

Exploitation of Women as Devadasis and its Associated Evils

Submitted to

**National Commission for Women
New Delhi**



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DECLARATION

We declare that the report entitled “**EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN AS DEVADASIS AND ITS ASSOCIATED EVILS**” submitted to the National Commission for Women, carried out by us during the period from 2015 – 2016, has not formed part of any previous research projects conducted for any Organisation, University or any other similar Institution of higher learning.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to convey our sincere thanks to **National Commission for Women** for providing funds for the project. In particular, we would like to thank **Dr. Lalitha Kumaramangalam**, Chairperson, NCW and **Ms. Richa Ojha**, Senior Research officer, NCW. Their constant support and encouragement is much appreciated.

We express our gratitude to the **University of Madras** for providing necessary facilities and support to complete the project.

Our special word of thanks to **Dr. A. Amudhavalli**, Professor & Head, Department of Library & Information Science for inspiring us to create new benchmarks.

Our thanks to **Dr. M. Srinivasan**, Professor & Head, Department of Criminology, University of Madras for his support and encouragement.

Our heartfelt thanks to **Dr. S. Ramdoss**, Assistant Professor, Department of Criminology, University of Madras and **Ms. M. R. Sindhumol**, Assistant Professor, Department of Statistics for helping us organize our research tool and for their valuable guidance at every stage.

We would like to thank the Field Investigators of the project, **Ms. Anuja Abraham**, **Mr. S. Gowtham Singh**, **Mr. K. Kuralarasan**, **Ms. D. M. Padma Priya** for their engagement in the field and active involvement in exploring the field extensively.

Many Thanks to **Mr. Vijo Varghese Vincent**, **Mr. Kannan B.**, **Ms. Brindha T. S.**, **Mr. Shabin O. S.**, research scholars of Departments of

Women Studies and Criminology for their willing and spontaneous help and assistance in the project.

Our sincere thanks to **Administrative Staff of Campus Director Office and Staff of Department of Women Studies**, University of Madras for their administrative support.

We would like to extend warm heartfelt thanks to **Mr. Omkar Dharmadikari, Mr. Chetan Kulkarni, Mr. Ramesh Kotibaskar, Mr. Balashib Gayakvad, Mr. Nelish Bandari, Mr. Ashok Patil, Dr. Ravikanth Lamani, Ms. Geetha, Ms. Sasi. Risikesh Kulkarni, Mr. Sachin, Mr. Vadiraj, Mr. Anand, Ms. Sidhu Chikadani, Mr. Sathish Kolar, Mr. Basu Dasar, Mr. Mayank Chauhan, Ms. Manju Shree, Ms. Burnard Fatima, Mr. Vishwananth, Mr. Srikanth, Mr. Karuppaiya, Ms. Uma, Mr. Loganathan, Ms. Jaya, Ms. Nirai Iyyappan**, for helping the field investigators in various ways. Their support and help were timely and of great magnitude.

We would also like to thank all the **Stakeholders** in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and Tamil Nadu for providing information and sharing nuances that helped the research.

Our sincere thanks to all the Library Staff at **Anna Library, Connemara, Government Archives, Madras University Library, MIDS (Madras Institute of Development Studies), MSSRF (M S Swaminathan Research Foundation), MSSW (Madras School of Social Work) Library, Roja Muthaih Research Library, Saraswathi Mahal Library, Women's Centre at Padmavathy University, Shivaji University Library, Karnatak University Library, Kalakshetra Library**, for guiding us with collecting appropriate secondary sources and text documents.

Our interactions with the **Devadasis** in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and Tamil Nadu have certainly enriched the research. It is our sincere hope that just as their insights and perspectives helped the research, our discussions and recommendations will enhance their lives.

We thank **Mr. Nirmal Singh** for the excellent cover design.

Our thanks are due to others whom we may have missed out. Our heartfelt gratitude to one and all.

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Introduction

1. INTRODUCTION

Devadasi system is a socio-cultural practice which has a long history in India. In the years around Indian Independence, there was a widespread demand for the abolition of Devadasi system by the Reformists and Revivalists. This was precipitated by the anti-Nautch campaign of the British colonial government. Even though many of the states have since outlawed the dedication of young girls as devadasis, the practice still continues in different forms and guises. Thus there is a veritable gap between official statistics and ground reality. This research study proposes to conduct a combined descriptive and evaluative study to examine the practice of Devadasi system in contemporary India especially in states like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra. The study also focusses on the associated evils of Devadasi system, namely, prostitution and begging.

The figure of the devadasi in the Indian imagination has changed in different historical periods. True to her name, a devadasi was held in respect and social standing because she was the “handmaiden of God”. However, the Social Reform Movements sought to abolish the Devadasi system as it foregrounded a morally reprehensible social practice. The clarion call coincided with the withdrawal of royal patronage and temple subsidies. This economic factor forced the devadasis to take up other occupations. Prostitution and begging were adopted in a large scale because they were approved and sanctioned occupations within the Devadasi system. The figure of the devadasi in contemporary India is a corroded version, which does not display her artistic and intellectual accomplishments. So, there is an ‘ideal’ courtesan, like Amrapali or Madhavi, and the ‘real’ prostitute and beggar, both of whom are connoted by the name ‘devadasi’.

The research praxis for this study is drawn from the framework of Corporeal Feminism, which highlights the objectification of women's bodies and the perception that they are "ahistorical, biologically given, a cultural object(s)". In her seminal work, *Volatile Bodies* (1994), Elizabeth Grosz projects the idea that the female body has a "lived" existence in historical and cultural terms. The devadasi is neither a reprehensible figure nor an exotic being. She has been shaped by a socio-cultural context, dominated by patriarchy, caste/ class hierarchy as well as religious superstition. This idea is important because the marginalization of devadasis over a period of history has culminated into an oppression based on caste, class and religion. In the contemporary context, devadasis are drawn from lower caste (SC) and lower class backgrounds. Thus the caste hierarchy and poverty join hands with illiteracy and superstition to attack vulnerable communities of women. Together, all these factors combine to form a web of discrimination and oppression. Kimberle Crenshaw terms this phenomenon as "intersectionality". It means that the sum of the different types of oppression is more than the individual levels of discrimination because they are experienced by an individual or a particular group. In this case, a devadasi is a victim of the oppressions of caste, class, religion and more.

This research project has been conducted over a one year period. The objectives of the projects are:

1. To determine the factors contributing to the Devadasi system in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra
2. To examine the prevalence of and legislations on devadasis in prostitution
3. To analyze qualitatively the contemporary cultural discourses on Devadasi system

4. To suggest measures for rehabilitation of women in prostitution/Devadasi system.

Four Field Investigators were appointed for a six month period. They first conducted a literature survey in the libraries in Chennai and on the resources available online. Then, the team identified the districts in the four states where Devadasi system is still prevalent. This survey clearly highlighted the presence of devadasis in large numbers. The field investigators also identified stakeholders such as health workers, social workers, government officials, NGO personnel, academics, members of judiciary, law enforcement and correctional administration who served as respondents.

An Interview Schedule was constructed. It consisted of 90 questions under twelve sub-headings. On the one hand, the Interview Schedule focused on the basic objectives of the project. On the other, it highlighted the life process of a devadasi from dedication through initiation and prostitution to rescue and rehabilitation. A total of 205 responses were received from the four states. In addition, 18 case studies and 12 profiles of respondents were created.

Some of the overarching findings and recommendations, based on the ground reality have been enumerated below:

Major Findings

- Majority of girls who are dedicated are from the Schedule Caste community.
- Parents make the decision to dedicate their girls.
- Dedication is a forced act.

- Poverty is a significant factor which aids dedication. Poverty, illiteracy, hereditary, caste system combine together and facilitate the dedication
- Begging and prostitution are two important social evils resulting out of Devadasi system.
- Many devadasis work in commercial sex industry and practice prostitution till the age of 40.
- Devadasis are subjected to different forms abuse.
- Children of devadasis face problems, such as branding and stigma.
- There are no uniform policies, programmes and schemes for the welfare and benefit of devadasis in the four states.
- There are no policies, programmes and schemes for children of devadasis.
- Lack of awareness is the major reason for the Poor/Non implementation of legislations.
- Rescue and rehabilitation become problematic because dedications happen within the closed family unit.
- Devadasis are not ready to reintegrate into the family and society because it is their family which forces them into the evil practice.

Recommendations

- Poverty is the lead cause for the continuance of this evil system. Effective poverty eradication schemes will help in prevention and abolition of dedication

- To prevent dedication and to abolish the system, the government has to provide alternative source of income generating programmes for their sustainable livelihood of devadasis.
- The stigma attached to the children of devadasis prevents them from continuing their education. Hence school authorities need to be educated to not ask for details regarding their further details and not divulge to others.
- Majority of the devadasis are rescued from their own families. Hence sensitizing the family members of the devadasis in the prevalence areas will help in reducing the number of dedications.
- Awareness campaigns about the socially inclusive policies and programmes need to be conducted among devadasis and various stakeholders of the system.
- Stakeholders need to be educated on State Legislations to ensure effective implementation.
- Awareness campaigns need to be conducted targeting young girls, especially educating the girl children of devadasis.
- Dissemination programmes need to be conducted at various levels starting from block level to state level to enhance the number of beneficiaries for the existing schemes need to be rectified.
- Lack of focus on the victimological perspective in the existing legislations, policies, programmes and schemes.
- Devadasi system has to be approached holistically by considering the intersections of caste, class and religion.

- The immediate need in the rehabilitation of devadasis is to create safe shelter homes and provide monetary assistance.

The research undertaken in this project, its findings and the recommendations are presented in the succeeding chapters. The report has been organized as follows:

Chapter – I is an overview of the project, and its different phases.

Chapter – II presents an extensive Review of Literature, which touches upon all the objective of the project.

Chapter – III outlines the Research Methodology used to identify, collect and analyze the responses of stakeholders in the four states.

Chapter – IV provides the Results and Discussions of the study. Both quantitative and qualitative markers have been used for analysis.

Chapter – V consolidates the statistical data and presents the findings.

Chapter – VI enumerates the findings in the form of a Conclusion and Recommendation.

The chapters are followed by a comprehensive list of References,. The list of Appendices includes the Interview Schedule, Case Studies, and High Profile Respondents, list of places visited, Photographs, and relevant Acts and Legislations. Together, the Appendices holistically capture the “fact” of the Devadasi system.

Review of Literature

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

The emergence of Devadasi system is cited between 3rd century and 12th century and the tradition has come through many transitions in the course of history. During every transition the tradition has suffered socially, culturally and economically to such an extent that contemporary devadasi practice is only associated with social evils. This review of literature examines the contributing factors of the Devadasi system, and the prevalence of Devadasi system in the four States. Further the review contextualises how the tradition of devadasis slipped in to prostitution and the process of law making against the devadasi practice. Finally, it gives an overview of the measures taken to rehabilitate the devadasis by the government agencies and the NGOs.

2.2. From Sacred Spouses to Common Prostitutes: A Socio-Cultural History of the Devadasi System

The term 'devadasi' is a Sanskrit term denoting female servant of deity or handmaiden of God. They are known by different names in different regions of India, such as 'Maharis' in Kerala, 'Natis' in Assam, 'Basavis' in Karnataka, 'Bhavanis' in Goa 'Kudikar' on the West-Cost 'Bhogam- Vandhi' or 'Jogin' in Andhra Pradesh; Thevardiyar' in Tamil Nadu; 'Murali', 'Jogateen' and 'Aradhini' in Maharashtra. In Karnataka, old devadasis are called as 'Jogati' and young devadasis as 'Basavi' (Pradeep, Manjula). Literally, the term Devadasi translates as "servant of God" and as a socio-cultural practice, it has a long history. It also has a pre-historic base in the legends of Renuka, wife of Sage Jamadagni and mother of Parasurama. As a tradition, it has an unbroken lineage from legends, through history to contemporary reality. However, the social standing enjoyed by the devadasis have corroded over the centuries and the divine and regal courtesans with accomplishments have degraded to the level of common prostitutes and beggars.

This section attempts to provide an overview of the socio-cultural history of the Devadasi system and the changing positions of the Devadasi within this framework.

2.2.1. Legend on the Devadasi System

Several legends, which reinforce the Devadasi system, are part of the Indian cultural memory. The most pervasive legend is that of Renuka, who is supposed to have “appeared from the fire pit of ‘Putra Kameshti’ Yadnya performed by a Kshatriya king Renukeswara. She was married to Rishi Jamdagni. The couple had five sons including Parasurama. One morning she was late in coming home from the river as she was sexually aroused by watching the love play in river, of a Gandarva Raja with his queens. This enraged Jamdagni who ordered his sons to kill her. All other sons refused and were burned to ashes by the Rishi’s curse, but Parsurama beheaded her. The Rishi gave him three boons. As the first boon, Parshurama asked to bring back to life his four brothers. As the second boon, he wanted his mother to be made alive. But her head was not available. So Parshurama cut the head of a woman from ‘Matang’ caste, and Jamdagni revived his wife with Matangi’s head. As the third boon, he wished to be free from the sin of matricide. But Renuka was cursed by Jamdagni to have leprosy and was banished from the hermitage. However, some ‘Eknatha’, ‘Jognatha’ Sadhus in the forest cured her. She returned back to Jamdagni who pardoned her and blessed her that she will attain great fame in Kaliyuga.” (Zaidi, 2007).

2.2.2. Devadasi System Worldwide

The Ankor Borei Inscription of Cambodia or ancient Kambuja reveals that seven dancing girls, eleven singers and four violinists were present in the temple during 611AD. In Arsmenia, there was a practice that the nobles employed their unmarried daughters for the purpose of serving the goddess

Anaitis. There is information about devadasi tradition of Babylon. Ishtar was the deity and devadasis were appointed as Ishtar. Girls were made to sit in the temple and any one can throw silver coins and take girls with them, from that moment the girls become property of the man who is buying the girl and he possesses right to have relationship with the girl. Marco Polo also described that parents themselves dedicated them to gods. He states that “the parents kept their daughter with them for dancing services in the temple on the important festive occasion and this was practiced till that marriage. The system was also prevalent in Missore, which is considered an ancient civilized country in the world; they engaged girls to the deity called “Amman”. “There was a document called Great Harris Papyrus in which there was description that Ramesis III donated 84,486 servants and devadasis, etc. and many landed property to the temple of Amon.” Devadasis were appointed in Temple of Apple and Sun God in Greece and dance of the devadasis were enjoyed by the temple priests, kings and other powerful people. The system was also practiced in Rome and there are evidences that dancing girls were present in the temple of Juno, Venus and Jews at Rome (Mishra, 2014).

Ritual dancing during religious services in a temple has a long history. “In India the practice originated and developed during the early medieval period, but in countries like Mesopotamia (Iraq), Egypt and Greece the system flourished several thousand years earlier. In Egypt, Temples of Osiris and Isis were crowded with dancing girls. At Corinth, in Greece thousands of women were associated with the temple of Aphrodite. The custom was prevalent in Babylonia (Iraq), Cyprus and other countries. In Sumer (Iraq), beautiful women were attached to every temple, who formed part of the god’s household. In Egypt, four professions were open to women-priesthood, midwifery, mourning and dancing. The royal priestess entered the profession when quite young and was given training in the sacred dances and singing the sacred songs. The custom was widely prevalent in ancient Greece. It was the

temple of Aphrodite in Greece, where the practice of dedicating girls is said to have been first established as a ritual of worship. The temple of Aphrodite (at Corinth) was so wealthy that it was able to keep more than a thousand courtesans, who were dedicated to the Goddess by men and women”

2.2.3. Pan Indian Presence of Devadasi System

The Devadasi system of dedicating young girls to temples was present in some parts of India as early as 300 A D. It became an established institution in Hindu by 700 A D (Basham 1959:185- 86). The origin of Devadasi system can be traced to 5th century AD. There are some references in *Skanda Purana*. In the “*Purushottam Ksetra Mahamtya*” in *Skanda Purana* and *Bamadeva Samhita*, it is evident that devadasis were present and they used to serve god by dancing in rituals and festivals.

In early history, a devadasi was a multi-faceted personality in that she played multiple roles - “surrogate of earth mother,” “Priestess of love” and “revered for being close to godliness.” (Kopf, 1993). In her seminal work, *Nityasumangali: Devadasi Tradition in South India*, Saskia C. Kersenboom contextualises the roles of a Devadasi both in day to day life and in the temple rituals. Citing the Devadasi as a multivalent concept, Kersenboom points out how a Devadasi balances two opposite forces of “life enhancing, fertile” and auspicious aspect as a nitya sumangali and a “life destroying, deadly” aspect as a ritual woman. (Kersenboom, 1987).

Before 966 AD, the word Emperumandiyar was used by the Vaishnavites to refer to devadasis. The word has been found in the Vishnu temple inscriptions of 1230-1240 A.D. Devadasis were linked with the down fall of Buddhism and there are many arguments that devadasis were the Buddhist nuns. “It is viewed that the Devadasis are the Buddhist nuns who were degraded to the level of prostitutes after their temples were taken over

by Brahmins during the times of their resurgence after the fall of Buddhism.”(Colundalur, 2011) However, this argument has not been substantiated and therefore of questionable relevance.

King Haribraman of West Bengal appointed dancing girls in Ananta Basudev temple. “Descriptions on the rituals of dancing in different inscriptions of India were available. In the stone inscription of Yogimara Cave (3rd century B.C.), Bhujabeswar Temple (975 A.D.), Kalipadaswami Temple (1018 A.D.), Brahmeswar Temple (1053 A.D.), Megheswar Temple (1070 A.D.), Sovaneswar Temple (1080 A.D.), Narendreswar Temple (1083 A.D.), Mukhalingam Temple (11th century A.D.), Jaladiswar Temple (1144 A.D.), Agastiswar Temple (1158 A.D.), Laxmi Nrusingha Temple of Simanchalam (15th century A.D.) and Sri Jagannath Temple (16th century A.D.) there were some evidences of dancing rituals or the devadasi traditions” (Mishra, 2014).

The rule of the Chola Kings between the ninth and twelfth centuries was the heyday for devadasis. “The devadasi, at the height of her glory, linked temple to court and balanced patronage with personal independence. Well-versed in the arts, she was considered a jewel of both court and temple alike. Both these institutions mutually cared for her rather lavish economic needs. Even in her marginalized social position, she was unique in that she epitomized the freedom of the plural woman outside of caste and not defined in the biological role of a Madonna. The devadasi tradition continued into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,” but lost its vigour (Meduri, 1988).

“In Tanjore temple inscriptions of 1499 A.D, it is mentioned that there were 400 devadasis. 450 devadasis in Brahideswara temple and 500 devadasis in Dorti Somnath temple were present. They lived in free quarters around the temple and were given tax-free land out of the temple endowment, in medieval times, about 4,000 temples in Gujarat are reported to have about

20,000 devadasis. In southern India the Devadasi system continued unabated until 19th century but in northern India the destruction of temples by Muslim invaders led to a decline of the institution” (Nag, 2001).

There is information regarding devadasi in temple inscriptions of “Korangunathan”, “Pipilikeswar” and “Sundereswar” of Thiruchirapalli district. Chalukya King Vikramaditya I constructed a temple in 12th century in the name of Chandaleswar and brought beautiful women from different parts of the world and made them temple dancers. Raja I appointed 400 girls for the purpose of dancing in the temple. Many devadasis were appointed in the Siva temple of Deopara in Bengal during the reign of Vijaya Sen. The practice of Devadasi system was more prevalent in south Indian states such as Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra and Tamil Nadu but there are evidences that the system was practiced in other parts of India as well. Devadasis were present in the Lord Jaganath temple, Orissa for several hundred years and in Orissa, the system originated during the 6th and 7th centuries during the Sailadhbhawa dynasty (Colundalur, 2011).

2.2.4. Reasons for the Emergence of Devadasi System

In ancient times, devadasis were divided into seven categories. When a man offered his daughter to temple, she is called as “Dutta Devadasi”. When a lady is kidnapped and made as a devadasi, she is called as “Hruta Devadasi”. When a woman is sold to temple for the purpose of being a devadasi, it is called as “Birkrita Devadasi”. If a woman voluntarily becomes a devadasi, she is known as “Bhrutya Devadasi”. When a woman is devotionally offered as devadasi, she is called as “Bhakta Devadasi”. When a woman after attaining a degree of competence, is offered as devadasi, she is known as “Alankara Devadasi”. If a devadasi gets payment for her dance and music, she is known as “Gopika” or “Rudraganika”. In the seven different categories, in the present scenario most of the devadasis are Dutta Devadasi

(offered by the family member), Hruta Devadasi (sold to the temple or priest), Bhakta Devadasi (women who are devotionally offered). The other reasons include the belief that if the girl child is sick and she is dedicated, she will get well and other such false beliefs.

Jogan Shankar, an Indian scholar, says that the following reasons play a major role in supplanting the system with firm roots:

1. As a substitute for human sacrifice, being an offering to the gods and goddesses to appease and secure blessings for the community as a whole;
2. As a rite to ensure the fertility of the land and the increase of the human and animal population
3. As a part of phallic worship which existed in India from early Dravidian times;
4. Probably sacred prostitution sprang from the custom of providing sexual hospitality for strangers;
5. Licentious worship offered by people, subservient to degraded and vested interests of the priestly class; and
6. To create a custom in order to exploit lower caste people in India by the upper castes and classes (qtd in Colundalur, 2011).

Devadasis played an important role in the Hindu temples. They performed activities such as cleaning the temple, lighting the lamps, dressing the deities etc. (Mishra, 2014). Even though there were many factors that contributed to the system in the early period, in the current scenario it is mainly “religious beliefs”, “caste system”, “male domination” and “economic stress which plays an important role in stimulating the phenomenon” (Colundalur, 2011).

2.2.5. Status of Devadasis during Pre and Post British Periods

2.2.5.1. Pre-British Period

The historical period before the arrival of the British was the golden period in the history of devadasis. They were treated with high respect. The devadasis had high social and economic status in society and they played an important role in transforming the culture of dance and music. Devadasis used to stay near the temple and perform rituals and ceremonies. They were entertainers during temple festivals and ceremonies. Kings provided patronage and made devadasis perform in the palace. Local land lords and other dominant people made use of the devadasis attached to the temple as entertainers and for sexual favors. (Black, 2007). During ancient times, girls dedicated to temple for the service of God were considered prestigious. Girls, not only from the Dalit and poor background, but also from the rich, aristocratic families were dedicated (Colundalur, 2011). As Sriram points out, “there was no particular caste from which women could be drawn for dedication and there were instances in the legends of princesses and girls from priestly classes becoming handmaidens of God. The Devadasis thus formed an occupational group rather than a caste.” But in the current scenario, it is mostly Scheduled Caste, illiterate and other lower class people who become devadasis (Black, 2007).

Toward the end of the 19th century, there was a spurt of social movements in India. Nationalism and search for national identity led to social movements relating to devadasis. These movements can be classified into two categories: Reformists/Abolitionists and Revivalists.

2.2.5.2. British-Colonial Period

The Devadasi system was extensively practiced in south India till the 19th century, whereas in north India, the practice declined due to Muslim invasion and subsequent destruction of temples. In the beginning of the 20th century, several state governments prohibited the act of dedicating girls to the temples (Nag, 2001). During the British period, there was a shift in the identity from devadasis to prostitutes. The Reformists, Revivalists, Missionaries, British government as well as men and women from the devadasi community contributed to the shift in identity.

The persistent image of the devadasi as prostitute was cultivated in the rhetoric of the Reformists and Revivalists. The first anti-nauch and anti-dedication movement was launched in 1882. "Their main aim was to do away with this system. Reform lobbyists were drawn mainly from missionaries, doctors, journalists and social workers. They urged the abolition of all ceremonies and procedures by which girls dedicated themselves as devadasis of Hindu shrines. They organized seminars and conferences to "create a public opinion against the Devadasi system. In the later part of 1892 an appeal was made to the Viceroy and Governor General of India and to the Governor of Madras. This appeal also defines the position of the anti-nauch movement" (Jogan, 1990)

For the Reformists - Christian missionaries, doctors, journalists, administrators and social workers - it was dedication and prostitution of the devadasi institution which were reprehensible. Some journals and newspapers like *The Indian Social Reformer* and *Lahore Purity Servant* supported the Reformist or Abolitionist Movement.

The Movement initially concentrated on building public opinion and enlisting members to refuse to attend Nauch parties as well as to refuse to

invite devadasis to festivities at their homes. Around 1899, the anti-nautch and puritan movement turned its attention to stopping dedications. The anti-nautch movement paved the way for anti-dedication movement. The social reform movements, spearheaded by Ram Mohan Roy, Periyar, Muthulakshmi Reddy, S. Muthiah Mudaliar, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, M. Krishnan Nair, C. N. Annadurai, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Govind Ranade, Dhondo Keshav Karve, and other prominent social thinkers, questioned the practice of Devadasi system and pleaded for its abolition. Bhagyareddy Varma launched a movement against devadasi pratha, forcing the Nizam to declare it a crime (*World Heritage Encyclopedia*).

The Hindu Revival Movement consciously stepped outside the requirements of state electoral politics and western scientific traditions. The movement received strong support from the Theosophical Society of India, whose anti-official stance and strong interest in Indian Home Rule bound them with the revival of dance and music. Pioneers like Madam H.P. Blavatsky and Colonel H.S. Olcott, the founders of the Theosophical Movement, had undertaken an extensive tour of South India and propagated the revival of devadasi institutions and the associated art of sadir. They gained support from some sections of the native elite by their public denouncement of western Christian morality and materialism. In 1882, the Theosophical Society of India had set up its headquarters in Adyar, Chennai with the set goal of working towards the restoration of India's ancient glory in art, science, and philosophy. (*World Heritage Encyclopedia*)

The support given to the revival of sadir as Bharatnatyam by the Theosophical Society was largely due to the efforts of Rukmini Devi Arundale and E. Krishna Iyer. The Theosophical Society provided the necessary funds and organization to back Arundale as the champion for India's renaissance in the arts, especially Bharatnatyam. The Revivalists tried

to present the idealistic view of the institution of devadasi. According to their view, it was the model of the ancient temple dancer as pure, sacred, and chaste woman.

The Revivalists stressed that the dance of devadasi was a form of "natya yoga" to enhance an individual's spirituality plane. They wanted to preserve the traditional form of sadir dance by purifying it. As a consequence of purification, some modifications were introduced into the content of the dance, which was strongly criticized by dancer Balasaraswati and other prominent representatives of the traditional devadasi culture. The Revivalists mostly belonged to Brahmin dominated Theosophical circles. Many Brahmin girls started to learn the dance from devadasis. (*World Heritage Encyclopedia*)

2.2.5.3. After Independence

In the early 20th century, Carnatic music underwent a series of changes in terms of performance and practice. "Older temple- and court-based forms of patronage ceased to be viable in the late colonial economy of South India, and toward the end of the 19th century, musicians moved in large numbers to the colonial city of Madras. There, music organizations, concert halls, and academies were established by an upper-caste, largely Brahmin elite that was interested in what they termed the "revival" of Carnatic music and its transformation into the "classical" music of South India. At the heart of the revival of Carnatic music was the notion that this music could take its place as a sign of tradition and Indianness alongside the trappings of an emergent middle-class modernity." (Weidman, 2003)

Another important discourse that shaped the modern social thought is the notion of ideal womanhood and female respectability. Devadasis, hereditary female musicians and dancers from a variety of non-Brahmin

castes, came to be regarded as prostitutes and their opportunities to perform were gradually diminished, upper-caste women were encouraged to learn, and eventually perform, music and dance. Indeed, for many Brahmin elites, the sign of the successful classicization of music and dance in the 1920s to 1940s was the transformational these into "arts" fit for upper-caste, middle-class "family women"." (Weidman, 2003)

Alongside the Social Reform Movements, a Social Purity Movement also made its presence felt in the early 20th century. Kalpana Kannabiran traces the origins of the devadasi abolition movement in the Madras Presidency to the social reform movement started by Kandukuri Veeresalingam in what would later become Andhra Pradesh, in the 1830s. "Focusing on women's emancipation, he was concerned with social hygiene: conjugality and sexual relationships, education, religious practices, as well as government corruption" (Kannabiran, 1995). The Social Purity movement, begun in 1880 in Madras by Raghupati Venkataratnam Naidu, was influenced by the Purity Crusade in England and America. As Kannabiran writes, "one of the crucial elements of the crusade was the broadening of the term prostitution not only to refer to sexual intercourse for monetary gain but also to serve as a metaphor for social depravity and moral corruption in general." (Kannabiran, 1995).

Equating devadasis to prostitutes not only degraded their accomplishments but also put them as the opposite of respectable family women. In a detailed essay on Anglo-Indian legal conceptions of dancing girls between 1800 and 1914, Kunal Parker traces the process by which dancing girls came to be criminalized as prostitutes. "Crucial in this process was the representation of dancing girls as a professional group, rather than as a caste, which might have its own laws concerning marriage and property inheritance. The representation of dancing girls as a professional group

characterized by the activities of dancing and prostitution brought them under the purview of Hindu law and allowed them to be seen as a group that had fallen from caste because of their practice of prostitution” (Parker, 1998). Ruling that their singing and dancing were merely "vestigial" and that their true source of income was from prostitution, the Madras High Court denied dancing girls any status as artists. Placing prostitution in opposition to legal Hindu marriage, Parker states, and the legislation was "directed explicitly towards the valorization of marriage, the construction of a Hindu community organized around marriage, and the sanitization of Hindu religious practice" (Parker, 1998).

Quite ironically, the abolition of the Devadasi system and support for its continuation came from devadasis themselves. The three major figures in this confrontation were Muvalur Ramairtham Ammaiyar, Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy and Bangalore Nagarathinammal. Dr. Reddy's passionate plea in the Madras Legislative Assembly logically sets out the evils of the Devadasi system. "I want the Honorable members of the House to understand that these [devadasis] are neither descended from heaven nor imported from foreign countries, At an age when they cannot think and act for themselves, [they are] sacrificed to a most blind and degrading custom. The dedication of a girl to a life of vice is a heinous crime-is it not a worse form of Sati? A hygienic mistake? A moral monstrosity?" (qtd in Weidman, 2003). Reddy was helped in her efforts by caste associations of Icai Vellalars and Sengundars, "castes from which devadasis generally came; male members of these castes saw the abolition of devadasis as a matter of retrieving the honor and dignity of their caste" (Anandi, 1991). Under the leadership of Bangalore Nagarathinammal, The Madras Presidency Devadasi Association and the Madras Rudrakannikai Sangam issued statements to counter the abolitionists in the late 1920s. Their efforts proved futile against the growing acceptance of a Victorian moral code in colonial India.

In the post-independence scenario, the Devadasi system has steadily corroded and what remains is a direct route to prostitution. As per the United Nations Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, 1956, dedicating a girl as devadasi is a form of Slavery. The act of dedication is prohibited through Article 1(d) which states that “any institution or practice whereby a child or a young person under the age of 18 is delivered by either or both of his natural parents or by his guardian to another person, whether for reward or not, with a view to the exploitation of the child or young person” (Black. 2007). Several legislations have been instituted by the Central and State governments to abolish the practice of dedication. These have been discussed in the succeeding section.

2.2.6. Current Status of Devadasis

Prostitution is defined as “the act or practice of a person, female or male, who for some kind of reward - monetary or otherwise - engages in sexual relations with a number of persons, who may be of the opposite or same sex”(Nag, 2001)

The practice of dancing and singing in the temple slowly degraded and devadasis were directly involved in prostitution. After the dedication, some devadasis went into the commercial sex industry and some ran prostitution in their homes and villages. There was a survey carried out in Bangalore by the Joint Women’s Programme for NCW among 375 devadasis, which reveals that 63.6 percent of young girls were forced to become devadasis due to the custom, 38 percent reported that the family had a history of devadasis. 40 percent of the devadasis were involved in commercial sex industry and others were involved in the villages. These devadasis were considered as “Public Property” in their villages. A majority of devadasis were single and 65 percent of them were associated with the patron. Astonishingly 95.2 percent of the devadasis have children and 95 percent were not able to register the

names of their patron as father of the children during school admission. A majority of the devadasis earn less than Rs.1000 a month. Historical studies refer to Devadasi system as “Sacred Prostitution” and it was a part of the society. However, now, the Devadasi system is a form of open prostitution and many poor people dedicate their daughters to the system in the name of appeasing the gods (Colundalur, 2011).

Initially devadasis offered sexual favors only to the kings and the temple priests. As time passed, they started providing sexual favor also to the common visitors of the temple. Devadasis were different from prostitutes/commercial sex workers because they did not charge for their services, and only accepted gifts. When they got old, some returned home and settled with their partners. It is a custom that they beg in five local residencies but this is not followed in the current practice of the system. As said earlier, the devadasis are most required in the commercial sex industry, which is well organized in Indian cities. Due to the fall of agricultural activities in the villages, many men move out from villages to cities for permanent or temporary work without their wife and family. Hence, this creates a readily available customer and demand in the commercial sex industry. There was a study on the development of devadasis self-help movement during 2001 in Belgaum and the results reveal that 31 percent of devadasis migrated to red light areas in Mumbai and other places (Black, 2007).

What we encounter is a stark degradation of the position of the devadasis as accomplished ritual women and courtesans respected by all to the level of common prostitutes and beggars, who are neglected by their own families and society at large. Sriram captures this duality in his book *The Devadasi and the Saint*: “On the one hand, the (devadasi) community was the storehouse of arts. On the other it was the repository of all evil and every conceivable vice.” (Sriram, 2007). This divided opinion is the result of

multiple historical factors including Christian preachers, colonial moralists and Indian social reformers. “...these people had no hesitation in condemning all Devadasis as prostitutes and their art as sinful.” (Sriram, 2007).

2.3. Contributing Factors

Every social problem has certain factors that facilitate the problems and these factor emerge from the society itself. Broadly, these factors fall under social, cultural, religious and economic conditions. The “Devadasi system”, one among the greatest social evils has many factors that supports its prevalence. The existing literature on the contributing factors is discussed in each subsection. The contributing factors are organized based on their severity.

2.3.1. Poverty

Poverty is a key contributing factor to numerous social problems. In the early times it was only due to the religious belief that girls were dedicated. Later poverty has become a major cause for the dedication. Due to poverty, many poor families dedicate their young girls as devadasis, who later serve as prostitutes in their locality (mainly for the upper caste people) or sent to brothels to earn money. The poor family uses religion as a means to unburden their daughters. The easy money earned through prostitution is substantial and this attracts the poor families to dedicate their girls as devadasis. Nowadays devadasis are dedicated only to be sent to brothels in different places of our country, this clearly indicate that dedication is only to earn money (Moni, 2006). According to study conducted by Orchard, 2007, in most cases many of the devadasis are the single bread winner of the families. This means that the devadasis are from poverty driven families and they indulge in sex work to take care of their families. Moreover, once the girl is dedicated, she is not allowed marry a mortal man and she needs to serve the god/goddess till her

death. Sometimes the parents dedicate the girls in order to avoid dowry and also to keep family property if they have any (Anil, 2002). Rowland (n.d) in his article “A Light in the Darkness: Fighting Ritual Prostitution in South India” states that girls are seen as expenditure and they are dedicated in order to avoid expenses of marriage and dowry, also parents who don’t have male kids dedicate their girls to take care of them. By dedicating the daughters, many poor families, not only avoid the cost of dowry but also the daughter plays the role of the son by assisting the family. Poverty is the major cause but there are many underlying factors involved in it. Hence poverty alone cannot be seen as a contributing factor.

In the news article to The New Yorker magazine, Dalrymple’s (2008) extensive interview with a devadasi captures this situation *“I was only six when my parents dedicated me,” she said. “I had no feelings at the time, except wondering: why have they done this? We were very poor and had many debts. My father was desperate for money, as he had drunk and gambled away all that he had earned and more, and he said, ‘this thing will make us rich, it will make us live decently. Soon after I had had my first period, my father sold me to a shepherd in a neighboring village for five hundred rupees.”* The above quote shows how poverty paves way for dedication.

Furthermore, the Devadasi system gives a religious sanction to prostitution. So parents use religion to benefit from the money earned through prostitution (Colundalur, 2011). The associated guilt is overcome through their superstitious belief. The study by Blanchard, et al. (2005) is contradictory to the above literatures. The result of the study conducted in North Karnataka shows that, most of the devadasis who are sex workers do not mention the economic problems. The study further states that it is very difficult to obtain information from the devadasi sex workers and they are

misleading, (In the present day, dedicating girls is only to improve economic condition of the family and it has turned out to be an organized crime, hiding under the religious garb).

2.3.2. Religious and Superstitious Beliefs

The Devadasi system is very closely associated with the Hindu religion. Even though there are other reasons, religious belief and superstitious belief have a significant role in the dedication of girls. There is strong and blind faith in god/goddess, this usually results in various reasons such as dedicating girls for the well-being of the family/village, to get a male child etc., Secondly, dedication is also done to get cure from illness or disability either of the girls or any of the family members. There is other irrational belief that, if a girl develops matted hair (Jat), she should be dedicated. NGOs and academicians say that the Jat is formed due to fungus but the devotees believe that the “Jat” is a manifestation of goddess Yellamma in the woman’s body. Very often the girls are offered to god/goddess to solve the problems of the family or village. When there are situations including life threatening diseases, infertility, and dire financial troubles the dedication is initiated to get away from those (Kamat, 2016). The devotees believe that the goddess heals all their diseases and gives them wealth (Evans, 1997). Joint Women Programme, Bengaluru conducted a study on Devadasi system and they listed out the reasons for dedication. It is evident from the study that the dedication is mainly due to superstitious and religious beliefs. In addition, the study by Asha Ramesh, (1993) also supports this result with the same findings (Anil, 2002). Even though there are social and economic reasons, religion plays an important role in dedication of girls. (Black, 2007). Such a social injustice is perpetrated when superstitions join hands with poverty.

2.3.3. Caste System

Devadasi system is mostly prevalent among the lower caste people. The literature also shows that there is a strong correlation between the lower caste and poverty which forces parents to dedicate their girls as devadasis. In fact the Devadasi system is seen as a social problem which particularly targets the Scheduled Castes alone (Evans 1997) and the dedication is practiced largely in non-Brahmin communities. However some higher caste people also dedicate their daughters as devadasis. Sometimes the upper class women dedicated themselves to avoid widowhood (Rout, n.d). Most often devadasis are either from a family that follows dedication as a hereditary practice or from the community/caste which practice Devadasi system as a way of life (Anil, 2002). A study cited in Omvedt, G (1983) indicates that more than 90% of devadasis who indulge in prostitution are dalits. The NCW's (National Commission for Women) report cited in Colundalur, 2001 substantiate Omvedt, 1983, the result of this study estimates that there are 2500 devadasis in the Karnataka-Maharashtra border and all of them are dalits. Even among the Dalits, it is only particular sub caste people who follow the devadasi tradition. Especially, in the Karnataka-Maharashtra border sub castes such as Holers, Madars, Madiga and Sambars among Schedule Caste dedicate girls as devadasis. Almost all devadasis are from the Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribes. The study also provides evidence that 93 percent of those questioned belonged to Scheduled Caste and 7 percent are from Scheduled Tribes (Black, 2007). The pioneer in the study of Devadasi system "Jogan Shankar" says that the Devadasi system is created by the upper class people in order to exploit the lower class people (Colundalur, 2011). Currently the practice is prevalent in Dalit community, only the women from Dalit families are dedicated as devadasis. In the early times the Devadasi system was highly prevalent in upper class people as well, however in the early 20th century the educated upper class people broke away from the practice (Law Making, Cultural

Shifts and Life of Devadasis, n.d). The article titled “Law Making, Cultural Shifts and Life of Devadasis” states that the upper class people stopped practicing the Devadasi system once they were educated. During those times, education was costly and not easily affordable by all. Apart from reasons like tradition and hereditary practice, “poverty” is very much interlinked with caste factor. Hence it is one of the reasons why the prevalence is high among the lower caste families. Most of the women from the Devadasi groups are from the lower caste. The families of devadasis are poverty driven, the girls are dedicated so that they can provide financial assistance to the family. Further, Deepa & Suvarna (2016) say that devadasis from upper class families are very rare in the present times. Often the upper class men force the families of lower caste to dedicate as devadasi and the money for the girl’s sexual service is paid by the upper class men (Arun, 2011). If Devadasi system is considered as forced prostitution, the connection between the caste and the forced prostitution is very strong. The upper class men use their social and economic superiority to force the lower class families to dedicate their daughters. Sometimes they take care of the expenses for the dedication ceremony. “According to the Ambedkar Centre for Justice and Peace, a Canada-based NGO: Thousands of untouchable female children (between 6 and 8 years) are forced to become maidens of God (Devadasis, Jogins, a Hindu religious practice in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka State, Maharashtra, Orissa State, to mention only a few). They are taken from their families, never to see them again. They are later raped by the temple priest and finally auctioned secretly into prostitution and ultimately die from AIDS. It is estimated by NGOs that 5,000 to 15,000 girls are auctioned secretly every year” (Deepa, B & Suvarna. S, 2016). Even though poverty is the reason behind the practice, there are two different perspectives on it, some authors see the practice as a byproduct of the caste system and the practice is forced on the lower caste people by the so called upper class. However, as a contributing factor, poverty and caste system are interrelated as most of the

lower caste families live in poverty. The question that arises is if poverty prevails in all sections of society, why do the lower caste people alone dedicate the girl?

2.3.4. Hereditary Practice

The dedication of girls is also due to hereditary practice. It is usual that the daughter of devadasi is dedicated as devadasi (Moni, 2001). Again the system is a hereditary practice in many of the families of lower caste families alone. Many girls become devadasis because their mother or grandmother followed the Devadasi system. The result of the study done in the Karnataka-Maharashtra border supports the previous statement. It indicates that 38 percent of the girls are dedicated because their family has a history of being devadasi (Colundalur, 2011). Another study shows that 32 percent of its study population are from families which have a history of devadasis (Orchard, 2007). Often the tradition is carried forward through generations. But in present days many non devadasi families dedicate their girls to get economic benefits (Orchard, 2007). The reasons for dedication differs from place to place. For instance a study by Anti-Slavery International shows that, in Karnataka the dedication is mainly due to hereditary practice but in Andhra, the major reason is the superstitious belief, people often dedicate an unhealthy child, a girls who develops matted hair or other health reasons (Black 2007). On the contrary, the report by Anil, 2002 shows that, in recent years, the devadasis who have previous history of devadasi tradition in their family has declined and people have started dedicating girls for other reasons. There are families in which some of the ancestors were devadasis and they left that profession, but if they face any health or economic problems they will resume the practice by dedicating girls from the family (Shiva Kumar, 2009).

2.3.5. Social Pressure

The other reason for dedicating a girl is due to social pressure. The upper class men force the families to dedicate the young girls. Most often it is the upper class men who have first sexual intercourse with those girls. Likewise, the temple priest who has a hold on the community will give “religious sanction” to families to dedicate their girls. Once a girl is dedicated, she should offer sexual service to the upper class men, priests and other men of power and money (Colundalur, 2011). The upper class people encourage the lower class people to practice the system in order to get access to the desirable women to fulfil their extra martial sexual needs (Reach, 2013). This shows the kind of social pressure imposed on the lower sections of society. But “Social Pressure” as contributing factor should be seen in line with the caste system because pressure is from the upper class to the lower class. However, on the field, the dedication is not at all due to the upper class pressure, it is found that the dedication is often due to economic causes.

All these contributing factors are interlinked with each other. All this comes under the umbrella of religious, social and economic conditions. However, the dedication is largely due to the religious/superstitious beliefs.

2.4. Prevalence of Devadasi System

Devadasi system is prevalent mostly in southern states of India, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. It has prevalence in some other states such as Gujarat, Goa, Assam and Orissa (Colundalur, 2011). In Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, there are few districts which has prevalence of Devadasi system.

In Karnataka, the practice is more prevalent in northern Karnataka, in districts such as Dharwad, Belgaum (Name changes as Belagavi), Bagalkot, Bijapur (Orchard, 2007). Belgaum, Bagalkot and Bijapur are referred as “3B”

districts which has more prevalence than other districts. Bellary, Bidar, Gulabarga (Kalburgi) also have more prevalence.

In Maharashtra, the practice of dedication is prevalent only in the Maharashtra-Karnataka border districts such as Kolhapur, Sangli and Solapur. It is also prevalent in some parts of Pune, Latur, Usmanabad, Satara, Sindhudurg and Nanded. In Mumbai, the practice of dedication is not there but many of the devadasis work in red light areas of Mumbai.

