen, 1987; Dorman, 2001; Robertson and Toro, 1998; Whitbeck and Hoyt, 1999; Schaffner, 1999; Johnson, 1992). Several studies have found that up to 77-90 percent of young women in prostitution ran away from home at least once before they turn to prostitution. However, many have extensive runaway histories (PCA-NY, 2001; Flowers, 2001; Weisberg, 1985; Johnson, 1992; Hwang and Bedford, 2004; Hatty, 1992; Lucas et al., 2000). In Thailand, the United Nations (2000c) found that the prevalence of running away from home among prostituted young people is much higher that is 92 percent. Other sources report that two out of three young women in prostitution are runaways; 84 percent of them report current or past homelessness (Walker, 2002; Farley and Barkan, 1998; Klain, 1999; Farley and Kelly, 2000). Raphael and Shapiro (2002) found that almost 56 percent of respondents who are involved in prostitution ran away from home at least once, one-third ran away between 2-4 times, 21 percent ran away between 5-10 times, and 30 percent ran away for more than 10 times; the mean age of first time runaways is 13.4 years. They also report that about 28 percent of the respondents were told to leave home by their parents or guardian, 40 percent were told to leave between 2-4 times, 16 percent were told to leave between 5-10 times, and 32 percent were told to leave for more than 10 times. The mean age of respondents forced to leave home for the first time was 15.1 years. In Moscow, IPEC (2002b) report that children who are runaways were more inclined to be involved in prostitution (77.9 percent) as compared to other criminal activities (56.9 percent).

According to PCA-NY (2001), there are two major motivations that lead children to run away from home and opt for the streets. The first is to avoid an emotional experience or consequence that they expect to occur. The second is to escape a recurrent or ongoing unpleasant, painful, or difficult experience in their life. Schaffner (1998) indicates that young people choose to run away from home as a last resort in order to escape from abuse and not as a result of 'impulsive decision' by an 'incurable delinquent'. Many sources document that the majority of young people runaway from dysfunctional homes or from homes with physically, emotionally and sexually abusive environments, including parental harassment, violence, parental drugs and alcohol abuse, neglect and other family problems (Goulden and Sondhi, 2001;

Saphira, 2001; Bell and Todd, 1998; Bittle, 2002; Cohen, 1987; Bagley and Young, 1987; Hay, 2004; Spangenberg, 2001; Silbert, 1986; Dean and Thomson, 1998; Klain, 1999; Dorman, 2001; Molnar et al., 1998; Kidd and Kral, 2002; Freed, 2003; UNESCO, 2002). Several researchers have found that 44-77 percent of young women on the street ran away from home in order to flee from violence at home and/or in their community, including physical abuse, gun violence, gang violence, and physical assaults on the way to and while in school (Patton and Morgan, 2002; Hotelling 2002; Robertson and Toro, 1998). According to Yates et al. (1991), young women who ran away from home and engaged in prostitution in most cases have histories of childhood abuse, particularly sexual abuse. Many studies found that 35-73 percent of runaway children experienced sexual abuse whether by family members or outsiders before leaving home (McCormack et al., 1986; Schaffner, 1998; Molnar et al., 1998; Stiffman, 1989). Saphira (2001) reports that more than half of runaways are victims of sexual or physical abuse at home, 25 percent of them are raped, and almost all came from dysfunctional families. Whitbeck and Hoyt (1999) found the percentage of children run away because of neglect and domestic abuse/violence even higher. They report that 59 percent of respondents ran away from home because they were neglected, 28 percent were abandoned by parents for 24 hours, 81 percent were pushed or grabbed in anger, 64 percent were threatened with a gun or knife, 18 percent were asked by a caregiver to perform a sexual activity, and 21 percent were forced to engage in a sexual activity. Kamala et al. (2001) also indicate that of 250 children interviewed, 80 percent left home when they were 12-16 years old. The reasons for leaving home are, above all, conflicts with their fathers (18 percent), violence and maltreatment by relatives or guardians (20 percent), and sexual abuse by relatives and members of the family (3 percent).

Before I left home I went through a really bad time and then I got chucked out of my house and told to live with my dad but he was that violent, he was a drug dealer and gave me all sorts of drugs and everything.

(Eve, involved in prostitution at 13, cited in Taylor-Browne, 2002: 1).

Furthermore, many children are runaways because their parents have drug and alcohol problems (Johnson, 1992; Peterson et al., 2002; Bagley and Young, 1995; Nadon et al., 1998; Robertson and Toro, 1998; Dean and Thomson, 1998). Nadon et al. (1998) found that 35-58 percent of children interviewed ran away from home because

their parents have drugs or alcohol problems. Saphira (2001) reports that 60 percent of runaways have parents who abused alcohol and/or drugs. Slavin (2001) and Robertson and Toro (1998) divide parents' substance abuse into two separate categories in order to detect which type of substance abuse among parents is a more prevalent reason to drive children to run away from home. They found that 41-66 percent of runaways reported one or both of their parents have a problem with alcohol, and 17-25 percent reported one or both parents have a serious drug problem. Parents' drugs and alcohol abuse often leads to frequent arguments or physical violence at home (Robertson and Toro, 1998; Kamala et al., 2001). The Michigan Network of Runaway, Homeless, and Youth Services report that over 64 percent of young people ran away because of severe conflict with their parents and 41 percent of them mention at the same time there was some form of substance abuse by family members at home (Peterson et al., 2002). Bagley and Young (1995) reveal that 80 percent of respondents left home permanently by the age of 16; forty-four percent of them claimed they had a parent with a drinking problem, and 95 percent claimed their reason for leaving home regardless of age was due to conflict between adults. Besides violence, abuse, conflict with adults and parents' substance abuse, another contributing factor that forces children to leave home and live on the street is economic deprivation (IPEC, 2002a; Dalla, 2004). Kamala et al. (2001) report that 30 percent of respondents mentioned poverty as a reason why they run away and 10 percent ran away because of the job opportunities available to them.

Many scholars agree that violence and abuse at home is the biggest contributing factor as to why children run away from home (Zigman, 1999; Dean and Thomson, 1998; Yates et al., 1991; Nadon et al., 1998; Spangenberg, 2001; Stiffman, 1989; Widom and Kuhns, 1996; McCormack et al., 1986). Therefore, it has been argued that is not sexual abuse, rather running away from home, that leads children into prostitution (Seng, 1989; Dorman, 2001; Klain, 1999). Barrett (1998) and Bittle (2002) suggest that running away is a more salient factor for becoming involved in prostitution than childhood sexual abuse. Dean and Thomson (1998) indicate most prostituted young people were initially runaways. The social control theory is able to explain the existence of the link between running away and prostitution involvement of children (Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997). The theory suggests that failures in the social bond, which arise from childhood sexual abuse, will make young people vulnerable to run away from home or families in order to join friends on the streets who later introduce them to

delinquent activities such as prostitution (United Nations, 2000a; Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997). Widom (1996) proves that childhood sexual abuse victims are more likely to runaway from home into the streets before they end up in prostitution. In addition, McClanahan et al. (1999) report that childhood sexual abuse victims who have run away from home are significantly more likely than non-runaways to have ever been prostituted (44.7 percent) and engaged in routine prostitution (35.6 percent). Silbert (1986) found that almost all the young women (96 percent) were runaways prior to starting prostitution and almost all the subjects (94 percent) felt very negatively about themselves just prior to starting prostitution.

Running away from home may turn children to the streets and then become homeless (ADMCPSEY, 2001; Goulden and Sondhi, 2001; Johnson, 1992). McIntyre (1999) reports many young people 'gravitate' towards the streets because they feel their 'street family' is able to look after their needs. In addition, they also feel wanted, nurtured, supported, and protected. On the streets, these children are able to seek or to replace the love and affection they lost or never received from their own families (Dean and Thomson, 1998; Klain, 1999).

Most are kids from families so screwed up [that] if they don't leave, they're going to die. The street, as bad as it is, is a better life.

(Johnson, 1992: 61).

However, living on the streets with the vulnerability resulting from psychological effects of early sexual abuse, inferiority complex, insecurity, social dislocation, with no safe place to sleep, and with little or no money for food or shelter exposes these young people to a greater danger of sexual victimization beyond exploitation through prostitution (Hatty, 1992; Flowers, 2001; Patton and Morgan, 2002; McClanahan et al., 1999; Hofstede et al., 1999; Dorman, 2001; O'Connell-Davidson, 2001). These children become the easiest target of pimps and sexual predators (Klain, 1999). One study found that being homeless for longer than 30 days is the single most determinative factor causing runaways to be prostitution victims (Nadon et al., 1998). This is because they will be approached for sex or lured into prostitution within 36 to 48 hours of being on the streets (Hofstede et al., 1999; Hosey and Clune, 2002). Johnson (1992) reports the longer children remain on the streets, the less likely

they are to return home, and the more likely they will be forced to turn to prostitution in order to survive. However, YAPI (1998) argues that no matter what the reason is for the children to have left home, and how long they stayed on the streets, these children are at high risk of entering prostitution since they do not have adults to care for them.

When children end up on the streets, they give up their childhood. They are forced to take on roles that normally are held by adults. On the streets, youth must find food, shelter, clothing, and other necessities for themselves. However, there are very few legitimate ways that runaways can support themselves ... Hungry, cold, and lacking opportunities, runaways turn to delinquent behaviour in order to survive. Some get involved with theft and drugs trafficking. Others turn to prostitution to survive.

(Peterson et al., 2002: 28).

Runaways who live on the street and involved in prostitution are often for survival (Judd et al., 2002; Anderson and O'Connell-Davidson, 2002; Melrose et al., 1999; Nadon et al., 1998; Aral and St. Lawrence, 2002; World Vision, 2002a; Robertson and Toro, 1998; Bittle, 2002; Widom and Kuhns, 1996; Jeffreys, 1997; McCormack et al., 1986; Seng, 1989; Dean and Thomson, 1998; Stiffman, 1989; Dorman, 2001; Finkelhor and Ormrod, 2004; Silbert, 1986; Johnson, 1992; Hay, 2004). The involvement is also known as 'survival sex', 'opportunistic prostitution' or 'sex for favours' where children exchange sex for basic needs such as accommodation, food, money, clothing, safety, drugs, transport, or protection (Davies, 2001; Grant et al., 1999; O'Leary and Howard, 2001; Weisberg, 1985; Flowers, 1998; Spangenberg, 2001; Greene et al., 1999; Peterson et al., 2002; Gray et al., 2002; Sullivan, 1988; Saphira and Oliver, 2002). It is important to note that 'runaway' or 'throwaway' victims may not get involved in 'survival sex' if individuals do not offer survival resources to them in exchange for sex (O'Leary and Howard, 2001). Most runaways or street children often see themselves as their only support (Klain, 1999; Estes and Weiner, 2002). With a lack of education and marketable technical skills crucial for legitimate employment eligibility, the children turn to 'survival sex' as the most viable economic choice for them to get the things they want or need (Weisberg, 1985; Barrett and Beckett, 1996; McClanahan et al., 1999; Grant et al., 1999; Flowers, 2001; Greene et al., 1999; Barnitz, 2000; ADMCPSEY, 2001). The choice, they thought, would be better for them than

getting involved in a more 'serious' criminal offence like selling drugs, stealing, or robbery (May et al., 2000; NCMEC, 2002). However, there is also evidence that runaways are equally likely to shoplift or deal drugs while being involved in prostitution, suggesting that sexual abuse may indirectly affect a child's entrance into prostitution through involvement in other criminal activities (McCormack et al., 1986).

I didn't like it but I knew it were the only way I could get money without going thieving.

(Louise, involved in prostitution at 11, cited in Melrose et al., 1999: 31).

'Survival sex' is common among runaways, as they believe they are doing what they must do in order to survive (Roman et al., 2002; Weisberg, 1985; Flowers, 1998; Spangenberg, 2001; Davies, 2001; Greene et al., 1999; Peterson et al., 2002; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Kidd and Kral, 2002). According to Flowers (2001), almost two-thirds of all runaways eventually turn to prostitution for money and subsistence needs. Several studies report that 24-55 percent of runaway and homeless children turn to prostitution to obtain necessities of life and to buy drugs at some points in their lives (Dematteo et al., 1999; Klain, 1999; Peterson et al., 2002; O'Leary and Howard, 2001). Lee and O'Brien (1995) review a number of British studies and conclude that 15-20 percent is the minimum estimate of the percentage of long-term street children who turn to prostitution for survival. In South Australia, one research study indicates that 34 percent of 106 young people interviewed are engaged in 'sex for favours' (Davies, 2001). The most common favours received for sexual exchanges are associated with accommodation, alcohol, and drugs. Greene et al. (1999) conducted a survey with 640 shelter youths and 528 street youths of 12-18 years old in various cities across the United States. They found that 27.5 percent of street sample and 9.5 percent of shelter sample admitted to having participated in 'survival sex' since they left home, defined as the selling of sex to meet subsistence needs. A study of 409 street youths in Los Angeles found that 43 percent of them engaged in 'survival sex'; of these, 82 percent traded sex for money, 48 percent for food or a place to stay, and 22 percent for drugs (Robertson and Toro, 1998).

Another study reports that a great number of children run away before the age of 16, and suggests that one in seven of them provide 'sex for money' as a survival

strategy (Barrett, 1998). Silbert (1986) found that the vast majority of respondents felt they had no other options at the time they started prostituting. Basic financial survival is the reason mentioned by over 90 percent of them involved in prostitution. NCMEC (2002) also reports that many runaways who are forced to sell themselves try to make enough money to survive. According to Davies (2001), lack of income is the most common factor associated with young people who participate in 'survival sex'. However, she also found that regardless of whether they are involved in 'survival sex', the income they receive is still inadequate. This may suggest that economic disadvantage on its own is not enough to incite involvement in 'survival sex', and that other factors as well may influence this behaviour. O'Neill (1997), Johnson (1992) and Dorman (2001) indicate loneliness and emotional vulnerability as the other two possible important factors that force or influence young women to be involved in prostitution besides the intention to make money for survival.

To sum up, neglect, abuse, and violence at home appear to be contributing factors towards children running away from home thus leading them into prostitution (Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997). It is important to note that not all children who runaways are involved in prostitution and not all prostituted children are runaways (Saphira and Oliver, 2002). However, sexual exploitation of these children combined with an unstructured and unsupervised childhood, emotional deficiencies, and other family crises, increases the probability that runaways will engage in prostitution (Klain, 1999; Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997). Besides that, economic circumstance in addition to situational difficulties when living on the streets provides the impetus for many young women to enter prostitution in order to make a living or for an economic survival strategy (Sullivan, 1988).

2.2.3 Substance Abusers

The third group of young people who are vulnerable to prostitution are those who have a problem with substance abuse. The relationship between substance abuse and child prostitution is hardly new and it has attracted much recent attention (Dalla, 2004; CASA, 1996). Numerous sources report substance abuse is common among children involved in prostitution; excessively high number of these children suffers from severe

addiction (Hay, 2004; Weisberg, 1985; Kidd and Kral, 2002; Saphira and Glover, 2004; Dalla, 2004; Warburton, 2001; Greene, et al., 1999; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998; Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997; Grant et al., 1999; Farley and Barkan, 1998; Davies, 2001; Saphira, 2002; Flowers, 1998; Bagley and Young, 1987; Dean and Thomson, 1998). ADMCPSEY (2001) indicates that one in four prostituted children consumes heavy amounts of alcohol, and one in three is a drug user. Dalla (2004), Saphira (2002) and Hosey and Clune (2002) found that 82-99 percent of young people in prostitution were substance abusers. Riehmman (1996) suggests that 82 percent of street children have sex while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The John Howard Society of Alberta (2001) found that 92.1 percent of aboriginal youths and 62.5 percent of non-aboriginal prostituted youths in Canada used a combination of drugs and alcohol. A Norwegian study, comparing young people who paid for sex with a control group, found there is more personal drug use among those engaged in prostitution. In addition to that, their parents also have a history of alcohol and drug problems (Brannigan and Van Brunshot, 1997).

Several sources report that substance abuse is a contributing factor that may lead young people into prostitution (Farley and Kelly, 2000; Spangenberg, 2001; Baker, 2000; Grant et al., 1999; ADMCPSEY, 2001; John Howard Society of Alberta, 2001; Hosey and Clune, 2002; Crowley and O'Sullivan, 1998; Johnson, 1992). Some young people who are addicted to substances may turn to prostitution in order to support their habit (McClanahan et al., 1999).

I was saving it. I saved a lot of money to try and save enough money to try and stop, and I've spent it all. I spent it all on drugs. Now I'm working every night because I have to because of my habit. Before I was just working about two nights a week and that. Now it's like every night, it's horrible. Because I've always got to make sure my heroin's there for when I wake up.

(Michelle, involved in prostitution at 13, cited in Taylor-Browne et al., 2002: 7).

Melrose et al. (1999) and Scott (2002) report that the number of prostituted children that initially are involved with substance abuse is higher than with adult prostitutes. Cusick et al. (2003) found that 56 percent of 125 participants started using 'hard drugs' before they entered into prostitution. Saphira and Glover (2004) also report that prior to initiation with prostitution, 38 percent of 47 participants interviewed were

regular drug users. Runaway children often report they have drug problems that subsequently lead them into prostitution (Crowley and O'Sullivan, 1998; Johnson, 1992; Klain, 1999; ADMCPSEY, 2001). Goulden and Sondhi (2001) reveal that over 80 percent of serial runaways (those fleeing home more than once) have ever used illicit drugs; one in twelve is using Class A drugs at least monthly during the previous year. Riehmman (1996) found that 84 percent of children living on the streets had histories of illicit drug use, 45 percent were heavy drug users, 10.6 percent reported they took drugs through injections, and 39 percent reported drugs used to be a problem for them. Another study found that nearly 75 percent of street children used illicit drugs, and 17.7 percent reported their drug problem led them to leave home (Robertson and Toro, 1998).

Young people who leave home because of drug problems often gravitate towards life 'on the streets', as these places are drug user friendly and it is easy for them to obtain illicit drugs there (Spangenberg, 2001; Cusick et al., 2003). Those who do not have prior drug problems may become immersed in the drugs subculture after few days, weeks, or months on the streets (ADMCPSEY, 2001). Indeed, Johnson (1992: 97) states that "there is no way to live on the streets and not get involved with drugs". Substance use costs these young people substantial amounts of money and the financial impact is often serious (Bagley, 1999; Cusick et al., 2003). Many runaways who are dependent on drugs become involved with prostitution in order to obtain cash to buy drugs (Davies, 2001; Robertson and Toro, 1998; Aral and St. Lawrence, 2002). In 1989, the County of Los Angeles calculated that 75 percent of runaway children engaged in prostitution as a way to support their addictions (Klain, 1999). Dalla (2004) found that 66 percent of prostitution-involved females reported addiction to drugs prior to entering prostitution. Reid and Costigan (2002) report that approximately 80 percent of female drug users in Guangxi, China became involved in prostitution to support their habits. They also found that 30 percent of female drug users in New Delhi were involved in prostitution because they were highly dependent on drugs. In another study, nearly 80 percent of young people interviewed admitted they used drugs at the time they first got involved with prostitution (Johnson, 1992). Alexander (1998) reports that approximately 60 percent of prostituted young women on the streets who used drugs, did so prior to becoming involved in prostitution, and indeed, turned to the 'sex trade' to pay for the drugs.

Ana, 18, sits in a chair in her mother's house in a poor neighbourhood of a major city in Brazil. At the age of 10, Ana started sniffing glue and quickly moved on to other drugs. She left home to escape violence and neglect and became a prostitute, principally to support her drug addiction. Ana continues to live in a world where violence is common. Now four months pregnant, she is also HIV positive.

(Ana, a prostitution survivor, cited in the UNICEF, 2003b: 24).

Addiction often influences young people to exchange sex more frequently than those who are not addicted to substances (Scott, 2002; May et al., 2000; Barry, 1995; Spangenberg, 2001; Hosey and Clune, 2002; Weisberg, 1985). CASA (1996) and Cusick et al. (2003) report that trading sex for money to buy drugs is a frequent and deadly practise in more than half of crack-addicted young people. O'Leary and Howard (2001) found that 60-100 percent of female participants in several studies regularly exchanged sex for drugs or money to buy drugs in order to support their addiction. In Thailand, prostituted children who are addicted to drugs are willing to sell their bodies 24 hours a day, whenever they need money for the drugs (Baker, 2000).

The most frequently used substance among prostituted young women are alcohol or marijuana, but the use of other substances like heroin, crack cocaine, amphetamines, hallucinogens, stimulants and inhalants is common (Hwang and Bedford, 2004; Robertson and Toro, 1998; Scott, 2002; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Baker, 2000; Davies, 2001; Klain, 1999; Johnson, 1992; Melrose et al., 1999). Intravenous drug use has been reported by up to a quarter of children in prostitution and the simultaneous use of multiple substances is not uncommon (Robertson and Toro, 1998; Baker, 2000; Scott, 2002). Hotaling (2002) reveals that 95-97 percent of prostituted children abused substances ranging from marijuana to ecstasy, speed, heroin, and alcohol. NIDA (1998), Kidd and Kral (2002) and Dalla (2004) found that cocaine is the drug of choice for 'sex-for-crack' exchanges. In a Costa Rican survey, nearly 60 percent of young women in prostitution reported they drank alcohol and smoked crack or cocaine on a daily basis, 55 percent reported daily marijuana use, 53 percent used pills and approximately 20 percent sniffed glue (UNICEF, 2001a). Riehmman (1996) found that of the 217 street children interviewed, 87 percent used cocaine, 89 percent used heroin, 47 percent used cannabis, and 51 percent used alcohol. Lucas et al. (2000) report that 80 percent of prostituted young people interviewed indicated they used alcohol

and/or drugs, 17.1 percent used alcohol only, 7.6 percent used marijuana only, while 24.8 percent used alcohol, marijuana and other drugs.

The reasons for substance abuse among young people are different before and after their involvement in prostitution. Many studies have found that young people use substances before their involvement with prostitution to deal with the stress of life on the streets and at home, such as coping with the painful memories of childhood sexual, physical, and/or mental abuse and its consequences include low self esteem, depression, isolation, guilt and self disgust (Dunne and Legosz, 2000; Alexander, 1998; Saphira and Herbert, 2004c; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Davies, 2001; Greene et al., 1999; Judd et al., 2002; Stiffman, 1989; McCormack et al., 1986; Schaffner, 1999; NCMEC, 2002; Dean and Thomson, 1998). Saphira (2001), for example, reports that 82 percent of prostituted young people interviewed in New Zealand are drug users and 63 percent of them used drugs to deal with sexual abuse and 72 percent with physical abuse they experienced during childhood. In another study, 44 percent of young people admitted they used drugs as a way to forget the stress of living on the streets, to forget the past, and in general 'to put the pain aside' (Kidd and Kral, 2002). Saphira and Glover (2004) report that participants (females who began prostitution before 18 years old) in their study who were sexually abused during childhood were more likely to consume a lot of alcohol and drugs and later to engage in prostitution (74 percent) than participants who did not suffer from sexual abuse (55 percent).

On the other hand, the use of substances after their entering into prostitution is often reported as a way to help them to endure the degradation and detrimental impact of prostitution as well as to dull the terrifying effect of childhood abuse (Flowers, 1998; Saphira, 2002; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998). Several studies have also found that prostituted children use substances as a way of self-medication to numb the trauma of prostitution, to block the pain and shame that result from prostitution, or to detach themselves from reality (Zigman, 1999; McClanahan et al., 1999; ADMCPSEY, 2001; YAPI, 1998; Dalla, 2004; Hosey and Clune, 2002; Gray et al., 2002; Saphira, 2002). As Rosa, a prostituted young woman said, "I like to drink, it helps me to forget everything" (O'Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor, 1996d: 10). Some children also reported they took alcohol and/or drugs before sex with clients in order to lessen the pain of intercourse, to overcome shyness, and to help them 'work' (Crowley and O'Sullivan, 1998; Johnson, 1992; Klain, 1999; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998; May et al., 2000).

Several studies also found the use of substances among young people increases during prostitution. Raphael and Shapiro (2002) report that 90 percent of respondents admitted that this was the case for them. In another study, Cusick et al. (2003) found that 21 percent of 125 participants started to use hard drugs right after they start prostitution, while 23 percent became hard drug users the same year they enter into prostitution. Farley and Kelly (2000) and Saphira and Glover (2004) report that some prostituted children increase the use of drugs or alcohol and the amount consumed during prostitution in order to anesthetize the pain of physical injuries and verbal abuse inflicted on them in prostitution. Sixty-six percent of participants in their study reported drinking 'lots' when they had sex for money (Saphira and Glover (2004).

After learning that her father had indentured her for 5 years, Min-li collapsed with hopelessness. "I began hurting myself, abusing alcohol, cigarettes, and amphetamines." Substance abuse helped her forget where she was, what she was doing, and her pain and anger. "I had no other way to vent my anger" was a common theme in the girls' descriptions. With drugs, they could retreat to a world where they were safe and where the pain stopped. Moreover, amphetamines had an additional function: They helped indentured girls stay up and meet the demands of long work. "I had to work 17 hours; how could I prop myself up?" said Mori, who was quite offended when asked why she used amphetamines.

(Hwang and Bedford, 2004: 142-143).

Even though many studies suggest that young people are first involved with substance abuse and then engage in prostitution, Dalla (2004) however found the relationship occurs in the other way around; i.e. that young people started prostitution first and then become involved in substance abuse, or that they started prostitution and drug abuse at the same time. She reports that 18 percent of prostituted young women admitted using drugs concurrently with involvement in prostitution and 17 percent mentioned using drugs following their entry into prostitution. Alexander (1998) also reports that 40 percent of prostitution-involved young women on the street began to use drugs after involvement in the sex trade. These young people may find ready access to drugs at a place where they are not discouraged from using them, where 'everybody else' is using them, and where they most certainly have the money to pay for them (Cusick et al., 2003). However, once they take drugs, they must continue to have sex to maintain the habit or lifestyle that they set up (Saphira, 2002).

To sum up, substance addiction and selling sex (or using sex as an object) means young people are paying for the habit (McClanahan et al., 1999; ADMCPSEY, 2001). The primary consequence of substance addiction is that it leads young people to continue their involvement with prostitution, and prevent them from being able to consider an alternative future genuinely (Zigman, 1999; Dorman, 2001). As well as being drug-dependent, prostituted young people might be more vulnerable to violence compared to those who are not addicted to drugs (Scott, 2002).

2.2.4 Children who Live in Poverty

Children who live in poverty are the fourth group of young people vulnerable to prostitution. Poverty greatly increases young people's vulnerability to sexual exploitation through prostitution (Hatty, 1992; Barrett, 2000; De Moura, 2002; Hosey and Clune, 2002; Hughes, 2000b; Cusick et al., 2003). Many sources suggest that poverty is the biggest underlying factor forcing young people into prostitution (Saphira and Oliver, 2002; Kramer and Berg, 2003; Klain, 1999; Azaola, 2000; Save the Children, 1996; Warburton, 2001; IPEC, 2002a; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Barrett and Beckett, 1996; Kamala et al., 2001; United Nations, 2000a; Bagley, 1999; Davies, 2001; Muntarhorn, 1996a; Dodsworth, 2000; Hughes, 2000b; Duong, 2002; Sorajjakool, 2003; Bruce, 1996; Baden, 1992; UNAIDS, 2002). Baker (2000) explains that whilst poverty is the main reason why children enter prostitution, this does not mean they are so poor that they have nothing to eat, or that the poorest of the poor undertake this work; the lack of wealth is the factor that pushes most children into this 'work'. Kramer and Berg (2003) suggest that poverty can possibly encourage the earlier age of entry into prostitution for young women.

Around the world today, children are increasingly vulnerable to sexual exploitation especially those who suffer from the effects of poverty (Hughes, 2000b; O'Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor, 1996a). Lockwood (2003) states most young women that enter into prostitution originate from rural areas, ethnic minorities, or among the urban poor i.e. street children. In the United States, poverty is a critical contextual factor in child sexual exploitation (Ives, 2001). In Tanzania, Kamala et al. (2001) report poverty is a source of child prostitution. In Bangladesh, the magnitude of

child prostitution is increasing following the rapid increase in poverty and landlessness (Saphira and Herbert, 2004a). In Vietnam, one survey found that 79 percent of children in prostitution are from rural poverty areas (Duong, 2002). United Nations (2000b) identifies rural poverty and rapid urban growth in the Greater Mekong sub-region as two key factors that contribute to children's vulnerability to sexual exploitation. In South Africa, many children forced into prostitution are predominantly living on the streets in the city or in poverty-stricken urban or rural areas (O'Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor, 1996a). While there is widespread recognition that poverty plays a major role in children's entry into sex trade, there is however very little research that empirically investigates this relationship (ADMCPSEY, 2001). There are two living conditions identified that increase the likelihood of young people suffering from poverty, which can project them towards prostitution; either they are born into poverty, or they are projected into difficult financial circumstances due to running away from home.

i. Born into Poverty (Poor or Economically Disadvantaged Family)

Large numbers of young women in prostitution, particularly in developing countries, are more likely to come from poverty-stricken families or socio-economically disadvantaged homes (Saphira, 2001; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Save the Children, 1996; World Vision, 2002a; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Amarasinghe, 2002; Duong, 2002; Bruce, 1996). Muntarbhorn (1996a) argues that poverty among parents is the major cause of child prostitution. In Northern Thailand, poverty is a leading force in propelling young people into prostitution (Warburton, 2001). In the Greater Mekong sub-region, 35 percent of families of the prostituted children indicate that poverty is the fourth most significant stressor in their life (United Nations, 2000b). Kamala et al. (2001) reveal that 80 percent of prostituted children interviewed agree that their parents or guardian are poor, many depend on small-scale farming, fishing, petty business, or begging, which could not fulfil these children's basic needs. In New Zealand, one study found that 57 percent of prostituted children are known to have come from poor or very poor families (Saphira, 2001). In another study, Amarasinghe (2002) found that 58 percent of children in Sri Lanka identified themselves as relatively poor compared to other families in the

community – they are unable to meet the monthly expenditure with the earnings of the family members, in spite of assistance given by welfare programmes.

There are other poverty related characteristics at play too. The families of the children are also often landless, in debt to the bank or moneylenders and suffer from marital instability (Van Brunschot and Brannigan, 2002; Kamala et al., 2001; Duong, 2002; Saikaew, 1996; Future Group, 2001). Often these young people have a single parent, a mother with no resources to provide social and economic needs for the families; sometimes the parent fails to provide adequate nutrition for the children (IPEC, 2002b; Saphira, 2001; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Bruce, 1996). If the father is present, he is often either a labourer or a petty trader (Amarasinghe, 2002). In few cases, single parent mothers are involved in prostitution in order to resolve familial financial difficulties, putting their daughters at high risk to follow in their footsteps, or to be forced to enter prostitution (Hatty, 1992; Bruce, 1996; Amarasinghe, 2002; Davies, 2001; Duong, 2002). As these women are affected by poverty, so are their children (Pearce, 2000). With no family income, children are especially vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse (O’Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor, 1996a; Ives, 2001).

Living in highly dysfunctional poor families and dire poverty sometimes influences parents to sell or to expose their children to sexual exploitation as a way of earning money for survival, emergency needs or to pay debts (Beyrer, 2001; Saikaew, 1996; Baker, 2000; Duong, 2002; Kamala et al., 2001; Save the Children, 1996; Hughes, 2000b; Hwang and Bedford, 2003; ECPAT International, 2000; Dorman, 2001; Johnson, 1992). In the Northeast region of Brazil for example, often children of poor families, usually with drug dependent parents, live on the streets, abandoned or sold into prostitution (Rosemberg and Andrade, 1999). In some villages in the rural north of Thailand, it has become common for families in abject poverty to sell their daughters to the sex trade (Farley and Kelly, 2000; WCCSEC, 1996). In Taiwan, a young woman can be sold, pawned as a prostitute, or even adopted into prostitution (Hatty, 1992). Another study in Taiwan by Hwang and Bedford (2003) reports that some children as young as 7 years old have been ‘traded’ into brothels, or sold off to adoptive families who intend to sell them into prostitution. Former prostitutes are among those who adopt young women to pass on their profession and to ensure their own income for old age. In the Greater Mekong sub-region, the sale of a young woman, particularly virgins, into prostitution brings an ‘enormous’ sum of money to poor families ranging from \$100 to

\$150. If the young woman is considered very 'attractive', she can be sold for much higher sums (United Nations, 2000b). In Pakistan, the United Nations (2001) report there is a premium on virginity in prostitution. The price of 'first night' sex, referred to as 'Nath Utrai,' is enormous when compared to the usual local rate and for this reason, a female child of a family may be forced into prostitution as early as age 11. In Costa Rica, Beyer (1996) suggests that, with over 40 percent of families living in poverty, it is predictable that young women as young as 12 years old will be sent out by their parents to earn money through prostitution. Yet, he notes that, in a few cases, prostituted young women were beaten by their parents for not bringing home certain amount of money per day to supplement the meagre family income. In Cambodia, Freed (2003) reports a survey by UNICEF that found that about 50 percent of prostituted women and children were sold to brothels in 1993. Two years later another survey by UNICEF shows an increase in the number of women and children sold into prostitution. Of those individuals sold into prostitution, 45 percent report they were deceived by pimps and 55 percent were sold by people they knew and trusted: parents and relatives (40 percent), boyfriends (10 percent), and friends (5 percent).

My mother is a member of a 'hui' (a credit group). She needs money to contribute to the group. She forces me to make money this way. I work everyday and she takes all the money ... Two years ago she took me to Nam Vang in Cambodia ... She said I would work as a dish cleaner ... I do not know how far it was from here but we left in the early morning and arrived in the evening. We came to a restaurant and there I was told that I should sell my virginity for good money for my family. I did not understand what "virginity" means so my mother explained it to me. She said sooner or later I would lose it, but better to lose it this time since I could make money. If not, I will lose it to some "bastard" friends and it will be wasteful to do so ... The customer was a middle-aged Chinese who bought my virginity with US\$300. My mother took money from him in advance and did not give any money to me. After that night, I stayed for about a month, making money by sleeping with all kinds of customers, including the Vietnamese. Then I travelled back and have worked in this neighbourhood ever since ... It is better here since it is close to home ... She just gives me two clothes a year and pays for my breakfast only ... I did not get angry with her. She is my mother and my duty is to help her.

(Thu Thuy, a 16 years old prostitution victim, cited in Duong, 2002: 38).

Young people are also forced to enter prostitution to be income earners to provide financial support (income remittances) for their families (Willis and Levy,

2002; Amarasinghe, 2002; Saikaew, 1996; Peterson et al., 2002; Simkhada, 2002). Some are forced to get involved in order to earn money to pay for the medical treatment of family members who are ill, especially their parents (United Nations, 2000b; Khodyreva, 2002). In other cases, when a parent becomes too sick to work, the family is likely to slip into poverty, and children may be forced to work in prostitution to help the family survive (Baker, 2000; Freed, 2003). In the Philippines, many young women migrate from rural to urban areas with the sorrowful acquiescence of their family to become the sole breadwinner for their large family (Bagley, 1999). In Vietnam, some prostituted children become major contributors to the family's income (Saphira and Herbert, 2004a). In a Sri Lankan study, 14.3 percent of young women felt that their sexual involvement was a way that they could earn a living and thereby support their families (Amarasinghe, 2002). As Noi, a 16-year-old prostituted child from the People's Democratic Republic of Laos said:

I really hate this work. But I have to do it because I need the money. Sometimes I really don't like the client, but I have to sleep with him even if I don't like him. I don't think about myself. I don't really have an idea about the future. I just want to earn money to help my mother and my family.

(Noi, a prostitution victim, cited in the UNICEF, 2003b: 22).

Azaola (2000) condemns the use of young women to earn money for poor families as the enslavement of the most vulnerable family members. The fact is that children who engage in the sex trade have had only marginal effects on the quality of life of families and individuals in terms of material benefits, as Amarasinghe (2002) said:

A few cases were reported that the money earned/obtained, or the benefits accrued have had a positive effect on the quality of life of the families ... The overall impression obtained in the study, however, is that the children involved in commercial sexual activities have not gained much economically from their sexual involvement. What is earned is most often spent on their daily needs, and enjoying life. On the whole, these children and adolescents continue to live in the poorer sectors of society.

(Amarasinghe, 2002: 68).

ii. *Forced into Difficult Financial Circumstances*

Young people also face poverty when they run away or are forced to leave their homes and live on the streets (O'Neill, 1997; Dorman, 2001; Johnson, 1992; Melrose et al., 1999). Even if street children come from financially stable families, financial problems emerge after a few weeks or months living on the streets (Rosemberg and Andrade, 1999). For those who are already from poor families, living on the streets may result in worse financial circumstances (Johnson, 1992). Estes (2002) found that poverty among 'runaway' and 'throwaway' children on the street is rampant, as are hunger and malnutrition. Sometimes, poverty is synonymous with street children (Rosemberg and Andrade, 1999). Young people who live in poverty are particularly vulnerable to becoming involved in prostitution within six weeks living on the streets (Eddy and Walker, 2002; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Pearce, 2000; Hatty, 1992).

I was homeless and staying with a friend. While I was there, I met a woman who seemed really nice. She said that she knew a way I could make a lot of money. She owned an escort service. After I turned two tricks, I decided that I couldn't do it anymore. I told my female pimp I wanted to stop. She held a gun to my head and threatened to hurt me if I stopped.

(A prostitution victim, cited in Hofstede et al., 1999: 10).

For runaway and homeless children, poverty is not just about lack of access to resources, but it is also about an absence of choice (Warburton, 2001). The lack of access to resources and information may affect their education levels, marketable skills, and employment opportunities (Grant et al., 1999; UNICEF, 2001a). As a result, many children have few real and effective choices for legitimate employment available to them (Seng, 1989). The lack of employment choices leads many young runaways, faced with poor financial situations, into the sex trade at an early age in order for them to survive or to look for their own source of income (Kramer and Berg, 2003; ADMCPSEY, 2001; IPEC, 2002a; Hosey and Clune, 2002; World Vision, 2002a). They may view prostitution as a resistance/response to privation (Dalla, 2004). Davies (2001) suggests that prostitution in the context of runaways and homeless children is possibly an active strategy to cope with the hardship of poverty. A study by Streetwise Youths in London reveals that 80 percent of a sample of prostituted young women mentioned 'a

severe or desperate shortage of money’ as a main factor influencing their decision to enter prostitution (Cusick, et al., 2003). In a study of Thai students, 85 percent cited poverty as the reason for children to enter into prostitution (Baker, 2000). In Tanzania, 70 percent of prostituted children indicated that poverty was the main factor influencing their decision to become involved in prostitution (Kamala et al., 2001). While the majority of street children choose prostitution for survival, there are also some who make a choice and hope to save money from their ‘work’ in order to return home to start a family and invest in a small business such as a grocery store or a beauty salon (United Nations, 2000b; ADMCPSEY, 2001). These children however are being victimised because of their desire to escape poverty and a lack of opportunity (Cusick, et al., 2003).

To sum up, even though the correlation between poverty and child prostitution is strong – it is consistently cited as a cause, and sometimes it is even used as a justification for child prostitution – poverty alone is not a reason that pushes children into prostitution (UNICEF, 2001a; Saikaew, 1996; Muntarbhorn, 1996a; Duong, 2002). Most poor people do not end up in prostitution. Many poor societies do not have a high degree of child prostitution (WCCSEC, 1996; Muntarbhorn, 1996a). In addition to that, poverty alone is not sufficient in itself to explain the phenomenon of large number of children recruited for prostitution, especially in rich countries such as the United States and Canada (Zigman, 1999; Azaola, 2000; Ives, 2001; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Hwang and Bedford, 2003). In both countries, a large number of prostituted children come from middle class sectors, and they engage in prostitution as methods of supporting themselves while living on the streets (Stiffman, 1989; Azaola, 2000; Estes and Weiner, 2002). Here, economic hardship alone fails to distinguish those in poverty who choose prostitution from those who do not, as indigence touches the lives of countless children, the majority of whom never engage in prostitution (Robertson and Toro, 1998; Dalla, 2004). Poverty is best seen as a significant risk maker for prostitution. If it is combined with other factors, young people are more likely to become involved in prostitution. Such factors include family disintegration, sexual abuse within the family, domestic violence, familial or personal drug addiction, migration, lack of education, lack of employment opportunities, demand for prostituted children, criminal networks, male-dominated social systems, socio-cultural traditions and religious practices (United Nations, 1999; IPEC, 2002a; Saikaew, 1996; Ives, 2001; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Van Bueren, 2001; Muntarbhorn, 1996a; UNICEF, 2001a).

2.2.5 Children and/or Families Under the Influence of Materialism

While there is a strong relationship between drug abuse, poverty, childhood abuse, runaway children and child prostitution, the link between acquiring material goods and the involvement of young women in prostitution should not be underestimated (Crowley and O'Sullivan, 1998; Bruce, 1996). The desire to acquire material goods is also known as 'materialism'. Young women (and families) under materialism's influence are the fifth group of children vulnerable to prostitution. Baker (2000: 17) defines materialism as "the need for a better standard of living or the desire to have the latest and the best or simply to have". Eddy and Walker (2002) note that there are distinctions between prostitution for survival and prostitution linked to materialism. They explain that prostitution for survival means young people engage themselves in prostitution in order to combat hunger. On the other hand, prostitution due to materialism means young people trade sex through prostitution in order to buy consumer goods.

The growth of consumerism leads to the creation of a materialist culture in certain societies which influences an escalating number of young women to become involved in prostitution (WCCSEC, 1996; ECPAT International, 2000; Khodyreva, 2002; Grant et al., 1999). It is thought that the desire for material goods can increase a naïve young woman's vulnerability to be easily lured or forced into prostitution (ECPAT International, 2000). Some young women may see prostitution as an attractive alternative for impoverishment and an easy way to make or to earn quick money (Hatty, 1992; Lockwood, 2003; UNICEF, 2003b; Gould, 2001; United Nations, 2000b). As Spangenberg (2001) says, prostitution is believed by some young people to be an easy way to make money to provide for their own needs in terms of fashion accessories and entertainment. This trend is increasing in some countries, especially when consumer goods are highly prized as a mean of higher social status (World Vision, 2002a; Save the Children, 1996). Studies show that an increasing number of middle and upper class young women enter into prostitution, often to service an expensive lifestyle (Save the Children, 1996; Roman et al., 2002).

What job pays £60, £100 a night? Sometimes you can earn £100 in an hour if it's busy. You know where you're well off, don't you?

(Dawn, involved in prostitution at 15, cited in Melrose et al., 1999: 51).

In Vietnam, for example, children ‘working’ in the sex trade in central Hanoi can earn £630 per month, whereas the average monthly wage is £15 (UNICEF, 2003b). In Nepal, due to the influence of movies, fashions and trends, many Nepalese young women believe that prostitution gives them a better life with more financial security than working in their remote villages (Lockwood, 2003). Crowley and O’Sullivan (1998) say that image and fashion play a significant part in these social dynamics and young people place themselves under enormous pressures to follow media role models and to compete with their peers’ latest fashion commodities in which this situation can lead some vulnerable children into prostitution. In the Dominican Republic, there are reports of young students, called ‘home girls’, who take up the sex trade as a way of either paying their fees or of earning extra income (ECPAT International, 2000). In Thailand, materialism is seen as an important factor in explaining why some children enter into prostitution (Baker, 2000). A recent report found a growing number of young Thai students engage in ‘casual’ prostitution in order to supply themselves with brand-name goods (Saphira and Oliver, 2002).

In this age of materialism, many young people are seen with branded trainers, sports jerseys and clothes. It is very difficult for young people who do not have these things to fit in (Gray et al., 2002). In Sri Lanka, nearly 60 percent of respondents reported the income received from prostitution was mainly spent on their personal needs including clothes, jewellery, household goods such as sewing machines and on recreation and entertainment with friends (Amarasinghe, 2002). In Lagos, some children exchange sex in order to fulfil their desire to go to the cinema or for fancy goods (ECPAT International, 2000). The desire for material well-being is also the motivation for Japanese and Taiwanese schoolgirls selling their bodies to gain money in order to buy a pager, a mobile telephone or other luxurious things (Lockwood, 2003; Baker, 2000). There is also a report that documents a young woman who is willing to sell herself for a few bottles of nail polish (Crowley and O’Sullivan, 1998). Saphira and Oliver (2002) argue that the involvement of young women in prostitution due to the influence of materialism might be as a means of ‘tension reduction’. This is because frequent and rapid sexual behaviour can make them use sex as a distraction or excitement to maintain high levels of adrenaline and avoid feelings of emptiness (Saphira and Oliver, 2002). Johnson (1992) gives another view of the relationship between involvement in prostitution and materialism. She says:

When children are raised in emotionally and physically deprived homes, when they grow up without love or nurturing, money gains undue importance and status. Rather than a means to an end, a way to obtain both necessities and luxuries, money becomes important for itself.

(Johnson, 1992: 102).

There are also reports that children are involved in prostitution because of their *families'* attitude towards materialism (Bruce, 1996; Save the Children, 1996). Baden (1992) indicates that young women are frequently 'sold' into prostitution by their families – often at a very young age – in order to purchase land, modern consumer goods, or to build houses. The lack of alternative opportunities and high rewards from prostitution compared to other work (as much as 25 times higher than the median rewards from other work) means that prostitution is often the most attractive of highly restricted options, from the point of view of parents and, sometimes their daughters (Baden, 1992). A study in Thailand found that 60 percent of families who send their daughters to brothels do not do so because of acute poverty, instead they are motivated by the desire to own consumer goods like TVs and videos (Brown, 2001). According to Baker (2000), this phenomenon happens because the villagers are constantly exposed to modern and luxury material goods through advertisements in the mass media, but their income from selling agricultural produce is meagre:

There are also fathers who have traded their children for opium, or mothers who seek extra money to build the brick house of their dreams or to buy the latest electrical equipment shown on TV, and selling their child into prostitution is a quick and sure way of earning fast.

(Bruce, 1996: 16).

2.3 Recruitment Processes of Young Women into Prostitution

Understanding the precipitating factors that make children vulnerable to prostitution does not fully explain how they are drawn into 'the life' (Klain, 1999). Other related aspects also should be examined. One of the aspects to consider that is quite important in the case of young women's involvement in prostitution is the 'recruitment process'.

Gray et al. (2002) defines ‘recruitment into prostitution’ as the process of selecting individuals for prostitution. There are many ways a young woman can be recruited. Often recruitment is accomplished through lies, blackmail, tricks, exploiting friendships or relationships, enticement, playing on the financial needs of the person being recruited, intimidation, and peer pressure (Farley and Kelly, 2000; Russell, 1986; Johnson, 1992; Phoenix, 1999; O’Connell-Davidson, 1998; Spangenberg, 2001; NCMEC, 2002; Gray et al., 2002; Barry, 1995). The recruitment process of young women into prostitution almost always involves adult accomplices, particularly pimps (Estes and Weiner, 2002; Barrett et al., 2000). Pimps are almost ‘invisible’ from the public eye (Abiala, 2003). They control the ‘business’ and play a vital role in exploiting and manipulating prostituted young women (May et al., 2000). Individuals responsible for recruiting young women into prostitution other than ‘pimps’ that are frequently mentioned in the literature are parents, relatives, and peers (Barnitz, 2000; Faller, 1993; Farley and Kelly, 2000; Taylor-Browne, 2002; Cohen, 1987; Gray et al., 2002; May et al., 2000; NCMEC, 2002; Klain, 1999).

2.3.1 Pimps

In general, a pimp is a person who benefits from the earnings or who lives off the earnings of a person working in sex trade (Hosey and Clune, 2002; ADMCPSEY, 2001). May et al. (2000) however define pimps as men who control the activities of one or more females and whose motivation in doing so is largely one of profit, and pimping as living on the earnings of prostitution. O’Connell-Davidson (1998) suggests that a pimp is as an individual who plays an active and identifiable role in the daily reproduction of one or more person’s prostitution and defines ‘pimping’ as the activity carried out in pursuit of that end. O’Leary and Howard (2001) describe pimping in the criminal statutes as receiving money from another person knowing that it is made in whole or in part through prostitution. Meanwhile, Gray et al. (2002) describe a pimp as a person who is supposedly looking out for, and protecting the interest of, a prostitute, but who is usually using them for financial or other benefit for themselves. According to Cohen (1987), there are two types of pimps. The first type is the pimp as ‘villain’ who lives off the victims, beats them, and makes false promises to keep them. The second is

the pimp as 'protector' who has a good relationship with the victims, protects them from police and 'perverts'.

Pimps cannot be defined by race, class, gender, colour, or financial status. Often they masquerade as talent scouts, professional businessmen, taxi drivers, hotel workers, sports persons, teachers, photographers, and may present simply as the 'man next door' (Eddy and Walker, 2002). They are not necessarily strangers, a gang leader, or a brothel owner. Even family members (mother, father, or grandfather) also have been found operating pimping activities (Barrett et al., 2000; Hosey and Clune, 2002; UNICEF, 2003b; Appelqvist, 2001). Pimps are almost always male and are apparently 'attractive', expensively dressed men like businessmen, either in suits or in 'corporate casual' style in order to make it difficult to pick them out (Spangenberg, 2001; Barry, 1995; Hunter, 1994; O'Neill, 2001; May et al., 2000; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998). There are women in brothels, massage parlours, saunas, bars, motels, or salons who fill precisely the same role as men in recruiting and managing prostituted young women (May et al., 2000; Hunter, 1994; Austin, 2003). Female pimps are often former prostitutes who recruit younger women to work for them (Klain, 1999; Hwang and Bedford, 2003). The pimps' primary goal is profit (Leidholdt, 2003).

Male pimps are also not essentially mature in age. There is evidence that pimps are becoming younger. Their average age is now estimated at between 18-20 years and they usually kidnap and promote 'prostitutes' at the age of 12, 13 or 14 years old (Spangenberg, 2001; NCMEC, 2002; Johnson, 1992; Saikaew, 1996; Gray et al., 2002; United Nations, 2000b; Khodyreva, 2002). Generally, male pimps are criminals who are not only involved in prostitution but also in other offences. May et al. (2000) found that all pimps from 20 samples had committed various offences over the last six months; two-thirds were in possession of illegal firearms, three-quarters dealt in drugs, two-thirds committed at least one robbery, two-thirds committed actual bodily harm (ABH), and half committed grievous bodily harm (GBH). They also often have low education attainment, are unemployed, and engage in substance abuse (Hosey and Clune, 2002; May et al., 2000).

2.3.2 Young Women Vulnerable to Recruitment by Pimps

Pimp-related recruitment occurs in both unsupervised and supervised settings – anywhere young people tend to gather or ‘hang out’ such as shopping malls, nightclubs, video game arcades, bus or train stations, parks, recreation areas, and around high schools and colleges, as well as in community centres, youth drop-in centres, shelter houses, and internet chat rooms (Estes and Weiner, 2002; NCMEC, 2002; Barnitz, 2000; Spangenberg, 2001; Klain, 1999; Hofstede et al., 1999; Hay, 2004; Eddy and Walker, 2002; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Gray et al., 2002; Silbert, 1986). The internet is the ‘newest’ place to recruit young people for prostitution (Eddy and Walker, 2002; Appelqvist, 2001; Hughes, 2003). Pimps and perpetrators use it as a forum for ‘meeting’ individual children through utilizing ‘chat rooms’ and ‘bulletin boards’ (Swann and Balding, 2001). Young women who ‘hang out’ at the places mentioned or who chat on the internet sometimes look for an adult who would show interest in them; this meets pimps’ criteria and they are at high risk of being approached by pimps sooner rather than later (Roman et al., 2002).

If you look good and drive a big car, then they're fascinated with you ... and a lot of them are young, spoiled ... A lot of time[s] I'd pick up these junkie girls that I knew I wouldn't have ... longer than a week, two weeks at the most ... but I played it cause I knew that was money for two weeks.

(Kent, a Minnesota pimp, cited in the NCMEC, 2002: 27).

Often a pimp, or someone working for a pimp, will approach a young woman who looks vulnerable, is lacking in love and attention, isolated, and who is not strongly connected to someone (Dean and Thomson, 1998; Klain, 1999; Gray et al., 2002; Johnson, 1992). Nevertheless, young women who live with families or who are from middle-class homes also can be susceptible to pimps’ recruitment (Hofstede et al., 1999). In particular, young women who lack self-esteem can be spotted easily by pimps (Estes and Weiner, 2002; Barnitz, 2000; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Ives, 2001; Hay, 2004). Furthermore, those who seem naive, lonely, homeless, rebellious, and who are likely to be without money or job skills are vulnerable to pimps (Barry, 1995; Cusick et al., 2003). Young women who struggle in school, have not attended school in months, and lack parental attention are also among the most frequently targeted group of young

people (Roman et al., 2002; Gray et al., 2002). Saikaew (1996) lists a range of characteristics of young women who are vulnerable to pimps' recruitment:

- i. The young woman is about to complete school and is therefore considered to be of a suitable age and no longer legally required to go to school.
- ii. An older sister or relative is already involved in prostitution.
- iii. The young woman has been expelled from school or is not interested in continuing education or what she sees as hard work, but wants to have money and nice clothes and to follow her peers.
- iv. The young woman's parents have separated or divorced (especially if one or both partners have remarried).
- v. One or both of the young woman's parents are dead, and she is living with relatives or friends.
- vi. One or both of the young woman's parents are drug addicts, alcoholics, or compulsive gamblers.

(Saikaew, 1996: 67-68).

Besides young people with the above criteria, pimps also recruit and mingle with young women who desire money or desire what they believe will be a glamorous, comfortable and exciting lifestyle (Scott, 2002). Initially, pimps often promise these young women money, a car, nice clothes and jewellery (Roman et al., 2002; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Gray et al., 2002). Young women who are addicted to drugs are also vulnerable to being recruited (Hosey and Clune, 2002; Spangenberg, 2001).

2.3.3 A Classic Technique of Recruitment: A Pimp as a Boyfriend

The vast majority of young women in prostitution are initially recruited by a pimp or subsequently fall under the control of a pimp (Klain, 1999; Hay, 2004). In many cases, the pimp may initially be a 'boyfriend' of the young woman (ADMCPSEY, 2001; Gray et al., 2002). Hunter (1994) reports that the number of young people recruited into prostitution and working for a pimp ranges from 30-84 percent. Barry (1995), Johnson (1992) and Farley and Kelly (2000) however estimate that 80-95 percent of all prostituted people are controlled by pimps; pointing out that younger women are more

vulnerable to exploitation by pimps and that most prostituted children are possibly controlled by pimps. May et al. (2000) found that the majority of prostituted females they interviewed were managed by pimps at some time in their career, and 53 percent were introduced to prostitution by their pimps.

A primary method of procuring a young woman for prostitution is through by feigned friendship and love (NCMEC, 2002). This method is a classic tactic of recruitment used by pimps (May et al., 2000; Klain, 1999). Pimps use a systematic plan to gain control of a young woman by gradually luring her away from her support network until she is completely separated from friends, family, and her home (Gray et al., 2002). In general, the process to recruit a young woman into prostitution starts when a pimp approaches her, befriends her, ‘sweet-talks’ her, gradually builds a comforting relationship by giving attention and feigned affection and later convinces her ‘to be his woman’ until she is dependent upon him emotionally or financially (Hay, 2004; Barry, 1995; Hofstede et al., 1999; Silbert, 1986; Dean and Thomson, 1998; Johnson, 1992). A pimp is able to detect what is missing in the young woman’s life and that makes her vulnerable to become sexually exploited (Gray et al., 2002). During the relationship, she may be seduced with gifts, compliments, and even a promise to marry her or to give a lifetime commitment (Sereny, 1985; Klain, 1999; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Sorajjakool, 2003). However, all of these may initiate sexual relations:

The pimp may then initiate a sexual relationship with the girl, continuing to become the primary person in her life. This pre-tense of love lulls the girl into thinking theirs is a mutually developing relationship, making her emotionally and psychologically dependent on the pimp as a substitute for the family that abused her or turned her away. At this point, the pimp may demand that she have sex with someone else, often a ‘friend of the pimp, to prove her love for him. Next, she must have sex with a stranger for money. Soon she finds herself prostituted as a condition of her love for him.

