

**Uncovering the realities of prostitutes and their children in a cross national comparative study
between India and the U.S.**

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This qualitative study examines the needs and challenges of prostitutes and their children. A review of research regarding prostitutes indicates that the needs and experiences of prostitutes, their children, and stakeholders who provide services to this population have been neglected. The first part of the study looks at the challenges prostitutes face trying to be successful mothers. The study was conducted in the U.S. and India. The findings of this study reveal that these women face difficulties in their daily lives. Due to the distinct differences between the interventions and policies in both countries, each group shares a different relationship with their children. The findings of the study strongly advocate for joint programs for prostitutes and their children to help ensure them all a better future. The second part of the study was conducted with children of prostitutes who live with their mothers in red light areas of Mumbai, India. The participants discussed the experiences and challenges they face in their daily lives as children of prostitutes, their relationships with their mothers, and support programs needed for a better life. All of the child participants conveyed that they did not want to be separated from their mothers. The children had good relationships with their mothers and wanted to support their mothers as they aged. The final part of the study examines challenges stakeholders encounter while providing services to prostitutes and their children. The stakeholders also shared their views about the difficulties that children of prostitutes and their mothers face. The stakeholders expressed what support they thought would be helpful for this group. This study is presented in the form of three distinct scholarly manuscripts. Each of the manuscripts has its own research questions and findings that contribute to the overall research agenda in unique ways. Each study makes its own specific recommendations for social work policy, practice, and research. Together, the three manuscripts add to our knowledge about prostitutes as mothers, as well as defining their children's needs and challenges.