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SOCIO-CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF TRAFFICKING AMONG WOMEN IN  
ETHIOPIA: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

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ABSTRACT

Trafficking of women from Ethiopia is a serious global issue since last couple of decades. The growing episodes of trafficking of women in Ethiopia are closely interlinked with patriarchal social system and numerous socio-cultural determinants stimulating gender violence in rural regions of the country. This piece of research is based on content analysis and review of 27 research articles published in different journals on this thematic area. Greater priority is given on critical analysis of contents and inputs of these studies in responding to research questions and validating the key research hypothesis adopted for the study. Patriarchal social setup coupled with limited economic opportunity and social deprivations among rural women of Ethiopia tend to promote socio-cultural milieu for being trafficked. The feminization of poverty is key contributing factor for trafficking in women and increasing gender violence in rural Ethiopia. The diminishing access to education, employment opportunities, empowerment are positively correlated with enhanced out flow of women being trafficked to middle east countries annually for last couple of decades. The socio-cultural determinants may be categorized as stimulants and barriers in context of trafficking of women. Poverty, gender violence, patriarchal social norms, absence of policy enforcement, practice of child marriage, ethnic diversity, inimical cultural practices, ignorance about trafficking are key stimulating socio-cultural determinants of trafficking. Education of women, opening of employment opportunities, higher ethnic status and birth order of girl are mitigating or protective socio-cultural determinants curbing and flow of women being trafficked. The conclusions cover wide range of recommendations to address policy gap and promote empowerment of women as a viable alternative for mitigating trafficking. Expansion of job opportunities coupled with enforcement of migration and criminal laws and involvement of private organizations would go a long way in combating trafficking from the land of Ethiopia.

*Keywords:* Feminization of poverty, Trafficking, Socio-cultural milieu, Gender violence, Patriarchal.