In Tamil Nadu, the devadasis were closely associated with the temples, hence the presence of devadasis can be seen in temples of Thanjavur, Madurai, Kanchipuram, Thiruvaiyaru, Puddukottai and Thiruvallur.

In Andhra Pradesh Devadasi practice is prevalent in fourteen districts – Karimnagar, Warangal, Nizamabad, Mehaboobnagar, Kurnool, Hyderabad, Ananthapur, Medak, Adilabad, Chittoor, Rangareddy, Nellore, Nalgonda, and Srikakulam.

2.5. Cultural Discourses on Devadasi system

The figure of the Devadasi is strongly inscribed and has a long lineage in temple architecture, literature and other artistic discourses in India. Devadasis have also been cultural and religious icons through history. The curious fallout after the abolition of the Devadasi system is that the devadasi was completely removed from her position as an accomplished artist and devotee to that of a common prostitute.

2.5.1. Dancing Girls in Sacred Literatures and Myths

There are references to the dancing girl in Hindu sacred literature. “The oldest mention of a courtesan is probably in the *Rig Veda* Where the goddess of dawn Ushas is compared to a dancing girl richly clad in revealing

embroidered garments. The pumschali, a sacred courtesan, played a role in ritual, or *vratya*.... The *Atharva Veda* described the courtesan as a *gandharva-grihita*.... Scholars interpret this as the beginning of the later practice of marriage of the courtesan to some deity” (Lakshmi, 2008).

There are extensive references to dancing girls in Hindu mythology. When Bharata, author of *Natya Shastra*, “went about directing a dance-drama to entertain the gods, he needed women actors and dancers. Complying with his request, the god Brahma created *apsaras*, or celestial dancing nymphs, who were an early avatar of the *devadasis*” (Lakshmi Viswanathan, 2008). In another myth, beautiful nymphs known as *apsaras* such as Menaka and Urvashi emerged during the churning of the ocean in search of the immortal nectar. “Neither the gods nor the demons would take them as wives, nor therefore they became the common property known as *sumatmajas* (daughters of pleasure)” (Lakshmi Viswanathan, 2008).

In an interesting study, David Kopf traces the pre-temple genesis of the Devadasi system to the ritual dances of women of the Rajbhansi tribe in East Bengal. In rituals called *Hudama* and *Ita puja*, young beautiful women danced naked to highly erotic songs in uncultivated farms to pray for rains and good harvest (Kopf, 1993).

There is a reference to the dancing girl in Buddhist literature also. “Amrapali was a courtesan [in the ancient city of] Vaishali....who was devoted to the Buddha himself. She danced, sang, played the lute and wrote poetry.” The *Jataka* stories also provide details about “the *antapura* or the inner quarters for women [which] employed 16,000 dancing girls! The garden of pleasure, where kings relaxed, half in stupor, resting their heads on the laps of their favourite dancers, is a scene vividly etched...” (Lakshmi Viswanathan, 2008).

Vatsyayana's *Kama Sutra* lists sixty four arts in which accomplished courtesans excelled in. They are grouped under three heads -- “ganika, rupajiva and kumbhadasi.” Such a grouping also delineates sensual and other artistic roles to devadasis. The evocation of senses by the 64 arts is explicated in detail in Bhanudatta's classic *Rasa Manjari* (Lakshmi Viswanathan, 2008).

In Tamil literature, the most vivid symbol of the devadasi is Madhavi in the epic *Silappadikaram*. In the scenes depicting Madhavi and other courtesans, Ilango Adigal outlines the customs and manners of courtesans. The beauty, sensuousness and the dancing prowess of Madhavi create a prototype for the figure of the devadasi in the Indian imagination.

2.5.2. Depiction of Devadasis in Bhakti Literature

Bhakti literatures across India have highlighted the passion for the divine exemplified by devadasis. “Paravai, Sangili and Manikka Nachiyar were three legendary dancers whose praise is sung by many Nayanmars and most notably in Sekkilar's *Periapuranam*. Saivite, Vaishnavite and Virasaivite saints have immortalised temple dancers in their Bhakti poetry. Before the II century, when temple women were assigned specific duties, there is only mention of the word 'sule' (meaning prostitute) in inscriptions. In the 11th century, when the temple as an institution was expanding, the word 'patra' (meaning singing/dancing girl) was gradually attached to them. The word 'devadasi' itself is conspicuous by its absence in this period, although it was then current in the inscriptions of neighbouring regions as well as in the 'vachana' literature of the Virashaivas.” (Janaki, 1994).

By the 12th century, specific duties were assigned to temple women. “The temple complex came increasingly to resemble the king's court, and the devadasi's relation to the deity approximated the courtesan's relation to the king. The sacred prostitute gradually became the custodian of the arts of

singing and dancing. For her services to the temple, the devadasi enjoyed grants made either to her personally or to the temple. These included grants of lands, some of which were made by upper caste women themselves. By the late 19th century, the devadasi tradition was a decidedly matrilineal one. The young dedicated girl underwent rigorous training in 'nritya' and Gita under a male guru, which entitled her access to a structure of cash payments through the temple or through personal land grants from the sexual alliances she developed with upper caste patrons." Her strict professionalism, says Amrit Srinivasan, "made her an adjunct to conservative domestic society, not its ravager", an assertion borne out by the number of female donors of grants to temples for their services." Indeed, the devadasi's legal rights entitled her to adopt daughters and pass property on to her female descendants (Janaki, 1994).

Chola and Vijayanagar dynasties unequivocally established a legacy of art and architecture in South India. "Devadasis were at the very centre of this vast and rich cultural transformation.... Their music and dance served two main purposes. One was to sanctify the temple. The other was to serve the king.... The harbinger of this good fortune [was] the perennially auspicious woman, the nityasumangali, or devadasi." (Lakshmi, 2008). In the realm of arts, such patronage also resulted in the creation of new genres of poetry and music – *padams* and *javalis* – which combined the erotic with the divine. Kshetrappa and Annamayya were two famous exponents of *padams*. Devadasis themselves were accomplished poets in this genre, known by different names such as *Chatu*, *Tanippatal*, etc. Ramabhadramba, Madhuravani and Rangajamma adorned the courts of the Nayaks of Thanjavur (Lakshmi, 2008).

As Avanthi Meduri points out in her study "Bharata Natyam – What are You?"

“The devadasi, at the height of her glory under the ruler ship of the Chola kings in the ninth through twelfth centuries A.D., linked temple to court and balanced patronage with personal independence. Well-versed in the arts, she was considered a jewel of both court and temple alike. Both these institutions mutually cared for her rather lavish economic needs. Even in her marginalized social position, she was unique in that she epitomized the freedom of the plural woman outside of caste and not defined in the biological role of a madonna” (Meduri, 1988)

The allied arts of Tamil Bhakti worship -- *sadir* (dance), *nagaswaram* (instrumental music) and *nattuvangam* (dance-conducting) were traditionally organised into two orchestras: the *periamelam* (in Tamil literature 'big drum') and the *cinnamelam* (in Tamil literature 'small drum'). The *periamelam* was focussed around the male *nagaswaram* virtuoso and was the hereditary specialisation of the 'pure' section of the community. The *cinnamelam*, on the other hand, was focussed around the devadasi or female dancer and her male guru or *nattuvanar*, and was the hereditary specialisation of the 'mixed' section of the community. Recruitment to the profession was restricted from within each group on the basis of various natural and cultural criteria such as (i) sex- the *nagaswaram* as also dance-conducting was meant to be performed only by men while the *sadir*, was danced only by women, (ii) inheritance 'shares' in the local service rights to the *periamelam* were transmitted through male links and to the *cinnamelam* through female links, (iii) initiation-dedication to the deity seen as a simple rite of incorporation for the men and as a special ceremony of 'marriage' for the women, marked entrance into the profession and was compulsory for the attainment for privileges associated with temple office, and (iv) training- the public demonstration of skill in one's art subsequent to a ritual and social apprenticeship to one's teacher was the necessary preliminary to a professional career. Participation in each orchestra

consequently required both technical and hereditary qualification (Amrit, 1985).

2.5.3. Cultural Position of Devadasis in the Twentieth Century

As a cultural and artistic heritage, the devadasi and her dance are synonymous. However, the arrival of the colonial British and the Reformist Movement, sounded the death knell for the Devadasi and a drastic transformation of the art form. Private vs public, home vs world, women vs men – this strong dichotomy is deeply entrenched with reference to the Devadasi system. This dichotomy is very evident in the social reformist discourse on Devadasi system. “The artistic achievements of devadasi women – their prowess as musicians and dancers – were overshadowed, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, by the stigma of prostitution.” (Weidman, 2005). The high point of the dichotomy was the passing of the Anti-Dedication Bill in the Madras Legislative Assembly by Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy and the futile efforts of Bangalore Nagarathinammal and others of the Madras Devadasi Association.

Saskia Kersenboom (1987) – Story's book length study *Nityasumangali: Devadasi Tradition in South India* focusses on the Devadasi system as a cultural tradition. The devadasi tradition is examined within the temple ritual of Tamil Nadu as well as the royal patronage. As the author states, “this is not the study of the fact of the devadasi tradition, but of its meaning and the mode of production of that meaning.”

The colonial label "dancing girl" was used to refer to communities of women with and without temple affiliations in different parts of the Bombay and Madras Presidencies (Parker 1998). The dance they performed was, in Tamil Nadu, variously called *Sadir*, *Nautch* (a corruption of the Hindi term *nach*), or Karnataka before the "revival" of the dance form in the 1940s as

Bharata Natyam. (Weidman, 2003). This interpretation of the role of a devadasi degraded a heritage they had preserved over the centuries.

Gramophone companies, however, initially run not by Brahmins but by Americans and Europeans, actively recruited devadasi women for their first recordings. Unlike All India Radio, which started in the 1930s as a vehicle for the nationalist project of making music respectable (thus denying broadcasting opportunities to devadasi women), the gramophone companies were purely capitalist enterprises. Between 1910 and 1930, their best-selling recordings in South India were of Dhanakoti Ammal, Bangalore Nagaratnammal, Bangalore Thayi, Coimbatore Thayi, M. Shanmughavadivu, Veena Dhanammal, and Madras Lalithangi, all women from the devadasi community (Kinnear 1994; Menon 1999).

Tamil Isai Sangam is another noted institution, which nurtured the artistic talents of the Isai Vellala Community, from which many Devadasis hailed. “Tamil Isai Sangam (Tamil Music Sangam) was founded in 1942 by Raja Annamalai Chettiar at the Annamalai University in South Arcot district. This was a counter organisation to the Madras Music Academy founded in 1926 by Brahmins. The Tamil Isai Sangam by and large extended its patronage to non-Brahmins and emphasised Tamil music in contradistinction to the Sankritic musical traditions of Muthuswami Dikshitar and others and extended patronage to indigenous musical instruments like *nadaswaram* (wind instrument). This was also the entry point of women of the Devadasi community making a mark in the field of Carnatic music. M.S. Subbulakshmi, M.L. Vasanthakumari, Veenai Dhanammal and her nieces Brindha and Mukta came mostly from the Isai Vellalar community which had historically been associated with the Devadasi system. Balasaraswati, one of the greatest exponents of Bharatanatyam was also a niece of Veenai Dhanammal and hailed from the same community. It is a point of sociological

interest that while the male children born to devadasis took to playing the *nadaswaram*, the female children took to the profession of the mothers.” (Vijaya, 1998)

2.5.4. Devadasis in the Cultural Imagination

Some of the best outputs of Bhakti literature have been inspired by the devadasis. A good example of the combination of eroticism and spirituality is the musical form called *padams* popularised by Kshetrajna or Kshetrappa. It is believed that his compositions are inspired by a devadasi from his village and he composed *padams* to Lord Venugopalaśwamy. These songs formed part of the dancing repertoire of devadasi dancers of *Sadir* in Tamil Nadu and *Kuchipudi* in Andhra Pradesh (Kopf, 1993).

In a similar vein, it is believed that *Gita Govinda*, the twelfth century work of Jayadeva is inspired by his Devadasi wife. It is amazing that Jayadeva has combined intense physical passion as a sublime expression of the divine love between the Jeevatma and Paramatma (Kopf, 1993).

Kopf also provides an illustration of Candidasa, who fell in love with the Devadasi of a local temple. Since she was a Harijan, their relationship was censured. However, Candidasa found her to be an embodiment of Sakthi and “defended the moral value of sanctified sex And salvation achieved through a woman's embrace” (Kopf, 1993).

2.5.5. Representative Literary Narratives on/by Devadasis

The most controversial and the most celebrated work by a devadasi is *Radhika Santawanam* by Muddupalani in the eighteenth century. It is an erotic love poem, which depicts Krishna's love for his new wife and the jealousy it kindles in his older wife, Radha. The poem is a classic illustration

of women's sensibility and her perception of sexuality. The poem created a furore in the public sphere from the time it was presented. Muddupalani's contemporaries, the male poets of the court, mainly Kandukuri Veerasalingham, termed it licentious and sought to ban it. Ironically, the work was censured even when Bangalore Nagarathinammal tried to republish it. The Reformists and the Colonial government banned the work for its unbridled and open discussion of sex by a woman (Sriram, 2007).

Another seminal work on devadasis is Muvalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar's semi-autobiographical novel, *Dasigalin Mosa Valai* in 1936. "The novel, a mixture of autobiography and propaganda, follows the lives of several devadasis who come to the realization that the system is exploiting them and who mobilize to effect legislation." (Kannabiran, 1995). As an individual, who walked out of the Devadasi system, Ramamirtham Ammaiyar voices propaganda based on the Self-Respect Movement. The novel has a poignant preface: "My strong opinion is that from the ancient time, the temple priests, Kings and the landlords, in the name of art had encouraged particular communities to indulge in prostitution." (qtd in Anandhi, 1991). At present, the novel is a good document of the Devadasi system and the movement to abolish it. The protagonists of the novel are two sisters who escape the system and form the Devadasigal Munnetra Sangam. What is interesting is that the novel presents a spectrum of devadasi voices for and against the system -- Bogachindamani is lured by the wealth and supports the Devadasi system, Kanagavalli yearns for a monogamous marriage, Gunapoosani and Vivekavati look at the class and religious considerations and Gnanasundari perceives the nexus between the zamindari system and the Devadasi system (Anandhi, 1991). This highlights the ambivalence of the Devadasi system in the twentieth century.

Thillana Mohanambal is a Tamil novel, which was first serialised in the Tamil magazine *Ananta Vikatan* and later made into a successful movie. It was written by Kothamangalam Subbu. The plot depicts the love between Sikkil Shanmugasundaram, a nagaswaram player and Mohanambal, a devadasi dancer. What is interesting is that the novel and the film capture the nuances of the devadasi tradition. Shanmugasundaram and his troupe represent the concept of the periamelam and Mohanambal and her troupe represent the cinnamelam. Mohanambal's mother and her persistent efforts to find a “suitable” patron for her daughter poignantly depicts the dream of every Devadasi mother. The novel and the film are set in Thanjavur, Thiruvarur and Madurai – all seats of the devadasi tradition.

The figure of the Devadasi has been a continuing trope in Indian literature. Arun Kolatkar's *Jejuri* poems, published in 1976, are set against the backdrop of the Khandoba temple, which continues to be a place of dedication to this day. The collection puts forth vivid images of everyday life. New insights arise, when the poems are read in the context of the Devadasi system.

Amita Kanekar's *A Spoke in the Wheel* (2005) is the latest addition in the literary representation of a devadasi. Through the central character, Upali and the Devadasi, Sutanuka, the author explores how women are oppressed in the name of religion and traditions. The conversation between Upali and the temple priest regarding Sutanaka's love for the sculptor, Devadina reveals the many faults of the Devadasi system. “The girl may be happier, you say, but is that all that matters? What of the sacred laws before which we all are helpless? If she flouts the law, there will be calamity- on her, on her community, on this temple.” (Kanekar, 2005). In their study on the novel, Smriti Thakur and Alpana Saini point out how practitioners of religion “mould sacred laws according to their convenience which become in one or

another way, the medium of women's exploitation, specifically, for those women who are engaged in practices like devadasi. Simultaneously, Kanekar shows the fact that these religious practitioners, who pretend to serve society, in actuality, are the culprits of society who mislead people in the name of religion."

Devkant Barooah's poem "Devadasi" (1980) evokes the real dedication of the body and soul of the devadasi as the handmaiden of God and how destiny intervenes to push them to their lowly state:

Who to?

To whom will you offer?

The sweet fragrance of your heart and the enchanting body

of yours?

To God?

But shall the accursed love of yours quench the thirst of

God?

For God needs blood — scarlet blood — from the heart.

Will you give Him love?

offer

obeisance?

Whom Heaven's damsels

anguished

like Rambha

and Menaka

The attractive garland woven — as if by magic — of

celestial

'Parijat' blossoms casts no spell on Him.

And you would offer Him just earthly flowers —

Flowers that bloom at dawn and decay at dusk?

You would merely give to the luxurious rich what the

beggars possess.

Would you dare giving away water to the river

and not to the thirsty sands?

Of this soil am I born, the lovely flowers,

Brahmaputra

too, spring from

the self same soil.

For our sake, my Dear, for our sake alone,

are meant the

cherry

lips of the exquisite belles.

It is but a farce — a mere play — to surrender the heart

to

someone.

This broken heart bespeaks our own glory:

The tears of separation are nothing but the stream of

'Mandakini'

of the heart;

The love pouring therefrom is but the fragrance of

heavenly 'Mandar'

flowers;

The aspect of love is beset with suspicion;

In this sea of sorrow, my boat flounders in the tempest

Will you not share a part of my agony?

Would you be content to stand back on the banks and

look on?

It's a mistake — a colossal

mistake!

For He is a jealous

God

And we, the victims at the altar of jealousy

—

just

scapegoats!

The primitive Man was haunted by mistrust,

His heart trembling with fear unknown —

And that — the guillotine!

Today, too,

as from the beginning of creation

The incessant struggle between man's

desire and his

Destiny

Is reminiscent of ages past.

We sing the glory of Man,

But celebrate the triumph of Fate! (PP 10-12)

2.5.6. State of the Devadasi Artist Today

In her study “Gone with the Devadasis,” (2014) Shakunthala Narasimhan points out how the devadasi repertoire in arts not only consists of their major contributions to music and dance, but also in their expertise with unique musical instruments. “A unique drum, known variously as the *chondke*, *chawandga* or *chandike*, was handled only by devadasis. It was fascinating to watch Radhabai.... sing while accompanying herself on the instrument. It was held tucked under one arm while manipulating the stick strung through the centre of a small cylindrical drum, inside which she created fantastic rhythm patterns using her nimble fingers, to the accompaniment of a single stringed *tuntune* (*ektara*), a drone played by another woman. In a display of extraordinary musical skill, the pitch of the rhythm patterns changed with the tension on the string attached to the drum.” The abhorable fact is that, with these instruments, the devadasis of today are not entertaining the divinity or royalty but are begging for their survival. The ray of hope lies in devadasis like Muthukannamma of Viralimalai, who continue to train contemporary dancers in the rich and subtle nuances of Sadir, which are missing in the sanitised form of Bharata Natyam.

2.6. Devadasis in Prostitution

The Devadasi system has a long history behind it and it has undergone many transitions. Sex work is not their profession, most of the devadasis had one or two patrons in their life time (Orchard, 2007 & Amrit, 1985). However, the Devadasi system is always associated with prostitution and the relation between the Devadasi system and prostitution is very significant. (Reach, 2013). Dalrymple (2008) says that “the Devadasi system is centuries old, and the women once enjoyed lives of great privilege”. They were invited to all ceremonies and their presence was considered auspicious. The social, cultural, economic and political changes made them prostitutes (Orchard,

2007). Once the British took over the revenue system of the temple, the financial support of the devadasis were taken away which affected the social and economic status and they had no option other than prostitution (“Law Making, Cultural Shifts and Life of Devadasis”, 2013). On the other hand, their dance and other skills had a little link to obscenity, so prostitution became the more attractive option (Geetanjali, Ajay, Rima, 2000). The devadasi struggled for the cultural and ritual identity. Besides, in the process of modernization and westernization, the religious importance of the devadasis was lost and weakened, as a result many of the devadasis ended up in the prostitution (Evans, 1997). Initially devadasis offered sexual service to kings, zamindars and other village head man and other upper class people. Later they slowly started to entertain other people of society and slowly became prostitutes (Moni, 2001). The major reason is, after the end of royal patronage, the income of devadasis reduced significantly and some of them became beggars and prostitutes. (Rout, n.d). Even now in Karnataka and Maharashtra, begging is a major source of income for the devadasis, they beg during Tuesday and Friday to collect money and grains from the residents and the specific system is called as “Jogva” in Karnataka and Maharashtra. According to Blanchard et al, 2005 (cited in Orchard, 2007) at present most of the devadasis practice sex work or they run brothels in villages.

Evans (1997) in his study titled “*Contemporary Devadasis: Empowered Auspicious Women or Exploited Prostitutes?*” clearly explains how devadasis are associated with prostitution. He explains that “Even though the representations are generally context-sensitive, studies of the contemporary devadasis have mainly focused on the gendered dimension of the devadasi-hood, that is, the devadasi as synonymous or reducible to a common prostitute. It is puzzling why the label 'prostitution' is so persistently attached to the contemporary devadasi. One explanation is that the generic term 'devadasi' is applied to any woman associated with theogamy (principally the

cult of Yellamma-Renuka) in Karnataka, overlooking the diversity of her ritual statuses as the “chaste” degraded and pious wife of Siva Jamadagni. A closer examination reveals that only the ‘degraded wife’ (sule muttu) is associated with commercial prostitution. Another explanation is that such a misappropriation of the term ‘devadasi’ may reflect a secularized sociological perspective which represents the devadasis as predominantly exploited rather than empowered. This perspective is reflected in the newspaper reports in which the Yellamma-Renuka temple is portrayed as a ‘recruiting center’ for prostitutes. An increasing social and sociological concern for women's issues in contemporary Indian society arguably makes the sociological perspective a valid representation of the contemporary devadasi as an exploited sex worker, especially if she comes from rural scheduled caste communities. The Devadasi Act (1934, 1947) made it illegal for the devadasis to perform dance in the temple precincts; who then are the contemporary ‘devadasis’ of Karnataka? The post- Independence period is characterized by a struggle for a cultural identity over the body of the ‘post-devadasi’. This struggle takes place on several levels of representation. On the level of discourse the term ‘devadasi’ is used by the authors (e.g. Trivedi, 1977, Tarachand, 1992) generically as synonymous with ‘prostitute’ in support of a secularization, modernization and de-traditionalization thesis” This clearly explains the transformation of the word devadasis in to prostitutes.

The saying in Marathi is “*Devadasi devachi, bayko saarya gavachi*” means servant of god but the wife of the whole town. Being a devadasi gives them the religious sanction to indulge in prostitution, so unlike other prostitutes the devadasi women do not hesitate to become prostitutes (Deepa, & Suvarna. 2016). Prostitution is considered immoral in society, however dedication is used to justify the practice of prostitution, hence the devadasi escapes the social stigma. Moreover the devadasis consider the sexual service as workshop of goddess (Reach, 2013). The devadasis are referred as cheap

prostitutes (Vimochana, 1985 as cited in Orchard, 2007) and they do practice sex work in rural setting. Hence they get more customers than the commercial sex work and the risk of getting caught by the enforcement agency is also very less. Moreover the devadasis are safe against the abuse compared to the commercial sex workers. The religious cover makes the devadasis comfortable in sex work. Due to this reason the number of devadasis is rising every year. On the other hand, the commercial sex workers claim themselves as devadasis to avoid the stigma and to justify their sexual practice (Reach 2013).

The act of entering prostitution is closely associated with economic condition. Economic factors plays a major role in dedication. The study by Blanchard, et.al (2005) in Karnataka reveals that out of 1588 Female Sex Workers (FSW) interviewed, 414 (26%) of them reported that they entered through Devadasi system and most of them reported financial need as a reason for the dedication. Unlike other FSWs, devadasis practice home/rural based sexual service, most often they practice sex work within the community. Hence it is very difficult for the law enforcement agency to curb this evil practice. On the other hand, there are some devadasis who practice sex work in brothels in cities like Mumbai, Pune, Kolhapur, Miraj and Sangli. Considerable number among the commercial sex workers are devadasis (Reach, 2013). Parents take the decision about dedication, mostly when the girls are too young and they are not able to make any decision, the girls are forced to practice Devadasi system and they should be seen as victims.

In some cases the brothels are run by the old/elderly devadasis who had practiced sex work and retired. When there is need for girls, these devadasis visit the village to procure girls for sex work. Since they are also devadasis, they are very familiar with the village and they know the particular family or the caste where they can get girls for sex work. Once the girls are

identified, they pay an advance and take the girls to their brothels. The advance is adjusted against the earning of the girls through sex work. In recent times, the non devadasi prostitutes and devadasis earn a lot through sex work, which encourage the poor lower caste families to dedicate their daughters. Most often, these girls return when they are old or ill. Sometimes, they never return to their families (Reach, 2013). The Devadasi system in the early times was associated with the dance and music but at present it is very clear that the act of dedication is just name sake, the intention is to practice commercial sex work. At present the Devadasi system just feeds girls for prostitution and uses religion as a veneer to hide its negative effect.

A devadasi who operated in the Kamatipura (red light area in Mumbai) says that there is a huge demand in the market for young virgin girls and Devadasi system is one of the ways to procure virgin girls. Sometimes, the client makes an advance payment to the pimps and madams in the brothels to procure virgin girls. So this forces the pimps and madams to step into the village to get girls for their clients. In the process the retired devadasis who have settled down in their villages assist the pimps and madams and get the commission (Reach, 2013).

2.7. Legislation for Devadasis in Prostitution

The widespread Devadasi practice slowly started to decline in the late 19th century. Their social and economic status also declined, which led the devadasis to look for other economic support and they were forced to become prostitutes. The social movements in India had begun for various issues and there were a social movement against the Devadasi system as well. The first voice against Devadasi system was raised in 1882, during the anti-Nautch and anti-Dedication movement (Wikipedia). The Reformists were mainly social reformers, doctors, journalists and social workers who protested against the Devadasi system and the Revivalists supported the existence of the Devadasi

system (Anil, 2002). The article titled “Law Making, Cultural Shifts and Life of Devadasis” (2013) emphasises that “Pressure from the colonial "reform" movement led to suppression of the practice of Devadasis.” The temple authorities also raised voice against the abolition of devadasi practice. Bharatnatyam dancer Swapna Sundari and Odissi dancer Late Sanjukta Panigrahi are notable individuals who stood against the abolition

Devadasis enjoyed high social status and there was a regular income. During the late 18th century and beginning of the 19th century, their social and economic status started to decline mainly due to two reasons. Firstly, the numerous temples were destroyed during the Mughal period. Secondly, the “National Movement” unleashed new definitions of social morality. Additionally, middle class elite from Madras and North India tried to revive the tradition of classical music and dance by making them more broad-based (Geetanjali, Ajay, & Rima, 2000). Geetanjali, Ajay, & Rima, (2000) highlight that “To make classical music and dance socially acceptable, it was imperative to strip them of their sensual connotations and instead emphasize their spiritual content. The devadasis' culture became identified with the obscene and the erotic, and they were condemned for their interpretation of dance along erotic lines. Such was the fervor that there were protests against admitting children of devadasis to schools that were otherwise open to everyone. As a consequence, devadasis began to lose their dominant position as repositories of a dancing and singing tradition”.

The idea of banning the devadasi practice came after the arrival of Europeans. They saw the girls as dancing and singing in temples and existing just to entertain the rich people. They also noticed that these girls were showing their body parts so they are no different from prostitutes. As a result, the Devadasi system came to national and international attention, it had been discussed in British House of Commons and the system was cited as an

example of the "debauched primitiveness" and resulted in the decision to discourage the devadasi practice. There was a letter to the Viceroy that requested that the work of devadasis be discouraged since it "necessarily lowers the moral tone of society, but also that family life on which national soundness depends. (Geetanjali, Ajay, & Rima, 2000).

At the end of 19th century, there was anti-nautch campaign against the Devadasi system. Seminars, workshops, conferences, awareness campaigns and public meetings were conducted for the abolition of the evil practice. In 1882 there was an appeal made to the Viceroy, the Governor General of India and the Governor General of Madras. The British saw these devadasis as prostitutes and banned temple dancing and dedication of girls to the temple.

Meanwhile, the organizers of Society of India fought to revive the devadasi dance. People like Madam H .P. Blavatsky and Colonel H. S. Oclott undertook a tour of south India and promoted the importance of the revival of devadasi tradition and the art of sadir. After establishing the Theosophical Society at Adyar, their aim was to restore ancient Indian history and transform of Sadir in to Bharathanatyam (Amrit, 1985)

The first step in the process of abolition was initiated by the princely State of Mysore in 19th century. In Tamil Nadu, political parties started their campaign against the Devadasi system and at the end, during 1930 there was a bill brought by Dr. Muthu Lakshmi Reddy in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly prohibiting the dedication ceremony in Tamil Nadu and also made a way to legalise marriage of the dedicated women. (Anil, 2002). Dr. Muthu Lakshmi Reddy pointed an inadequacy in Sections 372 & 373 of Indian Penal Code in preventing the dedication. During the British rule, Bombay Devadasi Prevention Act was enacted in 1934. According to this Act, people who are involved in the dedication, except the woman, who is being dedicated should be punished for a year of imprisonment or fine or both. This Act also

supported the devadasis in the issues relating to the land. This Act made the local collector to intervene when there was a land dispute (Wikipedia). Later, the devadasi practice was abolished through an Act in 1947 in Madras Presidency (Janaki, 1994). These Acts not only prohibited the Devadasi system but also prohibited means for their livelihood, dance and music (Ask, 2014). Both the Bombay Devadasi Prevention Act and the Madras Devadasi (Prevention of Dedication) functioned in Mysore State which is now Karnataka. These Acts were replaced by Karnataka Devadasi (Prohibition of Dedication) Act 1982 and later notified by the government through the Gazette in 1984. The Karnataka Devadasi (Prohibition of Dedication) Act increased the imprisonment period and the fine amount. Unlike the other earlier legislations, this Act also laid down provisions for rehabilitation of devadasis. Later, Andhra Pradesh (Both Andhra and Telangana) enacted a similar Act in 1988 (Anil, 2002).

Unlike the other three States, the Reform Movements were very intensive and the Reformists were very active not only in the matter of abolition of devadasis but also in certain issues like Sati, Child Marriage, and Female Infanticide etc. The “Self Respect Movement” (Suya Mariyathai Iyyakkam) by E.V.Ramasamy played an important role in the abolition. Many reformists married devadasis and the daughters of devadasis to show their support towards the abolition of Devadasi system. However, there were a different of opinion within the Self-Respect Movement between E.V. Ramasawy and Ramamurtham Ammal. Hence Ramamurtham Ammal, separately fought for the abolition. The two women, Ramamurtham Ammal and Muthu Lakshmi Reddy played a vital role in the abolition of the Devadasi system. At present, the prevalence of devadasis is less in Tamil Nadu compared to the other three States. That Reform Movements were very intensive and the Reformists were very active in Tamil Nadu can be

considered as a major reason why the practice is not much prevalent in Tamil Nadu.

As a result, the process of eradicating the devadasi practice was very serious during the 20th century. The practice was eradicated by various State laws such as The Bombay Devadasis Protection Act, 1934, The Tamil Nadu Devadasis (Prevention of Dedication) Act, 1947, The Prohibition of Dedication Act 1982 of Karnataka, the Andhra Pradesh Devadasis (Prohibition of dedication) Act, 1988 (Deepa, B & Suvarna. S, 2016).

The State governments have banned the practice and taken many initiatives to prevent the practice. Kaustubh (n.d) comments that government has prohibited the practice however it has failed to address the problem such as poverty, untouchability, lack of awareness and ignorance which causes the practice. He further highlights this as a major reason for the prevalence of the practice.

Despite these legislations, the practice exists in many forms (Orchard, 2007). There can be two major reasons for this, lack of implementation and inability of these legislations to curb the evil practice. The legislation related to Devadasi system are not strong enough to convict the offenders. From 1988, there are seven cases registered in Andhra Pradesh and there is no conviction so far. In Karnataka, there are 45 cases registered but only one case got convicted (Rowland, n.d).

National Legal Service Authority says that lack of awareness on law relating to prevention of Devadasi system and lethargic attitude in restoring the life of victims are major causes for the prevalence of devadasis (The Hindu, Jan 30, 2006). The law prohibiting Devadasi system doesn't get the attention of the concerned official, only very few are booked under that act and the conviction rate is very less. For instance, in 2003 only 45 cases were

registered, out of which only three were convicted (two of them imprisoned for two years and one was punished with Rs.1000 fine (Shiva Kumar, 2009). In addition, the study titled “A Report on Diagnostic Study on Prostitution in Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh and Impact of Preventive Measures” conducted by Rural Education and Action for Change (REACH) and sponsored by Ministry of Women and Child Development reveals that “There is lack of awareness about the prohibiting Acts among the affected population. The police authorities also enforce this Act half-heartedly”. The above statistics and research clearly show lack of awareness, inadequacy of the law and law enforcement agency in the matter of conviction. The practice is not eradicated mainly due to poor implementation of law. Some of these legislations banning Devadasi system also give provisions for rehabilitation of devadasis.

2.8. Rehabilitation of Devadasis

The rehabilitation measures for devadasis started during the late 20th century. Currently, providers of rehabilitation are NGOs, Government agencies, devadasis themselves and some individuals. However most of the work in the area of rehabilitation is done by the NGOs. The government has taken many initiatives for the rehabilitation and it has been discussed below. However the rehabilitation measures are not effective and they are also misused because the provisions are not forceful in addressing the issues.

2.8.1. Karnataka

Among the four States, Karnataka has more schemes for devadasis. The State government of Karnataka has Devadasi Rehabilitation Center to implement the schemes by the government. The Devadasi Rehabilitation Center is funded and monitored by State Women’s Development Corporation.

A financial assistance of Rs.10,000 is being given for the remarriage of destitute widows. The destitute widow should be in the age group of 18 and 35 years and she must be a domicile of Karnataka for more than five years. The annual income should be as per the Integrated Rural Development Programmes norms. Initially an amount of Rs.5000 is given to the couple to meet the expenses of the marriage and the balance amount of Rs.5000 is kept in the form of National Savings Certificate in the name of the woman.

A financial assistance of Rs.10,000 is given to a couple where the bride is a devadasi. The devadasi woman should be in the age group of 18 to 35 years and must be a domicile in Karnataka for more than two years. The suitor should be above 21 years of age at the time of submitting the application. He should have a permanent source of income of not less than Rs.500 per month. The State Government has enhanced the financial assistance for general category to Rs.20,000 and to Rs.25,000 for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Department of Women and Child Development, n.d).

In Karnataka, a 1986 amendment to the Prohibition of Devadasi Act (1984) states that marriage of the devadasi is legitimate and she is granted Rs.3000 to get married. But this has helped pimps and others who are associated with devadasi practice. There were many fake marriages conducted simply to avail the grant (Black, 2007). There were also income generation activities, scholarships and hostel for children of devadasis and special importance is given to girl child of devadasis. But the major problem is that, there is no mechanism to identify the devadasis. So many women claim themselves as devadasis and they have exploited the state Programmes for devadasis (Orchard, 2007). However these legislations are keen on criminalizing the act and fail to address issues such as regular income for devadasis, proper education for the children of devadasis and the overall rehabilitation of devadasis (Deepa & Suvarna, 2016).

2.8.2. Maharashtra

In Maharashtra, an amount of Rs.10, 000 is given every year to the NGOs which work for the devadasi eradication programmes. There is also a pension scheme for devadasis who are above the age of 40. There are other schemes such as a loan of Rs.35,000 for devadasis to start a small business. Rs.10,000 is given for the marriage of the unmarried devadasis or the daughters of the devadasi (Reach, 2013). However, during the field visit, it was found that the beneficiaries of devadasi pension schemes were transferred to “Rajiv Gandhi Niradhar Yojana” schemes and the other schemes have been stopped in 2012.

2.8.3. Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh (Andhra and Telangana) does not have many schemes for devadasis. However the devadasi practice has been banned through Andhra Pradesh Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act, 1988. The Act penalizes the practice of dedication and makes it cognizable and nonbailable offence. The Act further lays down the duties of the district management regarding the prevention. Similar Act called The Andhra Pradesh Devadasis Prohibition of Dedication Rules 2015 was enacted in 2015. Unlike the previous one, the Act has provisions for rehabilitation and relief of devadasis. The Act says that the government should fund preventive activities, should provide education and house for devadasi as well. However during the field work, it is noticed that these schemes are only in papers. The officers responsible for the prevention and rehabilitation works do not know the word devadasi even.

2.8.4. Tamil Nadu

The devadasi practice was prohibited in 1947. According to the Social Welfare Department of Tamil Nadu, there are no devadasis in Tamil Nadu, hence they don't have any rehabilitation programmes. But the devadasis have been identified by the field workers in Tiruvallur, Tirutani, Viralimalai and Thiruvarur. Hence the method adopted by the Social Welfare Department to identify the devadasi is questionable.

2.8.5. Rehabilitation Work Done by NGOs

Most of the rehabilitation work is done only by the NGOs. There are schools for children of devadasis and Self-help groups for devadasis. It is found that the NGOs are not directly involved in prevention work. Many of the NGOs accept the devadasis in sex work and help them by issuing condoms in order to prevent HIV.

There is work done for the rehabilitation but the major problem of identifying the devadasis makes the implementation hard. The mechanism to identify the devadasis is not up to the mark, in fact there is no proper mechanism at all.

Most of the devadasis indulge in sex work after the dedication. Moreover the major reason for the dedication is to earn money through sex work. Some devadasis practice sex work at home or rural set up and some work in brothels. The pattern of sex work by the devadasis differs from the other Female Sex Workers, hence the intervention Programmes should be different from those provided to FSWs (Blanchard, et.al, 2005) Most of the available literature on Devadasi system is about the history or it simply explains how the system is practiced right now. The literature has failed to address problems such as prevention and rehabilitation. Hence this study is

focussed on suggesting rehabilitation measure for the devadasis and their children.

At present, most of the Devadasi Rehabilitation Programmes provide monetary benefits to the devadasis and their children. Sathyanarayana & Giridhara (2012) state that devadasis are excluded socially and stigmatized. This causes depression and change in the behavioral patterns. Over a period of time they are likely to get psychotic disorders. The authors also highlight that “Young girls' reproductive function before growth results in stunted skeletal growth, high risk of obstructed labor, and can lead to vesicourethral, vesicovaginal, or vesicoanal fistula and infection. The health risks are further multiplied by poor nutritional and health support from the family and community. The growth spurt at the adolescent age is further reduced by inadequate nutrition and psychological stress may lead to psychosomatic disorders; Moreover, these girls are likely to face three times higher complications as compared to older women. In short, young girls initiated into the Devadasi system are potentially at a high risk of becoming victims of health and psychological stress factors. According to a recent survey, in Karnataka state alone, 26% of Female Sex Workers are enter into sex work through the Devadasi system. Most of them struggle to develop healthy sexual practices, grapple with the stigma of their profession, HIV, and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)”. So it is evident that the Devadasi system causes negative impact on physical and psychological wellbeing of the devadasis. The authors further states that community participation is required to curb the devadasi practice since the system is closely associated with community. The study proposes the “psychological working group frame work”. The psychosocial working group defines psychosocial wellbeing in three main areas of Human Capacity, Social Ecology, and Culture and Values and the existing problem in prevention can be tackled through this. At present all the Rehabilitation Programmes are economically oriented and there is no

schemes to address the physiological and psychological wellbeing of the devadasi.

2.9. Conclusion

Various studies has been done in the field of Devadasi system. This review provides an overview about socio-cultural history of Devadasi system, the contributing factors of devadasis system, prevalence of Devadasi system, cultural discourses on Devadasi system, devadasi in prostitution and legislations and rehabilitative measures for devadasi. Many of the studies focus on history of the Devadasi system. Some of the studies perceive Devadasi system as a by-product of caste system and other studies focus on the HIV AIDS perspectives. The studies, by and large, do not address the issue of rehabilitation. It is very important to study the awareness about existing legislations, policies and schemes for devadasis among stakeholders. In order to provide effective rehabilitation, it is equally important to identify the problems faced by the stakeholders in the field. The study also focusses on obtaining suggestions to improve rehabilitation. The methodology adopted for the study and results are discussed in the forthcoming Chapter.

Research Methodology

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is a combination of partially “descriptive” and partially “evaluative” research design. The study is predominantly descriptive, when it proposes to explain the prevalence of Devadasi system in India. The study is evaluative, when it attempts to evaluate the effectiveness of various government schemes and different programmes of the non-governmental organizations.

3.1. Objectives

1. To determine the factors contributing to the Devadasi system in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra
2. To examine the prevalence of and legislations on devadasis in prostitution
3. To analyze qualitatively the contemporary cultural discourses on Devadasi system
4. To suggest measures for rehabilitation of women in prostitution/Devadasi system.

3.2. Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data pertaining to the existence of Devadasi system in India from time immemorial were collected from cultural texts available in libraries and archives. Relevant data were also collected from government gazettes, published and unpublished statistical data from government and non-government organizations. A wide range of literature survey has been carried out to understand the history of the Devadasi system, the transition from traditional practice of dedication to present day prostitution. Through the survey, it was understood that contribution of literature in explaining the origin, growth and socio-cultural aspect, prevalence and legal framework for the abolition of Devadasi system is remarkable.

Table 1 - Identification of Districts for Data Collection

Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu
Bijapur	Sangli	Chittoor	Thanjavur
Bagalkot	Sholapur	Nellore	Pudukottai
Belgaum	Kolhapur	Mehaboobnagar	Tiruvallur
Bellary	Pune	Rangareddy	Kanchipuram
Koppal	Mumbai	Ananthapur	Vellore
Gulbarga	Satara	Prakasam	Villupuram
Shimoga	Sindhudurg	Kurnool	Dharmapuri
Raichur	Latur	Medak	Nagapattanam
Haveri	Usmanabad	Nizamabad	Tiruvarur
Gadag	Nanded	Warangal	
Dharwad	Jejuri	Karimnagar	
Bidar		Adilabad	
Davanagere		Visakhapatnam	
		Hyderabad	
		Nelagonda	

3.3. Primary Data Collection

3.3.1. Universe

The universe of the present study includes stakeholders such as health workers, social workers, government officials, and personnel of the non-governmental organizations, representatives from judiciary, law enforcement agencies and correctional administration.

3.3.2. Locale of the present study

The present study is conducted in four states of India namely, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) and Tamil Nadu.

3.3.3. Sampling Design

The factors surrounding the Devadasi system and its associated evils are sensitive and delicate issues. Hence, only people who have knowledge and experience in handling or combating this evil practice were selected as samples for the study. So, purposive sampling, a kind of non-probability sampling technique, which is characterized by the use of judgement and a deliberate effort to obtain data from the sample is collected for the study. The sample of the study includes health workers, social workers, government officials, and personnel from non-governmental organizations, representatives from judiciary, law enforcement agencies and correctional administration. The details of the number of stakeholders in each state are given below. The total sample size of the study is N=205.

Table 2 - Distribution of Stakeholders in Each State

State	Number of stakeholders
Karnataka	53
Maharashtra	52
Andhra Pradesh	34
Telangana	16
Tamil Nadu	50
Total	205

3.3.4. Identification of Stakeholders

Respondents for the present study are identified as stakeholders who have knowledge and experience in handling problems related to Devadasi system and its associated evils. Factors that make the existence of this evil practice prevalent in society may not be known to general public but officers from Social Welfare Department and police are able to provide a glimpse of the dark area of the system. In most of the rescue operations, police and social

welfare officials give their assistance and also social welfare department officials play a significant role in distributing funds and schemes announced by both Central and State governments for devadasis. The study also focusses on the rehabilitation programmes and reintegration of girls who are dedicated as devadasis in to normal life and society. The role of NGOs in the rehabilitation programme is commendable. Social workers and personnel from NGOs join hands to conduct awareness programmes and campaigns for the eradication of Devadasi system. Lawyers are well qualified in legal aspects relating to the abolition and prevention of the system. Health workers such as District Medical Officers (DMO), medical practitioners in government hospitals and primary health centers act as a relief to the rescued devadasi women by giving proper medical assistance and health care.