(Klain, 1999: 4-5).

After making the young woman dependent on him, the pimp slowly separates the young woman from her support group (family, relatives and friends) and introduces her to drugs and alcohol (Gray et al., 2002; Hay, 2004). At this stage, he begins to dominate her, eventually establishes control, and forces her into prostitution, either on the streets or in an indoor place (Saikaew, 1996; Barry, 1995). Some may realise they

are victims of prostitution the minute they are forced, but many take a long time to realise it (Hosey and Clune, 2002; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998; May et al., 2000; Roman et al., 2002). Often young women regard what they do or they are told to do as a form of 'sacrifice' for their 'love' relationship, and they continue to think of the pimps as their 'boyfriends' (Klain, 1999). This happens because the emotional bond between the young woman and her pimp affects her perspective taking abilities. She does not regard those who benefit from her prostitution earnings as a pimp, rather as a 'boyfriend' or 'partner' (Department of Health et al., 2000; Hosey and Clune, 2002; May et al., 2000). The perception however sustains the abuse of a pimp, and he may 'season' her for life as a 'prostitute' with physical and verbal abuse (Klain, 1999). At the end, the young woman takes on the values of the street and the pimp takes control of her life (Gray et al., 2002). Runaways with problems at home are especially vulnerable to this tactic, because they often 'want to belong', and they are frequently naïve and easy to control (Klain, 1999; Finkelhor and Ormrod, 2004; Johnson, 1992). Swann's work (1998a) helps us to gain a clear picture of the process through which pimps recruit young women into prostitution. According to Swann (1998a), the recruitment process typically goes through four stages as summarised below:

- a. **Stage one: Ensnaring** – a girl meets a young man who impresses her with his maturity, good looks, money, car, and lifestyle. He soon becomes her boyfriend. He makes her feel special and important, pouring attention on her, buying her clothes and jewellery. This often includes a ring, which leads her to believe that he is making a special commitment to her. They begin a sexual relationship and she falls 'head over heels' in love. At this stage, the girl may be living at home, and the relationship may even have the blessings from her parents. Contact between the girl and her 'boyfriend' will typically be three or four times a week.
- b. **Stage two: Creating dependency** – the 'boyfriend' needs to make the girl completely dependent on him. He becomes very possessive. He tells her that if she loves him she does not need anyone or anything else. She interprets this possessive attention as a sign of his passionate love. She thinks he is jealous. She feels flattered, comforted, and even protected by his intense interest. As 'proof of her love' she willingly destroys particular objects of importance or sentimental value that have any significance in her life outside the relationship i.e. photos, jewellery and address book, or he might destroy them with her

consent. In some cases, he will even call the girl by a different name, which further erases her sense of an identity separate to the relationship. At the beginning, she persuades herself that she is only making small sacrifices, which are not important. Gradually he destroys her ties to others, making her relinquish friends and even reject her family. She can also become physically isolated by agreeing to be kept in a room or flat, so that, 'I could prove he could trust me', and, 'he could see I didn't need anyone else but him'.

- c. **Stage three: Taking control** – he now begins to control all aspect of her life – where she goes, who she sees, what she wears, when and what she eats and even, in extreme cases, when she goes to the toilet. At this stage, the 'boyfriend' frequently begins to be violent. The girl often becomes frightened, but she makes excuses for his behaviour. She justifies his behaviour by taking the blame upon herself; 'I know I really wind him up', or, 'I was asking for it'. She believes that one more sacrifice, one more 'proof of her love', will end the violence, save the relationship and her boyfriend will return to be the loving, caring person he was at the beginning. Above all, she still loves him and this emotion often outweighs all the harm. Granting small indulgences at this point, such as soft drugs and alcohol, reinforces him as 'the good guy' and is another part of the process of undermining her resistance. Sporadic acts of 'generosity' are more effective as a means of control than constant physical harm and abuse.
- d. **Stage four: Total dominance** – the cumulative effect of the three previous stages is that the 'boyfriend', having become the all important person in the girl's life, has created a 'willing victim'. Simple compliance from her rarely satisfies him, as he also demands respect, gratitude, and love. The final step is when she agrees to have sex with another man, often one of his 'friends'. She does not see any money change hands. In other cases young women put straight on to the streets, told how to 'earn the money', and are watched. Sometimes the 'boyfriend' will convince her that he desperately needs her help and will demand that she provides sexual favours for other men as further proof of her love for him. The girl will endure extreme sexual humiliation, and will even entrap other girls for her boyfriend and his friends, as a result of this completely dominating relationship.

(Swann, 1998a: 11-13).

2.3.4 A New Technique of Recruitment: A Pimp as an Employment Agent

Today, the process of recruiting young women into prostitution is becoming more complex as pimps do not only pretend to be boyfriends but also employment agents (United Nations, 2000b; ECPAT International, 2000; Saikaew, 1996; Beyer, 1996; Hughes, 2000b). Employment agents are frequently responsible for the recruitment of young people living with impoverished parents in villages in developing or transitional countries (Dorman, 2001; Klain, 1999; Saikaew, 1996; United Nations, 2000a, 2000b). Lockwood (2003) says impoverished, uneducated parents and young women are easily taken advantage of, easily fooled with promises of something, especially a better life. Pimps know very well that they must target vulnerable people, and poor families and children living in poverty are at risk from pimps because they are deprived and some will do anything in order to survive, or to have something for their life (Lockwood, 2003; Klain, 1999).

Often young women are lured into prostitution by false offers of employment in large cities (Hatty, 1992; ECPAT International, 2000; United Nations, 1999). For example, there are cases of Mexican girls as young as 14 recruited by offers of domestic employment and then delivered to brothels frequented by migrant workers (Dorman, 2001). In Vietnam, pimps who pretend to be employment agents will go to urban slums and poor rural villages, where poverty is acute and where limited educational and employment opportunities exist, and recruit young women with promises of a bright prospect of earning a living in other places (United Nations, 2000b). They bribe, coerce and lie to the poor families, promising employment, often as domestic servants, waitresses, or manual labour, to obtain young women (ECPAT International, 2000; Klain, 1999; Freed, 2003). Duong (2002) who studied child prostitution in Vietnam asked a question to one brothel owner, "When you went to the village to recruit new children, did you tell them that they were being hired for this kind of activity?" The brothel owner replied:

Sometimes yes, sometimes no. Usually I have to look for those who are in a special situation, such as those from poor families or those having divorced parents. I tell them that they should come with me to do things like dishwashing or housecleaning. They all start with that kind of job. Gradually, I persuade them to go with customers. If they agree, it's okay. If not, I won't force them. But in most cases they agree. This activity is

easy, with very good earnings. They're used to living in the countryside, in dire poverty. Now they come to the city with me, and there they do nothing but have everything. So no one wants to leave me.

(Dung, a 29 years old brothel owner, cited in Duong, 2002: 46).

Some families are encouraged to give up their daughters in return for financial support in the full knowledge of what will happen to them (United Nations, 2000a; Bruce, 1996; Hatty, 1992). At times, the financial support is to relieve poverty. At other times, the family is seeking additional material gains (UNICEF, 2001a). Other families may be offered certain amount of money as an advance payment charged against their daughters for accepting the job (Beyrer, 2001). This payment and the financial support given however is just a 'gimmick' to initiate a debt-bondage, the daughters are then sacrificed to pay the debt, even though they are as young as five years of age (United Nations, 1999; Beyrer, 2001; ECPAT International, 2000; Future Group, 2001; Freed, 2003). Lockwood (2003) says children are particularly vulnerable to such recruitment as they are so ready to trust the authority of adults. If their parents ask them to follow the 'agent' they will, if the 'employment agent' tells them that they must pay off a 'debt', they will work hard to do so, even though the debt might never diminish. This is a common trick used by pimps.

[In northern Brazil] young girls, around 15 or 16 years old, are imported like chattel after being lured ...by traffickers promising them employment in the canteens and restaurants of the Amazonian mining towns. They are falsely guaranteed wages of \$100 a week for working as waitresses. They are then taken, by plane, from northern and southern cities and villages to perform their "waitress" duties. When they arrive, the bar owner, saloon keeper or canteen owner tells them that they now have a debt to pay. That debt is charged both for their transportation from their native villages to Amazonia and for their continued upkeep, including food provisions and malaria medicine ... The girls must work off this continuing and growing debt by prostitution ...The money for their sexual services is paid directly to the restaurant, saloon keeper or the agents who brought the girls there. The girls are further enslaved as they are unable to leave their captors ...

(Beyer, 1996: 37).

2.3.5 Recruitment by Parents, Relatives and Peers

Pimps' recruitment is not the only factor pushing young women into prostitution. The next two factors are parents/relatives forcing or encouraging young women, and peers influencing their friends. In Estonia, there have been reports of parents or guardians forcing children in their care into prostitution to earn extra money for the family (Bruce, 1996). In Thailand, 42.2 percent of students were of the view that young women are forced into prostitution by their parents (Baker, 2000). Amarasinghe (2002) found that a large number of parents interviewed encouraged their daughters to become involved in sexual acts for reasons associated with poverty. Family encouragement or support stems from the view that the young women will be able to contribute to the household income (Saikaew, 1996; Bruce, 1996; Leidholdt, 2003). However, in one study in Moscow, about 50 percent of young women involved in prostitution reported that it was adults, often strangers (47.3 percent), and seldom their own parents or relatives (1.8 percent) who lured them into the sex trade (IPEC, 2002a).

Maria became a child prostitute when she was 14 years old. She adopted this horrible life-style at the insistence of her own mother, who told her that she was beautiful and that men would like her very much. Besides, she would earn a lot of money. In the evenings Maria's mother took her to a motel where they made contacts. The mother remained nearby to receive the payments. Each night, Maria had sex with three or four men.

(A Barbarous Crime, Awake, February 8, 2003).

Often the recruitment of these young women takes place through families or relatives who are already working in prostitution (Saikaew, 1996; Duong, 2002). Raphael and Shapiro (2002) found that one-third of the 206 respondents admitted that there was someone in the household who regularly exchanged sex for money when they were growing up. Almost 42 percent indicated that their biological mothers were involved, and 40 percent had sisters who were involved. Extended family members who were involved included aunts (42 percent) and cousins (75 percent). Families or relatives sometimes use violence to force young women to enter prostitution. They also manipulate the young women's way of thinking towards prostitution; i.e. prostitution as a profession or as an easy way to get 'what you fancy in your life' (ADMCPSEY, 2001; Duong, 2002; Hosey and Clune, 2002). One study found that almost 14 percent of

respondents reported there was someone in the household who forced another to make money through prostitution by using threats, violence, or control (Raphael and Shapiro, 2002). Hofstede et al. (1999) also reported there are parents who advertise their children for prostitution over the internet. Some families may also recruit their daughters to get involved where there is an established tradition of young women entering in sex trade, where selling sex is a culturally accepted as a profession, a 'normal' part of life in their neighbourhood (Duong, 2002; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Saikaew, 1996; United Nations, 2000c). In one study, 71 percent of respondents mentioned that when they were growing up, there were people in their neighbourhood or friends who regularly (two or more times a week for at least a month) exchanged sex for money (Raphael and Shapiro, 2002).

Rasy is 17 and was sold into prostitution in Trolop Bek for \$100. After she had paid back her debts to the brothel owner she returned to the family home. There were problems with her family because she had been sold into prostitution. She tried to commit suicide by jumping off a bridge but was rescued by a neighbour who took her to the house of an aunt. This aunt sold her again, this time to a brothel in Tuol Kork and just \$60. Rasy is homesick and wants to pay her debts so that she can go home to her family.

(Save the Children, 1996: 10).

A 16-year-old Cambodian girl woke up to find herself in a small brothel in her country's capital, Phnom Penh. Her aunt had drugged her into unconsciousness and handed her over to a brothel owner in exchange for money.

(Sorajjakool, 2003: 8).

There are also young women who are involved in prostitution as a result of having been recruited by peers who are already in prostitution (Hunter, 1994; O'Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor, 1996b; Weisberg, 1985; Saphira and Herbert, 2004b; Saphira, 2002; Bruce, 1996; United Nations, 2001). Jesson (1993), IPEC (2002a) and Cusick (2002) regard peers' recruitment as the main factor that affects the majority of young women that enter into prostitution. One study found that 60 percent of young women in prostitution are recruited by peers (Schetky, 1988). Some peers work independently in prostitution and they influence other young women to get

involved to follow their lifestyle. They may do this because of loneliness and the need for friends while involved in prostitution (Spangenberg, 2001; Hunter, 1994). However, other peers may influence young women for their pimps because they are asked to do so (Gray et al., 2002; Estes and Weiner, 2002).

I dropped out of school in Grade 4. My parents did not care about my schooling anyway. A friend of mine in the same village returned home one day and asked if I wanted to work as a tailor in Hanoi. She said she cared about me because my family was very poor. She promised me that the job would bring me good money. We travelled together to the city. When we arrived, she told me about her actual activity, which is what I'm doing now. I hesitated at first, but then agreed. She took me to this karaoke bar and I was received. But when the first customer wanted to sleep with me, I refused because I was afraid. Then the pimp beat me up severely. Anyway, I make good money pretty easily. It's better than farming, which is very hard. And no one at my village knows what I'm doing, except the girlfriend who introduced me.

(Nguyet, a 16 years old prostitution victim, cited in Duong, 2002: 40).

In the case of young women influenced by peers who work independently in prostitution, they are normally vulnerable, socially excluded, and rebellious as a result of longstanding contact with peers who are similarly 'out of control' (Cusick et al., 2003). Their peers are usually schoolmates or street-mates who are already in prostitution who then introduce these young women to prostitution as 'an adventurous' way to make money to survive, or to make more money than they could possibly achieve by legitimate means (Klain, 1999; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Cusick et al., 2003; Weisberg, 1985; Finkelhor and Ormrod, 2004). There are reports of 11-year-old young women recruiting other 'girls' out of school (Gray et al., 2002). Often, peers 'provoke' or 'feed' these young women with stories of the exciting, glamorous life on the streets, as well as with outward signs of being 'successful' in their pursuit of their victims – nice clothes, pretty jewellery, pagers and mobile phones, easy access to drugs, a network of adult friends who take them to 'grown up' places (e.g., night clubs, bars, on trips) and adults who 'protect' them from harm by others (Saphira, 2002; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Gray et al., 2002). Some children, especially those living on the streets, in poverty and in desperate living condition, are easily seduced by the 'exciting' stories of prostitution by their friends, particularly when their friends show material evidence of what they already achieved from prostitution (Estes and Weiner, 2002).

She were one [a prostitute] and she said it were easy money. So I decided to go on [‘the game’] ... Me friends got me into it and I just enjoyed it.

(Nicki, involved in prostitution at 13, cited in Melrose et al., 1999: 35).

Some peers may persuade young women to get involved by making them believe that prostitution is something worth trying. For example, they may believe that prostitution offences are less serious than acquisitive crime; prostitution leads to ‘street credibility’; prostitution is ‘evidence of being grown up’; and possibly that prostitution is an experience of being loved/complimented/admired (Cusick et al., 2003). For many young people, it is important for them to be as ‘good’ as and to be accepted by their peers. They may start prostitution due to peer pressure (Crowley and O’Sullivan, 1998). A young woman who enters into prostitution under peers’ influence may operate her sex trade independent of pimps (Spangenberg, 2001; Klain, 1999; Hunter, 1994). However, Hosey and Clune (2002) and Pheterson (1986) note that their percentage may be small because young women eventually hire the services of pimps at certain stage of their involvement.

Typically, peers who are ‘agents’ of pimps or who work for pimps are ‘owned’ by pimps (Gray et al., 2002). Many pimps use their ‘own girls’ as recruiters to lure their friends (including their sisters and cousins) and young women on the streets who are around the same age as them (Cusick et al., 2003; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Spangenberg, 2001). Pimps reward their ‘girls’ with money, drugs, a new pair of jeans, an opportunity to get their nails and hair done or other things of value for each young woman they bring into the ‘stable’ (Estes and Weiner, 2002; Spangenberg, 2001).

2.3.6 Pimps’ Tactics to Control Children in Prostitution

Control is central to the popular idea of pimping (May et al., 2000). Pimps control both the young woman and what she earns (Dean and Thomson, 1998; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Johnson, 1992). They use many ways to control young women including threats, domination, violence, demoralizing, dehumanising, humiliation, intimidation, sexual assaults, and torture (Cohen, 1987; Truong, 1986; NCMEC, 2002; Barry, 1995; Shaw and Butler, 1998; Weisberg, 1985; Farley and Kelly, 2000; Barnitz, 2000; Phoenix,

1999; Ennew, 1986; Johnson, 1992; United Nations, 2000b). Isolation is the first step used by pimps to control young women after they are recruited (ADMCPSEY, 2001; Swann, 1998a). Pimps primarily isolate young women from the public eye to avoid legal action (O'Connell-Davidson, 1998; Gray et al., 2002; O'Neill, 1997). On top of that, they create an environment of total emotional deprivation for the young women so that they become very dependent on the pimps (Klain, 1999; Beyer, 1996; Hay, 2004). By isolating them, it breaks her will and separates her from her previous life, thus she does not know where to turn for support or help from friends and family (Phoenix, 1999).

The goal is to get the girls as dependent as possible. Mentally you've 'gotta' burn into their brains you're the only one – you're god. Once you've got that down and they're ready to work ... then you instill the fear – the wrath of god. If they mess up, there's a price to pay, and they know it's a heavy price.

(A Minnesota pimp, cited in Hofstede et al., 1999 p. 3).

Many young women are locked in secret locations (including relatively affluent as well as deprived areas) in small rooms, brothels, flats/apartments/condominiums, and clubs (Department of Health et al., 2000; UNICEF, 2003b; ECPAT International, 2001; Beyer, 1996). Swann (1998a) discusses two cases of 14 year-olds who were locked in rooms without toilet facilities and in one case, the young woman had to use a box with newspaper in a corner of the room. Hughes (2000b) also suggests that the rooms in which these young women are caged, are often narrow, dark, unhygienic, and have foul smells. In Cambodia, one survey of 53 young women found that most lived in small dark rooms and served five to ten customers per day (UNICEF, 2003b). Some pimps will deliver the young women themselves from these places by taxi to clients' homes, privately rented apartments or to hotel rooms (O'Grady, 1994). Living in isolated places coupled with emotional, sexual, and physical abuse these young women have no choice except to depend on their 'masters' for survival (Klain, 1999; Truong, 1986; Johnson, 1992). In this case, young women may repress their trauma and idealise their pimps at the same time (Southgate, 1989). Besides placing these young women in secret locations, pimps often move them around in the 'circuit' in a number of different cities or venues located at great distance from their place of origin in order to keep them under

control, to avoid law enforcement authorities, to make more money, and to ensure that the young women are not found by their family or friends (Spangenberg, 2001; Hofstede et al., 1999; Hughes, 2000b; United Nations, 1996; Ireland, 1993). The unfamiliar surroundings also can prevent a young woman from forming new friendships or figuring out whom to trust (Cohen, 1987).

These girls, when sold, are usually locked up in the brothels, often not seeing the light of day for up to two years. They can be called on for sex 24 hours a day. The usual working hours of these girls start from 10 a.m. to 4 a.m. the price of a virgin girl is between 2,000-15,000 baht. This amount goes to the brothels. Each visit after is between 100-150 baht. If the customer desires to stay overnight, he is charged 200 bht. The highest return for these girls is 50% of the price charged while the lowest is approximately 5%. Wages are not usually paid in cash to the girls but recorded in their accounts. They are given \$1.20 each day for meals. Each girl is forced to accept a minimum of 1-2 customers per day and a maximum of 26 customers per day.

(Sorajjakool, 2003: 11).

In prostitution, young women have to follow the rule and order of pimps with no exceptions (Gray et al., 2002; Johnson, 1992; Leidholdt, 2003). If they are asked to 'serve' ten, twenty, thirty 'customers' every night, they have to obey even though they are as young as ten years old (O'Grady, 1994; Hwang and Bedford, 2004; Willis and Levy, 2002; Bagley, 1999). If they go against or ignore the orders, they are severely punished by their pimps (Hofstede et al., 1999; Leidholdt, 2003). Pimps typically treat their 'girls' as their personal possessions, beat them if they behave disrespectfully to the pimp, if they are arrested, or if they violate some rules or seek contact with their family or friends, or if they leave or threaten to leave (Beyer, 1996; Khodyreva, 2002; Barnitz, 2000; May et al., 2000; Russell, 1986; Miller and Jayasundara, 2001; Dean and Thomson, 1998). In one study, fifteen percent of young women interviewed reported that they were beaten by pimps at least once a week (Hofstede et al., 1999). Silbert (1986) notes that prostituted young women may retreat into a very passive role in which they feel powerless, out of control in their life, debilitated, and psychologically paralyzed.

[Prostituted young women] constantly watched while with customers, and allowed to go outdoors only when they are ill and need medical treatment.

They may be forced to take 20–30 clients 15–17 hours a day and given only one day off every month during their menstrual periods. They have little right to protect their health and are beaten for disobedience. They cannot refuse customers, but instead work on demand.

(Hwang and Bedford, 2004: 139).

Several studies report the prevalence of physical abuse as occurring in over half of pimp-prostitute relationships (Klain, 1999; Eddy and Walker, 2002; UNICEF, 2003b; Davies, 2001; Johnson, 1992; Saphira, 2002; May et al., 2000). At least 84 percent of respondents in one prostitution survivors study say that they were victims of aggravated assault, and 53 percent victims of sexual torture, including being burnt, gagged, hung, bound, or having their body parts mutilated by pinching, clamping, and stapling (Hunter, 1994). Another source reports that young women who had been contacted through outreach as showing signs of assault, such as bruises, whip marks, and black eyes. Some have also been branded or tattooed denoting 'ownership' by the pimps (NCMEC, 2002). Hughes (2000b) reports that young women in prostitution are subjected to the most inhumane abuse by pimps, including beatings with wires and sticks, electric shock, torture with acid, confinement in locked rooms, forced drug intake, forced sex even during menstruation or illness, surgical procedures to restore the hymen to recreate 'virginity', rape, forced household labour when not being used in the brothel, and lack of adequate food and rest. Again, she says that young women who are sold to brothels must find ways to cope with an average of 10 unwanted assaults each day (Hughes, 2000b). The virginal surgical procedure (hymenoplasty) is a method used by pimps to increase the 'debt' that a young woman owes. All medical bills for the surgery will be charged to the young woman. After all the pain from the surgery, pimps gets the profit by reselling her as a virgin (Future Group, 2001).

Ra Ratt is a frail 14-year-old whose vagina has been stitched up more than five times so that clients would think she was a virgin. Her owners forced her to take clients well before her wounds healed, so that the men would believe that the bleeding was from her torn hymen. "It was so very painful," she said with a shudder.

(*Virgin Ruse*, The Straits Times (Singapore), July 16, 2000).

I was so small. They gave me hormone injections so that I'd grow breasts faster. These injections hurt so, so much. When I tried to struggle, the madame beat me on the chest with a metal kitchen spoon.

(Maya from Nepal, a prostitution victim, cited in Barnitz, 2000: 1).

Silbert (1986) notes two-thirds of young women in her sample were physically abused or beaten many times by their pimps. Several sources found that 40-60 percent of young women were sexually assaulted by pimps, gangs and acquaintances (NCMEC, 2002; Gray et al., 2002; Hotaling, 2002). Eddy and Walker (2002) report 78 percent of respondents were raped by pimps and male customers at an average of 49 times per year. Weisberg (1985) notes a pimp had beaten a young woman with a 6-foot bullwhip and another was tied to a car and forced to run behind it. Some prostituted young women are held at gunpoint because of disobedience (United Nations, 2000a; Roman et al., 2002). Estes and Weiner (2002), Hunter (1994) and Khodyreva (2002) say that violence and threats to the point of death are only part of the daily abuse to which the majority of these young women are subjected. Hofstede et al. (1999) report a pimp had beaten a pregnant 15-year-old young woman so severely that she eventually suffered from miscarriage, raped a 14-year-old runaway, beat another young woman with a cable-television cord, and shot one prostituted young woman to death. There are also reports that, where young women in Brazil tried to flee from pimps, they were eventually found murdered (Beyer, 1996). May et al. (2000) found in a sample of 19 respondents that all had experienced physical abuse from their current pimps ranging from 'slaps' to injuries that led to them being hospitalised or require emergency medical care. Ten had been raped or otherwise sexually abused and several had experienced extreme violence.

I've had three broken arms, nose broken twice ... I'm partially deaf in one ear ... I have a small fragment of a bone floating in my head that gives me migraines. I've had a fractured skull. My legs ain't worth shit no more; my toes have been broken. My feet, bottom of my feet, have been burned; they've been whopped with a hot iron and clothes hanger ... the hair on my pussy had been burned off at one time ... I have scars. I've been cut with a knife, beat with guns, two-by-fours. There hasn't been a place on my body that hasn't been bruised somehow, some way, some big, some small.

(A prostitution victim, cited in Giobbe, 1992: 126).

Besides 'disciplining' young women to ensure obedience, pimps ultimately physically and verbally abuse them in order to keep these young women working (Johnson, 1992; Miller and Jayasundara, 2001; NCMEC, 2002; Gray et al., 2002; Leidholdt, 2003; Eddy and Walker, 2002). Money is a central aspect for a pimp to recruit and control young women in prostitution. Child prostitution in general is a lucrative and brisk 'business' for pimps to make a quick profit (Cordingley and Gee, 1997; Bruce, 1996). Often pimps have a 'stable' of young women who work for them ranging from one to nine persons for a pimp (Cohen, 1987; May et al, 2000; NCMEC, 2002; Johnson, 1992). In the United States, it is estimated that \$40 million a day, \$14 billion a year, is spent on prostitution (Hunter, 1994). Pimps in the United States can get about \$500 a night from selling a 14-year-old young woman. In Thailand, a young woman under 18, costs \$100 (Barnitz, 2000). In Germany alone, prostitution reaps an estimated \$6 billion annually (Leidholdt, 2003). In Italy, young women are sold for \$2500 to \$4000; young virgins reportedly fetch up to \$10,000 (UNICEF, 2001a). In Cambodia, approximately \$20 million is spend on buying sex from women and children in prostitution each year; the brothel owners earn an average of \$3300 a month from each prostituted female (Hughes, 2000b). Because of the lucrative nature of the prostitution 'business', a pimp tightly controls a young woman to make sure she will not escape and he will not lose his income (Klain, 1999). Some young women have been prostituted to 7-15 men per day and are seldom allowed to keep the money (Hughes, 2000b). The majority of pimps control all the money earned by the young women (Roman et al., 2002; Klain, 1999; Saphira and Herbert, 2004a; Johnson, 1992; Weisberg, 1985). After having had sex with three to ten men a day, the young women are forced to give up all their earnings to pimps (Hofstede et al., 1999). Pimps often make exploited young women feel like they owe them money for clothes, housing, drugs, and food to force the young women continue working in the sex trade (Gray et al., 2002).

For my second pimp there was no way I could finish work without having at least £200 every day. I got cigarettes and condoms and nothing else. I didn't have a penny of it. He chose my clothes, he chose my knickers, he chose my food, he told me when to eat, when to sleep, when to work, when to go home, when to speak. I just could not do anything without his permission.

(Frances, involved in prostitution at 14, cited in Taylor-Browne, 2002: 6).

Some pimps impose quotas of earnings on their 'girls' by giving them little money (Cohen, 1987; NCMEC, 2002). May et al. (2000) found that prostituted young women on the streets handed over a large amount of their earnings to pimps. Scott (2002) estimated that pimps take 60-70 percent of prostitutes' earnings. Raphael and Shapiro (2002) report that 41 percent of respondents on the street and 44 percent of respondents in drug houses had given some money they made in prostitution to pimps. Around 75-80 percent indicated they did this because they were frightened of being harmed, or believed they would be harmed, if they stopped. Pimps frequently beat the young women if they do not make enough money or fail to hand over the required amount of money, some are even raped or killed (Cohen, 1987; Barnitz, 2000; Farley and Kelly, 2000; May et al., 2000; Hofstede et al., 1999).

One day he wanted more money, he owed someone. I was ill and didn't want to go out. I got a fractured skull for that one.

(A prostitution victim, cited in May et al., 2000: 18).

Despite violence and abuse, pimps also use drugs to control prostituted young women (Klain, 1999; Gray et al., 2002). Forced drug use is common among young women in prostitution (Estes and Weiner, 2002; Johnson, 1992; Hughes, 2000b; Scott, 2002; United Nations, 2000b). Many pimps are involved in drug trafficking and sales, both for profit and to keep the young women they exploit addicted so that it would be difficult for them to leave their pimps (Hofstede et al., 1999; Ives, 2001). One pimp claim that he currently has five young women working for him, all of whom he has turned into drug addicts in order to exert greater control (UNICEF, 2003b). Drugs may entrap them, keeping them working, passive, submissive, and obligated (Johnson, 1992; UNICEF, 2003b; Dean and Thomson, 1998). Drugged young women may be willing to do anything to fulfil their addictions (Klain, 1999; Johnson, 1992). They may be forced to work for many hours at a time, standing for hours and end up waiting in the evenings until early in the morning in all kinds of weather conditions to make more money for their pimps and to buy drugs (Gray et al., 2002). O'Connell-Davidson (1998) and May et al. (2000) note the use of drugs by pimps is to replace physical coercion in order to keep young women 'working' through non-violence. A part of this argument is valid. From another perspective, drugs will turn the young women into addicts, and this places

them even more in debt with the pimp (Klain, 1999). At this point, the pimp's physical coercion of her may be more serious particularly if she fails to supply her earnings and to pay the drug-debt to the pimp.

... the word pimp or meaning of the word ... a dude who got a woman hooked up on drugs, beat the hell out of them every day, day in and out.

(Kent, a Minnesota pimp, cited in the NCMEC, 2002: 27).

Pimps also use other methods of deprivation to control young women in prostitution. A quite popular method is emotional blackmail; threatening to tell the young woman's family about her sexual activities or to inflict violence against her family or friends if she tries to escape from him (Scott, 2002; Gray et al., 2002; NCMEC, 2002; Khodyreva, 2002; Hwang and Bedford, 2004). The pimps will take pictures of young women who are drugged, either naked or in sexual situations, and threaten to send these pictures to family, friends, or schools (Gray et al., 2002). If she becomes pregnant, the pimp uses the baby as leverage to manipulate or control her (Klain, 1999). As Johnson (1992) says, many pimps think that by getting a young woman pregnant and eventually burdening her with a child she cannot support, they can guarantee her loyalty. Should the young woman threaten to leave him, he will often hold the child as a hostage. Pimps may also use another young woman to beat up 'his girl' to control her behaviour, or if she did not come through with his share of the money (NCMEC, 2002). In a recent development of pimping activities, prostituted young women not only are under a pimp's control but also a gang's control, which places greater restrictions on their freedom (Spangenberg, 2001).

To sum up, pimping is the extent to which vulnerable people are manipulated into prostitution, and maintained in it by coercion (May et al., 2000). Pimps do not offer prostituted young women protection against violence by clients, but do offer them protection against assault by other pimps (Scott, 2002; Aral and St. Lawrence, 2002). If she wants to leave her pimp, her new pimp often requires her to pay a fee to ensure her safety, because her former pimp may use a 'tracker' or bounty hunter to get her back (Klain, 1999). In other case, a pimp is reported to have asked a young woman who want to leave him a payout bill of \$5,000 (ADMCPSEY, 2001). Pimping is very likely to damage the young women to the same degree as crimes such as rape (Ennew, 1986; Hotaling, 2002; Farley and Kelly, 2000; Barry, 1995; May et al., 2000; Cohen, 1987;

O'Neill, 1997; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998). It can fracture young women's lives in three ways; increasing poverty, cutting young women off from other social networks, and crushing their beliefs in their ability to resist pimping (Phoenix, 1999). The increase in poverty among young women in prostitution is because most of their earnings go into the pockets of the pimps; nowhere we can find a wealthy young woman in prostitution (Eddy and Walker, 2002).

Many people have the mistaken belief that being in the sex trade is easy money and those who are being exploited choose to be there, but only a small part of this is true. There is easy money to be made; otherwise there wouldn't be pimps. But, the reality is that youth may receive larger amounts of money or presents in the beginning stages of recruitment from the money they earn in the sex trade, but eventually they have very little, if any control over any of the money.

(Gray et al., 2002: 28).

2.4 Men who Buy Sex from Children

The seeking of child sexual partners may be part of a continuum of social and sexual transgressions (Saphira and Oliver, 2002). Men form the vast majority of people who seek out sex from children, though little information about them is available (Brooks-Gordon and Gelsthorpe, 2003a; United Nations, 1996; Barnitz, 2000; Austin, 2003; Grant et al., 1999; Marttila, 2003; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998, 2001; Saphira and Oliver, 2002; Ireland, 1993; Johnson, 1992; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Bruce, 1996). The practices of men buying sex from children have been largely ignored in research despite the recent visibility and scale of child prostitution (Marttila, 2003; Austin, 2003; Anderson and O'Connell-Davidson, 2002). Most attention has been given to young people selling sex and this subject has been extensively researched (Spangenberg, 2001; Brooks-Gordon and Gelsthorpe, 2003b). The limited research into child sex customers focuses primarily on demographic and motivation for buying sexual contact/intercourse from prostituted children (Hosey and Clune, 2002). Much of the research is based on convicted individuals whose most common characteristic is the fact that they engage in forms of behaviour that constitute child sexual exploitation (O'Connell-Davidson, 2001). Recently, efforts to curtail child prostitution have begun to focus on the services

that customers are requesting (Saphira and Oliver, 2002). The lack of academic research on men buying sex is, for the large part, due to the difficulties in getting in contact with and getting information on these men (Marttila, 2003).

Like any industry, the prostitution of children adheres to the laws of supply and demand, and therefore a number of factors fuel it (UNICEF, 2001a). The role of 'demand' as a driving force behind child prostitution begins when men demanded the more esoteric forms of sexual titillation (Flowers, 1998; Hughes, 2002). It has resulted in the growth of the whole sex business, which has further accelerated the pimping and recruitment activities, profiting from available and cheap 'products' – bodies of young people – in order to meet the pressure of demand (Marttila, 2003). To understand the nature and behaviour of men who buy sex from children is crucial in order to stem the demand side of the equation, to intercept potential offenders before they exploit children, as well as to deal with the problem of child prostitution as a whole (Grant et al., 1999; Saphira and Oliver, 2002; Anderson and O'Connell-Davidson, 2002; Bruce, 1996; Austin, 2003). More research should be conducted on this group of people, because it is after all the customers that are for the most part responsible for financing the entire business and sustaining the prostitution industry (Marttila, 2003). As Johnson (1992) says, prostitution would not exist if people were not willing to pay for prostitutes' services.

Men who buy sex from children are often referred as clients, customers, prostitute users, buyers, 'punters', 'johns' or 'tricks' (Raphael and Shapiro, 2002; Scott, 2002; O'Connell-Davidson, 2001; Ives, 2001; Marttila, 2003; Grant et al., 1999; Spangenberg, 2001; Ireland, 1993; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Bruce, 1996; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Eddy and Walker, 2002; Johnson, 1992; Benoit and Millar, 2001; Appelqvist, 2001). These men should be called abusers, as they are responsible for the abuse of children through their activities (UNICEF, 2003a; WCCSEC, 1996; United Nations, 2000b). However, the use of the term abuser may lead to confusion, as it is commonly referred to those who abuse a child in domestic environment (Marttila, 2003). In this study, a man who purchases sex from a child will be referred to as a 'customer'. By definition, a customer is a man who uses or buys sex from a child under the age of 18. The use of the term 'customer' has been criticised of being too normalising, but in the absence of a better term, when analysing child prostitution from a viewpoint of a man paying for sex, I find it usable (Marttila, 2003).

The customer is a central agent in the sexual exploitation of children in prostitution (Marttila, 2003). However, there are no typical profiles for them and no simple categories within which they fall (UNICEF, 2001a; Grant et al., 1999). They are from all ages, classes, ethnic backgrounds, and sexual orientations and they are usually, but not always, professional, employed full-time, in long-term relationships or married men with children (Ives, 2001; Spangenberg, 2001; Marttila, 2003; Johnson, 1992; Hunter, 1994; Bruce, 1996; UNAIDS, 2002; Saphira, 2002). In Cambodia, one study reveals that the use of child sex slaves transcends rank, power, and class, but the majority of them are young men between 18 to 25 years old, from taxi drivers to senior government officials (Future Group, 2001). In an American study, the customers' ages ranged from 30-50 years old (Johnson, 1992). In the Balochistan study (in Pakistan), customers came from all age groups but the 'regulars' were aged between 25 to 45 years old (United Nations, 2001). Very few of those who exploit prostituted children consider themselves to be abusive or exploitative (UNICEF, 2001a; Saphira and Oliver, 2002). They use a number of excuses to deceive themselves into thinking that their behaviour is acceptable and that nothing is wrong with having sexual relations with children (O'Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor, 1996b; UNICEF, 2001a; Marttila, 2003; Saphira and Oliver, 2002; Anderson and O'Connell-Davidson, 2002; Austin, 2003) including the following 'beliefs' :

- i. The female body is specifically designed to take man's penis, it does not do any damage, and there is no physical harm to children.
- ii. Prostituted children who approach them have actively chosen prostitution.
- iii. A young woman in prostitution is not a child but a prostitute/commodity, a means to an end, something to be used.
- iv. A young woman is a 'grown up' and 'sexually experienced' at a very young age, so there is nothing wrong with it.
- v. No harm can result from having sex with the child since the child is already a prostitute.
- vi. Prostituted children desperately need money, so they are actually doing these children a favour.
- vii. Child prostitution is a trade between two independent 'individuals', which is 'of nobody else's business'. What is being sold and bought is not the body of or the

individual seller but the service that is offered by (the body of) a seller, namely, the prostitute.

- viii. Men have very strong sexual needs and they use prostituted children in order to protect the virginity and innocence of 'good' girls.

Men, both heterosexual and homosexual, make up 90 percent of the customers of child prostitution (Barnitz, 2000). The men's motives and preferences to buy sex from children defy generalisation (Saphira and Oliver, 2002). Some have argued they buy sex from children because they view sex as a commodity (United Nations, 1996; Jacobson, 2002; Ives, 2001; Scott, 2002). These men may use prostituted children to avoid an emotional commitment, a kind of 'McSex' without context (Jacobson, 2002). 'McSex' is a self-focused approach to the desire for 'variety', 'control', and 'immediate satisfaction when aroused', which reflects a conception of sex as a commodity rather than as part of an intimate relationship (Brooks-Gordon and Gelsthorpe, 2003b). For married men, it is easier to hide interactions with 'prostitutes' than an affair and there may be a sense that having 'McSex' with a 'prostitute' is 'less unfaithful' than being emotionally engaged in an affair (Hosey and Clune, 2002). Others may be motivated to buy sex from children in order to obtain a sense of camaraderie or to show 'true' heterosexual masculine identity to male colleagues or friends (United Nations, 1996; Hosey and Clune, 2002; Ives, 2001; Marttila, 2003; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998). From the literature, men who buy sex from children may fall into one or more of the following six groups.

2.4.1 Men who have a Sexual Preference only for Children

Some men are very focused on their sexual pursuit of children or have deeply entrenched sexual preferences for children of a particular age and gender (Grant et al., 1999; Ives, 2001; Saphira and Oliver, 2002). These men are not necessarily paedophiles – men who are sexually attracted only to young, prepubescent children and who will engage in sexual activities with a child in order to fulfil their fantasies (ECPAT International, 2001; O'Grady, 1994; Austin, 2003). Rather, they are hebephiles; individuals whose preferred sexual objects are children who have reached or passed

puberty (O'Connell-Davidson, 2001; Ives, 2001). Often these men's lack of interest in conventional relationships with women is the reason they enter into child sex contracts (Brooks-Gordon and Gelsthorpe, 2003b). Scott (2002) suggests that some of these men have difficulties with 'dating rituals' such as clubbing and chatting up. Others may be shy and fear relationship with women, or may think that modern women have unrealistically high expectations of the pace and extent of change in their attitudes, as they hold on to certain historically male ideals about woman (Jacobson, 2002). O'Connell-Davidson (1998) suggests that they may not search for adult prostitutes for sex because they believe adult prostitutes are 'out for everything they can get' and it is 'strictly business to them':

[Adult prostitutes] is all business-like. It's by the hour, like a taxi service, like they got the meter running ... There's no feeling. If I wanted to fuck a rubber doll, I could buy one and inflate it. Here it's different. They [prostituted children] are not professionals. They enjoy sex, it's natural to them ... they're affectionate ... they're responsive. They even kiss you ... You know, if you go with [an adult] prostitute and you don't pay her, you know what? They call it rape. You can be in court on a rape charge.

(A customer, cited in O'Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor, 1996b: 18).

2.4.2 Men who Buy Sex because of Convenience and Curiosity

Some men may prefer adult sexual partners, but out of stress, convenience or curiosity, engage in sexual activity with prostituted children (UNICEF, 2001a; Jacobson, 2002; Farley and Kelly, 2000). In this case, the decision to solicit a prostituted child is due to influence by the availability and opportunity (Ives, 2001; Scott, 2002; Saphira and Oliver, 2002). The customers gather information about the availability of children for sex in a variety of ways: from trial and error; from personal recommendations from others (including friends, bartenders, taxi drivers, and hotel workers); and, increasingly, from information posted on internet websites (Scott, 2002). The advent of the internet also has made it easier for this group of men to collect and watch child pornography, encourage direct sexual exploitation of children by developing their curiosity towards their bodies (Saphira and Oliver, 2002; Marttila, 2003). Curiosity and the desire for a new sexual experience may be a more prevalent motivation for those men with few

experiences with prostituted children (Hosey and Clune, 2002). For this group of men, prostitution appears as consumption and buying sex from children is not 'sexually deviant' but as a conscious, 'consumer choice' (Marttila, 2003; UNICEF, 2003b).

Yes, (I get) lots of requests for kids. Especially in the last four or five years. It's getting worse. They want younger and younger kids ... In one case an eight year-old ... Another one wanted a six-year-old ... Some of them will ask you to shave your pubic hairs because it reminds them of a little girl.

(A story by a prostituted woman, cited in Hatty, 1992: 77).

2.4.3 Men who Obtain Prostituted Children by 'Chance'

This group of men primarily become abusers of children through their adult prostitute use, not by explicitly looking to have sex with prostituted children (O'Connell-Davidson, 2001). They do not have a focused sexual interest in children (UNICEF, 2003b; Austin, 2003). They may go to prostitution areas to seek commercial sex from adults and may unexpectedly be offered the 'services' of a child, or they may find themselves in situations where sex with a child is more convenient or cheaper than sex with an adult (Brooks-Gordon and Gelsthorpe, 2003b; Anderson and O'Connell-Davidson, 2002; Grant et al., 1999; Melrose et al., 1999). Such unexpected offers of sex with prostituted children occur because the vast majority of them are integrated into the mainstream sex industry which serves all those who wish to purchase commercial sex (O'Connell-Davidson, 2001). For the majority of these regular sex customers, age is not as important as whether the individual prostitute is attractive to the particular customer or not. They may not even know how old the prostitute is, and they do not ask (Spangenberg, 2001). They pick out a prostituted child on the basis of her looks, demeanour, working style, and so on, not simply because she is an underage (Anderson and O'Connell-Davidson, 2002).

2.4.4 Men who Seek Something Different in Their Sex Life

Some men feel that their sex life with their partner is dissatisfying, thus they choose to be involved in sexual relationships with children to resolve this problem and/or to seek something different in the sex life (Jacobson, 2002). Their sexual disappointment is often due to the desire or fantasy for varieties of sex that regular partner do not provide or that they cannot, or dare not, express to their partner (Scott, 2002; Jacobson, 2002). For example, they may wish to perform 'unusual sexual' acts or to exercise sexual power over extremely vulnerable, powerless, objectified, and/or degraded individuals such as children (Ives, 2001). To sexually fantasize about exercising mastery over a child or to 'experiment' with a child as a sexual partner is not necessarily uncommon amongst men particularly those who regularly use prostitutes (Ireland, 1993; United Nations, 1996). A fantasy plays a major role on encounters with prostitutes, as it is both a way of explaining away the reality and a way of putting on and taking off different identities (Marttila, 2003). Many customers nowadays increasingly eroticise or fantasize the vulnerability of children (O'Connell-Davidson, 1998). In one study of 193 male university students in the United States, 21 percent admitted to having sexual attraction towards small children, nine percent described sexual fantasies that involved children, and seven percent indicated some likelihood of having sex with a child if they could avoid detection and punishment (Ireland, 1993). NCMEC (2002) mentions that there is an increase of reports of prostituted children being 'hired' for large sums of money to perform acts of sadomasochism. Customers who seek something different in their sex life may explicitly hire children to fulfil their sexual fantasies, but in reality, they actually use the children to experience power and control, domination and subordination, in an asymmetric age relationship (Grant et al., 1999; Jacobson, 2002; Davis, 2000). They essentially take an unfair advantage of the power imbalance between them and the children for personal pleasure (O'Connell-Davidson, 2001).

Something you want desperately, but you know it is 'morally wrong'. We, as children, are raised with the belief it's wrong to lust for someone on a purely physical level. By the simple act of booking an appointment, you are dominating your past, exerting your will over your parents (or other authority figures). And you will be rewarded by physical pleasure. It is a power play, yes, but a power play against yourself.

(A prostitution customer, cited in O'Connell-Davidson, 1998: 158).

2.4.5 Men who Seek Sex with Children on the Basis of Myths and Misconceptions about Sexual Health

The fear of AIDS among men who regularly use prostitutes for sex may be the biggest reason for the concurrent growth in the prostitution of children (Piot, 1996; Barnitz, 2000; Flowers, 1998; Khodyreva, 2002; Save the Children, 1996; YAPI, 1998). These men avoid sexual contact with adult prostitutes, but regularly seek sex with prostituted children in the belief that: this practice will protect them from exposure to AIDS as the children are not infected or less likely to be infected than adult prostitutes with the disease. In some cultures, it is thought that if you are HIV positive and have sex with a young woman especially virgins, you will be cured (Belk et al., 1998; Anderson and O'Connell-Davidson, 2002; ECPAT International, 2000, 2001; Piot, 1996; Flowers, 1998; Barnitz, 2000; UNAIDS, 2002; Kamala et al., 2001; UNICEF, 2001a, 2003b; Shahabudin, 2000; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998, 2001; Save the Children, 1996; Future Group, 2001; Bruce, 1996). Because of this mistaken belief, such customers may select younger children in prostitution, and those who profit from the prostitution business, such as pimps and brothel owners, may seek increasingly young children in order to fulfil the demand (O'Connell-Davidson, 2001; Barnitz, 2000; Lim, 1998b; Khodyreva, 2002; United Nations, 1996; Cordingley and Gee, 1997). There are reports of girls as young as eight and nine years old being marketed to men as 'virgins, free of AIDS' (Flowers, 1998; Anderson and O'Connell-Davidson, 2002).

Child prostitution is increasing because people with money think they will live longer and remain healthy if they have sex with young girls ... They are afraid of HIV, so they buy virgins.

(Kien Serey Phal, director of the Cambodian Women's Development Association in Phnom Penh, cited in Cochrane, 1999).

2.4.6 Men who Seek Children for Innocence and Virginity

Children have also been sought for sex on the basis of a particular interest in innocence and virginity (Lim, 1998a; Ireland, 1993; Save the Children, 1996; United Nations, 2001). Innocence and virginity is the 'priceless asset' of children, but it is sexually

desirable to the child sex customers (Kitzinger, 2002). Innocence is often idealised as a physical beauty of children – good looks, smooth skin (hairlessness), smallness, openness and curiosity (Montgomery, 2001). At the same time, innocent children are imagined to be sexually inexperienced, passive, and undemanding, and because of this, there are men who are especially drawn to children in prostitution (Anderson and O'Connell-Davidson, 2002; Beyrer and Stachowiak, 2003). Some may be influenced due to the widespread belief (in certain cultures) that having sex with innocent young women and virgins renews youthfulness, increases virility, brings good health, longevity, luck and success in business, and gives higher sexual pleasure and a sense of power (United Nations, 1996; ECPAT International, 2001; Future Group, 2001; Anderson and O'Connell-Davidson, 2002; Cochrane, 1999; Bruce, 1996; Sorajjakool, 2003). As one customer in Marttila's (2003: 10) study said, *"I feel as if [I am] getting back at the girls to whom I wasn't good enough at the age of 19"*. Many of these child sex customers demand innocents and virgins, so many children are taken into the sex trade at the time of, or just before puberty (Future Group, 2001).

The little girls, ten or twelve years old, I wouldn't describe them as innocent, they're not innocent, but they're fresh. They don't have the attitude of the older whores. The older whores have gone down hill. They use foul language. They drink. They're hardened. The little girls, they're not experienced. They're not hardened, they want to please you, they don't know what to expect, you get a better service from them.

(A customer, cited in O'Connell-Davidson, 1998: 147).

There is a high price on innocence and virginity and customers are willing to pay far more for every young woman who is described as virgin or whose youthfulness suggests innocence (Flowers, 1998; United Nations, 1996; 2001). Many pimps make a lot of profit by trading innocent and virgin children in the sex markets (UNICEF, 2001a; Hughes, 2000b; United Nations, 2000b). The children often euphemistically described by pimps as 'fresh young ladies', 'beautiful unspoiled girls', or 'women without body hair' to tell the customers that the children are ready for sex (Barnitz, 2000; Beyrer and Stachowiak, 2003).

2.4.7 The Abuse of Children by Customers

The customers of child prostitution tend to regard a sex act with a child as a 'service', 'a luxury moment', 'a wonderful, relaxing moment', 'indulgence', 'an easy lay', being 'with no pressure of performance', 'a feeling of power', 'immediate satisfaction', and 'feeling of independence' (Marttila, 2003). They enjoy the slow build-up of sexual relations with prostituted children and a fantasy of 'risk' associated with the activity (Brooks-Gordon and Gelsthorpe, 2003b). Seldom customers regard child prostitution as a place for them to violate subordinate young women, yet say they enjoy victimizing the young women with a blood, scar, bruise, tear, broken bone, emotional depression, or death (Lim, 1998b; Ennew, 1986; Kitzinger, 2002; Muntarhorn, 1996a; Dean and Thomson, 1998).

After pimps, customers are the second group of people who most frequently perpetrate violence towards children in prostitution (Benoit and Millar, 2001; Raphael and Shapiro, 2002; NCMEC, 2002; Kitzinger, 2002; Davis, 2000; YAPI, 1998; Farley and Kelly, 2000; Dorman, 2001; Johnson, 1992; O'Leary and Howard, 2001; Khodyreva, 2002; Saphira, 2002; Dean and Thomson, 1998). Several studies found that 62-100 percent of young women engaged in prostitution report physical assaults from customers including being beaten, slapped, punched, kicked, and threatened with a weapon (Raphael and Shapiro, 2002; Farley et al., 1998; Church et al., 2001; Farley and Barkan, 1998; Eddy and Walker, 2002; Peterson et al., 2002). Kamala et al. (2001) found that 17 percent of young women were beaten and robbed of their money, as well as being sexually abused and harassed. Another study reveals that, of 25 respondents interviewed, 20 reported they were verbally abused and 10 were hit by the customer (Saphira and Herbert, 2004c). Farley and Kelly (2000) report that some customers are extremely dangerous, often assault, and sometimes murder 'prostitutes' for pleasure. They use fists, feet, baseball bats, knives, or guns in their assaults. One man reported having inserted a shotgun into at least one prostitute's vagina and mouth. Saphira and Herbert (2004c) also report that some customers' assaults left the young women unconscious, and that one of them had been badly knifed in an attack and had spent some time in hospital recovering. Church et al. (2001) report that young women who 'work' outdoors are six times more likely to have experienced violence by clients than those working indoors.

Rape (including gang rape) is also a commonplace experience for young women in prostitution (Flowers, 1998; Davies, 2001; Miller and Jayasundara, 2001; Hughes, 2000b; Klain, 1999). Few studies report that 50-90 percent of prostituted young women were raped or sexually molested by one or more customers at some time in their lives (Farley and Kelly, 2000; Dean and Thomson, 1998; Farley and Barkan, 1998; Eddy and Walker, 2002; Peterson et al., 2002; Farley et al., 1998). Raphael and Shapiro (2002) found that up to 70 percent of respondents admit to have been raped by customers an average of 31 times per prostitute. Hunter (1994) reports that 78 percent of young women interviewed were raped on average of 16 times a year by pimps and 33 times a year by customers. Hosey and Clune (2002) found that 48 percent of prostituted young women were raped more than five times by customers. In another study, Silbert (1986) found that 70 percent of respondents were raped by customers. There is a widespread belief that the concept of rape does not apply to prostitutes. Many people assume that when a prostituted young woman is raped, it is part of her 'job', and that she deserved or even asked to be raped (Farley and Kelly, 2000; Farley, 2004).

Even though the men picked me because I was young, some would use this as an excuse not to pay. They would argue I was a child anyway and not supposed to be in commercial sex work, so why should they pay me?

(Caroline, a 16-year-old prostitution survivor from Mombasa, Kenya, cited in UNICEF, 2001a: 29).

The abuse of children in prostitution by customers is not difficult to understand as most men who buy sex from children often see themselves as entering into a commodity exchange rather than a social relationship (Brooks-Gordon and Gelsthorpe, 2003b; Anderson and O'Connell-Davidson, 2002; Jacobson, 2002; Ives, 2001). Therefore, they act solely on the basis of self-interest, and feel no connection with, or moral responsibility towards, those who provide the 'service' he purchases (O'Connell-Davidson 2001; Saphira and Oliver, 2002). When they abuse prostituted children, the arguments used are that the children are prostitutes, guilty people; they pay for sex, thus they can do whatever they want to the children; they are customers and the children must give better 'services' to them; or the children are drug addicts, 'damage goods', and they do not deserve respect (Ireland, 1993; Ennew, 1986; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998; Kitzinger, 2002; Lim, 1998a; Southgate, 1989).

2.5 The Consequences of Prostitution to the Children Involved

There are many serious, lifelong, and life-threatening consequences for children as a result of their involvement in prostitution (ADMCPSEY, 2001; Lim 1998a; Spangenberg, 2001; GMCL, 1999; United Nations, 2000b; Shaw and Butler, 1998; WCCSEC, 1996; Gray et al., 2002). The most tangible consequences are violence and substance addiction. The example of pimps and customers violence/brutality can be seen from the story of one prostituted young woman below:

I have two scars on the back of my head. I have a broken nose in two places. I've had a broken jaw which has a pin in the back of it. I've had five or six broken ribs ... My hands were scalded; they were put on a hot plate; I still have scars all over my hands. I've had a drill bit pushed into my fingers. I've had a gun pulled at my head; the trigger has been pulled and then the guy was laughing because he didn't have it loaded. I've had hoses pulled on me, fire hoses, high pressure hoses. I've had bottles thrown at me. I had a beer bottle break over my body. I've been set on fire. I've had gasoline put on me ... I've been stabbed. I've been run over. I've been thrown from the third storey of a building. I have been robbed numerous times. I've been punched out numerous times ... I'm talking hundreds. Hundreds and hundreds of bad dates (tricks/customers) in eight years.

