

Narco Violence, Forced Displacement and Sex Trafficking: A Qualitative study in Mexico

Abstract

During the last decade, more than 160,000 people have been forcibly displaced internally due to *narco* violence in Mexico. Displaced families suffer social and economic vulnerabilities which, leaves them easy prey to traffickers for the purpose of exploitation. Young girls and women are extremely vulnerable. This paper analyzes the impact of forced displacement on trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation caused by *narco* violence in Mexico. For this study, we gathered information from 16 forced displaced trafficking victims (FDTV) in Monterrey, Mexico. Findings elucidate that traffickers use different tricks and promises to trap displaced young girls and women, including force into sexual exploitation. Moreover, narco violence has generated a huge number of orphans and widows in the country. Traffickers use the economic vulnerable condition, and lack of family support structures, of these orphans girls and widows, and force them into sexual exploitation.

Keywords: Narco violence, Forced displacement, Sex trafficking and Mexico

*Narco-violence*¹ in Mexico has escalated dramatically since 2007 (Shirk and Wallman, 2015; IDMC, 2012) and has resulted in an estimated 159,091 additional homicides in the country (Espallargas, 2017, SEGOB, 2017). The recent report on *narco-violence* by the Attorney General of Mexico indicates that there are 18 out of 32 Mexican states mostly affected by the drug cartel violence (Mosso, 2017). According to *Secretariado Ejecutivo del Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública* during last 20 years from 1997 to 2017 the rate of homicides jumped 50.24 percent and continued to grow dramatically. In the recent study on *Indice de Paz Mexico 2018* (Mexico Peace Index) elaborated by Instituto para la Economía y Paz (Institute for Economic & Peace) indicates that during the year 2017 the economic cost of violence rose to 4.72 billion Mexican pesos which is equal to 21 percent of national GDP (IEP, 2018).

The social impact of violence is enormous, as many studies affirm that it directly violates the human rights of victims and forces people to migrate both internal and across the border (IDMC, 2012, Albuja, 2014). Nieto (2016) indicates in his study *La migración forzada en México tiene rostro de mujer* that most of these forced migrants are young women and girls. Some data also indicates that during the last decade more than 160,000 people have been displaced from their place of origin due to drug cartel violence in Mexico (Diaz-Leal, 2015).

Globally, there are 65.6 million people have fled from their homes either as refugees (22.5 million), internally displaced persons (40.3 million), or asylum seekers as a result of conflict and persecution (UNHCR, 2016). The International Organization for Migration defines forced migrant as any person who migrates to “escape persecution,

¹ Narco violence refers to drug related violence: which define as: all intentional violence including homicide that involve in production; manufacture; extraction and commercialization and controlled drugs (Vuillamy, 2010, Eberle, 2011, Roth, 2017),

conflict, repression, natural and human-made disasters, ecological degradation, or other situations that endanger their lives, freedom or livelihood” (IOM, 2000). According to the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM) forced displacement or forced migration is the coerced movement of a person or persons away from their home or home region and it often connotes violent coercion (Knox and Marston, 2015).

United Nation Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) indicates that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person (Article 3) and no one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms (Article 4)². A recent study of HAART (Awareness Against Human Trafficking) (2016) on displacement, violence and vulnerability, states that forced displacement can increase the risk of trafficking by violating their human rights and weakening or destroying family support structures, community bonds, and self-protection mechanisms that might otherwise serve as a buffer to trafficking. Researchers also note that; traffickers use the vulnerable situation of displaced people to falsely offer lucrative employment opportunities (Yousaf, 2017, HAART, 2016). The study of Nagle (2013) on conflict and human trafficking in Colombia indicates that due to *guerrilla* activity, every year thousands of women and girls displaced from rural areas and migrated to urban centers in search of livelihood. Upon their arrival, many of them are lured by false promises and are trafficked into the city’s sprawling sex industry for the purpose of sexual exploitation. At the destination, they suffer wide range of violence and various form of discrimination due to the unequal nature of gender relations and thus their human rights are violated.