Table 3 - Profession of Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Number of Stakeholders
NGO	63
Social Welfare Department	29
Police	18
Free Lancer	6
Politician	3
Academician	45
Medical Professional	9
Community Leader	4
Journalist	5
Advocate	9
Priest	5
School Teacher	1
Devadasi	5
General Public	3
Total	205

3.3.5. Identification of Variables for Primary Data Collection

3.3.5.1. General Description of Devadasis and Prevalence of Devadasi System

Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra, Telangana and Tamil Nadu

Stakeholders

Names of Devadasis in each state

Status of devadasis

Prevalence districts in all four states

Identification of devadasi women

3.3.5.2. Dedication

Community which has prevalence of dedication

Dedication ceremony in various states

Decision making for dedication

3.3.5.3. Contributing Factors

Contributing factors of dedication

3.3.5.4. Problems of Devadasis

Devadasis in marriage

Till what age devadasis practice prostitution

Source of income for devadasi

Various forms of abuses

How do stakeholders identify the problem of devadasis?

3.3.5.5. Children of Devadasis

Status of devadasi children

Policies and programmes for the children of devadasis

Inheritance of property by children of devadasis

3.3.5.6. Legislations

- Central legislations
- State legislations
- Implementation of legislations
- Suggestions for improvement in legislations

3.3.5.7. Policy and Programmes

- Intervention from government
- Schemes for devadasi state wise
- Implementation of schemes
- Suggestion for schemes
- Devadasis awareness about legislations and schemes

3.3.5.8. Rescue, Rehabilitation and Reintegration

- Place of rescue
- Assistance of stakeholders while rescue
- Immediate need after rescue and rehabilitation
- Challenges for Stakeholders during rescue
- Providers of rehabilitation
- Causes for failure of rehabilitation
- Follow up of rehabilitated devadasis
- Reintegration of devadasis into family
- Refuse to get reintegration of devadasis into family
- Risk factors for relapsing into Devadasi system
- Suggestions for effective rehabilitation

3.3.5.9. Prevention

- Prevention of dedication of women into temple
- Official in charge for prevention
- Programmes to combat dedication
- Who tries the case?

3.3.5.10. Policy Recommendation

Policy recommendation

3.3.6. Construction and Finalization of Tool

For the present study, an interview schedule was designed to collect information regarding the Devadasi system and its associated evils from the respondents. Several rounds of discussions were carried out with subject experts, statistician and data processing consultants and the reliability and the validity of the tool was established. The core purpose of the interview schedule is to collect information on the following issues

The existence or prevalence of the Devadasi system in the above mentioned states. The responses of Central Government and the respective State Governments, which include the legislative, correctional and rehabilitative measures to combat this evil practice. The recommendations of stakeholders for policy making in order to reintegrate the existing devadasis into mainstream society.

3.3.7. Details of Interview-Schedule

An interview schedule with 90 questions is used as research instrument in this descriptive and evaluative study regarding the age old practice called Devadasi system. (Exploitation of Women as Devadasis and Its Associated Evils) The entire interview schedule is divided into 12 sub headings to give more focus on the basic objectives of the study. The selected samples of this study are stakeholders which include health workers, social workers, government officials, and personnel of the non-governmental organizations, representatives from judiciary, law enforcement agencies and correctional

administration. The field of study consists of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) and Tamil Nadu.

The First heading of the interview schedule deals with the demographic details of the respondent. The Second heading is mentioned as Devadasis and includes few questions in general regarding the caste and religion to which they belong and various types of names by which they are known in the selected field of study (Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) and Tamil Nadu). Names of districts where the practice of Devadasi system is still prevalent are also included. Dedication ceremony of devadasi girls comes under the Third heading in which respondents are requested to answer where the ceremony takes place and during which season it is conducted, procedures of the ceremony, the sponsors of the ceremony etc. The Fourth heading deals with the contributing factors of Devadasi system in society. The factors listed under this head are associated with the first objective of the study i.e. “To determine the factors contributing to the Devadasi system in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) and Tamil Nadu”. Fifth and Sixth headings are associated with rescue and rehabilitation measures introduced for devadasi women. The questions under this head help to throw light on the various aspects like problems and challenges faced during rescue operation, the immediate needs once they (Devadasis) are rescued, who gives assistance during rescue operations and the like. When it comes to rehabilitation, there are questions like who are the providers of rehabilitation, what are the factors that make the rehabilitation programme a failure and suggestions regarding the reintegration of devadasis back to normal life as well as society. Questions under this heading are framed on the basis of the fourth objective of the study i.e. “To suggest measures for rehabilitation women in prostitution/Devadasi system”. The Seventh heading in the questionnaire points out different kinds of abuses a devadasi woman has to face from her family and society. These

abuses are classified as physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse and socio cultural abuse. The Eighth heading relates to the children of devadasis. This heading is used to check the status of devadasi children in society and society's perception of them, their educational qualification and to sort out any rehabilitation programmes introduced for these children. The Ninth heading deals with the reintegration of devadasi women. This heading helps to find out the reasons addressed in the reintegration of devadasis. This discusses what will be the situation if they refuse to be reintegrated and problems during reintegration. The Tenth heading focusses on prevention of Devadasi system. The last two headings are integral part of the interview schedule i.e. legislations and policies, programmes and schemes. The Core part of these two headings depends on the objective "To examine the prevalence of and legislations on devadasis in prostitution". There are a number of legislations passed in India for the abolition of this evil practice. It can be classified as schemes and policies introduced by the Central and State governments for the welfare and development of devadasis who are victims of religious prostitution.

3.3.8. Case Study Method

Apart from collecting information from stakeholders through interview schedule, case studies are also collected from devadasis and high profile individuals who are working for the cause of devadasis for a long time. A descriptive analysis of case studies is carried out to assess the current scenario of the Devadasi system.

3.4. Statistical Analysis

The collected data is entered in the computer and the analysis is carried out with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS – Latest Version) and MS Excel.

3.4.1. Implications

3.4.1.1. Output

The samples for the study are qualified representatives and therefore the outputs from the stakeholders will provide quantitative as well as qualitative inputs on the position of devadasis in four states (Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) and Tamil Nadu).

3.4.1.2. Outcome

The study of cultural texts will reflect the changing social perceptions on the devadasis. The invisibility of the devadasis in the present day as well as their entry into the social mainstream at a different level in terms of class and community is highlighted.

3.4.1.3. Policy Recommendations

By studying the outputs and the outcomes, the study has made realistic policy recommendations that will rehabilitate devadasis in the society by taking into account their accomplishments. In other words, the attempt is to propose what is good for the devadasis rather than what is convenient for society.

Results & Discussions

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results obtained through quantitative study are presented below. The data emerging from the results has provided a unique insight into how the complex subject of devadasi system is perceived by the stakeholders of the system. Several key categories have emerged in respondents' accounts of their perceptions and experiences. The literature so far concentrates mainly on the historical and the literary traces of the system. However, the present research focusses on the perceptions of the stakeholders and the devadasis, and on the operating dynamics within the society. There is an emphasis on the evil effects of dedication ceremonies of girls to temples, the role of families in dedication, and the impact of such dedication. The effect of such an analysis is that dedication of girls in temples still prevails and it remains a societal problem. This study focusses mainly on the stakeholder's responses on preventing or combating this societal evil and suggests measures for rehabilitation of the devadasis.

4.1. General Description of Devadasis and Prevalence of Devadasi system

4.1.1. Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra, Telangana and Tamil Nadu

Table 4 - Distribution of Stakeholders in Four States

Distribution of Stakeholders in Four States		
State	Frequency	Percent
Karnataka	53	25.9
Maharashtra	52	25.4
Andhra Pradesh	34	16.6
Telangana	16	7.8
Tamil Nadu	50	24.4
Total	205	100

This table shows the state wise distribution of Stakeholders. Samples were identified from four States, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana (which was a part of Andhra Pradesh and later it has been named as a separate State) and Tamil Nadu. Stakeholders from Karnataka (25.9%) and Maharashtra (25.4%) show a slight increase in the number where the traditions of dedicating girls as devadasis are still practiced. At the same time the number of stakeholders from Andhra Pradesh (16.6%) {Including Telangana (7.8%)} and Tamil Nadu (24.4%) shows a similar kind of pattern where the practice is not much prevalent compared to the former States.

The four States mentioned above were considered as the field of the present study. As per the official statistics, these are the States in which dedication of girls to temple as devadasis is still in practice. Out of the selected four States prevalence of Devadasi tradition is at an alarming rate in Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh where as in Tamil Nadu, the system has been eradicated to an extent. The number of devadasis present in Tamil Nadu is comparatively low. In Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh the number is high.

According to secondary sources, the existence of devadasi system in south India is distributed as follows: In Karnataka the practice is found to exist in six districts- Raichur, Bijapur, Belgaum, Dharwad, Bellary and Gulburga. In Andhra Pradesh it is prevalent in 14 districts –Karimnagar, Warangal, Nizamabad, Kurnool, Hyderabad, Medak, Ananthapur, Adilabad, Chittoor, Rangareddy, Nellore, Nalgonda, Srikakulam and Mehaboobnagar. In Maharashtra the Devadasi system exists in 10 districts- Pune, Solapur, Kolhapur, Sangli, Mumbai, Latur, Usmanabad, Satara, Sindhudurg, and Nanded. Apart from these districts, the study also found some more districts which has prevalence of devadasi system which is mentioned in the following tables:

Table 5 - District Wise Distribution of Stakeholders in Four States

District Wise Distribution of Stakeholders in Four States		
District	Frequency	Percent
Karnataka		
Dharwad	14	6.8
Belgaum	10	4.9
Bagalkot	16	7.8
Bijapur	13	6.3
Total	53	25.8
Maharashtra		
Kolhapur	12	5.9
Sangli	13	6.3
Solapur	11	5.4
Mumbai	16	7.8
Total	52	25.4
Andhra Pradesh		
Chittor	20	9.8
Mehaboobnagar	6	2.9
Medak	3	1.5
Rangareddy	3	1.5
Nellore	7	3.4
Prakasam	1	0.5
Anatapur	2	1
Karnool	2	1
Nizammabad	6	2.9
Total	50	24.5
Tamil Nadu		
Tanjore	14	6.8
Nagapattinam	1	0.5
Pudukottai	16	7.8
Chennai	8	3.9
Vellore	2	1
Tiruvallur	9	4.3
Total	50	24.3
Grand Total	205	100

Table above shows the district wise distribution of stakeholders. Selection of districts was based on the prevalence of the practice of devadasi tradition. Karnataka (25.8%) and Maharashtra (25.4%) show similar kind of percentage in the district wise distribution of stakeholders whereas Tamil Nadu shows least percentage 20%.

4.1.2. Stakeholders

Table 6 - Profession of Stakeholders

Profession of Stakeholders		
Stakeholders	Frequency	Percent
NGO	63	30.7
Social Welfare Department	29	14.1
Police	18	8.8
Free Lancer	6	2.9
Politician	3	1.5
Academician	45	22
Medical Professional	9	4.4
Community Leader	4	2
Journalist	5	2.4
Advocate	9	4.4
Priest	5	2.4
School Teacher	1	0.5
Devadasi	5	2.4
General Public	3	1.5
Total	205	100

Selection of stakeholders of study included NGO, Social Welfare Department, Police, Freelancer, Politian, Academician, Medical Professional, Community Leader, Journalist, Advocate, Priest, School Teacher, Devadasi and General Public. From the above table it is clear that majority of the stakeholders are NGO personnel (30.7%). academicians come next with 22.0% General public and School teachers show least percentage 1.5% and .5% respectively.

Respondents for the study is identified as stake holders because people who have knowledge and experience in handling problems related to Devadasi system and its associated evils can give potential inputs for the study.

4.1.3. Prevalence Districts in all Four States

Table 7- State Wise Distribution of Prevalence of Devadasi System

State Wise Distribution of Prevalence of Devadasi System								
Districts	Karnataka	Frequency	Maharashtra	Frequency	Andhra Pradesh	Frequency	Tamil Nadu	Frequency
	Bijapur	53	Sangli	55	Chittoor	41	Thanjavur	24
	Bagalkot	53	Solapur	54	Nellore	38	Pudukottai	18
	Belgaum	51	Kolhapur	51	Mehaboobnagar	32	Tiruvallur	15
	Bellary	44	Pune	33	Rangareddy	22	Kanchipuram	13
	Koppal	39	Mumbai	25	Ananthapur	21	Vellore	12
	Gulbarga	21	Satara	24	Prakasam	20	Villupuram	4
	Shimoga	21	Sindhudurg	7	Kurnool	19	Dharmapuri	2
	Raichur	20	Latur	6	Medak	14	Nagapattinam	2
	Haveri	20	Usmanabad	5	Nizamabad	10	Tiruvarur	1
	Gadag	15	Nanded	4	Warangal	5		
	Dharwad	11	Jejuri	4	Karimnagar	4		
	Bidar	11			Adilabad	2		
	Davanagere	6			Visakhapatnam	2		
					Hyderabad	1		
					Nalgonda	1		
Total		365		268		232		91

Table 7 represents prevalence districts in each state according to the stakeholder's perception. In Karnataka districts such as Bijapur (53), Bagakot (53), Belgaum (51), Bellary (44) and Koppal (39) has high prevalence. In Maharashtra, Sangli (55), Solapur (54), Kolhapur (51) and Pune (33) have more prevalence. Chittoor (41), Nellore (38) and Mehaboobnagar (32) have more prevalence in Andhra Pradesh. Thanjavur (24), Pudukottai (18) and Thiruvallur (15) districts have more prevalence in Tamil Nadu.

The system is more prevalent in Karnataka, especially in north Karnataka. The districts such as Belgaum, Bagalkot, Bijapur, Dharwad, and Bellary have more prevalence of devadasi. Belgaum is the place where the Savundatti Yellamma temple is located. Huge number of devadasis visit every year for Jatra (yearly festival). The taluks such as Athani, Kokatnoor has more prevalence of devadasi practice. Similar to the Yellamma temple, there is a temple at Kokatnoor which is 20 Km away from Athani taluk, In Bagalkot district, taluks such as Mudhol, Jamakandi, Rabbakavi and Bannati have more prevalence. Out of which Mudhol stands first since it has more number of devadasis. There is a separate area for the devadasis in these taluks where the devadasis practice home based prostitution. Most of these places are away from the mainstream of society. This district has more HIV prevalence. The reason is said that, this district has more sex workers. In Bijapur, places such as Kakaidikai, Bableshwar, Turbae has more prevalence. Even in these districts the devadasis stay away from the mainstream. One has to go by personal transportation if we have to reach these people. There is no bus or other transportation to these people. Among these districts, Dharwad has less prevalence.

In Maharashtra, Mumbai, Thane, Kolhapur, Solapur, Sangli and Miraj have red light areas, where the devadasis practice sex work. In red light areas there is a classification among the devadasis sex workers and non devadasis. If we go and ask in the red light areas about the devadasis, they will list the devadasis who practice sex work. Home based prostitution is very less in Maharashtra. Even in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana it is more prevalent in border districts of Karnataka. In Tamil Nadu, districts such as Tirutani,

Tiruvallur and Vellore have prevalence and these districts share border with Andhra Pradesh. So it is understood that the prevalence districts are geographically and culturally similar.

In Tamil Nadu it is prevalent in Thanjavur, Pudukottai and Nagapattanam. Thanjavur is very famous for classical dance and music since very ancient period. Devadasis were the upholders of classical dance and music. Till now devadasi system is known to people in Thanjavur, even the dedication ceremony and the particular term “pottukattu” for tying thali. All these responses from the native people show the popularity of this tradition in Thanjavur. There were 400 devadasis in Brihadisvara temple (Big Temple) during the Chola period. These devadasis were not only from Tamil Nadu but from other states also. They were good in dance and music. These 400 hundred devadasis were looked after by the king. They were given separate houses, land by the king. Their houses were built throughout four ‘veedhis’ (road) starting from the temple. All the details of these 400 devadasis were written in stone pillars inside the temple. Their names before dedication as devadasis and the place which they belonged to were engraved in the pillar. These devadasis enjoyed a high social status. A Devadasi named “Muthukanamma” who was dedicated at a very young age is still dancing before the deity during Thiruvizha. When years passed, servants of god become servants of kings and patrons. But the dark side of the Devadasi system were hidden by everyone. Most of the people were very eager to explain the golden periods of devadasis. Since the rule of the kings, they were engaged in prostitution secretly. Even though they were in prostitution their status was not miserable like in the present. They were financially independent. The laws implemented for Devadasi system was successful according to the words of a respondent who is lawyer. These laws were aimed to eradicate the system from temple premises. It was a successful in that point of view. Once it became illegal, it was not allowed to conduct dedication ceremony in temple. So as per the respondent’s opinion the law should be reframed for the total eradication of the ceremony. During royal period there was no caste associated with dedication, later girls from Isai Velalar were mostly dedicated.

4.1.3. Names of Devadasis in Each State

Table 8 - Names given to Devadasis

Different Names Which refer to Devadasis in Your State							
Karnataka	Frequency	Maharashtra	Frequency	Andhra Pradesh	Frequency	Tamil Nadu	Frequency
Basavis	20	Aradhinis	7	Basavi	25	Devaradiyar	40
Jogatis	86	Bhagtan	1	BhogamPatara	1	Empuremanadiyar	1
Kalawants	2	Bhavin	11	Bogam	1	Manikattar	1
Muttukatti Kondavlu	1	Devali	8	Devali	2	Mathamma	17
Sule	1	Kalavanti	2	Dogam	1		
Jogamma	7	Matangi	15	Joginis	36		
Jogtis	7	Murali	40	Kalavanthala	6		
Yellamma	5	Naikine	2	Mathamma	35		
Mathamma	1	Devika	1	Nartaki	7		
		Jogti	20	Yellamma	28		
		Jogini	9	Renuka	7		
		Yellamma	1	Mathangi	7		

Table 8 represents the different names for devadasis in four States. As shown in the table Basavis (20) and Jogitis (86) are the common names for devadasis. In Maharashtra, Murali (40) is the most common name. Basavis (25), Joginis (36), Mathamma (35) and Yellamma (28) are the common names in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. In Tamil Nadu, Devaradiyar (40) is common name in olden days and Mathammas (17) is the most common name in the present.

In the ancient times the Devadasis were divided into seven categories. They are known as Dutta, Hruta, Bikrita, Bhrutya, Alankara and Gopika or Rudraganika. Such categories reveal the origin and status of the Devadasis. When a sacred man offered his daughter to a temple as a Devadasi, she is known as “Dutta Devadasi”. But when a lady was kidnapped and subsequently employed in a temple, she is known as “Hruta Devadasi”. Sometimes when a lady was sold to the administrator or the priest of a temple, she is known as “Bikrita Devadasi”. If a lady voluntarily worked in a temple as a Devadasi, she is known as “Bhrutya Devadasi”. Some women who devotionally offered themselves to serve the temple are known as “Bhakta Devadasi.” When a woman after-attaining a certain degree of competence, is offered to the temple with ornaments, she is known as “Alankara Devadasi”. The Devadasis who received remuneration for offering dance and music in the temple in a particular time is identified as “Gopika” or “Rudraganika”. These classes of the Devadasis received fixed remuneration and some landed property for their personal use (Purna Chandra Mishra, 2013).

The term Devadasi is a Sanskrit term denoting female servant of deity. But they are known by different names in different areas, such as Maharis, Tevidicchis, Nangainar, Kudikkaris, Muraikkaris in Kerala, Natis in Assam, Basavis in Karnataka, Bhavanis in Goa, Kudikar on the West-Cost Bhogam-Vandhi or Jogin and now Mathamma is the name used in Andhra Pradesh;

Thevardiyar in Tamil Nadu; Murali, Jogateen and Aradhini in Maharashtra. In Karnataka, old devadasis are called as Jogati and young devadasis as Basavi. The term 'Basavi' refers to feminine form of Basava a bull, which roams the village at will without any restriction. (Manjula Pradeep, 2003). In Tamil Nadu they are known as Devaradiyar, Padiyilar, Taliccherippandugal, Empuremanadiyar, and Adukkalaip-pendugal. Devadasis were known as Devaradiyal (slaves of the god) and in later years, this took a corrupted form as thevadiyal, a pejorative term representing devadasis as prostitutes. In Tamil Nadu they were known as Devaradiyar, Mathammas and Devadasis. According to one respondent who is an Assistant Professor in Tamil University, Devadasis and Devaradiyar were two different categories. Devadasis were considered as the upholders of classical dance and music where Devaradiyar engaged in prostitution in royal chambers. Social status enjoyed by devadasi was not like Devaradiyar. They had respectful position in royal Durbar. But when years passed and devadasis lost their status and dignity, Devaradiyar merged with devadasis and all together are known as Devadasis. Mathamma is the name that refer to devadasis in districts like Tirutani, Tiruvallur and Vellore.

In Karnataka they are referred as Poti, Jogtis, Jogini and in southern part of Karnataka they are called as Nayaka Sani, Ranga Sani, Muttukatti Kondavlu, Devarasuli, Nityasumangali, Kasabi, Patradevalu where as in central Karnataka as Basavi which are grouped as Gudi Basavi, Nadikola Basavi, Balgada Basavi, Ura Basavi, and Chowri Basavi. In Andhra Pradesh the dancing girls are identified with Sani and Bogam. The dancing girls of Assam are named as Kurmapus, Kudipus, Nati or Natin. In Goa they are known as Bhavin. But in Bombay the dancing girls are named according to the presiding deities as Murali, Bhavin, Jagavins, Naikine, Kalavanti, Devali, Matangis and Sharnis. In Odisha the dancing girls of Sri Jagannath Temple are called Mahari and Nachuni.

It is universally accepted that names are very significant to identify an individual. The names will also help to distinguish between each other. Naturally, with a unique name as one's identity both he/she and others will connect the name with owner's gender, appearance, character and all kinds of other attributes. The name is the connection that makes the individuals to establish self-identity. The right to a name and nationality is one of the fundamental human rights. But the devadasis spend their life without this legal identity and the benefits and protections it affords. All these devadasi women are referred as Basavis, Joginis, Mathamma etc., in various States. The devadasis as well as their family are not aware of the right to have an individual name for every person and do not understand the importance of it that is enshrined in the International Conventions and Indian Constitution.

4.1.4. Status of Devadasis

The relationship of the devadasis with other men who surround them in their social life varies. These men of the devadasi community were known as 'melakkarars', nayanakarars' and 'nattuvanars', who were either born to devadasis or recruited for temple service as musicians. Among these musicians, the 'cinnamelam' (small drum) group was associated with devadasi's dance and music performances. Sexual contact between this group of men and devadasis was prohibited. The 'periyamelam' (big drum) group, known as nagaswaram players, provided music for other ceremonies and rituals and thus were not entirely dependent on the Devadasi tradition. They had to depend on the landed classes for patronage. This again prohibited any sexual contact between devadasis and these musicians. In short, it was not a free flow of devadasis desire which marked out the system, but it is almost an exclusive control by the landed patrons. The relationship between devadasis and the landed communities was not merely a sexual contract. They had some ritual status in the patron's household. As far as the status of devadasis are

concerned they were invited to perform rituals like marriages in these households and her presence was even considered as auspicious. She was also asked to tie the 'tali' for the bride on behalf of the bride groom. Given her status as god's wife and as 'nityasumangali', the temple also granted her certain ritual honors. The passing away of a devadasi was mourned by the temple and the deity by observing pollution for a day, ie, by not accepting the offering of pujas. Flowers, sandal paste, etc, were sent from the temple for the dead body. The bier carrying her body was kept in front of the temple for a while before the funeral procession began. This ritual status, however, did not translate itself into any definite social status. It is seen that both their own community as well as the opponents of the devadasi system treated them as impure women (Anandhi, 1991).

The devadasi's life was unique, not only because of her sexual function or because she was supposed to be sacred to and often possessed by the goddess. Her whole way of life was far removed from the life of ordinary women. It was in fact almost a reversal of their life. She was free to wander anywhere, in or out of the village, free to work at any profession or occupation, and earn an income. According to traditional law, she was treated as a male, having inheritance rights similar to those of a son, and also has the right to perform religious rituals, such as the *shraardh* for her father, which no woman is normally permitted to perform. Her children took her surname, and not that of any man, regardless of how longstanding a relationship she had with their father. She was thus absolutely free from the bondage of *pativrata* and the stricture of Manu that a woman must always be dependent on father, husband or son. For this reason, many see remnants not only of matrilineal but also of matriarchal traditions in the *devadasi's* situation, and feel that the life of a *devadasi* was not particularly worse than and in some respects was better than that of the ordinary, patriarchally oppressed woman. (Omvedt, 1983).

Married to God before puberty, devadasis, or Joginis, many of whom live in the temples, become sexual servants to the villages' upper-caste men after their first menstrual period. In some villages, the men who bought them keep devadasis as concubines. In others, they are public chattels, who are used by men free of charge. Socially they are outcastes and they do suffer from severe venereal or sexually transmitted diseases from the men. AIDS also affects many of them. Majority of the devadasis after they reach a certain age migrate to the towns where they enter in to brothels and become prostitutes. The label of being a devadasi is put on them. Just like caste, they cannot change their identity and have to live with it until their death. (Manjula Pradeep, 2003)

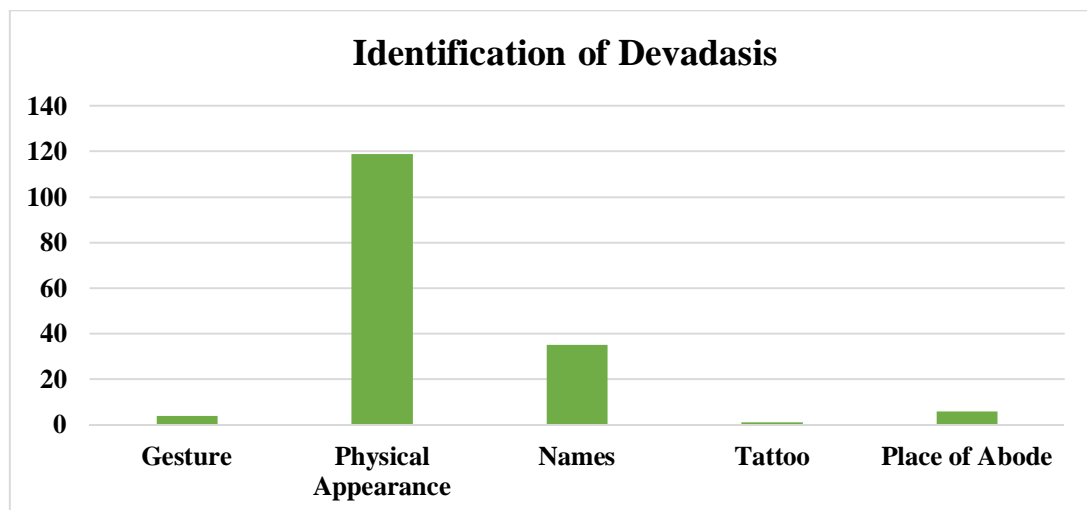
The paradox of this system however, is that on certain occasions, the *devadasis* are seen as a receptacle for the goddess herself and are therefore highly respected. At weddings, funerals and during the Jatra festival, an annual five-day celebration of Yellamma, a *devadasi* is awarded a semi-holy status and is worshipped (Marglin, 1985). During this festival, the Devadasi enters into trance. This contributes to making her an object of devotion and admiration in the eyes of villagers: *“Three times a year we devadasis used to go to the temple for important festivals. Everyone worshipped us and treated us well. We danced and went into a trance. Everyone fell at our feet and called us goddesses. On those days we became very important. The rest of the time they made fun of us”*

It is observed in the present study that the devadasis live either in brothels or in groups as transgenders live. Sometimes, there are a group of devadasis who live along with the transgender who is also dedicated as devadasi. The transgender is the head of the group and also has a temple of the goddess Yellamma. These devadasis live as dependents with the transgender. In Karnataka, taluks such as Mudhol, Jamakandi, Bannati, and

Rabbakavi have a separate place where the low caste people live. Many of the devadasi live alone. In Maharashtra, most of the devadasis live in brothels or with the transgender. The current status of devadasis is pathetic as they cohabit with transgenders. The transgenders are more masculine and authoritative and the feeble women devadasis are forced to live under the mercy of transgenders in many cases.

4.1.5. Identification of Devadasi Women

Chart 1 – Identification of Devadasis



This is a graphical representation of identification of devadasis. As per the graph, there are five main ways to make devadasi women different from normal women. First one is through gesture, and then physical appearance like they wear Thali which is tied during their dedication ceremony and their names would be more associated with the name of God/Goddess to whom they are dedicated. Some time they follow the same name. Few of devadasis place tattoo in their body. At last we can identify them from the place where they are staying. 72.1% identification takes place through physical appearance. 21.2% is through the name they have after their dedication. 3.6 %

of them are identified by the place and 2.4% of them through gestures and rest of the .6% by the tattoo pasted on their body.

Table 9 - Identification of Devadasis

Identification of Devadasis					
Identification	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Percentage
Gesture	-	1	3	-	2.40
Physical Appearance	51	38	20	10	72.10
Names	1	3	16	15	21.20
Tattoo	-	1	1	2	0.60
Place of Abode	-	-	3	-	3.60

Table above explains how identification marks of devadasis vary from state to state. The physical appearance of a devadasi plays a significant role in their identification as devadasi women. Karnataka has first place with 51 who are has identified through physical appearance. Maharashtra it is 38. In Andhra Pradesh it is 20 in number and Tamil Nadu identification takes place through their physical appearance were only 10 in number. Most of the devadasis change their names once they are dedicated. Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have 16 and 15 respectively for identification through names. 0.6% of devadasis were identified through tattoos they placed on their body and 3.6% in terms of the place they stay in.

Devadasi women are identified with beads and Jat. The identification of devadasis includes the following: they carry a basket and shoulder bag with bandra (a yellow powder used for make religious mark in forehead). The number of beads differs according to the devadasis and also to the god/goddess to whom they are dedicated. For example, people who are

dedicated to Hanuman will have pendants of Hanuman in between the beads; similarly there are different pendants of gods used in between the beads. But the most common is the red and white beads again the numbers of beads differ accordingly.

Devadasis in Karnataka use a unique drum, known variously as the *chondke*, *chawandga* or *chandike*, which is handled only by devadasis. It is fascinating to watch Radhabai, a devadasi playing her musical instrument. She tucks it under one arm while manipulating the stick strung through the centre of a small cylindrical drum, inside which created fantastic rhythm patterns using the nimble fingers, to the accompaniment of a single stringed *tuntune* (*ektara*), a drone played by another woman. In a display of extraordinary musical skill, the pitch of the rhythm patterns change with the tension on the string attached to the drum (Sakuntala, 2014).

4.2. Dedication

4.2.1. Religion and Community which has Prevalence of Dedication

Chart 2 – Religions in which Dedication is Prevalent

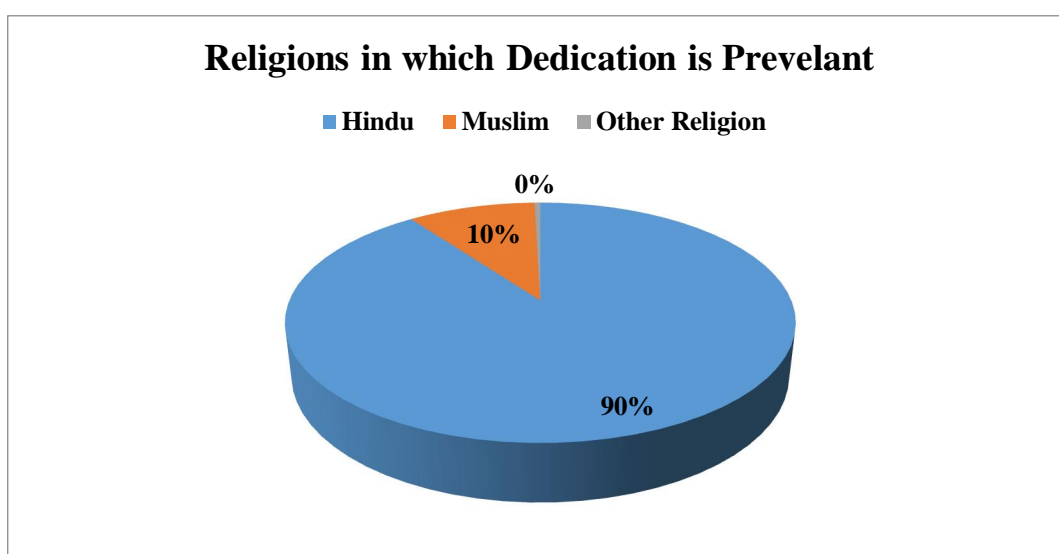


Table 10 - Religions in which Dedication is Prevalent

Religions in which Dedication is Prevalent		
Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Hindu	205	89.90%
Muslim	22	9.60%
Other Religion	1	0.40%
Total	228	100.00%

The Diagram and Table above show the religion in which dedication is practiced and still prevalent. It highlights the fact that Hindu religion is more influenced by Devadasi tradition compared to Muslim and other religions. According to the respondents 90% of the dedications take place in Hindu religion and 10% among Muslims and 0% when it comes to other religions.

There has been influence of devadasi tradition on Muslim community as well. Some of the Muslim sects started offering girls to 'dargas'. Such girls were called 'acchutis'. There is a colony of such people in Maharashtra even today. The girl is married to the Koran. After the Nikah is performed, the girl is called as 'bibi' and is condemned to lead a life of prostitution. (Manjula Pradeep, 2003).

Table 11 – Community wise Dedication of Girls

Community wise Dedication of Girls					
Caste	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Total
SC	53	52	50	30	59.90%
ST	52	28	6	9	30.70%
OBC	8	9	1	-	5.80%
Other Caste	-	-	-	11	3.60%

The Table above shows the community in which the dedication of girls to the temple is more prevalent. As per the data given in the table girls from the SC community (59%) are more vulnerable to Devadasi tradition. When data is divided state wise, it can be seen that Karnataka stands in first position compared to other states. 30.7% of girls from ST community are victimised by the age old practice of the system. When it comes to OBC, Maharashtra comes first but it shows only less percentage (5.8%). Dedication of girls from other castes is there in Tamil Nadu but the percentage of dedication is very low (3.6%)

Table 12 - Prevalence of Dedication in Terms of Sub-Caste

Prevalence of Dedication in Terms of Sub-Caste		
Sub Caste	Frequency	Percentage
Madiga	56	24.90%
Holiya	25	11.10%
Sambar	8	3.60%
Madar	8	3.60%
Dasar	8	3.60%
Valmiki	10	4.40%
Chalvade	11	4.90%
Kamble	9	4.00%
Maithre	4	1.80%
Magar	6	2.70%
Matang	3	1.30%
Mang	7	3.10%
Mala	30	13.30%
Isai Vellalar	24	10.70%
Arundathiyar	16	7.10%
Total	225	100.00%

The table above explains the details of sub castes in which dedication is still prevalent. 24.9% of dedication takes place in Madiga sub caste. We can find the presence of this sub caste in prevalent areas of Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. Holiya comes in second position with 11.1% which can be seen in Karnataka and Maharashtra. Apart from Madiga and Holiya, Mala is another caste in which dedication takes place. In Tamil Nadu 10.7% of dedication takes place in Isai Vellalar sub caste while 7.1 % is in Arundathiyar. These castes are considered the prominent sub castes in which dedication of girls are practiced, while rest of the sub castes shows only less percentage of dedication.

4.2.2. Community wise Prevalence of Dedication

It is a fact that any researcher studying Indian society cannot understand the culture and the social order without understanding the system of caste. Membership to caste is by birth. Caste system is based on the concept of purity and pollution through which ritual status of the people are determined.

Devadasis are invariably from the lowest, usually the untouchable castes, and are considered lower than other classes of courtesans, or other classes of dancers and singers in the temple. It is overwhelmingly dalit girls who become *devadasis*. Occasionally, Brahman girls get the *jathor* mat in their hair, are dedicated to the goddess, and continue all their life to perform the *puja* of deity, without marrying. They never become *devadasis* or prostitutes. A survey of Pune prostitutes by Vilas Wagh showed that more than 60 percent of them were dalits, and of the devadasi prostitutes 90 percent were dalits. His survey did not find a single prostitute from the Brahman, Maratha, and Jain or lingayat castes. Belonging to a lower caste is a kind of “prerequisite” to become a devadasi. From the few studies that were carried out in South India, it is found that almost all devadasis belong to the *Harijan*

(Untouchable) group (Tarachand, 1991). The Devadasi system cannot in fact be fully understood if one does not examine the lower caste status (generally identified with the term *Harijan*, those who are defined as “untouchable” or with the term *Dalit*, which means *oppressed*) and their role in the Indian society (Orchard, 2007).

The interpretation of the dominant position of the upper castes and their important role in the creation of the *devadasi* institution is confirmed by some scholars, such as Orchard (2007). In his interpretation, the system of devadasi expresses the great social and economic prominence of upper class landowners, who were able to control the village priests. In this view, the upper castes have influenced the establishment of an order of prostitutes who are licensed to carry on their profession under the protective shield of religion. The establishment of such a system facilitates their access to low caste women to fulfil their sexual needs. In this light, the temple priest has traditionally been a pawn in the hands of powerful upper caste landlords. This hypothesis can be confirmed by the fact that often temple priests, when trying to convince parents to consecrate their daughters to the divinity, carry out the instructions of upper caste men who have bribed them (Orchard, 2007). It is possible that a person from a higher caste who fancies a lower caste girl, may order the priest to ask an old devadasi to go into a trance during a religious festival and indicate the name of that girl (Orchard, 2007). As the dedicated girl attains puberty, another ceremony (*Uditumbuvadu*) is conducted, which effectively completes the process of her dedication. In this second ceremony, the priest “marries” the girl, dressed as a bride in a ceremonial red *sari*, to the deity. After the ceremony, the young virgin is forced to spend her “wedding” night with a village elder who invariably belongs to a higher caste, and thereafter she cannot refuse sexual services to any member of the village. In the past the priest of the local temple, who normally belonged to the caste of

Brahmans enjoyed the right of deflowering *devadasis* after attaining puberty. In fact, priests claimed that as representatives of the gods on earth (*bhudevas*), they should have the first claim. As anything offered to a god belongs to priest, so the girls offered must belong to them also (Orchard, 2007).

Nowadays parents of *devadasi* girls prefer upper caste well-to-do members to deflower the girl. These people contact the parents of *devadasi* through a senior *devadasi* who plays the role of a mediator. It is a matter of prestige for landowners to deflower a *devadasi* so that normally there is a competition among well-to-do members of the village. Prior to the deflowering ceremony, an agreement is made between the upper-caste man and the *devadasi*'s family for the payments and provision of subsistence, ornaments and clothes to be provided to the girl. Traditionally it is socially accepted that the person who deflowers the girl can have enduring sexual relation with her as long as he desires and is capable of maintaining her.

The present study also found that the practice of dedicating girls to the god is most prevalent among Hindus and very rarely among Muslims (which was discussed earlier). Among Hindus, all caste people dedicate their girls to the deity. However the practice is largely prevalent in Scheduled Castes and Schedule Tribes. The Sub Castes such as Madiga, Holiya, Mathar, Sambar, and Kamble dedicate girls in Karnataka and Maharashtra. Mala, Mang and Madiga are the sub castes who largely practice dedication in Andhra Pradesh. Isai Velalar and Arunthathiyar are the two sub castes in which majority of dedication takes place in Tamil Nadu. There is a saying in these castes "Get daughters and live happily". Mostly the dedication takes place in SC community. Poor girls from this community are more vulnerable to this age old evil practice.

4.2.3. Dedication Ceremony in Various States

Customarily the young devadasi is initiated into the system through a number of ceremonies, which resembles the marriage ceremonies of the Brahmins. The young devadasi, before attaining puberty, is married away to god through the mediation of the temple priests by the '*tali*' tying ceremony or the '*pottukattu*' ceremony, as it is popularly known. This ceremony resembles the child-marriages of the Brahmin households. After the attainment of puberty, another elaborate ceremony known as '*cadanku*' is performed under the patronage of local landlords and temple trustees. Following this, the nuptial ceremony is performed through some symbolic consummation rites which signifies her union with the god. It is during this ceremony, she acquires her status as '*nityasumangali*' that is one who is free from widowhood. From then onwards, the devadasi is free to choose her patron who could also act as her sexual partner without having to marry her. These patrons who often took care of temple income are usually Brahmins and high-caste non-Brahmin landlords. However, this sexual contract between the devadasi and her patron neither ensures her the status of wife nor any say in the household matters of the patron. The off-springs of such unions become the children of the devadasis only, without any inheritance claim over the property of their father. (Anandhi, 1991). Apart from regular dedication, young girls are dedicated to the gods and goddess after the appearance of matted hair called *jat* which is taken to be a sign of the call of the goddess. The dedicated girl is forbidden to marry. When such girls come of age, they perform dances in the temple, perform various services to the gods and goddesses, and take part in various rituals and religious ceremonies. They are considered to be married to the god or goddess, and are sexually available to any man who comes to the temple. (Gail Omvedt, 1983). The prerequisites for a girl to be dedicated are several. She had to be whole of body, not be lame, deaf, or blind, or have any bleeding or suppurating wounds. It must be a

devadasi who adopts a girl child for propagating the system. The adoption can be done by any of the following ways:-

1. Datta- A girl child given away by her parents to an older devadasi.
2. Vikrita- A girl child sold to an older devadasi.
3. Bhrutta- A girl child born to an adopted son of a devadasi to be trained as a devadasi.

Parents give or sell a daughter to a devadasi in any of three circumstances :(1) the parents, or more usually the mother, may have made a vow to God to dedicate their daughter to His service. Such a vow is made usually at the time of the illness of another child when a vow is made in order to cure the child; (2) parents being very poor and cannot afford the expenses of marrying their daughter. (3) The mother of the girl being a widow and finding herself pregnant, is driven out of her house or has left it (Rout, n.d.).

During the feudal period, Devadasis became bound to the service of feudal lords, from *rajas* and *maharajas* down to the village overlords. Even today, they continue to be enslaved to such masters. Rich merchants, landlords, big farmers, pay Rs.600 to Rs.800 required for the dedication ceremony of a girl, and thus buy the right to have the first sexual relation with her. They continue to have special privileges after that, even though she remains available to other men as well. However, the more prevalent system today is that the pimps from the Bombay prostitution industry pay for the dedication ceremony, and often pay something to the girl's parents, in order to directly recruit the girl for a commercial brothel in Bombay (Omvedt, 1983).

The initiation ritual includes a “deflowering ceremony”, known as “*uditambuvadu*” in some parts, whereby the priests would have intercourse with every girl enrolled at his temple as part of his religious perks. A popular Marathi saying is, “*Devdaasi devachi bayako, saryagavachi*” “Servant of god, but wife of the whole town”). Necklaces symbolise the bondage that defines devadasi girls from the lowest caste whose parents have given them to local goddesses or temples as human “offerings”. She has to remain unmarried, and maintain herself by ceremonial begging, a system called “jogava” in Marathi, to make both ends meet. With “*chal*” (a string of small bells) in her feet, she carries the “jag” (a metal mask of god) in a “*pardi*” (a basket) on her head and begs through out her life, or ends up in a brothel.

Usually the dedication ceremony takes place on full moon day of *Chaitra* (March – April corresponding to the spring season) or *Magha* (November – December), which are considered auspicious periods (Story, 1987). About the rite of initiation, it is stated that, unlike old times, such ceremonies are nowadays performed rather secretly at smaller temples or local priests’ residences, rather than in big temples, to avoid high expenses and also to escape the clutches of law. To attract less attention of the public generally only the parents and the temple priests take part in the dedication ceremony. The girl is taken to a spring pond where she takes a bath. After that, she wears a new white dress, symbol is of her new condition as consecrated woman. Along with a few other *devadasis* and family members, she goes to Yellamma temple with an offer to the deity. In the plate a bead necklace is kept and is covered by a piece of cloth. Then a senior *devadasi* ties the bead necklace (*thali*) to the girl’s neck and place rings on her toes, a *devadasi* sign she would never be allowed to remove (Jogan Shankar, 1990).

In Andhra Pradesh, girls are married to the god Potharaju. In the Shimoga District of Karnataka, girls are handed over to the goddess Renuka Devi, and in Hospet, to the goddess Hulganga Devi. In the Vijapur district of Karnataka, girls are given to the Monkey God (Hanuman, Maruti). Many girls in Karnataka are dedicated to the goddess Yellamma. Dedication ceremony is conducted in association with some festival. In Andhra Pradesh it would be during Yellamma festival. In Maharashtra the female child is betrothed at birth to *Khandoba*.