(Hatty, 1992: 75).

Other consequences of child prostitution that will be highlighted in this section are psychological damage, infectious diseases, and pregnancy.

2.5.1 Psychological Damage

Children in prostitution suffer the same effects as other survivors of sexual assault and abuse (Hughes, 2000b; Grant et al., 1999; Dean and Thomson, 1998). They are twice as likely to have a mental-health problem, emotional disorder, or personality disorder than children who are not involved (Davies, 2001; Klain, 1999; O'Connell-Davidson, 2001; McClanahan et al., 1999; O'Leary and Howard, 2001; Benoit and Millar, 2001). Farley and Barkan (1998) report that over three-quarters of respondents in one study experienced symptoms of serious mental-health problems. Several sources report that most prostituted children have experienced conflicting feelings of fear, loyalty, guilt,

rage, betrayal, shame, blame, worthlessness, powerlessness, and withdrawal – all of which have been shown to manifest themselves in both inwardly self-destructive behaviour and outwardly external problem behaviour (Flowers, 1998; Future Group, 2001; YAPI, 1998; Kenward and Hevey, 1989; Klain, 1999; United Nations, 2000b, 2001; Farley and Kelly, 2000; Saphira and Herbert, 2004b; Grant et al., 1999; Bittle, 2002; Freed, 2003). These children may also suffer from a sense of entrapment, low self-concept, depression, anxiety, poor self-image, and low self-esteem (Saphira and Herbert, 2004b; Appelqvist, 2001; Dean and Thomson, 1998; Farley and Kelly, 2000; Willis and Levy, 2002; Klain, 1999; McClanahan et al., 1999; UNICEF, 2001a, 2003b; Johnson, 1992; United Nations, 2000b, 2000c; Kidd and Kral, 2002; Farley and Barkan, 1998; Beyrer and Stachowiak, 2003; Bruce, 1996).

Men take sex anyway. I was self-destructing and I thought it was all I was worth.

(Lorraine, involved in prostitution at 17, cited in Melrose et al., 1999: 16)

According to Johnson (1992), the act of prostitution, the selling of the self to uncaring strangers, is a traumatic process that destroys self-esteem. Again, she adds, prostituted young women's comments about what they do – “I don't like to talk to anyone about that,” “I don't want people to know,” “It's nothing I'm proud of,” and “I have no self-respect, I feel like meat, but it's money fast” – evidence of shame and guilt. Young women may also fear to trust and to talk to adults about their experiences because they believe that telling anyone about it is pointless (Saphira and Oliver, 2002; YAPI, 1998; Bruce, 1996; Davis, 2000). Some may even feel that they are not fully human, because of the way they have been treated in prostitution (Klain, 1999; Bruce, 1996).

I just think you lose your identity. You become a prostitute and you no longer feel like a human being.

(Frances, involved in prostitution at 14, cited in Taylor-Browne, 2002: 5).

One study found that 71 percent of respondents had devastatingly low self-esteem, and 80 percent showed current or recent signs of marked depression (Bagley and Young, 1995). In Cambodia, all 12 participants in one study were victimised and

felt helpless, damaged, degraded, betrayed, shameful, depressed, hopeless, unable to sleep, had nightmares, poor appetite, and a sense of resignation (Willis and Levy, 2002; Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997, United Nations, 2000a, 2001). The United Nations (2000b) reports that the four most common emotional problems among sexually exploited children in Thailand are sadness (55.2 percent), hopelessness (55.2 percent), withdrawal (31 percent) and irritability (41.4 percent). Other problems experienced are tearfulness, worthlessness, anxiety, lack of motivation, daydreaming, aggressiveness and loneliness. In the Karachi study, all of the 58 prostituted children interviewed exhibited symptoms of psychological damage such as low self-esteem (32.8 percent), guilt and self-blame (48.2 percent), self-rejection (41.4 percent), sadness (46.5 percent), anger/frustration (58.6 percent), fear (40 percent), tempers tantrums (39.7 percent), anxiety (60.3 percent) and sexual aggression (55.2 percent) toward persons weaker than themselves (United Nations, 2001). In another study, 43 prostitution-involved juveniles had been compared on a standardized psychological test (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory – MMPI) with 44 non-prostitution delinquents and 43 normal female adolescents to determine whether prostitution-involved juveniles exhibited specific psychiatric dysfunctions (Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997). This study found that prostitution-involved juveniles showed elevated levels of hypochondriasis, depression, hysteria, paranoia, psychasthenia, schizophrenia, and hypomania over both comparison groups.

Many of these women and adolescent girls reported depression, hopelessness, inability to sleep, nightmares, poor appetite, and a sense of resignation and despair. They appeared sad, subdued, withdrawn and ashamed. They suffer grief for many losses: the loss of freedom, of childhood, of innocence, and of virginity. They have lost a sense of safety, and of trust in the people most important to them ... Many women and adolescent girls reported high levels of fear and anxiety. They described panic attacks and frequent nightmares. Their greatest fear was of beatings and physical punishment by the brothel owners. They were beaten if they refused to accept a customer, even if they had an infection. They reported fear of violent, drunken customers. The fear of HIV/AIDS was ever present.

(Freed, 2003: 140).

Acute anxiety, depression and other psychological disturbances such as insomnia, irritability, flashbacks, emotional numbing, panic, memory lapses, continuous

extreme tension, and being in a state of emotional and physical hyper-alertness, are symptoms of PTSD (Saphira, 2002; Farley et al., 1998; Hosey and Clune, 2002; ECPAT New Zealand, 2003; Farley and Kelly, 2000; Kenward and Hevey, 1989; Sorajjakool, 2003; Farley, 2004). PTSD is a psychological reaction to extreme physical and emotional trauma such as rape, assault, and death threats (Barry, 1995; Saphira and Herbert, 2004c; YAPI, 1998; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Spangenberg, 2001; Giobbe, 1992; Klain, 1999; Saphira and Oliver, 2002; Hughes, 2000b; Kidd and Kral, 2002; Hunter, 1994). Often children in prostitution are found to have suffered from PTSD (Farley and Barkan, 1998; United Nations, 2000b; Saphira, 2002; Hunter, 1994). Those who are raped and ran away from home are found to have high rates of PTSD (ECPAT New Zealand, 2003). Silbert (1986) reports that every single rape victim of her study reported fear, guilt, rage, shock, hurt, depression, relief to be alive, overwhelming helplessness at the time of the rape, and feeling out of control of her own life. One study found that 67 percent of 475 female prostitutes in five countries (South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, USA, and Zambia) meet the diagnostic criteria for PTSD (Farley et al., 1998). The psychological scars and emotional stress associated with prostitution induced PTSD typically lead to substance abuse. Often using substances is an attempt to escape the bad memories, to cope with the pain of their reality as well as to become numb to their current circumstances (Zigman, 1999; Schaffner, 1999; Dalla, 2004; NCMEC, 2002; Dunne and Legosz, 2000; Greene et al., 1999; Judd et al., 2002; Stiffman, 1989; McCormack et al., 1986; McClanahan et al., 1999). Farley and Kelly (2000) report that young women who trade sex for drugs will be in a more severe psychological distress than those who do not trade sex.

Until last year Magdalen worked at the Blue Star beer House in Kalookan City, part of Metro Manila. She began to work there when she was 14 years old. Magdalen went to manila to look for a job and was lured by a recruiter to work as a 'hostess' in the Blue Star. She describes her work as:

"waiting for male customers to choose her from a number of other girls, bringing the customer to one of the cubicles in the beer house, baring her body and eventually satisfying the customer's sexual urges. Once finished with a customer she would go back to waiting for the next customer".

Magdalen catered to an average of 15 men a night. On Saturdays, she served an average of 30 men. At times when she could not take it any more she would be forced by her manager to submit to the customers. It goes

without saying that she would usually end her day at four in the morning, feeling very exhausted, depressed and miserable about her work and enslavement ... Magdalen was rescued along with 50 other girls, mostly in their teens, by the Kamalayan development Centre (KDC) in coordination with the labour bureau and government services agencies. The staff who rescued Magdalen say she has injuries and scars far deeper than the physical and mental problems. Magdalen is to a great extent, emotionally and psychologically battered. She had developed a phobia for men. She has lost her self-respect and sees herself as a cheap commodity that could be bought and used by men at any time they wished.

(Save the Children, 1996: 15-20).

Suicide ideation and suicide attempts frequently happen amongst the population of children in prostitution (Grant et al., 1999; Seng, 1989; Kidd and Kral, 2002; Klain, 1999; Willis and Levy, 2002; Weisberg, 1985; Johnson, 1992; Mullen et al., 1993). Those who develop serious psychological problems more often: abuse drugs; are runaways or throwaways; are victims of childhood physical and sexual abuse; or are infected with HIV (Yates et al., 1991; Molnar et al., 1998; Saphira, 2004; Kidd and Kral, 2002; Hwang and Bedford, 2004; Giobbe, 1992; United Nations, 2001). Research indicates that prostituted children on the streets are more likely to be clinically depressed. In addition to that, they are also twice as likely to have a serious psychological problem and almost twice as likely to be actively suicidal or to have previously attempted suicide (Klain, 1999; Davies, 2001). Saphira (2004) also suggest that the younger young people begin to have sex for money, the higher the number of them that venture into suicidal thoughts.

In Karachi study, 19 out of 58 prostituted children interviewed acknowledged having experienced occasional to very frequent suicidal feelings (United Nations, 2001). In another study, Saphira (2004) found that 56 percent of respondents reported thoughts of suicide in cases where the influence was a male customer or someone older than themselves, 28 percent thought of suicide themselves and 16 percent because their peers suggested the idea. O'Connell-Davidson (2001) reports that 50 percent of prostituted children have at least once, attempted suicide. Silbert (1986) found that 44 percent of respondents mention they have seriously attempted suicide. In addition to that, 27 percent tried to harm themselves in some other way, or tried to commit suicide more than once because they wanted someone to know they are hurt and they seriously wanted to die. Saphira (2002, 2004) reports that 65 percent of young women involved in

prostitution have inflicted self-harm whether to attempt suicide or to express their emotional dismal/distress. Giobbe (1992) reveals that 75 percent of prostitution-involved females have attempted suicide and 15 percent of all suicides reported by hospitals are prostitutes. One survey conducted with a group of young women involved in prostitution reports that 71 percent of them thought of suicide, 33 percent had a suicide plan and 14 percent had attempted suicide (Klain, 1999). In the United States, one study found that 41 percent of 61 pregnant prostituted young women had seriously considered or attempted suicide within the past year (Willis and Levy, 2002). In Thailand, 31 percent of prostituted children interviewed had attempted suicide, including slashing their wrists, jumping from a building, setting fire to their bedroom, overdosing on sleeping pills, and self poisoning (United Nations, 2000b).

I am only 16 years old, but I must have slept with dozens of men so far. All of them are beasts. They are after my body. I feel like a sex-toy. Sometimes, I feel like killing my customers or myself. Life has lost all meanings for me. Only death will rescue me from all this sufferings and mental ordeal.

(A 16-year-old prostituted young woman, cited in the United Nations, 2001: 25).

In the case of drug usage among prostituted children, several studies suggest that drugs are strongly related to suicide, either as a way of killing themselves (overdose) or killing themselves because of the addiction and the lifestyle of the addict (Kidd and Kral, 2002; O'Leary and Howard, 2001; Farley and Barkan, 1998). Hwang and Bedford (2004) report that one participant in their study attempted suicide twice by swallowing amphetamines. Another study found that respondents who use drugs are more likely to have experienced thoughts of suicide (50 percent) than those not using drugs (22 percent) but the numbers not using drugs are small (Saphira, 2004). Young people in prostitution may see suicide as a solution to end the unbearable psychological pain they suffered during childhood or to end the feeling of being trapped in their degrading life (Molnar et al., 1998; Johnson, 1992).

2.5.2 Infectious Diseases

Children in prostitution are at high risk of many infectious diseases (Willis and Levy, 2002; United Nations, 2000b; Beyrer and Stachowiak, 2003). STDs, particularly AIDS, are most frequently reported. The increased risk of STDs among children in prostitution is partly due to the changing behaviour and attitude of customers towards the AIDS endemic (Flowers, 1998). Many customers are under the mistaken notion, as mentioned above, that children do not carry STDs and sex with prostituted children is safer than sex with adult prostitutes (Save the Children, 1996; Piot, 1996; UNAIDS, 2002; UNICEF, 2001a, 2003b; Khodyreva, 2002; Bruce, 1996). This is clearly a misconception. One study reveals high rates of prostituted children being infected by STDs, in Cambodia (36 percent), China (78 percent), and Thailand (38 percent) including syphilis, herpes, urinary tract infections and polyps (UNICEF, 2003b; United Nations, 2000b). In Tanzania, more than seven percent of street children are infected with STDs in the course of a year (Klain, 1999). O'Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor (1996d) report that 20 percent of young women interviewed have contracted at least one form of venereal disease. Kamala et al. (2001) found that 85 percent of children engaged in prostitution admitted to having contracted a STD once or twice since they became prostitutes, and 76 percent had received treatment in hospital. However, most of the time, the diseases go untreated, which can cause long-term health problems (Gray et al., 2002). Farley and Kelly (2000) and Farley (2004) report that prostituted young women having sex with more customers have more severe physical symptoms, and the longer they are in prostitution, the more STD is reported.

In Raphael and Shapiro's (2002) study, about half of the respondents had STDs and close to 22 percent of them were HIV positive. According to Willis and Levy (2002), prostituted children who are infected with a STD, such as syphilis or cancrroids have a four times increased risk of HIV infection. The United Nations estimates that more than 50 percent of new HIV infections currently occur in people between the ages of 15-24 and 10 percent are occur in children under age 15 (YAPI, 1998). Willis and Levy (2002) report that 50-90 percent of children rescued from brothels in parts of Southeast Asia are infected with HIV. Spangenberg (2001) found that over half of prostituted young women considered that it was 'somewhat-likely or very likely' that

they would get AIDS. Farley and Barkan (1998) report eight percent of respondents have contracted HIV.

Children in prostitution may be particularly vulnerable to infection because they have immature reproductive tracts and are more likely to be injured by penetrative sex as compared to adults (Piot, 1996; Saphira and Oliver, 2002; UNICEF, 2001a; Saphira, 2002; Barnitz, 2000). The genital abrasions during sexual activity, and the hormonal fluctuations and permeability of key tissue walls, may increase the risk of transmission (Lim, 1998a). Once exposed, it is easier for the virus to pass into their bodies because they have limited protection against diseases since their immune systems are not yet fully developed (Alexander, 1998; Lim, 1998a; Piot, 1996). The risk of infection is further increased by earlier debut of sexual activity, as well as by a multiple sexual partners (Saphira, 2002). At the same time, almost all children in prostitution are unlikely to be able to negotiate safe sex practises because customers often refuse to use condoms (UNICEF, 2001a, 2003b; Kamala et al., 2001; Saphira and Herbert, 2004b; Willis and Levy, 2002; United Nations, 2000b, 2001; Dean and Thomson, 1998; Simkhada, 2002). For example, one Canadian study found that 89 percent of customers refused to use condoms (Farley, 2004).

We worked in groups, with an older girl negotiating with clients. Men would ask our ages and the younger the better. I would then go with the man to a lodging where we would have sex. I paid a commission to the group leader for every client. Some of the men would beat me, especially when I refused to take drugs or if I insisted on using a condom.

(Caroline, a 16-year-old prostitution survivor from Mombasa, Kenya cited in UNICEF, 2001a: 35).

Some customers also reported to have begged young women for unprotected penetrative sex by offering to pay double the price they have quoted (Johnson, 1992; O'Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor, 1996d). Farley (2004) report that 73 percent of prostitution-involved female indicated that men offer to pay more for sex without a condom, and 45 percent mentioned that the men become abusive if they insist them to use condoms. Often young women are disturbingly passive in negotiating the sexual encounter (Klain, 1999). Their vulnerability limits the capacity to manage potentially violent situations or the risk of STDs (Montgomery, 2001).

Many men will pay more for sex without condoms because they believe that the experience is more intense. "If they wanted safe sex, do you think they would out on 42nd Street? They want fantasies ... Condoms aren't part of fantasies. AIDS isn't part of fantasies. AIDS has no impact on what's goin' on in the streets," one prostituted youth told Patricia Hersch.

(Johnson, 1992: 127).

Children's vulnerability to STDs is often further compounded by drug abuse for two reasons (Riehmman, 1996; O'Leary and Howard, 2001; PCA-NY, 2001; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998; Davies, 2001; Reid and Costigan, 2002; Saphira and Glover, 2004). First, young people under the influence of drugs (or alcohol) are often less able to control transactions with customers or set limits to the transactions (Crowley and O'Sullivan, 1998; UNAIDS, 2002; O'Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor, 1996d; Cusick et al., 2003). Second, heavy addiction to drugs (especially those who are intravenous drug users) may result in contraction a STD through needle-sharing and irregular condom use (Davies, 2001; O'Leary and Howard, 2001; Riehmman, 1996; Alexander, 1998). Under these conditions, men who use prostituted children are certainly playing Russian roulette with their lives (Flowers, 1998).

As well as vulnerability to the STDs, children in prostitution are also at risk of other health problems. Hepatitis-B, Hepatitis-C, and tuberculosis infection are reported (Shahabudin, 2000; Willis and Levy, 2002; Kamala et al., 2001; Weisberg, 1985; Alexander, 1998; Farley, 2004; Benoit and Millar, 2001; Bruce, 1996; Hay, 2004). In Brazil, 2.7 percent of 645 prostitution-involved female are infected with Hepatitis-B, and 2.5 percent of 464 are infected with Hepatitis-C (Willis and Levy, 2002). Many prostituted children live in poor conditions, are undernourished, and have poor hygiene (United Nations, 2000b; Willis and Levy, 2002; Anarfi, 1997). Due to the conditions and the nature of prostitution, many of them have skin infections, gastro-intestinal disturbances, parasitic infestations, eczema, impetigo, pneumonia, tiredness, sore throats, internal injuries, discharges, warts, abdominal pain, chest pain, fever, colds, insomnia, muscular pain, headache, and migraines (Leidholdt, 2003; Kamala et al., 2001; United Nations, 2000b, 2001; Weisberg, 1985; Alexander, 1998; Willis and Levy, 2002; Bruce, 1996; Gray et al., 2002; Raphael and Shapiro, 2002; Johnson, 1992; Farley, 2004). In Bogota, the overwhelming majority of children and women in a survey reported physical health problems including allergies, respiratory problems and

blindness (caused by glue sniffing), migraines, symptoms of premature aging, dental problems, complications of abortion as well as STDs (Farley and Kelly, 2000). In Cambodia, 38 percent of prostituted children have headaches and skin diseases, 24 percent suffer from malnutrition, 17 percent have chest pain, and 14 percent have stomachaches and wet their beds (United Nations, 2000b). These children also have an increased risk of cervical cancer, a result of high number of sexual partners and young age at first intercourse (Future Group, 2001; Farley and Kelly, 2000; Willis and Levy, 2002; Farley, 2004).

2.5.3 Unexpected Pregnancies

Other consequence of involvement in prostitution is early and/or unwanted pregnancies (Davies, 2001; Widom, 1996; United Nations, 2000b; UNICEF, 2003b; ADMCPSEY, 2001; Beyrer and Stachowiak, 2003; Widom and Kuhns, 1996; Raphael and Shapiro, 2002; Weisberg, 1985; Dean and Thomson, 1998). There is little information about how many prostituted young women become pregnant and what happens to their children (Spangenberg, 2001). Sexually exploited young women have a 90 percent chance of becoming pregnant within one year (Willis and Levy, 2002). Spangenberg (2001) reported that prostituted young women who had been raped or coerced into having sex at least once were twice as likely to become pregnant compared to those who had not suffered such abuse. Weisberg (1985) found that half of prostituted young women had been pregnant at least once, a significant number had been pregnant more than once, and almost one-fifth had been pregnant more than twice. The average age at first pregnancy was 14.5 years old.

Pregnancy is considered undesirable by brothel owners or pimps because it prevents the prostitute from working (Future Group, 2001). Consequently, many unsafe abortions are performed using various barbaric methods that endanger the life of the young women, involving knitting needles, with no anaesthetic and no aftercare (O'Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor, 1996d; Beyrer and Stachowiak, 2003). The UNICEF survey found that up to 48 percent of young women in prostitution had terminated their pregnancy (O'Connell-Davidson and Sanchez-Taylor, 1996d). The United Nations (2000b) reports that of 12 young women who became pregnant in

Vietnam, eight have had abortions. One of them became pregnant for the third time and had already undergone two abortions. Those young women who kept their babies were, however, at high risk of giving birth to premature low birth weight infants (Klain, 1999). Willis and Levy (2002) report that eight percent of 55 infants born to prostituted young women during the study died, and 67 percent were referred to child protection agencies. Worldwide, the estimation of the number of children in prostitution who experience violence, physical and mental health problems, become pregnant and have had abortions can be seen from Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Estimated Yearly Occurrence of Adverse Health Effects of Child Prostitution

	Estimated yearly occurrence
Adverse health effects in prostituted children*	
<u>Infectious disease</u>	
STDs	2,000,000
HIV infection	300,000
HPV infection	4,500,000
HBV infection	500,000
<u>Pregnancy</u>	
Maternal deaths	4,752
Spontaneous abortions	900,000
Induced abortions	1,224,000
Abortion-related complications	367,200
Abortion-related deaths	710
<u>Mental illness</u>	
PTSD	6,700,000
Attempted suicide	1,640,000
<u>Substance abuse</u>	
All substances	9,000,000
<u>Violence</u>	
Physical assault	2,500,000
Rape	2,500,000
Murder	6,900
Adverse health effects in infants born to prostituted children†	
Infant deaths	190,080
Complication of STDs	237,000
HIV infection	249,480
Deaths from HIV infection	54,886
HBV infection	8,316

Note: STD = sexually transmitted disease. HPV = human papillomavirus. HBV = hepatitis B virus. PTSD = post-traumatic stress disorder. *Based on an estimated 9 million girls and 1 million boys prostituted per year. †Based on an estimated 2,376,000 infants born to prostituted children per year.

Source: Willis and Levy (2002: 1418).

2.6 Society's Obligations towards Prostituted Children

The exploitation of powerless children by powerful adults is at the heart of the problem of child prostitution. Around the globe, children are exploited for a number of different reasons, but linked by the fact that unscrupulous adults prey on their vulnerability (World Vision, 2002a). The sexual exploitation of children is a 'unique' form of child abuse and is wrong (UNICEF, 2001a). It touches the nobility, integrity and dignity of the most vulnerable and least articulate human beings of our society (Montgomery, 2001). The effect of prostitution on the dignity of a child remains the same, whether there is an intermediary involved or not and whether it is regular or occasional (Bruce, 1996). It is difficult to find a risk group to which these children do not belong (ADMCPSEY, 2001). Children who suffer from psychological health problems particularly pose a serious challenge insofar as effective treatment and reintegration into society is concerned (Willis and Levy, 2002).

Some scholars argue that child prostitution is a modern form of slavery, as the children are nothing short of slave labourers and suffer from the loss of basic human rights, violence, diseases, drug addictions, physical injuries and psychological problems (Bruce, 1996; Williams, 2002; David, 1999; Beyer, 1996; Saikaew, 1996; Ennew, 1986; Barry, 1995; Law, 2000; Hughes, 2000a; Hynes and Raymond, 2002; Dorman, 2001; Muntarhorn, 1996a; Johnson, 1992; Leidholdt, 2003; Davis, 2000; Ireland, 1993). As they are treated as 'commodities', 'bought' and 'sold' like chattel to satisfy the demand for perverse sexual gratification (WCCSEC, 1996; UNICEF, 2001a; Williams, 2002; Hynes and Raymond, 2002; Ssewakiryanga, 2002).

One pimp interviewed in London in 2000, for example, said that he had just paid £800 each for two 13-year-old girls from a deprived area of South Africa. He 'orders' the girls who are then delivered by a courier. As he says: "they're not even property: they're commodities ... You've bought them and they have to do what you tell them".

(UNICEF. 2003b: 19).

Law (2000) argues that such treatment of young women shows how men manipulate and systematically subordinate the political economy of the female body. These 'shameful' abuses, so long a dirty secret must not be allowed to continue (UNICEF, 2001a). It is so urgent and so serious that action must be taken immediately

(Montgomery, 2001). James et al. (2002) suggest that children's bodies are 'the very temples of the sacred' that should be preserved at all costs from any violation or transgression acts. Furthermore, child prostitution has not only a substantial negative impact on the children concerned, but also has significant wider social costs. These relate to extended families, the next generation of children of prostituted young women, the population of children, the health care system, the welfare system, the security system, the mental-health system, and the criminal justice system (Willis and Levy, 2002; John Howard Society of Alberta, 2001). The number of children who are tricked into prostitution increases every year and the age of entry is decreasing (U.S. Department of State, 2001). Given what we now know about the dimensions of child prostitution and its devastating effects on the children themselves, perhaps the central question concerns how to pursue its eradication (Dorman, 2001). Every effort should be taken to criminalize the sexual exploitation of children in all its forms. We have to remember that these 'prostitutes' are children and we have the obligations to protect them because these children are our future (WCCSEC, 1996; YAPI, 1998).

It is time for us to figure out who the real perpetrators are – and they are not children (YAPI, 1998). Child prostitution is a male problem – fantasizing about sexual acts with vulnerable people, or believing the myths of having sex with an innocent and/or a virgin (Jacobson, 2002). It is therefore be very wrong to punish, criminalize or penalise the child victims (WCCSEC, 1996; Jacobson, 2002; Klain, 1999). Indeed, there must be a shift away from criminalizing children, taking firm legal action against those who create a demand for sex with children and addressing much more seriously the various factors that lead adults to perpetrate such horrific offences (Austin, 2003 West, 2003; Muntarhorn, 1996b).

We have to act now and we have to act forcefully ... We owe this to the children that have been abused, tortured and even killed by sex offenders and to the children who are at risk of becoming victims ... This modern form of slavery has to be stopped!

(Closing Speech by Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden at the First WCCSEC in 1996 cited in the ECPAT International, 2002: 39).

3 Conceptualizing Child Prostitution in Malaysia

3.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of four main parts. The first part discusses briefly Malaysian geographic and demographic characteristics, history and economic background. The second part provides a concise explanation of current Malaysian legislation designed to protect children from prostitution. The third part develops a model of the involvement of children in prostitution in Malaysia. This chapter ends its discussion by presenting hypotheses for the current research.

3.2 Malaysia: An Overview

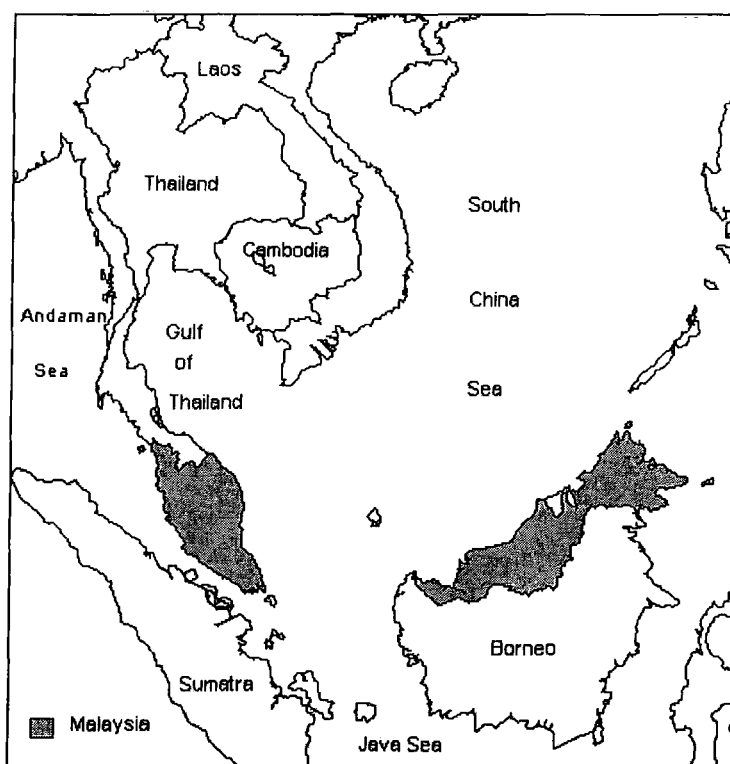
Malaysia is a democratic federal constitutional monarchy country situated in South-eastern Asia. It is divided into two regions, known as Peninsular Malaysia (West Malaysia) and East Malaysia. Peninsular Malaysia is bordered to the south by Singapore and to the north by Thailand. East Malaysia occupies the northern part of Borneo Island and is bordered to the south by Indonesia and completely surrounding the tiny enclave of Brunei to the north (Figure 3.1). The two regions are separated from each other by the South China Sea, but both share a largely similar landscape. The total population of Malaysian in 2000 was 23.27 million compared to 18.38 million in 1991 (Department of Statistic, 2001). The distribution of the population though is uneven, with some 17 million residents concentrated in the Peninsular Malaysia. In terms of age, 33.3 percent of the population are below 15 years, 62.8 percent are 15-64 years, and 3.9 percent are 65 years and over. Sayed Abdul Rahman (2000) estimates that the percentage of children below 18 years old in Malaysia was around 45 percent of the total population.

Malaysia is a multicultural society with three main ethnic groups coexisting: Malays, Chinese, and Indians. Based on 2000 census figures, Malays (combined with other 'son of the soil' sub-ethnics to form *Bumiputera* ethnic) were the largest ethnic group and accounted for 65.1 percent of the population, Chinese for 26.0 percent, Indians for 7.7 percent, and other minority groups, like Sikh, Eurasian and indigenous



tribes, made up the remaining one percent (Department of Statistic, 2001). The Malays who are Muslims and speak *Bahasa Melayu* are politically strong but most of them still live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for support (NPFDB, 1999a; Andaya and Andaya, 1982; Roslan, 2001). The Chinese are Buddhists and Taoists, living in urban areas, speak *Hokkein*, *Hakka* and *Cantonese* and are dominant in business (Roslan, 2001; Chiu, 2000; NPFDB, 1999a). The Chinese population in Malaysia is greater than in any other country outside of China (Chiu, 2000). Indians are mainly Hindu Tamils and speak Tamil, Malayalam, and some Hindi, and occupy larger towns on the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia (NPFDB, 1999a; Roslan, 2001; Chiu, 2000).

Figure 3.1: Location of Malaysia



Bahasa Malaysia is the official language of the country but English is widely spoken. The multi-cultural characteristic of Malaysian society is inherited from the British colonial during their occupation in Malaya (later known as Malaysia in 1963) from 1786 to 1957; the Chinese were brought into the country to work in the tin mines, while the Indians to work in the rubber plantations (Henderson et al., 2002; Andaya and Andaya, 1982; Roslan, 2001; Badaruddin, 2002; Chiu, 2000; Warren, 1993; Castles,

2000; NPFDB, 1999a). In May 13 1969, Malaysia saw an incident of ethnic conflict particularly between Malays and Chinese due to large socioeconomic imbalance between them. The incident led to the adoption of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1970.

During the NEP period (1970-1990), Malaysia experienced remarkably high economic growth and transformed itself from a middle-income country and a producer of raw materials (tea, rubber, tin, and cooking oil) into an emerging multi-sector economy (Roslan, 2001; Mohamed and Asan Ali, 2003; Badaruddin, 2002; Andaya and Andaya, 1982; Castles, 2000). In 1991, the policy was changed to the National Development Policy (NDP) and its aims are to promote balanced and sustainable development. Under this policy, the process of industrialization has developed significantly particularly in the electronics sector and economic performance continued to be excellent with the Gross National Product (GNP) annual growth rate from 1975-1996 averaged 7-8 percent (NPFDB, 1999a; Castles, 2000). In 1993, Malaysia had been recognised as one of the newly industrialising countries (NICs) and 'economic miracles' of East Asia (Roslan, 2001; Badaruddin, 2002). However, in 1997, Malaysia began to suffer from an economic downturn due to the East Asian financial crisis (Griffith-Jones et al., 1998; Atinc and Walton, 1998; Castles, 2000; Henderson et al., 2002; Knowles et al., 1999). This economic contraction is affecting the lives of millions and aggravating social vulnerabilities in many dimensions; with falling incomes, rising absolute poverty and malnutrition, declining public services, threats to educational and health status, increased pressure on women and increased crime and violence (Knowles et al., 1999; Atinc and Walton, 1998).

3.3 A Current Legislation to Protect Children from Prostitution

Before August 2001, the protection of children from prostitution in Malaysia was specifically focused on the female gender. Males were totally excluded from protective legislation. The Women and Girls Protection Act 1973 (Act 106) was the Act provided to protect any female below 21 from prostitution (Section 7) (Government of Malaysia, 1995). The Act, together with the Juvenile Courts Act 1947 and the Child Protection Act 1991 however were merged to form a new act, the Child Act 2001. The new act

makes some amendments on the laws relating to the care, protection and rehabilitation of children and includes the principles of the UNCRC (Government of Malaysia, 2002; Sayed Abdul Rahman, 2000; U.S. Department of State, 2001). Malaysia became a signatory to the UNCRC in 1995 (Shamsiah, 2002; Sayed Abdul Rahman, 2000; Kulasegaran, 2001).

The Child Act 2001 has 15 parts and 135 sections and is considered the most comprehensive act the country has ever produced to give better protection to children (Sayed Abdul Rahman, 2000). The Act reflects new thinking about the relationship between children and their parents, encourages cooperation and partnership between families and the agencies charged with the duty of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and aims to provide an effective legal framework for the protection of children (Sayed Abdul Rahman, 2000). According to Section 43, it is a punishable offence for any person who sells, lets for hire or buys a child under the age of 18 for the purpose of prostitution or for the purpose of having sexual intercourse with the child. This section also covers the case of child trafficking for the purpose of prostitution and any person who acts as an intermediary on behalf of a child. An offender who is found guilty of committing such offences can be fined not exceeding RM50,000 or face imprisonment to a maximum 15 years, or both (Government of Malaysia, 2002). These penalties are stiffer than the penalties provided in the Women and Girls Protection Act 1973, where the guilty offender was only liable to imprisonment for a maximum of 5 years or a fine of not more than RM10,000, or both (Section 16) (Government of Malaysia, 1995).

The Child Act 2001 defines a child in need of protection from prostitution and rehabilitation is a person who is:

- i. Being induced to perform any sexual act, or in any physical or social environment which may lead to the performance of such act;
- ii. Living in or frequently visiting any brothel or place of assignation; or
- iii. Habitually in the company or under the control of brothel-keepers or procurers or persons employed or directly interested in the business carried on in brothels or in connection with prostitution.

(Section 38, Child Act 2001).

If a child has been found in any situation above, and the 'Protector' or the police officer is satisfied on reasonable ground that the child should be given protection, he or she will be brought to the Court for Children (Section 39). If the Court is satisfied that there is a need to protect the child, he or she will be removed to a temporary place of refuge until an inquiry has been completed and a report of inquiry has been submitted to the Court. Here, 'Protector' means the Director General of Social Welfare, the Deputy Director General of Social Welfare, a Divisional Director of Social Welfare in the Department of Social Welfare, the State Director of Social Welfare, or any Social Welfare Officer (Section 2). Based on the inquiry report, the Court will decide whether:

- i. To detain the child in a place of refuge for a period of three years from the date of the admission;
- ii. To place the child in the care of a relative or a person who is considered fit by the Court for a period not more than three years from the date of the order;
- iii. To order the parent or guardian to execute a bond (determined by the Court), with or without sureties, that is equal to a period not exceeding three years from the date of order; or
- iv. To place the child under the supervision of a Social Welfare Officer not more than three years from the date of order.

(Section 40, Child Act 2001).

'Place of refuge' means an institution or centre for the care and rehabilitation of children (Section 55). Under Section 41, children also can be placed in a place of refuge (rehabilitation centre) if they or their parents/guardians make an application to the 'Protector' or the officer in the centre. There are five rehabilitation centres provided in Malaysia to protect and to rehabilitate prostituted children. These centres are run by the Department of Social Welfare and have a total capacity of 630 beds (Table 3.1). Three of these centres are located in Peninsular Malaysia and one each in Sabah and Sarawak (East Malaysia). However, the centres are provided only for young females. No specific rehabilitation centre is available for young males who are safeguarded from prostitution.

Besides victims of prostitution and children who are exposed to the danger of prostitution, other groups of young people resident in the centres are victims of abuse, runaways, those who are pregnant out of wedlock, and those who are threatened or

intimidated for sexual intercourse, or for any immoral purpose (Section 41). In 1996, a total of 875 young women were protected in the rehabilitation centres and 17.6 percent of them were found involved or exposed to prostitution (Table 3.2). The number of residents increased to 1,066 in 1997, the year the country began to suffer from the economic downturn. By 1998, nearly 50 percent of residents in the rehabilitation centres were young women safeguarded from prostitution and activities related to prostitution.

Table 3.1: Rehabilitation Centres for Children in Malaysia

Name of Centre	Date Opened	Capacity
Taman Seri Puteri, Cheras	January 1967	30
Taman Seri Puteri, Rembau	December 1976	200
Taman Seri Puteri, Batu Gajah	March 1978	200
Taman Seri Puteri, Kota Kinabalu (Sabah)	June 1982	100
Taman Seri Puteri, Miri (Sarawak)	April 1985	100

Source: Abdul Hadi (1995).

Table 3.2: A Total Number of Young Women in the Rehabilitation Centres Protected from Prostitution, Immoral Activities and Abuse

Year	Total Residents	Cases Related to Prostitution	Percentage
1993	N.A	426	-
1994	N.A	337	-
1995	N.A	189	-
1996	875	154	17.6
1997	1066	215	20.2
1998	630	306	48.6
1999	708	187	26.4
2000	710	N.A	-
2001	453	N.A	-

Note: N.A – Not Available

Source: Department of Social Welfare (2000, 2002).

The rehabilitation centres are well known in Malaysia as *Taman Seri Puteri*, which literally means ‘The Garden of Princesses’ (Abdul Hadi, 1995). The objective of the centres is to assist the children to acquire skills and desirable attitudes and values that conform to prevailing social norms, in order to re-integrate them into the mainstream of society (Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995, 1998; Abdul Hadi, 1995). In the centre, children have to follow strict routines (Table 3.3) and undergo rehabilitation programmes such as character building, behaviour modification, skills training, value orientation, and the development of personal resilience, in order for the children to withstand challenges and temptations after they are released (Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995,

1998). They are also allowed to have certain activities once a month like receiving visits from family members, sending or receiving letters to or from the family, and going out for shopping. They are also provided with a small amount of pocket money each month. In addition, they can go home to celebrate religious festivals like Christmas, Eid, Chinese New Year, or Depavali after six month living in the centre.

After being released from the centres, these children have to go through a year of after-care supervision handled by the Social Welfare Officer to make sure their re-integration into the community runs smoothly and that they do not return to 'bad habits', such as prostitution or other 'immoral activities'. Currently, even though the institutional form of rehabilitation is seen as a good way of protecting children, the Department of Social Welfare feels that it should be considered as a last resort (Nagaraj and Yahya, 1995). The department believes the best form of rehabilitation is to place children in the community itself.

Table 3.3: Residents' Routine in the *Taman Seri Puteri Rembau*

Time	Activity
5.30 am	Wake up and preparation
6.15 am	Morning prayer/physical exercise
7.00 am	Breakfast
7.30 am	Clean areas surrounding the institution
8.00 am	Assembly
8.30 am	Vocational/religion/academic class
10.00 am	Tea break
10.30 am	Re-enter vocational/religion/academic class
12.30 pm	Break/lunch/afternoon prayer
2.00 pm	Moral class/art class/sport
4.00 pm	Tea break
4.45 pm	Evening prayer
5.00 pm	Brass band training/ <i>kompang</i> /marching
6.30 pm	Dinner
7.30 pm	Night prayer/religious talk
9.00 pm	Free activity – indoor games/watching TV
10.00 pm	Bed time

Note: *Kompang* is a traditional Malay Music played by a small group of people.

3.4 Conceptualizing the Involvement of Children in Prostitution in Malaysia

Starting from 1970s, Malaysia has undergone rapid development through industrialization and modernization resulted in dramatic economic and social

transformation. The rate of urbanization increased as many people from rural areas migrated to urban areas particularly in the period of 1970s and 1990s to seek employment. The urban population swelled from 37 percent in 1981 to 51 percent in 1991, and 62 percent in 2000 (Department of Statistic, 2001). The industrialization and modernization process had tremendously improved people's quality of life primarily in health and education (Badaruddin, 2002). The UNDP Human Development Report in 1997 ranked Malaysia as the 60th out of 175 countries assessed in terms of well-being (Kamerman, 2002). Compared to neighbouring countries, Malaysia was among the highest: Thailand (59th), the Philippines (98th), Indonesia (99th), Vietnam (121st), Laos (136th) and Cambodia (153rd). Though the two factors are responsible for improving the standard of living in Malaysia, certain unintended social problems linked to this process started to emerge, and one of the problems is child prostitution. In this part, the prevalence of the phenomenon in the country will be theoretically explained.

3.4.1 Family Dysfunction

Family is the heart of child development. It is the primary and most important social institution for the upbringing, education and protection of children (Wolcott, 1999; Berthiaume et al., 2002; UNICEF, 1997; Kumpfer et al., 1998). The growth of children is influenced in particular ways by the family environment – historical, social, and economic circumstances (Earls and Carlson, 2001). Research on child and family development provide evidence that the family environment is the key factor that influence a child's health, behaviour, social, well-being, intellectual, moral, emotional and physical, and that parental love and attention, support, stability and consistency in the home are tremendously important in determining a child's life and what will happen to him or her when they grow up (Heneghan et al., 2000; Moore and Vandivere, 2000; Earls and Carlson, 2001; Oetting et al., 1997; Brooks-Gunn and Markman, 2005; Nichols and Schwartz, 2004; Fagan, 1999; Wolcott, 1999; Veneziano, 2003; Benard, 1991; MacDonald, 1997).

In general, a child who develops healthily is the one who has good parenting and care from the family, or who has been nurtured by caring adults beginning from birth who contribute to the growth of a broad range of positive attitudes and mindsets; high

self-confidence, self-esteem and self-worth, positive social skills and competencies, successful relationships, morality and emotions (Berthiaume et al., 2002; Nichols and Schwartz, 2004; Wolcott, 1999; Heneghan et al., 2000; Oetting et al., 1997; Wolcott and Hughes, 1999; Earls and Carlson, 2001). Children benefit from all these positive attitudes because of the secure relationships they develop in their family settings, and also because of the ways in which the parents provide cognitively stimulating activities and support for developing positive relationships with others (Moore and Vandivere, 2000; Wolcott, 1999; Heneghan et al., 2000; Wolcott and Hughes, 1999). According to MacDonald (1997), parents whose children grow and develop healthily are better parents and they are prone to providing affectionate, supportive, and stimulating environments for children. They are also better role models, and their children are more likely to attend to them and be concerned with parental approval of their behaviour. The children of these high-investment parents are also better able to benefit from all of this parental solicitude.

However, not all children are able to live in such a 'beautiful', supportive and understanding of the functional families. Many are living in dysfunctional families; the family institution that often becomes an arena for suffering and violence (Wolcott, 1999; UNICEF, 1997). Definitions of 'healthy families', 'strong families' and 'healthy family functioning' and their counterpart, 'disturbed' and 'dysfunctional' families are frequently embedded in psychological paradigms (Wolcott, 1999). Strong families promote each other's welfare and happiness, show appreciation for each other, have good communication skills and talk a lot to each other, spend time together, have a sense of spirituality, and use crises as an opportunity to grow (Wolcott and Hughes, 1999). Conversely, 'disturbed' and 'dysfunctional' families lack or do not have these positive family setting characteristics. Nichols and Schwartz (2004) mention that family systems must be stable enough to ensure continuity, but flexible enough to accommodate to changing circumstances. Problems arise when inflexible family structures are unable to adjust effectively to maturational or situational challenges. When the family fails to handle adversity from these challenges, maybe due to flaws in their adaptation structure or maybe due to their inability to adjust to changed circumstances, these will result in family dysfunction especially if there is a background of stress in the family (Nichols and Schwartz, 2004).

In relation to child prostitution, a growing body of research suggests that the vast majority of prostituted children come from dysfunctional family systems (ADMCPSEY, 2001; NCMEC, 2002; Klain, 1999; Flowers, 1998, 2001; ECPAT New Zealand, 2003; Saphira and Oliver, 2002; Estes and Weiner, 2002; WHO, 1996; Ives, 2001; Saphira and Herbert, 2004b; Earls and David, 1990; McIntyre, 1999; Nadon et al., 1998; Grant et al., 1999; Cohen, 1987; Barrett and Beckett, 1996). In the case of Malaysia, the researcher presumes that family dysfunction causes children to be vulnerable and easily drawn into prostitution. The basic thought behind this assumption is:

- i. Family dysfunction can deprive a child's development psychologically and emotionally that can lead the neglected child to seek support particularly for love, warmth, affection and attention from someone outside the family. The emotional and psychological vulnerability may make the child an easy target to be victimised, exploited, tricked or forced into prostitution by opportunistic adults.
- ii. Dysfunctional families are often abusive and violent. A child may be psychologically affected by the violence between parents or may also be a subject of abuse and violence by parents physically, emotionally and sexually. Abused children may runaway from home to flee from family violence and then become involved in prostitution for survival. Some children may use drugs to cope with the psychological scarring and emotional stress as a result of abuse and violence while living with their parents, while others may use drugs after they runaway from home to escape the trauma and memory of abuse. Both groups of children are vulnerable to prostitution. They may enter prostitution for survival or may be tricked or forced to enter prostitution because of their susceptibility to drugs.
- iii. Dysfunctional families often struggle to provide adequate parenting and care for a child. Neglect of a child's welfare physically, emotionally, and psychologically are assumed common in dysfunctional families. Relationships between children and parents are also unstable. Often these families lose control of their child, fail to monitor those with whom their child is friends and the activities the child is involved in outside the family boundary. A lack of parental

vigilance may lead the child to be involved with bad friends who are already in prostitution.

Family dysfunction theory emphasizes that the process of family dynamics involving the behavioural interplay of each member of the unit affect family unity and functioning (Iwaniec, 1999; Elliott et al., 2000). According to this theory, there are two systems within the family i.e. the child and the parents, and these two systems need boundaries between them (with some permeability) to ensure a healthy climate for all family members (Elliott et al., 2000). In relation to child prostitution, the theory maintains that family dynamics contribute to child abuse and neglect, and that the abuse and neglect occurs because 'normal' family boundaries, hierarchies and relationships have broken down (Weisberg, 1985; Klain, 1999; Sullivan, 1988; Weitzer, 2000b; Sereny, 1985; ECPAT International, 2004; Montgomery, 2001). Abuse and neglect impairs a child's psychological development and the common symptoms of the impairment are running away and substance abuse (Dunne and Legosz, 2000; Bowlus et al., 2003; Dube et al., 2003; Iwaniec, 1999; Browne and Finkelhor, 1986; Widom and Kuhns, 1996; Abdul Halim and Asmah Bee, 1996; Lim, 1998a; Elliott et al., 2000; Bagley, 1985; Briere and Elliott, 1994; Whitbeck and Hoyt, 1999; Schaffner, 1999; Judd et al., 2002; Estes, 2002; Flowers, 2001; Slavin, 2001; McCormack et al., 1986; Greene et al., 1999; Hotaling, 2002). Children running away from home, abusing substances and victims of sexual (re)victimization (rape, sexual abuse and exploitation) are vulnerable to get drawn into prostitution (Ives, 2001; Jesson, 1993; Lanning, 1992; Muntarbhorn, 1996a; Voss, 1999; Appelqvist, 2001; Azaola, 2000; Barnitz, 2000; Dodsworth, 2000; Ennew, 1986; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Hay, 2004; Dean and Thomson, 1998; Sereny, 1985; Shaw and Butler, 1998). A problem with family dysfunction theory is that it does not account the abuse case outside the family. It has also been criticised for its lack of attention to power relations within the family (Taylor, 2002).

The use of family dysfunction theory to conceptualize the involvement of children in prostitution may turn out to be controversial, since the theory argues that children's behaviour is the reflection of parental behaviour or is the outcome of their life experience in the family (Taylor, 2002; MacDonald, 1997; Benard, 1991; Berthiaume et al., 2002; Wolcott, 1999; Heneghan et al., 2000; Veneziano, 2003; Moore and

Vandivere, 2000; Earls and Carlson, 2001; Brooks-Gunn and Markman, 2005; Nichols and Schwartz, 2004; Fagan, 1999; Oetting et al., 1997). It is important to note that, the use of the theory in this research does not mean the researcher wants to put the family as the main institution to be ‘blamed’ in relation to children’s involvement in prostitution. The theory is only used to explain the process through which they get drawn into prostitution. The researcher believes that every institution – the government, the NGO, the society and the family – has their part and responsibility to play regarding the problem. Also, the researcher believes that child prostitution is neither the prostituted children’s problem, nor is it the family’s problem. It is ‘our’ problem and ‘we’ have to shoulder it together to eliminate the problem.

3.4.2 The Causes of Family Dysfunction in Malaysia

In general, family dysfunction can be any circumstance that interferes with healthy family functioning. However, the discussion here will be focused on only three situations evidently contributed to the family dysfunction among Malaysian society, namely domestic violence, family breakdown, and poverty. There are many working definitions of poverty, but no official version (Berthiaume et al., 2002). Here, poverty means inadequate resources to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, emotional and social support, safety and health. It may be caused by financial problems, unemployment, low minimum wage, or underemployment. Poverty has been considered one of the factors that contribute to family dysfunction because its existence can damage the stability of the family, hurting the family’s ability to communicate pro-social norms and to care for their children (World Vision, 2002b; Oetting et al., 1997). Some families may have only one dysfunctional aspect. Others may have two or three dysfunctional factors which may make the intervention process for child victims of prostitution more complicated.

In 1994, the Malaysian Population and Family Survey examined the main problems usually encountered by the Malaysian families in their life. Around 19 percent of wives interviewed mentioned that they had family problems (NPFDB, 1999a). Out of this, 41.5 percent of the respondents below 35 years old and 41.7 percent of the respondents over 35 years old said the main cause of the problem was ‘financial’. The

second problem mentioned was 'childcare'; 26.5 percent reported by younger wives (below 35), and 16.8 percent by respondents over 35. The third problem mentioned was 'quarrel between husband and wife'; 24.7 percent mentioned by respondents over 35, and 23.1 percent by respondents below 35. Other problems mentioned by wives were 'interference by my mother-in-law' and 'problematic husband'. The first three problems to a great extent are related to each other. Often these problems exist in low-income families and young couples who have just started family life but who are financially unstable. Financial problems force many wives/mothers to participate in the labour force. According to NPFDB (1999b), the female labour force participation has increased from 36 percent in 1970 to 42 percent in 1991 and 52 percent in 2000. There are two reasons why wives/mothers are involved in the economic sector. First, there are more jobs available (Roslan, 2001). Second, household expenses have increased as the cost of living has escalated due to rapid industrialization, modernization and urbanization forcing the wives/mothers particularly those from low-income families to work in a way to help their husbands raise the family economy (Knowles et al., 1999; Badaruddin, 2002; Atinc and Walton, 1998). Nevertheless, the involvement of wives/mothers in the labour force may have an increasing impact on family stability, particularly in relation to the relationship between married partners, parenting and childcare (Kulasegaran, 2001; Fagan, 1999).

A 1998 study of 'Childcare and Parenting Styles among Working Parents in Malaysia' conducted by the NPFDB found that working parents (N=3,837 respondents) relied heavily on family members for care of their children while they work (30.6 percent) and also on themselves (14.6 percent) (NPFDB, 1999b; Kamerman, 2002). Among the family members, grandparents played a major role in providing childcare (60.4 percent) followed by other relatives (22.5 percent) and older siblings (17.1 percent). Neighbours and friends provided another 15 percent of the childcare. Domestic servants accounted for 6.6 percent of childcare. Childcare centres accounted for only 5.1 percent of the care provided. However, about 18 percent of the children had no specially assigned caregivers but were under supervision at public or religious schools. Only a very few parents (1.5 percent) sent their children away from home to stay with relatives for sustained periods of time. About nine percent of the children had no caregivers and were considered 'latchkey' children, left alone while their parents worked outside of the home (Kamerman, 2002).

Financial problems, changing patterns of women's employment, parenting and childcare problems can all be stressors in a family, affecting both the relationship between family members and the marriage institution. If parents are not flexible enough in their relationship, if there is lack of tolerance and understanding between parents over difficult circumstances faced, it can jeopardize the marriage and break it down (Nichols and Schwartz, 2004; Fagan, 1999). Studies of the reasons for divorce often describe erosion in the qualities of the relationship – loss of affection, an absence of caring and communication, growing apart – as common reasons for marriage breakdown (Wolcott, 1999). The Malaysian Population and Family Survey 1994 found that the main reason for dissolution of marriage among couples is the lack of understanding between husband and wife and the husband being irresponsible towards the family. These phenomena exist both among the urban and rural families (NPFDB, 1999a). In 2000, statistics showed that 895,000 women in Malaysia 'headed' the household compared to 653,500 women (18.5 percent) in 1991 and 444,100 women (17.7 percent) in 1980 (Department of Statistic, 2001). In other survey in 1992, 10.2 percent of families with children aged 18 and below were 'headed' by single mothers. Among them, 87.5 percent was due to husband's death, and 12.5 percent as a result of divorce and separation. The majority of them faced financial, social, and emotional problems; their economic status was below the poverty line of RM350 (£50) per month (Abdul Halim and Asmah Bee, 1996; NPFDB, 1999a). According to Kulasegaran (2001), most divorced single mothers are simply abandoned by husbands who leave them to look after their children's needs and welfare alone. They may earn about RM200-RM400 (about £30-£60) per month, which is an insufficient amount to survive on, particularly those who have three to five children to be looked after (Kulasegaran, 2001). When assistance for single women-led families is absent, children suffer (Berthiaume et al., 2002). Hanafiah et al. (2000) and the Government of Malaysia (1996) in the Seventh Malaysian Plan believe that the increase in divorce rates in the country is due to the industrialization and urbanization. How far the two are related to each other though is unclear. In my opinion, whether these processes significantly affect the frequency of divorce in the country is not the issue. The main and real issue behind parental divorce is the welfare of the children.

All the stressors above, particularly economic pressures, can contribute to family violence or abusive family environments and drug/alcohol abuse (Moore and

Vandivere, 2000; Berthiaume et al., 2002). Family breakdown may also result from domestic violence. According to Rashidah et al. (1995), it was estimated that 1.8 million or 39 percent of women above the age of 15 years in Malaysia were physically beaten by their husbands or boyfriends in 1989. During the same year, only 909 women reported incidences of physical abuse to the police, showing that only 0.05 percent of battered women made a police report (Table 3.4). The low reporting was due to the belief that such abuse is not a crime but a family matter and as such police and/or legal intervention is not necessary (Rashidah et al., 1995). In year 2000, there were 3,468 of women victims of domestic violence reported in Malaysia. The number of victims however decreased to 3,107 in 2001, 2,755 in 2002, 2,555 in 2003, and 1,207 until May 2004. The reported cases are considered the tip of the iceberg (Rashidah et al., 1995). The actual number of domestic violence cases in the country is speculated to be higher (Hii, 2001).

Table 3.4: Statistics of Domestic Violence Cases in Malaysia (Women Victims)

Year	Cases
1989	909
1990	472
1991	419
1992	466
1993	298
1994	532
1995	1,409
1996	1,413
1997	5,799
1998	4,791
1999	3,806
2000	3,468
2001	3,107
2002	2,755
2003	2,555
May 2004	1,207

Sources: Royal Malaysian Police (2004).