In the case of Mexico, very few studies have identified the relation between *narco* violence and trafficking for sexual exploitation. For example, the studies of Ramos Lira

² <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

et.al (2016) and Correa-Cabrera & Bryson Clark (2016) found that women and girls are primary affected by the violence due to organized crime in Mexico. Studies indicate that young women and girls kidnapped by the organized crime are forced into prostitution in different places. Recently, the Mexican Senate highlighted that women, girls, and children, who are displaced due to organized crime violence from their community, are targeted by traffickers for the purpose of sexual exploitation and organ trafficking (Senado de la República, 2017). Thus, the aim of the paper is to explore and analyze the impact of forced displacement on trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation caused by *narco* violence in Mexico. This analysis will contribute to the design of effective intervention programs by federal and local governments for these women and children.

Background

There is a body of research that has addressed the links between conflicts, internal displacement and human trafficking. Some of the research discusses issues to conflicts and internal displacement and others cover the subjects of displacement and trafficking. Human trafficking for the purpose of exploitation (sexual or labor) is one of the fastest growing business activities in world today (USDS, 2017). Displaced women and girls are targeted by traffickers for the purpose of sexual exploitation (Martin, 2006). Traffickers take advantages of the vulnerable condition of forcibly displaced people, they lure them with false offers of economic stability, shelter, food, lucrative employment & salary to trafficked (Yousaf, 2017, Nagle, 2013).

The study on displacement, child soldiers and human security by Alfredson (2002) found a multitude connection between displacement and child soldier trafficking. The children of Sierra Leone, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Sudan,

Burundi, Somalia, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Colombia and Iraq who are displaced from their families and community due to violence or conflicts remain particularly vulnerable, the marginalized condition poses a greater risk of recruitment by traffickers. In Colombia the conflict and displacement fuel human trafficking, and according to Nagle (2013) every year nearly 70,000 people are trafficked in the country most of whom are displaced people. The internal armed conflict and socio-political violence in Colombia has displaced millions of people from their land. The study underlines trafficking of human beings for sex and labour is a thriving business in Colombia. As long as the conditions of displacement cause women and children to take desperate measures to survive, or are forced to remain living in conditions that render them fully exposed to exploitation and criminality, trafficking thrives.

In conflict situation women and girls are more vulnerable than men, as they are countered as a high-risk population as s\economic opportunities are stripped away (Martin and Callaway, 2009, Nagle, 2013). For example, the civil wars in Afghanistan has resulted massive displacement and has pushed thousands of women and girls in poverty, making them extremely vulnerable to trafficking. Taliban and rebel fighters forcibly marry young girls and use them as sexual slaves (Mazurana and Carlson, 2006). In Sierra Leon nearly 94 percent of displaced household surveyed experienced sexual assaults, including rape, sexual slavery (Physicians for Human Rights, 2002).

In Mexico, since 2007, *narco*-violence has increased dramatically and has displaced more than 160,000 people from their place of origin (IDMC, 2016). Forced displacement in the country has been hidden and undocumented outcome of this violence. No government institution has systematically tracked the scope (IDMC, 2016, Diaz-Leal, 2015). Some recent media articles such as *Invisibilidad del desplazamiento forzado en*

Mexico³ of El Universal, *Desplaza a 311 mil violencia en el país*⁴, of REFORMA have documented the connection between conflict and massive forced displacement in Mexico, however its association with human trafficking remain an under researched area, which we have tried to explore in the present study.