There are various myths around this inhuman practice. The *Jogin* system is based on the traditional belief in Andhra Pradesh that evil over the family or the village can be avoided by dedicating a girl in the family to be a *Jogin*. As soon as she reaches puberty, she becomes the exclusive concubine of the feudal gentry in the village.

In Maharashtra, the poor deluded women promise to sacrifice their first-born daughter if Khandoba will make them mothers of many children. Then after the vow, the first-born girl is offered to Khandoba and set apart for Him by tying a necklace of seven cowries around the little girl's neck. When she becomes of marriageable age, she is formally married to Khandoba or dagger of Khandoba and become His nominal wife. Henceforth she is forbidden to become the wedded wife of any man. The parents of such girls do not feel ashamed to take her earnings.

In Karnataka, there is a traditional belief that when there is famine, drought or epidemics, to appease gods and goddesses a lower caste girl is dedicated to the local goddess Hulgamma (Manjula Pradeep, 2003).

The field observation of the present study found that the dedication ceremony is similar to the marriage. A Son of devadasi who is also working in an NGO for the past 15 years described the dedication ceremony. He says that *“A girl who is going to be dedicated will be made to sit in front of the goddess. Four or five old devadasis will be present to conduct the ceremony. The girl will be made to bathe and made to wear green saree. The old devadasi will apply “Bandra” (a yellow colour powder used to make religious mark in forehead. Then all devadasis will chant “Akkyajogva” which is the famous chanting of Yellamma, then the red and white beads will be tied on the new girl by the old devadasis. The old devadasis will tell all the rules and customs that should be followed by the new girl and give blessing to become a good devadasi like them. Later food will be served to all. The dedication ceremony will be completed only when the food is served. Then the girls will be made to have intercourse with the upper class men. The family will spend roughly 10,000 to 15,000 for the dedication ceremony, if it is a very poor family they will just tie the beads and dedicate the girl”*

A Devadasi Rehabilitation Implementation Officer says that *“because of the restriction, there is no dedication in the temples but there are dedications still in rural areas. Nowadays it is illegal to conduct ritual in the temple to dedicate girls. Hence to avoid arrest and legal hassles, the girl to be dedicated to the temple is kept at one place and the other religious rituals like keeping the “mangal sutra” or “muthu” in front of the God or Goddess is carried out in another place or temple. Without the knowledge of police, dedication still happens in some place. The dedication ceremony is complete only when they offer food to other devadasis and to the neighbourhood. Earlier the food will be offered at the place of dedication. But nowadays, due to the prohibition of dedication, if they offer food, others will get to know about dedication so rather than offering food, the amount spent for food is*

given to the devadasis. Many of the stakeholders say that dedication still happens in many village but no one knows about it.”

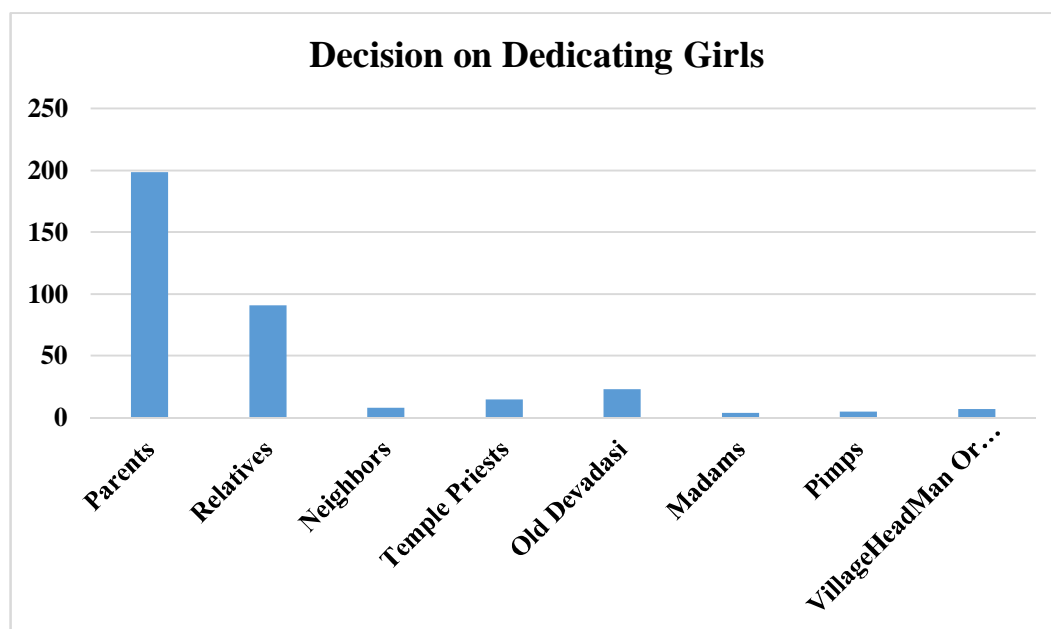
4.2.4. Dedication to Gods and Goddesses

When we look into god/goddess of dedication, girls are dedicated to many deities. Yellamma is the goddess to whom the dedication is more. Apart from Yellamma, girls were also dedicated to some other gods Thuljabhavani, Hanuman and Kandobha. So it is evident that the dedication is both to male and female deities. The dedication to deity differs from State to State. In Karnataka, the dedication is mostly to the female goddess Yellamma. Whereas in Maharashtra, the dedication is both to male and female deities. For instance, girls are dedicated often to Kandobha. In Solapur, the dedication is to Thuljabhavani. The temple for Thuljabhavani is 30 Km away from the Solapur town. In some parts of Kolhapur, the dedication is to Hanuman and Kandobha. In Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the dedication is largely to the female goddess Mathamma and sometimes to Hanuman.

There is a pattern discernible in the dedication of girls. Girls are dedicated to gods/goddesses who are geographically nearer to them. For example Yellamma temple is near many districts from north Karnataka. Kandobha temple is near to people from Pune. Thuljabhavani temple is near to people from Solapur. Next to Suvadatti Yellamma temple, many followers goes to Kokatnoor Yellamma temple which is 20 Km away Athani taluk. Kokatnoor temple is one among the temples where dedications are carried out.

4.2.5. Decision Making for Dedication

Chart 3 – Decision on Dedicating Girls



The Diagram given above indicates who can make the decision of dedicating girls to temple. As per the diagram it is divided into different heads like parents, relatives, neighbours, temple priests, old devadasis, madams, pimps, village headman or upper class people. It shows that 56.5% of decision is taken by parents, which is more than half of the total sample population.

So we can say parents have a significant role in deciding to dedicate a girl to temple. Relatives come next with 25.9% and other influential person including old devadasis. According to the respondents 6.5% of them makes decision regarding dedication. 4.3% temple priests had a role in encouraging dedication ceremony. Rest of them show only low percentage.

Table 13 - Decision on Dedicating Girls

Decision on Dedicating Girls					
	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Percentage
Parents	53	50	48	48	56.50
Relatives	39	26	18	8	25.90
Neighbours	-	3	3	2	2.30
Temple Priests	5	6	2	2	4.30
Old Devadasi	4	6	7	6	6.50
Madams	-	2	2	-	1.10
Pimps	1	3	1	-	1.40
Village Head Man Or Upper Class People	2	3	1	1	2.00

Table shows the state wise distribution of who makes the decision of dedicating girls to the temple. According to the data given in this table, in all four states parents (56.5%) were the one who makes the decision of dedicating girls to temple. In four states Karnataka shows the highest number of 53 parents and Maharashtra shows 50 which stands next to it. Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu share equal number of 48. When it comes to relatives there is a decrease in the number from state to state. In Karnataka total number is 39 and in Maharashtra it is 26 and Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu show 18 and 8 respectively. In total 25.9 % of relatives are engaged in making decision regarding dedication. In the case of old devadasi, Andhra Pradesh shows highest number 7 and Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu share equal number 6. While Karnataka shows very least number 5. Rest of the heads are very small in numbers.

Most of the girls belonging to devadasi group are from lower castes. Their families are trapped by poverty and often depend upon the income supplied by their daughters and money being funneled down to them from higher caste, wealthier men who can pay for the services of a prostitute. Girls are dedicated to the devadasi profession not because of poverty only, there are other causes like lack of son in the family, too many daughters in the family, mother being in the profession, elder sister or any other member of the family being a devadasi. Most of the times the dedication ceremony is financed by a wealthy man, and after the girl attains puberty this man has the right to the girl's virginity. The person finances all the expenditure for the dedication ceremony before the girl attains puberty. At the time of 'deflowering' the man pays a large sum of money to the girl's family, hence the financial returns to the family of a girl are immediate, and they profit from her earning as long as she continues to work. A devadasi family also receives regular gifts of presents and cash on those specific days dedicated to the goddess Yellamma from Hindus who worship this goddess (Chakraborty, 2000). The landowner can offer a sum of money (normally Rs.2000-3000) to the father for this arrangement. It is most common that the reason for dedication is taken by the upper class men in the village in order to use them as prostitutes. There are devadasis who said that they were dedicated because of the upper class men in the village. Some poor families force their girls to become devadasi (Tandon, 2001). In majority of the cases parents take the decision to dedicate the girls. The relatives, neighbours, local pimps and madams also take the decision to procure girls for prostitution in the name of Devadasi system.

Most of the older devadasis work in commercial sex industry of cities like Mumbai, Pune and Sangli etc. When these devadasi come to their own village they come with a lot of money and other things like mobile, jewels etc. On seeing this, many of the parents get attracted and dedicate their girls. So

more than social and cultural factors, the dedication is mainly due to economic factors.

The law has come and the dedication has been prohibited, however family members of the girls who earn money through the girls are still looking for ways to get money. So it is most often they who make decision to dedicate the girls. A Journalist from Bagalkot says “nowadays there no muthukattu and all, who cares about all those things, all they need is money, whether they get after dedication or without dedication, all money for them”. So there is no dedication nowadays, the girls are directly sent to brothels in Mumbai, Pune and Sangli etc. So the government can claim that they have abolished the Devadasi system, however the issue of lower class/caste girls being pushed in to prostitution prevails.

Despite all the efforts taken by the government to combat this evil practice, the system continues in many places. Since the family plays a major role in dedication, it becomes difficult for the stakeholders to rescue and rehabilitate devadasis. It is pathetic to realize that the so-called protectors of women become perpetrators who push young girls into the Devadasi system. Hence it is imperative to educate the families of devadasis and make them aware of the ill-effects of the system and this will help in reducing the number of dedications.

Chart 4 representation of whether the dedication of girls to temple is a forced act or a traditional ceremony. Diagram is divided in to four parts. 47% of the respondents says that it is forced act. 37% of the respondents argue that it is a traditional practice. 14% of the respondents are of the opinion that sometimes it might be forced and some other times it might be traditional. Rest of the respondents are not aware whether it is a forced act or traditional ceremony.

Chart 4 – Dedication of Girls to Temple is Forced Act or a Traditional Ceremony

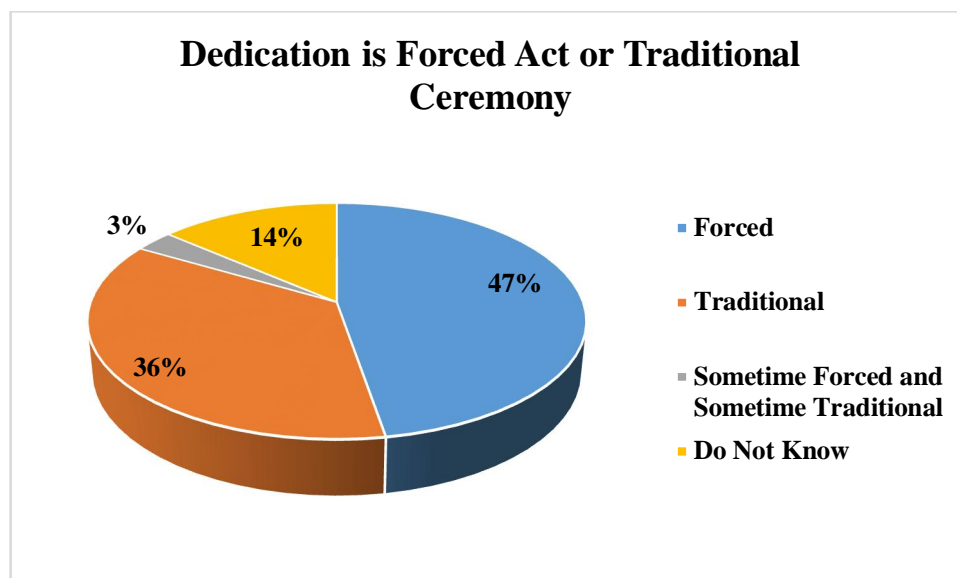


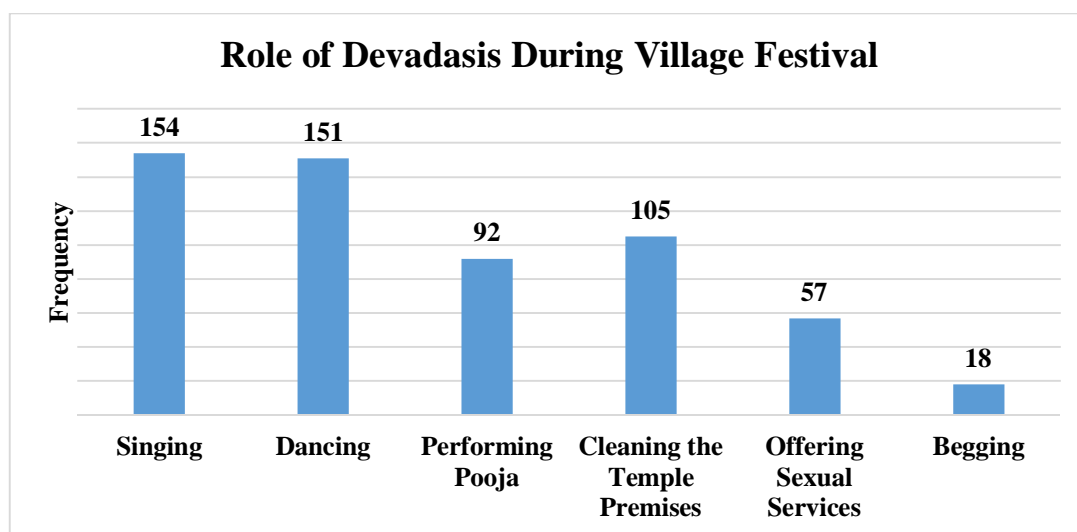
Table 14 - Dedication of Girls to Temples is Forced Act or a Traditional Ceremony

Dedication of Girls to Temples is Forced Act or a Traditional Ceremony					
Dedication	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Percent
Forced	31	27	23	16	47.3
Traditional	9	11	21	33	36.1
Sometime forced and sometime Traditional	1	-	4	1	2.9
Do Not Know	12	14	2	-	13.7

Table 14 shows state wise distribution of dedication of girls to temple and whether it is forced act or a traditional ceremony. Apart from Tamil Nadu in all other states dedication of girls to temple is a forced act with a percentage of 47.3%. But in Tamil Nadu majority of the respondents viewed it

as a traditional ceremony. Out of 49 respondents from Tamil Nadu 33 of them are of the opinion that devadasi system is traditional. 2.9% of respondents remarked as sometimes it, might be viewed traditional and some other times as forced act. Rest of the respondents that is 13.7% are not aware of the fact whether it is a forced or a traditional ceremony.

Chart 5 – Role of Devadasis During Village Festivals



This is a graphical representation of the role of devadasis during village festivals. From the GRAPH, it is evident that devadasis are very skilled in singing and dancing. According to the respondents 154 of them are good singers and 151 danced during festival pooja. As they are known as servants of god they are expected to clean the temple premises. 105 of them used to clean the temple premises. 92 of them engaged in performing pooja. 57 of them offer sexual services. 18 of them go for begging which is considered to be the source of their income once they get old. But it is the one they performed the least in number.

From this result, we could infer that though devadasis are primarily into prostitution, there is still a strong religious connection which bind them to perform religious rituals.

Table 15 - Role of Devadasis During Village Festivals

Role of Devadasis During Village Festivals					
Roles	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Percentage
Singing	51	47	25	31	26.70
Dancing	27	35	46	43	26.20
Performing Pooja	32	31	13	16	15.90
Cleaning the Temple Premises	43	32	18	12	18.20
Offering Sexual Services	5	19	21	12	9.90
Begging	3	10	4	1	3.10

This is a tabular representation of the role of devadasis during village festivals. They perform during village festivals. Table shows that in all States devadasis have a significant role in singing and dancing during village festivals. 26.9% of them are engaged in singing and 26.2% of perform dance. 15.9% of them perform pooja but it is not that important. 18.2% of the devadasis are engaged in cleaning the temple premises. Graph shows that 9.9% of them offer sexual services and it has been viewed as a part of their life after dedication. 3.1% of them beg during village festivals.

4.3. Contributing Factors

4.3.1. Contributing Factors of Dedication

Table 16 - Factors Contributing to Devadasi System

Factors Contributing to Devadasi system	
Contributing factors	Percentage
Poverty	12.00
Unemployment	3.20
Illiteracy	9.00
Caste System	9.10
Hereditary	10.30
To please god for the wellbeing of the family	2.70
Fulfilling the vows taken by the parents	2.80
Religious Beliefs	10.20
Superstitious Beliefs	10.60
Vested interest of upper caste men to fulfil their sexual needs	1.60
If a girl develops 'Jat' there is a belief that she should be dedicated to God	4.70
Influence of old devadasis	3.40
Only female child in the family	3.10
Too many girl children	3.00
Due to skin ailments	4.50
Physically handicapped	4.00
To gain merits in their next birth	1.60
To get male child	2.30
To avoid widowhood	0.90
If the boy or girl Develops Symptoms Of 3rd Gender	0.40
Not well during birth	0.60
Total	100.00

Table 16 shows contributing factors of Devadasi system. As per the table there are lots of factors that contribute to devadasi system but among them poverty has a prominent role with 12.0%. Superstitious beliefs 10.6%, Caste system 9.1% and Illiteracy 9.0% are the supporting factors of poverty. Sometimes it is like a hereditary practice that one girl from a family should be dedicated as devadasi. 2.8% parents dedicated their female child for vows taken by them and prosperity of the entire family. 6% women dedicate themselves as devadasis in order to avoid widowhood. 3.4% old devadasis have significant role in making next generation of devadasis as they are supposed to be the income source when they become very old. 4.0% child born with health issues or physically handicapped that child is expected to be dedicated to God.

A significant contributing factor in the dedication of daughters as devadasis is precisely that they are daughters. As Action Aid's report *Disappearing Daughters* states: *'Whilst boys are expected to bring wealth into a family, girls are seen by many as 'expenditure'. In many states, dowries and expensive marriages are inevitable outgoings for families with daughters. As daughters traditionally become part of another family after marriage, it is sons who are expected to provide for parents in their old age.'* In Andhra Pradesh devadasis are dedicated because there is no son in the family. By dedicating their daughter to the goddess, not only do poor families avoid the cost of a dowry, but the daughter can then take on the role of a son in providing for the family, and perhaps even in performing certain religious rites. Religious superstition, coupled with a lack of education and knowledge of health issues, all contribute significantly to the decision of the family. The interpretation of certain health problems, such as coughs, hair discolourment resulting from malnutrition, and dehydration, as a sign of the goddess' displeasure, marks the daughter out for dedication. In Karnataka, tradition and social pressure play a key role, majority of devadasis are dedicated

because it is seen as a hereditary duty. Social acceptance of dedication is higher in Karnataka than in Andhra Pradesh, therefore it is not only religious, but also social norms which need to be challenged. In Maharashtra it is completely commercial than religious practice, whereas in Tamil Nadu there is a drastic reduction in the number of dedication of girls to temples.

If parents are childless, they vow to dedicate their first girl child if it happened to be girl. If there are no sons in the family, the girl child is dedicated and cannot marry as she becomes a 'son' for the family (earning the family's livelihood) yet another economic reason contributed to the dedication. If the girl's family has some property, the family ensures that it stays within the family by turning the girl into 'son' by dedicating her. If a girl develops 'jat' (matted hair) she is dedicated as it is believed that she has received summons from the goddess to serve her. "More than anything else, the motive of earning money by prostitution of oneself or a relative is the chief cause of this dedication in recent years. The parents always take good care to choose a daughter of fair skin and regular features for this dedication so that she may attract more customers in her youth". Girls are generally dedicated at a young age, between the ages of eight to ten. Various modus operandi are adopted by the recruiters to ensure the entry of young girls. Retired Devadasis, who have become *Jogtis*, often go into trance during festivals and direct a particular family to dedicate a particular daughter of theirs to the deity. Conversations with Scheduled Caste families indicate that sometimes, it is possible that a person or persons from higher caste who take a fancy to a Scheduled Caste girl may pay jogti to 'go into a trance'. Parents, who for economic reasons want to dedicate a girl, may even find the spurious plea of having found a 'jat' or matting of hair of the girl, a condition that occurs because of poor tonsorial hygiene. In villages where social awareness prevents easy dedication, parents or close relatives of the girl ensure that she

becomes pregnant. They then challenge the village elders to get the girl married or let her become a devadasi.

Case Study:

Yamunava Ganapathi, from Bijapur, Karnataka, says that “I was the **only girl child** for my mom who was also devadasi, so I was also dedicated as devadasi. It is a **regular practice** that if the devadasi has a single girl child, the girl will be dedicated as devadasi to take care of the mother in her old age”.

There are five main reasons for the survival of the system in contemporary period. The most important factor among them is **poverty**. This poverty leads to malnutrition, which creates health problems, like physical disabilities or getting of Jat (matted hair or clotted pad of hair). When the child develops Jat, it is believed that the god or deity selects her for his or her service. But the formation of Jat might be the result of acute malnutrition, as its development starts from the time of infancy of a girl and may be from the stage of foetus in the mother's womb. Sometimes, the child may also develop Jat if she does not get proper nutrition and hygiene. On the other hand, physical disability results in loss of bodily parts at the time or after birth. It may also be the result of malnutrition. In such conditions, girls cannot marry. What they feel is, "if we remain alone, we need to depend on our brothers' family, after the parents. Although brothers are our family members, their wives come from other families. They may treat us well for some time but normally they may not look after us that well for the life. Therefore, it will become a problem for us." So, they take up this practice as a substitute for marriage.

Case Study:

Renuka Mythri, Bagalkot, Karnataka, says that “when I was around 12 Or 13 my family was in extreme poverty and few of the upper class men forced our family to dedicate me as devadasi so that my family can come out of the economic problem. The government never address the problems it is often people like you who come for the study not the government. There are 300 devadasis in the village but only 3 houses were given to devadasis that too for the people who have lands they get house, we people are the low section of the society if we have lands who would we seek government’s help?”

Family conditions come next to poverty. These include helplessness of parents as well as daughters. Helpless parents are those who cannot manage their families because of their health problems, or loss of a partner, or old age, besides the poverty. Therefore, they look for someone who would help them with the earnings and who would be obliged to look after the parents. They also feel insecure in life and unhappy if they do not have a son, who would beget children and perpetuate the family line, who would inherit the property, (if any) and who would perform the death rites of the deceased parents. People prefer to raise a daughter rather than confront the situation of children. However, in the patriarchal set up, the daughter has to get married and move out of family that means she will have to leave her parents after marriage. She is not obliged to look after the parents as she goes away from them. She cannot rightfully take the responsibility of her parents like a son, as she belongs to her husband's lineage. Therefore, parents take the help of the institution of devadasi system to substitute the daughter for a son. Then she can mitigate the parents' hardship with her earnings. It becomes her duty to look after the parents in their old age. On the other hand, helpless or destitute daughters take up this practice by compulsion.

Case Study:

Chandrava Yellappa, from Bijapur, Karnataka, says that “*I belong to the **Holayar** caste, I was dedicated when I was 14 or 15 after my puberty. It is **hereditary** practice in our family to dedicate girls as devadasis. My mother and grandmother were also devadasis*”.

Religious dogma is yet another important factor for the continuation of the devadasi system. If the region where the devadasis reside is affected by poverty or any personal or natural hazard it is attributed to the action or anger of the supernatural forces. So there is a need of propitiation of the angry gods and goddesses. And one of the ways to protect from such effects, it is believed, is to dedicate a girl to the deity. Therefore, these girls accept the devadasi status to protect other people of the village.

Ignorance is the fourth contributing factor of the Devadasi system. People of lower castes are illiterate and remain confined to a smaller social circle than the upper caste people. All these aspects contribute to their ignorance and lack of awareness. This leads them to accept traditional institutions, however evil these may be.

Case Study:

A Devadasi, from Bagalkot, Karnataka, Refused to provide name: she says that “*I was dedicated due to poverty, when I was 15 years. Now I have three kids and they are school going. Almost 50% of our children study till 10th Std and start working. They don’t continue schooling because of the stigma and labelling. We don’t get any help from the government. Now I have HIV. There is no hospital in our village and I have to travel a lot to hospitals. If we get diseases, in hospitals they only give tablets, not any injections or they do not do*

any operations since we have HIV. I have told you only very few problems we have but your time won't be enough to listen to all our problems. Like you many people come and ask about our life style and problem, every time we expect that some good will happen at the end nothing happens. The society uses us as a use and throw object, at least we are happy that we are helping people like you".

The fifth factor is the **social or community pressure**. Advice or encouragement of patron or master to their servants and advice of the neighbours or relatives play a role in making their daughter a devadasi without independently looking into or challenging the advice of the powerful. The pujaris are also responsible for the continuance of the system, as they offer a hand to the devotees at their level and get the benefits in kind, in return. They consider it a privilege to perform the initiations, which give them some sort of benefit in economic terms and a social and religious recognition in the community. Vested interests loom large in the conversion of powerless and ignorant girls into the life of a devadasi.

Case Study:

Chandrava Rammappa from Solapur, Maharashtra, says that *"I was dedicated when I was a kid and I don't know what age I was. We were five daughters in our family, I was dedicated due to poverty. After dedication many men come to me and pay me money for my sexual service. Now I have 3 sons and 2 daughters, who don't know their father's name. They all stopped going to schools because of the discrimination. I am not receiving any pension from the government"*

Thus the major contributing factor is poverty and superstitious belief. Jat is one of the major factor in dedication. A professor from Shivaji University who is working on this issue said that the girls get Jat due to unhygienic environment or not taking care of their hair. On the other hand, Jat is made manually by applying an oil/paste from Banyan tree. Sometimes if the person shows some kind of physical, behavioral or biologic changes while maturing into male, female or third gender, the family avoids the responsibility and try to dedicate them to the temple. However in the current scenario, poverty has a significant role in dedication. Many family dedicate their children to come out of the economic deprivation. It is also found through interview with the devadasis that they become devadasis due to economic causes.

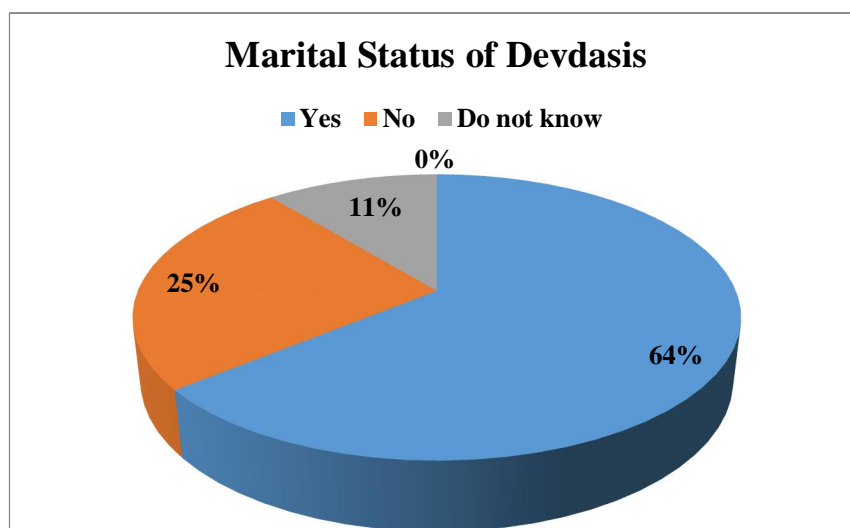
Stakeholder's response:

A Swami Ji, who is running an NGO in Belgaum says that *“there is superstitious belief that if a girl suffers from any skin disease she will be dedicated as devadasi and made to take bath in the Yellamma temple and Jogudabhav temple. But this water is naturally medicated water and have rich minerals content, if someone takes bath regularly any skin problems gets cured. But many of them believe that disease was cured because of the power of the goddess. So this is one of the ways to project the goddess as very powerful. So many of them dedicate their girls to Yellamma for different reasons”*. He further says that the system is abolished and there is no more dedication like before. It is NGOs who make the little things bigger and exaggerate the situation.

4.4. Problems of Devadasis

4.4.1. Devadasis Getting Married

Chart 6 – Marital Status of Devadasis



Pie diagram given above shows the marital status of devadasis. As per respondent's opinion 64% of devadasis get married. 25% of them are not married and 11% of the respondents are not aware whether they are married or not.

Table 17 - Marital Status of Devadasis

Marital Status of Devadasis					
Responses	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Percentage
Yes	17	24	29	34	50.7
No	36	28	20	16	48.8
Do Not Know	-	-	1	-	0.5

Table shows state wise distribution of the marital status of devadasis. Tamil Nadu has the highest number of devadasis getting married (34). Karnataka one of the state in which the system is still prevalent, has highest rate of devadasis not getting married (36). In Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh there is no big difference because the number of devadasis getting married is 24 and 29 respectively and not getting married is 28 and 20 respectively. In four states 50.7 % of them inform that devadasis are married and 48.8% of them said they are not getting married and 0.5% are not aware of it.

4.4.2. Devadasis in Marriage

In early 20th century, Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar, a devadasi turned social worker not only demanded support for the Devadasi Abolition Bill from among the devadasis, but constantly motivated the devadasis to articulate themselves and break the system through marriages with someone of their choice. As part of her program of domesticating and containing devadasis within the monogamous familial norms, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy argued that they should be compulsorily married and those men who were willing to marry them should be encouraged with employment (Chakraborty, 2000).

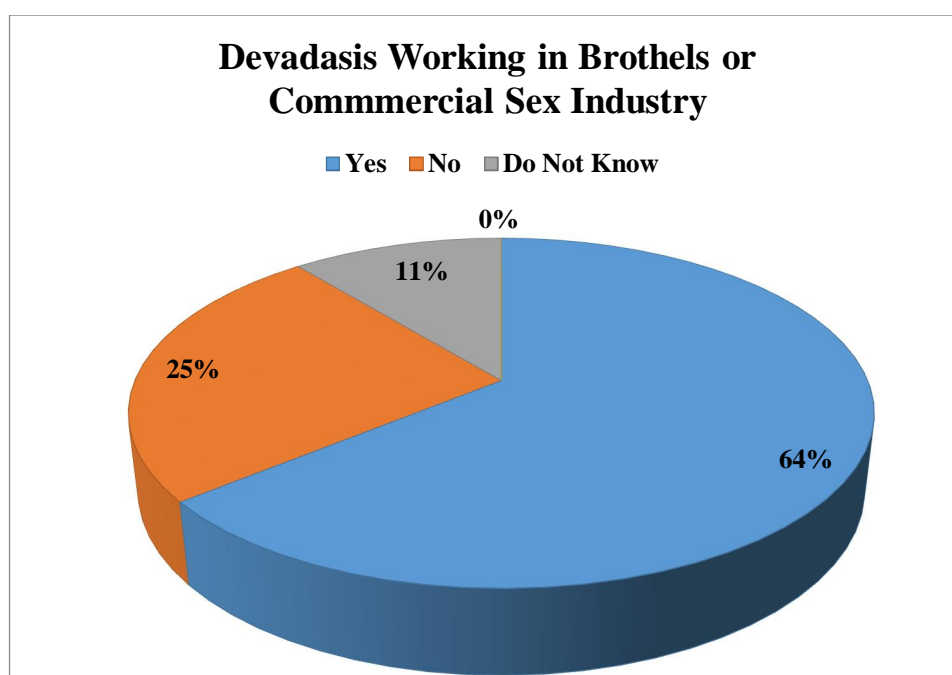
Of course, there is a restriction on devadasis to get married. Only very few of them get married and others lead their life with many partners. The devadasis who do sex work in the Turbe red light area in Thane say that *“even if we get married, the husbands will doubt us. They will drink and beat us daily. They (husband) won’t go for work and they totally depend on us for the income. So again we have to go for sex work to earn, so there is no difference in terms of being married. By being single at least we avoid torture and beating from men. This is my experience by seeing many of the devadasis who get married. So many of us are afraid to get married”*.

The problem continues for the daughters of devadasis as well. It is very difficult for them to get married. Since they are daughters of devadasis, their chastity is questioned often by their husband. Sometimes the husbands leave them halfway. Due to this many of the daughters of devadasis do not get married and come to the same profession.

On the other hand, some scholars say that the devadasis are not prostitutes and they often live with single partners throughout their life. So a question was asked to the stakeholder that if the devadasis live with single partner then why do they need rehabilitation? He said that there is a difference between the care taker and the person who plays the role of the care taker. The partners of the devadasis don't give any assurance for the life of the devadasis. They may disown them any time that is why these women get into begging. Unlike other beggars, there is religious color attached to them so that they get more money than the usual beggars.

Similarly, the amount of money the government has decided to assign to whoever marries a former *devadasi*, instead of providing the victimized women with security and dignity, often seems to encourage unscrupulous people to marry these women and later trade them to brothels in big cities. Many rehabilitation programs aim merely to quantify results in terms of numbers of women rehabilitated, seem ineffective in the long term and even contribute to worsening the existing condition of the devadasis.

Chart 7 – Devadasis Working in Brothels or Commercial Sex Industry



This is a diagrammatical representation of devadasis working in brothels or commercial sex industry. Majority of the devadasis that is 64% of them work in brothels or commercial sex industry. As per the respondents 25% of devadasis do not work either in brothels or in commercial sex industry. 11% of the respondents are not aware of the fact that devadasis work in brothels or commercial sex industry.

Table 18 - Devadasis Working in Brothels or Commercial Sex Industry

Devadasis Working in Brothels or Commercial Sex Industry					
Responses	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Percentage
Yes	51	52	25	29	76.6
No	2	0	25	18	22
Do Not Know	-	-	-	3	1.5

Table identifies devadasis working in brothels or commercial sex industry. As per the respondent's opinion 51 in Karnataka and 52 in Maharashtra work either in brothels or commercial sex industry. These are the two states where devadasi practice still exists. In Andhra Pradesh, number of devadasis working and not working in brothels or commercial sex industry were equal that is 25. In Tamil Nadu number of devadasis engaged in prostitution is 29, it was more than half of the entire sample selected from Tamil Nadu. Considering all samples from four states 76.6% of devadasis work either in brothels or commercial sex industry, and 22.0% are not in this profession.

4.4.3. Till what age do devadasis practice prostitution

Chart 8 – Active Phase of Devadasis in Prostitution

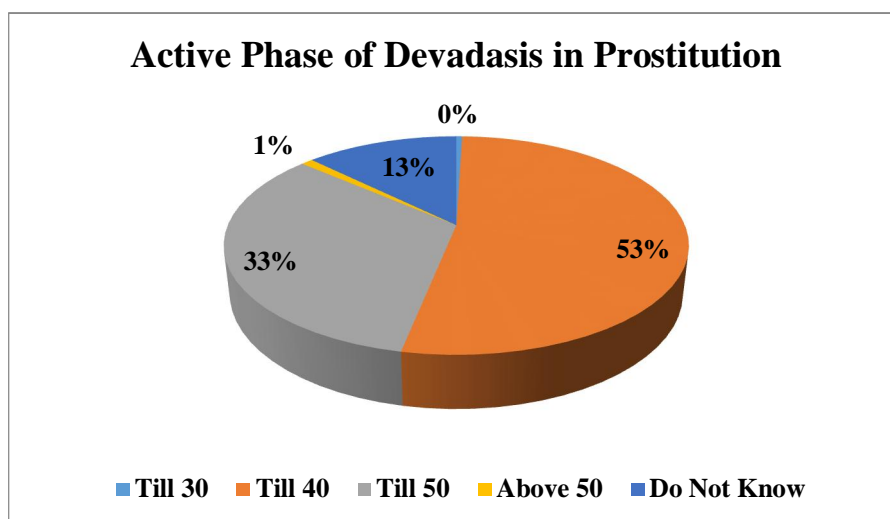


Chart 18 explains the age limit of devadasis who are in prostitution. Data given in the table shows that till the age of 40, 53% of women who are dedicated as devadasis practice prostitution. Then once they attain the age of 50 there is a decrease in the percentage of devadasi women who are engaged in prostitution that is 33%. Diagram also shows 1% of women come out of prostitution at the age of 30. According to respondents 13% of them are not aware of the age limit.

Table 19 – Active Phase of Devadasis in Prostitution

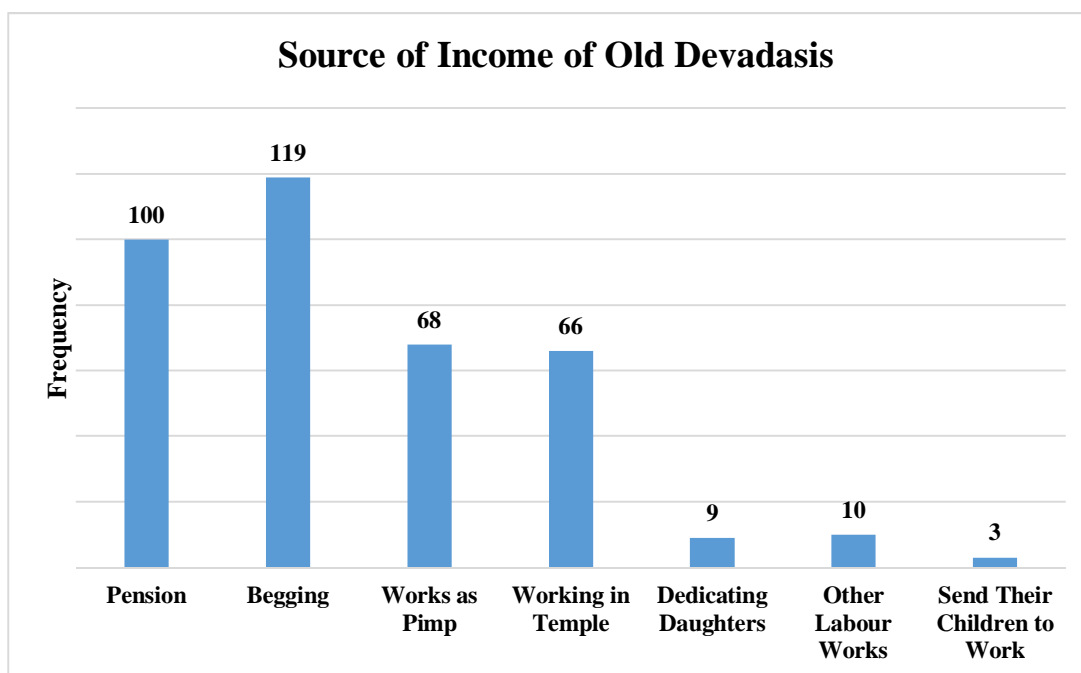
Active Phase of Devadasis in Prostitution					
Age	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Total Percentage
Till 30	-	-	-	1	0.5
Till 40	34	34	26	14	52.7
Till 50	19	18	24	7	33.2
Above 50	-	-	-	2	1
Do Not Know	-	-	-	26	12.7

Table shows the age limit of devadasis engaged in prostitution. Even though there is difference in the age limit from state to state, there is a common fact that most of the devadasis come out of the practice of prostitution by the age of 40. In Karnataka it was 34 in number, while in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh it was 34 and 26 respectively. Taking all the States, its 52.7 %. Half of them consider 40 as their age limit. 33.2% of the devadasis practice till the age of 50. Andhra Pradesh owns highest number of women practicing prostitution till the age of 50, 1.0% of them practiced above the age of 50. 12.7% respondents are unaware of their age limit.

Mostly devadasis are into sex work till 30 years or 40 years. Most of the devadasi women become sick during their early thirties. Unlike commercial sex workers the devadasi come to sex work at the age of 12 to 15, so their health get spoiled earlier so they won't be in sex work for a long time. Majority of them suffer from sexually transmitted diseases due to unsafe sex with multiple partners. We do not have official statistics to estimate the number of devadasis affected with STD/AIDS. But the disease makes a break in their source of income. The NGOs working to create awareness among the commercial sex workers about the disease and safety precautions like usage of condoms and other health related information are not given to devadasis. Devadasis are in to prostitution as long as they are fit and healthy. Once they are not fit for prostitution they are thrown out. Many of the devadasis said that their families depend on them for the living. As we have seen in the contributing factors sometimes elder girl would be dedicated as devadasi to financially support their parents. Throughout their life they take care of their family and siblings but once they become old, their family and siblings are not ready to accept them back to their family. Most of the devadasis in red light area have similar kind of stories like this. Their family needs their money not them.

4.4.4. Source of Income for Devadasi

Chart 9 – Source of Income of Old Devadasis



This is a graphical representation of income source when they become old. As shown in the table, 119 of them go for begging as they can't depend on any other source of income. 100 of them get financial support in the form of pension schemes for devadasis. 68 of them work as pimps who recruit young devadasis into the field of prostitution. 66 of them earn from working in temples. 10 of them go for manual labour works, nine of them dedicate their own children as devadasis so that they are able get money through them. Three of them fully depend on their children by sending them out for work.

Table 20 - Source of Income of Old Devadasis

Source of Income of Old Devadasis					
Other Source of Income for Devadasis	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Percentage
Pension	50	24	20	6	26.70
Begging	40	43	33	3	31.70
Works as Pimp	12	23	19	14	18.10
Working in Temple	17	28	18	3	17.60
Dedicating Daughters	3	4	1	1	2.40
Other Labour Works	-	4	5	1	2.70
Send Their Children to Work	1	1	1	-	0.80

Table shows income generation of devadasis after they become old. As per the table 31.7% of devadasis depend on begging to meet their daily needs. 26.7% rely on pension schemes available for them by Central and State governments. As per the government rules and regulations in Tamil Nadu, the state government does not offer any pension schemes for devadasis but six respondents from Tamil Nadu told that devadasis were getting pension. 18.1% of devadasis work as pimps while 17.6% are engaged in cleaning temple. 2.7% of them depend on manual labour and 0.8 % of them depend on their children for the livelihood.

In ancient period, devadasis were granted land by their patrons. Importantly, these land rights were kept in the name of the temples, and only the income out of these lands could be enjoyed by the devadasis. She also had an inheritance right over this income, but only as long as she provided a female heir to the temple as the next devadasi. To ensure this hereditary right over income, the status of the girl whom the senior dasi dedicated to the

temple must be of a minor. For this, the devadasi was allowed to adopt a girl child as her own under the Hindu law, unlike the usual household women. Though this right to adopt and the inheritance right over landed income provided the devadasi enjoyed certain power within her household and in her community, this economic status acquired through temple patronage created a variety of competitive social pressures among the 'dasis' and the men of their community. In our view, theirs was a situation of double-bind. To acquire their economic status, they had not only to be devadasis, but also should perpetuate the system. In other words, the moment the devadasi freed herself from the system and refused to perpetuate it by providing a new minor devadasi, she lost her income too. Thus, this economic independence too was contained within a certain logic which benefited the men of the landed households. Of course, the system had no concern for the women of these higher caste landed households which sustained the devadasi system (Anandhi, 1991).

Devadasi held's certain privileges in comparison to other women. From the time of her dedication she was not only taught music and dance but also to both read and write. According to the French missionary Dubois: "the courtesans are the only women in India who enjoy the privilege of learning to read, to dance, and to sing. A well-bred and respectable woman would for this reason blush to acquire any one of these accomplishments" (Eraly, 2011). Not counting the royal families, the devadasis were the most literate women in the early colonial period. Furthermore, the devadasis enjoyed *inam*, tax-free land grants from the temples or the kings. The income the devadasis obtained from the temple was more than the *inam* lands. She was also provided a direct salary and food from the temple. This income originally came from donations from the king or wealthy citizens to the temple. This land was given in return for the services they performed. The land only remained in their possession for as long as one person in the family was employed.