In 1997 and 1998, the period when the Malaysian economy was severely affected by the East Asian financial crisis, there were 10,590 domestic violence cases reported. That was the highest number of violent cases against women reported in the country compared to other years. Knowles et al. (1999) and Atinc and Walton (1998) who studied the social consequences of the financial crisis in East Asia believe that the increase cases in domestic violence in the countries in 1997 and 1998 was very much

related to the crisis. This is understandable, as rapid development in the past decades has led to rapid social change and has brought rising incomes to most Malaysian families. A sudden stop to the rapid growth can be expected to disturb family stability. According to Atinc and Walton (1998), the crisis hit families hard in two ways:

- i. Falling labour demand: economic decline, the corporate crisis, and a credit squeeze were causing lay-offs, real wage declines, weak demand for new labour market entrants, and falling margins in the informal sector.
- ii. Sharp price shifts: prices had risen due to exchange rate devaluation, associated increases in the prices of traded goods, and public sector price hikes.

The falling labour demands, in particular, increased the incidence of poverty in certain parts of Malaysia (like in urban areas) and forced many families to cut down household expenditure. In slum areas, people were reported cutting down from three meals per day to two or even one (Atinc and Walton, 1998). Other families had to struggle to gain access to additional employment and income to address their children's food, educational and other needs virtually with extreme and limited irregular earnings. Such intolerable economic stresses brought on by the severe impact of the East Asian financial crisis created tension in the families, and for those families already in volatile circumstances, the economic stress may become the turning point to them to be abusive and violent (Knowles et al., 1999).

3.4.3 Family Dysfunction Develops Children's Vulnerability

Children can pay a high price for family dysfunction since it puts children's safety, welfare and well-being at risk (Fagan, 1999; James, 2000; Kumpfer et al., 1998). Parents who are preoccupied with stressful circumstances i.e. poverty, unstable marriage, divorce, domestic violence and other economic and personal concerns maybe less able to provide optimal home environments for their children and, when overwhelmed, they may even become harsh or coercive towards their children (Moore and Vandivere, 2000; Swanston et al., 2002; World Vision, 2002b; Heneghan et al., 2000; Fagan, 1999; Nichols and Schwartz, 2004). In relation to this research, the discussion on how family dysfunction develops children's vulnerability to prostitution

will be made by observing two significant impacts of its prevalence on children – child abuse and child psychological damage – frequently debated in literatures.

i. Family Dysfunction Resulting in Child Abuse

The first principal effect of family dysfunction to children is increased risk to physical, emotional, and/or sexual abused – ranging from assault, violent, sarcasm and belittling, humiliation, harassment and isolation not involving physical violence (Fagan, 1999; James, 2000; UNICEF, 1997; Khoo et al., 1995; World Vision, 2002a; Widom and Hiller-Sturmhöfel, 2001; Swanston et al., 2002). Children can be abused when parents cannot cope with the stress in their lives (UNICEF, 1997; Widom and Hiller-Sturmhöfel, 2001; Abdul Halim and Asmah Bee, 1996; James, 2000). Moore and Vandivere (2000) report that children living in single-parent families or cohabiting families were more than twice as likely as those living in married-couple families to live in stressful family environments. Furthermore, children living in a stressful family environment were over three times more likely than other children to have a highly aggressive parent. Abdul Halim and Asmah Bee (1996) discovered that most cases of child abuse were found in urban areas and the majority of abusive parents experiencing life stresses and family problems were raised in families which were aggressive or in constant conflicts, and came from the lower socioeconomic group. They also found that mothers who were forced to shoulder parental duties alone experienced stress, were unhappy and used physical discipline to control their children. In another study, Fagan (1999) reports that children were six times more likely to be abused in blended (divorced and remarried) families; fourteen times more likely to be abused in single mother/living alone families; twenty times more likely to be abused in unstable families where the natural parents cohabit; and thirty-three times more likely to be abused when the mother cohabits with a boyfriend. UNICEF (2001a) explains that divorce and remarriage can place a strain on family relationships and can result in children with conflicts of personal identity.

United Nations (2000b) and Khoo et al. (1995) report that child abuse can happen in all families and socioeconomic classes. However, it is very closely related to families who suffer from financial problems, poverty, work pressures and life stress because of migration from rural to urban areas. Mohd Sham et al. (1994) investigated

the relationship of families' socioeconomic factors with the incidence of child physical abuse in Malaysia. They found that 92 percent of 119 abused children interviewed were from low income families (social class IV and V). In another study, Khoo et al. (1995) found that 63.9 percent of abused children were growing up in families where both parents worked and where children were taken care of by child minders. According to the United Nations (2000b), parents in many cases worked long hours and stayed at work until late at night owing to economic problems. They left their children in the care of an adult who did not supervise the child closely, or who was an abuser himself (Mohd Sham, 1996; Hanafiah et al., 2000). Particularly, large families struggled financially. They lived in cramped living conditions (overcrowding) where adults and children shared the same sleeping quarters and this increased the risk of sexual abuse (Badaruddin, 2002; UNICEF, 2001a). In other cases, underprivileged children were enticed by abusers for sex with sweets or clothes (United Nations, 2000b; Kamala et al., 2001).

Domestic violence can also place children at greater risk of being victims of abuse and continuing the intergenerational cycle of violence. Research has found that wife battering is often accompanied by physical and/or sexual abuse of the children (James, 2000; PCA-NY, 2001; Widom and Hiller-Sturmhöfel, 2001). In a study of battered wives, it is reported that 37 percent of battered women and 54 percent of battering men beat their own children (PCA-NY, 2001). In another domestic violence study, 33 percent of the alleged abusers were abused by their parents and about 50 percent of their parents were themselves involved in domestic violence (PCA-NY, 2001). Widom and Hiller-Sturmhöfel (2001) also report that alcohol abuse by one or both spouses can lead to marital stress, including spouse abuse. This observation reinforces the notion that parental alcohol abuse potentially acts through several mechanisms to increase the risk of child abuse.

In Malaysia, child abuse has only been highlighted recently as a social problem (Shamsiah, 2002; Mohd Sham, 1996; Sayed Abdul Rahman, 2000). It was not until 10 years ago that child abuse in Malaysia began to receive the media attention and social welfare concern that it deserved (Kulasegaran, 2002). The first documented case of child abuse was made in 1974 when Woon, Carmel and Lam wrote an article, "Battered Child Syndrome in a Malaysian Hospital" in the *Medical Journal of Malaysia* (Mohd Sham, 1996; Abdul Halim and Asmah Bee, 1996). In 1985, the SCAN team was formed

for the purpose of identification and management of child abuse. Twenty-five cases of child abuse and neglect were identified during the first year. The number of cases increased to 177 in 1990 and 247 in 1995 (Mohd Sham, 1996). Within the period of 1985-1995, there were 1,688 cases of child abuse and neglect reported to the Social Welfare Department by SCAN; 877 concerned physical abuse (43.7 percent of victims were less than 5 years old), 328 concerned sexual abuse and 483 concerned neglect and abandonment. Forty-one out of 1,688 cases were babies born to drug-addicted mothers, 39 children had been staying away from home, 10 were already living in the streets for sometime, 58 cases died due to the abuse and a significant number were scarred or even brain-damaged (Mohd Sham, 1996). Kasmini and Mohd Sham (1995) found that 72.1 percent of the 86 children diagnosed for child abuse and neglect in the General Hospital Kuala Lumpur in 1985-1986 were victims of physical abuse, seven percent of sexual abuse, one case of both physical and sexual abuse and 19.8 percent of neglect. Of these children, 27.9 percent were sent back to their parents and 12.8 percent to their relative home. About 31 percent were placed under the care of the Department of Social Welfare while the remaining 8.1 percent who were illegal immigrants, were deported with their parents. Only one child was successfully fostered. Eleven children were taken away from the hospital by their parents or guardians without the knowledge of the health staff. There were five deaths.

Overall, the statistics on child abuse cases in Malaysia recorded by the Social Welfare Department every year can be seen in Table 3.5 below. From only 76 cases identified in 1970s, the number of abuse victims increased to 1,368 in 1980s and 9,764 in 1990s. Between 1980s and 1990s, the cases were found to have increased more than 610 percent. In the period of 2000-June 2002, there were 2,486 child abuse victims identified. Interestingly, child abuse in Malaysia, like in the case of domestic violence, was found higher in 1997 (1,149 cases) and 1998 (1,161 cases), the years where the country were severely affected by the East Asian economic crisis, compared to other years.

From Table 3.6, a total of 1,799 cases of physical abuse, 895 cases of neglect, 1,091 cases of sexual abuse, 356 cases of abandoned, and 141 cases of emotional abuse were detected by the Social Welfare Department in the period of 1997-June 2001. Child physical abuse was found higher during economic crisis where 476 cases reported in 1997 and 489 cases reported in 1998. Child sexual abuse cases were also considered

high during the crisis (219 cases in 1997 and 270 cases in 1998), but it was found higher a year after the crisis (291 cases in 1999). Furthermore, the case of child neglect was found higher during the crisis (252 cases in 1998) and a year after the crisis (250 cases in 1999).

Table 3.5: Child Abuse Cases in Malaysia

Year	Cases
1975	76
1980	96
1981	89
1982	82
1983	145
1984	97
1985	72
1986	171
1987	149
1988	191
1989	276
1990	511
1991	970
1992	820
1993	1084
1994	836
1995	1117
1996	1009
1997	1149
1998	1161
1999	1107
2000	934
2001	1013
June 2002	539

Sources: Shamsiah (2002), Sayed Abdul Rahman (2000), Abdul Halim and Asmah Bee (1996) and Mohd Sham (1998).

Table 3.6: Types of Abuse

Types of Abuse	1997	1998	1999	2000	June 2001
Abandoned	85	83	106	71	11
Neglect	152	252	250	183	58
Physical	476	489	413	362	59
Sexual	219	270	291	258	53
Emotional/Psychological	55	36	17	24	9
Others	62	21	30	36	57
Total	1,149	1,161	1,107	934	247

Source: Department of Social Welfare (2002).

The actual number of abuse cases is assumed higher than reported cases in the country every year (Abdul Halim and Asmah Bee, 1996). Like any other social problems, reported cases are estimated to constitute only about one tenth of the actual figure (Shamsiah, 2002). This phenomenon often occurs in the privacy of the home or in isolation and goes unnoticed unless reported. But, many cases are not reported for a variety of reasons, including fear of punishment and lack of civic consciousness towards child abuse by the public and professionals involved (Shamsiah, 2002; Abdul Halim and Asmah Bee, 1996). Abused children also do not report or may refuse to cooperate with authorities during investigation for the following reasons: fears that they might lose their family ties and shelter; fear of being separated from the family as the abuser is the sole breadwinner of the family; because the abused child may be accused as a problem maker in the family; and because the abusers often make the child afraid to tell (Robiah, 2000; UNICEF, 2001a).

Children who have been victims of abuse are varied in terms of age. Some are as young as infants and others are toddlers. From the Royal Malaysian Police statistics, 92 cases of child abuse reported in the period of 1999-2001 involved children who had not yet celebrated their first birthday, 154 cases were children between 1-7 years old, and 211 cases were children above seven years old (Table 3.7). Research by Kasmini and Mohd Sham (1995) on the 86 children diagnosed as abused and/or neglected in 1985-1986 found that 24.4 percent were below the age of one year, 27.9 percent from 1-4 years old, 29.1 percent from 5-9 years old and 18.6 percent were 10 years and above.

Table 3.7: Age of Children Victims of Abuse

Age	1999	2000	2001	June 2002
Below 1 year old	29	36	27	5
1-7 years old	39	55	60	3
Above 7 years old	83	65	63	3
Total	151	156	150	11

Source: Royal Malaysian Police (2002).

The reasons children have been abused also varied. Table 3.8 shows that nearly 46 percent (231 cases) of the child abuse cases reported to the police in the period from 1999 to June 2002, the police did not know or could not trace the reason why the children were abused. However, the known reasons for the abuse were as follows; 32.5 percent (89 cases) of the children reported that they were abused 'without reason', 26.3

percent (72 cases) were abused because they were regarded as ‘stubborn’, 8.0 percent (22 cases) because of parental emotional depression, and 7.3 percent (20 cases) because they were unloved. It is very sad to learn that 6.6 percent (18 cases) of them were abused because they were ‘always crying’ and five cases because the parents were willing to sell them for money.

Table 3.8: Motives of Abuse

Motives	1999	2000	2001	June 2002	Total
Discipline problem	2	8	3	1	14
Stubborn	28	33	10	1	72
Always crying	8	9	1	0	18
Suspected drunk	1	1	2	0	4
No reason	20	26	38	5	89
Unknown reason	56	43	80	52	231
Parental emotional depression	7	8	7	0	22
Parental lack of love	15	3	1	1	20
Sexual purpose	0	6	2	0	8
Parental neglect/careless	0	7	1	0	8
Child’s reluctance to study	4	2	5	3	14
For sale	0	0	0	5	5
Total	141	146	150	68	505

Source: Royal Malaysian Police (2002).

Alleged child abusers were mainly close members of the family (Kasmini and Mohd Sham, 1995). Khoo et al. (1995) found that 36.7 percent of the 90 children in their sample were abused by father, 22.2 percent by mother, 10.0 percent by stepparents, while relatives, babysitter, and others made up the rest. Data from SCAN on physical abuse cases in the period of 1985-1995 showed that the biological fathers were the most frequent abusers (238 cases out of 877 cases), whereas 172 biological mothers were similarly identified (Mohd Sham, 1996). The third most frequent abusers were child-minders (128 cases). Data from the Royal Malaysian Police in Table 3.9 below also shows a similar pattern as given by SCAN. The father was the most prominent figure of child abuser identified by the police in the period of 1999-June 2002. Around 23 percent of the children were reported abused by their own fathers. Second main abuser was babysitter (18.5 percent), and the third was mother (16.7 percent).

Biological fathers were identified as the more frequent abusers, which might be caused by several factors; mothers were also wage earners and often had to work shifts (even at night) leaving the father to look after the child; due to poor parenting skills, their impatience or stress in dealing with a child’s needs lead to abuse (Mohd Sham,

1996). It was also found that a number of the physical abuse cases were perpetrated by drug addicts and alcoholic parents. Often these problems were only identified when contact was made with the suspected abusers (Mohd Sham, 1996). According to PCA-NY (2001), children of substance-abusing parents were three times more likely to be abused and four times more likely to be neglected than children of parents who were not substance abusers.

Table 3.9: Child Abusers

Child Abusers	1999	2000	2001	June 2002	Total
Own father	47	31	27	8	113
Own mother	16	29	26	12	83
Step father/mother	10	3	18	5	36
Uncle	4	3	3	2	12
Aunt	2	2	6	1	11
Other close relations	4	8	0	0	12
Babysitter	30	28	25	9	92
Teacher	3	10	1	2	16
Others	23	19	27	28	97
Grandparents	0	1	1	1	3
Foster parents	1	7	4	0	12
Neighbour	0	4	2	0	6
Employer	0	1	0	0	1
Elder brother	1	0	1	0	2
Total	141	146	141	68	496

Source: Royal Malaysian Police (2002).

In the case of sexual abuse, SCAN reports that 80 percent of the sexual abusers were well known and, in fact close to the abused child and only the minority were strangers (Mohd Sham, 1996). The biological father was the single most frequent abuser found by SCAN in child sexual abuse cases in the period of 1985-1995; other sexual abusers were grandfathers, uncles, cousins, neighbours and personal friends. Personal friends were found often to have sexually abused young women when all cases involving young women from 12-16 years of age were considered. Whereas, if only those children below 12 years old were considered, most were abused by family members or neighbours (Mohd Sham, 1996). There were 213 cases of intra-familial sexual abuse reported by the Royal Malaysian Police in 2000, as shown in Table 3.10. These cases increased to 246 in 2001 and 306 in 2002. The biological father was the most frequent abuser in all the years given, but he was not the only abuser committing sexual abuse within the family, as the number of other relatives including stepfather,

uncle, brother-in-law, and brother were also considered high. Between 2000 and July 2003, an average of 25-32 percent of intra-familial sexual abuse victims were abused by their own father, 13-21 percent by their stepfather, 15-21 percent by their uncle, 6-12 percent by their brother-in-law and 6-10 percent by their own brother. Evidence shows that the incidence of intra-familial sexual abuse was higher among underprivileged and marginalized social groups (Badaruddin, 2002).

Table 3.10: Intra-familial Sexual Abuse Cases

Relationship	2000	2001	2002	July 2003
Own father	67	77	77	48
Stepfather	41	52	40	25
Uncle	34	42	65	24
Brother-in-law	26	23	22	9
Brother	14	15	31	14
Cousin	8	11	27	13
Grandfather	4	5	13	5
Step-brother	1	4	10	3
Adopted father	3	7	9	4
Other close relatives	15	10	12	9
Total	213	246	306	154

Source: Royal Malaysian Police (2003).

ii. Family Dysfunction and Child Abuse Damaging a Child Psychological Development

The second principal effect of family dysfunction is the potential impact on the psychological development of children (Oetting et al., 1997). It is important to note that not all parents in dysfunctional families physically abuse their children. Some may neglect their children's needs without bodily harming them. But, others may both abuse and neglect their minors at the same time. Research in child and family development however suggests that abuse, neglect and other types of dysfunctional family outcomes can have adverse psychological affects on children particularly their self-esteem, self-confidence, achievement at school, emotional stability, social adjustment and relationship quality with others (Moore and Vandivere, 2000; Kumpfer et al., 1998; NPFDB, 1999a; Nichols and Schwartz, 2004; Fagan, 1999; Kulasegaran, 2001; MacDonald, 1997; Heneghan et al., 2000; Berthiaume et al., 2002; James, 2000). However, it is important to note that children from dysfunctional families who are abused may suffer more severe psychological damage than those who are only being

neglected, and their mental health might be worse if they experience both abuse and neglect at the same time.

Family breakdown is certainly a stressful life event for children and families (Benard, 1991). According to Fagan (1999), one of the sad consequences of the breakdown of families today is that, to pay the bills or fulfil their higher expectations for material comforts, more mothers work outside the home. When the primary caregiver is away from their children more than 20 hours each week, the effect is an increase in the risk of insecure attachment, which in turn further increases the risk that the child will be unable to form close and satisfying intimate relationships in later developmental stages. Other negative impacts include impaired cognitive and verbal development, lower educational achievement, increased behavioural problems, problematic social development and increased exposure to crime. Adequate time with parents is critical for the development of children, especially for self-esteem and confidence (Fagan, 1999). In another source, Kulasegaran (2001) mentions that when parents who live in a 'broken life' or where a divorce has taken place, the children show higher levels of fear, grief and anger, and have higher rates of school absenteeism, poor academic performance and delinquency. Badaruddin (2002) reports that 70 percent of social problems occurring in Malaysia involve young people from broken homes. According to Silbert (1986), children who are under achievers and have non-conformist behaviour may have been influenced by the isolation and lack of positive social supports given by their family during younger age. Some children living in poverty also suffer similar psychological impacts from those from broken families. Berthiaume et al. (2002) report that many of these children suffered from health problems, attention deficit disorders, hyperactivity, emotional disorders and conduct disorders.

Children are also highly vulnerable to the adverse influences of parental mental health problems and family violence. Much research has extensively documented that parental mental health problem and family violence can affect children's emotional development, social sensitivity and self-concept (MacDonald, 1997; UNICEF, 1997; Jaffe et al., 1990; PCA-NY, 2001; Heneghan et al., 2000; Nichols and Schwartz, 2004; Kulasegaran, 2002; Berthiaume et al., 2002). Heneghan et al. (2000), for example, report that children of mothers with depressive symptoms show decreased responsiveness, increased hostility and anxiety, deviant cognitive and linguistic development, were involved in conduct disorder and experienced depression that may

have long-lasting results. Moore and Vandivere (2000) found that children aged 6-17 in families experiencing stress were nearly twice as likely as other children to exhibit low levels of engagement in their schoolwork. James (2000) and Bowlus et al. (2003) report that witnessing domestic violence, particularly violence which occurs over long periods of time at intense levels, can have a severe emotional impact on children. Reynolds et al. (2001) indicate that there is increasing recognition that domestic violence is a public health issue, and that it is related to depression, suicidal ideation and a host of other psychological problems for children. Jaffe et al. (1990) found that children who were exposed to repeated family conflict or to strong negative emotions like anger often experience low self-esteem, depression, stress disorders, poor impulse control, social-cognitive deficits, problems with peer interaction, feelings of powerlessness and strong behavioural expressions of anxiety and/or aggression. Another study reported that children who witnessed family violence were found to suffer from post-traumatic stress symptoms, problem behaviours at school and difficulties with interpersonal relationships (PCA-NY, 2001). According to Reynolds et al. (2001), children may no longer see the world as a safe place, adults as trustworthy protectors, or events as predictable or controllable after witnessing domestic violence. In an attempt to decrease their sense of helplessness and restore a feeling of control, many victims may blame themselves for what happened, which could result in feelings of shame, guilt, lack of trust, lowered self-esteem and depression. Children may also indirectly suffer psychologically from domestic violence if the mother who has been traumatized by violence withdraws her own emotional support from the children or feels frustrated and helpless to keep their children safe (James, 2000; PCA-NY, 2001).

Like those who experience parental divorce, live in poverty and witness family violence, children who are abused also suffer from similar psychological damage: including withdrawal, low self-esteem, fear, moodiness, anxiety, self-destructive behaviour, depression, anger, aggression, feeling of guilt and shame, betrayal, stigmatization, traumatic sexualization, powerlessness, suicidal tendencies, psychosis, an increased likelihood of re-victimization in adulthood, sexually inappropriate behaviour, school problems, truancy, running away, and delinquency (Bowlus et al., 2003; Farley et al., 1998; Kulasegaran, 2002; Mullen et al., 1993; Swanston et al., 2002; Faller, 1993; Widom and Kuhns, 1996; PCA-NY, 2001; UNICEF, 2001a; Whitbeck and Hoyt, 1999; Widom and Hiller-Sturmhöfel, 2001; Browne and Finkelhor, 1986; Dunne

and Legosz, 2000; Southgate, 1989; Widom, 1996; Cohen, 1987; Briere and Elliot, 1994). In relation between school problems and the involvement in prostitution, Brannigan and Van Brunschot (1997) found that many children who were prostituted experienced more frequent school expulsions and discipline, resulting in lower levels of completed education.

By looking at these psychological impairments, it is not difficult to understand why many studies find that a large number of children from dysfunctional families, especially abused children (65-95 percent), were exploited through prostitution (Greene et al., 1999; Silbert, 1986; Bagley and Young, 1987; Benoit and Millar, 2001; Farley and Barkan, 1998; McIntyre, 1999; YMCA et al., 1995; Flowers, 1998; Roman et al., 2002; Widom and Kuhns, 1996; Klain, 1999; Davis, 2000; Miller and Jayasundara, 2001; Giobbe, 1992; Hosey and Clune, 2002; Johnson, 1992; Cusick, 2002; Nadon et al., 1998; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Saphira and Oliver, 2002). These children have such traumatic experiences at an early stage in their lives that they suffer from deep emotional scars (YMCA et al., 1995). A child who experiences low self-esteem in particular is more vulnerable to be recruited into prostitution, as one pimp interviewed said:

When I was a pimp I manipulated three girls into prostitution, by leading them to believe they were of no use to anyone but me. I think a person has to believe in themselves or they are vulnerable to this type of manipulation. Their self-esteem was very low, so it was easy to get them out there.

(Transvestite, started pimping at age 15, cited in Ives, 2001: 21).

3.4.4 Vulnerability Markers Related to Involvement in Prostitution

The entrance of abused children and other victims of family dysfunction into prostitution though are not direct. Here, family dysfunction is a pre-disposing or static factor that makes children vulnerable to prostitution, but it is not the only factor that causes children to be drawn into prostitution. Children are more likely to get drawn into prostitution if one, two, or three of these events happened while they were growing namely sexual (re)victimization, running away and/or substance abuse. These events are

dynamic factors and also vulnerability markers of children's psychological damage as a result of family dysfunction.

i. Sexual (Re)victimization

A child who is psychologically damaged is vulnerable to sexual (re)victimization through exploitation or rape. Those who suffer from sexual abuse at early age are more vulnerable to be sexual re-victimization in later stages. One study found that 16 percent of children who were referred to a treatment program for sexual abuse had experienced re-victimization (Swanston et al., 2002). Sexual re-victimization happens because sexual abuse in childhood can alter children's orientation to the world and can distort their self-concept, perspective on sexuality, feelings about men, and emotional capacities (Faller, 1993; Widom, 1996; Mullen et al., 1993; UNICEF, 2001a; Silbert, 1986; Browne and Finkelhor, 1986; Kramer and Berg, 2003; Widom and Kuhns, 1996). As Montgomery (2001) states, having lost her all-important virginity, a child might become promiscuous and act in ways that are considered unacceptable in middle class society. This however will place her at high risk for sexual assault, abuse, and exploitation at one stage. Swanston et al. (2002) found that the relationship between childhood sexual abuse and young people having multiple partners, unprotected intercourse, consensual sexual intercourse before age 16, and experiencing rape or attempted rape was significant.

In general, a child who has problems at home (including having been sexually abused) or who is living in dysfunctional family is often psychologically and emotionally deprived to some degree (Klain, 1999; Weisberg, 1985; Ives, 2001; Bittle, 2002; Brown and Barrett, 2002; Crowley and O'Sullivan, 1998; Dean and Thomson, 1998; Barry, 1995; Johnson, 1992; Flowers, 1998; Sereny, 1985). She has a lack of support, love, affection, attention and warmth, and is left to suffer from low self-esteem, self-worth, and self-confidence, depression, stress disorders, feelings of powerlessness and hopelessness (Swann and Balding, 2001; Bittle, 2002; UNICEF, 2003b; Johnson, 1992; Grant et al., 1999; O'Neill, 2001; Duong, 2002; Barry, 1995; Hofstede et al., 1999; Flowers, 2001; PCA-NY, 2001; Dean and Thompson, 1998). The emotional and psychological deprivation at home may lead her to find substitutes for 'what has not been given by the family' or 'what is missing in the family environment' or 'what is

lacking in her life' from outside the family, particularly peers (Klain, 1999; Flowers, 2001; PCA-NY, 2001; Grant et al., 1999; Hofstede et al., 1999; Swanston et al., 2002; Barry, 1995; Dean and Thompson, 1998). With such vulnerable backgrounds, these children are easy targets for opportunistic adults or perpetrators, who often look for weak victims to seduce or force into sex (Ives, 2001; Sereny, 1985; Crowley and O'Sullivan, 1998; Weisberg, 1985; Swanston et al., 2002). A study by NPFDB in Malaysia in 1997 reveals that 18.4 percent of young people between 15 and 18 years old interviewed were involved in sexual intercourse and/or sexually exploited when they were away from parental guidance (Lee, 1999). Zulkifli, Low and Yusof conducted a survey among 1,200 respondents aged 15-21 in 1995 and found that 15 percent of the young people were victims of sexual exploitation and/or had sex at the age of 15-16, 23.3 percent at 17-19, and 32.8 percent at 20-21 (Lee, 1999). Another study carried out nationwide in Malaysia at the end of 1996 among 30,233 secondary level students (aged 13-18) in 881 classes from 708 schools revealed that 1.8 percent of them were engaged in sexual activities and/or victims of sexual exploitation (Lee, 1999).

In Malaysia, news about rape of children and women are reported nearly everyday. Police statistics show that there was an average of 2.4 rape cases reported per day in 1993 (Table 3.11). The average number of rape cases reported everyday increased to 2.8 cases in 1995, 4.2 cases in 1998, and 4.7 cases in 2004. Table 3.11 also reveals a number of young women under 16 who were raped. More than half of rape victims in Malaysia in 1991-1999 were young women below 16. According to Rastam et al. (2002), for every rape that is reported, many more go unreported. It is estimated that nine out of every ten rape cases in Malaysia are not reported. Furthermore, the police statistics do not include victims of rape who are subsequently murdered as these cases are classified under homicide instead of rape (Rastam et al., 2002).

Statistics from the police show that a rape victim is more likely to be raped by someone she knows than by a complete stranger (Table 3.12). Boyfriends or 'dates' were the most prominent perpetrator who raped women and children in all the years given, followed by family members or relatives, strangers and neighbours or others. Rape, like sexual abuse, has immediate and long-term effects on its victims. In the immediate aftermath of the rape, survivors must deal with the consequences such as trauma, shock, bodily injuries, STDs (including HIV), or pregnancy (Rastam et al., 2002). In the long term, rape victims are more likely to suffer from depression, alcohol

and/or drug abuse, anxiety, hyper-vigilance, PTSD, low self-esteem, suicide ideation, and destructive behaviours.

Table 3.11: The Number of Reported Rape Cases in Malaysia

Year	Total Victims	Victims under 16 Years of Age
1991	682	378 (55.4%)
1992	711	395 (55.6%)
1993	879	465 (52.9%)
1994	912	537 (58.9%)
1995	1,005	604 (60.1%)
1996	1,071	719 (67.1%)
1997	1,429	744 (52.1%)
1998	1,539	812 (52.8%)
1999	1,457	800 (54.9%)
2000	1,210	N.A
2001	1,354	N.A
2002	1,418	N.A
2003	1,471	N.A
2004	1,718	N.A

Note: N.A – Not Available.

Sources: Fong (1998), Royal Malaysian Police (1997), Robiah (2000) and Rastam et al. (2002).

Table 3.12: Relationship between Victims and Rapists

Year	Strangers	Boyfriends/Dates	Family/Relatives	Neighbours/Others
1991	110	346	141	85
1992	112	321	147	131
1993	172	434	120	153
1994	129	403	216	164
1995	167	489	199	150
1996	167	539	212	153
Percentage	16.5	48.0	19.6	15.9

Source: Royal Malaysian Police (1997).

Rape survivors often do not report the rape because they are afraid of being blamed for it (Rastam et al., 2002). The notion that a female who was raped must have done something to cause the rape and therefore is to blame for it is, sad to say, still very much alive in Malaysian society. This attitude can be seen in various levels of society including professional groups like lawyers, medical consultants, and politicians. Former judge Tan Sri Harun Hashim (now is Vice Chairman of Malaysian Human Rights Commission) for example, said in an article in the *New Straits Times* newspaper in 8th August 1996 that some women are more deserving of being raped than others e.g. a prostitute compared to an innocent schoolgirl who is well-behaved, good in her studies and a virgin. In another example, in commenting on gang-rape by five youths against a

15-year-old girl who befriended one of them through the internet, the Malaysian Society for Clinical Hypnosis adviser, Datuk Seri Dr. M. Mahadevan said:

The victim is at fault. Agreeing to meet someone without knowing the history or background of the person is equivalent to courting trouble. Some girls have vulnerable personalities, do not use common sense and are gullible to these Roadside Romeos who are just interested in having a good time.

(Rastam et al., 2002: 16).

The former Information Ministry Parliamentary Secretary Datuk Dusuki Haji Ahmad also did not hesitate to do his bit for victim-blaming when responding to women's demands for harsher laws against rapists in 1987, he said that:

Apart from other factors, I think the woman factor itself contributes to rape when they wear revealing dresses and mix around freely ... Men are men and have their weaknesses.

(Rastam et al., 2002: 24).

Rape survivors often do not report the rape because of fear of not being believed and being stigmatised by the communities (Rastam et al., 2002). In some communities, women or girls who lose their virginity before marriage are branded 'dirty', 'impure' or seen as 'spoilt goods' and often forced to leave home and village when their status has been discovered (Eng, 1997; Rastam et al., 2002; United Nations, 2000a; Abdul Hadi, 1987). Their chances of marriage as well are jeopardised as virginity continues to be an important priority for the majority of men seeking brides (Eng, 1997; United Nations, 2000a). Regardless of which race or religion she comes from, it is socially accepted myth that marriage confers on women a new status. Alternatives such as co-habitation without marriage are taboo and a mark of shame in Malaysia (Kulasegaran, 2001). Illicit intercourse and *khalwat* (close proximity) are punishable under the *Syariah* Law against a Muslim found with another who is not his/her spouse. Some survivors therefore choose to keep the rape a secret.

Like rape survivors, children who are victims of sexual exploitation (seduced or forced for sex) also often do not disclose their situation for the same reasons given by rape victims. Cases usually come to light when the children become pregnant. Each year, more than 10,000 young women in Malaysia get pregnant and give birth, and

some of these births have been conceived out of wedlock and because of unplanned pregnancies (Lee, 1999). A study about the knowledge of young people about contraceptives by NFPDB in 1998 found that their knowledge was high; 88.8 percent of the respondents knew about the pill, and 94 percent knew about condoms (Lee, 1999). However, only 37 percent used any form of contraception. For the vast majority of young people who did not use contraceptives, 34.3 percent cited they “did not expect to have sex in the first place”, 31.3 percent said “sex is not fun with contraceptives” or contraceptives are “too difficult to use”, 8.9 percent reported their partners had objected to use contraceptives, and another 8.9 percent believed that the use of contraception was wrong or dangerous. The study also found that only 25 percent had knowledge of pregnancy and where the foetus develops. The low use of contraception and lack of knowledge about pregnancy had resulted in many unplanned and unwanted pregnancies, particularly among those young women who frequently loitered in shopping complexes, those in need of money, those working in factories, as well as those who lived with friends and were away from parental supervision (Lee, 1999). It is quite common in Malaysia for parents to force or encourage children to marry once it is confirmed that a young woman is pregnant out of wedlock.

In a society which views sex before marriage as wrong and which looks down on women or girls who are not virgins, becoming pregnant is really a heavy burden that they have to carry. The victims may get little support or help from the family during pregnancy, and in many cases they will be thrown away from home or sent to a ‘welfare home’ to deliver the baby alone because the family reject or feel embarrassed to have a daughter who has a baby without a legitimate father (Rosla, 1995; Rastam et al., 2002). Parents are at times more concerned about the family’s good name and what the neighbours would say to them and their daughter than the fear of losing their daughter (Rastam et al., 2002). Because of these situations, many victims of sexual exploitation and rape who find themselves pregnant will abort their baby. In Malaysia, abortion is not allowed, except in situations where the life of the mother is threatened. These young women therefore will illegally abort the baby by using *panadol*, malaria pills or by insertion of objects (SERI, 1999; Lee, 1999). Only a few are believed to visit the private clinics or traditional healers such as *bomoh* (witch doctor) or the Chinese *sinseh* since the cost for abortions is considered expensive about RM500-RM1,000 (Lee, 1999). For those young women who conduct the abortion process by themselves, some may have a

‘successful’ abortion. Others may not and remain pregnant and ultimately give birth. Unfortunately, some of these babies die because of medical complications, as there are no adults, doctors or nurses with them during labour, or are murdered the minute they are born to conceal them from the family and wider society. Other babies are at high risk of being abandoned a few hours or days after delivery in the bushes, parks, at the doors of orphanages, homes, hospitals and mosques (Kulasegaran, 2001; SERI, 1999). According to Kulasegaran (2001), the phenomenon of children being abandoned at birth is part of the rising phenomenon of child abuse and neglect. One source points out that it is ignorance rather than sex education that leads young women into a life of misery where they are trapped – in relationships wherein they are exploited as sex objects, into unwanted pregnancies, abortions or abandoned babies, and STDs including HIV/AIDS (Lee, 1999).

All the dead babies found from illegal abortion or labour, and those who are alive but have been abandoned in the public spaces, are classified by the police as abandoned baby cases. Table 3.13 shows the statistics of abandoned babies in Malaysia by young people. The highest case of abandoned babies happened in 1999-2001. Up to 90 percent of the cases in that period were newborn babies (Table 3.14). The majority of these abandoned babies were from unwanted pregnancies as a result of voluntary or forced premarital sexual liaisons. But, it should be noted that a small number of them are also from unwed young women who were victims of intra-familial sexual abuse and rape (SERI, 1999).

Table 3.13: Number of Abandoned Babies

Year	Cases
1992	55
1993	41
1994	49
1995	N.A
1996	55
1997	54
1998	19
1999	70
2000	65
2001	97
June 2002	47

Note: N.A = Not Available.

Sources: Royal Malaysian Police (2002) and Badaruddin (2002).

Table 3.14: Age of Abandoned Babies

Year	Foetus	Newborn	Total
1999	5	65	70
2000	4	61	65
2001	10	87	97
2002	1	46	47

Sources: Royal Malaysian Police (2002).

Figure 3.2: A Dead Newborn in the Bin Bag Found in the Park with Note Left

Source: Royal Malaysian Police (2004).

Note in the Circle: "To those who find this bag, please bury this baby - I am brainless".

The violation of a child's sexuality, if it is combined with family tensions and/or emotional deficiencies, makes the probability of the child getting involved in prostitution in puberty extremely high (Sereny, 1985; UNICEF, 2001a). A substantial amount of research in many countries has shown a link between child prostitution and early child sexual (re)abuse and (re)exploitation either by members of their family, extended family, or by family friends, neighbours, teachers, employers, caregivers and classmates (Widom and Kuhns, 1996; Silbert, 1986; Kramer and Berg, 2003; NCMEC, 2002; Ives, 2001; Faller, 1993; Widom, 1996; Grant et al., 1999; UNICEF, 1997, 2001a; Flowers, 2001; Browne and Finkelhor, 1986; Klain, 1999). There are two ways through which sexually exploited children can be drawn into prostitution i.e. tricked by child exploiters and influenced by friends as discussed in Chapter Two. In Malaysia, the

demand and the value for the children is high, particularly a virgin young woman, who has a 'price tag' of \$2,000 (Cordingley and Gee, 1997).

ii. Running Away

Running away is one of the common behavioural outcomes and symptoms in children from dysfunctional families as discussed at length in Chapter Two. In Malaysia, there were 4,772 runaway cases reported in 1992, 4,939 cases in 1994, and 4,774 cases in 1995 (Badaruddin, 2002; Government of Malaysia, 1996). West (2003) estimates there are 75,000 street children in the country. One study found that young people who are always absent from school in the state of Terengganu and in the city of Kuala Lumpur are more likely to think of running away from home (NPFDB, 1999a). The proportion of those who ever thought of running away from home among school absentees was 23.4 percent compared to 11.3 percent among those who were never absent from school. It was also reported that children from single parent families, especially single fathers (71.4 percent) appeared to have a higher tendency of running away from home. Further investigations have found that the proportion who ever thought of running away from home were high among those children who had conflict with parents (24 percent), stole parents' money and stole in public places (48 percent), broke school regulations and went absent from school (47 percent), vandalized (33 percent) and smoked cigarettes (22 percent) (NPFDB, 1999a). Kulasegaran (2001) and Badaruddin (2002) also report that children from dysfunctional families or who are living in low-cost crowded houses or apartments in deprived urban areas often found running away from home, loitering in shopping malls and karaoke bars, skipping school and getting into bad company.

Disconnection from one's familial network while running away increases the vulnerability of children to prostitution (Ives, 2001). The majority of children who run away from home in Malaysia, like those in other countries, are assumed to be involved in prostitution in order to survive after they are influenced by peers. Some may be involved because of trickery or enticement by pimps. However, a small number of them may enter prostitution due to the sense of hopelessness as a result of trauma from sexual (re)victimization at a young age or while growing up (United Nations, 2000a; Silbert, 1986). They may feel they are 'damaged goods' and that they will not be able to marry

and raise a family (Montgomery, 2001; Abdul Hadi, 1987; United Nations, 2000a; Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997). They run away from home to join friends who later introduce them to prostitution as a means for survival. But, they become involved because they feel they have nothing left to lose (Hosey and Clune, 2002; United Nations, 2000a; Duong, 2002). These children are psychologically and emotionally 'sick' as their scream for love has not been heard and may never be, as Sereny (1985) says below:

A child who runs away is giving, loud and clear, a signal of alarm ... A child believes that his or her scream for love has not been heard and may never be. It is a sick child and in order to find comfort – and, indeed, to live – it will seek the company of its peers, other sick children and even sicker adults: those who prey on children, either for financial or for sexual satisfaction. This is how the vicious circle of child prostitution is created and helped to flourish.

(Sereny, 1985: iv).

iii. Substance Dependency

The third symptom of children from dysfunctional families, which relates to prostitution involvement, is substance abuse. In Malaysia, the number of young people abusing drugs had soared from 7,750 in 1992 to 9,727 in 1993 and 10,153 in 1994 (Badaruddin, 2002). Family breakdown and despair, parental substance abuse, aggression and hostility, rejection, neglect, abuse and a lack of affection are believed to be the primary causes of substance abuse among young people (Watts and Wright, 1990; Oetting et al., 1997; Briere and Elliott, 1994). Low et al. (1996) report that more than 50 percent of urban heroin abusers in Malaysia come from single parent families and a third of them have lost one or both parents during the early years of life. Even in a two-parent family, a disturbed family relationship is apparent in the drug addict's home; parents may be working full-time and may not be meeting the needs of the family; and, one parent usually is found to be intensely involved with the addict while the other parent is usually distant, absent or punitive. They conclude that the majority of young people who abuse drugs most likely come from a weak and unstable family unit: where they are alienated from their families, are deprived of perceived needs (financial or material, emotional or related to a feeling of recognition or respect), where they feel rejected, are

runaways from home, come from situations where parental controls are too relaxed or too strict, and have no role models. They also often have family members with some criminal history and parents who do not spend quality time with their children and who are quick to put down and blame children. Other studies also found that children who witnessed domestic violence and were living with primary caregivers with depressive symptoms were more depressed, anxious, felt that they were blamed, experienced greater anger and involved in alcohol, inhalant, and drug abuse (Jaffe et al., 1990; Heneghan et al., 2000; Whitbeck and Hoyt, 1999; Crider and Rouse, 1988; Widom and Hiller-Sturmhöfel, 2001; PCA-NY, 2001; CASA, 1999; Robin et al., 1997). Kumpfer et al. (1998) and World Vision (2002b) believe that disorganised stress in the household, a lack of consistent and responsible parenting and parents who spend relatively little time with their children, particularly 'quality time' enjoying joint activities, are among the factors that make children vulnerable to substance abuse.

Dube et al. (2003) conducted research on adverse childhood experiences among adults. They examined the association between categories of adverse childhood experiences with the risk of illicit drug use: abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual); neglect (physical or emotional); and growing up with household substance abuse, criminality of household members, mental illness among household members, and parental discord and illicit drug use. They found that 56-64 percent of respondents who were exposed to these types of childhood experience used illicit drugs and the majority started the drug use by the age of 14. They believed respondents may have feelings of helplessness, chaos, and impermanence and may have problems self-regulating affective states during childhood. Thus, substance abuse may help them feel better or may serve as an avenue to escape or dissociate from the immediate emotional pain, anxiety, and anger that likely accompany such experiences (Dube et al., 2003; Oetting et al., 1997; UNICEF, 2001a; Briere and Elliott, 1994; Judd et al., 2002; Saphira, 2001; NCMEC, 2002; Dunne and Legosz, 2000; Dean and Thomson, 1998; Stiffman, 1989; Saphira and Herbert, 2004c; Greene et al. 1999; McCormack et al., 1986; Schaffner, 1999; Davies, 2001). Widom and Hiller-Sturmhöfel (2001) who studied the relationship between childhood abuse and alcohol abuse found that children who are victims of childhood abuse may turn to alcohol as: a coping mechanism to deal with the trauma associated with the abuse and its consequences; a way to reduce feelings of isolation and

loneliness; self-medication in an attempt to gain control over the experience; and, a way to improve self-esteem.

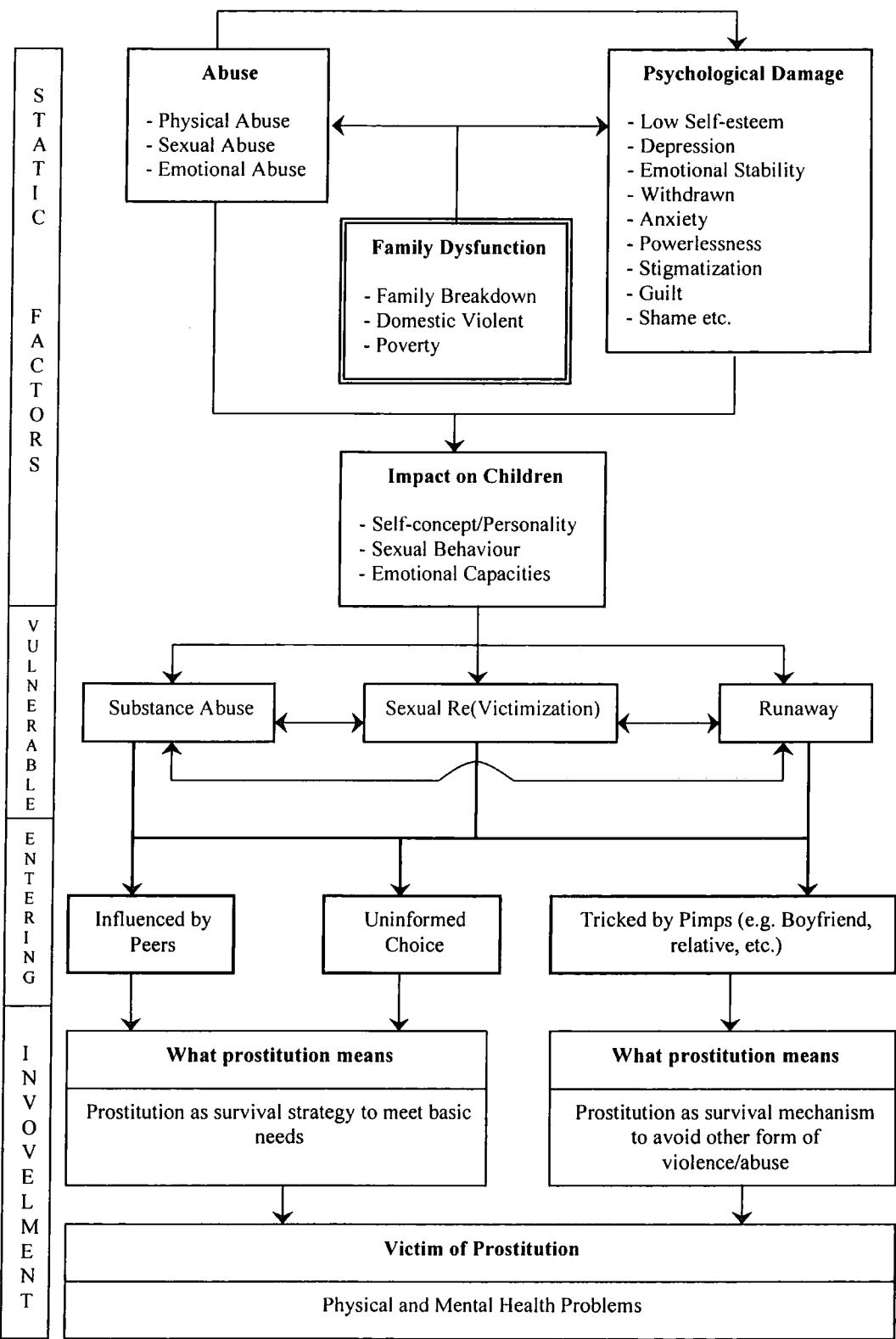
Watts and Wright (1990) give a lengthy explanation about the use of drugs among children. They state that children who are exposed to almost constant rejection, neglect, or abuse often develop an 'anger' or 'despair' and feel enraged at the parent who has inflicted such intense pain or sense of loss. These children usually feel a need for attention from their parents on the one hand and anger towards them on the other. This combination often leads to outbursts of anger, which the parent may find difficult to ignore. Because aggression is difficult to ignore, it is often reinforced. Children who feel rejected or abused by their parents may decide to seek revenge for the pain they have experienced at the hands of their parents. Obviously, illegal drug use or any delinquent behaviour that embarrasses the parents or costs them money would accomplish this goal. Parental neglect or lack of supervision, on the other hand, might lead the children to engage in deviant behaviours to force the parents to take notice. Drug use also may distract children from the conflict they experience with their families by their involvement with peers and by the buffering or psychopharmacologic effects of drugs themselves. Substance abuse merely covers rather than cures their sufferings, and the need for the substance may persist or even increase over time, thus increasing the risk of developing addiction (Widom and Hiller-Sturmhöfel, 2001).

Unlike the case of sexual (re)victimization and running away, the majority of children in Malaysia entering prostitution and abusing substances do so because of self-determination, not because of pimp or peer's influence. This is because the impact of substance abuse on children is different from the impact of sexual (re)victimization or running away. Though, it is not correct to suggest that substance abuse is more significant than sexual (re)victimization and running away in leading children to prostitution. The three dynamic factors are equally important and related to each other. What is being said here is that substance abuse can make children more and more vulnerable to prostitution when their dependency or addiction to the substance is more and more severe. Substance abusers generally often engage in deviant behaviour to secure their addiction and prostitution is an apparent 'solution' they may choose (Klain, 1999; Johnson, 1992; Ives, 2001). In this case, children's 'choice' of engaging in prostitution though does not mean an informed choice (Duong, 2002; Jeffreys, 1997). They are forced by their circumstances.

Like those children who have been sexually (re)victimised and who run away from home, some children abusing substances may also be drawn into prostitution because of peer influence. Low et al. (1996) report that friends play a substantial role in introducing drugs and causing addiction among children. In another study, Oetting et al. (1997) report that 90 percent of children who used drugs have friends who used those same drugs. Drug-using children not only have drug-using friends, but those friends also may be involved in prostitution (Davies, 2001; Oetting et al., 1997). They do not only encourage the children to use drugs, but also may influence them to join prostitution. Davies (2001) reports that children who smoke cigarettes, use alcohol and other drugs and trade sex usually have friends who are engaged in these same behaviours. Children abusing substances may also enter prostitution as a result of pimp's enticement or tricks. Pimps often use drugs to trap or lure drug-using children into prostitution (Johnson, 1992; Hughes, 2000b; Scott, 2002; Hofstede et al., 1999; Ives, 2001; United Nations, 2000b). These children will be hooked or dependent to drugs before they are forced to enter prostitution by pimps (UNICEF, 2003b; Hay, 2004; Klain, 1999; Estes and Weiner, 2002; May et al., 2000).

In summary, the varying pathways through which children in Malaysia might be drawn into prostitution can be illustrated as shown in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3: Survival Route Model



3.5 Research Hypotheses

Given the above theory and the objectives listed earlier, the following are the research hypotheses that I would like to test in the current study:

- i. All children involved in prostitution come from dysfunctional families.
- ii. Most of them suffer from abuse (physical, sexual or emotional) during childhood.
- iii. All of them suffer from mental health problems as a result of living in dysfunctional family and/or being abused.
- iv. All of them do not complete school or have low education attainment.
- v. Most of them experienced running away from home at least once before engaging in prostitution.
- vi. Most of them have been sexually exploited before they are drawn into prostitution.
- vii. Most of them are involved in substance abuse before entering prostitution.
- viii. Most of them enter prostitution because of being tricked, forced or trapped by perpetrators.
- ix. Most of them 'work' in prostitution with, or for, intermediaries.
- x. Most of them 'work' every day and 'serve' many customers per day.
- xi. Most of them do not practise safe sex or use condoms.

- xii. All of them use the income earned from prostitution to provide the basic necessities for survival.
- xiii. All of them have been physically abused by pimps and customers during prostitution.
- xiv. Most of the children who are abused during prostitution use substances as a coping mechanism.
- xv. All of them suffer from mental health problems resulting from their involvement in prostitution.
- xvi. Most of them faced difficulties in changing lifestyle after prostitution.
- xvii. All of them wish to start a normal life after rehabilitation programmes and do not plan to re-enter prostitution.

4 Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the processes involved in this research, including the approach used and the methods adopted to conduct the study. Child prostitution in nature is a difficult and sensitive subject (Taylor-Browne et al., 2002; United Nations, 2000b). Still, there is an urgent need to research it (Kane, 1998; Montgomery, 2001). One of the reasons for this research is because, as a society, we in Malaysia have very limited knowledge of the phenomenon, as well as limited explanation of the involvement of children (Davies, 2001). Many aspects are still unknown and are pretty much concealed from society.

When deciding to conduct research on this phenomenon, a researcher has to think of a suitable approach to be used. In this research, the use of the children-centred approach would seem to be the right choice, considering that children in prostitution are victims of sexual exploitation, the nature of the phenomenon is sensitive and the scale of research is small. This approach is concerned with the pressures and influences that affect children involved in research more than other approaches (Jones, 1992). It has the ability to minimise any possible risk to the children resulting from the research. In principle, the approach places children at the centre of the research process, regarding them as socially competent and worthy of investigation (James et al., 2002). It recognises children as knowledgeable individuals who know about their own worlds more than adults (United Nations, 2000b). Adults do not always know everything about children's worlds, what they are doing and thinking (RWG-CL, 2003). This approach would also be an advantage to the children because it gives them opportunities to address their situation without adult interventions.

According to Barker and Weller (2003), traditional positivistic approaches, with an emphasis on the large-scale quantitative observation, measurement, and assessment of children by various groups of adult professionals, have been criticised for seeing children as mere objects to be studied, carrying out research 'on' rather than 'with' children. Such research as well has been underpinned by adult assumptions and has focused upon adult interests, rather than the interests of children (Barker and Weller,

2003). Children have been perceived as incompetent, poor informants, not able to fully understand many of the issues that confront their daily lives, and in need of protection and control (Keddie, 2000). Their own interests, experiences, and knowledge have often been excluded from the research enterprise (Barker and Weller, 2003). In other words, children have rarely had the opportunity to speak for themselves in research (Keddie, 2000; RWG-CL, 2003). However, children in this research are treated in a way which corresponds with the underlying principles of the children-centred research approach. They are considered as subjects of rights and as active participants in their own lives, with views and information that must be listened to and respected. There is now strong consensus that children's views can and ought to be taken seriously (Keddie, 2000). Therefore children, consistent with the Article 12 in the UNCRC, are assured the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting their lives, and are provided the opportunity to be heard. Any possible policy action to improve their quality of life as a result of this research will also be recommended to the proper agencies.

In this research, children's ideas, thoughts, experiences, and memories have been accessed through empowering them to tell their own stories in their own way. They are believed at any time and are no more likely to lie or exaggerate than adult participants (RWG-CL, 2003). Nevertheless, they have less power, less information about the world outside the community and less knowledge about the long-term consequences of their actions (RWG-CL, 2003). They may feel unable to say no, and they do not usually have the same confidence with words as adults (Barker and Weller, 2003; RWG-CL, 2003). Thus, the research is obliged to use research methods that help the children participants to express themselves.

This research has been conducted with young women safeguarded from prostitution in two rehabilitation centres; *Taman Seri Puteri Batu Gajah* (TSP Batu Gajah) in Perak, and *Taman Seri Puteri Rembau* (TSP Rembau) in Negeri Sembilan. Both centres are located in Peninsular Malaysia (West Malaysia). In this research, both quantitative and qualitative methods are used. According to FHOP (2003) the use of a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods is often considered the best and most efficient approach to collecting in-depth and complete information for research, since the two compliment each other and make up for what the other method is lacking. There are several processes involved for successful research: including reviewing literature, gaining research permission and ethical approval, preparing the research

proposal, designing semi-structured interviews, conducting fieldwork, processing and interpreting data, and writing a thesis. The details of the processes are described as below.