In Latin America, Mexico has highest number of slaves (Walk Free Foundation, 2016) and occupies the first place in the distribution of child pornography and child sexual abuse (Figueroa 2016; Benítez, Cortes, & Guzman, 2014) in the world. The 2017 Trafficking in Persons Report by the U.S. Department of State indicates that Mexico is a source, transit and destination country for sex trafficking and forced labor. According to the report, Mexican women and children, as well as men, are forced to work in agriculture, domestic service, food processing factories, construction, the informal economy, begging, and vending in both the United States and Mexico. The most vulnerable groups to human trafficking in Mexico include women, children, indigenous people, individuals with mental or physical disabilities, migrants, and LGBT Mexicans, (USDS, 2017). Every year 15,000 to 20,000 women and girls are trafficked into the United States from Mexico and other Latin American countries. Sex traffickers lure poor women and girls with false promises of jobs in the U.S. (Richard, 2000; Acharya, 2011).

Research Methodology

In 2016 the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI en *Spanish*) funded a project entitled: “An exploratory study on exploitation of indigenous

³<http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/observatorio-nacional-ciudadano/invisibilidad-del-desplazamiento-forzado-en-mexico>

⁴<https://www.reforma.com/aplicacioneslibre/articulo/default.aspx?id=1192587&md5=9296fcd8574fee7fff6e8d612eee3a55&ta=0dfdbac11765226904c16cb9ad1b2efe>

people in the state of Nuevo Leon, Mexico” (No. 236.2401.NL-2016), under the supervision of first author. For this project a total 22 sex trafficking victims were interviewed. In the study two victims were identified (named: Rosalinda and Veronica) from the state of Guerrero who left their community because of continuous violence by the organized criminal groups. After completion of this study, follow-up research was carried out to analyze how forced displacement leads to trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, as this problem has not been studied in Mexico. As such, we approached Rosalinda and Veronica to seek their collaboration with the present study, as they have good knowledge on background of the sex trafficking victims. Once we discussed the project with Rosalinda and Veronica, they said they would try to find other girls who are in the same condition.

After receiving the information, the authors of the study, visited the designated brothel and contacted the woman. We described the study and mentioned that Rosalinda and Veronica had given her name and location. After few minutes of conversation with victim, we paid the requested amount of \$200 pesos for 30 minutes to madam, and in case our meeting prolonged for more than 30 minutes we paid an extra amount to owner (this is a common practice in researching clandestine phenomenon such as human trafficking) (Kara, 2010 Baldwin et.al, 2011, Silverman et.al, 2011). This approach allows us to hide our identity in front of the brothel owner and traffickers, only victims knew that we were researchers. After concluding the interview, we asked participants to help us find more women who are victims of trafficking working in the same brothel or others nearby. Every time they located an indigenous victim, they arranged the interview and called us. Applying the snowball technique, we were able to gain access and interviewed indigenous sex trafficking victims in Monterrey. All interviews lasted for around 40 to 50 minutes, and

using the above-mentioned technique, we interviewed a total of 16 women victims ($N=16$) during 2017-2018. All interviews were conducted in Spanish and audio taped and followed an open-ended guide, which was pilot tested. In the paper pseudonyms are used to protect women identity.

Ethics statement

The study protocol was approved by the Autonomous University of Nuevo Leon (UANL) and National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT), Mexico, and followed International Review Board (IRB) research standards and practices. Before and during the interviews, we followed the World Health Organization (WHO) ethical and safety recommendations for interviewing women victims of trafficking written by Zimmerman and Watts (2003), including the relevant ethical and methodology procedures such as safeguarding participants' confidentiality, anonymity, and safety. It is also necessary to mention that, although they agreed to be interviewed via their friend, we still obtained their consent and always explained to them the sole purpose of our study and subject to be discussed. Moreover, we never asked their name, including any questions regarding their ethnic origin that could cause a discriminatory reaction, nor did we question their sentiments or judge their decision or character.