The rights displayed here were all hereditary, but the devadasis rarely had children of their own. Instead, their main option was adoption. Here too the devadasis are an exception to the otherwise patrilineal society. Thurston observes that “the Devadasis are the only class of women under Hindu law, as administered by the British Courts, allowed to adopt girls to themselves” (Thurston, 1987). As their household was matrilineal, with both the profession and the property being inherited by the women, girls were preferred. Sharma argues that there laid a strong economic reason behind the passing of the dedication and the property through matrilineal lines, as the devadasi was the main provider of the household (Sharma, 2007).

But now the status and the position of devadasis in society have completely changed. The primary source of income for devadasis is sex work. Apart from that they do other manual labor. The government give pension schemes for devadasis but most of the devadasis interviewed do not receive any pension. Moreover this pension is given only to devadasis who are more than 45 years old.

In Karnataka and Maharashtra, we can find many devadasis who beg. There are two types involved in begging. Firstly, the devadasis who sit in front of the temple and beg. Secondly, the devadasis who carry a basket with a goddess statue and a bag of Bandara (yellow powder use for religious marking in forehead) on their shoulders. The begging happens in all the major temples associated with this system, we can see many devadasis begging in front of the temples. In the famous Yellamma temple in Saundatti taluk of Belgaum district, we can see many devadasis begging. Some sit and beg, whereas some carry a basket with a statue of Yellamma or a bag of bandra (an yellow powder used for religious mark in forehead), if someone offers money the devadasis will keep the yellow thilak on their forehead and bless them. Getting blessing from the devadasis is considered auspicious. Even the

transgenders dress up like devadasis and they beg like other devadasis. In Jogudabhave temple, Kokatnoor and other temples in Karnataka, the practice of begging is prevalent. Further, we can see many devadasis in bus stops and other public places begging with the basket and the statue of the goddess. It has been noticed in Dhawad, Bagalkot, Belgaum and Bijapur by the field investigators of the present study.

The Jogudabhave temple is closely associated with the Yellamma temple. It is few kilometers away from the Yellamma temple. Most the devotees who go to Yellamma temple, first reach here and offer food and other offerings to the mother goddess, who is said to be the mother in law of Yellamma. We can notice many devadasis begging in this temple.

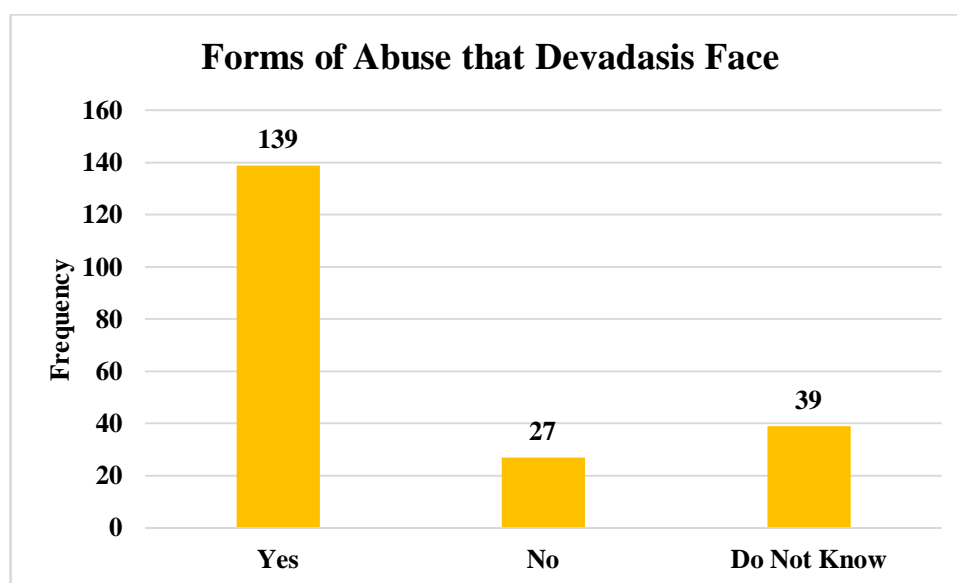
In Maharashtra, begging in front of the temple is very less, however we can see many devadasis who beg in public places. Especially in Solapur, the devadasis are much in to begging and they are called Aharadani devadasis. Unlike Solapur, there is not many devadasis seen begging in Kolhapur and Sangli. In Solapur, one can come across a devadasi begging every 10 minutes. They earn Rs.500 to Rs.1000/- per day. It is a huge income for them. Because the devadasi gets more money through begging, there are non devadasi who dress up like devadasis and beg in public places.

Apart from the regular begging, the traditional process of begging is associated with the Devadasi system. It is called as “Jogva”. Every Tuesdays and Friday they go to five of their neighbouring houses for begging. They collect money and food grains. They should not collect any cooked food. They sing a song while begging by playing “*Chowdiki*” a music instrument used by devadasi. Offering grains and money to devadasis who come for begging is considered a ritual by the people. This is followed in both Karnataka and Maharashtra but only the older devadasi still adhere to this system of begging. The young devadasis are in prostitution.

Ulligamma, 85, who begs in front of the Kokatnoor temple in Belgaum district of Karnataka says that *“When I was young I was earning money and I’m old now so I don’t have any other option than begging. I have a son who is truck driver so he will be travelling always and a daughter who got married, she is settled in Gujarat. No one takes care of me now. My daughter says “if you have money for up and down train then come to my home otherwise don’t come. I’m old, I can’t work so I don’t have any other option than begging. People coming here drop me some money and my life goes on. I was dedicated when I was very young, I don’t even remember my age during dedication. I have 3 sisters all three of them are devadasis, even my mother and grandmother are devadasis”.*

4.4.5. Various Forms of Abuses

Chart 10 – Forms of Abuse that Devadasis Face



This is a graphical representation of whether devadasis are subjected to any form of abuse. 67.8% of the respondents remark that devadasis are subjected to many forms of abuse. 13.2% of them said devadasis are not subjected to any form of abuse. Few of the questions in the head is not applicable to some respondents so 19.0% of them did not answer.

Table 21 – Various Forms of Abuses

Different Types of Abuses									
Verbal Abuse	Frequency	Physical Abuse	Frequency	Financial Abuse	Frequency	Sexual Abuse	Frequency	Socio – Cultural Abuse	Frequency
Name Calling	115	Kicking	61	Theft	11	Unwanted Touching	29	Using religion to justify abuse or dominance	32
Accusing	39	Slapping	55	Fraud	14	Molestation	20	Stigma Labelling	101
Criticizing	59	Knuckling	6	Miss appropriation of property	12	Unwanted Kissing	8	Ostracization From Community	90
Threatening	44	Biting	5	Misuse Of Welfare Benefits	15	Refusing to use condoms	67	Family Disown	68
Yelling	70	Burning	7	Misappropriation Of Funds	15	Demanding sex	95	Discrimination	98
Insulting	90	Sticking	13	Controlling Income	58	Forcing Sex	91	Not allowed to take part in social events	75
Humiliating	35	Pinching	10			Forcing To Indulge In Prostitution	85	Inauspicious	31
		Punching	34						
		Cutting	6						
Total	452		231		125		395		495

Table 21 shows different types of abuse that devadasis face. Abuses are categorized under five heads like verbal abuse, physical abuse, financial abuse, sexual abuse and finally socio- cultural abuse. From the table it is clear that verbal abuse (452) and socio- cultural abuse (495) are higher in number compared to other abuses. In verbal abuse name calling (115) and insulting (90) stand first as per the remarks of respondents. In socio- cultural stigma/labelling (101) and discrimination (98) stand in first position. Sexual abuse (395) comes next to socio-cultural abuse.

Abuse can take several forms, often with more than one type of abuse occurring at the same time for individuals. Major forms of abuse, which were investigated in the present study, are given below.

- ***Verbal Abuse***

It is use of words, acts or other means to cause fear, humiliation, emotional stress, or anguish. Victims may be threatened with punishment, deprivation, or institutionalization. Other verbally abusive acts include, but not limited to, berating, infantilizing, humiliating, ridiculing, cursing, making harsh comments etc. However, the impact of these forms of abuse is often difficult to assess because similar actions or words may be more traumatic to some individuals than others. Cultural norms and expectations also appear to significantly affect how these forms of abuse impact victims. Verbal abuse is a common form of abuse for devadasis. Frequently they are referred as bitch. They face verbal assault when they do not obey the customers for sexual favour. Even though the verbal abuse is very common it has made a tremendous impact on the mental wellbeing of devadasi women.

- ***Physical Abuse***

Physical Abuse is the use of physical force causing discomfort which may or may not result in bodily injury, physical pain, and impairment. Person who are subjected to rough handling or mistreatment are the victims of

physical abuse. It includes slapping, shaking, pushing, kicking, punching, striking with an object or weapon, deliberate exposure to severe weather, unnecessary physical restraint, forced confinement and failure to provide adequate health care. Physical abuse by family, relatives, neighbours, strangers including their customers is very common among devadasis. They do not get support from police even if they are brutally attacked or assaulted. Police also tend to register false cases against them and arrest them often.

- ***Sexual Abuse***

All unwanted forms of sexual activity, behaviour, assault or harassment to persons are sexual abuse. It can include verbal or suggestive behavior, fondling, sexual intercourse, lack of personal privacy, being forced to commit degrading acts and unnecessary help with dressing or hygiene. Young girls' reproductive function before growth results in stunted skeletal growth, high risk of obstructed labour, and can lead to vesicourethral, vesicovaginal, or vesicoanal fistula and infection. The health risks are further multiplied by poor nutritional and health support from the family and community. The growth spurt at the adolescent age is further reduced by inadequate nutrition and psychological stress may lead to psychosomatic disorders; Moreover, these girls are likely to face three times higher complications as compared to older women. In short, young girls initiated into the *devadasi* system are potentially at a high risk of becoming victims of health and psychological stress factors. According to a recent survey, in Karnataka state alone, 26% of female sex workers are into sex work through the *devadasi* system. Most of them are now struggling to develop healthy sexual practices, grappling with the stigma of their profession, HIV, and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs).

- ***Financial Abuse***

This is the misuse of a person's funds or property through fraud, trickery, theft or force. It can include: frauds, scams, the misuse of money or property, convincing a person to buy a product by give away money, stealing money or possessions, misusing bank or credit cards, misusing joint banking accounts, forging a signature on pension cheques or legal documents and misusing the power of attorney. Whatever little money earned by the devadasis are misused by their near and dear ones. Financial exploitation is considered to be one of the major forms of exploitation as devadasis earn money from sexual services. The main perpetrators of financial exploitation is the family members of devadasis. From the time of dedication of devadasis to the temple, the family members extract money from devadasis and leave them helpless. The meager financial assistance given by the government to the devadasis as pension is also misused by the family members.

- ***Socio-cultural Abuse***

Psychosocial: The imaginary wives of the God are excluded socially, stigmatized morally, and have additional problem of facing widowhood. All these factors may lead *devadasis* to feel depressed and may manifest with abnormal changes in their behavioral pattern. Over a period of time, they are likely to suffer from psychosomatic disorders and may live unnoticed in the community.

Apart from the other abuses, the devadasis reported that stakeholders themselves abuse them often. A devadasi from Mumbai shouted at us when we approached for the interview. After explaining to her that we have come on behalf of NCW and we are there to listen to her, she said that “*many*

people come, especially NGOs, along with many foreigners and show them our bad life style and get funds from them. But they won't do anything for us. I thought you people have also come for the same reason. They just use us to make money so they are no different from our parents who dedicate us for money. Recently there were few people who came to us for an interview and took all our details and posted it in the internet, many of us were arrested because of that. So it is problem of our livelihood. We are afraid of the new comers that is why we don't encourage these kind of people".

A Professor from Karnatak University also makes a similar statement; she states *"the devadasi system is almost abolished. Of course it is still there in some interior villages but it is not as big as the NGOs project. The NGOs just project this problem to get funds from the government. The government should be very careful in funding the NGOs and also monitor the work done by the NGOs. If the NGOs say that the system is abolished then many of the NGOs will be shut down and it employees will lose their job. That's the main reason these NGOs project the problems"*.

During the field work in Bijapur, Karnataka, we had approached an NGO. The moment they saw us, they started avoiding us. The NGO is headed by a former devadasi and so she might have lot of information but she refused to answer many of our questions. Their office was not in an office set up, it was just a home and they had the name board at the entrance. We have also noticed many beds and pillows in the hall and men and women coming and going. There is no purpose for beds and pillows at an NGO office. So the question is are they running a brothel in the name of an NGO?

4.5.How do the Stakeholders Identify the Problems of Devadasis?

Table 22 – Identification of the Problems and Exploitation of Devadasi Women

Identification of the Problems of Devadasi Women		
	Frequency	Total Percentage
By Local public	13	18.60
By One Self	17	24.30
Keen Observation	25	35.70
By Referral	8	11.40
Research Work	6	8.60
By Media	1	1.40
Total	70	100.00

Table shows how the problems of devadasis are identified by the respondents. Actual size of the sample is 205 but few of the questions in this head were not applicable to all respondents, so the number of respondents comes down to 70. Regarding the data given in the table it's clear that respondents used to identify devadasi through keen observation in the field. 35.7% identification takes place through observation. 24.3% identification is through one self. 18.6% identification is through local public. If some area is famous for dedication practice then people in that area would be aware of all the details. Respondents can approach them and get information regarding the problems of devadasi women. Other options are by referral 11.4%, research 8.6% work and media 1.4%.

In the early work on abolition of devadasi system, Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar, a devadasi turned social worker said that in the name of shastras, religion, Gods and rituals, our women have been abused and

exploited in all spheres. Except in India, in no other country, prostitution has been legitimised as 'God blessed holy art'. Preparing a set of women for prostitution only exemplifies our men's animal desires... It is shameful to note that our national leaders defend the devadasi system in the name of preserving the tradition and art.

Regarding the physical health and unwanted pregnancies of the devadasis, Orr (2000) has found out in his study that almost all the deliveries are domiciliary and taken care of by the older women in the community. Abortions and stillbirths are alarmingly frequent. Contraceptive measures are strictly a taboo. Unwanted pregnancies are subjected to crude methods of induced abortions. The most common practice is to insert a stick coated with oleander milk into the uterus of the pregnant woman. The effect that it could have on her reproductive health is not given any consideration. Frequent pregnancies, abortions and deliveries render a majority of *devadasi* women physically weak and anemic (Orr, 2000).

One of the most dangerous threats for *devadasis* is AIDS. Being women with multiple sexual partners, awareness on issues of personal hygiene is very low. Consequently, most of the women suffer from reproductive tract infections and sexually transmitted diseases (Nag, 1995). In Bombay, virtually all such women suffer from several forms of venereal disease. It has been estimated that 20 % of the *devadasis* are infected with HIV (Nag, 1995). Generally these women perceive any such problem as a normal feature of their life cycle and never take their health seriously. Thus the identification of physical problems and other forms of exploitation of devadasis is a nightmare for the stakeholders. But many of the devadasis reported that no one comes to address the problem. It is also understood that the Social Welfare Officers just take a survey and never follow up after that. The Social Welfare Office gets information from the NGOs.

4.6.Children of Devadasis

4.6.1. Status of Devadasi Children

Table 23 - Status of Children of Devadasis

Status of Children of Devadasis		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Truant	103	18.70
Dedicated as Devadasi	58	10.50
School Going	163	29.50
Working	143	25.90
Delinquent	85	15.40
Total	552	100.00

This table shows the status of children of devadasis. Most of the children of devadasis are school going with 29.5%. 25.9% devadasi children are working. 10.5 % Female children of devadasis are dedicated as devadasis as per respondents opinion. Rest of the children of devadasis are either truant (18.7%) or delinquent (15.4%).

The children who are born through the sexual abuse of their mothers suffer a lot in society. Most of the children said that when they go to school, teachers and other children treat them badly. They are called “bastards”. One of the ex-Devadasi told us that when they fill the school admission form for their children, they mention “**God**” in the column of father’s name. Children of devadasis don’t have legal rights on their father’s property and they are not expected to take their fathers name with them. So during school admission it is a problem which leads to them being illiterate. But now they can take their mother’s name as initial.

“Manisha is a 32 year old Basavi dedicated to the God Aanjaneyar in her childhood. She belongs to the Scheduled Caste called “Mathika” in which the dedication is very common. Poverty and religious beliefs like dedicating single girl child to God were the reasons behind the dedication. Now she is has two boys who are doing their primary schooling in government schools. During their enrolment in schools, mother’s name was used instead of father’s name”.

Table 24 - Perception towards Children of Devadasis

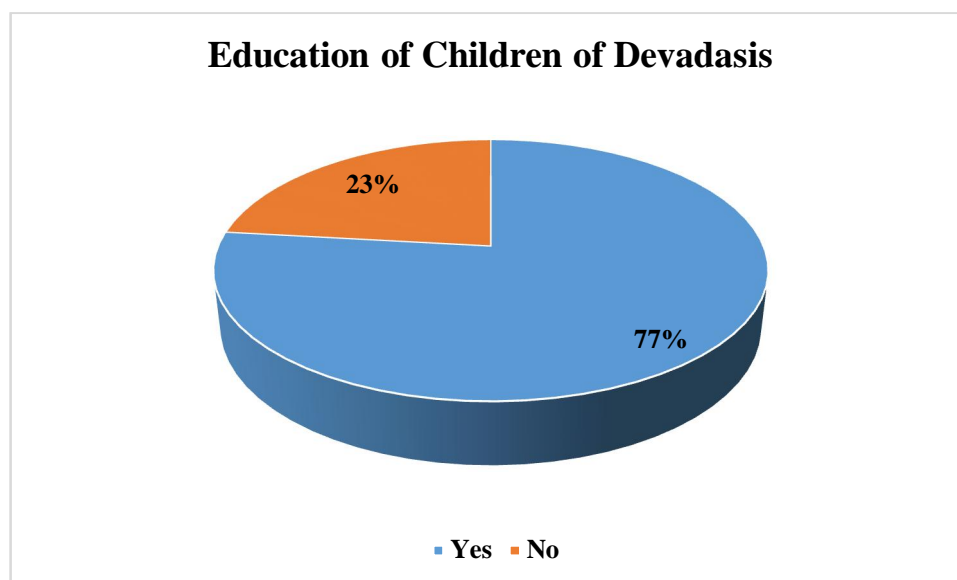
Perception Towards Children of Devadasis		
	Frequency	Total Percentage
Social Exclusion	118	18.40
Branded	152	23.70
Ill-Treated	128	19.90
Stigmatized	124	19.30
Discriminated	120	18.70
Total	642	100.00

This table shows perception towards devadasi children. 23.7% of respondents agree that branding them as devadasi children is the main problem in the perception of public. 19.9% of them said that ill- treating them is common and 19.3% of them state that stigmatization by society since their birth is another problem. 18.4% of them said Social exclusion and 18.7% of them said that discrimination plays a significant role in the perception of the general public.

Children of devadasis are ill-treated badly by their fellow-beings. The social stigma attached to these children often prevents them from continuing their education. Thus the number of school drop outs among devadasi children is very high. The derogatory status of the devadasi women in society

has its negative impact on their children and the society also ill-treats them and denies them the opportunity to be part of the mainstream culture.

Chart 11 – Education of Children of Devadasis



This is a diagrammatical representation of the educational status of children of devadasis. As per the respondent's opinion 77% of the children of devadasis get education like other children. 23 % of the children are not able pursue education as they are stigmatized as Devadasi children.

Getting admission into regular stream of schools is a nightmare for devadasi's children. Even if they are successful in getting admission into the school, they are not treated on par with other children. The government of Karnataka has gone one step further and started special schools for devadasi children. It has its own positive as well as negative effects. Since there is no social inclusion of these children with other children of the society, there are possibilities for these children to develop a negative attitude towards other members of the society. There are criticisms by various NGOs for starting a separate school for devadasi's children. But some of the stakeholders have also opined that at least there is a possibility of these children to get educated

even if it is in a separate stream. Some social activists judge rehabilitating devadasi children in special schools promoted by the government as a practice that leads only to further isolation and segregation from other children (Asha Ramesh, 1993).

Table 25 - Problems in Educating Children of Devadasis

Problems in Educating Children of Devadasis		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage
They often asked to provide the father's name which they don't know	24	11.70
Most often they are not given admission simply	8	3.90
They often feel bad when they are asked to introduce them self	1	0.50
Ill-treated during admission	7	3.40
Do not know	165	80.50
Total	205	100.00

Table lists out the main problems faced while educating devadasi children. Main point is, according to 11.7% respondent's opinion, those children born to devadasis do not have a legal father and they do not have any right on the property of their father. Rest of the 3.9% said that school authorities won't give admission through simple procedure. During the time of school admission they were expected to write their father's name in the admission form, a detail these people do not have. This leads to the rejection of their admission. 3.4% of the respondents explain that most of the time they are ill-treated by classmates and even some time by teachers. 80.5% of the respondents were not aware of all these things.

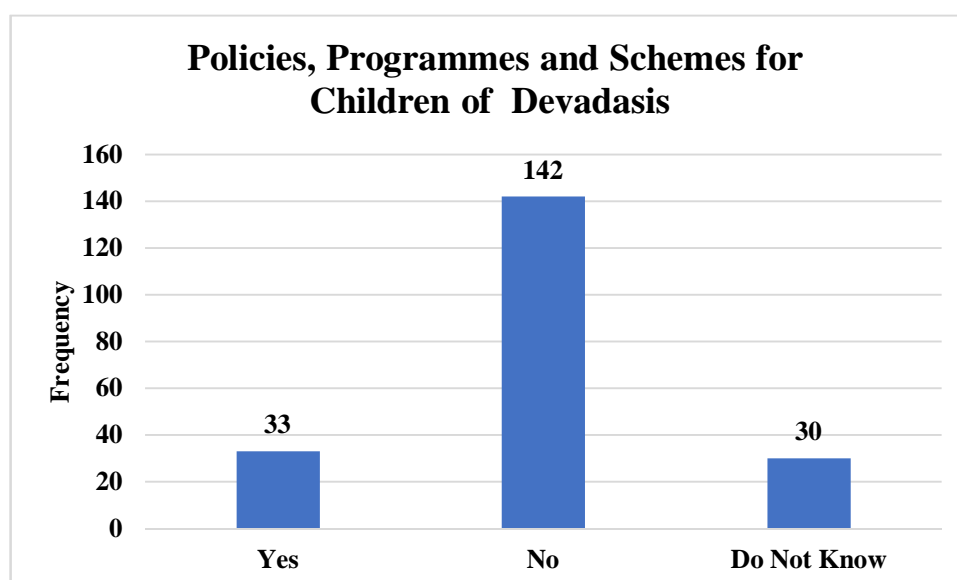
The children of devadasis do not face better conditions. Traditionally, a stigma is attached to *devadasi* children who are not perceived equal by the other members of their caste. The children of a *devadasi* cannot enjoy

legitimacy and have no rightful father they can claim (Fuller, 1990). Children born to such mothers bear the stigma of being ‘Devadasi’s Children’ and lack a father figure. These children are often looked after by their grandparents or care takers because most of them can’t stay with their mother. These children miss out on parental care and guidance during crucial periods of their development.

Many of the children of devadasis are discriminated and ill-treated in their schools. Due to this, many of the children of devadasis don’t go to schools and there are school drop outs. One of the son of devadasis who is now working in a NGO said *“we were two Ramesh in our class, so to differentiate me, every one use to call me devadasi’s son Ramesh”. Like me many of the children face problems and they don’t go to schools, once they stop going to schools they will be attracted towards negative elements in the society”*.

4.6.2. Policies and Programmes for the Children of Devadasis

Chart 12 – Stakeholders Awareness on Policies, Programmes, and Schemes for Children of Devadasis



Graph shows policies, programmes, and schemes for the children of devadasis. As per the respondents opinion, 69.3% of them told there is policies, programmes and schemes for devadasi children. 16.1% of them said they know about the available schemes and programmes. 14.6% of respondents are not aware of any policies, programmes and schemes for the children of devadasis.

There are not many schemes for children of devadasis. It is emphasized by many stakeholders that there should be free education for them and free hostel. Most importantly, they should be taken away from the negative environment and given education in residential schools so that they won't fall in the same custom. There is an NGO in Athani taluk of Belgaum which gives free education for children of devadasis, but currently the school has less than 10 percent of devadasi children. Also many of village people and some of the stakeholders said that NGO made money out of this issue. Moreover, many of the stakeholders suggest that rather than providing many things for free; let us give the job assurance for the children of devadasis. A Social Welfare Officer says that *"the devadasis system is almost at its end. Most of the devadasis have passed away or become old, so it is time for all the stakeholders to focus on the welfare of the children of devadasis"*.

There is a rule in Karnataka and Maharashtra that the children of devadasis should not be asked about the father's name but in reality, many children are asked about their father's name in schools. So many find it difficult to get admission in schools. There is suggestion from the stakeholders that the identity of the devadasi children should not to be revealed to others in order to avoid stigma and discrimination. It is also observed that most of the devadasi children do not continue their education till UG or PG. Mostly they go till school level and stop their education. Later they start working or roaming with friends. Since there is no father, there is lack of control on them, after a certain period, the mothers don't control the male child.

A teacher from Bagalkot district says that “*even though they (devadasi children) are sent to schools, their parents are not educated and they live in a negative environment. So they show poor performance in academic. Once they reach class 10th or 12th they fail and drop their education. So from the beginning, schools should show special care on these kids. There should be special class and evening tuitions for them. NGOs should come forward to take tuitions for the children of devadasis. The tuitions should be in their locality so that teachers can interact with the devadasis often. In our society we have special respect for the teacher, so if a teacher says something they will listen, who knows this may work. There are no such initiatives so let us give it a try*”.

Table 26 - State Wise Distribution of Stakeholders Awareness about Policies, Programmes, and Schemes for Children of Devadasis

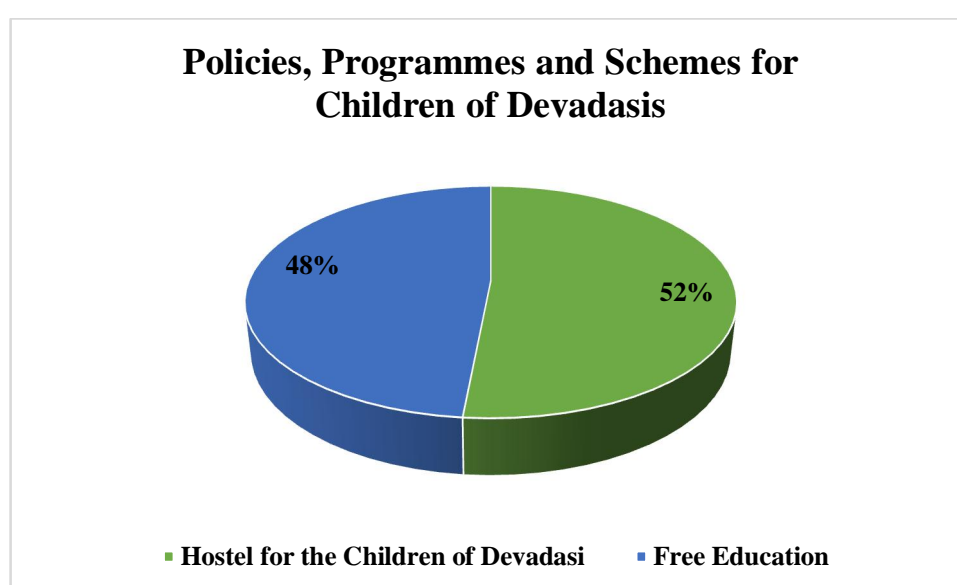
State-wise distribution of Stakeholders Awareness about Policies, Programmes, and Schemes for Children of Devadasis					
	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Total Percentage
Yes	13	15	5	-	16.1
No	39	34	42	27	69.3
Do Not Know	1	3	3	23	14.6

Table is a state wise distribution of policies, programmes and schemes for the children of devadasis. Compared to other states, in Karnataka and Maharashtra number of respondents who know policies, programmes and schemes are considerably high and they were 13 and 15 respectively. In Andhra Pradesh it was 5 and in Tamil Nadu no one among the respondents was aware about it. 42 respondents in Andhra Pradesh said there are no such policies, programmes, and schemes.

The table given above explains the state wise distribution of the awareness level of stakeholders about the policies and programmes for the children of devadasis by the respective governments. There is a wide discrepancy in the policies and programmes for devadasis in all four states. States like Karnataka and Maharashtra have few programmes for children of devadasis. Depending on the programmes run by the government, awareness level also varies. For example the Government of Tamil Nadu gives a zero figure statistics as far as the number of devadasis is concerned. Hence there are no schemes for the devadasis and their children. Thus the results, obviously shows that none of the stakeholders are aware about the policies and programmes for children of devdasis.

The children of devadasis deserve protection in terms of immunization, nutrition and primary education. They should have normal family relationship in their childhood. The government has taken many positive steps for the rehabilitation of devadasis, but a lot more needs to be done as it is a problem of not only women but also of the entire community.

Chart 13 – Policies, Programmes and Schemes for Children of Devadasis



It is a diagrammatical representation of the policies, programmes and schemes for devadasi children. According to 48% of respondents, free education is available for the children of devadasis and 52 % of them indicate that there is hostel facility for the children of devadasis.

Table 27 - State Wise Distribution of Policies, Programmes and Schemes for the Children of Devadasis

State Wise Distribution of Policies, Programmes, and Schemes for the Children of Devadasis					
	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Percentage
Hostel for the Children of Devadasi	14	15	5	0	52
Free Education	14	14	4	0	48.50

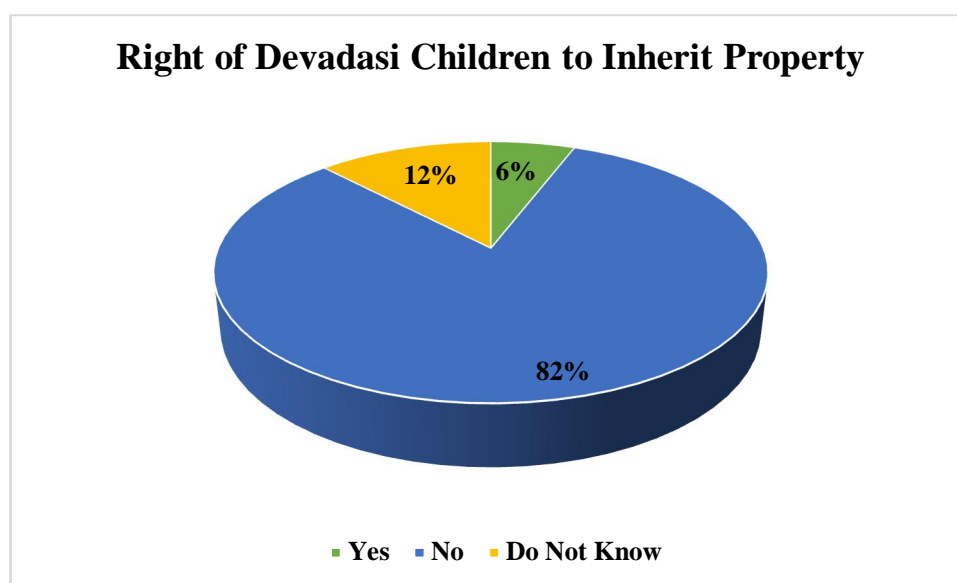
Table shows the policies, programmes and schemes for the children of devadasis. Few of the questions are not applicable to certain respondents so the sample size is low. According to 14 respondents from Karnataka and 15 from Maharashtra free education to the children of devadasis are there in both states. Other half of the respondents that is 14 from each Karnataka and Maharashtra argue that hostel facility is also available for the children of devadasis. In Andhra Pradesh only 5 respondents knew about policies programmes and schemes. In Tamil Nadu none of the respondents were aware of the programmes, policies and Schemes.

In 1990s the Muzarai department had launched a unique pilot scheme in Athani of Belgaum district to rehabilitate the children of devadasis in the State of Karnataka. Sources in the department told a newspaper “Vijay Times” that the children of devadasis, associated with the temples under the jurisdiction of Muzarai, had been identified for rehabilitation. The project was implemented in association with Vimochana, an NGO working for devadasis.

The project cost was borne by the government. The government has identified 134 children of devadasis studying in 5th to 12th standard and admitted them to selected schools run by the Muzarai temples. The children have been provided free uniforms, text books and food with government spending on this children. It was decided that depending on the success of the pilot project, the government would extend the scheme for the entire academic year and to other regions where devadasi system is prevalent. The news report says that the NGO Vimochana had already rehabilitated 674 devadasi and 350 dalit families. The NGO had also established a Kannada medium residential school and a high school for children of devadasis, a novel experiment by any NGO.

4.6.3. Inheritance of Property by Children

Chart 14 – Right of Devadasi Children to Inherit Property



Pie diagram shows the opinion of respondents regarding the legitimate right to inherit the property of the parents. 82% of the respondents told that children of devadasis were not able to inherit the property of their father and also they are not allowed to use their father's name legally. According to 6% of respondents, children of devadasis are expected to inherit the property of parents. 12% of the respondents are not aware of the matter.

Inheriting the property of the parents and ancestors is considered one of the important legal rights of individuals. Whereas for devadasi children, they cannot inherit the property of the father. The reason behind is some of the devadasis cohabit with multiple partners and hence it is not possible for them to identify the father. Devadasis living with one partner (for example, a patron) are aware about the father of the child. But even in these circumstances they can get fringe benefits from the patron but cannot inherit the property. Here the onus of proving the legitimate father of the child is on the devadasi women and in most cases devadasis fail to prove it due to various social taboos attached to it.

4.7. Legislations

4.7.1. Central Legislations

Table 28 - Central Legislations

Central Legislations	Frequency	Percentage
Indian Penal Code, 1860 (sec 372 & sec 373)	129	16.30
Madras Hindu Religions Endowment Act Of 1926	19	2.40
Devadasi Security Act, 1934	29	3.70
Prevention of Devadasi Act in 1935	39	4.90
Madras Devadasis Prevention and Dedication Bill -1938	24	3.00
Devadasi Abolition Bill December 20,1947	40	5.10
Immoral Traffic Prevention Act 1956	114	14.40
The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children Act 2000	118	15.00
Child Protection Law	87	11.00
The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986	106	13.40
The Bonded Labour System (Abolition)Act, 1976	84	10.60
Total	789	100.00

Table shows list of Central Legislations in relation to the prevention of Devadasi system. 16.3% of respondents were aware of the Central Legislations. 15.0% of respondents were aware of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children Act 2000) (JJ Act). 14.4% of respondents were aware of Immoral Traffic Prevention Act (ITPA) 1956. 13.4% respondents were aware of the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1986.

In 1924, Indian Penal Code (IPC) was amended. Sections 372 and 373 of IPC declare the practice of dedicating girls for the ultimate purpose of engaging them in prostitution as illegal. It prescribes that whoever disposes off any person under the age of 18 years (or in the possession of any person) with the intent that such person shall at any age be employed or used for the purpose of prostitution or illicit intercourse with any person or with the knowledge that the person is likely to be employed or used for any such purpose at any age, is liable to be prosecuted. Amendment of Indian Penal Code is not a direct interference in the Devadasi practice. In 1930, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy of the Women's India Association, introduced in the Madras Legislative Council a Bill for the "prevention of the dedication of women to Hindu temples in the Presidency of Madras". The Bill, which was popularly known as the Devadasi Abolition Bill, declared the 'pottukattu' ceremony in the precincts of Hindu temples or any other place of worship as unlawful; gave legal sanction to the devadasis to contract marriage; and prescribed a minimum punishment of five years imprisonment for those who were found guilty of aiding and abetting the Devadasi system. The Bill had to wait till 1947-with certain modifications introduced in 1937-to become at last an act (Ananthi, 1991).

However, the first legal initiative taken for stopping the Devadasi system dates back to 1934 when the Bombay Devadasi Protection Act was passed by the British Government. This Act covered the Bombay state, as it

existed then. The Bombay Devadasi Protection Act declared dedication of a woman as an illegal act, irrespective of the fact whether the dedication was made with her consent or not. According to this Act, marriage by a Devadasi was to be considered lawful and valid, and the children from such wedlock were to be treated as legitimate. The Act also laid down grounds for punitive action that could be taken against any person or persons, who were found to be involved in dedications, except the woman who was being dedicated. Those found guilty of such acts could face a year's imprisonment or fine or both. The 1934 Act had provided rules, which were aimed at protecting the interests of the devadasis. Whenever there was a dispute over ownership of land involving a Devadasi, the local Collector was expected to intervene. Concurrently with the Bombay Devadasi Protection Act, the Madras Devadasi (Prevention of Dedication) Act, 1947 was also in operation in the then Mysore state which was renamed as Karnataka in 1972.

The two Acts then existing were replaced by the Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act which was adopted by the State Legislature in 1982 and was notified by the Government through its Gazette in 1984. The new Act declared dedication as devadasi to be an unlawful practice. As was held by the Act of 1934, the new Act also seeks to declare unlawful the very act of dedication, whether the dedication is done with or without the consent of the dedicated woman. The 1982 Act strengthens the penal provisions that were hitherto available under the 1934 Act. The maximum punishment was increased to three years imprisonment and maximum fine was increased to Rs. 2000. If the guilty was found to be a parent or guardian or relative of the dedicated woman, the penal provisions are even stronger. Imprisonment in such a case can extend up to five years with a minimum term of two years and the fine can be up to Rs.5000 with the minimum fine being Rs.2000. Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act quite significantly provides that rules may be framed to provide for the custody, protection,

welfare and rehabilitation of the devadasis. The rehabilitation of the devadasis had to be central to the realization of the objectives set out in the Act and due recognition is given to this aspect in the Act itself. (Based on Asha Ramesh, 1993) This is followed by the enactment of a similar Act by Andhra Pradesh in 1988.

The study found that in all the four states the law enforcement agencies do not register any case under the Devadasi Prevention Act. In few instances, police register case under the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act (ITPA). The stakeholders have the opinion that the improper implementation of this Act is another reason for continuance of Devadasi system. Lack of awareness about the Devadasi Prevention Act among the law enforcement agency is cited as another reason for poor implementation of this legislation. Since the system is deep rooted, there are no complaints from anybody to register a case in the police station. Police also do not take cognizance under suo moto to register case. This shows the social acceptance of Devadasi system in the society.

Table 29 – State Legislations

State Legislations								
Legislations	Karnataka	Frequency	Maharashtra	Frequency	Andhra Pradesh	Frequency	Tamil Nadu	Frequency
	Devadasi Samarpan Nishedhan Act 1982	47	Bombay Devadasi Protection Act 1982	47	Andhra Pradesh Devadasi (Prohibiting Dedication) Act 1989	43	Madras Devadasi (Prevention of Dedication) Act 1947	28
	Karnataka Devadasi Prohibition of Dedication Act 1982	49						
	Devadasi Prohibition of Dedication Act 1992	49						

4.7.2. State Legislations

Table 29 shows legislations in four states. 47 respondents in Karnataka know about Devadasi Samarpan Nishedhan Act 1982, 49 are aware of Karnataka Devadasi Prohibition of Dedication Act 1982 and also Devadasi Prohibition of Dedication Act 1992 and 47 in Maharashtra are aware of Bombay Devadasi Protection Act, in which the prevalence of practice of devadasi tradition still exists. 43 respondents from Andhra Pradesh are aware of Andhra Pradesh Devadasis (Prohibiting Dedication) Act 1989. 28 of respondents from Tamil Nadu are aware of Madras Devadasi (Prevention of Dedication) Act 1947.

Legal Initiatives Indian Penal Code Sec 372 and 373 In 1924, Indian Penal Code was amended. Sections 372 and 373 of IPC declare the practice of dedicating girls for the ultimate purpose of engaging them in prostitution as illegal. It was prescribed that whoever disposes off any person under the age of 18 years (or attained the possession of any person) with the intent that such person shall at any age be employed or used for the purpose of prostitution or illicit intercourse with any person or with the knowledge that the person is likely to be employed or used for any such purpose at any age, is liable to be prosecuted.

Bombay Devadasi Protection Act 1934 in 1934 when the Bombay Devadasi Protection Act was passed by the British Government. This Act covered the Bombay state, as it existed then. Bombay Devadasi Protection Act declared dedication of a woman as an illegal act, irrespective of the fact whether the dedication was made with her consent or not. According to this Act, marriage by a Devadasi was to be considered lawful and valid, and the children from such wedlock were to be treated as legitimate. The Act also laid down grounds for punitive action that could be taken against any person or persons, who were found to be involved in dedications, except the woman

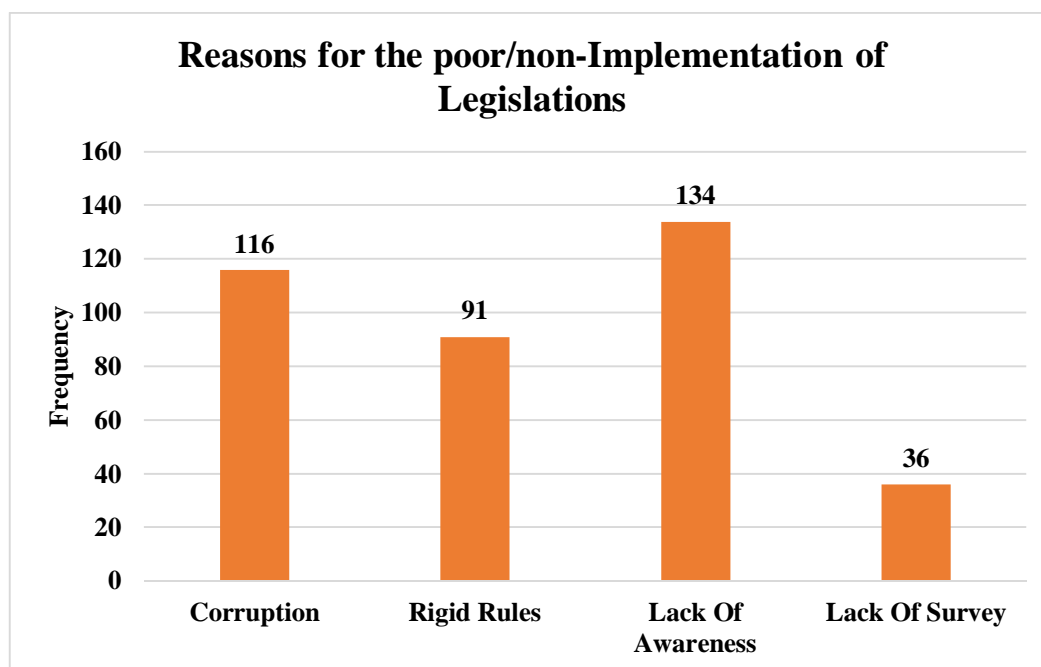
who was being dedicated. Those found guilty of such acts could face a year's imprisonment or fine or both.

Madras Devadasi (Prevention of Dedication) Act, 1947 Madras Devadasi (Prevention of Dedication) Act, 1947 was also in operation in the then Mysore state which was renamed as Karnataka in 1972. The two Acts then existing were replaced by the Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act which was adopted by the State Legislature in 1982 and was notified by the Government through its Gazette in 1984.

Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act 1982 the 1982 Act strengthens the penal provisions that are hitherto available under the 1934 Act. The maximum punishment has been increased to three years imprisonment and maximum fine has been increased to Rs.2000. If the guilty was found to be a parent or guardian or relative of the dedicated woman, the penal provisions are even stronger. Imprisonment in such a case can extend up to five years with a minimum term of two years and the fine can be up to Rs.5000- with the minimum fine being Rs.2000 Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act quite significantly provided that rules may be framed to provide for the custody, protection, welfare and rehabilitation of the Devadasis. The rehabilitation of the Devadasis had to be central to the realization of the objectives set out in the Act and due recognition was given to this aspect in the Act itself. The Government has to undertake legislation at a very early date to put a stop to the practice of dedicating young girls and young women to Hindu temples which has generally resulted in exposing them to an immoral life

4.7.3. Implementation of Legislations

Chart 15 – Reasons for the Poor/Non- Implementation of Legislations



The diagram represents the reason for the Poor/Non-Implementation of Legislations, 116% of the respondents say corruption, 134% of the respondents say lack of awareness, 91% of the respondents say rigid rules and 36% of the respondents say lack of survey as reasons for the Poor/Non-Implementation of Legislations.