4.2 The Beginning of Research

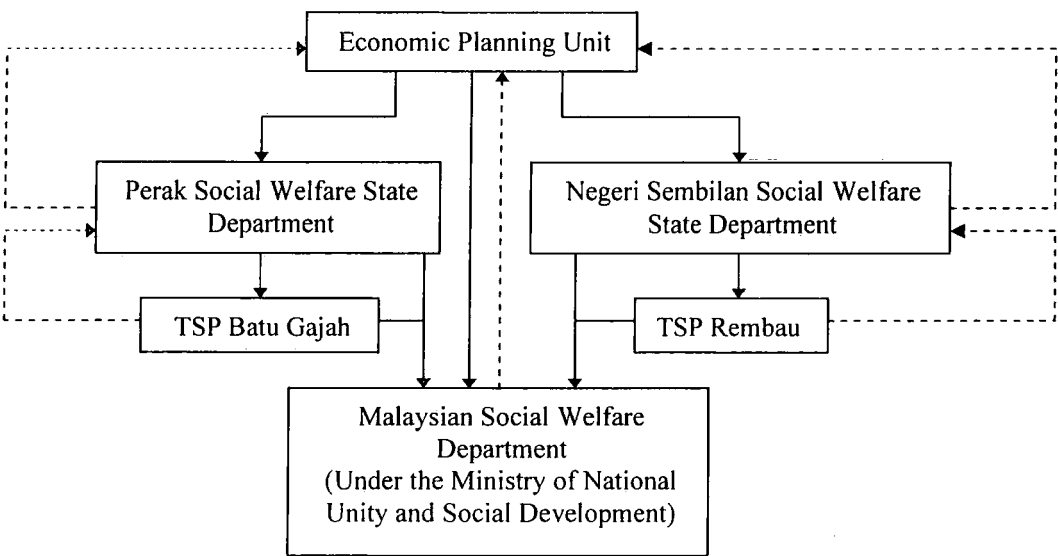
The research began with gaining permission and ethical approval from the EPU in Malaysia and the University of Durham as well as reviewing literature on subject of study.

4.2.1 Research Permission and Ethical Approval

All foreign researchers and Malaysian nationals domiciled overseas who wish to conduct a research in Malaysia must get an approval from the EPU. The EPU is the government body under the Prime Minister Department responsible in coordinating all matters pertaining to research. The researcher submitted an application form to the EPU in December 2003 together with the research proposal, semi-structured interview form, and research or fieldwork schedule. The application was successfully approved in April 2004. The application took about four months to be approved, as it went through a few bureaucratic processes as shown in Figure 4.1. Since the research needs to be conducted in the two rehabilitation centres in Malaysia, the EPU, upon receiving the application form, forwarded the application to the Social Welfare Department in the states of Perak and Negeri Sembilan as well as to the Malaysian Social Welfare Department. The departments then contacted their respective rehabilitation centre to obtain their feedback as well as to decide on whether to agree or reject the researcher's application to conduct research at the centres. Upon receiving the information from the centres, the departments reported back the status of the application to the EPU as well as informed the Malaysian Social Welfare Department. Meanwhile, the Malaysian Social Welfare Department had also provided their comment on the application to the EPU. The federal department has the authority to overwrite any decision makes by the centres and/or the state level Social Welfare Departments regarding the application.

This research has also been granted ethical approval from the University of Durham. The university makes it compulsory that all work involving human volunteers be assessed for ethics approval. The application for the approval was submitted to the Director of the Durham Centre for Applied Social Research (DuCASR).

Figure 4.1: Bureaucratic Procedure in Approving Research Application in Malaysia



Note: — Informed to
----- Feedback to

4.2.2 Review of Available Information

Before proceeding to fieldwork research, an extensive review of literature, including articles, books, research reports and documents was made particularly to study the methods of data collection usually used in this kind of research, to learn how to design effective research, and to identify the best possible way of conducting this research. Additionally, the information gathered was used to enhance the researcher's understanding of child prostitution and issues surrounding the phenomenon, as well as to develop an effective theory, to find out policies practiced in other countries to reduce this problem, and to know the practices or programmes usually used to treat the young

women who were victims of prostitution. Since child prostitution is less researched in Malaysia, it is quite difficult to find related materials on this issue from the country. Therefore, most of the materials reviewed for this research are taken from other developed and developing countries.

4.3 Methods of Data Collection

This research avoids using a survey approach to collect information from prostituted young women. According to Barker and Weller (2003), questionnaire surveys can be intimidating (since they require a high degree of literacy), inappropriate (since they are often devoid from any context), and boring (since they are no 'fun'). It is also a poor tool to use with children, particularly where sensitive subjects such as child prostitution and abuse are concerned (Duong, 2002). In this research, two other methods are used instead i.e. semi-structured interview and narrative interview. Semi-structured interview involves a series of open-ended questions based on areas of the topic as mentioned in section 4.4. It is a useful method particularly when collecting attitudinal information for exploratory research like this where little is known about the subject area (Mathers et al., 1998).

Narrative interview is classified among the qualitative research methods. It is a form of unstructured, in-depth interview with specific features (Bauer, 1996). Its basic idea is to reconstruct social events from the perspective of participants as directly as possible (Bauer, 1996). This method is commonly used in qualitative research and has been regarded as the 'bread and butter' in qualitative work (Jones, 2004). It is a vehicle for understanding sociological questions about groups, communities, and contexts through the individual's life experience (Brogden et al., 2001; Franklin, 1998). The roots of the narrative method emerged from the concept of human experience occurring from interrelationships with both social and environmental settings and being marked by temporal continuity, one experience developing from a past experience into a future experience (Brogden et al., 2001).

Here, narratives are different from life histories. Narratives are shorter in length than histories and they require more direction by the interviewer in order to cover specified topics of discussion (Franklin, 1998). In this research, narrative interview is used to provide more detailed information about research subjects that may not be

accessed through the semi-structured interviews, and to obtain data reflecting the psychological reality of participants, i.e. experiences, or at least their representations of reality (FHOP, 2003). The narrative method is able to achieve the purpose, as it uses a specific type of everyday communicative interaction, namely story telling and listening, through which it enables, encourages and stimulates interviewees to tell their experiences or stories about some significant event in their life (Bauer, 1996). Narrative researchers believe that storytelling is a naturally-occurring form of talk which helps humans make sense of disruptive past events, like involvement in prostitution, through a cohesive presentation (Poindexter, 2002).

The use of the semi-structured interview together with the narrative interview has many advantages. Firstly, both methods compliment each other. Secondly, it gives opportunities for both interviewer and interviewee to discuss some topics in more detail (Mathers et al., 1998). Thirdly, the participant has greater control over the direction of the discussion during the interview, which allows them to tell their story in their own way. In other words, they are free to talk and to express their view. In the context of narrative interviews, narrative researchers believe that interviewers are likely to elicit stories when they listen closely and do not over-structure the interview, do not interrupt respondents unnecessarily, and avoided suppressing natural forms of expression (Poindexter, 2002). Fourthly, the methods are also considered to be effective in researching young people who may be unwilling to speak frankly or shy to talk on their experiences in front of others (Taylor-Browne et al., 2002; WHO, 2001). Fifthly, the methods allow the interviewer to help participants clarify recollections or answer difficult questions (Mathers et al., 1998). Apparent contradictions, for example, can be gently probed, permitting the participant to clarify a narrative. Furthermore, if the participant provides only a brief response, the interviewer can use cues or prompts to encourage the interviewee to consider the question further. Sixthly, both methods are able to help to raise the voices of people who are silenced or oppressed, such young women who have been involved in prostitution (Poindexter, 2002). When an individual who is disenfranchised reads another's story, that person can feel validated and less isolated, part of a shared consciousness and an alternative collective story, which can move that individual toward self-efficacy, social action, and contribute ultimately to societal transformation (Poindexter, 2002).

4.4 Designing Semi-structured Interview Schedule

The semi-structured interview schedule used in this research has been adapted from various studies conducted in developed and developing countries (see example Amarasinghe, 2002; United Nations, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2001; Azaola, 2000; Raphael and Shapiro, 2002; Kamala et al., 2001; NCMEC, 2002; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Saphira and Glover, 2004; Lucas et al., 2000; Taylor-Browne et al., 2002; Duong, 2002; Saphira and Herbert, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c). The phenomenon of child prostitution culturally and regionally differs across the world and it therefore must be understood in relation to a specific society and culture in which it exists (Lee and O'Brien, 1995; Mahler, 1997; UNICEF, 2001a; Spanger, 2002). So, the interview schedule was designed to follow the local situation and the nature of the phenomenon in Malaysia. Questions such as "what are your partners' favourite sex positions?" used by Kamala et al. (2001) with prostituted children in Tanzania are not used in the semi-structured interview schedule, as they are both potentially stigmatising and distressing and highly culturally specific. Similarly, questions like "do your parents/guardians know that you are sexually abused (involved in prostitution)?" and "do your community members/friends know that you are sexually abused (involved in prostitution)?" used by Amarasinghe (2002) to investigate child prostitution in Sri Lanka are also not directly relevant to the current study given that prostituted young women in Malaysia are a 'hidden community' (Mikhail, 2002; Nagaraj and Yahya, 1998).

Other important factor considered while designing the interview schedule concerns language. When talking about sexuality and sexual abuse, Hamby and Finkelhor (2001) advise that younger children require much more developmentally sensitive questions. Thus, the vocabulary used in the interview schedule was simplified and many terms were reviewed for their age-appropriateness.

The semi-structured interview schedule used in this research is multidimensional. It contains a number of open-ended questions about the different forms of victimization experienced by young women, the background of young women, sex offenders or abusers, venues of sexual activity, nature of prostitution 'work', intermediaries involved, abuse during childhood and prostitution, substance abuse, experiences living in prostitution and the rehabilitation centre, and possible push-pull factors that drew young women into prostitution. There are five advantages of using a

multidimensional semi-structured interview schedule. Firstly, it covers the subject of study in depth. Secondly, it encourages the participant to provide rich and detailed information for the research. Thirdly, it is relatively informal and gives the interviewers some flexibility to approach the participant in a sensitive and appropriate manner, including the freedom to rephrase questions and to ask them in any order as long as they follow the broad themes of the research. Fourthly, it has the ability to detect the overlapping and/or replication in the answers given by the participants. Finally, given the potentially stressful nature of recalling their experiences of abuse and prostitution, it allows participants some control or direction over the narratives of their own experiences, rather than a more closed or fixed format. In the current study, the multidimensional semi-structured interview comprised of five sections, with varying numbers of individual questions under each section (see Appendix 1). The sections were as follows:

- i. Section A – Respondent background.
- ii. Section B – Family background and the relationship of the respondent with her family.
- iii. Section C – The involvement of the respondent in prostitution.
- iv. Section D – Respondent's life experience during the involvement.
- v. Section E – Respondent's life experience in the rehabilitation centre and her future plans.

It is important to note that the Questionnaire as presented in Appendix 1 is translated from its original Malaysian language (*Bahasa Malaysia*) as this is the first language of the participants and was used for the purpose of data collection.

4.5 Pre-fieldwork Preparation

4.5.1 Preliminary Visit to the Rehabilitation Centres

A preliminary visit to the rehabilitation centres was made to discuss about the study and the fieldwork with the officer in-charge. The visit was arranged a week prior to the data collection period. In the discussion, officers-in-charge were given details about the

purpose and nature of the research, the methods, and the possible benefits, risks and outcomes. Other things that were highlighted and agreed were:

- i. ***Participation of residents***– the centres were asked about the total number of residents and the number of those to be interviewed. At the time of discussion (May 2004), there were 36 residents living in the TSP Rembau and 50 residents living in the TSP Batu Gajah. Permission was granted for all residents to participate in this research. In fact, the centres suggested that all residents would be required to participate in the study and I had to emphasise to officers-in-charge that participation of residents should be voluntary, given freely and that non-participation or withdrawal was possible for residents without fear of negative consequences in the rehabilitation. Additionally, it was necessary for me to arrange in each of the two rehabilitation centres for counselling support to be available for any resident who participated in the study following her interview.
- ii. ***Date and time for interviewing the residents*** – it was important to minimise the impact of the data collection process on residents' daily routine in the centres. Therefore, a specific date and time was set up to interview participants. The centres gave full cooperation to this research. The TSP Rembau allowed residents a break of one day where participation in other structured activities was not required in order that they could take part in the study. Similarly, the TSP Batu Gajah gave residents a two-day break to facilitate their participation.
- iii. ***Rules while doing fieldwork*** – the researcher was reminded that the centres are restricted areas and men, other than staff members and close family members, are not allowed to make contact with the residents for any reason. The explanation given was that the residents are under the 'rehabilitation process' in which contact with other males may 'emotionally disturb' them. As I am a male researcher, the centres agreed that it would be very 'useful' for female research assistants to be employed for the purpose of data collection.
- iv. ***Location for interviewing the residents*** – the centres provided the use of a hall and the surrounding areas as the location for the interviews. In each case, I had no choice of location. Even though a large hall is not a conducive place to conduct interviews of this kind, it was the only place provided by the centres. As

a result, I worked with the female research assistants to ensure that each the physical space was used so as to ensure confidentiality and privacy of participants. On the day of the fieldwork, all of the residents gathered in the hall early in the morning and a short briefing was given specifically about this research and the purpose of the fieldwork. As the primary researcher, I was given permission to undertake this, even though this contradicts (iii) above. I was able to introduce myself, the nature of the research, emphasise the voluntary nature of participation and ensure participants on anonymity, as well as introducing the research assistants who would be conducting the interviews.

- v. ***Recording of the interviews*** – I was not allowed to videotape or photograph the centres or the residents, or to use any kind of electronic device to tape or record interviews with the residents. The interviews could only be recorded in writing.

4.5.2 Selecting and Training of Research Assistants

Immediately after my preliminary visit to the rehabilitation centres, the process for selecting and training the research assistants was conducted. To recruit suitable women as research assistants was not an easy process. Due to both time constraints and a limited budget, it was not possible to advertise the job to professional researchers. However, with the help of a lecturer from a local university in Malaysia, I was able to recruit four of his recommended students as research assistants. The four students were final year undergraduates who were doing a degree in community studies. In addition, I managed to recruit another student (a second year undergraduate who was studying business) and two former students who were interested in being involved in this research (one with a degree in development science, while the other with a degree in law). Initially, I had felt I needed ten research assistants. However, seven was still a good number and they provided much support during the fieldwork. The background of the research assistants recruited can be summarised as follows:

- i. ***Age*** – all the female research assistants recruited were 20-25 years of age. My concern was to have as narrow a gap as possible between the research assistants and the respondents, as I believed that a better relationship could be developed between the two groups if they were close in age.

- ii. ***Experience of interviewing people*** – all the research assistants had basic experiences in interviewing people, if not young people, while doing their coursework and/or dissertation projects. This meant that they had some idea of the process of meeting people, the interview process, and a general sound knowledge of research.
- iii. ***Personality and communication skills*** – both personality and communication skills are subjective and hard to measure. However, when I interviewed the potential candidates, I was mindful of the need for them to be non-judgemental about the participants, supportive and empathic, to be interested in the research, and to be in agreement with the ethical approach I was taking to the study. Each of the research assistants recruited showed that they had a number of personal characteristics that I deemed essential for this study. They were highly motivated, committed and disciplined, with good interpersonal skills, open minded and intelligent.

I trained the research assistants for two days. As all of them are university graduates or students with some form of exposure to the field of methodologies, it was felt that a two-day training programme was sufficient. On day one, the purpose of this research was briefly explained, as well as the background to the phenomenon, the locations of the fieldwork, and the number of respondents. After that, the training session concentrated more on discussing the interview processes: how to ask questions, techniques to record the interviews, and listening skills. The research assistants were also taught a few techniques in building rapport, trust, and confidence with the participants. Other aspects that were discussed during that session included: what would happen if the interviewees denied their involvement in prostitution; what should they do if the interviewees talked about previously undisclosed abuse; and how they should react if the participants were upset. The research assistants were briefed on ways to deal with participants' emotional responses during the interview sessions. If the participants were distressed, the research assistants should allow them the space to express their feelings, and then offer them comfort. If they were too disturbed, the interview should be terminated. The research assistants were requested to spend some time with their participants after the interview or until they were very sure that their participants were emotionally recovered. The safety of the participants was always monitored during the

fieldwork. Additionally, they were reminded not to conduct any therapy or counselling on upset participants, as they were not qualified to do so. If the need for such service was identified, the participant should be referred to the researcher or the officer in-charge.

During the training, the research assistants were also asked to conduct a mock interview using their fellow assistants as respondents. The mock interview was conducted for the purpose of estimating the time needed for the actual interview and to ensure that they could manage their time well during the fieldwork, as well as to familiarise themselves with the questions used in the semi-structured interview schedule. They were also trained on how to ask questions on sensitive areas and were reminded not to lead the young women or impose their own views and experiences on them in any circumstances during the interviews. Jones (1992) states that the most dangerous situation is where the entire tenor and approach of the researcher is to suggest a certain set of answers, for example, through using suggestions and leading questions that leave the young women without any alternative but to agree to the interviewer's agenda. Not only that, leading questions could lessen the usefulness of the interview and discourage the children's spontaneity and ability to trust the interviewer (Jones, 1992).

On day two, the research assistants were assigned a fieldwork itinerary and a general discussion was conducted on what to expect during the interviews. All of them were prepared to expect the 'worst' situation knowing that the participants were victims of abuse and prostitution. That was also done to ensure they were mentally and emotionally prepared to conduct the interview. A basic consultation skill was taught to the research assistants in case some of the participants asked them for some simple advice during the interview sessions. They were asked generally to be willing listeners and to be positive and friendly towards the respondents. They were advised not to intervene or report directly to the officer if they found from the interview that the young woman or someone else was in danger. In such cases, they should first discuss it with the researcher. This was because I felt that it would be more likely that the officer would take seriously concerns express by me rather than the research assistants. They were also asked to approach the participants carefully, with sensitivity in order to make sure the research are safe, and did not emotionally harm the young women. They were given eight basic 'rules' to follow while conducting the interview:

- i. Respect the rights of respondents and any opinion given by them.
- ii. Acknowledge the emotional vulnerability of respondents as victims of prostitution and/or abuse.
- iii. Create a positive interaction environment with respondents.
- iv. Use appropriate language when communicating with respondents.
- v. Treat the identity of respondents as confidential.
- vi. Allow respondents to feel free to answer or not to answer any question asked.
- vii. Be a good listener and do not interrupt.
- viii. Do not pressurise respondents and do not force them to give any information that will be emotionally painful.

4.6 Interviewing the Young Women and Ethical Process Issues

In this research, 86 young women in two rehabilitation centres were interviewed face-to-face using a semi-structured interview schedule. Of the total sample of 86, ten participants (five from each centre) were further selected to participate in the narrative interview. The rehabilitation centres were not able to specify which of their residents had been involved in prostitution due to lack of records. Therefore, all residents in the two centres were presented to me as possible participants. The first stage was therefore to select out only those young women who were involved in prostitution. For the first 5-10 minutes of each interview, gentle probing was used to identify whether a young woman had been involved in prostitution or not. Only those who admitted being involved were asked to participate in this research. Furthermore, only those responded affirmatively and who gave their consent were interviewed. Those who were not involved or did not wish to participate were allowed to leave. In general, all interviews took between 45 minutes to an hour to conduct. The time was enough to cover all questions and to allow the participants to respond without pressure.

The narrative interview process was conducted immediately after the semi-structured interview. Potential participants were identified during the semi-structured interview. Each young woman was asked if she would be prepared to talk in more detail about her life. If she wished so to do, she was then invited to proceed to narrative interview. The first five respondents who agreed in each centre made up the sample of ten. During the narrative interview process, an unstructured interview procedure (see

Appendix 2 – Interviewer Guide for Narrative Interview)) was used to probe the young women's history and life experience before and after they became involved in prostitution. No pressure was placed on these young women, but they were invited, encouraged, and welcomed to tell their story. Each respondent was given 1-1.5 hours for the narrative interview session. The information related by the respondents was recorded on paper with their consent.

Prior to any interview session, the objectives of the research were explained in simple language to every participant. The information given included why they were being interviewed, what would be done with the information they provided, who would have access to the raw data, and what the potential outcomes of the research would be. The explanation enabled this research to have informed consent from the young women. Informed consent is important in order to minimize any possible harm to the participants. Besides that, they were also made fully aware of the issues of confidentiality. The research guaranteed their anonymity and the protection of their identities. Their real names will not be mentioned to anybody and in any part of the thesis. However, it is made clear that if they wish to be named in the thesis, their wish would be respected. Also, they were informed that all the materials used in the interview and all information gathered from them would be kept safely and would be properly destroyed once the research is completed. This is to ensure the young women's wellbeing and safety will not be affected. After the explanation, they were encouraged to ask questions, and then were invited to participate in the research. If agreeable, they were asked to sign a consent form. No participant was cajoled, persuaded or intimidated into giving informed consent. In fact, they were told that they had every right to withdraw their consent at any time. It is to be stressed that these ethical considerations were introduced by me as a researcher rather than by the rehabilitation centres, where the young women have little choice in decisions affecting their lives. It was essential for me to have voluntarily participants who willingly wanted to get involved in the research and to discuss their life experiences freely.

The interview process was conducted in a relaxed, informal way, and in a comfortable setting. The research assistant usually sat near to the participant in a conversational style designed to encourage a free-flow of discussion. Techniques to establish trust with the young women were emphasized during all of the interviews so that the participants were highly motivated and honest in giving their answers. WHO

(2001) states that establishing a rapport and a relaxed environment are crucial to collecting good quality data. But, another more important thing is to make sure that the interview process ends as an interesting and a rewarding experience for the participants. The research assistants were asked to begin with informal discussions by selecting a topic of interest, something easy to discuss before moving to a more detailed interviews. Once a relationship had been developed, they started using the semi-structured interview schedule to guide their discussions. Or, in the case of narrative interview, they used the initial topic of discussion to generate questions related to the research, and then put forward the question to the participants. The interviews were carried out bearing in mind the sensitivity of the young women's feelings and their traumatic pasts. Every question was asked in simple language and enough time was provided to the respondents to answer the questions. No contentious terminology, such as 'prostitute' or 'prostitution' was used while communicating with them, as this notion does not characterise participants as victims of sexual exploitation adequately. The use of such notion might drive the respondent into the feeling of being stigmatised, as well as shows the lack of respect to them as individual. No question about sensitive or private issues, such as abuse or prostitution involvement was directly asked. They were rather invited to talk about their experiences freely with the choice being theirs as to the level of disclosure. Any issues that the respondents were reluctant to discuss were not aggressively pursued so, as to respect their privacy. At the same time, if young women manifested emotional problems or appeared embarrassed or shy, the interview was conducted without note taking. The results of the interview in such cases were recorded immediately after the interview completed. At the end of the interview, participants were asked about their feelings, if there was any support or help they needed. If they needed support, the research assistants would refer them to the officer in-charge immediately. In addition, they were given the option to access the general summary of the interview, if they were interested.

Apart from gathering information, the research was conducted in a manner that gave the young women a voice and enabled them to speak out and be heard. Many of these young women's lives are chaotic and many have had painful personal experiences (Taylor-Browne et al., 2002). But, we have rarely heard their voices and they have scarcely been given an opportunity to speak about their own experiences (Kitzinger, 2002). We as a society are aware that young people can only speak in public if they are

allowed to do so and are provided a space. We know that young people are knowledgeable of their own 'world' and we can only really understand these 'worlds' by listening to and learning from them (United Nations, 2000b). Therefore, my role as a researcher was to let the young women taking part in this research and used it as a stage for them to speak and it was hoped that the Malaysian society is ready to listen to the difficulties faced by them. Further marginalisation of the young women who are already on the edge of society should not occur again. The young women have to be respected for their dignity and worth. Besides that, any interventions for them aimed at improving their situation must be based on such an understanding if it is to have any meaningful impact on their lives (United Nations, 2000b).

Overall, all the young women participated in this research were very friendly, cooperative, open, and appeared honest when sharing stories about their life and experiences, even though the experience that they went through was sometimes very difficult. Several participants mentioned their willingness to participate in this research and talk about their life experiences because they did not want other young women 'out there' to follow the same path they took. Most of the young women had no problem in sharing their experiences and looked comfortable when speaking to the female research assistants because of the same gender and the narrow age gap between them. Some even thought that the research assistants were as young as them. The research assistants too felt that they were connected well with the respondents. The few participants who felt uncomfortable with the interview were offered support by the officer in-charge immediately after the interview sessions.

During the interviews, several participants in one centre disclosed the problem of being tricked by a security guard into having sex in exchange for cigarettes and glue. The head officer of the centre was informed of the problem, but the identity of the young women was withheld. That was to ensure the officer would take proper action against the behaviour of her staff rather than the young women who reported the staff's misconduct. In other case, one young woman who showed sign of deep depression was also referred to the officer. The young woman revealed a new wound on her left wrist to the research assistant, claiming that it was a suicide attempt. She said it was her second attempt at ending her life by cutting her wrist with a piece of broken glass. The young woman's identity was, however, disclosed to the officer. That did not indicate undermining the confidentiality promised to every participant of this research. I

believed I was obliged to pass on information about the incident to the officer because it was part of her duty to care for the young woman. The intervention was also well-meant, as she was obviously psychologically unstable and in needs of special care and attention. The UNCRC in Article 6 states that every child has the inherent right to life and he or she should be ensured to the maximum extent possible to survival and development.

4.7 Data Management and Analysis

The information collected from the semi-structured interviews was analysed using SPSS Version 12.0, a quantitative analysis package. The purpose of this analysis was to find and explain patterns and trends in the data, as well as to identify and interpret differences, contradictions, and exceptions in the information in order to present a scenario and to outline the problem of child prostitution in Malaysia. All the semi-structured interview schedules were checked after the fieldwork ended, and all the answers provided were coded – giving a number to each type of answer to a question – by examining common patterns of behaviour as well as variations. The answers or the codes were then transferred to coding sheets or a database formatted in SPSS to provide both frequency of occurrence and cross-tabulations. No name or other identifying characteristics of the young women were entered into the database. Data were then checked for errors. At that stage, analysis of the data was made, including the comparison of frequencies.

In contrast, information collected from the narrative interviews were transcribed systematically and comprehensively. The interviews with these young women were conducted using a narrative or a story-telling format. As such, participants were invited to tell the ‘story’ from before they first became involved in prostitution up to present point in time when they were residing in the rehabilitation centres. The narratives therefore are a representation of ‘truths’ that allows us to understand how prostituted young women construct a sense of meaning out of the flow of experiences that make up their lives (Riessman, 1993). Following the interviews, the participants’ narratives were thematically analysed through their content, particularly with regard to language, significance, and context. As the interviews were conducted in the Malaysian language and the narrative accounts initially written in that language, the narratives presented in

this thesis have been translated by the researcher into English. Great care has been taken to retain the meaning of the words spoken by the young women, including the emphasis, emotional content and non-verbal messages which accompanied the young women's words. This was, of course a challenge to me as a researcher as I was not involved in the direct interviewing of the young women themselves. Thus, before the narratives were transcribed, I spent a time with the research assistants in both of the rehabilitations following each interview where the research assistants presented and discussed the content of the interviews they had conducted on my behalf. As a result, it was possible for me to check out possible uncertainties and reduce potential misinterpretations of the words used by young women as part of their narratives. Once the research assistant was satisfied with the narratives as presented by the young women, the narrative accounts were transcribed into the Malaysian language, then checked by researcher and research assistants for accuracy and meaning. Following this, I translated the transcripts into English, taking care to check and verify the resulting language used to ensure equivalence of meaning.

Following data collection, all of the information provided by the participants have been stored securely and no one has been allowed to read or to access the materials in order to protect respondents' identity and safety. The materials used will be destroyed after the study is completed.

4.8 Methodological Problems and Dilemmas

I did not encounter any major methodological problems during the fieldwork as the participants had given their full cooperation during the interviews and the research assistants were very committed to their work. There were however six minor methodological problems identified while conducting this research. The first problem concerns the selection of young women for the study. Since all residents were given the permission to be interviewed, the selection for potential participants related to this study was made with extra care. It was to ensure only those young women who were involved in prostitution participated in the research. In addition, as prostitution is illegal in Malaysia, it was not easy for the young women to admit that they were involved in illegal activities. That caused difficulty for the research assistants in identifying and

selecting potential young women to participate in this research. We spent quite a good portion of our valuable time during that process.

The second problem concerns the risk of participants suppressing of important information. Some participants may have been too shy to express their feelings freely and this is likely to have resulted, in some cases, in some valuable information being missed, such as the young women's sexual health, condom usage, and pregnancy. This is an inevitable part of research of this type, however the research assistants took a long time to establish trust with them in order to encourage open communication.

The third problem relates to the use of the consent form. Initially, it was not easy to ask young women to sign their consent forms. Even though they were willing to participate, they refused to put down their signature. Many questioned the need for them to sign the form, as they feared the signature might result in them being detained longer at the centre, brought to court for trials, or transferred to jail once they turned 19. Every effort was made to help them understand the nature of the research, and no interviews were conducted unless they understood it completely and willingly put their signature down in the consent form.

The fourth problem concerned the analysis of the interview data. It is not easy to process and analyse data from open questions used in semi-structured and narrative interviews, as responses given by the participants were so diverse. Rigorous preparation was needed in every stage of research; developing the interview schedule, conducting the interview and analysing the interview data. All required careful consideration and well planning.

The fifth methodological problem was connected with the translation of young women's life experiences from the Malaysian language to English. As the narrative interviews with the participants were conducted in Malaysian language, the research assistants also reported them in the same language. Thus, a great amount of time was needed to verify the accuracy of the stories.

The final difficulty comes about as a result of the emotional effects of this research. Because of the sensitive and upsetting nature of the research, it without doubt emotionally affected some participants as well as the research assistants. The participants were given emotional support after the interview sessions. Meanwhile, I offered the research assistants confidential emotional support and guidance in another session. All the research assistants showed a sense of sadness and despair – symptoms

of psychological stress. They expressed their frustration of not being able to do anything to help the situation surrounding the victimised young women.

4.9 Conclusion

In its overall process, this study adopted a children-centred research approach in order to minimize any negative impact to participants, to give them the opportunity to speak about their experiences and to express their own views and perceptions. Both semi-structured interview and narrative interviews were used as methods of data collection. The advantage of using these methods is that they allow such a difficult target group as young women in prostitution to be approached with respect to their rights, vulnerability, safety, and confidentiality. The methods have also been able to give deeper than previously achieved insights into the phenomenon of young women involved in prostitution in Malaysia. However, the research findings cannot be generalized to portray the whole scenario of the problem of child prostitution in the country, as the participants selected as samples are just from two rehabilitation centres. Given the nature of the problem, the limited budget, and the time constraint, it is impossible for this research to draw a representative sample that could be used to reveal the entire aspects of the problem in Malaysia.

In general, this study treated the participants sensitively as the subjects, rather than objects of the research. However, the temporary emotional response experienced by a few children and research assistants as a result of participation in the research was inevitable. The degree of the impact differed from one person to another depending on the situation. Nevertheless, all of them were given emotional support immediately after the interview sessions. The bravery of the young women in speaking out about their experiences cannot be underestimated. Without these children's 'words', experiences and views it would be difficult to offer a meaningful support to them to breakaway from prostitution, as well as to prevent other children from becoming involved in it.

5 Quantitative Findings

5.1 Introduction

Since both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to gather the information needed for this research, it is better to separate the research findings into two different parts. This allows the findings to be documented interestingly and presentably, and ensures that the findings are easy to understand. The first part of the research findings (quantitative findings) is presented in this chapter and the second part (qualitative findings) in Chapter Six.

A total of 86 sexually exploited young women were interviewed, representing a total of hundred percent of the residents in both centres who consented to participate in the research. However, only 63 residents were considered relevant for the research; 25 from TSP Rembau (39.7 percent) and 38 from TSP Batu Gajah (60.3 percent). Of those eliminated, 17 were found not involved in any activity related to prostitution, while six young women refused to take part in this research.

All the information given by the 63 respondents were analysed. The findings will be used to determine strategic approaches for the eradication of child prostitution in Malaysia, and guide policy makers, social workers, social activists, and NGOs leaders to tackle the persisting existence of the phenomenon. It is also hoped that these findings will raise awareness and promote the urgency of preventing more young women from entering prostitution. Although this research includes only 63 cases, and it is not from a random sample and therefore not representative of all young women engaged in prostitution in Malaysia, I believe it is good enough and large enough to provide valuable information for understanding the phenomenon, the involvement of young women in prostitution, and what should be done to help them.

5.2 Profile of the Young Women

5.2.1 Age

Table 5.1 shows the age of respondents who participated in this survey. The youngest respondent was 13 years old and the oldest was 18. Nearly 89 percent of them were 16-18 years old and about 11 percent were 13-15. The average age of the respondents was 16.95 years old. Young women of 18 years old were the majority of the respondents (44.4 percent) who participated in this survey.

Table 5.1: Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
13	1	1.6
14	1	1.6
15	5	7.9
16	14	22.2
17	14	22.2
18	28	44.4
Total	63	100.0

5.2.2 Place of Origin and Ethnic Background

The young women interviewed were from both urban and rural areas. Fifty-four percent of them (34 respondents) were from urban areas, while 46 percent (29 respondents) were from rural areas. In terms of ethnic background, 85.7 percent of the young women were Malay and 14.3 percent were Chinese, Indian and other ethnics (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Ethnic Background

Ethnic	Frequency	Percentage
Malay	54	85.7
Chinese	1	1.6
Indian	6	9.5
Other	2	3.2
Total	63	100.0

5.2.3 Level of Educational

In Malaysia, young people begin their formal education at seven years old. There are four levels of school system: primary school (7-12 years), lower secondary school (13-15 years), intermediate secondary school (16-17 years), and upper secondary school (18-19 years). They are considered as having completed their school education if they successfully go through the first three levels of the school system and sit for the Malaysian Certificate of Education (MCE) examination. If they get good results in that examination, they have the opportunity to matriculate or enter college. Those with little or no chance of matriculating or going to college are given the alternative to continue their education at upper secondary school level. They normally enter tertiary education at 19 or 20 years old. Table 5.3 shows that the educational attainment of the young women participating in this study was low. Most of them (63.5 percent) only finished the lower secondary education (form 1-3 secondary school). While two respondents had no educational experience whatsoever, 20.6 percent received basic education (primary school), and only 12.7 percent managed to reach intermediate secondary school level (form 4-5 secondary school).

Table 5.3: Level of Educational

Level of Educational	Frequency	Percentage
No schooling	2	3.2
Primary school	13	20.6
Form 1-3 secondary school	40	63.5
Form 4-5 secondary school	8	12.7
Total	63	100.0

5.2.4 Age of Leaving School

Of all the respondents who were able to attend school, 74.6 percent left school between the ages of 12 and 15 years, and 12.7 percent left school at 16-17 years old (Table 5.4). The average age at which respondents left school was 13.77 years. The youngest left school at nine years old.

Table 5.4: Age of Leaving School

Age of Respondent	Frequency	Percentage
9	1	1.6
10	1	1.6
11	4	6.3
12	7	11.1
13	11	17.5
14	15	23.8
15	14	22.2
16	6	9.5
17	2	3.2
Not attending school	2	3.2
Total	63	100.0

5.2.5 Reasons for Leaving and Not Attending School

There were many reasons given by the respondents for leaving and not attending school (Table 5.5). The majority of the young women interviewed (55.6 percent) said they hated going to school. Nineteen percent said that their family could not afford to send them to school, while another 19 percent claimed either their parent(s) did not want them at school, they were expelled from school or had run away from home. Two respondents stated that they left school because their mother forced them into prostitution. Overall, only two respondents successfully completed school education, which means 93.6 percent of the young women in this research were without MCE certificate, the basic qualification that would enable them to secure gainful employment in the government or private sectors.

Table 5.5: Reasons for Leaving and Not Attending School

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Do not like school	35	55.6
Family cannot afford	12	19.0
Parent(s) did not like it	6	9.5
Mother forced to enter prostitution	2	3.2
Running away	4	6.3
Completed school	2	3.2
Expelled from school	2	3.2
Total	63	100.0

5.3 Family Background

5.3.1 Family Size

Many young women interviewed came from big families. Table 5.6 shows that the average siblings in the respondents' families were 5.19 persons. Of the 63 respondents, 41.2 percent had 5-6 siblings in their families, 36.5 percent had 1-4 siblings, and 22.2 percent had seven or more siblings. The biggest number of sibling in the respondents' families was 10 persons.

Table 5.6: Family Size

Number of Sibling	Frequency	Percentage
1	6	9.5
2	1	1.6
3	9	14.3
4	7	11.1
5	12	19.0
6	14	22.2
7	4	6.3
8	2	3.2
9	4	6.3
10	4	6.3
Total	63	100.0

5.3.2 Self-assessment of the Family's Socio-economic Status

Nearly 70 percent the young women interviewed reported their families' socio-economic status as relatively not so poor (Table 5.7). But, 22.2 percent said their families were relatively poor and 7.9 percent reported them as very poor.

Table 5.7: Self-assessment of Family's Socio-economic Status

Family's Socio-economic Status	Frequency	Percentage
Relatively very poor	5	7.9
Relatively poor	14	22.2
Relatively not so poor	44	69.8
Total	63	100.0

5.3.3 The Majority of Childhood Spent with

Table 5.8 shows person(s) whom the respondents spent most of their time with during childhood. More than half of the respondents (52.4 percent) lived with both parents. However, 47.5 percent were found not living with both parents during childhood, of which 27 percent spent most of their childhood with a mother, while 20.5 percent lived either with a father, adoptive guardian or grandparent.

Table 5.8: The Majority of Childhood Spent with

The Majority of Childhood Spent with	Frequency	Percentage
Living with both parents	33	52.4
Living with mother	17	27.0
Living with father	5	7.9
Living with adoptive guardian	4	6.3
Living with grandparent	4	6.3
Total	63	100.0

5.3.4 Reasons for Not Living with Both Parents

The respondents gave many reasons why they were not living with both parents (Table 5.9). About 73 percent attributed it to parental divorce, 10 percent because of the death of one parent, and 6.7 percent because both parents had died. A few respondents stated being adopted by other family (10 percent) as the reason for not living with both parents.

Table 5.9: Reasons for Not Living with Both Parents

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Parental divorce	22	73.3
Mother died	1	3.3
Father died	2	6.7
Both parents died	2	6.7
Adopted by other family	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

5.4 Living Environments

5.4.1 Relationship with the Family

Table 5.10 shows that many respondents expressed their relationship with their families as not so good (41.3 percent) or bad (34.9 percent). Only 23.8 percent indicated they had a good relationship with their families. In terms of individuals in the family, 27 percent were close to their mother, and 23.8 percent to their sister (Table 5.11). Only a few were close to their father (11.1 percent), brother (11.1 percent) and grandparents (12.7 percent). About 14 percent of the respondents, however, claimed that nobody in their family was close to them.

Table 5.10: Relationship with the Family

Relationship with the Family	Frequency	Percentage
Good	15	23.8
Not so good	26	41.3
Bad	22	34.9
Total	63	100.0

Table 5.11: Individuals in the Family Closest to the Respondents

Persons	Frequency	Percentage
Mother	17	27.0
Father	7	11.1
Sister	15	23.8
Brother	7	11.1
Grandparent	8	12.7
None	9	14.3
Total	63	100.0

Table 5.12: Individuals in the Family Hated Most by the Respondents

Persons	Frequency	Percentage
Mother/stepmother	11	17.5
Father/stepfather	19	30.2
Sister	8	12.7
Brother	8	12.7
Grandparent	1	1.6
None	11	17.5
All	5	7.9
Total	63	100.0

Father/stepfather was frequently mentioned as the individual in the family most hated by the respondents (Table 5.12). About 30 percent of the young women interviewed said they hated their father/stepfather, 25.4 percent hated their brother or sister, while 17.5 percent hated their mother. Nearly eight percent hated all individuals in the family compared with 17.5 percent hated none of the family members.

5.4.2 Problems at Home

Of the 63 respondents, 81 percent (51 respondents) reported they had problems at home. About 35 percent faced only one problem, but the majority (64.6 percent) had suffered from multiple problems at home (Table 5.13). Two respondents faced as much as five problems concurrently.

Table 5.13: Number of Problems at Home

Number of Problems	Frequency	Percentage
1	18	35.3
2	18	35.3
3	9	17.6
4	4	7.8
5	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

Table 5.14: Types of Problem at Home

Types of Problem	Frequency	Percentage
Parental lack of responsibility (physical neglect)	13	25.5
Parental substance abuse	8	15.7
Parental gambling	7	13.7
Family members always fighting	36	70.6
Parental mental health problem	1	2.0
Parental tight discipline	4	7.8
Parental lack of love and attention (emotional neglect)	39	76.5

Table 5.14 shows the list of problems faced by respondents at home. There are four major problems frequently cited by the young women: parental lack of love and attention (emotional neglect) (76.5 percent), family members always fight particularly between father and mother (70.6 percent), parental lack of responsibility or physical

neglect (25.5 percent), and parental substance abuse and/or gambling (29.4 percent). A few reported they had suffered from a tight discipline at home (7.8 percent) and mother’s mental problem (2.0 percent).

5.4.3 The Effect of the Problems at Home

All the young women who had problems at home agreed that they had had a significant impact on their life. About 78 percent believed the problems made them feel neglected, 54.9 percent experienced stress or tension, and 9.8 percent felt a lack of freedom (Table 5.15). Many were found to have suffered from multiple psychological impact.

Table 5.15: The Effect of the Problems at Home

Effects	Frequency	Percentage
Feel neglected	40	78.4
Feel stress/tension	28	54.9
Feel no freedom	5	9.8

5.5 Childhood Abuse

5.5.1 The Experience of Abuse

The incidence of childhood abuse among young women interviewed was high. Of the 63 respondents, 82.5 percent (52 respondents) reported they were abused during childhood. About 69 percent were victims of physical abuse, 80.8 percent of emotional abuse, and 50 percent of sexual abuse (Table 5.16). Around 67 percent of respondents were found to have suffered from multiple abuse types (Table 5.17).

Table 5.16: Types of Abuse

Types of Abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Physical	36	69.2
Emotional	42	80.8
Sexual	26	50.0

Table 5.17: Number of Abuse Suffered

Number of Abuse	Frequency	Percentage
1	17	32.7
2	18	34.6
3	17	32.7
Total	52	100.0

5.5.2 Abuser

Table 5.18 shows the number of abusers who abused the young women during childhood. Only 27 percent claimed they were abused by one abuser, while the majority (73 percent) were abused by more than one abuser: 44.2 percent by two abusers, 25 percent by 3-4 abusers, and two respondents reported abused by five abusers. About 54 percent of the respondents professed they were frequently abused by their father/stepfather and/or mother/stepmother during childhood (Table 5.19). Meanwhile, 19.2 percent reported of abused by their brother or sister, and 26.9 percent by grandparent, uncle, aunty etc.

Table 5.18: Number of Abuser

Number of Abuser	Frequency	Percentage
1	14	26.9
2	23	44.2
3	11	21.2
4	2	3.8
5	2	3.8
Total	52	100.0

Table 5.19: Individuals Frequently Abused Respondents during Childhood

Persons	Frequency	Percentage
Father/Stepfather	14	26.9
Mother/Stepmother	14	26.9
Brother/sister	10	19.2
Grandparent	5	9.6
Other (Uncle, aunty, brother-in-law, etc)	9	17.3
Total	52	100.0

5.5.3 The Effect of Childhood Abuse

Table 5.20 shows a list of negative feelings suffered by the respondents as a result of their childhood abuse. Many respondents said the abuse caused them to feel hurt and angry (88.5 percent), depressed (75 percent), disowned by the family (38.5 percent), dirty (32.7 percent), useless (19.2 percent), and wanting revenge (15.4 percent). Four respondents said they felt nothing (did not suffer any negative feelings) from the abuse experienced.

Table 5.20: Negative Feelings Suffered from Childhood Abuse

Negative Feelings	Frequency	Percentage
Depression	39	75.0
Useless	10	19.2
Disowned by the family	20	38.5
Wants to get revenge	8	15.4
Hurt and angry	46	88.5
Dirty	17	32.7
Feel nothing	4	7.7

When examined closely, it was found that the majority of respondents (78.8 percent) did suffer from multiple negative feelings: 15.4 percent with two negative feelings, 44.2 percent with three, 11.5 percent with four, and 7.7 percent have as much as five to six negative feelings (Table 5.21).

Table 5.21: Number of Negative Feelings Suffered

Number of Negative Feelings	Frequency	Percentage
1	11	21.2
2	8	15.4
3	23	44.2
4	6	11.5
5	3	5.8
6	1	1.9
Total	52	100.0

5.6 Running Away

5.6.1 The Incidence of Running Away

The incidence of running away from home among the young women interviewed was excessive. Of the 63 respondents, 84.1 percent (53 respondents) used to run away from home at least once. Nearly 36 percent ran away 1-2 times, 39.7 percent between 3 to 6 times, and 13.2 percent between 7 to 10 times (Table 5.22). Six respondents ran away from home more than 10 times.

Table 5.22: Frequency of Runaway

Frequency of Runaway	Frequency	Percentage
1-2 times	19	35.8
3-4 times	10	18.9
5-6 times	11	20.8
7-8 times	4	7.5
9-10 times	3	5.7
More than 10 times	6	11.3
Total	53	100.0

5.6.2 Reasons for Running Away from Home

Table 5.23 shows the reasons why these young women ran away from home. The majority of them ran away because they felt depressed with their family situation (28.3 percent), because they were influenced by a friend or boyfriend (28.3 percent), or because they were having problems with their mother/stepmother (22.6 percent). A few respondents mentioned that they ran away from home because of problems they faced with their father/stepfather (9.4 percent) and because of frequent fights they had with brother or sister (11.3 percent).

Table 5.23: Reasons for Running Away from Home

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Depressed with the family situation	15	28.3
Problems with father/stepfather	5	9.4
Problems with mother/stepmother	12	22.6
Fights with brother/sister	6	11.3
Influenced by a friend or boyfriend	15	28.3
Total	53	100.0

5.7 Initiation into Prostitution

5.7.1 Age and Nature of the First Sexual Act

This study found that prior to their involvement in prostitution, all of the young women experienced sexual exploitation during childhood. Here, sexual exploitation means any abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust towards young women for sexual purposes; this includes rape, forced sex, and the inducement, coercion, enticement, seduction, or trickery of young women for the purpose of sexual gratification. The nature of the young women's first sexual experience is used to assess whether they were sexually exploited or not during childhood. During the interview, the young women were asked in detail on 'how their first sexual act happened' in order to fully understand their sexual experience. Using this definition, the study found that none of the sample had their first sex experience voluntarily and therefore all had been sexually exploited.

Table 5.24 shows that the age that young women first experienced the exploitation varied from one individual to another. The youngest was sexually exploited at the age of seven years old, and the oldest was at 18 years old. Nearly 83 percent were exploited at the age between 13 to 16 years old, 11.1 percent before their 13th birthday and 6.4 percent at 17-18 years old. On the average, they were initially exploited sexually at 14.25 years old. In terms of the nature of their first sexual experience, 60.3 percent reported they were seduced by sexual offenders, 22.2 percent were raped, and 17.5 percent were forced to have sex (Table 5.25).

Table 5.24: Age of the First Sexual Act

Age of Respondent	Frequency	Percentage
7	1	1.6
9	1	1.6
11	1	1.6
12	4	6.3
13	13	20.6
14	15	23.8
15	10	15.9
16	14	22.2
17	2	3.2
18	2	3.2
Total	63	100.0

Table 5.25: Nature of the First Sexual Act

Nature of the First Sexual Act	Frequency	Percentage
Forced	11	17.5
Raped	14	22.2
Seduced	38	60.3
Total	63	100.0

5.7.2 Sexual Offender

The age of the offenders who sexually exploited these young women also varies. The youngest was 13 years old and the oldest was 60 (Table 5.26). About 16 percent of the offenders were juveniles at the age of 13-18 years. Adult sexual offenders (19 years and above) were about 84 percent. The average age of the offenders was 23.14 years. Four respondents, who had their first sexual encounter when strangers raped them, did not provide the age of their offenders.

Table 5.26: Age of Sexual Offender

Age of Sexual Offender	Frequency	Percentage
13	1	1.6
14	1	1.6
16	1	1.6
17	5	7.9
18	2	3.2
19	4	6.3
20	10	15.9
21	5	7.9
22	3	4.8
23	8	12.7
24	4	6.3
25	3	4.8
26	2	3.2
28	2	3.2
29	2	3.2
30	2	3.2
32	1	1.6
40	1	1.6
41	1	1.6
60	1	1.6
Not available	4	6.3
Total	63	100.0

Almost all respondents knew the sexual offenders who victimised them (Table 5.27). Nearly 70 percent reported they were introduced to sex by their ‘boyfriends’, 6.4 percent reported through relatives (step-father, mother’s brother and sister’s husband), and 23.8 percent through their sister’s friend, a friend, father’s or mother’s friend and strangers.

Table 5.27: Sexual Offenders who Initiated First Sexual Act

Offenders	Frequency	Percentage
Stepfather	1	1.6
Mother’s brother	2	3.2
Boyfriend	44	69.8
Sister’s husband	1	1.6
Sister’s friend	2	3.2
Friend	5	7.9
Other (Father/mother’s friend, stranger etc.)	8	12.7
Total	63	100.0

5.8 Entry into Prostitution

5.8.1 Age of Entry into Prostitution

This study found that the youngest respondent first involvement in prostitution was at nine years old (Table 5.28). The majority of them (92 percent) entered prostitution at 13-17 years old and more than half (55.5 percent) were 15-16 years of age. The average age of the respondents first involved in prostitution was 15.10 years.

Table 5.28: Age of Entry into Prostitution

Age of Respondent	Frequency	Percentage
9	1	1.6
11	2	3.2
13	8	12.7
14	7	11.1
15	14	22.2
16	21	33.3
17	8	12.7
18	2	3.2
Total	63	100.0

Up-close, the study found that 49.2 percent of the respondents entered prostitution in their intermediate secondary school age (16-18 years), 46 percent at the

lower secondary school age (13-15 years), and 4.8 percent at the primary school age (7-12 years).

5.8.2 Ways to Prostitution

Most of the young women indicated that the person they ‘trusted most’ introduced them to prostitution (Table 5.29). In about 48 percent of cases, this was due to their boyfriends’ deceit, 38.1 percent were influenced by a friend, two respondents were forced by their mother, and one was persuaded by a relative (uncle). Nearly ten percent however said that they become involved in prostitution as a result of their own personal decision.

Table 5.29: Ways to Prostitution

Ways to Prostitution	Frequency	Percentage
Influenced by a friend	24	38.1
Own decision	6	9.5
Deceived by boyfriend	30	47.6
Forced by mother	2	3.2
Persuaded by relative	1	1.6
Total	63	100.0

5.8.3 Family Members Already Involved in Prostitution

Of the 63 respondents, only a minority (nine) were found to have one or two family members already involved in prostitution i.e. mother, sister or mother’s brother (Table 5.30). Seven respondents described their mother and/or sister as prostitutes, and two mentioned their mother’s brothers as pimps.

Table 5.30: Family Members Already Involved in Prostitution

Family Members	Frequency	Percentage
Mother	3	4.8
Sister	2	3.2
Mother and sister	2	3.2
Mother's brother	1	1.6
Sister and mother's brother	1	1.6
Not related	54	85.7
Total	63	100.0

5.9 Involvement in Prostitution

5.9.1 Intermediaries

The majority of the young women interviewed ‘worked’ with or for intermediaries. The intermediaries were agents of a prostitution syndicate, a boyfriend, their mother, a relative, a pub owner, or a friend. Often the intermediaries were said to run the prostitution ‘business’, look for customers, make a deal, and collect the money. According to the young women, an agent of a prostitution syndicate was a man usually introduced by their boyfriend, mother, friend, or relative. Often these individuals were referred as ‘pimps’. In Chapter Two, a pimp is defined as a person who benefits from the earnings of a person ‘working’ in the sex trade, or who actively control the activities of one prostituted person, or who is using prostituted person for financial or other benefit for himself. This research, though, does not consider agent of a prostitution syndicate as the only pimp, but also accounting all the intermediaries found in this study.

From Table 5.31, about 71 percent respondents ‘worked’ with or for intermediaries: boyfriends (34.9 percent), agents of a prostitution syndicate (20.6 percent), and others (16 percent) like their mother, relative, pub owner, or a friend. Nearly 29 percent however reported they ‘worked’ alone, without the involvement of any third party.

Table 5.31: Intermediaries

Intermediaries	Frequency	Percentage
Agent of a prostitution syndicate	13	20.6
Boyfriend	22	34.9
Mother	2	3.2
Relative	2	3.2
Pub owner	3	4.8
Friend	3	4.8
No intermediary	18	28.6
Total	63	100.0

5.9.2 Locations of Sex Trade

Table 5.32 shows the locations where the respondents ‘worked’. Most of them ‘worked’ in closed-door locations like pubs, hotels, customers’ houses, boyfriends’ houses or

their own house. A few ‘worked’ on the street. The table also shows that many respondents ‘worked’ in several locations during prostitution. They did not stay at one location but were mobile, or had been mobilised from one location to another. Many young women however reported that most of the time, they ‘worked’ in a hotel (66.7 percent) and the customer’s house (50.8 percent). Some ‘worked’ in the boyfriend’s house (30.2 percent) and in the pub (25.4 percent). But, 49.2 percent were found ‘working’ (following a customer’s request) in parks, abandoned houses, customers’ cars, bushes, karaoke clubs, and a friend’s house. A few ‘worked’ in their own house (7.9 percent).

Table 5.32: Locations of Sex Trade

Locations	Frequency	Percentage
Pub	16	25.4
Hotel	42	66.7
Customer house	32	50.8
Boyfriend house	19	30.2
Own house	5	7.9
Other (parks, abandoned house, etc.)	31	49.2

5.9.3 Number of Customers Per Day

This study found that every respondent had a different number of men who buy sex from her in a day. The majority of them (57.1 percent) reported that they traded sex with 6-10 customers per day, 25.4 percent between one to five customers, and 17.5 percent had more than 10 customers per day (Table 5.33). Two respondents revealed that they were forced to serve sex to up to 20 men or more in a day by the agent of a prostitution syndicate and boyfriend during prostitution.

Table 5.33: Number of Customers Per Day

Number of Customers	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 customers	16	25.4
6-10 customers	36	57.1
More than 10 customers	11	17.5
Total	63	100.0

5.9.4 Charge Rate Paid by the Customers for Sex

Respondents who 'worked' with or for intermediaries said they had no say in determining the 'price' for sex 'service' provided to the customers. In contrast, those who 'worked' alone had more autonomy and bargaining power to negotiate the payment with the customers. Table 5.34 shows the charge rate paid by the customers for sex with the respondents. About 30 percent of the respondents were paid less than RM100 by each customer, 38.1 percent were paid RM100-RM200, and 31.7 percent were paid more than RM200 by a customer. Five respondents reported that their intermediaries (agents of a prostitution syndicate and pub owners) charged the customers up to RM800 (£114) for the sex 'service' provided.

Table 5.34: Charge Rate Paid by the Customers for Sex

Charges in RM	Charges in £	Frequency	Percentage
Less than RM100	Less than £14	19	30.2
RM100-RM200	£14-£28	24	38.1
More than RM200	More than £28	20	31.7
Total		63	100.0

Note: Currency exchange £1.00 = RM7.00 (May 2004).

5.9.5 Days of 'Work' Per Week

In terms of days of 'work' per week, 47.6 percent of the respondents 'worked' for seven days a week, 30.2 percent 'worked' for 5-6 days a week, and 17.5 percent 'worked' for 3-4 days a week (Table 5.35). A few were found 'working' for only 1-2 days a week (4.8 percent).