Results

Participants' characteristics

Among the 16-interviewed trafficked women, seven were of the age group 13 to 15 years old and nine women said their age was between 16 to 20 years. Findings highlight that women have very low education levels. Three victims never attended school, eight women had primary level education and five women have completed junior high school. Approximately half of the participants belonged to different indigenous groups⁵ and nine did not identify themselves as belonging to any indigenous community. In addition, when we asked their place of origin, the majority of women were displaced from the states of Guerrero (n=7), four each from the state of Michoacán and Veracruz, and one from the state of Mexico (see table 1).

Table 1: Socio demographic characteristics of participants

Narco-violence and Forced displacement

In the figure 1, we have analyzed the data of homicides committed between 2013 and 2016 in each of Mexico's administrative entities, which indicates that the highest incidences of homicides take place in six states: Guerrero, Michoacán, Jalisco, Mexico State, Chihuahua and Sinaloa (see figure 1). According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC, 2016) since 2007 there are almost 160,000 people that have been displaced from their place of origin. Martinez (2017) indicates that during the last decade, population rates began to decrease in 691 Mexican municipalities (28 percent of the country's total population) due to narco violence.

⁵Mixteco (3), Otomí (2), Nahuas (2)

Figure 1: Number of homicides in Mexican states during 2013-2016

The national census data indicates that the states of Mexico state, Guerrero, Sinaloa and Chihuahua lose the highest percentage of population (INEGI, 2017) and one of the major concerns of this negative growth is due to migration of people due to narco violence. The recent study of IDMC (2012) indicates that the loss of population in these states is linked to the drug cartel violence. People flee from their communities due to kidnappings, extortion, abductions, theft and other crimes in search of better socio economic condition, and security, as they do not have other options. In this regards Estefania an 18 years old girl said:

“When Calderon (President Felipe Calderon) declared war against narcos, Michoacán became so violent. It was not possible to go to work, all day and night we were hearing bullet (gun) sounds. Sometime gang (cartel gang) threatens us not to give information to authorities (police). Few days back they kidnapped our community head and two days later we found his dead body with a message. We suffer constant extortion from cartel people. We were living with fear, it was impossible to go to field. You do not know when they will kill us. We had feeling that we were living in a prison, even we stopped celebrating fiesta de santo patron (feast of patron saint). Many people from my community left their home and migrated to Mexico city or in Guadalajara. As it was impossible to lead a peaceful life, my family also decided to migrate to Puebla”.

Like Estefania’s family, there are other families that flee from their place due to constant extortion by narcos. For example, Gloria an 18 year old girl from Guerrero state indicated:

“My father used to cultivate maize and papaya, but as military people occupied our community and there was a constant fight between military and organized crime. My father could not go to field to cultivate. Thus, he decided to open a Taquería in the village. However, after two months some people came to our house and asked for 1000 pesos. When we asked the reason, they said, it is payment of right of the floor (derecho de piso)⁶. My father said: he does not have money, immediately they put a gun on his chest and said: no te hagas tonto, somos gente de Guerrero Unidos, aqui toda la gente pagan una derecho de piso, si no paga, te desaparece..... (do not be fool, we are people of Guerrero Unidos, here everybody pay right of the floor, if you do not pay, you will disappear). They asked us to pay within three days. So, we sold our horses and ornaments to pay money to organized crime. They used to come every fifteen days and asked the rent. Constant extortion made us impossible to sustain life there. Our major part of income was going on paying on rent to narcos. Thus, one day my father decided move to Mexico city”.

In addition to Estefania and Gloria there are many other cases of forced displacement. Many families also left their community due to the killing of parents, kidnapping of family members and no opportunity of work or education. This forced displacement causes enormous suffering, particularly for women and children. Upon their arrival to new destination, many displaced people face economic and social complications, due to limited social capital, which renders them unable to make plans or find dignified livelihoods. This vulnerable condition is used by traffickers to trap young girls for the purpose of exploitation.

⁶ In Mexico, *derecho de piso* considered as a form of extortion, though the current law does not recognize it. The dynamic consists one or more people demanding payment to street vendors or businessmen. Usually this criminal activity practices by the organized crime.