There is no official statistics on the number of devadasis living in our country. Lack of data on the issue leads to insufficient measures taken by the government. It is suggested that there should be a baseline survey to find out the extent and prevalence of Devadasi system in India in various states. The police personnel are not aware of the legislations pertaining to devadasis in their respective states. As a result there is no registration of cases and even if it is registered there is no conviction of cases. This results in the continuance of the Devadasi system in many states. Advocates are also included in the

stakeholder's list. They say the legislation is weak and in most of the cases production of witness is a big problem and only two cases were convicted till now in Karnataka. In Bagalkot district, discussion with some police officers including women police officer revealed that they are not aware about the legislations regarding devadasis.

4.7.4. Suggestion for Improvement in Legislations

Table 30 - Suggestions to Improve Present Legislations

Suggestions to Improve Present Legislations		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Sensitizing the devadasis and other stakeholders on legislations	51	10.70
Be practical while framing the legislations	141	29.60
Involve people working at grass root level	125	26.30
Amendments in legislations	40	8.40
Appointment of concerned officials	25	5.30
Prevention of corruption	58	12.20
Punitive action	36	7.60
Total	476	100.00

The above table shows the stakeholders suggestions to improve the present legislations. 29.6% of them suggest being practical while framing the policies and 26.3% of them suggest to involve the people working at grass root level while framing the policies. 12% of them say that corruption should be reduced, 10.7% of them suggest that the judgment should be quick and early, 8.4% of them suggest amending the legislations and 7.6% of them suggest to take punitive action should be stringent.

Devadasis themselves are not aware of the legislations. Creating awareness about the prevailing legislations and making people know about the stringent punishment given for dedication of girls to the temple will result in eradicating the devadasi system. Periodical amendments in the existing legislations will help to curb the problem in an extensive manner. Steps should also be taken for proper implementation of the existing legislations. Monitoring mechanism should also be in place for proper implementation. Speedy trials through fast track court will help in a long way to avoid unnecessary delay in proceeding with the case.

4.7.5. Supreme Court's Initiative on Public Interest Litigation

In the year 2014, the Supreme Court has asked the Chief Secretary of Karnataka to take steps to prevent unmarried girls from being forced to become *devadasis* at a February 13-14 religious event, staying the practice of “dedication” that eventually leaves these temple courtesans vulnerable to abuse. The court also asked the Centre, the National Commission for Women and state governments of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra to respond to a public interest plea that said similar practices were continuing in these states. The PIL filed by Sabu Steephen the President of SL Foundation a NGO which sought suitable guidelines to rid the country of the menace, said hundreds of young girls, all from poor and mostly Dalit families, were being exploited in the name of being dedicated to temple deities. The PIL had alleged that *devadasis* would be dedicated at the event on the intervening night of February 13-14 in front of the Uttangi Durga temple in Karnataka's Davangere. Chief Justice P. Sathasivam and Justices Ranjana Prakash Desai and Ranjan Gogoi asked the Chief Secretary to take necessary steps to prevent the so-called dedication service and directed the court registry to fax a copy of the order to the Karnataka bureaucrat. The PIL cited newspaper reports that said that despite the Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act,

1982, the practice continued in the state and also in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. “It is clearly indicated in the report(s) that (on) the full moon on Magha month (February 14) an effort is being made to bring hundreds of girls to dedicate them as *devadasis*.... “The act of dedication of devadasis is a matter of national shame and the same is to be stopped forthwith in all parts of the country,” the PIL said. The petition alleged that many devadasis, exploited by local landlords and influential men, had been left to fend for themselves and were dying of poverty or sexually transmitted diseases. It also said all the states mentioned had enacted the Devadasi Prohibition Act in 1982 but no measures had been taken to curb the practice

4.8. Policies and Programmes

4.8.1. Intervention from Government

Table 31 – Further Interventions from Government

Further Interventions from Government		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Periodical meeting with local police, NGOs and higher authorities of police	110	20.90
Proper amendments in respective legislations based on the experience of NGOs	89	16.90
Funding the NGOs more	62	11.80
Being co-operative with the activities of NGOs	106	20.20
Mechanism to ensure that benefits reach the beneficiaries	159	30.20
Total	526	100.00

Table shows suggestions of possible interventions from government. According to the respondents there should be a mechanism to check whether benefits reach the beneficiaries (30.2%). Meeting with NGOs, local police and higher authorities should be arranged. 20.2% of respondents argue that everyone should cooperate with the activities of NGOs. 11.8% of them feel that for the proper working of NGOs their funds should be increased. According to 16.9% respondents proper amendments in legislation should be done to curb the practice of Devadasi system.

In the year 2006 'Project Combat' was launched to eradicate Devadasi system in Karnataka. Sensitizing advocates, judges, police and administrative authorities, about prevention of Devadasi system and making them aware of acts pertaining to organized and commercial sexual exploitation of women and girl child are the main objectives of "Project Combat" launched by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA). According to the NALSA, lack of exposure to laws relating to prevention of Devadasi system and bringing the affected girls back into society had resulted in the prevalence of the menace. In the project they have organized workshops at the State, district and taluk levels. Under this project, which is an initiative of the National Legal Literacy Mission, the authority aims at educating judicial officers, advocates, non-governmental organizations, law enforcement officials, administrative officials and devadasis of Karnataka and Maharashtra to Devadasi Prohibition Act and rehabilitation programmes for the effective implementation of Devadasi Prohibition Act. But the actual number of people trained and educated under this project is not known.

Many of the stakeholders in this study said that lack of awareness is the major reason for dedication of girls to the temples. Hence there should be documentary films, advertisements in public places and street plays to educate people not to dedicate girls. There are campaigns organized in various parts of Karnataka and Maharashtra by the NGOs on 'Jat' removal, untying tali and beads etc. But the outreach of these programs has not percolated to the roots

of the society. Any social evil can be combated only through stringent intervention by the civil society and the role of media in this task is imperative. Legislations alone cannot eradicate this kind of evil practices. Sensitizing people is more important than making amendments into the existing legislations.

4.8.2. Schemes for Devadasis

Table 32 - State Wise Distribution of Policies, Programmes and Schemes

State Wise Distribution of Policies, Programmes and Schemes			
	Plan Name	Frequency	Percent
Karnataka	Monthly Pension schemes	53	25.9
	Housing schemes for Devadasis	39	19
	India-Canada Collaborative HIV/AIDS Project (ICHAP)	7	3.4
	Devadasi Rehabilitation Programme	14	6.8
	Income Generating Activity	34	16.6
	Short Term Loan To Devadasis who are members of Self Help Group	19	9.3
	Training for Devadasis in Self Employment Programme	20	9.8
	Marriage Scheme Rs. 50000	2	1
	30Kg Rice from Social Welfare Department	1	0.5
	Swathe Beema Medical Coverage	3	1.5
	LIC Coverage for Rs.25000	2	1
Maharashtra	Devadasi Marriage Scheme	23	11.2
	Devadasi Pension Scheme	21	10.2
	Hostel for Devadasi Children	13	6.3
Andhra Pradesh	Housing and Land Schemes	9	4.4

Given table shows state wise distribution of policies, programmes and schemes. Compared to other states Karnataka has lots of policies, programmes, and schemes. In all that schemes monthly pension scheme is the one which 25.9% of respondents are aware. 19% of the respondents are aware of housing schemes and 16.6 % of respondents are aware of income generating activities. In Maharashtra there are three schemes for devadasi women. As per the respondents remarks Devadasi pension schemes are common among the three. Andhra Pradesh has housing and land schemes for devadasi women in which 4.4% respondents are aware of the scheme.

The Social Welfare Department in Karnataka State undertook various programs such as establishment of exclusive state-homes for the victims of devadasi system. They have also established special residential school for children of devadasis as they are more prone to be the victims of this system. Moral education, vocational training like tailoring, embroidery, and knitting are taught to devadasis in state-homes. Devadasis of marriageable age are encouraged to get married and settle in life. For this, minimum incentive is sanctioned by Karnataka State Government. They are also provided subsidized loans through nationalized banks to start self-employment or business under the assistance of Social Welfare Department. Priority is given to devadasis in case of various benefits provided through developmental programs for weaker sections of the society such as Janata Housing Scheme, Bhagya Jyoti, Grahakalyan, Old-age pensions and Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment. A special effort is made for the rehabilitation of devadasis, and entrusted with publicity of various rehabilitative programs and curbing the spread of this evil practice. Voluntary organizations which are interested in rehabilitation of devadasis and their children are also supported with Government funds.

Besides the state home for women in Athani to rehabilitate devadasis, a certified school for children of devadasis is also established in Sundatti which has one of the largest concentration of devadasis. The Social Welfare Department has also chalked out programs for rehabilitation of devadasis under the Graha Kalyan Scheme. Vocational training is being imparted to identify and willing devadasis to enable them to earn a respectable livelihood.

In Karnataka and Maharashtra, there are pension schemes for devadasis. However, eligible age for the scheme is 45 years. But as far as employment is concerned, it is very hard for the devadasis to get job elsewhere. Many of the stakeholders suggest that the pension schemes should be given to all devadasis without age limit and the pension amount should be increased.

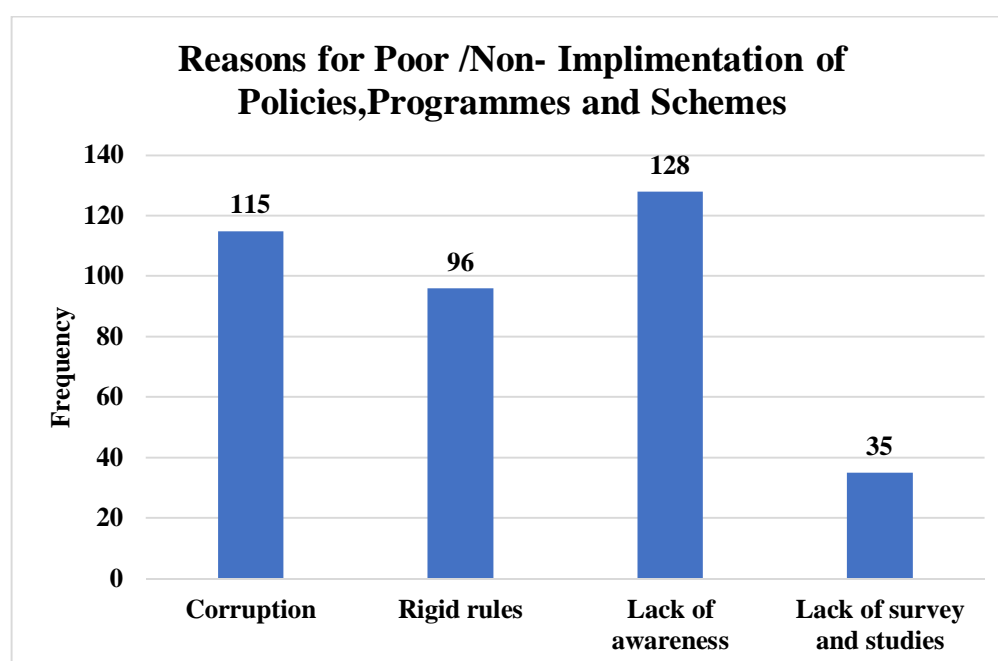
In Maharashtra, the pension schemes are not given properly to the devadasis. It is given once in 3 months or 6 months. The devadasis get an amount of 1000 rupees as pension, many of them claim that the pension amount is not enough to meet the living expenses. They feel that pension schemes should be increased. However in Maharashtra, all the schemes have been stopped in 2009. No marriage has been conducted under the marriage loan schemes. This is either due to strict rules or the devadasis are not aware of the schemes available for them. The free education, uniform and educational kit schemes were started on 29.8.1994 and stopped in 2012. The old devadasis have been shifted to the Sanjay Gandhi Schemes so now only the elder devadasis get pension.

In some parts of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh (Including Telangana), lands are given to devadasis but, these lands are often unfertile and devadasis cannot make use of them. Hence agricultural land should be given so that they can get a regular income. Some of the stakeholders argue that actual number of devadasis is less compared to the statistics available with the

government and NGOs. During last 20 years the government has introduced many schemes for devadasis and for their welfare, so many of the non devadasis claimed themselves as devadasis for the sake of getting benefits from the government. Government should have a proper mechanism to identify the devadasis, so the current statistics includes large number of devadasis.

4.8.3. Implementation of Schemes

Chart 16 – Reasons for poor/non-implementation of Policies, Programmes and Schemes



The above diagram represents the reasons for Poor/Non-Implementation of Policies, Programmes, and Schemes. 115 of the respondents say corruption is the cause of the Poor/Non-Implementation of the Policies, Programs, and Schemes. 96 of them say rigid rules as the reason. 128 of them say lack of awareness as reason and 35 of them says lack of

studies as reason for Poor/Non-Implementation of the Policies, Programs, and Schemes.

Schemes doesn't meet the needs of devadasis. There is no proper mechanism to identify real devadasis. The current procedure is to get letter from a village head and show a photo in which she wears the costume of devadasis (Basket, Chodiki etc.). A professor from Maharashtra says that *"these things are readily available in the photo studio, hence anyone can take photo and claim themselves as devadasis and avail the benefits"* There are middle men to get these schemes for devadasis so they take some share from whatever money the devadasis get. These schemes do have many strict rules. For instance, the housing scheme can be availed only by those who have land to build house. There are loan schemes through banks, but the banks ask the devadasi to produce surety which is again impossible for them.

A Devadasi Prevention Officer says that *"there is lack of funds so these schemes can be given only to limited number of devadasis. So we often get recommendations and pressure from local politicians to give schemes for particular devadasis. We often get such recommendations and pressure, so it is very difficult for us to work"*.

To reach this office, it took so much time; the office is located in a remote area. One cannot easily find the address. Even with the local person being with us. It was very difficult for us to reach the office. If this is the scenario, how can an illiterate and old devadasi reach this office in order to avail schemes?

4.8.4. Suggestion for Schemes

Table 33 - Suggestions of Policies, Programs and Schemes to be adopted by Government.

Suggestions of Policies, Programs and Schemes to be adopted by Government		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage
More shelter homes to the victims	59	11.90
Ensuring awareness programs	144	29.00
Focussing on the economic and socially sustainable support	150	30.20
Programmes that could meet the actual need of devadasis	143	28.80
Total	496	100.00

The above table shows the suggestions by stakeholders to enhance the policies by the government. 11.9% of the respondents suggest provision of more shelter homes and 29% of the respondents suggest awareness programmes for devadasis and other stakeholders. 30.2% of the respondents suggest that the government should focus on the economic and social sustainability of devadasis. And 28.8% suggest that the programmes should meet the actual needs of the devadasis.

The policies, programmes and schemes of the government should reach the beneficiaries without any hassle. A baseline survey to be conducted to find out the actual need of the devadasis. The lack of official statistics and information about the socio-demographic profile of the devadasis hinders the government to make effective policies for the welfare of the devadasis as well as for complete eradication of the Devadasi system. There is an urgent need to focus on the rehabilitation of devadasis in order to empower them and to

prevent them from getting into prostitution. The immediate need of the devadasis during and after rehabilitation should be the focus of the government to provide them the sustainable standard of living.

4.8.5. Devadasis Awareness about Legislations and Schemes

Table 34 - Awareness about Legislation/ Policies, Programmes, Schemes

Awareness About Legislation/ Policies, Programmes, Schemes					
	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Total Percent
Yes	23	13	10	4	62.9
No	30	39	36	24	24.4
Do Not Know	-	-	4	22	12.7

The above table represents the awareness percentage of devadasis about the Legislation/ Policies, Programmes, Schemes. 62% of the stakeholders says that devadasis are aware about Legislation/ Policies, Programmes, Schemes and 24.4% say the devadasis are not aware about the Legislation/ Policies, Programs, Schemes. 12.7% of the stakeholders said they don't know whether the devadasis are aware about the Legislation/ Policies, Programmes, Schemes.

The interview with a devadasi shows that many devadasis are not aware of these schemes. Many of them don't know about the schemes offered by the government. The government is keen to create awareness about the prevention but not on the schemes. During the field work it was found that there was a lot of work done to create awareness about the prevention of dedication. But the State governments have failed to create awareness about the schemes available for the devadasis. For example, there was a devadasi girl marriage scheme in Maharashtra by Social Welfare Department and the

schemes were stopped since no beneficiaries applied for it. There can be two reasons for this, either the eligibility criteria to avail the schemes are very rigid or none of the devadasis are aware about the schemes. This should be taken in to serious consideration. On the other hand, there is another problem comes along if government creates awareness about the schemes. There will be many non devadasis claiming themselves as devadasis to avail the benefits. So government should ensure the schemes reach the real devadasis.

4.9. Rescue, Rehabilitation and Reintegration

4.9.1. From where have the rescues taken place?

Table 35 – Place of Rescue

Place of Rescue		
Responses	Frequency	Total Percentage
From Brothels	11	18.00
Red Light Areas	9	14.80
While Being Trafficked	4	6.60
Family	17	27.90
Neighbours Friends	2	3.30
Temples	14	23.00
Domestic Labour	1	1.60
Court Referral	1	1.60
Villages	2	3.30

Table shows the list of places from where rescue of devadasis takes place. 27.9% from family, 23.0% from temple and 18.0% brothels are the major places from where the rescue has taken place. Most of the dedications take place with the strong support of the family and associated with temples

then later they can be found in brothels or commercial sex industry in their own place or somewhere far away like in red light areas. 14.8% rescue has been from red light area. As per the respondents opinion 6.6% of devadasis have been rescued while being trafficked for prostitution. 1.6% of them have been rescued by respondents from domestic labour. Some other times rescue has taken place through court referral (1.6%) and also from their own home towns (3.3%).

A new effort has begun with small teams taking up *jat* removal or haircutting campaigns in the towns of Kolhapur, Gargoti and Nipani. So far, about 50 women in several towns and villages have been officially released from their state as devadasis, and several have been married. Many of the activists plan to continue these campaigns by linking propaganda against the devadasi system with propaganda for the need for united struggle by dalits against all the injustices that beset their lives. It remains true, however, that the current phase of anti devadasi campaigning, contrasts with the early period, not only in that its leadership is primarily caste Hindu and middle class, but also in that its style has mostly involved lobbying, rallies, seminars and conferences without much follow up. An occasional individual like the stakeholder may fight back, but Yellamma still has thousands of devotees. The desire to throw off traditional forms of religion endorsed by patriarchal and casteist enslavement has not yet taken hold of the masses of low caste workers, agricultural labourers and poor peasants in the border areas between Karnataka and Maharashtra. Until this happens, the system will undoubtedly continue.

In Karnataka and Maharashtra, most of the NGOs and other stakeholders undertake awareness building and rehabilitation works. The rescue is not done by many of them. The NGOs work in the red light areas and home based brothels. They often conduct awareness raising camps, health

camps, HIV prevention camps etc. During an interview with a devadasi in Solapur, we have seen many condom boxes, when we asked about it she said the NGOs will provide them condom on regular basis. The situation is similar in many places. So it is understood that NGOs are working in brothels by supporting the devadasis and not in rescues. Perhaps in a way some of the NGOs are indirectly supporting the devadasi system for their own benefit.

Table 36 - State Wise Distribution of Rescue

State Wise Distribution of Rescue					
Responses	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Percentage
From Brothels	-	6	5	-	18.00
Red Light Areas	-	6	3	-	14.80
While Being Trafficked	-	2	2	-	6.60
Family	1	1	9	6	27.90
Neighbours Friends	-	-	2	-	3.30
Temples	1	2	7	4	23.00
Domestic Labour	-	1	-	-	1.60
Court Referral	-	-	1	-	1.60
Villages	-	-	2	-	3.30

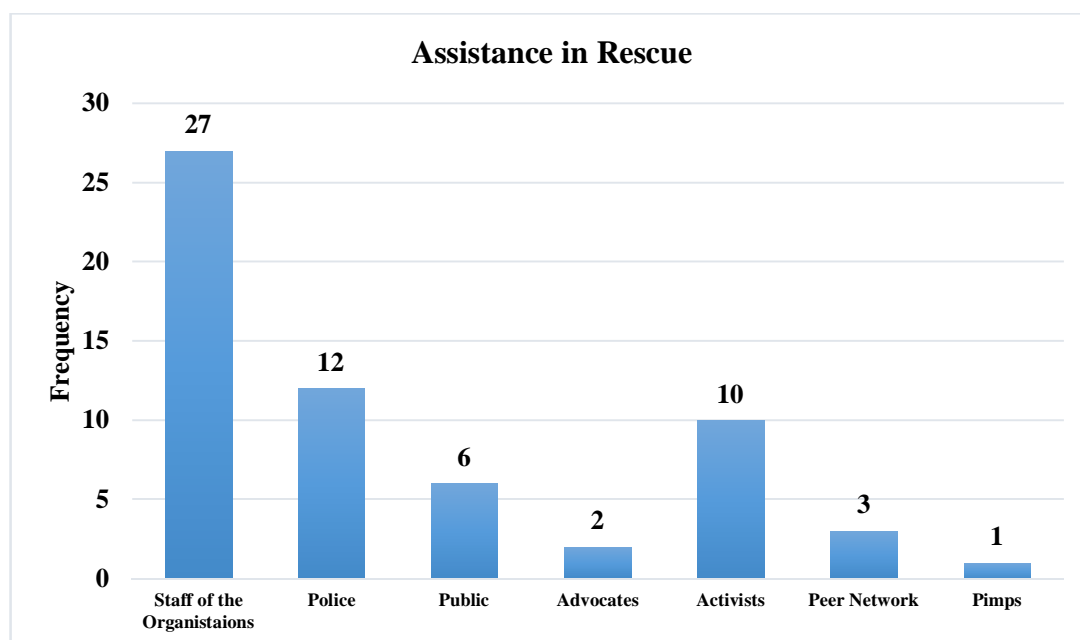
Table shows state wise distribution of places from where rescue has taken place. While comparing four states most of the rescue done by respondents were from family, temples, brothels and red light areas. These four places were closely connected to each other. In Karnataka rescue has taken place only from family and temple. Number of rescue was 1 for each. In Maharashtra 6 of them have been rescued from brothel, 6 from red light area, 2 of them rescued while trafficking, 1 from family, 2 from temple and 1 from

domestic labour. Most of the rescue has taken place in Andhra Pradesh 9 of them rescued from family itself. 7 from temples, 5 from brothels, 3 from red light area, 2 from each village and while being trafficked and 1 through court referral. But in Tamil Nadu rescue was taken place only from family and temple, the number is 6 and 4 respectively.

We could infer from the above table that rescue is a difficult task for the stakeholders as the role of family is crucial in continuing the devadasi system. Availability of information about dedications and secret ceremonies by the family members makes it even more difficult to trace the dedicated girls.

4.9.2. Who assisted during rescue?

Chart 17 – Assistance in Rescue



This graph shows that all have been assisted by the respondents during the rescue. According to the graph 44.3% staff from the organization assisted the respondents mostly during rescue. 19.7% of them have been able to get

good support and help from police department and 16.9% from other social activists. 9.8% of people from the areas where rescue has taken place help the respondents in a way they can. 4.9% of peer group, 3.3% of advocates and 1.6% pimps assist them in few places which show least percentage.

Table 37 - Assistance in Rescue

Assistance in Rescue					
Responses	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Percentage
Staff of the Organization	1	6	15	5	44.30
Police	1	1	6	4	19.70
Public	1	1	3	1	9.80
Advocates	1	-	1		3.30
Activists	1	2	3	4	16.40
Peer Network	-	1	2	-	4.90
Pimps	-	-	1	-	1.60

Tabular representation of state wise distribution of number of people who assisted during rescue is given above. In Karnataka peer network and pimps have not participated in rescue and rest of the people in the given list share equal number that is 1 with each other. In Maharashtra according to the remarks of 6 respondents staffs from the respondent's organisation assist them during rescue. Others in the given list maintain a same number 1, apart from that in Maharashtra 2 of them had found the presence of activist. In the case of Andhra Pradesh it shows participation of all people from the given list but their number varies according to their profession. 12 of the respondents say that they got assistance from their own organisation. 6 of them told they got police help. 3 of the respondents have taken help from public and activist respectively. In Tamil Nadu we can see considerable decrease in the number

of people who took part in rescue. There also, staff from the respondent's organisation outnumber other heads given in the Table. 5 of them seek help from their own organisation while 4 others receive assistance from public and activist respectively.

Rescuing devadasis and reintegrating into the family is a difficult task for the stakeholders as there is a wide social acceptance for this practice. Devadasi themselves are not willing to come out of the system for various reasons. Religious taboos and restrictions make them slaves of this system and it is impossible to eradicate this system without strong policy intervention by the government. It is suggested to form a coordinated network of various stakeholders to effectively deal with this issue. There are sparse evidences to show that a significant number of rescues take place in temples and brothels. But there is no coordinated effort from the government and the NGOs to eradicate the system. Working against a socially accepted and deep-rooted social practice is not an easy task and devising appropriate strategies will help in saving the girls from this social evil.

Table 38 - Immediate Needs of Devadasis after Rescue and Rehabilitation

Immediate Needs of Devadasis After Rescue and Rehabilitation					
Need Immediately after Rescue	Frequency	Effective Rehabilitation	Frequency	Immediate Need of Devadasis Opt for Rehabilitation	Frequency
Safe and secure shelter	14	A Shelter home	43	Protection from the offenders	18
Education	15	Assessing The Devadasis Psychosocial Need	59	Psychological Support	83
Economic Support	21	Assessing Her Physical Health	38	Legal Support	61
Psychological Support	14	Organizing Vocational and Skill Development Training	124	Medical Intervention	92
Medical Support	5	Education	97	Economic Support	135
Vocational Support	10	Interim Monetary Relief	114	Reintegration	16
Legal Support	4				
Financial Support	16				
Creating Media Awareness	5				
Reintegration	2				

4.9.3. Immediate Need for the Rescue and Rehabilitation

Table 38 shows immediate needs of devadasis soon after they get rescued, rehabilitated and immediate need of devadasis who opt for rehabilitation. First the table explains immediate need of devadasis after they are rescued. According to 57 respondents first she needs safe and secure place to stay and protection from offenders. As per the data given by 156 samples, devadasi women needs economic support for being independent. 97 of them said they need psychological assistance in order to overcome trauma they have undergone throughout their life. 134 of them argue that authorities should provide vocational training to devadasi women so that they become economically independent. According to 65 respondents concerned authorities should provide legal support for them.

There is an immediate need for devadasis after rescue and rehabilitation. The government should construct shelter homes or temporary stay homes for the rescued devadasis for the purpose of rehabilitation. In the process of rehabilitation, there should be assistance in the form of non-formal education, psychological, medical, legal and financial support to be provided for the inmates of the shelter home. As far as the medical support is concerned, the inmates with their consent need to be tested for venereal diseases like STD/HIV/AIDS. If they are affected by any of these diseases the government should provide special medical care for the victims. If they require any legal support, the government should provide free legal aid for them. Short term vocational training programs need to be imparted for the inmates of the shelter home for keeping them productively engaged and to ease them for reintegration into the society after complete reformation.

4.9.4. Challenges for Stakeholder during Rescue

Table 39 - Challenges Faced After Rescue

Challenges Faced After Rescue		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Taking consent from rescued devadasi for medical check up	11	16.90
Making them psychologically comfortable	19	29.20
Attending to legal requirements	2	3.10
Lack of shelter home	13	20.00
Economic stability	17	26.20
Language	3	4.60
Total	65	100

Table shows the challenges respondents face immediately after they rescue devadasi women. Few questions under this head were not applicable to certain respondents so the total number of respondents comes down to 65. According to the respondents they face great difficulty in making the rescued devadasi women psychologically stable 26.2% of the respondents problem is to make them economically stable And also 16.9% respondents found hard to take consent from devadasis for medical check up to verify their health status. 20.0% problem is due to lack of proper shelter for rescued devadasis. Rest of the problem are legal requirements (3.1%) and language where they faced difficulty in proper communication (4.6%).

Table 40 - Problems Faced While Rescuing

Problems Faced While Rescuing		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Financial	8	11.30
Political Leaders Influenced By Traffickers	3	4.20
Pimps/Mediators	8	11.30
Victims Themselves	12	16.90
Political Pressure	15	21.10
Social Stigma	8	11.30
Caste	12	16.90
Police Helping the Traffickers	4	5.60
Devadasis Are Not Cooperating	1	1.40
Total	71	100

Table shows an outline of the problems faced by respondents during their rescue operation. Actual size of the sample is 205 but few questions in this head are not applicable to all respondents. Hence the total number of respondents is 71. As shown in the table, the respondents said that political pressure (21.1%) is a hindrance while rescuing the devadasis. Here the term political pressure do refer to actual politicians but it refers to the influential social groups of that locality which politicize the issue for their own vested interest. 16.9% is because of caste of the victim and 16.9% victims themselves create problems because few of them are not ready to be rescued, they are happy with the life they are living. 11.3% lack proper financial support. 11.3% is due to the influence of pimps and mediators and it has great impact on rescue. 11.3% is because of the problem of stigma attached to devadasis. Even though they are rescued and rehabilitated society views them only as devadasis.

Table 41 - State Wise Distribution of Problems Faced While Rescuing

State Wise Distribution of Problems Faced While Rescuing					
	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Percentage
Financial	1	4	3	-	11.30
Political Leaders Influenced By Traffickers	-	1	2	-	4.20
Pimps/Mediators	-	5	3	-	11.30
Victims Themselves	-	1	9	2	16.90
Political Pressure	1	3	6	5	21.10
Social Stigma	-	1	7	-	11.30
Caste	-		8	4	16.90
Police Helping the Traffickers	-	1	2	1	5.60
Devadasis Are Not Cooperating	-	1	-	-	1.40

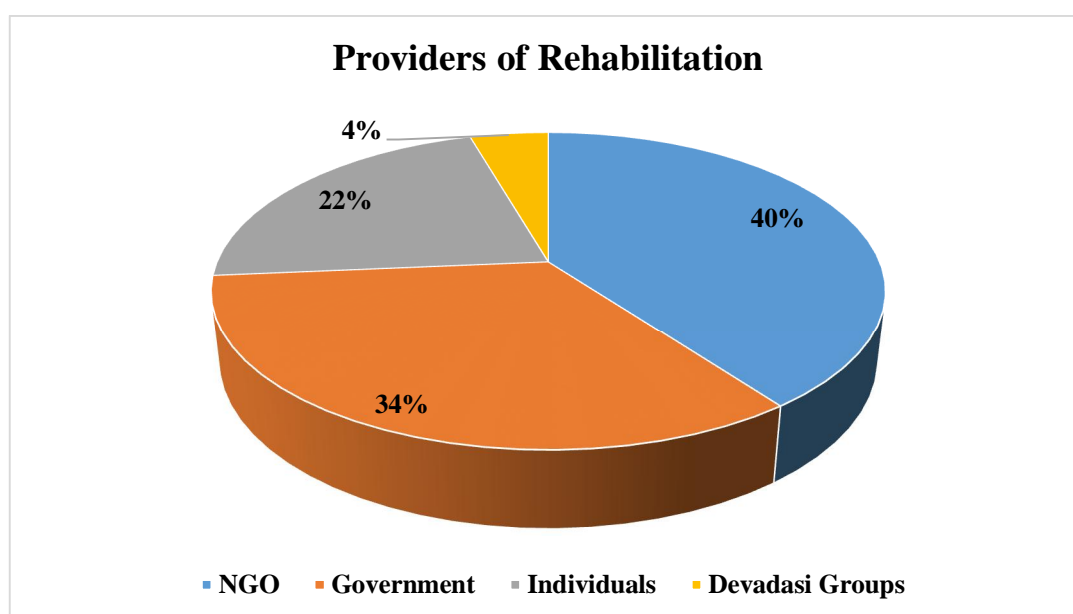
Table above shows the state wise distribution of the rescue of devadasis. In Karnataka, lack of financial support and pressure from influential people are the main reasons that affect rescue in a negative manner. When we come to Maharashtra because of influence of mediators/pimps and lack of financial support back off the rescue programs. Apart from this, political pressure makes rescue difficult for respondents that is 6 in number. Rest of the factors are present only in a small percentage. If we take the case of Andhra Pradesh, most of the problems are present and the rejection of cooperation from devadasis themselves act as main problem for rescue as per the opinion of 9 respondents. 8 of them say that caste is also a problem. According to 6 of them political pressure is also a drawback. Social stigma is another influential factor. Compared to other state here political pressure also very high. In Tamil Nadu political pressure (5), caste (4), victim themselves

(2) and finally help received by traffickers from the police are the main problems of rescue.

The rehabilitation programmes may form an important part of the special component plan for devadasis by the Department of Women and Child Welfare. It is suggested by the stakeholders that a State-level Committee may be formed for the implementation of the programmes. It should be chaired by an eminent social worker and consist of officials, researchers, NGOs and leaders among the joginis and their counterparts as members. At the district level, a Joint Committee of officials and non-officials should be formed for the implementation of the programs. The State-level Committee should have an autonomous status and there should be no interference by official agencies. It is also suggested that the training programmes through income-generating schemes are required in the area where religious prostitution is prevalent.

4.9.5. Providers of Rehabilitation

Chart 18 – Providers of Rehabilitation



Pie diagram above represents the providers of rehabilitation. It is divided into four categories where the first one is NGO which shows 40% among other categories. Next one is government with 34%, who takes care of all rehabilitative programs of devadasis stands in second highest position. Individuals themselves act as providers of rehabilitation with a percentage of 22% which comes in third position. Last one is devadasi group themselves who provide rehabilitation and shelters for devadasis (4%).

In the state of Andhra Pradesh, an attempt was made to reform and rehabilitate Joginis. The government has evinced interest in this issue and established the NISA (National Institute of Social Action). Later Samskar, an NGO, took up the work of reformation and rehabilitation of the Joginis. This eventually spread into other parts of Andhra Pradesh. In this way, Ashray was formed which is working in Mehaboobnagar district. The organization is working as an intermediary between the SC Corporation and the Joginis to identify them and to recommend them for getting the loans for income generation. It also conducts awareness campaigns and anti-dedication movements. Besides, Mahila Samatha Mandali/ Samakhya has also worked on this issue. When the District Poverty Initiatives Programmes came up, it took some interest on the issue and now takes the initiative for Jogini reformation by encouraging the involvement of Joginis and their participation in such programs. It seems ironical that despite rehabilitation assistance, the system still survives in some part of Andhra Pradesh. Many socio-economic compulsions and religious beliefs keep the system going among the socially underprivileged communities. Notwithstanding the Government, sponsored programs and awareness campaigns by the local NGOs, some dedications, however less in number, are still taking place every now and then. There are made secretly without the knowledge of the public at the time of Jakthras or certain temple festivals outside the village.

Table 42 - Providers of Rehabilitation

Providers of Rehabilitation					
Responses	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Total Percentage
NGO	53	52	37	9	39.80
Government	53	45	28	2	33.80
Individuals	43	33	5	2	21.90
Devadasi Groups	7	9	1	-	4.50

This table shows state wise distribution of providers of rehabilitation. As per the given table, NGOs are the largest rehabilitation providers in all four states. 53 of them from Karnataka felt that both government and NGO play a significant role in rehabilitation. 52 from Maharashtra, 37 from Andhra Pradesh and finally 9 from Tamil Nadu agree the NGOs plays a major role in rehabilitation. 45 of them from Maharashtra and 28 from Andhra Pradesh agree that government is taking action for rehabilitation programs.

But in Tamil Nadu, the state which is considered a low prevalence area have only 2 respondents who gave their opinion regarding rehabilitation. In Karnataka and Maharashtra numbers of respondents given their opinion regarding rehabilitation steps taken by individuals were 43 and 33 respectively. In Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu it was 5 and 2 respectively. 7 and 9 respondents respectively said that devadasi groups themselves provides rehabilitation.

4.9.6 . Common Causes for Failure of Rehabilitation

Table 43 - Common Causes for Failure of Rehabilitation

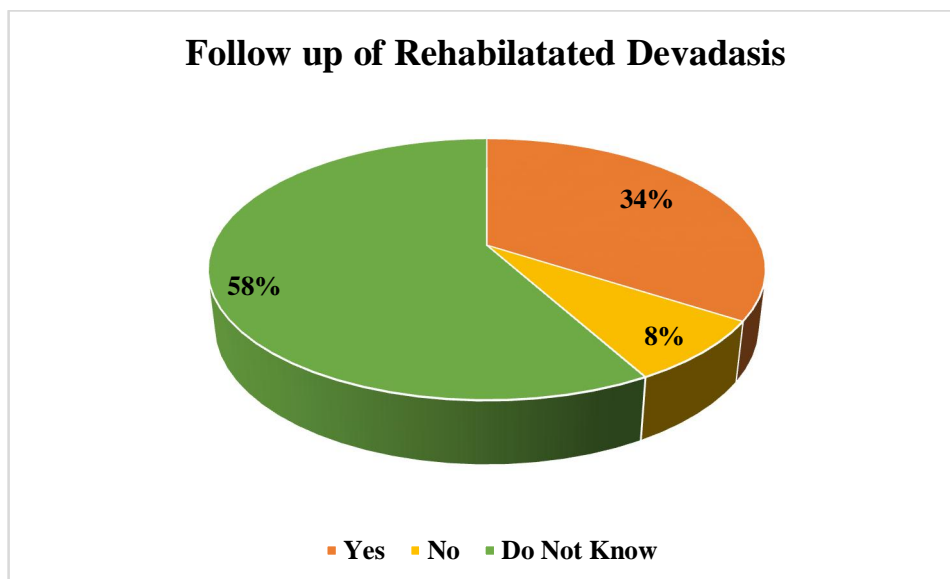
Common Causes for Failure of Rehabilitation		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Stigma attached to devadasis	115	15.50
Perception of public towards rehabilitation	91	12.30
Status of mental health of devadasis	25	3.40
Unpreparedness of devadasis	89	12.00
Lack of proper funding	23	3.10
Lack of shelter facilities	28	3.80
Objection from religious group	86	11.60
Ostracisation	95	12.80
It is considered as religious belief	98	13.20
It is a profession for them	92	12.40
Total	742	100

This table shows common causes which lead to the failure of rehabilitation. 15.5% of respondents are of the view that the main cause for the failure of rehabilitation is stigma attached to the women from devadasi tradition. 12.3% of them feel disapproval of society considering them as normal people make rehabilitation process a difficult task. 13.2% of them are the view that religious belief has a significant influence on people which forces them to follow this kind of tradition. According to 12.4% of respondents they consider it a profession and they are not prepared for rehabilitation. 3.4% stated that the mental health status of devadasis is another reason for the failure of rehabilitation.

The stakeholders also found it difficult to convince devadasis for rehabilitation. The devadasis get easy money through sex work and begging. First of all, they are not willing to work and pension or other monetary benefits given by the government are not enough for them. So it is very hard to convince them for rehabilitation.

4.9.7. Follow up of Rehabilitated Devadasis

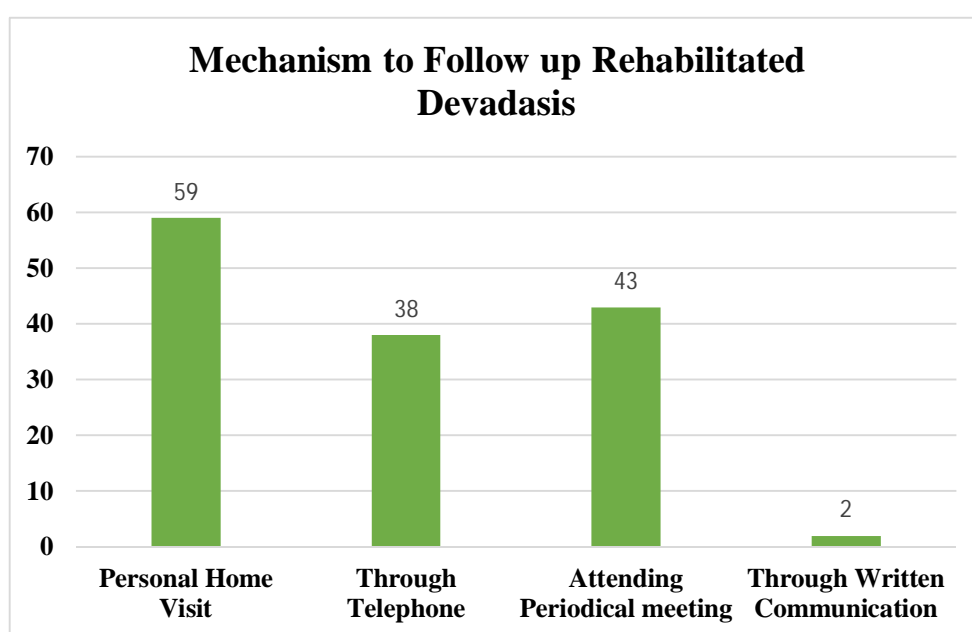
Chart 19 – Follow up of Rehabilitated Devadasis



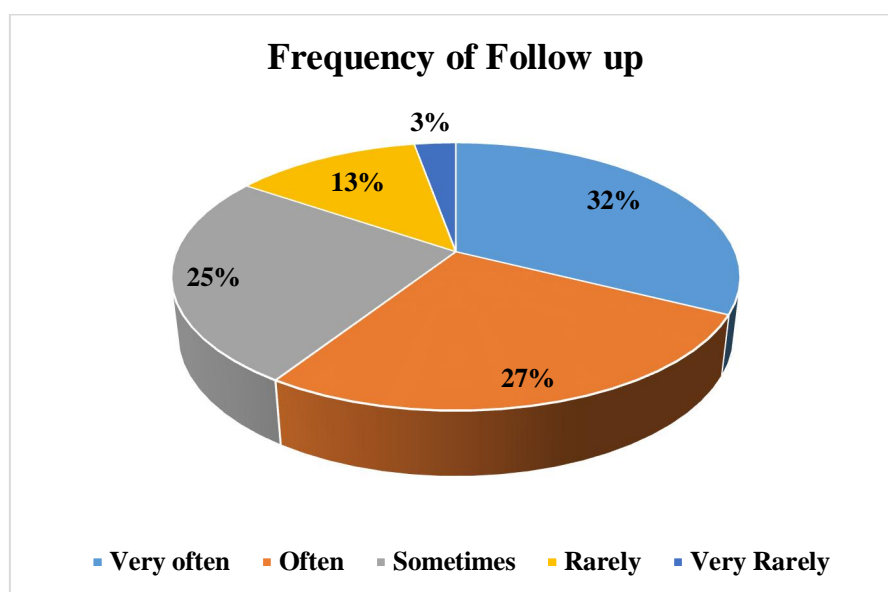
Pie diagram explains the status of follow up made by respondents regarding rehabilitated devadasis. 34% of respondents follow up the devadasis rehabilitated by them. This rehabilitation head is not applicable to 58% of the respondents so they are not aware of the procedure. Rest of the 8% of respondents are not doing any follow up and they are not even aware of their current status. It is understood through field work that the follow up of rehabilitated devadasis not given much importance. Only very few among the stakeholders follow up the rehabilitated devadasis.

The stakeholders like police and social welfare departments do not show much interest in rescuing the devadasis. In all the four states, the numbers of devadasis rescued from various places are very low. Moreover there is no proper mechanism devised by the state governments to follow up the rescued and rehabilitated devadasis. The frequency of periodical follow up is also not mentioned in any guidelines. At present, the follow up is carried out by the stakeholders randomly. It is suggested that there should be a periodical follow up of rehabilitated devadasis by the stakeholders which will prevent devadasis from reverting back to the same profession.

Chart 20 – Mechanism to Follow up Rehabilitated Devadasis



This is a graphical representation of how respondents undertake follow up of rehabilitated devadasis. Personal home visit (41.5%) was the method they adopt to get updates from devadasis women who are rehabilitated by them. Arranging periodical meeting (30.3%) is another way of being in touch with them. Sometimes respondents communicate through telephones (26.8%) and through written communication (1.4%).

Chart 21 – Frequency of Follow up

Pie diagram explains how frequently respondents follow up. 32% of respondents do follow up very often and 27% of respondents visit them often. 25% of respondents get updates from rehabilitated devadasis some times. Rest of the respondents do follow up rarely and very rarely with a percentage of 13% and 3% respectively.

4.9.8. Discussion for Rehabilitation of Devadasis

In both Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, rehabilitated devadasis are entitled to a variety of State benefits. These include monthly pensions, assistance with housing, free healthcare and education for their children. Due to a mixture of corruption and prejudice, they often find it difficult to access these benefits. Additionally, many are not aware of their full rights. In January 2012, Karnataka State finally issued 23,000 registered former Devadasi with entitlement certificates, enabling them to claim benefits. Though these certificates were backdated, it had taken four years for them to be issued. Official figures suggest that there are 23,000 devadasi in Karnataka, and 17,000 in Andhra Pradesh. These figures are based on the

number of devadasis registered to receive benefits. Other sources suggest that there may be as many as 100,000 in Karnataka and 60,000 in Andhra Pradesh. These figures illustrate not only the need to educate devadasi women as to their entitlements, but also the dramatic need for States to expand and develop their benefit programmes.