Table 5.35: Days of 'Work' Per Week

Days of 'Work'	Frequency	Percentage
1-2 days a week	3	4.8
3-4 days a week	11	17.5
5-6 days a week	19	30.2
7 days a week	30	47.6
Total	63	100.0

5.9.6 Feelings towards Customer

Nearly 56 percent of the young women interviewed said they hated their customers (Table 5.36). Around 29 percent of them felt nothing or have no feelings to the customers. But, 15.9 percent described themselves as liking or loving their customers.

Table 5.36: Feelings towards Customer

Feelings	Frequency	Percentage
Hate/angry	35	55.6
Like/love	10	15.9
Nothing	18	28.6
Total	63	100.0

5.9.7 Income

Table 5.37 shows the income earned per week by respondents. About 13 percent of them earned less than RM1000 per week, 23.8 percent earned between RM1,000-RM2,000, 25.4 percent earned between RM2,000-RM4,000, 19 percent earned between RM4,000-RM6,000, and 17.5 percent earned between RM6,000-RM10,000 per week. One respondent who was forced into prostitution and controlled by her mother reported earning RM20,000 per week, but she never saw any of the money. All the money went to her mother. She was given only a meagre amount of pocket money. The income figure earned by the respondents shown below includes the money provided or given to intermediaries. All the respondents who ‘worked’ with or for intermediaries reported giving them 30-100 percent of their income. For those young women who ‘worked’ in the hotel, the pimp (agent of a prostitution syndicate) took a portion of their income to pay for the room. That however was not the case of those young women brought into the hotel by customers. The customers paid the hotel room and the young women’s charges separately.

Table 5.37: Range of Income Earned Per Week

Incomes in RM	Incomes in £	Frequency	Percentage
Less than RM1,000	Less than £142	8	12.7
RM1,000-RM2,000	£142-£285	15	23.8
RM2,000-RM3,000	£285-£428	8	12.7
RM3,000-RM4,000	£428-£571	8	12.7
RM4,000-RM5,000	£571-£714	6	9.5
RM5,000-RM6,000	£714-£857	6	9.5
RM6,000-RM7,000	£857-£1,000	4	6.3
RM7,000-RM8,000	£1,000-£1,142	3	4.8
RM8,000-RM9,000	£1,142-£1,285	2	3.2
RM9,000-RM10,000	£1,285-£1,428	2	3.2
More than RM10,000	More than £1,428	1	1.6
Total		63	100.0

Note: Currency exchange £1 = RM7 (May 2004).

5.9.8 The Distribution of Income

The income earned by the respondents was spent for many things ranging from food to medical bill (Table 5.38). There were four main things respondents commonly spent money on: food (93.7 percent of the total sample), drugs/alcohol (79.4 percent), entertainment (74.6 percent), and clothes and accessories (74.6 percent). Only 14.3 percent used their income to support the families. About 11 percent reported they used a part of their income to have abortions, support boyfriends, pay medical bill, and/or helping friends. Three respondents said they saved certain amount of the money for the future. Another two respondents indicated that they used the money earned to bribe the police, for example, in cases when they were in police detention or were threatened with imprisonment if she did not surrender all or parts of her money. In another scenario, respondents were asked to repay the money that the pimp (agent of a prostitution syndicate) spent as 'settlement' with the police, when the young women were caught. One respondent reported that during one incident, the police detained her with four other young women in a hotel. Her pimp bribed the police RM400 for every one of them. On the next day, they however were asked to pay back the money.

Table 5.38: Distribution of Income

Income Distribution	Frequency	Percentage
Entertainment	47	74.6
Food	59	93.7
Clothes and Accessories	47	74.6
Furniture	7	11.1
Drugs/Alcohol	50	79.4
Support the family	9	14.3
Other	7	11.1

5.10 Abuse during Prostitution

5.10.1 Abuser

Of the 63 young women interviewed, 66.7 percent (42 respondents) reported experiencing abuse during prostitution at least by one abuser. The persons who often abused the respondents were customers (54.8 percent), boyfriends (52.4 percent), and agents of a prostitution syndicate (26.2 percent). Other abusers (9.5 percent) were pub owners, mothers, friends, and relatives (Table 5.39).

Table 5.39: Abusers during Prostitution

Abusers	Frequency	Percentage
Boyfriend	22	52.4
Agent of a prostitution syndicate	11	26.2
Customer	23	54.8
Other (pub owner, mother etc)	4	9.5

5.10.2 Types of Abuse and Ways of Coping with the Abuse

For those respondents who were abused, many suffered from at least one type of abuse. About 88 percent of the young women interviewed suffered from verbal abuse, 71.4 percent were slapped, 45.2 percent were raped, 38.1 percent were drugged, 33.3 percent were punched and kicked, and 14.3 percent were threatened with weapon (Table 5.40). Sometimes they were abused for slight mistakes, or even without specific reason. But, most of the time they were abused because they ignored what the intermediaries, particularly agents of a prostitution syndicate, customers, and boyfriends asked them to

do. One respondent told that she was beaten with a belt and PVC hose pipe and slapped a few times by an agent of a prostitution syndicate and her mother until she was unconscious because she did not want to trade sex with customers. Another one young woman reported that she was drugged, raped, and then beaten by her boyfriend because she refused to give all her earning to him. In terms of the ways to cope with the violence, 69 percent of the respondents used drugs/alcohol, and 11.9 percent shared their suffering with a friend (Table 5.41). Nineteen percent however cried and/or ignored the memory of the violence.

Table 5.40: Types of Abuse

Types of Abuse	Frequency	Percentage
Slapped	30	71.4
Punched	6	14.3
Sworn (foul language)	37	88.1
Kicked	8	19.0
Threatened with weapon	6	14.3
Raped	19	45.2
Drugged	16	38.1

Table 5.41: Common Ways of Coping with the Abuse

Ways of Coping	Frequency	Percentage
Taking drugs/alcohol	29	69.0
Sharing with a friend	5	11.9
Crying and/or try to ignore it	8	19.0
Total	42	100.0

5.11 Drug Use

5.11.1 Initial Drug Use

About 51 percent of the young women interviewed used drugs before their involvement in prostitution, while 31.7 percent after their involvement (Table 5.42). Only 17.5 percent said they had never used drugs in their life. For those respondents who used drugs, 78.8 percent started using drugs at the age of 14-16 years; the youngest was 11 years old (Table 5.43). The average age of initial drug use among the respondents is 14.87 years. Closer examination found that 3.8 percent of the young women started drug use at the primary school age (7-12 years), 61.5 percent started at the lower

secondary school age (13-15 years), and 34.6 percent started at the intermediate secondary school age (16-18 years).

Table 5.42: Initial Drug Use

Initial Drug Use	Frequency	Percentage
Before prostitution	32	50.8
After prostitution	20	31.7
Never use drugs	11	17.5
Total	63	100.0

Table 5.43: Age of First Started Drug Use

Age of Respondent	Frequency	Percentage
11	1	1.9
12	1	1.9
13	5	9.6
14	12	23.1
15	15	28.8
16	14	26.9
17	4	7.7
Total	52	100.0

5.11.2 Persons who Introduced Drugs and Regular Supplier

About 48 percent of the respondents were introduced to drugs by friends, 34.6 percent by boyfriends, and 11.5 percent by agents of a prostitution syndicate (Table 5.44). One respondent reported she was introduced to drugs by her adoptive father and two other young women were introduced by pub owners. From Table 5.45, the persons who regularly supplied drugs to the respondents were friends (51.9 percent), boyfriends (23.1 percent), agents of a prostitution syndicate (13.5 percent), customers (5.8 percent) and pub owners (5.8 percent).

Table 5.44: Persons who Introduced Drugs

Persons	Frequency	Percentage
Friend	25	48.1
Agent of a prostitution syndicate	6	11.5
Pub owner	2	3.8
Adoptive father	1	1.9
Boyfriend	18	34.6
Total	52	100.0

Table 5.45: Persons who Regularly Supplied Drugs

Persons	Frequency	Percentage
Friends	27	51.9
Customer	3	5.8
Agent of a prostitution syndicate	7	13.5
Pub owner	3	5.8
Boyfriend	12	23.1
Total	52	100.0

5.11.3 Types of Drug

Table 5.46 shows the types of drug used by the respondents. Many used combinations of drugs. Psychotropic pills (ice and ecstasy) were the most popular drugs as 96.2 percent of the respondents reported using these drugs. The second most popular drug used by the respondents was marijuana (73.1 percent). Some respondents also found sniffed glue (19.2 percent). A few used morphine (13.5 percent) and heroin (15.4 percent).

Table 5.46: Types of Drug

Types of Drug	Frequency	Percentage
Marijuana	38	73.1
Morphine	7	13.5
Heroin	8	15.4
Solvent (glue)	10	19.2
Psychotropic pill (ecstasy/ice)	50	96.2

5.11.4 Reasons for Drug Use

Many respondents gave more than one reason why they used drugs. Nearly 77 percent of the young women interviewed said they used drugs, sometimes because of feeling depressed, and 69.2 percent said they had used it for fun. About 46 percent had used it to forget bad memories, 40.4 percent to make themselves ‘work’ longer, and 21.2 percent to overcome shyness while ‘working’ (Table 5.47).

Table 5.47: Reasons for Drug Use

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Depressed	40	76.9
To overcome shyness during ‘work’	11	21.2
To forget bad memories	24	46.2
For fun	36	69.2
To make myself ‘works’ longer	21	40.4

5.12 Sexual and Mental Health

5.12.1 Contraception Use

Table 5.48 shows that 66.7 percent of the young women interviewed did not use any contraception (pill, condom, or both) during prostitution. Only 33.3 percent used contraception: pill (1.6 percent), condom (25.4 percent), and both (6.3 percent).

Table 5.48: Contraception Use

Types of Contraception	Frequency	Percentage
Pill	1	1.6
Condom	16	25.4
Pill and condom	4	6.3
Not using any contraception	42	66.7
Total	63	100.0

5.12.2 Pregnancy

Of the 63 respondents, 21 of them (33.3 percent) had experienced pregnancy. Twelve young women (57.1 percent) were pregnant by their boyfriends and seven were the result of sex with customers (Table 5.49). Two respondents were pregnant by their uncle and rapist. Of those young women who were pregnant, 12 of them decided to keep their babies, while nine opted to terminate their pregnancies.

Table 5.49: Individuals who Made Respondents Pregnant

Persons	Frequency	Percentage
Boyfriend	12	57.1
Customer	7	33.3
Relative (uncle)	1	4.8
Unknown (rapist)	1	4.8
Total	21	100.0

5.12.3 Psychological Problems

Table 5.50 shows that prostitution had various negative psychological impact on the young women involved. The vast majority of the respondents reported suffering from depression (61.9 percent), feeling entrapped (46.0 percent), dirty (44.4 percent), guilty (38.1 percent), useless and hapless (33.3 percent), low self-esteem (31.7 percent), anxiety (20.6 percent), fear of rejection (20.6 percent), hopelessness and suicidal (15.9 percent), and hatred for men (14.3 percent). About 24 percent felt prostitution did not cause any negative psychological impact onto them.

Table 5.50: Psychological Problems

Psychological Problems	Frequency	Percentage
No impact	15	23.8
Anxiety	13	20.6
Guilty	24	38.1
Depression	39	61.9
Low self-esteem	20	31.7
Entrapped	29	46.0
Dirty	28	44.4
Hopelessness and suicidal	10	15.9
Fear of rejection	13	20.6
Hatred for men	9	14.3
Uselessness and haplessness	21	33.3

Table 5.51: Number of Psychological Problems Suffered

Number of Psychological Problems	Frequency	Percentage
1	2	4.2
2	10	20.8
3	6	12.5
4	11	22.9
5	6	12.5
6	5	10.4
7	5	10.4
8	1	2.1
9	2	4.2
Total	48	100.0

For those respondents who were negatively affected by prostitution, 95.8 percent suffered more than one type of psychological problems (Table 5.51). About 21 percent suffered from two types of psychological problems, 12.5 percent suffered from three,

22.9 percent suffered four, 12.5 percent from five, and 20.8 percent from 6-7 types of psychological problems. Incredibly, three respondents suffered eight to nine types of psychological problems.

5.13 From Prostitution to Rehabilitation

5.13.1 Reasons for Admission to the Rehabilitation Centre

There were two main reasons given by the respondents for their admission to the rehabilitation centre. Eighty-one percent (51 respondents) reported they were admitted into the rehabilitation centre after being detained by the police. Nineteen percent (12 respondents) however said that a parent or relative had sent them to the centre after they agreed to do so in a family discussion. For those who were admitted to the centre by a parent or relative, many said their parents or relatives used running away as the reason for wanting to place them at the centre.

5.13.2 Difficulty in Changing Lifestyle after Prostitution

When asked about the difficulty faced in changing their life after prostitution, 46 percent of the respondents said they had no difficulty (Table 5.52). However, 44.4 percent said they did face some difficulties to change their life after prostitution and 9.5 percent said they were not sure about that.

Table 5.52: Difficulty in Changing Lifestyle after Prostitution

Difficulty	Frequency	Percentage
No	29	46.0
Yes	28	44.4
Not sure	6	9.5
Total	63	100.0

5.13.3 Life at the Rehabilitation Centre

Table 5.53 shows the conditions of respondents who were living in the rehabilitation centre. About 35 percent reported they felt depressed, sad and tense, and 14.3 percent

said they had problem adjusting to their new life at the centre. But, 27 percent reported they felt happy, relief and peace living in the centre. Another 23.8 percent reported they felt no different between living inside and outside the centre.

Table 5.53: Life at the Rehabilitation Centre

Conditions	Frequency	Percentage
Feeling depressed, sad and tense	22	34.9
Difficult to adjust life in the centre	9	14.3
Feeling happy, relief and peace	17	27.0
Feeling nothing different with life outside the centre	15	23.8
Total	63	100.0

5.13.4 Young Women’s Perceptions of the Centre

The majority of respondents (61.9 percent) reported they had been given good support from the centre (Table 5.54). But, 15.8 percent said the centre did not provide enough counselling support, and that the officers were too demanding. Around 22 percent mentioned the centre’s lack of security, lack of staff, lack of facilities and lack of activities, and said that the centre did not help them enough, particularly in developing their confidence and employment path.

Table 5.54: Young Women’s Perceptions of the Centre

Perceptions	Frequency	Percentage
Not enough counselling support provided	5	7.9
Officer too demanding	5	7.9
Receive good support	39	61.9
Other	14	22.2
Total	63	100.0

5.13.5 Frequency of Family Visits

In terms of family visits, 34.9 percent of respondents reported their family or relative visited them once a month (Table 5.55). About 33 percent said they were seldom visited, and 31.7 percent mentioned nobody visited them while living in the centre.

Table 5.55: Frequency of Family Visits

Frequent of Family Visit	Frequency	Percentage
Nobody visits	20	31.7
Once a month	22	34.9
Seldom	21	33.3
Total	63	100.0

5.13.6 Future Intentions

When asked about their future, many respondents disclosed that they had more than one thing they would want to do after released from the centre (Table 5.56). The majority of them (58.7 percent) would like to find a job once they were released. Only 23.8 percent would like to return to school or to further study. Twenty-seven percent would like to go back to their family, while 15.9 percent wanted to get married. About 12.7 percent wanted to open a small business like food stall, boutique, saloon, and cake shop. However, 11.1 percent of the young women interviewed stated that they might be forced to return to prostitution if they could not found any other way of survival.

Table 5.56: Future Intentions

Future Intention	Frequency	Percentage
Return to school/Further study	15	23.8
Pursue vocational training	8	12.7
Find a job	37	58.7
Go back to family	17	27.0
Have a business	8	12.7
Get married	10	15.9
Re-enter prostitution	7	11.1
Not decided yet	6	9.5

6 Qualitative Findings

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents outputs derived from narrative interviews conducted. Names in this chapter are pseudonyms, as to respect the privacy and protect the identity of the young women who voluntarily shared their life experiences. The story flow of each narrative differs from each other because it was conveyed using each young woman's own spontaneous language. It was their choice to select at which point of their life's journey that they would like to start. However, it would not be true to claim that the narrative given has no structure. The narrative is formally structured, a self-generating structure, and is similar to the structure of orientation for action: a context is given; the events are sequential and end at a particular point; it reveals place, time, motivation and the actor's symbolic system of orientations; the narration includes a kind of evaluation of the outcome (Bauer, 1996).

Of the ten participants interviewed, eight were chosen to tell their stories in this thesis. The other two stories were not included to avoid repetition, as their experiences in relation to prostitution involvement are very similar to those interviewed earlier. The selected stories have been transcribed to a level of detail required to achieve research objectives and the theoretical framework (Bauer, 1996; Poindexter, 2002).

It [transcription] is an interpretive process in itself, an important decision regarding how to present and 're-present' an interviewee's story. Representing text is not merely a step on the way to real work; it is a phase of the real work. Deciding on the form of transcription and re-presentation of data is a methodological issue and a larger research problem because it is interpretive.

(Poindexter, 2002: 61).

In this chapter, extensive quotes from participants are offered as a direct representation of what was said. Some editorial changes have, however, been made to the transcript excerpts in order to improve the comprehensibility of transcripts. Such editorial changes are permitted in the context of narrative analysis. As Tilley and Powick (2002) say, a transcript can be edited for the purposes of clarity but it must be

done carefully without affecting participants' intended meanings. For example, the extensive repetition of words such as "um" and "ah" and the repetitive phrases can be deleted, and tense agreement as well can be edited for ease of reading (Tilley and Powick, 2002).

No generalized method is available to produce the perfect transcript (Tilley and Powick, 2002). Nevertheless, the stories have the credibility to be appreciated, as the participants' words have been transcribed as close as possible to represent what was actually said. Poindexter (2002) explains that researchers have to re-present text as accurately as is feasible and to focus on the respondent's own expressions and perspectives in order to ensure that others live have been interpreted in the most ethical and respectful way possible. The stories carry thousands of meanings. Most are unpleasant stories, but it must be told so that we as a society can understand child prostitution and know about the experiences of these prostituted young women, as Ron O'Grady says below:

The children who are trapped in the slavery of these brothels were born with the same hopes and dreams of my children and children in everywhere.

And these men whose sexual appetites keep these children in slavery are the men who live seemingly respectable lives in my street and yours.

That is why this unpleasant story must be told. So that we will know about the children and about the hidden evil which lies below the surface of your society and mine.

(Ron O'Grady cited in the ECPAT International, 2002: 17).

6.2 Shima – A Rape Victim

The death of my mother was the turning point of my life. I was an orphan at six years old. My father died in an accident when I was a baby. I went to live with my grandparents at their village. I never went to school. My grandparents could not put me into any school because I did not have a birth certificate. Everyday I stayed at home, spending my time helping my grandmother or playing with other kids at the village. My grandmother was a housewife and my grandfather was a rubber-taper. We lived in

poverty. My grandparents' wooden house was very old and run down. There was no electricity, running water or gas cooker. When I was 13 years old, my grandparents sent me to stay with my sister in the city because they were too old to look after me. I felt abandoned and was very sad. My grandfather died of tuberculosis about two years after I left home, followed by my grandmother eight months later.

My sister was married with three children aged seven, six and four. Two of them were at a nursery, whilst the eldest was in a primary school. During my stay at her place, I was treated like a servant. Everyday I had to wake up at six in the morning to do household chores. I washed dishes and clothes, as well as cleaned the house in the morning then proceed to do outdoor tasks like cutting the grass, gardening, washing the car and sweeping rubbish till late afternoon. That was my daily routine and all that need to be done before she came back from work. My sister would be very upset if my work was not satisfactory. She would insult me with vulgar words. She would accuse me of being lazy. She nagged all the time. She never trusted me. Even if I was sick and could not do the chores, she would not believe me or show any sympathy. Instead she would accuse me of pretending to be sick to excuse myself. That really hurts and I do hate her.

My sister worked as a factory worker. Her husband was a security guard. Both of them abused me verbally, but he is worst because he raped me. It happened just a few months after I moved into his house. I was 13 years old. I guess he was in his 40s. My sister was out working and the children were at school. He came back early from work at about twelve o'clock in the afternoon. At that time, I was in the kitchen cleaning the stove. From his room, he shouted for a glass of water. He was not feeling well and needed the water to take his medicine. Then he asked me to give him a massage, which I simply obeyed. He asked me to take off my clothes and then he raped me. There was nothing I could do. I was so afraid. He warned me not to tell my sister what had happened or he would kick me out of the house. He raped me many times after that. That bloody old man ruined my life.

When I was 14 years old, I could not keep the secret anymore. I knew what he did to me was wrong. I felt guilty towards my sister for keeping the truth about her husband. Unfortunately, when I finally had the guts to tell her, she did not believe me. Instead, she called me a liar. She thought I wanted to ruin her family. They forced me out of the house on the very same day. My heart was totally broken. I was hoping that my sister would be sympathetic towards me and would change things once she learned

the horrid story. However, she is truly a heartless person. Once again I felt abandoned and alone. I cried for my mother and begged God to return her to me. In my childishness, I was hoping that God would listen to me and answer my prayer. If my mother were still alive, all those things would not have happened to me. I felt silly for telling the truth and what it led me to. If I had not told my sister, I could still be staying at her house. Instead I was forced to pack my clothes, a RM10 note was shoved to me and I was asked to take a bus to my second sister's house. My parents had five children, three girls and two boys. I am the youngest child. My other sister is also married, but I do not know much about my brothers. My eldest sister said both of them were drug addicts.

On the day I was thrown out of my sister's house, I decided not to go to my other sister's home. I was afraid that the same fate awaited me. That she would not believe me, and worst still I would be called a liar. I took a bus to go to a city as far away as possible from my sister's house. Upon my arrival, I spent hours sitting on a bench at the bus station, as I did not know where to go. I felt like I was losing my mind. At night, I would pick out a few boxes from the garbage bin and drag myself to a nearby building which was under construction. I would sleep through the night using the boxes as my bed and blanket. For a month, I was a homeless person in the city. I slept anywhere I considered 'safe'; the bus station, taxi station, food stall, mosque, store, empty building, under the bridge or in the market, as long as the place was hidden from the police or public. For food and other needs, I begged. I saw a few children begging for money, some were of my age, some even younger, and when your stomach is empty, you learn fast. There were times when I was too upset and tried to end my life. I simply felt that life was not worth living, particularly when I was treated badly by my own flesh and blood.

Then I met Anna. I was begging at a bus station when she came up to me and asked me why I had to beg. Initially I ignored her. Others had constantly asked me the same question. But she was persistent. She followed me around and tried to be nice. She asked me to join her for a lunch. My empty stomach gave way and I accepted her offer. That was when I told her a little bit about myself and what had happened to me. She was very sympathetic and invited me to stay with her at her flat. At that time, I was really happy. It had been ages since someone had actually shown me such kindness. Nobody ever offered me a place to stay.

Anna was 29 years old and worked in a salon. She was very caring, loving and nice to me. She took me to a shopping mall to buy a few clothes. She bought me a few trendy clothes of the latest design because she said I had to change my 'village style' of dressing to a more 'urban style' as I no longer lived in the village. She also made me cut my long hair. Once a month, she would take me to watch movies at the cinema. I was truly very grateful to Anna. Nobody had ever treated me the way Anna did. She said she loved me and treated me like her own sister, not a stranger. Anna was completely different from my sister. She was a great influence in every aspect of my life then. After a few months living with Anna, she suggested that I should find a job. I told her that I would be very happy to work, but without any certificate how was I to get a job and who would want to employ me? I was then only 14 years old. To my surprise, she put the idea for me to take up the job. I told her that I was too scared and was without any experience to do the job. However, she pointed out that the job could easily make me rich. She said I should not worry about doing the job, as she would protect and took care of me. She would be my so-called manager. She would find customers and arrange everything for me including transport to hotels, to customers' houses, golf resorts, spas, or anywhere required. All I needed to do was to wear nice dresses, put on some make-up and obey all the customers' requests.

My first customer was a businessman. He paid RM1000 to be with me. I gave all my money to Anna for safekeeping. Should I need some, I simply asked. Roughly, I entertained 3-6 men a day. Sometimes the customer booked me for 2-3 days especially during the weekend or when they worked away from Kuala Lumpur. Anna charged them RM500 per hour for my service. None of my customers used condoms during sex. Nor were they violent towards me. I had no fear of getting pregnant because I took contraception pills provided by Anna. However I was pregnant once because I forgot to take the pills. The baby was aborted. Anna took me to see a *bomoh* (a witch doctor) who gave me a black-bitter-solution to drink and used a sharp-bamboo stick to pull out the foetus. It was so painful. After the incident, I never failed to check my menstruation circle and used the contraception pills regularly.

In the beginning, I did feel guilty about doing the job. But I realised the job was the ticket to my survival and independence. I knew it was not a real job. Yet, it was better than being raped. I was a rape victim and other people who have been raped will understand my situation and why I did it. When you have been raped, you are

completely stripped of your self-worth. Life means nothing to you. Therefore, you might as well try the job, as you have nothing to lose. Once you are raped, your family shies away from you and the society frowns on you. You then lead the life of a rat. You cannot expose yourself or tell them who you are. If society ever learns that you are a rape victim, they will laugh at you, view you as a dirty person and place the blame on you. If you are hungry, you cannot beg for food. Even if you plead, offer your service (work) to trade for food, they would ignore you like you do not exist. In the end, you need to hide and do whatever 'secret jobs' you think possible to support your life, even one as dirty as the job. I chose to put up with the 'dirty job' because it was the only job I thought I could do to support my life. Other young women who were rape victims might resolve to selling drugs, shoplifting or stealing to survive after being thrown out of their home. I do not blame Anna for introducing me to the job. I do not blame myself either. What other choices does a young woman like me have in order to carry on living?

This is my second year at the centre. I was brought here after the police detained me when I was 15 years old. My life is very miserable now. The centre is like a jailhouse. I face no problems with the other residents or staff here. However, the horrible memories of being raped, insulted and abandoned keep haunting me. They are so painful and can suddenly change my mood. I become very angry and sad. I can be very aggressive too. Some of the residents think I have mental problem. I do not really care much about what they think of me. They do not know what I had gone through, my sufferings or how deep it affects my life. They have not been raped. They will never know how hurtful it was. I tried to commit suicide here once by cutting my wrist. Soon after, I felt very guilty and stopped the blood by using a piece of cloth. The officers never found out about this. I did not tell anybody because I believed people would not listen to me. I have not decided what to do or where to go once I leave the centre. I definitely do not wish to carry on with the job. However, if there is no other choice, I might be forced to return to the job as the final option.

I hope to meet Anna again. She is the only family I have in this world. She helped me a lot before and I hope she will help me again in the future. She is the only person who will accept me. What happened to me is not Anna's fault, but that of my sister's and her husband's. Both of them are guilty of ruining my life and causing me to do the job. I do not wish to go back to my sister. I no longer consider her my sister. She threw me out of her life a long time ago and I was left alone to walk a difficult path. I do

not believe she still remembers or has any memories of me. Let her continue to believe that I died a long, long time ago.

6.3 Dilla – Runaway and Drug User

Whatever had happened to me was the result of my involvement in gang activities during my school years. It had also led to my drug abuse. By accident, I became a member of the *gagak putih* (white raven) gang when I was only 13 years old. I was a victim of bullying at school. For someone in my situation, there is nothing more happy than being offered sympathy and protection. Blindly, I agreed to be protected without thinking of future consequences. But to be worthy of that protection, I had to first join the gang and had to undergo certain ceremonies to be accepted by the group members. Each person underwent a different type of initiation ceremony, doing certain things that he or she had been asked to do. In my case, they asked me to do three things. First, I had to passionately kiss each member of the gang, boys and girls alike, as proof of our closeness and togetherness. Second, I had to drink a glass of liquor. It symbolised the fun that we were supposed to share together. Nobody was allowed to enjoy life alone. Third, I had to give a drop of my blood to every group member to taste. It symbolised the responsibility of each member, as any member of a family, to protect each other in any situation at all. Only then was I accepted as one of them. They changed my name and soon I was known as ‘Lollypop’. I do not know what it meant, but I liked the name.

The *gagak putih* gang had 12 members, eight boys and four girls including myself. Some of the gang members were from my school, whilst others had quit school. Our gang leader was a 19-year-old boy who left school at 16. The gang did not have any specific activities. We met regularly after school and at selected shopping complexes on the weekend. During ‘special events’, like initiation ceremonies of new gang members, or if we were to have a *hoga* (marijuana, alcohol and sex) party, we would meet at hidden places such as in empty factory buildings, houses, cinemas, bushes or home of one of our gang members. I started smoking marijuana at 13 just a few weeks after joining the gang. I lost my virginity during the same *hoga* party to our group leader. Normally before the party begun, everyone had to chip in some money to buy drugs. Any boy or girl who failed to produce the money would be punished. The type of

punishment would differ. For a boy, he had no alternative but to bring the money. He would not be allowed to share the ‘goods’ with us. For a girl, she could offer to have sex with her ‘sponsor’. I endured this punishment a couple of times, as I was often without money for the party. The drug was easily accessible, as two of the boys in our group were suppliers.

I smoked at least two ‘pots’ of marijuana a day. The maximum count was eleven ‘pots’. One packet of marijuana cost RM10 and everyday I spent about RM20-RM40 on the drug. I stole money from my parents or sold things taken from home to buy the drug. I also stole things from school (canteen and cooperative shop) to sell or exchange them for the drug. I was expelled from school at 15 years old after being caught red handed by the school guard. I was trying to steal a bike. My parents were so mad and we had a heated argument. I told them I was not interested in school anymore. They then made a plan to send me to my grandparents’ house in the village. That was an important year for me, as I needed to sit the Lower Secondary Evaluation (LSE) exam. There was no way that I could escape school. My parents believed that I should leave the city, or risk being influenced by my bad buddies. I told my gang members about my parents’ plan. They told me to runaway from home. So I did. I went to stay with one of the gang members called Mamat. Actually that was not the first time I ran away from home. I did more than five times before. Every time I faced disciplinary action at school, I would runaway from home. My parents would be very upset each time they were asked to see the principal and would take it out on me once they reached home. Sometimes, my father slapped or beat me with a bamboo cane, belt, or stick. I was punished in school for selling cigarettes, truancy, *pow* (forcing other schoolgirls to hand over money or what I called ‘protection money’) and fighting.

Mamat was 18 years old and left school when he was 15. He was living in a small flat he shared with a few friends. He was one of our group’s regular marijuana suppliers and was a seller of illegal VCD (video and compact disk) at *pasar malam* (night market). Mamat proclaimed me as his *gundik*, which meant that nobody in the group could touch me without his permission. I became his sex slave and for those who were interested to have sex with me, they would have to pay to him. It never crossed my mind that Mamat was prostituting me. What he did was not a bother to me anyway, as long as he provided me with a place to hide from my parents, and that I could continue with the gang activities and guaranteed of my daily drug supply.

My drug problem worsened during my stay with Mamat. I became totally dependent on marijuana. Mamat would not always give me the drug for free. Sometimes, I needed to find money to buy it from him. Therefore, I traded sex with other gang members, as well as with Mamat's flatmates. Some paid for sex with money, while others with drugs. I charged RM30-RM50 for a sex service. I did not serve sex everyday. I did it only when my addiction was too high, or when I was out of drugs, or hardly had any money to buy food. Roughly it would be about three or four days a week with between 1-5 men a day. It was mostly at Mamat's flat. Only twice was I taken to a hotel and once to a customer's house. Mamat helped me find my customers. But, I did ask the customers to spread the news about my 'business' to their friends too. The money obtained from trading sex was enough to support my drug habit and daily needs. Mamat never forced me to trade sex. He never really cared with whom I had sex as long as I could find my own money to buy drugs from him.

Whilst living with Mamat, I felt like a fugitive. All the time I was in fear of being caught by my parents or the police and forced to return home. Most of the days, I would stay in Mamat's flat and would only get out at night. However, five months after I left home, my parents managed to gain information about my whereabouts from my classmates and came to my hideaway. They gently urged me to come home. Once home, we had a heart to heart talk for hours trying to understand what had happened between us. I was allowed to express my feelings and to request anything. At that time, I did feel guilty towards them. I felt I was the worst daughter any parents could ever have. I did not realise how much they loved me. I destroyed their hope and most regretfully, I destroyed my own life. When they insisted that I should stay at this centre, I agreed without much hesitation. I want to fix everything, to change and give myself a second chance.

I have not encountered any problems while staying here. I have strong support from my parents and they pay me a visit each month. The staff are also very kind and are ever ready should I need some counselling, advice or support. We do not have formal counselling sessions here but it is rather based on demand. If any of the residents feel the need for such session, they need only to ask for it. In fact, it is unlikely for the residents to seek the counsellor's advice unless they are facing problems like fighting between inmates. It happens quite frequently. Somehow, some of the staff choose to ignore and pretend it never happened. Normally the fights are caused by insignificant

incidents like when someone unintentionally uses other person's soap, or if someone jumps queue during meal at the dining hall. The worst fight I witnessed here was when two lesbian groups begun fighting over the right to recruit a pretty young woman who had just arrived at the centre. Almost half of the residents were involved in the fight. I am not a lesbian, nor a member of any groups we have here, so I keep away. Lesbianism is common here. It is not surprising at all, since the majority of the residents have experience sex, and of course they will find it wherever they are. It does not matter what type of sex activity as long as it is sex and as long as there is an individual who wants to be her sexual partner. At least two or three of the senior residents here are more adventurous. They trade sex with male security guards in exchange for glue and cigarettes. The 'things' are later sold to other residents. We have a few residents who are expert in making a 'home-made' cigarette. They use *rumpul jarum emas* (gold needle grass) and wrap it with a piece of paper. Fortunately, I keep my distance from these activities. I aim to quit this silliness. That is why, even though I was offered the cigarettes many, many times, I have never taken any of it. I am fully aware of my mistakes before and I do not want to do it again. I want to change my life and that is the only reason why I am here. I would not want to go against the rules or create trouble here. I do not wish to be thrown into the 'jail', a small room located inside the residents' building, where you may be locked for one week, two weeks or a month, and not allowed to get involved in any activities in the centre. The duration of punishment depends entirely on the centre's officials' judgement.

I will soon be released. Precisely three months from now (May 2004). I hope to continue my education and later, find a decent job. I wish to undo my mistakes and repay my parents' kindness. They have been extremely good to me and I should be the best for them. I also wish to be married and have my own family. Even though I am confident that I can manage my life properly after this, I am still haunted by the fact that, should society know about my past, how I lost my virginity, and my terms at the centre, will they accept me? I have already discussed this matter with a few staff here and also with my parents. My parents plan to move out of our present house and return to my father's hometown in Kedah. They said they would do anything to help me start a new life. Hopefully, by moving to Kedah, nobody will ever know anything about my past and the gang that I was involved with will not be able to trace me or lure me back

to them. I am so proud of my parents, of their love and sacrifices to put my life together again.

I do not blame anyone for what had happened. I only have myself to blame – my stupidity and ego. I was too vulnerable and easily influenced. But now, things will be different. I am strong and not a helpless girl anymore. When I remember what I did before, I feel so ashamed. How could I be so cheap? Why did I easily allow others to use my body for sex? How could I trade my body for just a packet of marijuana? It is disgusting! If only I could turn back the clock, I would not have let all those things happen. There is nothing good in selling your body to someone else. You lose everything – your virginity, your life, your chance to be married and your family. I am now suffering from all these losses. Still, I am very lucky to have a family who is willing to accept me as I am and help me rebuild my life. Whilst living in this centre, I have learnt to appreciate how important a family is. Without a good family, like my family, I do not believe I could or would change. I am really indebted to my family for saving me from further destruction.

6.4 Mona – I was not a ‘Prostitute’. I was a ‘Madam’

I was underage and working in a pub when the police caught me. I was 17 years old and I have been placed in this centre since then. I am not a prostitute. I am a madam. I did not trade sex with anybody. I only had sex with my boyfriend. He was a Singaporean aged 37 years old. He owned a pub in Kuala Lumpur and together with his friend I helped to run the place. His friend managed the pub, while I took care of the girls who worked as prostitutes in the pub. I recruited new girls as well. But, I was not one of them. My boyfriend paid me RM2000 a week for doing that work. He also gave me the key to his apartment, which I could use anytime, as well as a mobile phone and some pocket money. He came to Kuala Lumpur to visit his pub only once or twice a month. He owned other pubs in Singapore.

I met my boyfriend when I was 15. I was still a schoolgirl. My best friend Tasya, introduced me to him and soon after we became lovers. I left school and ran away from home to stay with him. I did not like school and I hated being forced to go to school. School was so boring. Tasya left school earlier to become a mistress to a businessman.

Nobody knew what happened to her or of her whereabouts, not even her family. I was the only person she kept in contact with. I met Tasya secretly for a few times at her apartment. The apartment was a gift from her sugar daddy. When I saw her apartment, what she was wearing, and her new life, I felt so jealous. She was just as young as me but she had everything. I begged her to reveal the secret so that I could one day be like her. Tasya told me her secret, of her being a mistress, and she even invited me to meet one of her sugar daddy's friends. She said the man was as rich as her sugar daddy. I met the man at his apartment and later he became my boyfriend as well as my sugar daddy. However, my first sexual experience was not with this man. I used to have a boyfriend when I was 13 years old. He was also 13. We loved each other very much. We had sex at his house and it happened at his persuasion. I simply followed whatever he asked me to do. Unfortunately, our relationship did not last. I did not feel bad after the act. I did not even feel guilty, upset, depressed, angry or so forth. I just felt sad when our relationship was over.

My Singaporean boyfriend (sugar-daddy) was a loving person. He cared so much and was so generous to me. He never raised his voice while I was living with him. Should I ask anything from him, he would oblige. He bought me clothes, a watch, a mobile phone, shoes, a necklace, a ring, a video player, a hi-fi, and many other things. All were branded and expensive things. He promised to buy me a car when I turned 18. If I had not met him, I could not have afforded all those things even if I strive for it through out my life. I did not feel guilty or bad the way I got those things. I never felt that I was trading my body for that purpose either. I am not a cheap girl. I was his girlfriend as well as his mistress. It is not wrong to be a mistress. It is a fair relationship. I served him sex and looked after his business, and in return, he gave me money and anything I wanted. Both of us made sacrifices. I do love him and as far as I am concerned, he loves me too. I did not care much even then if he did not love me, as long as he provided me money and things that I needed. We did not plan to get married. We were happy with our relationship as it was. Like Tasya used to say, as a mistress, I should forget about marriage. Instead, I should try to get as much money as I could from my sugar daddy while he still loved me. For when he fell for another girl, he would kick me out of his life and leave me with nothing. I would then be a poor girl.

I started to manage my boyfriend's pub when I was 16. He asked me to run and monitor prostitution activities in the pub. I was appointed a madam. Initially, there were

only eight prostitutes in the pub. After a few months with me as the madam, the numbers had increased to fifteen. They aged between 15-20 years old. My duty as a madam was to ensure that they came to work at the pub. I would need to call them if they were late or did not turn up. Everyday we had a lot of men who came to the pub for sex. It was crucial to have enough girls working there. I needed a least ten girls at one time. I never faced difficulties in getting that number. There were many girls willing to work at this easy job. It promised a lot of money, to be earned in a very short time. They need not waste their energy working in a factory or at the paddy field. On top of that, they need not wait until the end of the month to get paid. This job pays in cash the minute they finish their work. The more customers they have, the more they are paid.

The customer would arrive at the pub, look around for any girl he might be interested in, chose the one he wanted and make the payment to me. The girl would take him to the rooms at the back of the pub. After an hour or less, with his lust fulfilled, he would leave the pub. And as for the girl, she would have to satisfy the need of the next customer. The process never ends. Every customer was charged RM200. The girls would get half of the payment and I would take the other half for accommodation and security charges. It is a fair business as nothing comes free. The amount of money I took from them was small compared to their total income each month. After all, it was used to provide security while they were doing their 'business' with their customers. My boyfriend hired four bouncers to protect his pub and the girls.

The girls were not supplied with condoms. It was entirely up to them either to use them or not. If they wanted to use condoms, they would have to buy them themselves. I knew a few girls who used condoms to protect themselves from diseases and pregnancies. As far as I know, none of them ever got pregnant or were infected by diseases. The customers never harmed them either. All the girls were not forced to work at the pub. They were free to work or not to should they feel too tired to do it. It was entirely up to them. As I said before, the job is all about money. If you want money, quick money, you have to work, and if you do not want it, you do not need to work. It is as simple as that.

Besides monitoring the business, I was also required to recruit new girls. That was part of the tasks assigned by my boyfriend. I managed to get in four girls. All of them were my schoolmates. Some were still attending school, while others left school after they failed their examinations. They were from various backgrounds. One of them

was a policeman's daughter. I could not care less about their background, whether they were poor or rich, as long as they wanted to do the job. It was not difficult to persuade them. You only need to show yourself off, then they will start asking, and you tell them your secret. Every young woman wants to own luxurious things in her life like branded jeans, a diamond watch, a gold ring or branded shoes. But, everything has its price. Nothing is free. You need money to pay for it. To my knowledge, all the girls who chose to become prostitutes at my pub did so solely because they wanted to get extra money to buy luxury things they had dreamed of. Two of the girls however used the money to support their drug habits. Both were heroin-addicts. Most of the girls working at my pub used marijuana and ecstasy. I did too but not regularly. It was only for fun. I was 11 years old when I tried drugs for the first time. My boyfriend introduced me to marijuana. But I am not hooked to it.

I am a new resident at this centre. I came in about two months ago. I am not happy living here. If you ask other residents, they are all not happy too. How can I be happy if the staff are not friendly, if there are not enough facilities, if the schedule is too rigid, and if all the activities are too boring? I do not like having to wake up early in the morning and go to sleep early at night. I am too weary of following the same routine everyday. There is nothing here that I can actually learn to change my life. They teach me how to make a cake, how to cook, and how to sew. They think, by learning all these skills, I can set up a bakery shop, be a chef or a fashion designer once released from here. All these professions are not for me, and I do not believe these courses could open career opportunities for any resident discharged from here. The centre should provide proper career guidance for the residents so that they will know what to choose in the future, and which profession they would want to get involved in. At least, the centre should think of upgrading the existing courses or to create new courses that are more suited to the current job opportunity. Now is the information technology era. The residents should be trained in this field as much as possible. Furthermore, the centre should try to secure a proper job for the residents prior to their release. If we read the newspapers today, we know that many university students in our country are unemployed. If this is happening to university students, how will the residents here, the majority of whom like me have no certificates, survive in the future without a job?

Whilst living here, my adoptive mother visited me once. There is nothing worth telling about my adoptive mother or my family. I was an adopted child. I was born an

Indian but was brought up by a Malay family. My biological parents were from India. They left Malaysia when I was a baby and gave me up for adoption. My adoptive parents really love me, I know. But, when I am with them, I always feel different, like an alien. I could also feel the gap between us becoming wider and wider as I get older. To be frank, I have always felt rejected because of who I am. That was why I ran away from home, and became so wild. I have not decided about my future yet. Definitely I will not be going back to school. My class teacher used to consider me a bright student because my academic performance was excellent and I was quite active in the school's extra-curricular activities as well. I was the school athlete and a debater. However, I think the time for my schooling is already over. I will not be a child anymore by the time they release me from this centre. By then, I will have to work like others. I still have not decided what type of work I want to do in the future. As for now, I do not wish to think much about whether I should go back to my old job or seek others, or whether I should return to my family or move on. Nobody knows or is able to predict what will happen in one's future. For the time being, I am getting used to living in this environment and adjusting to my new life so as to avoid feeling depressed, sad and tense.

6.5 Nina – Tricked by her Uncle into Prostitution

My sister and I were conned into prostitution by my mother's brother who is a pimp. I was 14 years old. My mother suffers mental disturbance after my father left us when I was nine years old. My uncle exploited the harsh life we had, the poverty and instability. He came to our house one day, pretending to be a kind man by offering my sister and I work in his company in the city. Being naïve girls, we did not bother to find out what type of work he was offering us. I only thought of earning some money to support my family. It never crossed my mind that he would bring us into prostitution. He is our mother's brother, a close relative. I agreed to leave school and follow him to work at his company. In the city, my sister and I stayed at his cosy condominium for a week. While we were there, he forced us to give up our virginity in exchange for the job he promised.

Later, he sent my sister and I to work in a pub as lap dancers and prostitutes. We were shocked. We demanded explanations and the truth about what was going on. He insulted us by saying that my sister and I were lucky to be offered the high-profit job. He said thousands of young women were jobless, without any income and were living in poverty. I felt trapped and very angry. I was never told that the company was in fact a pub and the job offered was a disgusting one. I wanted to go home, but then I remembered my poor family, about me being far from home and without any money, and most sickening, I was no longer a virgin. I felt I had no choice but to accept my fate. My family and I had been suffering from poverty for so long. I did not wish it to be a part of our life anymore. I left school and agreed to come to the city because I really needed a job to make our life better. Even though the job was not what I had in mind, what else could I do? I promised my uncle to work at any kind of job before I came to the city. Should I know that he wanted me to be a prostitute, of course I would not have agreed to follow him.

The first time I performed lap dancing, I felt so nervous because I was too shy. My uncle sensed my nervousness and came over angrily to give me a 'tablet' (ecstasy) so that I would be nervous and shy no more. From that moment, I used ecstasy or marijuana every time I performed lap dances. I bought the drugs from my uncle's friend, who was the regular supplier to all lap dancers at the pub. If I were to ask my uncle for the drugs, he would say that I was paid only to do lap dancing. Since the use of drugs during my performance was entirely of my choice, I had to buy it using my own money. Roughly I would spend up to RM200 per day on drugs. The drugs, particularly ecstasy, were quite expensive. It cost RM30 for one 'copy' 'tablet' and RM70 for an original piece. Marijuana was not that expensive. It cost only RM10 for a small packet. I hardly ever used marijuana as its effect was 'mild', and I needed to take lots of it over a long period of time to get 'high'. I only used it as a substitute for ecstasy when the ecstasy stock was low, or simply to have fun with friends. I worked as a lap dancer six days a week from 9.00 pm till 1.00am and was paid RM1500 monthly excluding tips from the spectators. Tips were between nothing to RM300 a night. The tips you get are based on your performance. The sexier your performance, the better and higher your tips.

Apart from lap dancing, I was also asked to work as a prostitute on part time basis. However, most of the time the working hours were longer, depending on your

customer's wish. Sometimes, it would be as early as 10.00am or even 4.00am. All dealings needed to go through my uncle. There was no direct dealing with me. Once the customer had agreed and paid the charges, I would be sent anywhere directed by the customer, be it to a hotel, his house, a golf resort or a marina resort. Most of them 'booked' me by the hour, but some even by day (1-3 days). Most of them were businessmen. My uncle targeted that group of men because they could afford to pay RM500-RM1000 per hour for my service. The daily rate would be different depending on the dealings made with my uncle. I was given 40 percent of the income, which amounted to between RM6,000-RM10,000 a week. I needed to serve 1-5 customers every day.

I hardly ever used condoms during sex because the customers did not like them. Often they said I was young and totally new with sex and as such, they did not want to use condoms. Even though I was really scared of getting pregnant, I had no choice but to do without condoms. I was not worried about being infected by sexual diseases because I believed all of them were 'clean'. They were high-class people with family, business, and status. So I did not think they had AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases. On the other hand, I believed, they thought I was 'clean' too or would not have paid to have sex with me.

The income from the job totally changed my life. I could not believe that I could earn such a huge amount of money. The money was used to support my family and myself, as well as to buy things I dreamed of during my childhood such as a video player, a walk-man, a stereo, a watch, jeans, cosmetics, shoes, and jewelleryes. I also kept some of the money for future use. I did not intend to do the job forever. I planned to quit once I had saved a certain amount of money. Unfortunately, when I was 15, the police caught me before I could achieve that target. After just 10 months working at the pub, I was detained due to being underage and working as a lap dancer. I felt angry and my detention was unjustified as I was tricked into working at the pub. They thought that being a lap dancer was my way of making easy money and that I was a bad young woman. Believe me, if I had not been tricked, I would never have got involved in the job.

I consider myself as most unfortunate. I was tricked into that job and was detained by the police. Now I have to stay at this centre for three years. These incidents make me feel ashamed of myself. No one should know about the dark side of my life.

For me, the past is over and I do not wish to think about it anymore. I would like to start a new life once released from this centre. The first thing that I would like to do is to return to my family and take care of my mentally ill mother. I need to find a job. That's all that I can think of for now. I have no plan to get married. I do not think any man would want to marry a young woman like me – ex-lap dancer and ex-prostitute. I will not be involved in that job again. It is morally inappropriate. Yet, I do not regret or feel guilty about my involvement in that job. It had helped to release my family and me from poverty. Most people might not have experienced living in hunger. But, my family and I had faced that for a very long. With the money I earned, we could afford to buy meat, chicken and fish, and eat three meals a day just like other people. Before, my family and I ate only one meal each day of rice with salt or *kicap* (soy sauce). On good days we had a fried egg with the rice. My only regret was my uncle who cheated on me, robbed me of my virginity, and forced me into prostitution. I really hate him, but how can a vulnerable and naïve young woman like me avoid being exploited?

6.6 Rozana – Prostitution is for Survival after Running Away

I feel embarrassed every time I remember what I did in the past. Even though I am no longer involved in the activity, the guilt is still in me and very difficult to get rid of. I always wonder why I was so stupid to let strangers use my body for sex in exchange for cash. For three years I allowed myself to be used as a sex object. Three years of dirty, immoral and sinful life. I hate myself for what I did and I hate all the men who used my body for sex. I know my actions in the past were morally wrong. But, I had little choice at that time. The job was not what I had dreamed of but it was the only job available for my survival after running away from home when I was 15 years old.

When I left home, I had nowhere to go. I met a guy who kindly offered me to stay at his place. He was 22 years old and his name was Kamal. My mind was quite jumbled at that time. I was depressed, sad and all messed up. I accepted his offer and followed him home even though I was scared he might do something bad to me. I had no choice. I was more afraid of being caught by the police should I sleep out in the open anywhere in the city. Kamal was very kind, gentle and took good care of me. I did everything to repay his kindness, including having sex with him each time he asked for

it. He would give me some money afterwards, which I used to buy clothes and food. In the beginning, I only served Kamal. But after a few months, he introduced me to some of his friends. Everyday, at least two or three of his friends bought sex from me. During the weekend, up to ten of his friends would turn up at his doorstep.

I knew trading sex was wrong, both morally and religiously condemned, but what other choices did I have in order to survive? I needed money to buy food and continue with my daily life. Kamal never forced me to trade sex with his friends. Neither was he my middleman or manager; he never collected the money from customers or took some of my money for his effort. He did borrow money when he was in need of it, such as when he was facing a financial problem. But it did not take him long to pay it back, normally soon after he had received his salary. Sometimes, he would ask me to pay rent for the house. However, he never ceased to have sex with me, in return for bringing his friends home to be my customers. Each customer paid RM50-RM100 for a sex service. I would earn approximately RM1000-RM2000 per week. The money was mainly used to buy food, clothes, jewellery, cosmetics and for paying bills. I also saved some.

After about a year living with Kamal, I met Sherry. She was the first female friend I had after running away from home. She was 21 years old and very good-looking. I met her during one of my shopping outings. She invited me to her apartment that she shared with three other friends. The apartment was very cosy. While chatting with Sherry and her friends, I found out that they were all involved in a 'secret business' that was trading sex. Soon after, I left Kamal and stayed with Sherry and her friends. She introduced me to a male agent of a prostitution syndicate, which was operating in one of the big hotels in the city. Every young woman who wanted to work with him or seek his protection from the police would have to sleep with him. He had more than 20 young women working under his protection including myself. Everyday, I needed to work from 11.00am the day before until 2.00am the next day. I served 5-10 men a day and each one was charged RM150. My agent would give me RM80 and kept the rest for himself. My weekly earning was more than RM5000. That was a lot of money. I could not deny that the work was easy and the amount of money I earned was astounding. But as people always say, that kind of earning is 'hot money'. I found it very hard to save even RM100 a month. Money earned would be gone in a split second, spent on

shopping, entertainment, drugs, and gambling. In fact, the more money you get, the more you spend to enjoy life.

Personally I would say the work is not worth trying. I had to face a lot of pressure as every single minute I was in fear of being caught by the police. Even though you are promised protection, you know the job is against the law and you can never be hundred percent sure of it. Deep in your heart you know that the police will finally catch up with you. With such fear at the back of your mind, sometimes, you lose control of yourself and will urge the customers to quickly finish their 'business'. When that happens, you will definitely face abuse, threats and you may even be raped by angry customers. To them you are paid to serve them, so you can never tell them when to stop. The fear will always be with you and you will have to learn to live with it as long as you are still at the job. The police caught me once. There were four other young women with me the night I was caught. All our money was confiscated including our mobile phones. They threatened to put us in jail. Luckily, my agent was able to bribe the police and paid RM400 for each one of us. The very next day, he asked us to refund the money.

The reason why the job was not worth trying was because it placed your self-esteem at the lowest point and made you feel dirty. Everyday you serve sex to up to ten men, whose background you know nothing of. Can you imagine how many men had touched you and had sex with you after one year? When I think of this, I clearly find myself cheap and dirty. When I had sex with my customers, I would let my mind drift to a far, far away land as if my true self ceased to exist. Or, I would imagine being someone else so that the person the men were having sex with was not really me. Like other girls, I also took drugs (marijuana and ecstasy) to escape the reality, but I was not hooked on it. I took my first drug (marijuana) at 15 years old when I ran away from home and stayed with Kamal. His friends, who were also my regular customers, showed me how to use them.

To me, those men seeking the comfort of prostitutes are all crazy people. They are forever thinking about sex. The regulars came to the hotel once or twice a week to have sex with different young women at each visit. If the hotel had 10 or 20 young women, they were sure to have them all. And they were so proud of it. They would even ask the agent about 'newcomers' for they were willing to pay higher charges than the normal rates. When I was a newcomer, the agent sold me at RM800 for a sex service. But after two months, the charge was reduced to RM400. Six months later, it was

RM200. He needed to reduce the charges, for regular customers would know how long I had been there. When you are a newcomer, the customers will queue for you. You become a 'hot property'. They give you lots of tips and promise to visit you again. Some even need to 'book' you a day or a week in advance. They are very upset if they turn up on the agreed date or time and find you busy with another customer. During such peak hours, you might have more than 15 or 20 customers per day and have to work seven days a week. But after a few months, you may find your 'value' dropped drastically. It is either because you are considered 'experienced' due to the length of the time you work at the hotel or a newcomer is at the hotel. She will automatically replace you as a 'hot property'. Experienced young women are considered a second grade young woman. When you are referred to as 'experienced', you are no longer the *ayam emas* (golden chick). Now, like the majority of other young women who are working at the job, you need to compete for customers. You must fight with other young women to attract customers. Honestly, the longer you are in the job the lower is your service charge, signalling a smaller income. When your 'value' drops, your agent does not like it, as he loses part of his income too. He may 'transit' you to a few other hotels in the city or in other locations so that you can maintain the newcomer status. I was transited to at least five hotels during my involvement in the job.