Trafficking of young women and girls

Persons who are force displaced from their place of origin, suffer different forms of vulnerability and human rights violations (Decker et.al, 2009, Yousaf, 2017). At the destination, displaced people do not have a family and community network, moreover, they suffer barriers to economic opportunities (Nagle, 2013, Yousaf, 2017). This circumstance of vulnerability is well studied by the traffickers to coerce these people, especially young girls and women, for the purpose of exploitation (sexual or labour). Traffickers use deception to lure victims with false promises of employment with high remuneration such as factory workers, receptionist, domestic workers, models among other (Martin, 2012, Yousaf, 2017, McAlpine et al, 2016). In some instances, traffickers approach victims, or their families, directly and sell different types of dreams that desperate families accept in a hope of better future (Acharya, 2009).

The study of Nagle (2013) on armed conflict in Colombia and trafficking indicates that illegal armed groups use women as instruments and objects of war. Most victims are between 15 and 30 years old, and are forced to become sexual slaves controlled through physical and psychological violence. Upon arrival of displaced people to a new environment, the lack of a familiar or communal network renders them vulnerable to trafficking. In this regard, Claudia a 16 year girl from Guerrero, who states, her family was displaced from Chilapa municipality said:

“In the year 2016, Chilapa lived up one of the worst year in the history. More than 3,000 people died, and it was common for us to listen bullet and movement of military helicopter. The situation was terrible, practically we were staying inside the home, not even going to school. Due to violence my family could not work and it was difficult for us to continue living in that place. Thus after navidad (Christmas), my family decided to move

to Mexico city. We tried to sell our house but nobody buy, so we closed the house and travel to Mexico city. After reaching Mexico city my father stated working in a taqueria, however, his income was not sufficient for the family, thus, I tried to find out a job. One day I went to Zocalo (down town) in search a job in a shop. I enquired many places but could not find any job offer, but later on the day a person came and gave me a visiting card. It was written 'se solicita empleada con buen sueldo y presetaciones' (Requested employee with good salary including other facilities). Next day, I called to the telephone number and they gave an appointment for interview. When I went for interview, they said the job was in Monterrey. They promised 10,000 - 12,000 pesos monthly salary with social security. I accepted their offer and told my family about my job. My family was very happy. After two days, the agency handover a bus ticket and said: 'when you reached Monterrey a person named Eduardo will meet you'. After reaching Monterrey, I met Eduardo, who took me to a hotel and after that he brought me to this nightclub. Last six months I am working here, whatever they promised me it was false. When I asked for the work what they promised me, they scold and beat me and threaten not to ask again".

As Nagle (2013) affirmed, forced displacement creates vulnerable conditions to the people, it expose them to various risks including trafficking for exploitation. Moreover, in some cases traffickers also negotiate with parents to traffic their daughters. The loss of livelihood at the place of origin, and difficulty of insertion in labor market at the place of destination, create vulnerability that ensures parents accept the "offers" of traffickers. Josefina a 19 years old girl from Guerrero narrate.

"In 2016 when military people occupied our community, the violence between narcos and military escalated. It was quite impossible to go out for work. Many families from my village including us decided to move to other places. My parent decided move to

Ciudad Juarez, where one of my uncle is working in a maquila. Once we reached to Ciudad Juarez, weeks later my father started working in the same maquila, however, when Donald Trump became president of US they shut down the maquila. Many companies also shifted to US due to effect of Trump. My father started searching job, but unable to get employment. Few days later a person met my father and said: 'I have good offer of a job of domestic servant in Monterrey. The salary would be around 10,000-12,000 pesos per month including shelter, food and health insurance'. My father said it is a good offer, and signed the contract. After two to three days they asked me to travel Monterrey. I travel by a bus and once I reached here they took me to house, where I met some other girls. After seeing the place, I felt something different, when I asked them, a guy said: 'Reyna aquí te vas a trabajar como bailarina y vas a animar clientes' (Queen here you will work as a dancer and you will encourage clients). I opposed to work, however, they tortured me various ways and obligate to work. I do not want to stay here, this is a very ugly work, but do not have option. Do not know what to do where I go, my life is totally spoiled due to damn narco violence''.