In the 1990s, due to the limited effect of legislation, State authorities entrusted the implementation of the Acts to NGOs. Much of the work of these organisations has been done through *sanghas*, self-help groups, which help women to access benefits, subsidies and legal support. Rehabilitated devadasis associated with such groups have proven effective agents in preventing dedication ceremonies from taking place. However, due to the limited resources of self-help groups, they are not always as successful as they could be in improving the lives of former devadasis. Furthermore, the authorities see their existence as the fulfilment of state responsibilities to the devadasis, rather than the results which are produced.

In Maharashtra there is a job oriented training program to improve the skills of devadasis, run by District Training Centers through government Social Welfare Schemes. Through formal communication to the Social Welfare Department, efforts are made to impart specific job oriented training programs to identified devadasi girls. The training is customized in small groups to train in specific areas such as: tailoring, knitting clothes, weaving, candle making, envelope making, vegetable vending, and small provision shop management. Depending on each devadasi girl's interest and skills, micro credit loan systems were introduced for economic self-sustainability. This effort is an attempt to increase confidence, self-esteem, and independence. The aim of the group interaction is to provide enough room to share views, opinions, and emotional and psychological support.

Formal meetings are organised with Primary Health Care staff to provide specific treatment and nursing service requirements to devadasi initiated girls in Andhra Pradesh. Primary health care staff are trained to provide counselling services to those in need of them. Female midwives (field health workers) have access to build connectivity with devadasi families. Since female midwives are culturally accepted, it is widely prevalent to utilize the services of midwives effectively to gain access to devadasi families. Attempts are made to provide with good quality medicines, contraceptives, counselling services through primary health care centers and midwife field services to build trust and confidence and to improve sexual health and psychosocial support through counselling services.

Some of the devadasi initiated girls are not willing to change their life style. Efforts have been made for such a section or group of girls to participate in job oriented training, the micro credit loan system and primary health care service and by encouraging them to participate in one to one and group meetings. The conceptual framework of the program is designed so that after a certain period of time, the mutual trust may improve, a significant number of devadasi girls may be willing to change their views, helping them to become empowered economically and building confidence in them, and eventually integrating within the community. The society will ultimately understand, negotiate and help such girls to come out of the Devadasi system. In the process the religious heads will be motivated to go for more ritual cleaning ceremonies to change the attitude of such unwilling girls.

It was proposed by the Andhra Pradesh government to constitute that a Community committee including the key stakeholders such as village heads, representatives from women's self-help groups, a few devadasi family representatives, the welfare department, primary health care workers, religious heads, and other community based organizations. The Community

Committee members receive training based on 'children's rights' 'girl child health and psycho -social' issues and scope of 'community participation' to strengthen the program. The Community Committee is responsible for and oversees: organizing of purifying ritual ceremonies at regular interval to promote the maximum number of devadasis to participate; organizing job oriented training programs; and ensuring the adequacy of health and counselling services. The Community Committee also helps to increase the self-sustainability of the program, enhance the resilience capacity of target group, and considers cultural and context specific issues in order to strengthen the psychosocial-wellbeing of devadasi initiated girls (Lalitha, 2012).

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has enacted legislation to prohibit the dedication of women as Devadasi, Jogini, Basaivi, Mathamma, Parvathi, etc. Penalties for the violation of this Act: If any person performs, promotes or takes part in the performance of any ceremony or act for dedicating a woman shall be punished with fine between Rs.2000 and Rs.3000 and imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years but which shall not be less than two years if the person who performs or dedicates a girl, is her parent or guardian or relative, (he) shall be punishable with 2 -5 years of imprisonment and fine of Rs.3000-5000. Anybody who propagates the practice of dedication of woman shall on conviction be punished with imprisonment of 1-3 years and with fine of Rs.2000-5000. The Government has also launched a scheme, 'Jeevana Jyothi', in order to dissuade poor families from persisting with this heinous practice. Under this scheme the Scheduled Castes Corporation has sanctioned Rs.10000 per Jogini as a relief and rehabilitative remedy. This scheme is applicable only to those who were dedicated before 1988 and are identified as Joginis. Now the amount has been increased up to Rs.20000, which includes Rs.10000 as loan and the remaining amount as subsidy. However, it is not an easy task for the Joginis get the benefit without approaching the intermediaries, because of the existing

procedures of identification and unfamiliar rules for these illiterates at the Banks, which gives a scope for corruption. In fact, it so happened that several beneficiaries had to lose from a few hundreds to a thousand to get their Jogini fixed-deposits of Rs.10000 each from the Banks. Besides, wrong identification of beneficiaries is common. These have resulted in the non-percolation of benefits to the deserving beneficiaries as it happens in other Government sponsored development programs.

4.9.9. Rehabilitation Measures Taken in Telangana:

In order to eradicate the social evil system of Jogins/Basavis, which is in prevalence in some districts of Telangana, survey was conducted on the orders issued by the Commissioner of Social Welfare, AP, Hyderabad by the district Administration, under the guidance of District Collector, in the year 1987 – 88. Various surveys have identified Jogins/Basavi women as detailed below:

Hyderabad-740, Medak-1145, Nizamabad -5566, Karimnagar -2197, Warangal-1059, Adilabad-906, Mehaboobnagar-2879, Ranga Reddy-231 and Nalgonda-40.

It has also been noticed that more than 80% of persons belong to Scheduled Castes.

The Telangana SC Corporation's role is confined to the extent of implementation of Economic Support Schemes as part of overall rehabilitation of identified Jogins. The district SC Societies implant various schemes for the benefits of Jogins like providing Milch cattle, Bullock carts and kirana shops etc. Economic Support Schemes with a unit cost of Rs.20,000 per family has been implemented for rehabilitation of Jogins of which Rs.10,000 is subsidy from GOI. Vide G.O.Ms.No.80, S.W. (PCR)

Dept., dt.03.12.2011, Sri V. Raghunath Rao, Retired District & Sessions Judge, was appointed as a Head of the One Man Commission to look into the problems faced by the children of Joginis, Mathangis, Devadasis & Basavis, he has submitted report on Joginis to Government. The orders are awaited from the Government. A total No. of 9721 Jogins have so far been rehabilitated at a cost of Rs.1627.94 lakhs up to 2012 – 13 (as on 31.12.2012). The District – wise and year wise details are furnished herewith.

**Telangana Scheduled Castes Cooperative Finance Corporation Limited:
Hyderabad**

**Table 44 – District-wise Rehabilitation of Jogins/Devadasis since
inception to 2012 -2013 (Telangana State)**

Sl. No	District	Physical	Financial (in Lakhs)
1.	Adilabad	922	143.04
2.	Nizamabad	3300	577.95
3.	Karimnagar	1553	248.31
4.	Warangal	1007	185.79
5.	Khamman	0	0
6.	Nalgonda	51	6.05
7.	Medak	707	95.94
8.	Mehaboobnagar	1843	315.5
9.	Ranga Reddy	142	34.96
10.	Hyderabad	196	20.4
Total		9721	1627.94

**Telangana Scheduled Castes Cooperative Finance Corporation Limited:
Hyderabad**

**Table 45 - Statement Showing the Year-wise Physical & Financial
Achievements of Rehabilitation of Jogins since Inception to 2012 – 2013**

Sl. No	Year	Physical	Financial (in Lakhs)
1.	1995 – 1996	333	27.66
2.	1996 – 1997	1197	121.28
3.	1997 – 1998	533	104.34
4.	1998 – 1999	1195	170.51
5.	1999 – 2000	1749	272.52
6.	2000 – 2001	321	38.14
7.	2001 – 2002	748	148.74
8.	2002 – 2003	1613	283.29
9.	2003 – 2004	1671	398.6
10.	2004 – 2005	0	0
11.	2005 – 2006	37	2.05
12.	2006 – 2007	274	57.01
13.	2007 – 2008	0	0
14.	2008 – 2009	0	0
15.	2009 – 2010	33	1.9
16.	2010 – 2011	17	1.9
17.	2011 – 2012	0	0
18.	2012 – 2013	0	0
Total		9721	1627.94

4.9.10. Rehabilitation Measures taken by Andhra Pradesh:

In order to eradicate the social evil system of Jogins/Basavis, which is in prevalence in some districts of Andhra Pradesh, survey was conducted on the orders issued by the Commissioner of Social Welfare, AP, Hyderabad by the district Administration, under the guidance of District Collector, in the year 1987 – 88. Various surveys have identified Jogins/Basavi women as detailed below:

Nellore-284, Prakasam-26, Anantapur-2686, Chittoor-544, Vizianagaram-71, East Godavari-1 and Kadapa-1.

It has also been noticed that more than 80% of persons belong to Scheduled Caste.

The APSCFC's role is confined to the extent of implementation of Economic Support Schemes as part of overall rehabilitation of identified Jogins. The district SC Societies are implanting various schemes for the benefits of Jogins like providing Milch cattle, Bullock carts and kirana shops etc. Economic Support Schemes with a unit cost of Rs.20, 000 per family has been implemented for rehabilitation of Jogins of which Rs.10, 000 is subsidy from GOI.

A total No. of 8852 Jogins have so far been rehabilitated at a cost of Rs.1163.95 lakhs up to 2012 – 13 (as on 31.12.2012). The district – wise and year wise details are furnished herewith. Vide G.O.Ms.No.80, S.W. (PCR) Dept., dt.03.12.2011, Sri V.Raghunath Rao, Retired District & Sessions Judge, was appointed as a Head of the One Man Commission to look into the problems faced by the children of Joginis, Mathangi, Devadasis & Basavis, he has submitted a report on Joginis to Government. The orders are awaited from the Government.

**Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Castes Cooperative Finance Corporation
Limited: Hyderabad**

**Table 46 - District wise Rehabilitation of Jogins / Devadasis since
Inception to 2012 -13 (Andhra Pradesh State)**

Sl. No	District	Physical	Financial (in Lakhs)
1.	Srikakulam	10	2
2.	Vizianagaram	7	1.4
3.	Visakhapatnam	11	2.2
4.	East Godavari	10	2
5.	West Godavari	0	0
6.	Krishna	10	2
7.	Guntur	10	2
8.	Prakasam	79	13.59
9.	Nellore	256	49.61
10.	Kurnool	5687	741.76
11.	Kadapa	26	5.2
12.	Ananthapur	1860	243.92
13.	Chittoor	886	98.27
Total		8852	1163.95

Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Castes Cooperative Finance Corporation Limited: Hyderabad

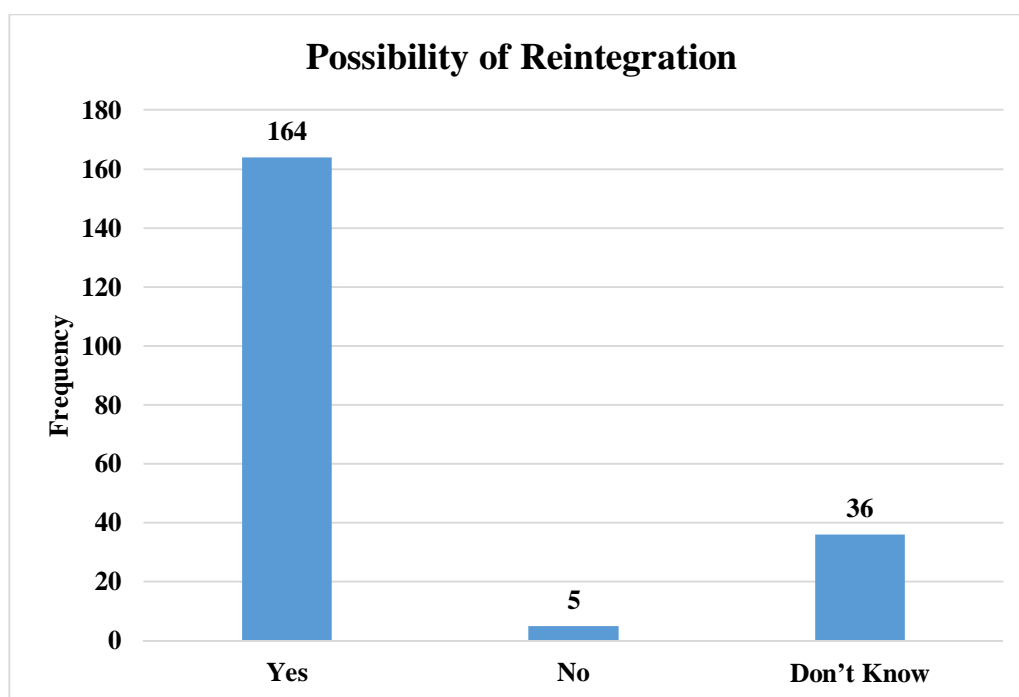
Table 47 - Statement showing the year-wise Physical & Financial Achievements of Rehabilitation of Jogins since Inception to 2012 – 2013

Sl. No	Year	Physical	Financial (in Lakhs)
1.	1995 – 1996	929	77.57
2.	1996 – 1997	1332	128.83
3.	1997 – 1998	618	75.82
4.	1998 – 1999	767	75.5
5.	1999 – 2000	1974	234.17
6.	2000 – 2001	414	43.07
7.	2001 – 2002	453	91.19
8.	2002 – 2003	1919	356.2
9.	2003 – 2004	219	43.8
10.	2004 – 2005	0	0
11.	2005 – 2006	76	7.6
12.	2006 – 2007	134	26.8
13.	2007 – 2008	0	0
14.	2008 – 2009	0	0
15.	2009 – 2010	0	0
16.	2010 – 2011	1	1
17.	2011 – 2012	0	0
18.	2012 – 2013	16	2.4
Total		8852	1163.95

On paper there are many rehabilitation programs for the devadasi's economic and education empowerment. But in reality the implementation of these programs is a distant mirage in States where devadasi system is prevalent. Hence it is suggested to implement alternative mechanism to monitor the implementation of the government schemes for rehabilitation of devadasis.

4.9.11. Reintegration of Devadasis into Family

Chart 22 – Possibility of Reintegration



This is a graphical representation whether reintegration is possible or not. As per 80.0% of respondents opinion, reintegration of devadasi women is possible but 2.4% of respondents have an opinion against this. 17.6% of the respondents are not aware of the reintegration of devadasis women from their tradition.

4.9.12. Need to Reintegrate Devadasis with their Family

Table 48 - Reintegration of Devadasis with Family

Reintegration of Devadasis with Family		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Reintegration with family and society is safer for the victims in all respects	101	19.70
Proper reintegration brings happiness to victims	60	11.70
Completely abolish the practice of dedicating girls to temples as devadasis	65	12.70
Overall development is possible through reintegration	53	10.40
To remove isolation from the society	59	11.50
Look into the family conditions and reintegrate otherwise there will be a high chances of re-trafficking	35	6.80
Reintegration is one of the important aspects for mainstreaming	55	10.70
In the long run, they need family support for their own safety	84	16.40
Total	512	100

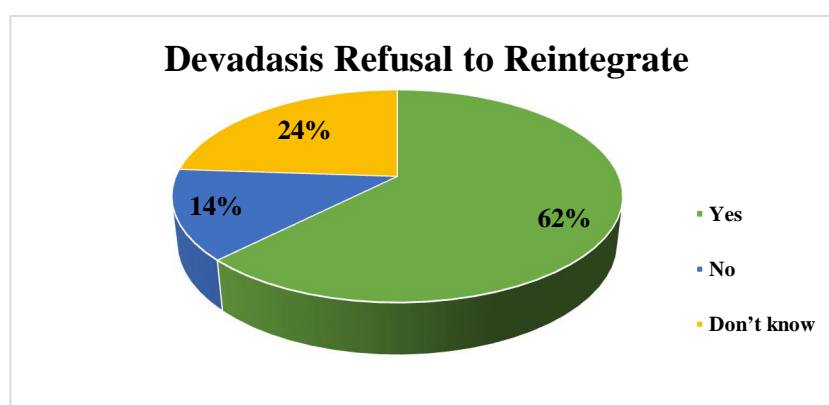
The table above shows evidence of the need for devadasis to reintegrate with their families. 19.7% of respondents opine that devadasis should reintegrate with their families for their safety. 16.4% of them said for a secured future life they need family support. 11.5% of them told that reintegration with family helps them to avoid isolation from society. 11.7% of them have opinion that reintegration brings happiness to the victims. 12.7% argue for the complete abolition of the practice of devadasi tradition. 6.8% of respondents are of the opinion that reintegration should be made only after the enquiry about the family conditions or else there may be chance of trafficking them again.

The integration of *devadasis* into the community is a complex social and cultural issue. Therefore, community participation is essential as the devadasi system is deeply embedded in the culture of the community. Simultaneous efforts will have to be implemented to build confidence, self-esteem, and economic status among initiated devadasi girls. It is essential to adopt a psychosocial frame work to provide comprehensive tools to design the program to reintegrate them into the mainstream. The psychosocial framework defines psychosocial wellbeing in three main areas of Human capacity, Social ecology, and Culture and values. Most of the existing problems toward eliminating the *devadasi* system can effectively be tackled by a balanced approach of each core area of the framework through community participation.

Beyond this model, steps need to be taken to address economic and physical barriers (access to primary healthcare services), Community participation to prevent future occurrences of *devadasi* ceremonies. Implementation of a comprehensive package is essential to enable the devadasi girls and women to cope with the psychosocial issues, physical health issues, and economic issues in their lives. It is vital that a smooth transition mechanism be implemented to switch these deprived women from the traditional system of dedication to deities into existing social system through community participation.

4.9.13. Refusal to Reintegrate into Family

Chart 23 – Devadasis Refusal to Reintegrate



Above diagram explains the refusal of devadasis to get reintegrated. 62% of respondents were of the opinion that devadasis were not ready to reintegrate and 14% of respondents told that devadasis refuse to reintegrate. Social stigma, isolation and discrimination from society make them reject the option of reintegration. 24% of respondents were not aware of any of reintegration programs for devadasis.

Table 49 - Reasons for Refusal to Reintegrate

Reasons for Refusal to Reintegrate		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Refusal from the family	28	5.20
Social Stigma	84	15.70
Family hatred towards the devadasis	9	1.70
Devadasis hatred towards the family	10	1.90
Feeling comfortable in sex work	88	16.40
To provide financial support to family	89	16.60
Lack of legal support	15	2.80
Getting trapped by sex traffickers	17	3.20
Luxurious life	65	12.10
Dedicated themselves to temples	81	15.10
Lack of awareness	50	9.30
Total	536	100

Table above lists out the main reasons behind devadasis refusal towards reintegration. According to 16.4% of selected respondents their refusal is because they are comfortable in sex work and 16.6% of other respondents said that they want to provide financial support to the family. 15.1% of them told that the reason for refusal is that they were dedicated to temple as devadasis. Even if they come out of that tradition, the stigma attached to them will not change. Society will consider them as prostitutes. Sometimes even family lives on her money but they are not ready to take their daughter back. 9.3% of them said lack of awareness and 2.8% of others told lack of legal support make themselves with in their own community.

It is the family who dedicates them as devadasis for many reasons. As observed in the field, it is not good to reintegrate in to their family. A devadasi from Turbe red light area says that *“she was dedicated by her father when she was very young, she worked in brothel and she got sister her married and sent money to the family all the times. Now, I have become old so I don’t earn money and no one in the family is ready to take care of me. They all enjoyed my money but when I am in need of care, no one supports me. Even they don’t like me coming to their homes because I am a sex worker. I am totally fed up with this life, enough of everything. Let this bad system stop with our generation and I don’t want other girl to fall into this system and spoil their life like us”* At last with tears in her eyes, she hugged one of the girls from our research team and said I don’t have anyone else for me, even if I die no one comes for our funeral. Please come often to see us and speak to us.

4.9.14. Risk Factor for Relapsing into Devadasi System

Table 50 - Relapse into Devadasi System

Relapse into Devadasi system		
Responses	Frequency	Percent
Gender	15	2.80
Lack of access to the resources	88	16.40
Low economic status	98	18.30
Social isolation	121	22.60
Low class (Caste)	68	12.70
Low level of education	75	14.00
Financial Impairment	31	5.80
Substance abuse	8	1.50
Previous history of devadasis in the family	10	1.90
Lack of respect in the family	18	3.40
Lack of motivation to lose the status of Nithyasumangali	4	0.70
Total	536	100

This table lists out the factors that lead to relapse in to devadasi system. 22.6% said that social isolation is the main factor which contributes to the relapse into system. People in society are not ready to accept the rescued and rehabilitated devadasis. This forces devadasi women to go back to the same way of life. 18.3% of respondents opine that low economic status plays an important role. If they want to come out of the old way of life, they need some other source of income to move on with their life and thereby have a stable economic status. Here we can see the failure of rehabilitation and vocational training and this leads them to their old life. 16.4% of them argue that lack of access to the resources and low level of education (14.0%) make them ineligible for any good job. 3.4% of them explains that lack of respect and care in the family lead them to their old life. Previous history of devadasi in the family (1.9%) and status of Nithyasumangali, a status awarded during their dedication also have impact on them (7%).

The main problem in rehabilitation is the social stigma. The society is not ready to accept devadasis. An advocate from Miraj says that “no one is ready to give jobs for devadasis even if I give jobs in my home I will be criticized and branded by others so like me many of them are afraid of giving jobs to devadasis”.

4.9.15. Suggestion for Effective Reintegration

Table 51 - Suggestion for Effective Reintegration

Suggestion for Effective Reintegration		
Responses	Frequency	Percent
Securing good job	134	19.60
Facilitating business start ups	136	19.90
Arranging Marriage	89	13.00
Encouraging them to lead an independent life in society	94	13.70
Constructing House	117	17.10
Imparting vocational training	114	16.70
Total	684	100

Table here identifies the suggestions given by respondents during data collection for the effective reintegration of devadasis. In respondent's opinion securing a good job (19.6%) and facilitating business startups (19.9%) are valuable suggestions put forward by them. Imparting vocational training (16.7%) is another suggestion through which they can be settled in their life. Other suggestions are constructing houses (17.1%) arranging marriage (13.0%) and encouraging them to lead an independent life in society (13.7%).

The stigma attached to the devadasis identity cannot be removed through the rehabilitation program. The village communities are not ready to accept the ex-devadasi families. In most of the villages, the Devadasis through the support of the local NGOs organise themselves to form cooperatives. Through this, they have started income generating activities. Many strong ex-devadasis are fighting against the devadasi practice. Most of them have become human rights activists. Very few of them are able to get married legally. Almost all of the ex-Devadasis have decided that they shall not follow this practice. They want their children especially girls to get good education or vocational training to live a much better life.

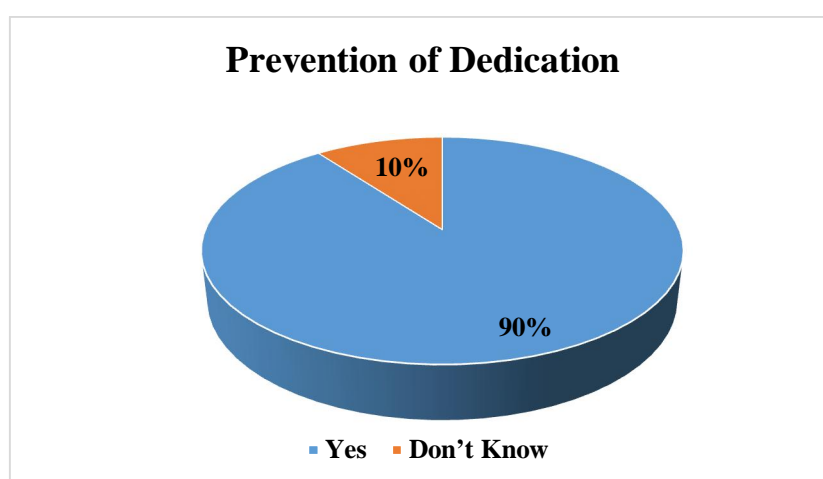
There are some attempts made by stakeholders to reintegrate devadasis into the mainstream community. There is a strong network of Self Help Groups (SHG) of women across the districts of Karnataka state. The NGOs initiate networking exercises with local SHGs, collaborating with community based organisations and initiating advocacy and facilitating the participation of families and key community members in an attempt to merge devadasis into regular community life. It has begun with a dialogue with temple priests and other key religious heads, to organize social purification rituals, and encourage the community to participate in such ceremonies. It is expected that the involvement of the community is likely to reduce the social stigma.

As observed in the field, the main issue is the economic problem that brings them as devadasis. In some States, the government provide some assistance but that doesn't meet the actual need of the devadasis. At present what the devadasi needs is the monetary benefits by which they can lead a happy life. Rather than encouraging them in sex work, there should be alternative opportunity for income so that they won't go back to sex work.

4.10. Prevention

4.10.1.Prevention of Dedication of Women to Temples

Chart 24 – Prevention of Dedication



This is a diagrammatical explanation of the opinion of respondents whether the system of dedication is preventable 90% of them responded in a positive manner that practice of dedicating girls as devadasis in temple is completely preventable 10% of the respondents were not sure whether the total eradication of the system is possible.

In spite of the positive opinion of stakeholders on prevention, dedications still happen. The reason behind is that the age old practice is deep rooted in society and changing the minds of the people overnight through

legislations is not possible. The other common reasons for dedication are gender, lower economic status, lower social status, lower caste, lower level of education, hereditary practice of dedication of girls in the family and the reluctance of losing the status of 'nithyasumangali'. If all the above mentioned causes are addressed properly, then there are chances for reduction of number of dedications in temples.

Table 52 - Ways to Prevent Dedication

Ways to Prevent Dedication		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Providing counselling to educate the women	91	6.10
Through awareness we can do a lot in prevention	44	3.00
If the sex buyers become conscious about the issue	7	0.50
If the women are vulnerable, they can get support from the NGOs	15	1.00
Media literacy	93	6.30
They can build their capacity	56	3.80
Educate them properly	135	9.10
If the society removes its masks and think openly, prevention is possible	44	3.00
Eradicating superstitious belief	146	9.80
Awareness building among priests	124	8.40
Awareness building among family	128	8.60
Making society understand this social evil	47	3.20
If quality intervention is provided	25	1.70
Framing vigilant committees in village to monitor	31	2.10
Providing basic amenities	132	8.90
Identifying high risk groups and provide counselling	111	7.50
Organizing self-help group	120	8.10
Prevent children of devadasi from entering the profession	117	7.90
Ensuring Jobs to them and their children	14	0.90
Devadasis group to create awareness	5	0.30
Total	1485	100

Table shows the ways to prevent dedication. There are different ways to prevent the dedication. Eradication of superstitious beliefs (9.8%) and giving proper education (9.1%) are the main ways to liberate them. According to the respondents, awareness building among family (8.6%) and temple priest (8.4%) will make a great impact on dedication. Most of the parents dedicate their female child as devadasi to support their families financially; if they are economically stable they can earn and support family. Next important thing according to 7.9% respondents is the prevention of devadasis children from entering in to the same profession. 2.1% of them argue that authority should frame up a Vigilance Committee in order to avoid further dedications.

There are several NGOs who are active in the fight against the *devadasi* system. They have mainly been working towards increasing the awareness of the *devadasis* and the local villages on the health consequences of this system, like the spread of HIV and other venereal diseases. Although these initiatives are extremely important to prevent the spread of diseases and to improve *devadasis*' health, it must be stressed that they are not sufficient and should be integrated with other measures, necessary to reduce the negative social impact of the *devadasi* tradition and to prevent the dedication of new *devadasis* in the future.

In Karnataka, only in Suvadatti Yellamma temple, there are police personnel during the Jatra to make sure there is no dedication. This is not the case not in other temples in Karnataka. The government of Karnataka sent a notice to temple authorities of all the temples not to encourage dedication and also to give intelligence to the enforcement agency. They have also appointed devadasi who are paid honorarium of Rs.1000 very month to collect intelligence and to act as vigilance committee. Maharashtra has no such prevention activity. According to the official statistics of Tamil Nadu currently there is no devadasi system prevailing. But the study found that

there are sparse number of Mathamas who still continue the practice. However, the actual ritual of dedicating girls into the temple is not in practice.

As observed in the field, there are many stakeholders who work for devadasis. But still the dedication goes on. So it will be great if we train some devadasis to work as informers. They know who conducts the ceremony and the ways followed by the people to conduct dedication ceremony, where these ceremonies take place and who are all working for this. So it will be easy for the enforcement agency to collect intelligence and prosecute the offenders. Moreover, they are devadasis so they know the actual need of the devadasis so it will be helpful if the policy makers frame policies according to the needs of the devadasis. A similar method is followed by the Karnataka Devadasi Rehabilitation Centre but it is not much effective. Hence this kind of system should be followed in all other states as well.

4.10.2. Who is Responsible for the Prevention?

Table 53 – Officials Responsible for Prevention

Officials Responsible for Prevention					
Officials Responsible for Prevention	Karnataka	Maharashtra	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Total Percent
Devadasi Dedication Prevention Officer	19	-		1	74.10
Revenue Officer	-	-	1	-	3.70
Social Welfare Officers	-	1	1	-	7.40
Collector	-	1	1	-	7.40
Devadasi Project Implementation Officer	2	-	-	-	7.40

The above table shows state wise distribution of officials who are responsible for preventing the dedication. As shown in table, 74.1% of them said that Devadasi Dedication Prevention Officer is responsible for the prevention. 7.4% of them said Social Welfare Officers, collector and Devadasi Project Implementation Officer were responsible. 3.7% of them said Revenue Officer should take action regarding prevention.

In Karnataka, Devadasis Rehabilitation Centre has been established in eight districts under Karnataka State Women's Corporation, and each has a Superintendent who is responsible for prevention and implementation of schemes related to devadasis. The Superintendent has Project Coordinator/Field Worker to assist him in the prevention or implementation. One of those field coordinators state that *"We are given Rs.1000 per month as travel allowance to visit field and this are not enough for the visits to the field. Furthermore we are not permanent employees so we can't take strict actions in prevention, we don't know whether the office will support us when we take any action."*

4.10.3. Programmes to Combat Dedication

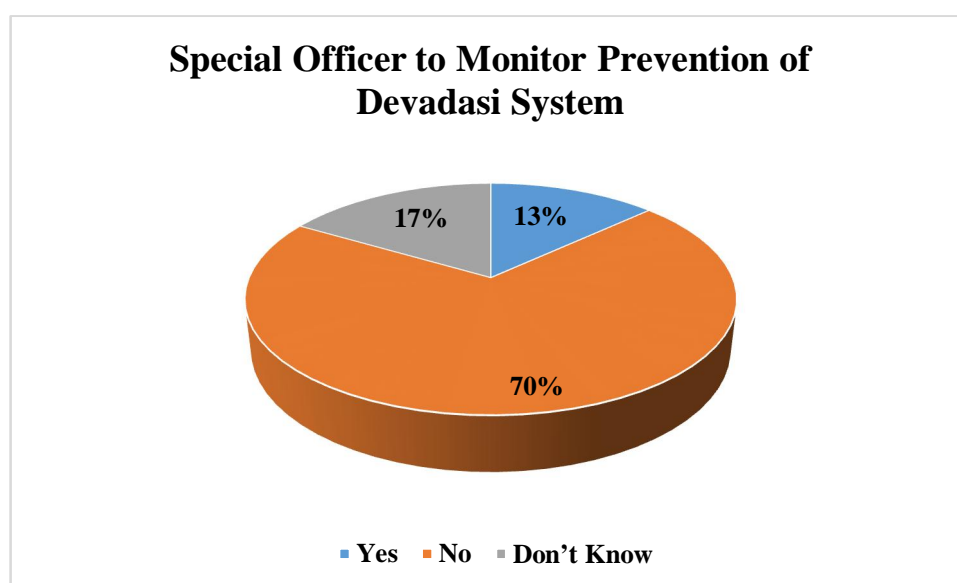
Table 54 - Programmes to Combat Dedication

Programmes to Combat Dedication		
Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Awareness programs	176	29.10
Street play / Cultural activities	112	18.50
Seminars/Workshop	42	6.90
Meeting with SHGs	49	8.10
Documentary movies	113	18.70
Conducting group discussion	36	6.00
Lecturing	33	5.50
Working/creating programs with local police	38	6.30
Exposure tour	4	0.70
Police Out Reach Programs	2	0.30
Total	605	100

Table shows the programs to combat dedication. 29.1% respondents are of the opinion that awareness programs can have a great influence in combating dedication. Documentary movies (18.7%), cultural activities and street plays (18.5%) can help to widen the awareness. Meeting with self-help groups was a suggestion put forward by 8.1% of respondents, since SHG authority can reach devadasis in an easy manner. Conducting group discussions (6.0%), seminars/workshops (6.9%) were also good to create awareness among people.

4.10.4. Who Tries the Case?

Chart 25 – Special Officer to Monitor Prevention of Devadasi System



The above diagram shows the stakeholder's response that there should be a Special Officer designated for prevention of Devadasi system. 70% of the respondents says "No". Only 13% of the respondents say "yes" and 17% of them say they don't know about it. Majority of the respondents state that there is no officer assigned for prevention of dedication while other 13% said that there is a special officer for prevention of dedication.

4.11. Policy Recommendations

Table 55 - Policy Recommendations

Policy Recommendations		
Responses	Frequency	Total Percent
Increase the pension amount	32	21.50
Preference in govt.jobs	31	20.80
Free education till they Study	33	22.10
Increase the self-help groups and support them	3	2.00
Rehabilitation should meet the need of the devadasi	9	6.00
Electrical and Electronic Engineering training	5	3.40
Proper Mechanism to Identify	15	10.10
Remove the age limit for pension	2	1.30
Free hostels without examination	9	6.00
Advertisement in public places	1	0.70
There should be a toll free number for devadasi to get assistance	1	0.70
Special loans or devadasis	5	3.40
Housing schemes	3	2.00
Total	149	100

The above table shows the policy recommendations by the stakeholders. 32% of the respondents say that pension scheme should be increased. 20.8% of the respondents suggest preference for devadasi children in government jobs. 22.1% of the respondents suggest free education for the children of devadasis till they complete their education. 10.1% of the respondents suggest having a proper mechanism to identify the devadasis.

Very few respondents suggest other policy recommendation and those are less than 10%.

During the field work, there were three recommendations that often came from the stakeholders. Most of stake holders suggested that

1. Pension amount of devadasis should be increased and age limit for pension should be reduced.
2. Job assurance/preference in government jobd for the children of devadasis.
3. There should be free education and free hostels for devadasi children till they study

A doctor from Karnataka who is working with devadasis for a long time says that “*the monetary benefit should be less and focus should be on the education and educational kits such as notebooks, books, pen and pencils and other educational aids*”. He further said that “*we can invest anything on education because it won’t go waste.*”

Findings

5. FINDINGS

5.1. Perception of Stakeholders on the Prevalence of Devadasi system in the districts of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

- In Karnataka, the prevalence of Devadasi system is in districts such as Bijapur, Bagalkot, Belgaum, Bellary, Koppal, Gulbarga, Shimoga, Raichur, Haveri, Gadag, Dharwad, Bidar and Davanagere.
- In Maharashtra, the prevalence of Devadasi system is in districts such as Sangli, Solapur, Kolhapur, Pune, Mumbai, Satara, Sindhudurg, Latur, Usmanabad, Nanded and Jejuri.
- In Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the prevalence of Devadasi system is in districts such as Chittoor, Nellore, Mahaboobnagar, Ranga Reddy, Ananthapur, Prakasam, Kurnool, Medak, Nizamabad, Warangal, Karimnagar, Adilabad, Visakhapatnam, Hyderabad and Nalgonda.
- In Tamil Nadu, the prevalence of Devadasi system is in the districts such as Tanjavur, Pudukottai, Tiruvallur, Kanchipuram, Vellore, Villupuram, Dharmapuri, Nagapattinam and Tiruvarur.

5.2. Names of Devadasis in each State

- In Karnataka, devadasis are referred as Basavi, Jogati, Kalawant, Muttukatti Kondavlu, Sule, Jogamma, Yellamma and Mathamma.
- In Maharashtra, devadasis are referred as Aradhini, Bhagtan, Bhavin, Devali, Kalavanti, Matangi, Murali, Naikine, Devika, Jogti, Jogini and Yellamma.

- In Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, devadasis are referred as Basavi, Bhogam Patara, Bogam, Devali, Dogam, Jogini, Kalavanthala, Mathamma, Nartaki, Yellamma, Renuka and Mathangi.
- In Tamil Nadu, devadasis are referred as Devaradiyar, Empuremanadiyar, Manikattar and Mathamma.

5.3. Identification of Devadasi Women

- Respondents say that majority of (72.1%) identification takes place through physical appearance.
- Devadasi women are identified through beads and Jat. The identification of devadasis includes the following: they carry a basket and shoulder bag with bandra (a yellow powder used for make religious mark on the forehead).
- Devadasis in Karnataka use a unique drum, known variously as the *chondke*, *chawandga* or *chandike*, which is handled only by devadasis.
- They are also identified by their unique names Jogini, Basavi, Mathamma etc.,

5.4. Dedication

5.4.1. Religion and Community that have Prevalence of Dedication

- Dedication is more prevalent in Hindu religion (89.9%)
- Girls from the SC community (59%) are more vulnerable to be dedicated as devadasis.

- The practice is prevalent among sub castes such as Madiga, Holiya, Sambar, Madar, Dasar, Valmiki, Chelvade, Kamble, Maithre, Magar, Matang, Mang, Mala, Isai Vellalar and Arundathiyar.

5.4.2. Dedication Ceremony

- All dedication ceremonies are conducted when the concerned girl is at a tender age (pre-puberty)
- In Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the dedication is largely to the female Goddess Mathamma and sometimes to Hanuman.
- In Karnataka, the dedication is mostly to the female Goddess Yellamma. whereas in Maharashtra, the dedication is to both male and female deities.
- In Tamil Nadu, the dedication is to the female Goddess Mathamma.

5.4.3. Decision Making for Dedication

- According to half (56.5%) of the sample population, decision of dedicating girls to temples are taken by parents.
- All dedications are not involuntary. Parents or guardians and indirectly the landlords are responsible for their dedication.
- According to 47 % of the respondents, dedication of girls as devadasis is a forced act.

5.5. Contributing Factors

Significant contributing factor in dedication of girls to temple is poverty. Superstitious and religious beliefs, notions of wrath and curse of the

deity, hereditary practice, dependence on landlords, illiteracy, ignorance, lure of easy money, influence of old devadasis and compulsion of parents/guardians are the major contributing factors of Devadasi system.

5.6. Problems of Devadasis

5.6.1. Devadasis getting Married

- As per respondent's (64%) opinion, majority of devadasis get married.

5.6.2. Till what age do Devadasis Practice Prostitution?

- 53% of the respondents have opined that women dedicated as devadasis practice prostitution till the age of 40.

5.6.3. Source of income for devadasi

- According to 119 respondents, devadasis go for begging as they cannot depend on any other source of income.
- Majority of the devadasis, that is 64% of them, work in brothels or commercial sex industry

5.6.4. Various Forms of Abuses

- 67.8% of the respondents remark that devadasis are subjected to many forms of abuses.
- Verbal abuse (452) and socio- cultural abuse (495) are higher in number compared to other abuses. Sexual abuse (395) comes next to socio-cultural abuse.

5.7. Children of Devadasis

5.7.1. Status of devadasi children

- Most of the (29.5 %.) children of devadasis go to regular schools.
- 23.7% of respondents agree that branding them as devadasi children is the main problem in the perception of the public.
- According to 48% of respondents, free education is available to the children of devadasis and 52 % of them indicate that there is hostel facility for the children of devadasis.

5.7.2. Policy and Programmes for the Children of Devadasis

- As per the respondents opinion, 69.3% of them told that, there are no policies, programmes and schemes for devadasi children.
- Only in the state of Karnataka there are various schemes for the benefit of children of devadasis.

5.7.3. Inheritance of Property by Children

- Majority (82%) of the respondents told that the children of devadasis were not able to inherit the property of their father and also they are not allowed to use their father's name legally.

5.8. Legislations

5.8.1. Central Legislations

- Majority of the respondents are not aware of the Central legislations.

5.8.2. State Legislations

- In Karnataka, 47 respondents know about Devadasi Samarpan Nishedhan Act 1982, 49 are aware of Karnataka Devadasi Prohibition of Dedication Act 1982 and also Devadasi Prohibition of Dedication Act 1992.
- In Maharashtra, 47 respondents are aware of Bombay Devadasi Protection Act.
- In Andhra Pradesh, 43 respondents are aware of Andhra Pradesh Devadasis (Prohibiting Dedication) Act 1989.
- In Tamil Nadu, 28 respondents are aware of Madras Devadasi (Prevention of Dedication) Act 1947.

5.8.3. Reasons for Poor Implementation

- Lack of awareness is said to be the reason for Poor/Non-Implementation of Legislations.
- The police department does not seem to take these Acts seriously.

5.8.4. Suggestion for Improvement in Legislations

- Stakeholders and devadasis are not aware of legislations on Devadasi Prohibition Acts in various States. Stakeholders suggested that administrative authorities need to be practical while framing the policies and involve the people working at grass root level while framing the policies. This will improve the proper implementation of legislations.

5.9. Policies and Programmes

5.9.1. Intervention from Government

- Majority (30.2%) of the respondents said that there is a mechanism is needed to ensure that the benefits reach the beneficiaries.
- Periodical meetings of the government with the stakeholders will help in resolving the issues of devadasis.

5.9.2. Schemes for Devadasis

- Compared to other states, Karnataka has lots of policies, programmes, and schemes. Among those schemes, monthly pension scheme is the one which 25.9% of respondents are aware. 19% of the respondents are aware of housing schemes and 16.6 % of respondents are aware of income generating activities.
- In Maharashtra, there are three schemes for devadasi women. According to per the respondents Devadasi Pension Schemes are well known among the three.
- Andhra Pradesh has housing and land schemes for devadasi women 4.4% respondents are aware of the scheme.
- 62% of the stakeholders says that devadasis are aware about Legislations/ Policies, Programmes, Schemes and 24.4% say the devadasis are not aware of the Legislations/ Policies, Programmes, Schemes.
- Lack of awareness is said to be the reason for Poor/Non-Implementation of schemes

- 30.2% of the respondents suggest that government should focus on the economic and socially sustainable support and 29% of the respondents suggest awareness programmes for devadasis and other stakeholders.

5.10. Rescue, Rehabilitation and Reintegration

5.10.1. Rescue

- Majority (27.9%) of the respondents said that the rescue has taken place from devadasi's family itself.
- 23% of the respondents said that the rescue of devadasis happened in temples.
- In Maharashtra, six of the respondents said that rescue has taken place from brothels and red-light area.
- 44.3% respondents said that NGOs assisted in rescuing the devadasis.
- According to 57 respondents, the immediate need for the devadasis after rescue is safe and secure place to stay and protection from offenders.
- Majority of (29%) respondents found that providing psychological support for devadasis immediately after rescue is a big challenge for the stakeholders.

5.10.2. Rehabilitation

- The stakeholders said that NGOs provide rehabilitation support for the devadasis when compared to other stakeholders.

- 15.5% of respondents are of the view that the main cause for the failure of rehabilitation is stigma attached to the women from Devadasi tradition.
- 12.8% of the respondents are of the opinion that the lack of societal acceptance and in few cases ostracisation of the devadasis from the main stream society is the common cause for the failure of devadasi's rehabilitation.
- 34% respondents have under taken follow up on rehabilitated devadasis.
- Majority of respondents personally make home visits to follow up rehabilitated devadasis.

5.10.3.Reintegration

- Majority (80.0%) of the respondents opined that the reintegration of devadasi women into the family is possible.
- 19.7% of respondents are of the opinion that devadasis should reintegrate with their family for their safety and wellbeing.
- 62% of respondents are of the opinion that devadasis are not ready to reintegrate with their family and society.
- According to 16.4% of selected respondents their refusal is because they are comfortable in sex work and 16.6% of other respondents said they want to provide financial support to their family.
- Majority of respondents (22.6%) said that social isolation is the main factor which contributes to the relapse into system.

- In respondents opinion securing a good job (19.6%) and facilitating business startups (19.9%) are valuable methods for effective reintegration.