The customers were from both groups, married and unmarried men but the majority were unmarried. In terms of age, it was difficult to guess how old the customers were. Some were as young as 17 or 18 years old. A few were as old as my grandfather who was 65 years. They are not to be trusted. From the thousand words they say to you, not a single one you can believe. They will come to you, praise you and say things like "You are a lovely girl", "You are sexy", "You are cute", "You are very special compared to other girls in the hotel", "Your body is the most beautiful body that I had ever seen in my life", and so on. Afterwards when they feel that you are not satisfactory, they will take it on you, abuse you verbally, swear and call you names like 'bastard pig', and worst still, they physically abuse you by slapping or pulling your hair. Praise is a way for them to get good service. Some did propose, or sympathised and promised to help. I would ignore their proposals because I knew they were actually laughing at me. They were all crap and great liars. The only reason they were at the hotel was to have sex. Will you believe that those men who came to see a prostitute, a young woman who is a virgin no more and had been with so many men, wanted her for

a wife? I think not! They only wanted sex and nothing else. If they really needed a wife, they could look for other young virgins out there, not a 'whore' at a hotel. Should you fall for their words, you are trapped. Every week they will seek only you as if you were their second wife. They would be very jealous to know that you were with someone else. No doubt they will pay for your service and generous with the tips, but you are actually placing yourself into a horrible life. Believing that you are theirs to ask, they will stop at nothing to fulfil their lust. They will tell you not to wear condoms, do anal, oral or group sex. They will abuse you verbally or rape and threaten you with a knife should you decline. Once I was threatened with a knife because I refused to do oral and anal sex with him. He used drugs (ecstasy) and alcohol to prolong his performance during sex. He paid for a two-hour session and I needed to take a break afterwards, as my private parts (anus and vagina) were so painful. I even served a drunkard once. They were not only smelly, but also difficult to handle. They swore a lot and said words that could hurt your feelings. Some customers, especially unmarried men, came to us to 'judge' their 'performance'. They would use various methods to last longer during sex and achieved higher sexual pleasure. Some would even rub their genital with *gambir serawak* (a traditional ointment for toothache), *vapour rub*, or *minyak cap kapak* (a type of ointment for headache) before sex. Others would experiment, implanting their genitals with bicycle's ball-bearings, glass-balls (pebble-like but smaller of about 3-5 mm in diameter), or hair of a horse's tail. It would be most uncomfortable and even hurtful when they used that stuff.

Every time the customer wanted sex, I would provide them a condom to protect myself from pregnancy and diseases. Some would use it but others would not. They refused condoms because they wanted to enjoy sex with young girls. Some would say it was their first experience of having sex with a young girl like me and did not wish to spoil their excitement by using condoms. They were willing to pay double or triple charges, an irresistible offer, which did not come by everyday. Some customers became quite aggressive when asked to wear condoms. They knew we were young and helpless. You have no choice but to obey. If you go against them you will be abused or even raped. Their defensiveness towards the use of condoms had a few of us raped. One girl was pregnant after being raped and diagnosed as having syphilis. She tried to abort the foetus when it was two-months-old by eating unripe pineapple, forcing it out by having her womb massaged, and drinking alcohol with paracetamols and herbs. She was

successful in getting rid of her pregnancy, but she was soon bleeding profusely and that cost her life. The incident made me realise that I need to quit the job. I immediately stopped working that year (2003), and accompanied by my grandparents, I came to this centre for protection. I dared not stay at home because my 'agent' might find me and force me to return to the old job.

Once you are in the job, there is no way out. It is almost impossible to be free of your agent. You are free to go anywhere and do most things. But deep down you know that someone is keeping an eye on you, either the agent or his men. You are allowed to go to certain places and meet certain people, but you cannot go home to your family. These are the unspoken rules. If you get close to someone who is linked to the authorities, he will forbid you from seeing him. If he finds out that you intend to go home to your family, he will harm or even kill you. If he comes to know that you want to leave or quit the job, he will search for you and force you back into the 'business'. They will torture you brutally once they have caught you. Of course, the rules were never highlighted during the beginning of your involvement. Your friend tells you how easy it is to make money doing the 'business' and creates stories or show off her successful lifestyle. She then introduces you to an agent, and convinces you that they will look after and protect you. To mark your first day as a prostitute, you are required to sleep with him for a week and be told the dos and don'ts about the customer and hotel services. Then, you begin the life of a prostitute. He never tells that your movement will always be observed or that you may not break your ties with him or quit the job. I never cared to ask because I thought doing the job there would not be any different as at Kamal's house. Just that, previously it was in a house not a hotel. I thought I could simply walk away from the hotel and the job if I felt I was not up to it anymore. Furthermore, the only thing that mattered then was money you needed to earn to survive and to better your life. You think there is nothing to lose if you are involved in the 'business' since nobody cares about you, nobody loves or needs you, and nobody will know. There are times when you do think about the negative consequences of your involvement, but you never take it seriously. You do not care or worry much about your future. You realise the existence of the hidden rules a few months after staying at the hotel or when you see an incident where another young girl is tied up, assaulted and tortured for trying to leave the syndicate. Only then you feel very scared and wish to

quit. But it is already too late. You are overwhelmed by hopelessness and start thinking that no one can save and take you away from him now.

I escaped from him after I had tricked him and went straight to my grandparents' house to seek help. I was sent to this centre soon after. I experience freedom and calm here. Still, I could never wipe out the guilty feeling or the dirt from my body. The staff are quite friendly and have given me much support. I have learned many things particularly how to respect yourself and to be grateful for your life. Before, I was too selfish and listened only to my heart. I did what ever I wanted to do without thinking of the consequences. I realise my mistakes now and feel very guilty. Three years ago, I thought that by running away from home, I could prove to my father that even without his love and support I would still survive and have a successful life. I was desperately trying to prove that life would be better of without him. That it was wrong of him to divorce my mother and not let me see her. I wanted him to know that he was the worst father in the world. He was cruel, ruthless and hurtful to his own daughter. I wanted him to realise that he had made the biggest mistake in his life by neglecting me and marrying my stepmother. Alas, those things never happened. Instead, I ended up being a prostitute, trading my body for money. When it finally hits you that you are actually a prostitute, you are robbed of your self-worth. You are scared to face society, worried that they might know you. I know I have to be strong if I really want to change.

6.7 Tipah – Tricked into Prostitution by her Boyfriend

It all started when I met and fell in love with a guy whom now I will hate for the rest of my life. I was 16 years old and was studying in form four at secondary school. He was 25 years old, good looking and a sweet talking young man. Every time he came to see me, he would bring me a present. Of course like other young women of my age, I felt so proud to be treated that way. It felt really nice when someone thought you were very special, cared and tended to your needs and confessed that you were always in his heart. Initially, we had a very good relationship. Life was indeed wonderful, filled with joy and happiness. At that time, I only wished to marry him, to spend our live together and to love each other forever. My dream almost came true when he promised to marry me once I finished school. And I lost my virginity to his promises. I was pushed to give

myself to him as prove of my never-ending love for him. I was overcome with guilt not just towards my family, but also myself. He calmed me down by saying that I should not worry as one day I would definitely be his wife.

Our love blossomed and became more intense with each passing day. When I told my friends about our relationship and his promise to marry me, they were very jealous. I was lucky to have a man to love me, they would say. And that I need not worry about my future since I had a 'candidate' for a husband. Everyday, I spent hours daydreaming. I pictured myself as a 'housewife', taking care of our 'kids', tending to my 'husband's' needs, cooking and washing, and doing so much more. I could not wait for the moment when my dream would come true. However, I kept my parents in the dark about the relationship because I was afraid that they would not accept our relationship and would force me to stop seeing the guy. I have a very strict father. He was forever concerned about who my friends were. He could not accept me being close to boys. I could only have female friends. I needed to ask his permission to be with the girls too. I could only meet up with friends for certain reasons like to do homework or to discuss a school project. I was seldom given the permission to celebrate my friends' birthdays or to spend some time with them. He considered that both of these activities were wasting time. He wanted me to concentrate on study all the time, to be the best in exams and to get good results every term so that I could go to university. I felt a lot of pressure to fulfil his hope because I was not a good student, just an average student like most of the pupils in the school. I did not tell my father about the pressure because I was afraid he would get angry.

After meeting the guy, I do not deny that my concentration on study was affected. I became less interested in lessons in class and did less revision. My parents realised the change in my behaviour and asked for explanation. I gave many reasons in order to protect the truth of what was going on about my relationship with the guy. But, I could not hide it for long when they found out my love letters. They confronted me and asked me to end my relationship with the guy. I was locked in my room for a week in order to stop me from seeing the guy. I felt so sad the way they treated me. Because of the incident and the love to the guy, I left my family. I did not care what my parents thought about me, or if they wanted to find me or not. What I really cared about was our love and our dream to get married. Not only that, I was worried about not being a virgin anymore. If I did not get married to him, of course no man would marry me in the

future. This was also the main reason why I left my family. Perhaps, if I was still a virgin, I could easily listen to my parents and dump the guy. I could not tell them the truth about my situation. If they knew about it, I might be given hard punishment because my situation would tarnish their good name, damage their dignity, and make them feel ashamed.

In the first two months living with the guy, I was so happy. He treated me very well and every time I missed my family, he always pacified me saying that everything would be over after we got married. But, every time I asked him about marriage, he always said he still needed time to find money. I doubted the reason he gave, but I just kept silent. I did not want him to think that I was too pushy. After two months, he showed his real character; aggressive, bad tempered, rude, insolent, foul-mouthed and so on. At that time, I realised that he was not sincere, and not committed to marrying me. I was thinking of going back to my family. But, he said I could not go back to my family. If I did, he would kill me. He brought me to one hotel. In the hotel I was drugged and raped. I did not really remember how many men raped me, but possibly there were more than five men. When I woke up, I was in a room with nine other young women, three Indonesians, five Thais, and one Chinese. I asked one of the Indonesian young women where was I. She told me that she also did not know where she was. She believed that I was sold to the same man who controlled the prostitution syndicate in the hotel. My heart was broken when she told me about that. The only thing I could do at that time was cry. I felt so stupid to trust the guy. I gave everything to him, I sacrificed myself, left my family in order to live with him, but in the end he did this to me. He was so cruel. He destroyed my hope and my future.

There were 27 young women in the hotel all together and they were from Thailand, China, Indonesia, and six were Malaysians including myself. Those who were from Thailand were trafficked to this country. The Indonesian and Chinese young women however were victims of employment fraud. They were promised a job in the factory before they came here. But, the employment agency was hiding them in the hotel room and asked them to prostitute after they arrived. Some of them never get out from the hotel for a year. Five Malaysian young women in the hotel had the same stories as mine. They were all tricked, promised marriage by the same guy who tricked and sold me. I was his sixth victim and the youngest of them all. All of us were placed on the ninth floor, the top level of the hotel. The floor had three bedrooms and one

bathroom. There was no TV, telephone, fridge or sofa. We were only given a towel, blanket, toothbrush, soap and a few clothes. Living in the hotel was like living in a jail. It smelled so stinky, like you were in the fish market. The lighting was quite dull and the ventilation system was not functioning very well. It had only two windows and when some of the young women smoked, you could not breathe properly even though the fans were switch on. The bedrooms as well were quite dirty and had a lot of cockroaches and mosquitoes.

Every morning we had to wake up at 8.00am to get ready for work. The pimp or his people would send breakfast at 9.00am. Whether you liked it or not, you had to eat the meals provided. Otherwise, you would have to eat the instant noodles supplied every month. At 10.00am, we were sent to a waiting room on the sixth floor to wait for the customers. I could not be late. If you were late, he would slap you. If you were ill, you had to tell him. Before you were allowed to take a rest, he would check whether you were really ill. If you were menstruating, he made you stand naked in front of him for his inspection. There was no way you could excuse yourself from work. The pimp was a very tough man and difficult to dealt with. One of us once suffered from serious period-pains and had a high fever as well. We asked him to send the young woman to the hospital. But, he did not bother about that. Instead, he only gave her two paracetamol tablets and asked us to take care of her.

Usually there were not many customers in the morning. But the number would increase by afternoon until late afternoon, and would double between evening and midnight. Each one of us entertained different number of customers per day. Neither us, nor the pimp could decide on that. It depended entirely on the customers; on how far they were attracted to you. If they think you are pretty, sweet and young, many will want to sleep with you. Then you may need to sleep with 20-30 men per day. On the other hand, if they think you are old, ugly, or less attractive, not many of them will come to you. However, you still need to serve at least five customers per day. As I remember there were about 10 customers who came to me each day. It made no difference if we had ten, twenty or just one or two customers per day. The pimp did not care about that, neither did he care about us. He only cared about his 'business', and the total number of customers who came to his hotel. I never cared how many customers I had as well because it was not my choice to work at the hotel or in the job. I was never even given a single cent out of the money paid by the customers. I did not even know

how much the customers were charged. According to the pimp, payment for our service was used to repay our 'debt'. If we wanted money, we had to ask for tips from the customers. I knew nothing about owing him a 'debt'. He said my boyfriend borrowed a certain amount of money from him, and I had to pay back the money. If my boyfriend's debt was settled, then I would be released.

Most of the customers never talked to us. They entered the room, pulled their trousers down, had sex, pulled their trousers up and hurriedly left the room. Some were quite bad. They did not respect you as a human being. They treated you like a slave. The minute they paid you, they thought you belonged to them and they would do anything they wanted to you. They asked you to dance sexily, to drink alcohol, to play with their genitals, to smoke marijuana, and to perform sex in improper positions. You could not refuse their wishes for they would abuse you and tell your pimp. You would also lose the tips, your only source of income. If they reported you to your pimp, he hit you hard, verbally and physically. Fortunately for me, I did not encounter such incident too often. We were constantly in fear and tried our best not to upset them. We knew what to expect if we did otherwise. The most abusive attack I ever witnessed there was when the pimp pulled the hair off one Indonesian young woman, then he beat, slapped and kicked her very hard until her body was shaking with pain like a chicken being slaughtered, with blood oozing out from her nose, mouth and ears. There were a lot of bruises on her body as well, especially on her face. She was unconscious for hours and we thought she had died. Luckily, she survived but she was mentally disturbed. She had nightmares, and would often wake up screaming and crying in the middle of the night. However, there were a small number of very gentle, kind and well-mannered customers. They came to us, talked to us, asked about us. Some would listen to our story and sympathised with our agony. Others might even refuse to have sex after they were told of our difficult life. I pleaded with a few customers who seemed to believe my story, to help me escape by contacting the police or my parents. I could not remember how many, but after going through the ordeal for four months, the hotel was raided by the police. I believe one or maybe a few of the customers did help to contact my father or the police. I was then taken to this centre for protection. The centre contacted my family and they all came to visit me on the very next day. The day I was reunited with my family was one of the most beautiful days in my life. I was so glad to see them again. I admitted my mistakes and begged for their forgiveness. They said they loved me and

they only wanted me home as soon as possible. Those precious words made me so glad and I felt very fortunate indeed. Before that I only assumed that they loved me. I was not quite sure because they never said it to me. The question about whether they 'do really love me' or not was always on my mind and that day, I got my answer.

I could not figure out why I was made a victim of prostitution. Maybe it is because of my personality; low self-esteem, lack of confidence and too trusting. I was always aware that I was not a smart, nor a popular girl. I was unattractive and called *lurus bendul* (a person who is easily influence and obliging) or *minah lawak* (a person who is constantly made fun of). My ex-boyfriend was the first guy to offer me love and to treat me well. I was totally over the moon. I never checked his background or realised the tricks he used to force me into prostitution. Love is blind, and it blinded me from recognising the difference between a diamond and a glass, between my family and the guy. I mistook a glass for a diamond. Then it broke and my hands were wounded, all covered with blood. Now, I need to clean and heal my hands. I will make sure that these hands tend only to my parents to undo my wrong doings and to repay them for their kindness.

It is almost a year since I came here. Yet, I find it hard to forget the incident and accept the fact that I was once a victim of prostitution. Those memories of being cheated, raped and forced to live in a crowded, smelly and windowless room, of being abused both by the pimp and the customer, of having to nurture another young woman's suffering from assault, of the starving due to lack of food, of being forced by a customer to drink alcohol and to perform sexy dances, they are still fresh in my mind as if it just happened yesterday. I feel depressed, guilty, and blame myself for what had happened. I hate my ex-boyfriend, the pimp and the customers who used my body. They treated me like rubbish. The tragedy makes me feel insecure, trapped, unsafe (of being abducted, abused or killed), less confident with people and even harder to trust them, particularly men. Before I was reunited with my family, I felt for sure that they would not forgive and would disown me for my 'sins' were almost unforgivable. However, I was wrong. They still love me and want me back. The centre helps me to cope with the pain and trauma. And now I can even continue my studies. My parents hope that I will complete school and sit for my Malaysian Education Certificate (SPM) examination this year (2004). I discussed the possibility with the counsellors and they were very supportive. The centre is even paying for my examination fees and tuition classes. I agreed to the

idea not because of my parents, more out of my will and ambition to find a proper job after my release from the centre.

6.8 Laily – I needed Money to Support My Family

As the eldest in my family, I felt fully responsible for helping my mother look after the needs and welfare of our family. My mother is a divorcee and she was the family breadwinner. My father left us when I was 11 years old. She was a housewife but soon after the divorce she had to work to support us. She started a small business selling *nasi lemak* (coconut rice), *karipap* (curry puff) and *mee goreng* (fried noodle) at the roadside every morning. Her daily income was quite small. Sometimes when it rained, she could not open her stall. When she fell ill, she had to rest for a few days or even a week. She has high blood pressure and also suffers from diabetes. She was always worried about our financial problems, and its effect on our schooling. She pawned all her jewellery for the money to pay for our school and examination fees, as well as the family expenditure. She was constantly in fear of having to send one or two of her children to the orphanage should she fail to take care of us or to provide the needs of the family. Knowing that, I sought her permission to quit my schooling so I could assist her with the family financial needs. My sacrifice would also ensure that all four of my younger siblings would be able to continue their studies. I told my mother, my brothers and sisters deserved that opportunity more than me. She did not agree initially because she wanted all of us to excel in our studies. However, she soon understood my decision. I left school at 14 years old to help her at our food stall every morning.

One day while helping my mother at the stall, I was visited by one of my close friends who worked in Kuala Lumpur. We were classmates from year three until six at primary school and were still together from forms one to two at secondary school. My friend moved to Kuala Lumpur after finishing her form two year at school to live with her aunt. When I saw her that morning, I did not recognise her at all. She had changed a lot just a few months after her move to the city. She looked fabulous, elegant and very stylish in her new designer jeans and T-shirt. She used to dress like me, a *budak kampung* (village girl) in *baju kurung* (a traditional dress normally worn by Malay women, old and young) or *kain batik* (sarong). We had a long chat about my family and

me. I asked her find me a job in Kuala Lumpur, as I needed to help my mother support our family. She gave me her promise and a week later she was back at my village with good news. She found me a job as a salesgirl at the supermarket where she worked. I told my mother and begged for her permission to work in Kuala Lumpur. Once again, she was quite hesitant because she was worried nobody could look after me in the city. However, she finally agreed when my friend promised to take care of me while I was in Kuala Lumpur.

My friend and I shared a two storey terraced house with eight other young girls who were also employees of the supermarket. The house belonged to the supermarket, so we did not need to pay the rent or electricity and water bills. I never failed to send home at least RM300 out of my total monthly salary of RM400. I knew my mother really appreciated my effort and was so proud of me. Soon after, I became the family breadwinner. My mother was constantly ill. Sometimes she was bedridden for more than a week. Once when she was severely ill, she gathered all her children including myself. As if reciting her last words, she said she would definitely die sooner or later and when that happened, she entrusted me to take full responsibility for my brothers and sisters. Each time I recalled those words my heart would be broken and I was in despair. I did not wish to be an orphan or to live my life without her. Then, I started thinking about getting a second job to gain extra money and buy proper medicines for my mother. All the while we dependent on traditional medicines. I told my friend about my anguish. She stared at me for a while and suggested that I should follow her to work as a GRO (Guest Relation Officer) at a pub-karaoke in the city. I was so surprised when she told me that she was working part-time as a GRO. I never saw her with any man. She did go out at least three or four days a week after work to visit her aunt or friends and came back quite late at night. She said she kept her activity a secret because she felt ashamed and worried that I might inform her family at the village. She said she took up the job because she needed to help her father support her ten siblings. Her father was a fisherman and his income was too small to feed the big family. She was the third child in the family but had become the second family breadwinner. Her mother was a housewife. Her elder brother and sister were both disabled. Their financial situation was no different from my family. We both led a very poor life.

In the beginning, I turned down my friend's offer because I knew being a GRO was morally wrong and I was not about to let my body be used to fulfil men's lust.

However as things got worse, I was getting more and more confused. My mother's medical needs were getting more expensive, one of my brothers was selected to study in a boarding school after he got excellent UPSR (Primary School Evaluation Test) results and our house needed immediate repair after a storm blew the roof away. I desperately wanted my brother to enter the boarding school, as that was a once in a lifetime opportunity. All those problems made me feel depressed, and most probably, irrational, as I had no other choice but to do extra work. I finally agreed to work part-time as a GRO and asked my friend to bring me along with her. It never meant that I agreed to that job. I needed the money to support my family.

At the pub, I was told to work in the karaoke section, which was placed behind the pub building. I was not allowed to work or to be at the customers' drink and music section because I was underage. I was only 16 years old. My duties were to serve and accompany the customers while they drank, to assist them with the CD or the sound system, and to be their singing partner. If they wanted sex, they needed to get the consent of each GRO. To serve sex to the men was not a part of the GRO's basic duties, just something they did as an extra. However the pub-owner always encouraged us to do that. If she agreed to her customer's request, a GRO would need to book a room from the pub-owner. The pub-owner was the only person with the authority to charge and collect money from customers. A GRO was not allowed to collect any payment and was forbidden from serving sex in the karaoke room. The pub-owner would give part of the payment to the GRO once the job was done. Every customer would be charged RM200 for each service. The GRO would get only RM100. The rest of the money was taken by the pub-owner for room charges (RM50) and pub fees (RM50). Normally, I worked four nights a week but sometimes only two or three nights, as I was too tired working at the supermarket. Roughly, I served sex to 2-5 men per night depending on the number of customers and GROs available the night. My first experience was rather awkward because I felt so uncomfortable and shy. However a few weeks later, the feeling disappeared. My first customer was not the man I lost my virginity to. My father's friend raped me when I was 12 years old. The incident also caused my parents to divorce. There were countless fights, arguments and confrontations between my parents. My mother blamed my father for what had happened. My father refused to report the incident to the police because the culprit had left our village for good and any disclosure would only affect my future. Alas, the incident made me feel inferior and miserable. I

felt guilty towards my parents especially towards my mother. She could not forgive my father and filed for a divorce. That is why I care and love my mother very much and will do anything to make her happy.

I could earn between RM2000-RM4000 a week working as a GRO. Part of those earnings I gave to my mother to buy basic necessities for the family, repair our home, pay for my brothers' and sisters' school fees and stationery, as well as to buy furniture and medicines for herself. I did save some of the money for the future. However, since I worked only part time as a GRO and I was working for just over seven months before I was detained, I was able to keep only a small amount of money. The savings are now under my friend's care. She helps to manage it, withdraws RM200 monthly to have it sent to my mother every time she visits her family in the village. It is declining and the thought that I may exhaust my savings before my release really has me worried. Without the money, I am afraid that my family's financial situation will be as bad as when we lost our father. This will surely affect my mother's, sisters' and brothers' daily life. I really hope to be freed soon and hope that I did not need to serve the three years sentence. My mother needs me to look after the family. Three years is too long and it does not justify my wrongdoings. I was punished because I was an underage girl visiting a pub. Not because of my involvement in prostitution. The day of my arrest was the unluckiest day of my life at the pub. I was just about a few feet away from the pub's back door on my way home when the police spotted me at 3.00am. My mother was very upset when she heard the news. But until today, she is still not aware of the reason why I was arrested. My friend came to visit me twice since I was here. I told her to tell my mother not to worry or think badly of me, as it was not my fault. I was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. Somehow my mother believes me and hopes that I will be released soon. She never visits me here. I understand her situation and the need for her to take care of her health and to look after my brothers and sisters.

Until today, my mother does not know that I used to work as a GRO and I hope she never finds out. I am afraid that if she does, it will upset our relationship and she will hate me. Being a GRO was not a job I could be proud of. It was a dirty job. No one working as a GRO wishes to be known as one because a GRO is almost like a prostitute. We know what jobs involved and how dirty it can be. People say that young women become a GRO to get quick money, enjoy a lavish lifestyle, an easy way to get rich but those reasons are not true for me. I had to do the job to get money to support

my family and that was the one and only reason I was involved. My family totally depended on me to provide financial support since my father left and my mother became ill. If I had had other options at that time and my family had not suffered from financial turmoil, I would not have involved myself in this job. Nobody wants to sell her body if she is not desperate and nobody likes to be labelled as a *pisau cukur* ('razor blade'), 'damaged' or 'immoral'. People would often call you these when they found out that you were a GRO.

What happened to me in the past is a history, and I will make sure it never happens again. I have learnt a lot of things while living here and I promise to take every single opportunity from what I have learnt to build my new life after this. In terms of a job, I do not want to work with somebody else anymore in the future. I prefer to work with myself. In other words, I would like to have a small business such as food stall or mini-restaurant. I love cooking and I want to use the cooking skills I learned here by setting up my own business. Overall, living in this centre is quite boring because the routine you have to follow is the same from the first day you come here until you are released. Three years you have to do the same things, eat the same food, play the same activities, visit the same places and live in the same environment. If I could make suggestions, I would like the centre to create a beautiful landscape for this centre by planting a lot of trees, shrubs, and decorate it like a small village. Residents as well need place to rest and chat. But the benches and meeting areas are very limited. I also would like the centre to create a few more other attractive vocational programmes like farming, business, restoration and designing, besides maintaining the existing programmes. Other thing is the residents should not be forced to join in all the activities in the centre, but they should be allowed to choose the ones they are really interested in. By doing that, it is not only the centre that would be given a full commitment by the residents, but also the residents would benefit or learn more from the activities. I believe that if all these things were implemented, our life here as residents of this centre would be more happy and cheerful.

6.9 Kathy – Forced into Prostitution by her Own Mother

It is not easy for me to share my story with others because I had a rather awkward childhood. I am what people refer to as *anak luar nikah* (a child born out of wedlock) of a prostitute mother. I have no brother or sister. There was only my mother and I. I do not even know who my father is because my mother could not remember which man had made her pregnant after visiting her. I feel ashamed to tell people that my mother is a prostitute, but that is reality. It has caused much suffering throughout my life. Being born by a prostitute mother is already too upsetting and revolting. But to know that you are born to a prostitute mother who does not even remember the man who made her pregnant, caused your anger and frustration to harden with the feeling of injustice and cruelty. Life as *anak luar nikah* and *anak pelacur* (prostitute's daughter) was not easy. People would stare at you with disgust and treat you as dirty as *anjing kurap* (stray dog). People would avoid your path and nobody wanted to play with you. You were condemned for your mother's sins. They thought you were just like your mother, a sinner. All the while I am here, I have never revealed my background to anyone. I am worried that they would keep their distance, hate me or do something bad to me. To be honest, if I could choose who I wanted for a mother, surely I would not have chosen my mother.

I blame my mother for what had happened. She was the one who forced me to leave school when I was 11 years old, to become a prostitute like her. She also instructed her boyfriend, Jani, to rape and rob me of my virginity. That dreadful night, my mother watched the whole thing without a trace of sympathy. I cried and pleaded to Jani not to harm me, but he simply ignored me. I could not do anything to stop him. He was a big man and I was only a small, fragile 11 year-old girl. I even cried and pleaded to my mother. She stood there and did nothing. In fact, she smiled to Jani before locking the bedroom door. Jani raped me a few times for hours. I was crying all the while because it was so painful. After the incident, I could hardly walk, as my private part (vagina) was bleeding and sore. I could feel a 'burning' sensation. I was really ill and vomited several times. I also had a terrible headache. I could not sleep that night for fear that he might return to my room. I really wanted to die and I hated my mother.

Three days after the incident, my mother sold me to at least five men a day. All the men were her regulars. They often came to our house to buy sex from her. My mother

usually traded sex in a hotel, but sometimes she did it at home. I never knew how much money she charged each customer to have sex with me. I dared not ask her or the customer about that because I was afraid she would be angry. I had to do the work everyday. Once I tried to protest but she became so angry and abusive, and I was not allowed any food. It was like living in a jailhouse though it had always been my home. I did think of running away, but each time I tried, I felt helpless, vulnerable and lost, as I did not have any place to go. After months of doing the job at home, my mother told her boyfriend to take me to the hotel where she usually worked. I knew that she was trying to hide the ‘business’ from the neighbours and the police. I recalled the day I was brought to the hotel. I was like a robot. My mind went blank and I could not care less what people wanted to do to me. I felt nothing, but a dirty and worthless human being.

The hotel was a small, cheap hotel. I was kept there and continuously raped by Jani for two days. On the third day, he told a lady (we called her Mama) to watch over me. The first thing Mama did was to force me to smoke marijuana to make me feel happy. She did not want a sad and gloomy looking girl, as that would not be good for ‘business’. Then she asked me to serve the customers. That was when I realised Jani was not simply my mother’s boyfriend. He was also an agent of a prostitution syndicate (a pimp). I was forced to serve 10-20 men a day, and at times it was more than that. Even though I kept complaining that I was too tired to work, Mama or Jani often forced more customers onto me compared to other young women. I was not allowed to refuse them, as it was the customers’ choice. I found out that they preferred me as their sexual partner because I was the youngest girl at the hotel. Some came regularly, at least three or four days a week. They said I was like a virgin and they had never had sex with someone as young as me. I never regarded those words as compliments, nor was I proud of what they said. I felt ashamed of myself and hated every single one of them. I told them who I was and what had happened to me. But, all the men did nothing as if I did not deserve their help. I knew why they refused to help me. It was because of my age. The customers like to have sex with the young ones, the younger the girl, the better. Before I was brought to the hotel, my close friend Fatima said she was the one regularly picked by the customers. She was 14 years old and the youngest amongst other girls at that time. Sometimes she had to work non-stop to serve up to 20 men a day as one after another customer kept choosing her. I realised then that the same fate had befallen me.

The men were from various age groups. I never asked how old they were or their occupation. They did not like to be asked such questions. You see, they came to me just for sex and not to be questioned. Should you ask them a question and they felt upset about it, then you would be in great trouble. Most of them were abusive. If they were upset, not satisfied with your service or if you went against their order, you would be hurt. I did not use condoms while with them. I knew about AIDS but I did not know where to find condoms. Even if I knew a shop that sold condoms, I could not simply go and buy it. It was embarrassing. What would other people think of me, a young schoolgirl buying a condom? Mama or Jani also did not supply me with condoms. The men who had sex with me as well did not bring their own condoms. How should I force them to wear a condom if they and I did not have one. I worked seven days a week. When I was tired, I needed to ask Mama or Jani for a break. They were always angry every time I asked for this, particularly when there were many customers waiting at one time. She/he just gave me one or two hours break. But, most of the time they just ignored my request, instead they gave me a 'tablet' (ecstasy) or marijuana. Seldom did I let them know that I was tired and needed a break to avoid being verbally abused. When I was tired, what I needed to do was ask them for a 'tablet' or marijuana even though I had to pay for that. I did not work during menstruation. But, Mama or Jani would check my panties first every time I told her/him that I was menstruating before she/he allowed me to have a rest. During the time, I just stayed in my room or my friend's room to get drunk or drugged. I never used drugs before I was involved in this activity. Besides working for long hours, I also used drugs for fun, to avoid the feeling of loneliness, and to forget all the bad memories of being abused by my mother in the past and during prostitution. I bought the drugs from Mama or Jani by using the money from tips given by customers as well as from my income. Jani gave me only RM500 every month as income. To be frank, I did not have any idea how much money the customer paid to Mama or Jani. If they charged RM200 for me, the same price charged for other young women, I believe my income was not as small as RM500, but as big as RM10,000-RM20,000 per week, not per month. However, I never saw or received any money from the so-called work that I had done. Jani said the money from my work was given to my mother.

Whilst working at the hotel, I only met my mother once when Jani complained about my attempt to escape from him. She and Jani beat me hard with a belt and PVC

pipe. She slapped me a few times until I fainted and bled from the nose. My whole body was scratched and swollen. I thought would die. Luckily, I survived the assault. The brutal incident dashed all hope I had of being freed from that activity. After the assault, I dared not think of running away from the hotel again. I was afraid that my mother and Jani would bash me should I make another attempt. I believed my mother masterminded the whole activity. Jani was just a boyfriend who did everything my mother asked him to do. He was like a puppet. Thus, I could never understand why my mother had to be so cruel and did all those things to me. Until today, I am still searching for an answer to this question. As my mother, why did she not feel any sympathy when she put me up for prostitution? Have I no blood ties with her? Even animals love their offspring, but not my mother. Sometimes, I feel my mother hated me so much and treated me cruelly because I am an *anak luar nikah*. I was a burden and she, being a prostitute, made it worse. She had to throw me out and not treat me like her own daughter. But, it was not my fault that I was born in such situation.

Last month was my thirteenth birthday and it has been eight months since the police sent me here. I feel so relieved to be here. I am now free from prostitution. Free from being hurt, pain, fear and men to serve. All the painful experiences are memories that I can never forget for the rest of my life. The centre gives me hope to carry on with my life, something that I have never dreamt of. It is almost unbelievable that after so much suffering and tragedy, I am still given the opportunity to rebuild my life. I never dreamed that one day I would be free from my mother who overpowered me and forced me into prostitution. I do not have any problems making friends with other residents or following the programmes and instructions at the centre. My only worry is about my future once released from this centre; where will I go? I do not wish to go back to my mother because I am afraid that I will meet the same fate as before. I poured out my fears to one of the staff here. She seems to understand my predicament but I have no other relatives to turn to. I am still not aware of any decision made by the centre about my future guardian. I will be 15 years old by the time of my release. I have yet to decide what I want to do in the future because it depends entirely on my future guardian. I will accept and obey the decisions made by the future guardian.

7 Discussion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter contains two main parts. The first part is a discussion of key findings against hypotheses. The second part is a discussion of additional findings about pimp and pimping activities.

7.2 Discussion of Key Findings against Hypotheses

In Chapter Three, seventeen hypotheses were constructed for this study based on the information from the available and recent literature. In this section, all the hypotheses will be reviewed using the research findings in Chapter Five and Chapter Six.

7.2.1 Predisposing Factors that Increased the Vulnerability of Children towards Prostitution

Three hypotheses were constructed relating to the extent to which family dysfunction, childhood abuse and psychological damage of children represent predisposing factors which increase the vulnerability of children towards prostitution. The first hypothesis predicted that **all children involved in prostitution in the research sample would come from dysfunctional families**. The situation of family dysfunction in the life of respondents during childhood was observed through five indicators: their experiences of family problems, their relationship with families, their experiences of domestic violence, their family socio-economic status, and their family of origin. The study has found that 93.7 percent of respondents had at least one situation of family dysfunction while they were growing up (Table 7.1). However, more than half experienced 3-4 situations of family dysfunction during childhood. Although significant in the lives of the majority of young women, the findings do not fully support the hypothesis. Specifically, for young women in the sample did not report family dysfunction.

Family problems (including parental emotional and physical neglect and parental substance abuse and gambling), unstable relationships with the family and domestic violence were the three major situations of family dysfunction experienced by the young women (Table 7.2). Family breakdown though was experienced by nearly half of the young women in this sample. The percentage is lower (47.6 percent) than the results found by Weisberg (1985). She reports that 60-85 percent of prostituted young women in several studies were separated from one or both parents during their childhood.

Table 7.1: Number of Situations of Family Dysfunction Encountered by the Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Do not have any situations of family dysfunction	4	6.3
One situation of family dysfunction	6	9.5
Two situations of family dysfunction	8	12.7
Three situations of family dysfunction	23	36.5
Four situations of family dysfunction	17	27.0
Five situations of family dysfunction	5	7.9
Total	63	100.0

Table 7.2: Situations of Family Dysfunction Experienced by the Respondents During Their Childhood

Variable	Frequency (N = 63)	Percentage
Family problems	51	81.0
Unstable relationship with the family	48	76.2
Domestic violence	36	57.1
Family breakdown (respondents who were not raised by both parents)	30	47.6
Poverty/economically unstable family	19	30.2

In the current study, poverty does not appear to be the primary factor contributing to the dysfunctional nature of the respondents' families. This is in contrast to the neighbouring countries like the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, and other developing countries such as Brazil, South Africa, Bangladesh, Tanzania, Mexico, Cuba, Taiwan, China, Sri Lanka and Costa Rica, where poverty was reported the major source of family dysfunction and the significant causal factor of child prostitution (Bagley, 1999; Baker, 2000; United Nations, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c; Montgomery, 2001; Sorajjakool, 2003; Duong, 2002; Freed, 2003; Sedyaningsih-Mamahit, 1999; Beyer, 1996; Rosemberg and Andrade, 1999; O'Connell-Davidson and

Sanchez-Taylor, 1996a, 1996b, 1996c; Heissler, 2001; Saphira and Herbert, 2004a; Azaola, 2000; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Ives, 2001; Kamala et al., 2001; Hwang and Bedford, 2003; Amarasinghe, 2002).

The second hypothesis predicted that **most of the young women in the research sample would have suffered from abuse (physical, sexual or emotional) during their childhoods**. This hypothesis is supported by the research findings. The majority of the young women were found to have suffered from emotional abuse during their childhood followed by physical abuse and sexual abuse (see Table 5.16). A great number of them were found to have experienced multiple abuse types (see Table 5.17). The findings are similar to Hunter's (1994) study. Somewhat surprisingly, the current study found that the rate of childhood sexual abuse among the sample was lower (50.0 percent) than previous studies, where 65-95 percent of young women in prostitution were reported to have had a history of childhood sexual abuse (see example McClanahan et al., 1999; Shaw and Butler, 1998; Bell and Todd, 1998; O'Grady, 1994; Widom and Kuhns, 1996; Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997; Nadon et al., 1998; Saphira, 2001; Farley and Kelly, 2000; Estes and Weiner, 2002; Dorman, 2001; Bagley, 1999; Weisberg, 1985; Seng, 1989; Davies, 2001; Roman et al., 2002; Lucas et al., 2000; Peterson et al., 2002).

The third hypothesis expected that **all young women in the research sample would suffer from mental health problems as a result of living in dysfunctional family and/or being abused**. The study has found that 96.8 percent of the young women experienced living in dysfunctional families and/or being victims of abuse during childhood (Table 7.3). To my surprise, only 79.4 percent of them though reported they were psychologically affected by the incidents. The findings do not support the hypothesis. The majority of young women reported family dysfunction and/or abuse were psychologically affected them to feel hurt/angry (73 percent) and depressed (61.9 percent). The words of Kathy typify the responses of many:

It was like living in a jailhouse though it had always been my home. I did think of running away, but each time I tried, I felt helpless, vulnerable and lost, as I did not have any place to go.

(Kathy, a prostitution victim at 11 years old).

Table 7.3: The Effect of Family Dysfunction and Abuse on Young Women’s Mental Health

Variable	Frequency (N=63)	Percentage
Young women reported experienced family dysfunction and abuse	61	96.8
Young women reported family dysfunction and abuse affected their mental health	50	79.4
<i>Type of psychological problems suffer</i>		
Feeling hurt/angry	46	73.0
Depressed	39	61.9
Feeling disowned by family	20	31.7
Feeling dirty	17	27.0
Feeling useless	10	15.9
Wants to get revenge	8	12.7

Family dysfunction and childhood abuse can affect the children’s mental health. The psychological damage can change the orientation of children about the world, their self-concept and emotional capacities. Family dysfunction, childhood abuse, and children’s mental health problems are therefore three interlinking predisposing factors identified in the study that significantly increased the vulnerability of the young women to become involved in prostitution.

7.2.2 The Degree of Vulnerability of Child Victims of Prostitution

The second component of investigation in the research is the degree of vulnerability of the children who became involved in prostitution. Four hypotheses were formulated to examine the situation. The first hypothesis expected that **all young women in the research sample would not have completed school or would have low education attainment**. In general, this hypothesis was supported, however two respondents managed to complete their school education (see Table 5.3). Another two respondents never had any opportunity to attend school in their life. The majority did not complete their schooling and achieved only minimal level of educational attainment. This attainment is very much related to the young women’s family situation, as family dysfunction can dull children’s senses and can make their learning difficult. Often they experienced school stress, poor attendance, behaviour and learning disorders, which leads many of them to leave school early (Kulasegaran, 2001; Nichols and Schwartz,

2004; Berthiaume et al., 2002; Moore and Vandivere, 2000; Widom and Hiller-Sturmhöfel, 2001). In this study, the average age at which respondents left school was 13.77 years. When it was compared to the average age of entering prostitution (15.10 years), the majority of the young women were suspected to have engaged in prostitution only a year after they left school.

I was expelled from school at 15 years old after being caught red handed by the school guard. I was trying to steal a bike. My parents were so mad and we had a heated argument.

(Dilla, a 13-year-old victim of prostitution).

The second hypothesis has predicted that **most of the young women in the research sample would have experienced running away from home at least once before engaging in prostitution.** The research found that 84.1 percent of the young women were running away from home. The findings support the hypothesis and are also consistent with previous studies, where 77-90 percent of children in prostitution reported running from home at least once before turning to prostitution (Flowers, 2001; Hatty, 1992; Weisberg, 1985; Lucas et al., 2000; Johnson, 1992; PCA-NY, 2001; Hwang and Bedford, 2004; Walker, 2002; Farley and Barkan, 1998; Klain, 1999; Farley and Kelly, 2000). Yet in the current study, many young women had an extensive history of running away during childhood (see Table 5.22). The reasons given for running away were primarily due to depression with the family situation, the influence of friends or boyfriends, and because of problems with their mother/stepmother (see Table 5.23). These reasons are not surprising as the majority of the young women endured difficult life experiences at home, with family problems, unstable family relationships, domestic violence, abuse and family breakdown. Closer examination found that young women who ran away from home at least once were vulnerable to be drawn into prostitution and those who ran away several times in their life were more vulnerable. Rozana and Dilla's account provides a good example of this process:

Three years ago, I thought that by running away from home, I could prove to my father that even without his love and support I would still survive and have a successful life. I was desperately trying to prove that life would be better of without him. That it was wrong of him to divorce my mother and not let me see her. I wanted him to know that he was the worst father in the world. He was cruel, ruthless and hurtful to his own daughter. I

wanted him to realise that he had made the biggest mistake in his life by neglecting me and marrying my stepmother. Alas, those things never happened. Instead, I ended up being a prostitute, trading my body for money.

(Rozana, a 15-year-old victim of prostitution).

Actually that was not the first time I ran away from home. I did more than five times before. Every time I faced disciplinary action at school, I would runaway from home ... My drug problem worsened during my stay with Mamat. I became totally dependent on marijuana. Mamat would not always give me the drug for free. Sometimes, I needed to find money to buy it from him. Therefore, I traded sex with other gang members, as well as with Mamat's flatmates. Some paid for sex with money, while others with drugs.

(Dilla, a 13-year-old victim of prostitution).

The third hypothesis predicted that **most of the young women in the research sample would have been sexually exploited before they were drawn into prostitution**. This hypothesis was not only supported, but surprisingly the study found that **all** the young women interviewed were victims of childhood sexual exploitation before they were victims of prostitution. The majority were seduced by perpetrators, many were raped, and several were forced to have sex (see Table 5.25). Closer examination found that nearly half of the young women entered prostitution in the same year that they were initially exploited sexually and many entered a year after that (Table 7.4).

Table 7.4: The Year of Involvement in Prostitution After Being Initially Exploited Sexually

Involvement in Prostitution	Frequency (N=63)	Percentage
In the same year they were initially exploited sexually	29	46.0
A year after they were initially exploited sexually	23	36.5
Two years after they were initially exploited sexually	5	7.9
Three years after they were initially exploited sexually	4	6.3
Four years after they were initially exploited sexually	2	3.2
Total	63	100.0

Note: Data given is derived from subtracting the age of young women entered prostitution with the age they were initially exploited sexually.

The fourth hypothesis speculated that **most of the young women in the research sample would have engaged in substance abuse before entering**

prostitution. This was not fully supported, but about half of the young women interviewed had been involved in drug abuse before engaging in prostitution (see Table 5.42). The average age of initial drug use among them was 14.87 years. Psychotropic pills (ice and ecstasy) and marijuana were the most popular drugs used by the respondents (see Table 5.46). Many used combinations of drugs. Up close, almost 83 percent of the young women (N=43) who used drugs had run away from home at least once, 67.3 percent were victims of emotional abuse, 53.8 percent victims of physical abuse and 36.5 percent victims of sexual abuse (Table 7.5). In the case of childhood abuse victims involved in substance abuse, the current findings are lower than the study by Saphira (2001). She reports that, of those prostituted young people who used drugs 63 percent were sexually abused and 72 percent were physically abused during childhood. The current study also found that the majority of drug abusers entered prostitution in the same years of their initial drug use or a year after that.

Table 7.5: Young Women who Used Drugs and Experienced Abuse and Running Away from Home During Their Childhood

Experienced	Young Women Who Used Drugs (N=52)	
	Frequency	Percentage
Running Away	43	82.7
Emotional Abuse	35	67.3
Physical Abuse	28	53.8
Sexual Abuse	19	36.5

In summary, childhood sexual exploitation was found to be a significant precursor to young women’s involvement in prostitution. The degree of vulnerability caused by sexual exploitation increased when young women left school early, ran away from home and became involved in substance abuse. Again, the findings of the present study support a significant interactive effect between risk factors.

7.2.3 Prostitution Entry

The third component that the research sought to investigate concerned the ways in which children were drawn into prostitution. The researcher hypothesized that **most of the young women in the research sample would have entered prostitution because**

of being tricked, forced or trapped by perpetrators. The findings support the hypothesis. Furthermore, the perpetrators were found to be the persons they ‘trusted most’ who then tricked, forced or trapped them into prostitution. Most significantly they include ‘boyfriends’, relatives, and their mothers (see Table 5.29). However, peer influence was found to be the second most important way in which young women entered prostitution. The percentage though lower (38.1 percent) than the result found by Schetky (1988) who reported 60 percent. Up close, more than half of rape victims in the current study entered prostitution under the influence of peers (Table 7.6). Rape victims often suffer from trauma and a sense of hopelessness due to their victimisation, and it maybe that they are influenced when they meet up with friends who are already in prostitution, or who know an ‘adventurous’ way of making money for survival. Such young women are drawn into prostitution because they think they have nothing else to lose. Shima explained this process in the following way:

After a few months living with Anna, she suggested that I should find a job. I told her that I would be very happy to work, but without any certificate how was I to get a job and who would want to employ me? I was then only 14 years old. To my surprise, she put the idea for me to take up the job. I told her that I was too scared and was without any experience to do the job. However, she pointed out that the job could easily make me rich ... In the beginning, I did feel guilty about doing the job. But I realised the job was the ticket to my survival and independence. I knew it was not a real job. Yet, it was better than being raped. I was a rape victim and other people who have been raped will understand my situation and why I did it. When you have been raped, you are completely stripped of your self-worth. Life means nothing to you. Therefore, you might as well try the job, as you have nothing to lose.

(Shima, a 14-year-old victim of prostitution).

Table 7.6: Ways in which Rape Victims Entered Prostitution

Ways into Prostitution	Rape Victims	
	Frequency	Percentage
Influenced by a friend	8	57.1
Thought of it myself	1	7.1
Deceived by boyfriend	3	21.4
Forced by mother	1	7.1
Persuaded by relative	1	7.1
Total	14	100.0

7.2.4 The Nature of Prostitution ‘Work’

The nature of prostitution ‘work’ represents the fourth area of investigation in the current research. Three hypotheses are relevant here. The first hypothesis predicted that **most of the young women in the research sample would ‘worked’ in prostitution with, or for, intermediaries (pimps)**. The findings support the hypothesis, but the percentage of young women who were controlled by pimps in the current study is lower (71.4 percent) than the estimation given by Barry (1995), Johnson (1992) and Farley and Kelly (2000) who all suggest a figure of between 80 to 95 percent. In the current study, most of the young women ‘worked’ with, or for, two groups of intermediaries (pimps), namely ‘boyfriends’ and agents of a prostitution syndicate (see Table 5.31). The average age of ‘boyfriends’ who were really acting as pimps was 22.5 years old (Table 7.7). Several research studies have found that the average age of pimps was between 18 to 20 years old (Spangenberg, 2001; NCMEC, 2002; Johnson, 1992; Saikaew, 1996; Gray et al., 2002; United Nations, 2000b; Khodyreva, 2002). However, the current study also found that a significant number of young women ‘worked’ alone, without the involvement of any intermediaries, as discussed below.

Table 7.7: Age of ‘Boyfriends’ who Acting as Pimps

Age of ‘boyfriends’	Frequency	Percentage
19 year-old	1	5.0
20 year-old	5	25.0
21 year-old	3	15.0
22 year-old	1	5.0
23 year-old	4	20.0
24 year-old	3	15.0
25 year-old	1	5.0
28 year-old	1	5.0
29 year-old	1	5.0
Total	20	100.0

Note: Two respondents did not know the age of their ‘boyfriends’ or pimps. The mean of pimp age is 22.5 years old.

The second hypothesis expected that **most of the young women in the research sample would have ‘worked’ every day and would have ‘served’ many customers per day**. The findings only support the second part of the hypothesis. The majority of them ‘worked’ 5-7 days a week and ‘served’ 6-10 customers in a day (see Table 5.33 and Table 5.35).

The third hypothesis speculated that **most of the young women in the research sample would not practise safe sex or use condoms**. The findings are consistent with the hypothesis. The percentage of the young women who used condoms is considered low (31.7 percent), though it is higher than the Balochistan study which found that none of the prostituted children interviewed used condoms (United Nations, 2001). According to the young women in this study, there are two main reasons why they hardly practised safe sex; the customers did not like to use condoms, and the young women were offered more money to have sex without condoms. Nina and Rozana describe this in the following way:

I hardly ever used condoms during sex because the customers did not like them. Often they said I was young and totally new with sex and as such, they did not want to use condoms. Even though I was really scared of getting pregnant, I had no choice but to do without condoms.

(Nina, a 14-year-old victim of prostitution).

Every time the customer wanted sex, I would provide them a condom to protect myself from pregnancy and diseases. Some would use it but others would not. They refused condoms because they wanted to enjoy sex with young girls. Some would say it was their first experience of having sex with a young girl like me and did not wish to spoil their excitement by using condoms. They were willing to pay double or triple charges, an irresistible offer, which did not come by everyday.

(Rozana, a 15-year-old victim of prostitution).

7.2.5 Prostitution as a Means of Survival

The fifth component of research sought to examine the extent to which prostitution was used to support the children involved to survive economically. The researcher hypothesized that **all young women in the research sample would use income earned from prostitution to provide the basic necessities for survival**. The findings however do not fully support the hypothesis. Whilst the majority of the young women used the money earned for survival to provide basic needs for food and clothes, in some cases the income gained went beyond basic survival and was used to purchase drugs/alcohol and entertainment (see Table 5.38). The use of money for substances and entertainment is

believed to represent a means of 'tension reduction' to distract the painful reality of life during prostitution and the traumatic experience of childhood abuse, as well as to avoid feelings of emptiness (Saphira and Oliver, 2002; Johnson, 1992). It is also important to note that about half of the young women in this sample used substances before their involvement in prostitution and many others became substance abusers after their initial involvement in prostitution (see Table 5.42).

7.2.6 The Prevalence of Violence During Prostitution

The sixth area of enquiry concerned the prevalence of violence towards children in prostitution. Two hypotheses were formulated relating to this area. The first hypothesis predicted that **all young women in the research sample would have been physically abused by pimps and customers during prostitution**. This hypothesis is not fully supported. The study found that the majority of the young women were abused by customers and/or pimps at least once during prostitution (see Table 5.39). They were often verbally and physically abused (see table 5.40). Others experienced more serious violence, like being raped and drugged. The findings are consistent with the previous research which reported that 62-100 percent of young people in prostitution were abused by pimps and customers (Raphael and Shapiro, 2002; Farley et al., 1998; Church et al., 2001; Farley and Barkan, 1998; Eddy and Walker, 2002; Peterson et al., 2002). Below are two stories given by the interviewees about their experiences of pimp and customer violence.

Whilst working at the hotel, I only met my mother once when Jani complained about my attempt to escape from him. She and Jani beat me hard with a belt and PVC pipe. She slapped me a few times until I fainted and bled from the nose. My whole body was scratched and swollen. I thought would die. Luckily, I survived the assault. The brutal incident dashed all hope I had of being freed from that activity. After the assault, I dared not think of running away from the hotel again.

(Kathy, an 11-year-old victim of prostitution).

Deep in your heart you know that the police will finally catch up with you. With such fear at the back of your mind, sometimes, you lose control of yourself and will urge the customers to quickly finish their 'business'.

When that happens, you will definitely face abuse, threats and you may even be raped by angry customers. To them you are paid to serve them, so you can never tell them when to stop. The fear will always be with you and you will have to learn to live with it as long as you are still at the job ... When they feel that you are not satisfactory, they will take it on you, abuse you verbally, swear and call you names like 'bastard pig', and worst still, they physically abuse you by slapping or pulling your hair ... Once I was threatened with a knife because I refused to do oral and anal sex with him.

(Rozana, a 15-year-old victim of prostitution).

The second hypothesis has predicted that **most of the young women who are abused during prostitution use substances as a coping mechanism**. The findings support the hypothesis, as 69 percent of the young women interviewed reported that they used drugs/alcohol to cope with the customers' and/or pimps' abuse during prostitution (see Table 5.41). A story given by Kathy below is an example of ways in which young women in this sample who were abused during prostitution coped with the abuse.

During the time, I just stayed in my room or my friend's room to get drunk or drugged. I never used drugs before I was involved in this activity. Besides working for long hours, I also used drugs for fun, to avoid the feeling of loneliness, and to forget all the bad memories of being abused by my mother in the past and during prostitution. I bought the drugs from Mama or Jani by using the money from tips given by customers as well as from my income.

(Kathy, an 11-year-old victim of prostitution).

7.2.7 Life After Prostitution

The last area of investigation concerned the life of children after prostitution. Three hypotheses were constructed here. The first hypothesis predicted that **all young women in the research sample would suffer from mental health problems resulting from their involvement in prostitution**. The study however does not fully support the hypothesis, as a number of young women interviewed (N=15) reported that prostitution had not led to any negative psychological impact on them (see Table 5.50). However, for the vast majority the picture is very different. For those who were psychologically affected by prostitution, the majority suffered from depression and many suffered from

feeling entrapped, dirty, guilty, useless and hapless, and from low self-esteem. A significant number of them suffered from multiple psychological problems (see Table 5.51). The findings in this study have a somewhat similar pattern to previous studies (see example Farley and Kelly, 2000; Willis and Levy, 2002; Klain, 1999; McClanahan et al., 1999; UNICEF, 2001a, 2003b; Johnson, 1992; United Nations, 2000b, 2000c, 2001; Kidd and Kral, 2002; Farley and Barkan, 1998; Beyrer and Stachowiak, 2003; Bruce, 1996; Flowers, 1998; Future Group, 2001; Montgomery, 2001; Saphira and Herbert, 2004b; Grant et al., 1999; Bittle, 2002; Freed, 2003; Appelqvist, 2001; Dean and Thomson, 1998).

The second hypothesis expected that **most of the young women in the research sample would have faced difficulties in changing their lifestyle after prostitution.** The findings do not support the hypothesis, as the number of young women who felt they have faced difficulties as against those who felt they did not, is fairly equal (see Table 5.52). The findings suggest that much more work needs to be done to help young women in the rehabilitation centres to recover from prostitution trauma and to regain their life. They need a boost to their confidence, and to be guided to a more positive attitude towards their life. The rehabilitation centres also have to think of alternative programmes for them and for those who felt depressed, sad and tense while living in the centre (see Table 5.53). Although many of the young women reported they were given good support from the centres (see Table 5.54), there are still plenty of areas in which improvement can be made. For example, the regimented three years system used to rehabilitate the children, as briefly mentioned in Chapter Three, needs to be considered in terms of its effectiveness and suitability in the future. The system maybe the reason why many young women felt it was difficult to change their lifestyle after prostitution. Certainly, the system contributes to young women feeling depressed, sad and tense while living in the centres, as three interviewees make clear below. Abdul Hadi (1995) states that, although the system and the detention is regarded as a measure for the protection of children, it is nevertheless punitive, as the children are deprived of their freedom and are subjected to a programme of instruction, for example in cooking, that they may not enjoy. Thus, many of the children in the rehabilitation centre feel imprisoned.