Narco violence has also caused thousands of orphans in Mexico. The recent report published by Red por los Derechos de la Infancia de Mexico (Redim) (2011)⁷ states that in Mexico the number of orphans due to arm conflicts is around 30,000. The majority of these orphans originate from the state of Michoacán, Tamaulipas, Guerrero and Sinaloa. The increasing number of orphans due to violence is worrisome trend, as most of the time the same organized criminal entities force these orphans to participate in their network of illicit activity, (compelled labor for criminal activity) or in other cases they targeted by human traffickers for different purposes of exploitation. Trafficker use different strategies to

⁷ <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/articulo/el-universal/nacion/el-narco-y-el-mexico-huerfano>

coerce orphan girls such as good employment, marriage or courtship, migration to USA, in some cases they do not hesitate to adopt. One participant named Lola a 14 years orphan whose parent were assassinated by organized crime in 2016 in Michoacán, was targeted by the trafficker. She narrates:

“.....after assassination of my father and mother, I was left alone in the family. I started working in a tortillería (bread making shop). I was earning 500 pesos per week and it was sufficient for me. One day, our village mayordomo came to tortillería and offered a job in Tijuana. He said: ‘I can employ you in an industry where you can earn 20,000 pesos per month’. I didn’t believe and said it is totally false. He tried to convince me, and in front of me he called his Tijuana’s friend and he passed me telephone. The person also said the same that I can earn 20,000 pesos every month. Even, he also offered me his house to stay as long as I want. I took few days to decide and a week later I travel with mayordom to Tijuana. After reaching Tijuana, mayordomo presented me with his friend ‘Javi’ and he left. Javi took me to his, where I was raped by him and by other three persons and after that Javi took me to a nightclub and handover to a lady, where they obligate me to work as a prostitute. Though, I opposed to collaborate with them, they tortured me physically till I accept (to work). They kept me in Tijuana nearly for three months and after that transferred me to Monterrey and last six months I am working in this bar.....”

In addition, the other alarming factor is increasing number of widows in the violence-affected states. For example, a recent article published in a national newspaper (El Universal) indicates that in Michoacán state the number of widows due to narco violence has reached to 2,500. Like orphaned children, widows also suffer economic and social vulnerability and are targeted by the traffickers and organized crime for different purposes. Some displaced women are forced to collaborate with organized crime and

transport drugs to US as a “mula” (mule). Most participants indicate their fall into trafficking was influenced by a desire to improve the social and economic opportunities

Experience of Violence and abuses

Trafficked women frequently experience violence and abuses by traffickers, and clients. Research indicates that; trafficked women experience high levels of violence, such as physical assaults, sexual assaults, verbal threats or abuse, psychological abuse (Lowman, 2000, Raymond, 2004). According to Zimmerman et. al, (2008), trafficked women live in a very hazardous environment, not because of lower hygienic condition, but due to the clandestine condition, exploitation, violence they face and lack of access to health care. Analysis indicates that participants are vulnerable to both physical and sexual violence at the hand of traffickers and pimps and to some extent it is a common event in the life of these women. The violence consists of being hit with an object, verbal abuse and locked in a room without food.

In some cases, women and girls are also burned by cigarettes, threaten to killed by the madam as well as forced to have sex with more than one client at a time. This clearly indicates the incidence of violence against women and the level of extreme cruel and inhumane treatment. In this regards Rosa Maria a 17 years old girls said:

“...once I brought here, violence, abuses (sexual & verbal) are common in my life. The padrote (pimp) forced (me) to work more than 14-15 hours, if sometime I could not work, he threaten me to kill. Many times when clients complained him about me, he beat me and locked inside a room. He treat me and other girls like a dog.....Padrote decide all for us, when we have to work, with whom we have to work, what to do or not, when to eat,

sleep etc., all these depend on him, if we do not obey him, then things goes worst....., for him our life is nothing....”.