I am not happy living here ... How can I be happy if the staff are not friendly, if there are not enough facilities, if the schedule is too rigid, and

if all the activities are too boring? ... There is nothing here that I can actually learn to change my life. They teach me how to make a cake, how to cook, and how to sew. They think, by learning all these skills, I can set up a bakery shop, be a chef or a fashion designer once released from here. All these professions are not for me, and I do not believe these courses could open career opportunities for any resident discharged from here.

(Mona, a 15-year-old victim of prostitution).

My life is very miserable now. The centre is like a jailhouse.

A (Shima, a 14-year-old victim of prostitution).

I really hope to be freed soon and hope that I did not need to serve the three years sentence. My mother needs me to look after the family. Three years is too long and it does not justify my wrongdoings ... Living in this centre is quite boring because the routine you have to follow is the same from the first day you come here until you are released. Three years you have to do the same things, eat the same food, play the same activities, visit the same places and live in the same environment.

(Laily, a 16-year-old victim of prostitution).

Depression, sadness, tension, and imprisonment are common feelings suffered by residents living in a 'total institution', such as that of a rehabilitation centre (Wolfe et al., 2001). According to Goffman (1961), although the institution cares the most for the needs of whole blocks of people, at the same time it controls the people's lives by rules and regulations with rigid control of time and a lack of diversity in the schedule of everyday activities and restriction of social intercourse between people within the total institution and society at large (Bubandt, 1998). In the case of the young women in this sample, the control of life and the restriction of social intercourse make it likely that they experience a sense of depersonalization and disconnection. Depersonalization is brought about by the generic and routine nature of the day-to-day living conditions, and disconnection results from their physical and psychological isolation from their family of origin, their community, and culture (Wolfe et al., 2001). Of course, the very nature of a life in prostitution means that these two processes of depersonalisation and disconnection are often already well established before the young women enter the centres, though they are further exacerbated when they are institutionalised. In other

words, these are young women who, as a result of their prior experiences, are particularly vulnerable to these two aspects of a 'total institution'.

The use of routine in a 'total institution' is also a feature of how 'inmates' are disciplined and controlled. Regimes of constant labour, vocational training, and religious instruction are used to reshape inmates' character as well as their behaviour (Malacrida, 2005; Yarrington, 2003). The authority does not only oversee all phases of an individual's daily life – sleep, play, eat, and work – but individuals carry out their daily routines in the company of others who are in the same situation, who are subject to the same demands and who are required to do the same thing en bloc (Gardner and Gronfein, 2005). Activities are rigidly scheduled, with the various activities brought together under an institutional plan imposed from above and supposed to embody the official aims of the institution (Yarrington, 2003; Gardner and Gronfein, 2005). Goffman (1961) claims that the daily routines and practices of a 'total institution' are dehumanizing or depersonalizing individuals in the institution - the 'mortification of the inmate self' - as it humiliates, degrades and defaces the identity of the institutionalized person (Gardner and Gronfein, 2005; Malacrida, 2005).

A rehabilitation centre carries an enormous social stigma and therefore the residents who live in the centre also bear the stigma attached to it, of which depression, sadness and tension are symptomatic (Malacrida, 2005). The higher the degree of stigmatization, the more intense the sense of dehumanization, depersonalization and disconnection is for the young women while living in the centres. Additionally, Foucault states that institutions like rehabilitation centres use social control as an instrument to discipline individuals (Yarrington, 2003). The centre and every system of power therefore is presented with the same problem – namely, 'the ordering of human multiplicities' – a form of 'government', in which scientific knowledge and mechanisms of social control are combined and coordinated to regulate human life (Brenner, 1994; Danaher et al., 2000). Foucault also argues that the physical layout of such places is never innocent or arbitrary; instead, vantage points, lines of surveillance and the physical spaces in places such as rehabilitation centre are constructed in ways that can be read as discursive practices, the means through which a society's underlying ideas and values circulate and are made material (Danaher et al., 2000; Malacrida, 2005). He is convinced that it is more effective to place a person under surveillance than to punish him or her in disciplinary institutions like rehabilitation centre (Danaher et al., 2000).

The third hypothesis speculated that **all young women in the research sample would wish to start a normal life after rehabilitation programmes and would not plan to re-enter prostitution.** The hypothesis was not fully supported, as a small number of the young women (N=7) reported that they might return to prostitution if they could not find any other way of survival (see Table 5.56). The majority of the young women wanted to find a job after being released. Not many of them wanted to return to school or to further study, or to get married. In the case of the low number of young women hoping to get married, it may be due to the traumatic experiences they suffered from prostitution involvement, as Nina explained this below. Prostitution teaches the victims to view themselves as sexually degraded, ‘damaged goods’, ‘loose’, ‘dirty’, or ‘guilty’ people (Brannigan and Van Brunschot, 1997; Ireland, 1993; O’Connell-Davidson, 1998; Kitzinger, 2002; Lim, 1998a). For those young women who saw for them in prostitution after their release from the centres, it may be, as Silbert (1986) says that prostitution has psychologically paralysed them to do anything positive about further victimization.

I have no plan to get married. I do not think any man would want to marry a young woman like me – ex-lap dancer and ex-prostitute.

(Nina, a 14-year-old victim of prostitution).

Below is the summary of the level of support found in the current study against each of the hypothesis.

Table 7.8: The Level of Support Found in the Current Study against Each of the Hypothesis

Hypotheses	Descriptions	Level of Support
H1	All children involved in prostitution come from dysfunctional families.	Not supported
H2	Most of them suffer from abuse (physical, sexual or emotional) during childhood.	Fully supported
H3	All of them suffer from mental health problems as a result of living in dysfunctional family and/or being abused.	Not supported
H4	All of them do not complete school or have low education attainment.	Not supported
H5	Most of them experienced running away from home at least once before engaging in prostitution.	Fully supported
H6	Most of them have been sexually exploited before they are drawn into prostitution.	Fully supported
H7	Most of them are involved in substance abuse before entering prostitution.	Not supported
H8	Most of them enter prostitution because of being tricked, forced or trapped by perpetrators.	Fully supported
H9	Most of them 'work' in prostitution with, or for, intermediaries.	Fully supported
H10	Most of them 'work' every day and 'serve' many customers per day.	Partially supported
H11	Most of them do not practise safe sex or use condoms.	Fully supported
H12	All of them use the income earned from prostitution to provide the basic necessities for survival.	Not supported
H13	All of them have been physically abused by pimps and customers during prostitution.	Not supported
H14	Most of the children who are abused during prostitution use substances as a coping mechanism.	Fully supported
H15	All of them suffer from mental health problems resulting from their involvement in prostitution.	Not supported
H16	Most of them faced difficulties in changing lifestyle after prostitution.	Not supported
H17	All of them wish to start a normal life after rehabilitation programmes and do not plan to re-enter prostitution.	Not supported

7.3 Discussion of Additional Findings

It was not my intention in the first place when starting this study to investigate pimps and pimping activities, as the main focus of the research was utterly to understand the involvement of children in prostitution. However, after the data was analysed, I found it is clear that the majority of young women in the research sample come from three subgroups; those who were controlled by 'boyfriends', those who were controlled by agents of prostitution syndicates, and those who 'worked' without a pimp. Both

‘boyfriends’ and agents of prostitution syndicates are pimps, with the essential difference being that agents of prostitution syndicates act as ‘organised pimps’, whereas ‘boyfriends’ act as ‘unorganised pimps’. From my analysis, I believe that these two groups of pimps have different influences over the young women. Therefore, I suspected that the prostitution activities of the two subgroups of young women are also different. Additionally, a number of young women were found to have ‘worked’ without pimps and without the control of any third party. They ‘work’ alone. Abdul Hadi (1980, 1987) considers this group of young women as ‘freelancers’. I will not use the term though as it is not appropriate in a child prostitution context because it fails to recognise the element of abuse and exploitation inherent in all forms of child prostitution.

In this section, I shall present the comparison of results between the subgroups of young women on four components of pimping or prostitution activities; location of sexual activities, number of customers, rates charged for sex and days of ‘work’. The findings below are important but they should be considered only as indicative considering that the research sample is small. Further research in order to explore more about pimp and pimping activities and its impact towards prostituted children is needed in the future to build a strong evidence base on this issue.

i. Locations of Sexual Activities

There is big difference between the three subgroups of young women in terms of the location of sexual activities (Table 7.9). All the young women who were controlled by agents of a prostitution syndicate were prostituted in hotels. About half of them were also sent to ‘work’ in the customers’ houses. For those young women who were controlled by ‘boyfriends’, the majority were prostituted in hotels and in their boyfriends’ houses. Nearly half were also forced to prostitute by ‘boyfriends’ in public places (parks, abandoned houses, customers’ cars, karaoke clubs etc.). On the other hand, young women who ‘worked’ without pimps were much more likely to do so in public places and in customers’ houses.

Table 7.9: Locations of Sexual Activities

Locations	Young Women		
	Controlled by 'Boyfriends' (N=22)	Controlled by Agents of a Prostitution Syndicate (N=13)	'Worked' Alone (N=18)
Hotels	77.3%	100.0%	44.4%
Pubs	18.2%	15.4%	33.3%
Customers' houses	31.8%	53.8%	77.8%
Boyfriends houses	72.7%	7.7%	11.1%
Public places	45.5%	30.8%	83.3%

ii. Number of Customers Per Day

There was no difference between young women who controlled by 'boyfriends', agents of a prostitution syndicate and those who 'worked' without pimp in terms of the number of customers they had to 'serve' in a day. About 50-60 percent in each of the three subgroups 'served' 6-10 customers per day (Table 7.10).

Table 7.10: Number of Customers Per Day

Number of Customers	Young Women		
	Controlled by 'Boyfriends' (N=22)	Controlled by Agents of a Prostitution Syndicate (N=13)	'Worked' Alone (N=18)
1-5 customers	31.8%	15.4%	27.8%
6-10 customers	59.1%	53.8%	55.6%
More than 10 customers	9.1%	30.8%	16.7%

iii. Rate Charged for Sex

The rate charged for sex also difference between the three subgroups of young women. In the case of young women who were controlled by pimps, the rate charged for sex was entirely up to the pimps' decision, not to the young women, as two respondents in this sample said:

When I was a newcomer, the agent sold me at RM800 for a sex service. But after two months, the charge was reduced to RM400. Six months later, it was RM200. He needed to reduce the charges, for regular customers would know how long I had been there.

(Rozana, a 15-year-old victim of prostitution).

I was never even given a single cent out of the money paid by the customers. I did not even know how much the customers were charged. According to the pimp, payment for our service was used to repay our 'debt'.

(Tipah, a 16-year-old victim of prostitution).

Young women who 'worked' alone however had more autonomy to negotiate the payment with the customers. But, they were paid less by customers compared to those who controlled by agents of a prostitution syndicate and 'boyfriends' (Table 7.11).

Table 7.11: Rate Charged for Sex

Rate Charged	Young Women		
	Controlled by 'Boyfriends' (N=22)	Controlled by Agents of a Prostitution Syndicate (N=13)	'Worked' Alone (N=18)
Less than RM100	27.3%	0.0%	72.2%
RM100-RM200	54.5%	46.2%	11.1%
More than RM200	18.2%	53.8%	16.7%

Note: Currency exchange RM7.00 = £1.00 (May 2004).

iv. Days of 'Work' Per Week

In terms of days of 'work' per week, the results show a clear difference between young women who controlled by pimps with those who 'worked' without pimp. Almost 50-62 percent of young women who were controlled by agents of a prostitution syndicate and 'boyfriends' were forced to prostitute for seven days a week (Table 7.12). On the other hand, young women who 'worked' without pimps typically 'traded' sex for 3-4 days, or 5-6 days, or seven days a week.

Table 7.12: Day of 'Work' Per Week

Days of 'Work' Per Week	Young Women		
	Controlled by 'Boyfriends' (N=22)	Controlled by Agents of a Prostitution Syndicate (N=13)	'Worked' Alone (N=18)
1-2 days	4.5%	0	11.1%
3-4 days	18.2%	15.4%	27.8%
5-6 days	27.3%	23.1%	33.3%
7 days	50.0%	61.5%	27.8%

From the findings above, young women who were controlled by pimps are more extensively exploited sexually than those who 'worked' without a pimp. It is clear that pimps use these young women as a 'money machine'. They do not only control the 'price' of sex 'services' provided by the young women but they also force the young women to 'work' seven days a week and to 'serve' many customers in a day. They also force the young women to prostitute in hotels, where they can easily get many customers who can afford to pay.

When comparing the degree of exploitation between the two groups of pimps, young women who are pimped by agents of prostitution syndicates appear to suffer from exploitation for money more frequently than those who pimped by 'boyfriends'. The agents did not only force the young women to prostitute in hotels, pubs or customers' houses, but also in public places in order to gain more money by mobilising them. They also highly charged the customers for sex 'services' provided by the young women. This is not surprising, as 'organised pimps' often link to the crime network locally or internationally. They are of course more exploitative than 'unorganised pimps'. But, it is wrong to suggest that 'unorganised pimps' are not criminals and are less dangerous than 'organised pimps'. In the context of child prostitution, 'boyfriends' or 'unorganised pimps' are also criminals and are equally dangerous to 'organised pimps'. Both of them exploited the young women for money by forcing them to sell sex.

In this study, young women who 'worked' without pimps maybe enter prostitution for survival to meet their basic needs or whenever they need money in their lives, since not many of them 'worked' extensively throughout the whole week.

7.4 Conclusion

The extent of the experiences of the young women interviewed for this study are not easily summarised and are not easily reducible to headline points. Their diverse experiences serve as reminder of the very real situation children are projected into through prostitution. However, several factors have emerged strongly. Family problems, domestic violence, family breakdown and unstable family relationship are four major aspects that made young women in this sample vulnerable to get drawn into prostitution. Abuse and family dysfunction damaged the young women psychologically. As a result of that, they were at risk to be victims of sexual exploitation, to run away from home, to

leave school early and to get involve in drug abuse. The majority of young women entered prostitution in the same year or a year after they were sexually exploited, left school, and became involved in drug use. Most of them had been tricked or coerced by perpetrators and influenced by friends to engage in prostitution.

During prostitution, a great number of young women in this sample ‘worked’ with, or for, intermediaries or pimps particularly ‘boyfriends’ and agents of prostitution syndicate. Pimps were forced them to ‘work’ more than five days a week and to ‘serve’ over six men in a day. Most of them did not use condoms during sex because of customers’ attitude. For almost all young women interviewed, prostitution is not only means a survival strategy to meet basic needs. But, it is also about a survival mechanism to avoid other form of violence/abuse from pimps and customers. The majority of the young women were emotionally and physically abused by pimps and customers including being raped and drugged. Abuse and violence made them emotionally vulnerable. Thus, many were abused substances as a coping mechanism. The use of drugs during prostitution also may be due to addiction as many of them already used it before entering prostitution. Overall, prostitution affects the majority of young women’s mental health from depression to feeling entrapped, dirty, guilty, useless, and low self-esteem.

Child prostitution in Malaysia exists because of the demand from the local market. Child sex tourism or child prostitution for tourists was not a major factor in this study. Men’s fantasy to have sex with young women is believed to be the main factor accounting for why the phenomenon exists and it is becoming widespread in the country. The demand for sex with children is considered high as young women from other Asian countries like Thailand, Indonesia, and China are also trafficked into the country, as one respondent, Tipah, told about her story during the interview:

There were 27 young women in the hotel all together and they were from Thailand, China, Indonesia, and six were Malaysians including myself. Those who were from Thailand were trafficked to this country. The Indonesian and Chinese young women however were victims of employment fraud. They were promised a job in the factory before they came here. But, the employment agency was hiding them in the hotel room and asked them to prostitute after they arrived. Some of them never get out from the hotel for a year.

(Tipah, a 16-year-old victim of prostitution).

This suggests that child prostitution in Malaysia is in part controlled by international crime syndicates and has links with the global or regional trafficking network of women and children. Further investigation of this phenomenon however is needed. Nevertheless, the government has to find ways to reduce or to eliminate the phenomenon because child prostitution is a problem in Malaysia today. The phenomenon is real, serious and happening, as confirmed in this study. The experiences of these young women provide evidence that contrasts sharply with the government's idea that child prostitution is not a 'problem' in Malaysia.

Protection from prostitution is the main issue for these victimised young women as the majority of them entered prostitution not because of their own free will. They were tricked, forced, or trapped by pimps and were influenced by peers. Not many chose or voluntarily engage in prostitution because they want to. The findings contradict with the popular view in Malaysia that all young women become involved in prostitution because they want to be 'prostitutes'. Even for those young women who could be seen as active agents in their decision making (i.e. those who make their own choices to engage in prostitution and to act on them) their involvement in prostitution was often to support their families or to meet their own basic needs while running away from home or because nobody was able to look after them after their parents had died. The narratives of Laily, Shima and Rozana provide good examples of this situation:

The death of my mother was the turning point of my life. I was an orphan at six years old. My father died in an accident when I was a baby. I went to live with my grandparents at their village ... When I was 13 years old, my grandparents sent me to stay with my sister in the city because they were too old to look after me ... I realised the job was the ticket to my survival and independence. I knew it was not a real job ... I chose to put up with the 'dirty job' because it was the only job I thought I could do to support my life ... I do not wish to go back to my sister. I no longer consider her my sister. She threw me out of her life a long time ago and I was left alone to walk a difficult path. I do not believe she still remembers or has any memories of me. Let her continue to believe that I died a long, long time ago.

(Shima, a 14-year-old victim of prostitution).

My mother is a divorcee and she was the family breadwinner. My father left us when I was 11 years old. She was a housewife but soon after the divorce she had to work to support us ... She has high blood pressure and also suffers from diabetes. She was always worried about our financial

problems, and its effect on our schooling. She pawned all her jewellery for the money to pay for our school and examination fees, as well as the family expenditure. She was constantly in fear of having to send one or two of her children to the orphanage should she fail to take care of us or to provide the needs of the family. Knowing that, I sought her permission to quit my schooling so I could assist her with the family financial needs ... My mother's medical needs were getting more expensive, one of my brothers was selected to study in a boarding school after he got excellent UPSR (Primary School Evaluation Test) results and our house needed immediate repair after a storm blew the roof away ... All those problems made me feel depressed, and most probably, irrational, as I had no other choice but to do extra work. I finally agreed to work part-time as a GRO and asked my friend to bring me along with her. It never meant that I agreed to that job. I needed the money to support my family.

(Laily, a 16-year-old victim of prostitution).

I hate myself for what I did and I hate all the men who used my body for sex. I know my actions in the past were morally wrong. But, I had little choice at that time. The job was not what I had dreamed of but it was the only job available for my survival after running away from home when I was 15 years old ... I needed money to buy food and continue with my daily life.

(Rozana, a 15-year-old victim of prostitution).

Are such young women to be seen as 'active agents' making informed choices about their lives, or are they passive victims of circumstances? According to Cook et al. (2004) young women are active agents when they actively engage with their surroundings. The surroundings of prostituted young women lives are often of struggle and one can understand how such primary influences may account for their 'decision' to become involved in prostitution. In this case, it can of course be theorised that such young women exercise great 'agency' or capacity for their 'choice' of prostitution as a means of survival. Such an analysis would highlight the 'choice' or 'decision' to enter prostitution as evidence that the young women are empowering themselves in order to get something beneficial from their activities for living. Often it is for money to provide the basic needs for survival, as they are the only supporter for themselves or the only one who can help their family to survive in poverty (Estes and Weiner, 2002; Dean and Thomson, 1998; Klain, 1999; Willis and Levy, 2002; Hwang and Bedford, 2003; Amarasinghe, 2002; Saikaew, 1996; Peterson et al., 2002; Simkhada, 2002; Azaola, 2000; Bruce, 1996; Leidholdt, 2003).

However, the nature of 'choice' is greatly debated in the context of child prostitution. Barry (1995) states that 'choice' cannot be accepted as a reason of why young women become involved in prostitution, because prostitution is not about or for them, but for men. It does not matter whether the young women claims the right or 'choice' to be prostituted or not to be. Jeffreys (1997) argues that the idea that prostitution is freely chosen is such a 'neutralising technique', a technique often used by socially despised and marginalised groups to create rationalisation in order to enable them to survive their marginal condition. Department of Health et al. (2000) said that children who claim to be engaging 'voluntarily' in prostitution cannot be considered as voluntary or consenting to such behaviour. For many of them, there may be too few alternative options to choose from (Jeffreys, 1997; Duong, 2002). A few researchers like Weitzer (2000a), McIntyre, (1999), Sereny (1985), Lim (1998a), McMullen, (1987), Swann (1998a), Saphira (2002) and Hofstede et al. (1999) also suggest that children do not 'choose' a life of prostitution. They lack awareness and have limited social, emotional and intellectual development to fully understand their actions and make responsible choices. Such arguments about prostituted young women hardly exist in Malaysia. Many people believe that the young women are 'bad' and 'damaged' girls and they solely 'choose' prostitution because they want to. Other criticism about prostitution as a 'choice' is that prostitution is not a 'proper' place for children to grow up and to enjoy their childhood (Lee, 2001; Postman, 1994). Therefore, whether the young women voluntarily 'chooses' to engage in prostitution for economic survival, emotional support, drugs, loneliness or any other reasons, they have to be protected.

In conclusion, like those young women who were tricked, forced and trapped by pimps, and influenced by peers, young women who so-called voluntarily 'choose' to become involved in prostitution should also be protected from prostitution. This does not mean to suggest that they are less affected by prostitution or that they are at a lower risk of victimization in prostitution than the other two groups of young women, therefore they should or should not be protected. It is important to note that all young women in this study were victims of sexual exploitation (either through rape, seduction or forced sex) before they engaged in prostitution. Childhood sexual exploitation and abuse is harmful and damaging for young women and involvement in prostitution is symptomatic of this harm (Bagley and Young, 1987; O'Neill, 2001). In Malaysia, very few young women victims of sexual exploitation are given therapy or counselling to

treat their trauma because families are often worried that people will know that their daughter is not a virgin. The longer the trauma of childhood sexual victimization remains untreated, the more serious the young women will suffer from psychological damage and there is a higher risk that they will be involved in self-disruptive behaviours (see example La Fontaine, 1990; O'Neill, 2001; Brown and Barrett, 2002; Kitzinger, 2002; Silbert, 1986; Robin et al., 1997; Bagley and Young, 1995; Stiffman, 1989; Mullen et al., 1993; Dube et al., 2003; Widom, 1996; Bagley, 1985; Browne and Finkelhor, 1986; Iwaniec, 1999). For the reason above and also for the purpose to free them from prostitution involvement and the abusive environment and traumatic experience of prostitution, the young women therefore should be protected from prostitution. After all, protection from sexual exploitation through prostitution is their right and also the right for every child in this world (Cusick, 2002; Lee and O'Brien, 1995; Lim, 1998a; WCCSEC, 1996; Barrett, 1997; Dodsworth, 2000; Barry, 1995; Klain, 1999; O'Connell-Davidson, 1998; United Nations, 1995; O'Grady, 1994; Muntarbhorn, 1996a; NCMEC, 2002; Piot, 1996; Save the Children, 1996; World Vision, 1999; Beyrer, 2001). Protection from prostitution does not conflict with the principles contained in the children's empowerment and children as active agents. Protection is central to the balance embodied in the UNCRC between recognizing children as active agents in their own lives, entitled to be listened to, respected and granted increasing autonomy in the exercise of rights, while also being entitled to safety in accordance with their relative immaturity and youth (Lansdown, 2005). It also provides the basis for an appropriate respect for children's agency without exposing them prematurely to the full responsibilities normally associated with adulthood.

8 Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, recommendations are provided, not only for the welfare of 63 young women who participated in this study, but also for other young women in Malaysia who are experiencing abuse through prostitution and who deserve help and support. These suggestions to tackle child prostitution in Malaysia, I believe, also are needed as there is currently no strategic plan in Malaysia to tackle the phenomenon of child prostitution. Therefore, in this section, I use not only the findings of the current study to formulate recommendations, but I also review and adapt policies related to child prostitution which have been successful in other countries to the Malaysian context. The adaptation aims to help the Malaysian government to strengthen the current policies used to protect children from prostitution and to make a concrete action plan to eliminate child prostitution in the country.

In general, the recommendations below are made based on the research findings in Chapter Five and Chapter Seven, the narrative accounts given by the respondents in Chapter Six, and the information discussed in Chapter One and Chapter Three. A few sections (i.e. Law Enforcement Authorities, and the NGOs sections) though, adapted some recommendations from developing countries made by the United Nations (1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2001) like Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Pakistan, India and China. The problem of child prostitution in Malaysia has somewhat similar pattern with these countries, therefore some of their recommendations on the phenomenon, which are related to the Malaysian scenario have been taken into account in this chapter.

In general, the researcher recognises three main aspects, which are important to be focused on in providing recommendations, namely prevention, rehabilitation, and reintegration. Additionally, suggestions to improve this research or to explore other aspects of research in the future are also provided.

8.2 Prevention

Every child in Malaysia deserves to live in a safe, secure, healthy, harmonious, loving, and warm family and to be protected from prostitution. When children are in prostitution, they are victims of sexual exploitation, and rarely can they protect themselves against abuse, assault, violent and the danger of STDs. The research findings and the narrative accounts given by respondents in this sample proves the sexual exploitation and the victimization of children in prostitution is really exists and it is beyond the expectation. A number of respondents participated in this study maybe small, but their victimization and sexual exploitation experience in prostitution should be fully given attention by authorities. Many prostituted young women out there are believed have the same sexual exploitation and victimization experience of those young women in this sample. Thus, efforts to protect children from prostitution must emphasize prevention as the first priority. Prevention is also the key to reducing child prostitution. The responsibility to protect children and to reduce child prostitution falls on everyone's shoulder in every institution – family, society, government, NGOs, etc. Everyone has to make sure they are working to prevent at-risk children from ending up engaging in prostitution.

i. Family

The study found that particular attention should be paid to four groups of vulnerable children: emotionally damaged children from dysfunctional families, sexual abuse and exploitation victims, runaways, and drug abusers (see Table 5.14, Table 5.16, Table 5.22, Table 5.25, and Table 5.42). These children are easy prey for pimps or are easily influenced by their peers to become involved in prostitution. The findings suggest that strong, healthy and functional family is an important part of protecting children from prostitution. Therefore, in order to ensure stable and supportive families for children, it is recommended that:

- a. **Campaigns for strengthening the family institution and improving family values** should be done constantly to enable families to withstand the pressure brought forth by the rapid and dynamic changes of lives.

- b. Activities or programmes to support families suffering from family dysfunction should be provided. Families who suffer from intra-familial sexual abuse experience and domestic violence should be encouraged to make a police report and to bring their children to mental health services in order to help them get over their victimization and restore their self-worth, self-esteem and self-confidence.
- c. Information about child abuse, child sexual exploitation and the effects of all forms of violence against children should be provided to families.

ii. Society

Society must be open to recognise and act against child abuse and sexual exploitation. As mentioned in Chapter One and Chapter Three, Malaysian society is not fully understood and aware about child sexual exploitation and child rights. Although they are now aware about child abuse, the phenomenon however still exists. The research findings and the police statistics about child abuse and sexual exploitation reported in the two chapters above show that much more needs to be done to tackle the problem. In order to move society forward to act against child abuse and sexual exploitation, several steps as listed below should be considered:

- a. Society should be educated about the rights of children and its awareness of and sensitivity to the problem of child abuse and exploitation should be heightened.
- b. Society should be aware and strive to bring child abuse and exploitation out of the shadows and to report such incidents to the authorities.
- c. Society should be encouraged to create a culture that refuses to accept any form of violence against children.

Society also needs to change its attitudes towards:

- a. ***Child prostitution***; by treating the phenomenon differently from adult prostitution and also recognizing it as a form of child sexual victimization, not as child deviance.

- b. ***Prostituted children***; by recognizing them as victims of sexual exploitation, not as villains, and offering them meaningful helps, not to label them with depressing names, which can affect their reputation, dignity, self-worth and self-esteem.
- c. ***Child rape victims***; d). ***Children who suffer from loss of virginity due to sexual abuse and exploitation***; by providing them protection, not to humiliate, isolate, ignore or stigmatise them.
- e. ***Sex with prostituted children***; by giving an unequivocal message that 'it is not right' to have sex with or to sexually exploit children.

iii. Media

The research results and the narrative accounts generally highlight the need to break the deafening silence around the issue of child abuse and sexual exploitation in Malaysia. The media can play a powerful role by raising the awareness through dissemination of accurate messages concerning the nature, extent and seriousness of child abuse and prostitution in contemporary Malaysian society. Lack of public awareness will cause children to be continuously victimised, and both child abuse and prostitution will be widespread and harder to eliminate from the society.

iv. Law Enforcement Authorities

From the research findings and the information discussed in Chapter Three, it is clear that law enforcement is a potent tool for prevention. In order to stop child prostitution and to protect children from prostitution, the steps below are thought needs to be implemented by law enforcement authorities in Malaysia. The first five steps (a-e) of the implementation have been adapted from the United Nations (1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2001, Save the Children, 1996) and the rest are from the information discussed in Chapter Three.

- a. To accept child prostitution as equally heinous as other mainstream crimes like murder, drug, corruption, rape, and robbery.
- b. To form a special task force unit to tackle child prostitution and related problems.
- c. To educate and train officers handling child prostitution cases on how to identify children at risk and to treat prostituted children as children in need, who may be suffering or likely to suffer from significant harm. The treatment of prostituted children should be based more on their protection, not criminalisation, so that they are not prosecuted by the system that should actually protect them.
- d. To increase the activities of community policing and raids on premises used for prostitution (pubs, hotels, entertainment centres etc.) in order to rescue prostituted children and to bring into the justice system child sex customers, pimps and other individuals related to child prostitution.
- e. To increase efforts in tracking down and prosecuting child exploiters.
- f. To increase penalty and jail sentences for customers, pimps, owners of prostitution premises, and individuals involved in child prostitution offences.
- g. To allow abortion rights to young women who conceive as a result of rape, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

v. Schools

Life is about learning process. Teaching children about the realities of sexual abuse and exploitation is a key for early intervention to prevent them from being victims of abuse and prostitution, and raising their awareness of the nature and tactics of exploiters. From the research findings and the researcher's personal school experience in Malaysia for 12 years, the researcher believes that schools can play a significant role on preventing children from abuse and prostitution if they:

- a. Educating children about sex, sexuality and sexual relationships, reproductive health, child prostitution and STDs so that they can recognize and avoid high-risk situations.

- b. Educating children about how to protect and respect themselves, and how to report incidents of abusive or coercive sexual contact between themselves and others to law enforcement and human service authorities.
- c. Educating and training staff on how to deal with 'at-risk' children in school i.e. those who suffer from domestic violence, abuse, family breakdown, substance abuse problems, and running away.
- d. Supporting 'at-risk' or vulnerable children to remain at school, building their self-esteem, and giving special motivational and counselling programmes in order to divert them away from involvement in appropriate or dangerous street sub-cultures or prostitution.
- e. Helping children to speak out about their problems.

vi. NGOs

Efforts to prevent children from engaging in prostitution are difficult to achieve without the involvement of the NGOs. From the research findings, the information discussed in Chapter Three, and the current movement of NGOs, the researcher believes that the organizations can play several roles in preventing children to become involved in prostitution. Below are the roles have been suggested to play by the NGOs in Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Pakistan, India and China, which is also thought should be implemented in Malaysia (adaptation from the United Nations, 1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2001):

- a. Lobbying the government to consider child prostitution as one of the significant social problems of the country and to impose stiff penalties on child abusers and exploiters, to review policies and statutes that may inadvertently put young people at risk, and to enforce new legislation related to the problem if necessary.
- b. Conducting awareness campaigns for the public to change their attitudes towards the problem and towards prostituted children.
- c. Documenting the life experiences of children in prostitution in order to listen to their views. These children are young, but they still have a voice that needs to be heard and taken seriously.

- d. Documenting the nature and extent of child prostitution in order to assist the government to tackle the problem, help and safeguard prostituted children, review legislation/policy related to child prostitution and provide special rehabilitation programmes for victimised children.
- e. Providing qualified youth outreach workers who can seek out and offer support to at-risk and sexually exploited children.
- f. Providing shelters and counselling for runaway or 'thrown away' children, and prostituted children who want to quit prostitution. Information about available services should be circulated through all media.
- g. Setting up advice lines and informal drop-in centres to help runaways, drug users, and victims of abuse and prostitution to get proper advice on their problems.
- h. Locating and visiting homeless, runaway and drug abuse children in identified locations to build a rapport with them in order to help them.

vii. The Department of Social Welfare

The Department of Social Welfare is the authority that has been given responsibility to handle any issue or case related to child protection and welfare. From the research results, the narrative accounts given by the respondents, and the way the Department of Social Welfare handles the phenomenon as well as prostituted children today, several measures should be taken by the department to prevent children from becoming involved in prostitution. These include:

- a. Launching a major national awareness-raising campaign concerning child abuse and prostitution in close collaboration with key members of civil society in order to break traditional taboos that prevent people from talking about these issues, to remove the stigmatisation of victims, to facilitate their eventual reintegration into society, and to raise awareness about the spread of STDs, particularly AIDS.
- b. Providing easy access to the public to make complaints to the department about the occurrence of child abuse and sexual exploitation.

- c. Providing easy access to services to abused, exploited, runaway and substance abusing children so that they can seek help and discuss their problems.
- d. Acting quickly and sensitively to complaints or reports of child abuse and prostitution in the best interests of the children concerned.
- e. Providing family counselling services to advise families experiencing psychosocial stress, poor relationships or finding it difficult to manage their children.
- f. Providing treatment plans for children who are raped, assaulted, abused and who manifest any chronic drug and mental health problems in order to increase their levels of self-esteem, as well as to alleviate negative social attitudes towards them.

8.3 Rehabilitation/Recovery

Prostituted children who are being safeguarded at the rehabilitation centres need special treatment to assist them in the process of recovery from the impact and experience of prostitution. Rehabilitation or recovery, without doubt, is the most difficult aspect of the entire process, both for the child victims and for those helping them. Rehabilitation is of little value unless coupled with some structure that would assist in the healing process of the child, physically, mentally and psychologically. From the research results, the narrative accounts given by the respondents, the discussion with the officers, and the observation during fieldwork, four aspects are considered in need of improvement by the rehabilitation centres in order to ensure the quality of services given to the children is of high standard, effective and beneficial – treatment programmes, vocational training, education of children, and the image of the centre and the children.

i. Treatment Programmes

Several aspects related to the treatment programmes are suggested below for the rehabilitation centres' consideration.

- a. The vulnerability of children as victims of sexual abuse and exploitation should be the principal motivation in structuring treatment programmes suitable for them. Programmes that promote self-confidence and build self-esteem for the children are primarily important.
- b. The three-year regimented system now being used to treat prostituted children regards these children more as villains/criminals, rather than victims of sexual exploitation. The system needs to be changed with a therapy base system or other humanistic systems that are more friendly to children, of shorter duration of living in the centre (less than three years), and also effective, skilled and lengthy interventions offering psychological and social supports.
- c. The programmes implemented at the rehabilitation centres are geared to transform the children into good housewives – cooking, sewing and handicraft making – but not to fulfil the needs of society and job placement. The centres need to move beyond crisis service delivery and begin to assist in the long term healing of the children. Alternative programmes which include crisis intervention and stabilization, skills-building toward self-protection and self-sufficiency, raising awareness on sexual abuse and on STDs including AIDS and their prevention, individualised counselling, mentoring activities, legal and personal rights education programmes to empower children to defend themselves, and sustained growth and reintegration activities need to be implemented in the centres.
- d. The number of trained professionals, including child psychologists, psychiatrists, counsellors and social workers specialising in this problem should be increased.
- e. The opportunities for experienced children to contribute support to the young people victims of child prostitution should be provided. Peer involvement in services has been judged as an effective medium for creating a more accessible and approachable service, helping children to recover from prostitution trauma, and regaining their self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-worth.
- f. The security of children in the centres should always be monitored to avoid being sexually exploited by irresponsible staff. Attention should be given to staff selection and recruitment in order to ensure that people who are unsuitable for work with vulnerable children are not employed.

- g. An effective complaints procedure should be developed and implemented in order that children's allegations and complaints about inappropriate treatment within the centre are taken seriously.
- h. The treatment of children in the centres should also involve their family as frequently as possible in order to allow the families to offer direct moral support to their children and to speed up the re-integration process of the children with their families.

ii. Vocational Training

The problem of child prostitution can never be resolved simply by the act of capturing the children and sending them back to their families or communities. As part of a longer-term recovery strategy, the centres should establish vocational training and job-placement services in order to provide the children with the means to build stable livelihoods. To achieve this, the centre should:

- a. Have a variety of skills training that suit the current demand in the job market for the young people.
- b. Develop partnership initiatives with local colleges or training and employment agencies and together, help to train the young people in vocational skills.

iii. Education

All children in the centre need appropriate schooling in order:

- a. To complete their education, especially for those who left school early.
- b. To offer a chance for education for those who never experienced schooling.
- c. To expose them to socialization process so that they can easily reintegrate into mainstream society after being released from the rehabilitation centres.
- d. To help them achieve basic qualifications or beyond to be used once they are released from the rehabilitation centres.

iv. The Image of the Rehabilitation Centre and the Children

Child victims in the rehabilitation centres could easily be identified and, therefore, looked down upon by society as undesirable. The rehabilitation centres need:

- a. To promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of the victims to foster their health, self-respect and dignity.
- b. To improve their image as the institutions that offer help for young people, not as institutions for punishment.
- c. To create an ambience of homeliness at the centres, a place of peace and care that offers hope and love to the children.
- d. To educate the public by constantly disseminating information through media about the centre and the child residents.
- e. To cooperate and work with society in conducting activities for the children.

8.4 Reintegration

The process of reintegrating children, who were victims of prostitution, is not an easy task. The attitudes of families and communities are the biggest challenge to deal with. For young women who are no longer virgins and who were involved in prostitution, their families and communities often look down on them. Therefore, prostituted children who want to return to their homes may suffer from both family and community stigma and rejection. In order to eliminate the problems and to make the reintegration process for the children a success, the centres have:

- a. To encourage the families to often visit the children at the centre. Families who are poor and live far away from the centre should be supported financially to enable them to visit their children.
- b. To understand and help the children deal with the factors that contributed to their involvement in prostitution before allowing them to go home.
- c. To set up or strengthen aftercare teams to provide continuous support for children after they return to their home and leave the centres.

- d. To frequently conduct family counselling sessions in order to create a more favourable family environment following children's release from the centre.
- e. To frequently visit the young women after they were released from the centres in order to support them emotionally regarding social stigma and to ensure they are not being sexually re-abused or re-exploited.
- f. To provide foster family or 'transit centre' for those children who fail to reintegrate with their families, are rejected by their families, or who are in danger of being forced to re-enter prostitution.

8.5 Future Research

This research is only a beginning, a first step in exploring the nature, dynamics and seriousness of child prostitution in Malaysia. Much more needs to be understood about the causes and extent of the problem, especially among those sexually vulnerable populations of children that are hidden from public view. In future, this research should:

- a. Increase the sample size by including respondents in all five rehabilitation centres in the country.
- b. Concentrate more on the dynamic aspects of Malaysian life that contribute to the sexual exploitation of children – family and societal values, morals, attitudes, traditions and structures.
- c. Include prostituted young women who are still involved in prostitution.
- d. Focus on male child prostitution as comparison to the phenomenon of female child prostitution.
- e. Study the problem based on specific geographical areas; city, district, state or nation.
- f. Study the motivating factors leading to the children's decision to exit prostitution.
- g. Cooperate with several government agencies, NGOs and academics from multidisciplinary backgrounds to conduct collaborative research.
- h. Study the behaviours and profiles of child sex exploiters – customers and pimps.

- i. Examine legislative amendments and law enforcement practices aimed at men who sexually procure children and men who purchase the sexual services of a child.
- j. Focus on long-term impact of child prostitution on children as they mature into adults.
- k. Evaluate the effectiveness of treatment or rehabilitation programmes received by children.

8.6 Conclusion

The recommendations above are multifaceted. Prevention and early intervention for children at risk is vital to avoid them from becoming prostitution victims. Everyone must make it a point to learn about the sexual exploitation of children, such as recognising the risk factors, understanding the dangers, knowing appropriate resources for referrals, and understanding the immediate and long-term impact on children. A multi-agency approach including partnerships between governments, families, communities, NGOs, professional groups and the media is really important to prevent children falling through the net and to eradicate the complex societal problem of child prostitution. By building a network of people or organizations interested in eradicating child prostitution, conducting awareness campaigns, doing collaborative research, providing support for dysfunctional families and at-risk children, and educating communities and young people, we can perhaps begin to change public attitudes and can come together to form a collective teamwork to protect children and to eliminate child prostitution. The processes involved in protecting children from prostitution will demand a lot of time, energy and capital investment, and success is not necessarily certain. However, efforts for preventing and protecting children from child prostitution must be done continuously and should never ever be stopped.

9 Conclusion

The evidence from this research demonstrates that child prostitution in Malaysia is not a minor problem. It is a serious problem and a massive threat to children. Being drawn into prostitution is not the preserve of 'problem children'. Children from intact and advantaged backgrounds can be drawn into prostitution. However, the vast majority of children in the current study come from backgrounds which can accurately be characterised as disadvantaged.

- i. They come from dysfunctional families, particularly from families where breakdown, multiple family problems, parental emotional and physical neglect, and domestic violence are characteristic.
- ii. They experience relationship problems with their parents.
- iii. They have history of abuse and sexual exploitation during childhood.
- iv. They leave school at early age (between the age of 12 and 15).
- v. They experience running away from home at least once.
- vi. They abuse drugs at younger age (between the age of 14 and 16).

It should be noted that family problems and breakdown, domestic violence, childhood abuse and sexual exploitation, unstable family relationship, low educational attainment, running away from home, and drug abuse are not the only factors that affect the vulnerability of children. Additionally, there are many children who face similar experiences yet are never involved in prostitution. But there is strong evidence that the greater the number of risk factors existing in the life of a child, the greater is the likelihood that a child will become victimised, and for many of the young people in this study, this victimisation included to prostitution. The majority of young women in this sample first were involved in prostitution at the age of 13 to 17 years old. The youngest was nine at the time she was prostituted. Most of them were deceived by their boyfriends who were really acting as pimps and influenced by their peers. In terms of the nature of their involvement and 'work' in prostitution, the research has found that:

- i. Most of them ‘worked’ in close-door premises like hotels, customers’ houses, pubs, or boyfriends’ houses. Some even ‘worked’ in public places like parks, abandoned houses, karaoke clubs, etc.
- ii. Most of them were pimped by boyfriends or agents of a prostitution syndicate.
- iii. Most of them ‘served’ 6-10 men per day and ‘worked’ 5-7 days a week.
- iv. Most of them used their earnings for food, entertainment, clothes, and drugs/alcohol.
- v. Most of them experienced abuse by pimps and customers including being verbally and physically abused, raped and drugged.
- vi. Most of them used drugs (psychotropic pills and marijuana) during prostitution as escapism from a depressed life, to erase bad memories and to enable them to ‘work’ longer hours.
- vii. Most of them did not use any contraception while prostituting.

The majority of the prostituted young women were placed at the rehabilitation centre after being under the police detention. Many pointed out that prostitution has affected them and make them feel depressed, entrapped, guilty, dirty and with low self-esteem. While living in the rehabilitation centre,

- i. Many of them have suffered from depression, sadness, and tension.
- ii. Most of them have hardly ever, if not all, been visited by their families.
- iii. Most of them felt they had received good support from the centre.

The research has also found that the nature of child prostitution in Malaysia, like in other countries, is abusive, exploitative, and negatively effects a child development. In summary, it:

- i. Is predominantly controlled by pimps or prostitution syndicates.
- ii. Operates clandestinely in close-door premises – that is why most people do not know of its existence and do not understand why children get involved in prostitution.
- iii. Involves violence, exploitation and abuse.
- iv. Suppresses a child’s normal development.

- v. Deprives a child's fundamental rights to independence, education, freedom, health and autonomy, as well as on decision regarding their bodies, preservation of their intimacy, and living with secured families.
- vi. Robs a child's happy childhood, future, innocence, virginity, dignity, privacy, and their sense of self-worth.
- vii. Denies the needs of children for love and self-expression.
- viii. Damages a child's physical and psychological health.

Overall, children in prostitution are truly victims that have to be helped and child prostitution has rightly been called the ultimate 'evil' phenomenon. The younger the children are, the higher the degree of their victimization in prostitution. Rescuing them is the only solution available for the children; to free them from pain, agony, and suffering.

Social service agencies need to work together to remove them from prostitution, as some are fully under the control of their pimps and are too afraid to seek help, while others may suffer from depression and self-hatred that they are unable to do anything for themselves. By saving them from prostitution, they will be able to build better life. They, like other children, are also special human beings with all the potential of being of great value not only to themselves, but also to the society and as such, deserve a normal live as any children.

The rescuing, treatment and reintegration of child prostitution victims is a complex mission, as it needs to deal with all of the interwoven issues, including running away, homelessness, abuse, education, neglect, sexual exploitation, substance abuse, physical and mental health problems, family dysfunction, and the effects of violence in these children's lives. But, it is a worthwhile mission.

Child prostitution is a social product, a symptom or a metaphor for societal decay, moral corruption and capitalism. It will continue to exist if society allows it, if we do not change our attitudes towards the problem and prostituted children, and if we continue to hide the prevalence of child abuse and neglect. It seems clear that for various reasons including societal norms and values, the seriousness of child abuse and neglect (and child prostitution) remains a hidden social problem in Malaysia. However, the problem is one which society cannot afford to ignore today. It should be brought out into the public so that people can directly and intently look at it and see its potential for

immorality, dreadfulness and devastation, which has always been there in the heart of the society. Abused and neglected children may suffer from psychological trauma throughout their lives. They have a high possibility of drowning in prostitution if they do not receive appropriate help and healing for their traumas. There is a need to provide better support and care for children in stressful and difficult home environments, and for those who have been subjected to abuse, neglect and violence. Perhaps if more effective social support and care can be extended to at-risk children, there will be less transition to prostitution.

In conclusion, child prostitution has to be eradicated by all means possible. The costs of human suffering as a result of child prostitution are incalculable primarily to the victims, but also to their families and society. Eliminating this problem requires comprehensive programmes that address their social root causes, and an investment of resources and time. The responsibility to eliminate the problem rests with the government and its agencies, the media, law enforcement authorities, the criminal-justice system, NGOs, parents, and all levels of civil society. It is only with a full understanding of the problem, a combined effort, a strong commitment and a sustained long-term battle that the goal to stop child prostitution can be achieved. No one should be unaware that every child has rights to be protected from violation and that prostitution is not a proper place for them to grow up. No one should remain ignorant that prostituted children are victims of sexual exploitation who are being abused, violently treated, raped, beaten, drugged and locked up by pimps and customers.

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Appendix 1

Strictly Confidential	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Semi Structured Interview Schedule</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">(English Version)</p>
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Researcher:

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(Under supervision of Prof. Simon Hackett)
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*This research is registered at University of Durham in order to fulfil the requirements
for the degree of Doctoral of Philosophy in Social Work*

To be read to the Respondent:
<p>As part of my degree and my concern to the problem of child sexual exploitation, this research is done in order to find out more information on this problem. That is why I came to you and I hope that you can help me by sharing your experience/information. Below are your rights to participate in this research:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I would like you to answer all the questions asked honestly. If you have problem understanding any question, please do not hesitate to ask me to repeat or to explain. Please leave out any questions you do not wish to answer. 2. Your information will only be used for the purpose of this research. You, as the information provider will be given anonymity in order to protect your identity. Please do not use your real name unless you want to. 3. If you feel uncomfortable after participating in this research, you will be offered immediate support and advice by counsellor and the officer. If you want to withdraw your information after participating in this research, you can do so. Please see the officer or researcher as soon as possible. This research is aware and respectful of your rights either to participate or not in this study. <p style="text-align: center;">~ Thank You Very Much for Your Cooperation ~</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">For Record Only</p> <p>Serial No.: </p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Time: _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Check List</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 40px; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Information has been checked</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Information has been processed into SPSS</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Information has been re-checked for the second time</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;">2002/2005</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Information has been checked	<input type="checkbox"/>	Information has been processed into SPSS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Information has been re-checked for the second time
<input type="checkbox"/>	Information has been checked						
<input type="checkbox"/>	Information has been processed into SPSS						
<input type="checkbox"/>	Information has been re-checked for the second time						

Section A – Respondent Background

1. How old are you now?

--	--
2. Where do you come from? (urban or rural area): _____
3. What is your ethnicity? (e.g. Malay, Chinese, Indian etc.): _____
4. When did you leave school? _____
5. What is the reason(s) why you left school: _____
6. What qualification do you have? _____

Section B – Family Background and the Relationship of the Respondent with Her Family

7. How many siblings do you have in your family? What is your position in the family? _____
8. Do your parents stay together? _____
9. How would you describe your family economic status? (e.g. poor, privileged etc.)

10. How would you describe your relationship with your family?
11. Who did you get on best with in your family? _____
12. Who did you get on worst with in your family? Why?
13. How would you describe your family environment? (e.g. loving, caring, fighting, etc.)
14. How does your family environment affect your life? (e.g. personality, behaviour etc.)

15. Do you feel that your parents are neglecting or have neglected you? In what aspect(s)?
-
16. Do your parents have any problems that you are aware of? (e.g. mental health, gambling, drug addiction etc.)
-
17. Do you feel that you have suffered any kind of abuse from your parents?
-
18. Do you think there is another person beside your parents who is abusing or had abused you? (do not give any names). What kind of abuse?
-
19. Can you explain how this kind of abuse(s) has affected your life? (e.g. personality, sexual behaviour etc.)
-
20. Did you ever runaway or have been thrown away when you were younger? Why? How many times did you runaway from home?
-

Section C – The Involvement of the Respondent in Prostitution

21. How old were you when you first had sex? How old was the first person you had sex with? How did it happen?
-

22. How old were you when you began 'working'? _____
23. Can you explain briefly how did you get involved? (e.g. trapped, tricked, influenced, volunteered)
-
24. Has anyone else in your family been involved in this 'profession'? _____
25. Did you have anyone managing/protecting/controlling you whilst you were 'working'? What was your relationship with him/her?
- _____
26. Where did you do your 'work'? (e.g. home, street, sauna, car, etc)
- _____
27. Who were the men who usually were your 'customers'? Where did you find your 'customers'? Did anyone help you to find 'customers'?
- _____
28. How did you feel about your 'customers'?
- _____
29. How many 'customers' did you have to 'serve' in a day and how much did the 'customers' pay for your 'service'?
- _____
30. How many days did you have to 'work' in a week? How much did you earn a week?
- _____
31. Did you have to give/share your earning with other people? If so, who and how much?
- _____
32. How did you prevent yourself from being pregnant? (e.g. using condoms)
- _____
33. Have you ever been pregnant? Who was responsible for it? How is the baby?
- _____

Section D – Respondent's Life Experience during the Involvement

34. How do you think this 'profession' has changed or affected your life?

35. How did you spend the money you earned?

36. Did you take drugs? When did you start using it? What kind of drug? Why you take drugs? Did anyone influence you to take it? Where did you get your drug supply?

37. Had you ever been abused during your 'work'? Who did it? (e.g. boyfriend, customer, pimp, etc.)

38. Can you describe how did they abused you? How frequent was the abuse?

39. How did you cope with the abuse?

40. What is your opinion about this 'work'? How do you perceive yourself? Do you feel trapped?

Section E – Respondent's Life Experience in the Rehabilitation Centre and Her Future Plans

41. How did you come into this centre? How old were you at the time?

42. Do you find it difficult to change your life after leaving the 'work'? Why?

43. How do you feel living in this centre?

44. What activity(s) in this centre do you like and dislike?

45. Do you receive adequate support and help from this centre?

46. Do you receive any support from your family? Do they visit you? How often?

47. What suggestion(s) do you have about how this centre could be improved?

48. What is your future plan after being released from this centre? (e.g. find another job, get married, continue studying, go back to previous 'work', etc.)

49. Is there anything else that you want to tell me?

~Thank You Very Much for Your Cooperation~

Appendix 2

INTERVIEWER GUIDE FOR NARRATIVE INTERVIEW *(English Version)*

Please read the guidelines below carefully before you start the interview session.

Please use these questions as a guide in the interview, but remember that it is important to encourage the respondent to talk freely about their experiences at their own pace, raising their own issues in their own time. Conduct your interview with respondents in an informal, friendly and relaxed way. Do not conduct interviews in an interrogative way. It is important to be sensitive to the needs of the interviewees at all times. If you notice that a young woman being interviewed is becoming distressed in any way, please give the respondent the option of terminating the interview and emphasise the support on offer.

As a research assistant, your task during the interview is help the respondents tell their story about their life experiences before prostitution, the factors that drove them into prostitution, their life experiences during prostitution and while living in the rehabilitation centre, and their future intentions after being released from the centre.

To start the interview, you can ask the respondent to tell you about herself or her life experience. Let her choose the point she wants to start with. The following questions may be useful for you in the course of the interview to help facilitate a respondent's life story, if needed:

FAMILY AND EARLY LIFE EXPERIENCES

1. How old are you now?
2. How old were you when you left school? What was your reason for leaving school?
3. Did you spend most of your time during childhood with your parents? If no, who was your guardian and why did you live with them? How would you describe your family's economic status?
4. Could you please describe your relationship with your family? Did you have problems while living with your family? What impact did these have on you as you were growing up?
5. Can you tell me about any experiences of abuse you had as a child (how old, who was the person, what kind of behaviours- i.e. physical, emotional, sexual) and the consequences for you afterwards?

SEXUAL HISTORY

6. Can you tell me about your sexual experiences? How old were you when you first had sex? How did it happen? How old was the first partner you had sex with?

RUNNING AWAY AND DRUG MISUSE

7. Have you ever run away from home? How old were you when you did this for the first time? What were your reasons for running away from home? How many times did you run away from home during your childhood?
8. Did you ever use drugs during your childhood? How old were you when you first started using drugs? What kind of drugs did you use? Who was the person who introduced you to drugs? Who was the person who often supplied you the drugs? Why do you think you started using drugs?

PROSTITUTION

9. How old were you when you became involved in this 'work'? Could you please describe how it happened?
10. What was your lifelike while you were 'working'?
11. Did you 'work' alone, or with, or for somebody else? Who? What was your experience of them? How much did you earn? etc.
12. Can you tell me about your customers? Who were they and how old were they? How many customers would you typically have in a day?
13. What was your health like when you were working? Did you always protect yourself during sex with them? Did you experience pregnancy during your involvement? Did you suffer from STDs?
14. Would you say that you experienced abuse from your customers? Could you tell me about your experiences of abuse? How did you cope with the abuse?
15. What is your opinion now about the 'job'?

REHABILITATION CENTRE AND THE FUTURE

16. How did you come to be in this centre? How old were you when you arrived here?
17. Could you please describe your life experiences while living in this centre?
18. Can you tell me about a typical day here?
19. How do you feel about living in this centre? Have you been given good support here? What suggestions do you have for the centre?
20. How often does your family or relatives visit you here?
21. How easy or difficult has it been for you to make changes to your life after the 'job'?
22. Do you ever think of returning to prostitution after being released from the centre?
23. What are your dreams and future aspirations? Do you ever think of returning to your family and/or marriage?