In this study, participants reported extortion, mistreatment, and abuses by clients as well as members of drug cartels. In this context, it is often mention by the victims that they suffer sexual violence by members of drug cartel groups. Sometimes they are forced to consume drugs (mainly cocaine). In case any girl or woman resists, they are kidnapped and different types of violence are perpetrated against them. As we can observe in the case Lilia a 15 years old girl from the Mexico state. Lilia along with her parents were forced to displace due to narco violence in their community. They migrated to Guadalajara, where she Lilia was trafficked to Monterrey. The trafficker promised to facilitate her migration to US, where she could work in a Mexican restaurant and promised her a salary nearly 700 USD per week. However, once Lilia accepted offer, the trafficker brought her to Monterrey and sold her in a nightclub. Lilia narrates:

.... it is all most a year that I am here... I have not talked with my parent and they also do not know where I am.....every day madrina (madam) obligate me to receive at least 15 to 20 clients... many types of clients visit this place... also sometime cartel people comes and obligate me and others (girls) to work with them privately.... They have their special place, they do not share tables with others.....One day some people of Zeta gang came to night club and one of them asked me dance privately and after dance he asked to smoke marihuana, although I denied; he forced me. After that he went and talked something with madrina, few minutes later two of them came and obligate me to accompany them. They took me to their place and whole weekend they abused me sexually.

I prayed, beg them but they did not listen me... they continued raped me.... I was bleeding severely... however, they did not care my situation and they continued rape.....

Evidence of this study implies that; victims of trafficking experienced double vulnerabilities. Many victims have naturalized the violence in their life. Physical and sexual violence force women to practice hazardous sexual behaviors as they are limited to negotiate safe sex with clients. As Deceker et al (2009) indicates, “it is true in the case of force displaced women as they are disempowered due to extreme vulnerabilities and dependency on others for the means of survival”.

Conclusion

The narco violence in Mexico is a conflict that involves heavily armed criminal organizations and the state. During the last decade this internal war has generated nearly 160 thousands of additional homicides in the country and has displaced same number of persons. Due to an inadequate clear conceptual framework from government, currently the situation is critical. The violence has shifted from the north to center and the south of Mexico. However, this violence has produced some collateral consequences such as forced displacement of many Mexican families and trafficking in persons for exploitation.

The finding of the study elucidate that narco violence has created large scale forced displacement in the country. Many families are forced to migrate to cities in search of social and economic wellbeing. Our results also illuminate how forced displaced young girls and women lare ured through false promises by traffickers and later forced into sexual exploitation. Moreover, narco violence has generated a huge number of orphans and widows in the country. Trafficker use the economic, vulnerable condition and lack of

family support structures of these people, and traffic them for various purposes of exploitation.

The trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation is one of the fastest growing criminal activities in world today. The 2017 Trafficking in Persons Report by the U.S. Department of State indicates that Mexico is a source, transit and destination country for sex trafficking and forced labor. Recognizing the problem in Mexico, the finding reveals the impact of narco violence on human trafficking. Our earlier studies (Acharya and Bryson, 2014, Acharya, 2011) indicated that the human trafficking problem in Mexico is a *multicausal* phenomena; however, none of these studies reveal the connection between narco violence and human trafficking. Thus, the study acknowledges the importance to adopt new strategies to combat the narco violence in the country. It is imperative to build networks with local organizations at different levels of government to protect displaced families, orphans, and widows. Moreover, it is the task of government to address the root causes of narco violence and promote intervention programs for the social and economic wellbeing of displaced families.

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