5.11. Prevention

5.11.1.Prevention of Dedication of Women to Temple

- 90% of the respondents affirm that practice of dedicating girls as devadasis to temple is completely preventable.
- Eradication of superstitious beliefs (9.8%) and giving proper education (9.1%) are the important methods to liberate devadasis.
- According to respondents, awareness building among family (8.6%) and temple priests (8.4%) will make a great impact on dedication. Most of the parents dedicate their female children as devadasis to support their families financially.
- 74.1% of them said Devadasi Dedication Prevention Officer is responsible for the prevention.7.4% of them said Social Welfare Officers, Collector and Devadasi Project Implementation Officer were responsible.3.7% of them said Revenue Officer should take action regarding prevention.

5.11.2.Programmes to Combat Dedication

- Respondents are of the opinion that conducting awareness programmes such as street plays/cultural activities, documentary movies can havr a great influence in combating dedication.
- According to the respondents there should be a mechanism to check whether benefits are reaching the deserving hands (30.2%).

Conclusion & Recommendations

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1. Perception of stakeholders on the prevalence of devadasi system in the districts of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

- As there is no official statistics available on the exact number of devadasis, it is suggested to identify the prevalence of various forms of devadasi system in India.
- The present study has identified some of the devadasi prone areas in various districts of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. It is recommended to strengthen and implement the already existing legislations, policies and programmes for prevention of dedication and rehabilitation of devadasis

6.2. Names of devadasis in each state

- As per the International Instruments and the Indian Constitution, it is the right of an Individual to have a name on his/her own.
- The common names given to devadasi women like Basavis, Jogini, Mathamma etc., is a violation of the basic Human Rights. Hence it is suggested to educate these women to recognize the importance of their self-identity by owning individual names.

6.3. Identification of devadasi women

- Anti-abolishing campaigns have to be conducted to de-identify some of the customary practices of wearing thali, beads,

carrying basket and denouncing the common name like Basavis, Jogini, and Mathamma etc., in the devadasi prone districts of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

6.4. Dedication

6.4.1. Religion and community that has prevalence of dedication

- Dedication is more prevalent in Hindu religion and especially among SC community.
- The economic vulnerability of these lower caste devadasi women makes them prone to various forms of exploitation.
- Values and attitudes held by male members of the society who are responsible for continuation of exploitative customs related with women in general and Scheduled Caste women in particular should be studied.
- Social, economic and political awareness about their empowerment will strengthen their status in society and to understand the vulnerability of their position to be exploited by the system.

6.4.2. Dedication ceremony

- All dedication ceremonies are conducted when the concerned girl is at a tender age (pre-puberty). Awareness campaigns need to be conducted targeting young girls, especially educating the girl children of devadasis and their parents.
- Most of the dedications happen in the temples of Yellamma, Mathamma etc. The priests, temple trustees, old devadasis and the local affluent landlords need to be educated by the stakeholders of devadasi cult on the ill effects of the system.

- The temple priests and village level Government officials should be made responsible for all the new initiations of girls as devadasis. They have to immediately report such events to the police.
- Dedication ceremonies are conducted in different forms to avoid police action. That is, the girl is not present at the temple but the beads are kept there and tied at home. Stakeholders have to be trained to be vigilant and perceptive.

6.5. Contributing factors

6.5.1. Contributing factors of dedication

- The study found that poverty is the lead cause for the continuance of this evil system. Effective poverty eradication schemes will help in abolition of various social evils prevailing in our society, including devadasi system. The government should take initiative to alleviate poverty as the main focus in the macro-level development programmes.
- Illiteracy is another contributing factor for the continuance of devadasi system. The backwardness of women is attributed to their lack of education. It is a deep-rooted belief for centuries that women should not be educated. People fear that it would bring misfortune to families whose girls are educated. The popular belief is that female education is meant only for devadasi who have to learn the fine arts and literature and perform dances in temples on public occasions.
- Education is a vehicle through which the problem can be solved. It is important to recognize the role of devadasi women as change agents and to promote education of the girl child, and

the social and economic empowerment of women leading to their full participation in the economic life and in decision making among devadasis.

- Central government has a scheme “Beti Padhao, Beti Bachao” to focus on education of girls. There should be a special provision in this scheme for girls of devadasis.
- The religious and superstitious beliefs are deep rooted in the Indian mindset. Eradication of these beliefs and evil practices cannot be uprooted overnight from society, even though there are strong legislations to curb the problem in India. Hence there is an urgent need for widespread coordinated social reform movement covering spectrum of society to eliminate these kinds of social evils.

6.6. Problems of devadasis

6.6.1. Devadasis getting married

- The study found that considerable number of devadasis get married and lead a normal life. Some of the state governments provide financial assistance to devadasis. But it is cumbersome for devadasis to avail the benefit. Hence the procedure for availing the benefits for marriage should be simplified. The government should give them incentives to lead a good life and at least one of the partners should be given employment so that they can lead a happy and dignified life. Otherwise, the marriage may prove futile, driving them back to the old pattern of life.
- Solemnization of marriage through investigation should be conducted by a competent officer and registration of marriage

should be made mandatory. After marriage a periodical follow up should be conducted. As far as possible, such marriages should be conducted with the assistance of local voluntary organizations.

6.6.2. Source of income for devadasi

- The study found that the main sources of income for devadasis are begging and indulging in prostitution. It will be a futile effort by the government if they do not provide alternative source of income generating programmes for their sustainable livelihood.
- During the process of rehabilitation, a base line survey needs to be conducted to find out the skills of the devadasis. Based on the skills, vocational training programmes need to be imparted which can facilitate employment opportunities for their self - sufficient living.
- Government should take initiative to provide loans through banks and cooperative societies to start small scale business. Self Help Groups consisting devadasis need to be established in devadasi dominated districts.

6.6.3. Various forms of abuses

- The study found that devadasis are subjected to various forms of abuse such as verbal, physical, sexual, socio-cultural and financial. In spite of strong legal interventions by the government, there are incidents of exploitation of devadasis by various sections of the society, including their own parents and family members. It is suggested to strengthen the existing

mechanism to handle the issues and challenges of devadasis. Stringent punishments should be awarded to the perpetrators of the devadasi system and device a strategically effective mechanism to prevent exploitation of devadasis.

6.7. Children of devadasis

6.7.1. Status of devadasi children

- Even though the study found that considerable number of devadasi children attend regular schools, there are instances of school dropouts at tender age among children of devadasis. The reason behind such dropouts are the attitude of the school authorities and the name calling of these children as ‘Son/Daughter of bitch’ by the fellow classmates of these children. Most of the children of devadasis are not aware of their father’s name which prevents them from enrolling in regular schools. The stigma attached to these children prevents them from continuing their education. Hence school authorities need to be educated to not ask for such details and not divulge them to others.
- In spite of free education schemes given by State governments up to primary level, Devadasi children find it difficult to continue their education. States, like Karnataka, have special policies and programmes for devadasi children like exclusive residential schools, hostel facilities and free supply of books and uniforms. It is suggested that these kinds of policies and programmes for devadasi children be extended in other states also. The study found that majority of stakeholders are not aware of these policies and programmes for children of

devadasis. Hence, Awareness Raising Workshops need to be conducted.

- As far as the exclusive residential schools for devadasi children are concerned, there are arguments and counter-arguments relating to the social inclusion policy of Government of India. The government is promoting social inclusive programmes for different kinds of normal and special children, and there is a widespread campaign against secluding a particular sect of children from mainstream stating various reasons. Hence it is arguable whether it is useful to have an exclusive school for devadasi children to continue their education or not.
- Awareness campaigns about the social inclusive policies and programmes of children need to be conducted among Devadasis and various stakeholders of the system.
- It is also suggested to protect all children of devadasis from sexual and other forms of exploitation and take all stringent measures against the perpetrators.

6.8. Legislations

- Stakeholders and devadasis are not aware of Central Legislations on Devadasi Prohibition Acts. It is suggested that while framing the policies, the administrative authorities need to involve people working at grass root level to ensure proper implementation of legislations.
- Action need to be taken to increase the level of awareness among stakeholders on State Legislations for its effective implementation. The Acts should be made known to all the people in general and community leaders in particular, various

people representatives, mandals at district level, and Government Officials at all levels, priests of the temples, law enforcing officials and other social workers of such areas where the practice prevails.

- Legal action within the purview of the Devadasi Prohibition of Dedication Act, should be strictly enforced against priests, women procurers, brothels agents, old devadasis, and prostitutes living in the village, who directly or indirectly support the system with vested interests.
- A Special Officer with an exclusive duty to enforce the Devadasi Prohibition of Dedication Act should be appointed with adequate staff and other infrastructure to coordinate rehabilitative programs by various voluntary organizations.
- It is also suggested to strengthen the legal processes wherever required by way of making amendments in the existing legislations and providing provisions in the legislations for the protection of the victims.

6.9. Policies and programmes

6.9.1. Schemes for devadasis

- The study found that there are schemes such as pension scheme, housing and land scheme, income generating activities for devadasis are given by the governments in various states. But there are no uniform policies, programmes and schemes for the welfare and benefit of devadasis in all these states. Even though some stakeholders are aware of these policies there is also a notion that lack of awareness among the devadasis is the reason for poor implementation of these schemes. Hence it is suggested

that awareness programmes need to be conducted at various level starting from block level to state level. This will enhance the number of beneficiaries availing the existing schemes.

- It is suggested that periodical meeting with local police, NGOs and higher authorities of government services need to be arranged to resolve the issue of devadasi system.
- There is evidence in the study that few welfare schemes are available for devadasis in various states, but there is a need to update the policies and programmes periodically and to enhance the financial assistance in proportion to the present cost of living of the general mainstream society.
- The role of NGOs cannot be ignored in dealing with the total eradication of devadasi system or rehabilitation of existing devadasis. Hence the government should liberally fund NGOs to carry out the rehabilitation measures. The government and the NGOs should work hand in hand for the welfare of devadasis. But they should exercise caution in monitoring the activities of NGOs by the government. There should be a mechanism to monitor and ensure that the benefit reaches the beneficiaries properly.
- It is also found that there is lack of focus on the victimological perspective in the existing legislations, policies, programmes and schemes. The existence of victims of devadasi system cannot be ignored and there should be proper inclusion of provisions relating to the protection of victims. So it is suggested to establish shelter homes for devadasis for the purpose of reformation and rehabilitation.

- It is suggested to conduct a need based survey on the requirements of devadasis. According to the results of the survey, the programmes need to be designed so that they meet the actual needs of devadasis.

6.10. Rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration

6.10.1. Rescue

- The study found that majority of the devadasis are rescued from their own families. Hence sensitizing the family members of the devadasis in the prevalence areas will help in reducing the number of dedication of girls in temples. The study also found that rescues are taking place in temples. Monitoring the activities of the temple priests and the local influential people can curb the problem of dedication in the temples. Brothel houses in red light areas are the major hub for the devadasis indulging in prostitution. Since most of the rescues take place in brothels, the law enforcement agency should keep a vigilant eye on the activities of the brothels.
- It is suggested that there is an immediate need for devadasis after rescue. The government should construct shelter homes or temporary stay homes for the rescued devadasis. In the shelter home there should be assistance in the form of non-formal education, psychological, medical, legal and financial support to be provided for the rescued devadasis.
- As far as the medical support is concerned, the rescued devadasis, with their consent, should be tested for venereal diseases like STD/HIV/AIDS. If they are affected by any of

these diseases the government should provide medical support for the victims.

- If the rescued devadasis require any legal support, the government should provide free legal aid for them.
- Short term vocational training programmes need to be imparted for the inmates of the shelter home.
- Initiatives need to be taken for the protection of devadasis from the offenders and to reintegrate them back to the family should be the main objective of the shelter homes.

6.10.2.Rehabilitation

- Rehabilitation is the process of correcting or treating an individual to lead a normal and law-abiding life. Rehabilitation of devadasis involve changes in the attitude and behavior of devadasis and refrain from indulging in social evils. The success of rehabilitation depends on the coordinated efforts of various stakeholders like government officials, NGOs, law enforcement agencies, judiciary and correctional administrators.
- The present study found that NGOs provide great support in rehabilitating the devadasis.
- However the study also found that there are few causes for the failure of rehabilitation.
- The stigma attached to the devadasis in the mainstream society make them vulnerable to continue the system. There are sparse incidents which prove that some of the devadasis are ostracized from society to lead an isolated life.

- On the one hand the social acceptance of devadasi system encourages the continuation of the system whereas on the other hand the ostracization of devadasis make them vulnerable to various forms of exploitation in society.
- The religious and superstitious belief, objection from religious groups, acceptance by devadasi themselves, fear of religious sanctions are some of the causes deep rooted in society which hinders the process of rehabilitation.
- Sensitizing both the perpetrators who commit the offence and the stakeholders who are the torch-bearers for eradication of devadasi system will help in combating the problem and facilitate the smooth process of rehabilitation.
- It is suggested that there should be a periodical follow up of rehabilitated devadasis by the stakeholders which will prevent the relapse rate of going back to the same profession.
- The Planning Commission, the Department of Women and Child Welfare, the Central Social Welfare Board, National Commission for Women, the National Institute of Social Defence, academic and research institutions and other organisations concerned may be associated with the programme of rehabilitation of devadasis.
- A permanent office should be established in the State capital where the prevalence rate is high to monitor the progress with regard to the rehabilitation of devadasis at various centres.
- It is necessary that rehabilitation and correctional centres be located in rural areas where the practice is prevalent with a high rate. These institutions can be voluntary organisations, and managed by trained social workers. The government should

provide the necessary financial assistance. These centres should be periodically inspected by the Government.

- Devadasi Rehabilitation Centres should further be transformed into small scale industrial units. For this purpose, financial aid from central agencies may be made available. This facilitates the economic viability of rehabilitation centers and development of individual skills of devadasis. This will certainly help them to earn livelihood through respectable and gainful employment.
- Voluntary organizations which are active in correction and rehabilitation of devadasis, should have an exclusive Research Cell, consisting of trained research assistants and social workers., for conducting follow-up studies of those who have been rehabilitated
- There is a long felt need to conduct a systematic survey covering the entire country to ascertain the exact population of devadasis. This will provide a database for future rehabilitation programmes.

6.10.3.Reintegration

- Reintegration of the rehabilitated devadasis into the family is an important phase in the process of making them to lead a normal life in the family. It is always safe and secure to be in the family to avoid unnecessary exploitation from the pimps and other human traffickers for sex work. However there is a need to assess the condition of the family before reintegrating the devadasis, since many of the families are the perpetrators of this evil practice. Some of the devadasis are not ready for reintegration with their families. The reason they state is that

they are not accepted by their own parents and other family members.

- The devadasis who are into the profession of prostitution have lead a luxurious life and they feel comfortable to be in sex work. Their families also financially depends on these devadasis for their livelihood. Leading a socially isolated life will make them fall prey in the hands of human traffickers for the purpose of sex work. Hence it is suggested to sensitize the entire society and make them aware of the positive effects of reintegration of devadasis into the family for their own safety and wellbeing.
- The study has identified some of the risk factors which will make young girls vulnerable for dedication into the temples. The risk factors are gender, lower economic status, lower social status, lower caste, lower level of education, hereditary practice of dedication of girls in the family and the reluctance of losing the status of 'nithyasumangali'. It is suggested that the above identified risk factors are to be taken into consideration while devising mechanism to eradicate this social evil.
- The vocational training imparted in the shelter homes or by the government and NGOs should be framed in accordance with the needs of the society. If the requirements of the society is taken into consideration, then the possibility of effective reintegration by the devadasis into the society is higher and it is also predicted that the rate of relapsing back to system, profession or practice will be reduced considerably.

6.10.4. Programmes to combat dedication

- The respondents are of the opinion that conducting awareness programmes such as street plays / cultural activities, documentary movies will a greatly influence in combating dedication.
- Media, particularly television, can be the most effective channel for raising consciousness among devadasis and the community at large.
- A state-level committee may be formed for the implementation of the programme. It should be chaired by an eminent social worker and it should comprise academicians, officials and non-officials.
- At the district level, a joint committee of officials and non-officials should be formed for the implementation of the programme. It should be headed by a prominent social worker.
- This committee should be autonomous in character.
- Students from colleges and universities must organise camps in the villages of devadasis to educate them and help them in rehabilitation.
- There should be counselling sessions followed by interaction with them in an effort to know what they are good at.
- Frequent anti-dedication campaigns and rallies should be organised wherever the practice is prevalent.
- Government officials and NGOs should be made responsible for stopping the initiations.

- The members belonging to low castes from which women are initiated as devadasis should be educated, through a deliberate propaganda by using all mass media, about the humiliating conditions of devadasis and prostitutes: the AIDS and other venereal diseases from which they are likely to suffer and the way cruel anti-social elements may exploit them.
- Some art forms – Music and Dance traditions – are special heritage of devadasis. Efforts should be taken to identify and preserve them. Devadasis can be employed as trainers/teachers, thus giving them employment and social status.

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Appendix

APPENDIX-A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

I. DEMOGRAPHICS
1. Name of the respondent (Optional)
2. Name of the organization/Institution
3. Designation
4. Age & Gender
5. Educational Qualification a. Illiterate b. Primary c. Elementary d. High school e. Higher secondary f. Degree/Diploma g. PG h. PG & above

II. DEVADASI			
6. What are the different names which refer to devadasis in your State?			
Tamil Nadu	Karnataka	Andhra Pradesh	Maharashtra
Adukkalaip -pendugal	Alankara Dasi	Basavi	Aradhinis
Chennaveedu	Balgada Basavi	Bassanis	Bhagtan
Devaradiayar	Basavis	Bhogam Patara	Bhavin
Empuremanadiyar	Chowri Basavi	Bhogam Vandhis	Devali
Kannigeyar	Devadsis	Bogam	Jagavins
Manikattar	Devarasuli	Devali	Kalavanti
Mathammas	Devasule	Dogam	Matangi
Nithyakalyani	Gudi Basavi	Joginis	Murali
Padiyilar	Jogatis	Kalavanthala	Naikine
Rudra Dasi	Kalawants	Mathamma	Nailis
Taliccherippandugal	Kasabi	Nartaki	Sharnis
	Mathammas	Sani	Tamasha
	Muttukatti Kondavlu	Venkatesinis	Theradiyan
	Nadikola Basavi	Vilasini	Venkatasani
	Nayaka Sani	Yellamma	
	Nityasumangali		

	Paravatis		
	Patradevalu		
	Poti		
	Rajadasi		
	Ranga Sani		
	Rudra Dasi		
	Sule		
	Ura Basavi		

7. In which religion is the dedication of girls as devadasis more prevalent?

a. Hindu b. Muslim c. Christian d. Others specify _____

8. In which Community is the dedication of girls to temple more prevalent?

a. SC b. ST c. OBC d. OC e. Others specify _____

9. In which Caste is the dedication of girls to temple more prevalent and mention the sub caste?

10. Who makes the decision of dedicating the girls to temple?

a. Parents b. Relatives c. Neighbors d. Temple priests e. Old devadasi f. Madams
g. Pimps h. Others specify _____

11. Is dedication of girls to temple a forced act or a traditional ceremony?

12. Who forces dedication of girls to temples?

a. Parents b. Relatives c. Neighbors d. Temple priests e. Old devadasi f. Madams
g. Pimps h. Others specify _____

13. What is the role of devadasis during the village festivals?

a. Singing b. Dancing c. Performing pooja d. Cleaning the temple premises e.
Offering sexual services f. Others specify _____

14. According to your perception, in which of the districts in the following states does the devadasi system prevail?

Andhra Pradesh	Karnataka	Maharastra	Tamil Nadu
Karimnagar	Bijapur	Pune	Coimbatore
Warangal	Bagalkot	Sholapur	Dharampuri
Nizamabad	Davanagere	Kolhapur	Kanchipuram

Karnool	Koppal	Sangli	Tanjore
Hyderabad	Belgaum	Mumbai	Thiruvallur
Medak	Raichur	Latur	Vellore
Ananthapur	Bellary	Us-manabad	Villupuram
Adilabad	Gadag	Satara	
Chittoor	Gulbarga	Sindhudurg	
Rangareddy	Haveri	Nanded	
Nellore	Dharwad	Jejuri	
Nelagonda	Saundatti	Satara	
Srikakulam	Belgam		
Ma-haboobnagar	Koppal		
Prakasam	Shimoga		
Visakhapatanam	Bidar		
East Godavari			
Kadapa			

15. What are the reasons for the prevalence of devadasi system in those districts?

16. Do you think devadasis get married?

a. Yes b. No

17. If yes, how many devadasis have you seen married?

18. Do you know of devadasis working in brothels or commercial sex industry?

a. Yes b. No

19. If yes, how many?

20. Till what age does devadasis offer sexual service?

a. Till 30 b. Till 40 c. Till 50 d. Specify others_____

21. What is the source of income after they become old?

a. Pension scheme b. Begging c. Work as pimps d. Work in temple e. Specify others_____

III. DEDICATION CEREMONY
22. Which period/month/season does the ceremony take place?
23. Where does the ceremony take place?
24. What are the procedures involved in dedicating ceremony?
25. What is the average age of the girl dedicated to the temple?
26. What happens to these girls right after the ceremony?
27. Who is the first person to have sexual relationship with the newly dedicated devadasi?
28. Which are the temples still practicing dedication ceremonies?
29. What is the approximate amount spent for this ceremony?
30. Who are the sponsors of the ceremony?
31. Is there any restriction placed on devadasis after the ceremony?

IV. CONTRIBUTING FACTOR	
32. What are the factors that contribute/facilitate devadasi system?	
a. Poverty b. Unemployment c. Illiteracy d. Caste system e. Hereditary f. To please god for the wellbeing of the family g. Fulfilling the vows taken by the parents h. Religious beliefs i. Superstitious beliefs j. Vested interest of upper caste men to fulfill their sexual needs	k. If a girl develops 'Jat' there is a belief that she should be dedicated to God l. Influence of old devadasis m. Only female child in the family n. Too many girl children o. Due to skin ailments p. Physically handicapped q. To gain merits in their next birth r. To get male child s. To avoid widowhood t. Specify others_____

V. RESCUE
33. How do you identify the devadasi women?
a. Gesture b. Physical appearance (Beads, Jat etc.) c. Names d. Language spoken e. Tattoo or other special marks f. Place of abode g. Specify others_____
34. How do you identify the problems of devadasi women?
a. By local public b. By one self c. Keen observation by the field staff d. By referral (NGOs/GOs) e. Research work f. By media g. Specify others _____
35. From where have the rescues taken place?
a. From brothels b. From red light areas c. While being trafficked d. From their own family e. Neighbors/friends f. Temples and other religious centers g. Domestic labor h. Court referral i. The pavement j. Specify others_____

<p>36. What are the problems you have faced while rescuing?</p> <p>a. Financial b. Political leaders influenced by traffickers c. Pimps / mediators d. Victims themselves</p> <p>e. Political pressure not to work against certain people f. Social stigma g. No Advocate will be ready to fight their case h. Caste i. Police helping the traffickers and not co-operating in carrying out the legal procedures j. Specify others_____</p>
<p>37. Who assisted you while rescuing?</p> <p>a. Staff of the organization b. Police c. Public d. Journalists / Media e. Advocates f. Activists (specify the field) g. Peer network h. Pimps i. Specify others_____</p>
<p>38. What are the immediate needs of devadasis soon after they get rescued?</p> <p>a. Safe and secure shelter b. Education c. Economic support d. Psychological support e. Medical support</p> <p>f. Vocational support g. legal support h. Financial support i. Creating media awareness about the situation</p> <p>j. Reintegration with the family k. Specify others _____</p>
<p>39. What are the challenges you faced immediately after rescue?</p> <p>a. Taking consent from rescued devadasi for medical check up b. Making them psychologically comfortable c. Attending to legal requirements in police station d. Lack of shelter home facility for them e. Economic stability f. Language g. Specify others _____</p>

VI. REHABILITATION
<p>40. Who are all the providers of rehabilitation? a. NGOs b. Government c. Individuals d. Devadasi groups g. Specify others _____</p>
<p>41. After rescue, what is the immediate need for effective rehabilitation? a. A Shelter home b. Assessing the devadasi's Psycho-social need c. Assessing her physical health d. Organizing vocational and skill development training e. Education f. Interim monetary relief g. Specify others _____</p>
<p>42. What is the immediate need of devadasis soon after they opt for rehabilitation? a. Protection from the offenders b. Psychological support c. Legal support d. Medical intervention e. Economic support f. Reintegration g. Specify others _____</p>
<p>43. What is your suggestion for effective reintegration of devadasis into the society? a. Securing good job b. Facilitating business start ups c. Arranging marriage d. Encouraging them to lead an independent life in society e. Constructing house f. Imparting vocational training g. Specify if _____</p>
<p>44. How many devadasis relapse to commercial sex, after the rehabilitation?</p>
<p>45. What are the risk factors for relapsing into devadasi system? a. Gender b. Lack of access to the resources c. Low economic status d. Social isolation e. Low class (Caste) f. Low level of education g. Financial impairment h. Substance abuse i. Previous history of devadasis in the family j. Lack of respect in the family k. Lack of motivation to lose the status of nithyasumangali</p>
<p>46. What are the common causes for failure of rehabilitation? a. Stigma attached to devadasis b. Perception of public towards rehabilitation c. Status of mental health of devadasis d. Un-preparedness of devadasis e. Lack of proper funding to organize program f. Lack of shelter facilities g. Objection from religious group h. Ostracisation by family/community members i. It is considered a religious belief j. It is a profession for them k. Specify others _____</p>

47. Do you follow up the rehabilitated devadasis? a. Yes b. No
48. If yes, how do you do it? a. Personal home visit b. Through telephone c. Attending periodical meeting d. Through written communication
49. If no, why? a. Need not been recognized b. Financial constraint
50. How frequently does follow up take place? a. Very often b. Often c. Sometimes d. Rarely e. Very rarely

VII. ABUSE				
51. Whether the devadasis are subjected to any form of abuse? a. Yes b. No				
52. If yes, what are the various forms of abuse of devadasi?				
Verbal abuse	Physical abuse	Financial abuse	Sexual abuse	Socio-cultural abuse
Name Calling	Kicking	Theft	Unwanted touching	Using religion to justify abuse or dominance
Accusing	Slapping	Fraud	Molestation	Stigma/ Labelling
Criticizing	Knuckling	Misappropriation of property	Unwanted kissing	Ostracization from community
Threatening	Biting	Misuse of welfare benefits	Refusing to use condoms	Family Disown
Yelling	Burning	Misappropriation of funds	Demanding sex	Discrimination
Insulting	Sticking	Controlling income	Forcing Sex	Not allowed to take part in social events
Humiliating	Pinching		Forcing to indulge in prostitution	Inauspicious
	Punching			

	Cutting			
	Shaking			
	Strangling			
	Scratching			

VIII. CHILDREN OF DEVADASIS
53. How many devadasis have children?
54. What is the status of children born to devadasis? a. Truant b. Dedicated as devadasi c. School going d. Working e. Delinquent f. Specify others _____
55. What is the perception towards the children of devadasis? a. Social exclusion b. Branded c. Ill treated d. Stigmatized e. Discriminated f. Specify others _____
56. Do children of devadasi get education like other children? a. Yes b. No
57. If yes, what are the problems faced while educating the children devadasi?
58. Is there any policy, program and scheme for the children of the devadasis? a. Yes b. No
59. If yes, what are they? a. Hostel for the children of devadasi b. Free education for the children of devadasi c. Specify others _____
60. Do the children of devadasis have the legitimate right to inherit the property of the parents? a. Yes b. No
61. What are the problems the children of devadasis face due to single parenthood?

IX. REINTEGRATION
<p>62. Do you think reintegration is possible?</p> <p>a. Yes b. No</p>
<p>63. If yes, why do we need to reintegrate them with their family?</p> <p>a. Reintegration with family and society is safer for the victims in all respects b. Proper reintegration brings happiness to victims c. To completely abolish the practice of dedicating girls to temples as devadasis</p> <p>d. Overall development is possible through reintegration e. To remove isolation from the society f. Look into the family conditions and reintegrate otherwise there will be a high chances of re-trafficking g. Reintegration is one of the important aspects for mainstreaming h. In the long run, they need family support for their own safety</p>
<p>64. Do the devadasis refuse to get reintegrated to their family?</p> <p>a. Yes b. No</p>
<p>65. What would be the reasons for refusal?</p> <p>a. Refusal from the family b. Social stigma c. Family hatred towards the devadasis</p> <p>d. Devadasis hatred towards the family e. Feeling comfortable in sex work f. To provide financial support to family g. Lack of legal support h. Getting trapped by sex traffickers i. Luxurious life j. Dedicated themselves to temples</p> <p>k. Lack of awareness l. Specify others _____</p>
<p>66. After rejecting to be reintegrated, where do they prefer to stay?</p> <p>a. In their relatives house b. In temple c. In their friends house d. Anywhere expect their home e. Specify others _____</p>
<p>67. Is there any chance of re-dedicating them to the temples after reintegration?</p> <p>a. Yes b. No</p>

X. PREVENTION	
68. Do you think dedication of women to the temple is preventable? a. Yes b. No	
69. If yes, what are the ways to prevent?	
a. Providing counseling, educate the women b. Through awareness we can do a lot in prevention c. If the sex buyers become conscious about the issue d. If the women are vulnerable, they can get support from the NGOs e. Media literacy f. They can build their capacity g. Educate them properly h. If the society removes its masks and think openly, prevention is possible i. Eradicating superstitious belief j. Awareness building among priests	k. Awareness building among family l. Making society understand this social evil m. If quality intervention provided n. Framing vigilant committees in village to monitor o. Providing basic amenities p. Identifying high risk groups and provide counselling q. Organizing self-help group r. Prevent children of devadasi from entering the profession s. Specify others _____
70. Do you think community outreach programs can combat this problem? a. Yes b. No	
71. If yes, what are the programs? a. Awareness programs b. Street play / Cultural activities c. Seminars/Workshop d. Meeting with SHGs e. Documentary movies f. Conducting group discussion g. Lecturing h. Working/creating programs with local police i. Exposure tour j. Specify others _____	
72. Do you suggest any other intervention from government? a. Periodical meeting with local police, NGOs and higher authorities of police b. Proper amendments in respective legislations based on the experience of NGOs c. Funding the NGOs more d. Being co-operative with the activities of NGOs e. Mechanism to ensure that benefits to reach the beneficiaries	

XI. LEGISLATION		
73. Which of the following legislations in your State are you aware of? (If you are aware of any other legislation other than the ones listed below, please list out in the space given)		
Central legislation	Yes	No
Indian Penal Code, 1860 (sec 372 & sec 373)		
Madras Hindu Religions Endowment Act Of 1926		
Devadasi Security Act, 1934		
Prevention of Devadasi Act in 1935		
Madras Devadasis Prevention and Dedication Bill -1938		
Devadasi Abolition Bill December 20,1947		
ITPA 1956		
The JJ (Care and Protection of Children Act 2000		
Child protection Law		
The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986		
The Bonded Labour System (Abolition)Act, 1976		
Andhra pradesh	Yes	No
Andhra Pradesh Devadasi(Prohibiting Dedication) Act, 1989		
Karnataka	Yes	No
Devadasi Samarpan Nishedhan Act 1982		
Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act 1982		
Devadasi (Prohibition of Dedication) Act in 1992		
Maharashtra	Yes	No
Bombay Devadasi Protection Act 1934		
Tamil Nadu	Yes	No
Madras devadasi (Prevention of Dedication) Act 1947		

74. Do you think the above mentioned legislations are implemented in your state? a. Yes b. No
75. If no, why?
76. What are the reasons for the poor / non- implementation of the legislations? a. Corruption b. Rigid rules c. Lack of awareness d. Lack of survey and studies e. Specify other_____
77. Who can lodge a complaint? a. Any one b. Suo moto c. Victims themselves d. Specify other_____
78. Who tries the cases registered under the Devadasi Prevention Act in your State? a. Judicial Magistrate b. Executive Magistrate c. Others Specify_____
79. Does your State have any special officer designated for prevention of devadasi system? a. Yes b. No
80. If yes, who is responsible for prevention? a. Devadasi dedication prevention officer b. Revenue Officer c. Collector d. Social welfare officers e. Other specify_____
81. Do you have any suggestion to improve the present legislations? a. Quick and early judgment b. Be practical while framing the policies c. Involve the people working at grass root level while framing the policies d. Amendments in legislations e. Appointment of concerned officials f. Reducing of corruption g. Punitive action

XII. POLICY, PROGRAMS AND SCHEMES		
82. Which of the following policies, programs and schemes in your State are you aware of? (If you are aware of any other policies, programs and schemes other than the ones listed below, please list out in the space given)		
Central Schemes/programs/policies	Yes	No
UJJAWALA		
Andhra Pradesh	Yes	No

Andhra Pradesh Devadasi(Prohibiting Dedication) Act, 1989		
Karnataka	Yes	No
Monthly Pension of Rs. 400 (2007-08)		
Housing schemes for Devadsis (2009)		
India-Canada Collaborative HIV/AIDS Project (ICHAP)		
Devadasi Rehabilitation Programme		
Income Generating Activity (IGA)		
Short Term Loan To Devadasis who are the members of Self Help Group		
Training for devadsis in Self Employment Programme		
Maharashtra	Yes	No
Devadasi marriage scheme		
Devadasi Pension Scheme		
Devadasi Rehabilitation Centre (sponsored by the western Maharashtra Development Corporation)		
Hostel for Devadasi Children		
Tamil Nadu	Yes	No
83. Do you think the above mentioned policies, programs, schemes are properly implemented in your State? a. Yes b. No		
84. If no, why? 		
85. What are the reasons for the poor/non-implementation of the policies, programs, schemes? a. Corruption b. Rigid rules c. Lack of awareness d. Lack of survey and studies e. Specify other_____		

86. What types of policies/programs/schemes do you suggest to the Government to adopt?
a. More shelter homes to the victims b. Ensuring awareness programs c. Focusing on the economic and socially sustainable support d. Programs that could meet the actual need of devadasis
87. Do devadasis have awareness about the legislation/ policies, programs, schemes? a. Yes b. No
88. Do you have an internal agency or third party for monitoring mechanisms? a. Yes b. No
89. Do you recommend any policy changes? a. Yes b. No
90. If yes, specify

APPENDIX-B
CASE STUDIES
Karnataka

Case Study 1: (Kokatnoor, Belgaum)

She is around 85 years old. She begs in front of the Kokatnoor temple in Belgaum district of Karnataka. As she puts it, “I was dedicated when I was very young. I don’t even remember the age. I have three sisters. All three of them are devadasis, even my mother and grandmother were devadasis. When I was young, I was earning money. I’m old now so I don’t have any other option but begging. I have a son who is a truck driver, he frequently travels. I have a daughter who got married, and she is settled in Gujarat. No one takes care of me now. My daughter says if you have money for up and down train fare then you can come to my home otherwise don’t come. I’m old, I can’t work so I don’t have any other source of income. I have never heard about the pension or other schemes. So I opted to beg which is the practice by many devadasis in their old age. People coming here drop some money and my life goes on.....”

Case Study 2: (Bijapur)

She lives in Turve village of Bijapur. She is around 58 years old. She says “I belong to the Holayar caste. I was dedicated when I was 14 or 15, right after my puberty. It is hereditary practice in our family to dedicate girls as devadasis. My mother and grandmother were also devadasis. I got married but my husband left me long back. It happens to many devadasis, someone will marry a devadasi for the sake of their physical needs, and then they leave them and run away. The cycle continues with daughters as well. Many of them don’t approach court or police because, this is our way of life. Only if these kind of things doesn’t happen to us, it is a miracle. Now I live with my two sons who are also not economically sound. I get pension, but not regularly, I get once in two or three months, sometimes four to five months”.

Case Study 3: (Bijapur)

She is 63 years old. She says “I was the only girl child for my mother who was also devadasi, so I was also dedicated as devadasi. It is a regular practice that if the devadasi has a single girl child, the girl will be dedicated as devadasi to take care of the mother in her old age. We don’t want to impart this to our next generation, so we stopped everything. But we don’t get any support from the government or others. We won’t even get menial labour jobs like other women. The government has schemes but it is very tough for us to get it. They give house only to people who have land, if we have land why do we come to this profession? The pension scheme is only for the devadasi who are above the age of 45. Moreover many of the non-devadasis also get these benefits”.

Case Study 4: Renuka Mythri (Bagalkot)

She says that “when I was around 12 or 13, my family was in extreme poverty and few of the upper class men forced our family to dedicate me as devadasi so that my family can come out of the economic problem. The government never addresses these problems. It is often people like you who come for the study not the government. There are 300 devadasis in the village but only three houses were given to devadasis that too for the people who have lands they get house. We people are the lowest section of the society if we have lands who do we seek government’s help”.

Case Study 5: (Bagalkot)

Refused to provide name: She says “I was dedicated due to poverty, when I was 15 years. Now I have three kids and they are school going. Almost 50% of our children study till 10th std and start working. They don’t continue schooling because of the stigma and labelling. We don’t get any help

from the government. Now I have HIV. There is no hospital in our village and I have to travel a lot to hospitals. Even in hospitals they only give tablets. If we get other diseases, the doctors won't do any operations since we have HIV. I have told you only very few problems we have but your time won't be enough to listen to all our problems. Like you many people come and ask about our life style and problem, every time we expect that some good will happen but at the end nothing happen. The society uses us as a 'use and throw' object, at least we are happy that we are helping people like you".

Maharashtra

Case Study 6: (Sangli)

He is a transgender who lives in Vishrambagh, Sangli. He is a priest of the Yellamma temple. He was dedicated as devadasi when his parents found that he is a transgender. Many parents do the same to avoid the stigma the family receives from society. He further says that "we are not like other transgenders, we won't beg in public places. Since we are dedicated as devadasis, we lead our life by doing pooja in Yellamma temple. Many of the devotees offer grains and money to us. (About 10 female devadasis live with him)."

Case Study 7: (Solapur)

She lives in Solapur. She says that "I have a ThuljaBhavani and a Yellama temple in one part of my home. Like other devadasis, I don't indulge in prostitution. I do pooja in my temple and my life goes on by serving the goddess. I don't remember when I was dedicated but I have been serving goddess from my childhood. I got married too. We have a music troupe which plays Chowdi, Surti and Thala. We do play in some temple festivals and they give money. I haven't heard about the pension and others schemes at all. Moreover I don't need all those things. I believe in the goddess and she will take care of me. I wish my life should end in this temple as well". (Field

Investigator noted a transgender in the music troupe, wherever there is a devadasi group, we can find transgenders with them)

Case Study 8: (Thane)

She is 60 years old and is from Bijapur, Karnataka. She was dedicated as a devadasi when she was very young due to poverty in the family. She has two elder brothers. The dedication took place in Karnataka. She was dedicated by her family because she could bring in income for the family. She was taken to Maharashtra by her uncle where she became a commercial sex worker. She earns for her family and her brothers have settled down because of her earning. She used to visit her native but now she has been set aside by the family members. She doesn't get any benefits from the government. She is unhappy about this culture and she wants the tradition to stop with her generation and not continued.

Case Study 9: (Thane)

She is a 65 year old devadasi. She is from Karnataka. Now she has settled in Maharashtra. She was married to goddess Yellamma when she was very young due to some illness and she has a strong belief in goddess Yellamma. She is not into prostitution. She is married and she leads a normal life with her family she has the typical "jat" hair and also has "pottu" thali on her neck. She goes for begging every Tuesday and Friday and she earns by selling some fruits and vegetables.

Andhra Pradesh

Case Study 10: (Mehabubnagar)

She is a 60 year old Jogini dedicated to Yellamma at the age of nine. She hails from Uktoor which comes under Mehaboobnagar district. She was dedicated to Yellamma due to traditional reasons and false religious belief.

During dedication a necklace was tied around her neck with red beads. Her only source of income after dedication is begging. Every Tuesday and Friday she goes for begging in Yellamma temple and nearby houses. Kalakishtamma was the eldest among the children. For having a boy child in the family she was dedicated to temple. Dedication ceremony took place in front of her house. She has a daughter who is doing her degree. And also she has two brothers and two sisters. Since she is above sixty years she is getting old age pension. According to Kalakishtamma', the system of dedicating girls to the temple should be eradicated completely in this generation.

Case Study 11: (Mehaboobnagar)

She is a 32 year old Basavi dedicated to God Anjaneyar in her childhood. She belongs to the Scheduled Caste called "Mathika" in which the dedication is very common. Poverty and religious beliefs like dedicating single girl child to God are the reasons behind the dedication. Now she has two boys who are doing their primary schooling in government schools. During their enrolment in schools, mother's name was used instead of father's name. She works as some daily labour, but there is no proper/regular income to her family. (NGO people pointed out that she is into sex work)

Case Study 12: (Chittoor)

She is from Chittoor. She was dedicated by her parents because she had some problem in her eye. So her parents prayed and dedicated her to the goddess Mathamma. She has two brothers. Her dedication ceremony happened like a marriage ceremony and her uncle sponsored and did all her dedication rituals and her uncle tied the mangalsuthra to her. He just tied the mangalsuthra for the purpose of dedication, he was already married. After her dedication she was asked to dance during the festival seasons. Then she lived with a person for a year and that person left her with a baby. She is working

as a daily labour. She has a boy child and he is also working as daily labour. Government has given her land for her rehabilitation. The land was given in the outskirts city and therefore no use. Her family doesn't have any other source of income other than her son's wages.

Case Study 13: (Chittoor)

He was dedicated to goddess Mathamma by his parents due to illness. He doesn't remember the dedication ceremony which happened to him. He used to dance during the festival seasons. As government had some rules and restrictions regarding people who dance during festivals, he stopped dancing and he is working as a daily labourer now. He used to maintain the Mathamma temple in the village. He used to do pooja on both Tuesday and Friday in the week. He is married and has two children. He hasn't received any benefits from the government.

Tamil Nadu

Case Study 14: (Mangatucherri Village, Vellore District)

She is the third of seven children born to a Mathamma and her guardian. The first girl child of the family died and she herself was seriously ill after birth. In the belief that she will also die, her parents vowed to dedicate her at the local temple and she miraculously survived the illness. Her dedication ceremony happened when she was seven. There was an elaborate ceremony in which the Mangalsuthra was first tied to the sword and then to the Mathamma. In her case the older upper caste Naidu from the village tied the Mangalsuthra. Like all Mathammas she wore a yellow saree decked with flowers. The maternal uncle who performed rituals during puberty was not allowed during the dedication. This is the result of the mistaken belief that the uncle will die if he ties the Mangalsuthra. The Mathamma was taught dance

ever since she was a young girl. However her public performance happened on the day of the dedication. Subsequently she danced in all the festivals for Mathamma till the age of twenty. After her dedication she fell in love with a person from the village and had a relationship with him. Her daughter is now 24 years and she works in a garment company and earns Rs.5000 per month. Her daughter is not dedicated. She finds it difficult to get her daughter married because she is a Mathamma. All the proposals that come are for second marriage. She also had a relationship with her sister's husband but the baby died during pregnancy. No one in her family respects / supports her. She doesn't have a place to stay and a proper source of income. Her only aim in life is to prevent her daughter from getting into the bind of the Mathamma system. (The people at the local NGO pointed out that she prefers sex work rather than accruing a skill and taking other jobs. After giving an interview to the Media, more and more people have approached her for sexual favour).

Case Study 15: (Thiruvallur District)

She is 24 years old and lives with her mother. She is mentally challenged. Her mother said that she was dedicated when she was young due to some illness. Few weeks after her birth, the child's eye were closed and there was no action from the child so she dedicated her child to Goddess Mathamma. So she was with her child in the Mathamma temple for two days and after two days she saw some improvement in the child. She said that it's only because of Goddess Mathamma that her child was cured. She was raped by a man from the community. As she is mentally ill she didn't even know the person who misused her. Her mother said that even she noticed her daughter's pregnancy only in the sixth month. She was ill treated by the community people as she is from the Mathamma community. After a long struggle, the guy accepted to give some monetary compensation for her but he is not willing to marry her. She has a boy child who is studying in the fifth standard.

She gets pension for Physically Challenged from government. SRED NGO who is working in that area provides Rs.200 per month for her son towards his education.

Case Study 16: (Singasamuthiram Block, Tiruttani)

She is 25 years old. She is from Arunthathiyar community. She was dedicated when she was six years old by her parents due to her illness. During her dedication she wore a dress of goddess and carried weapons like knife and sulam. Her dedication was like marriage ceremony, there is a bridegroom but he was not allowed to tie the mangalsuthra. They themselves or the elder devadasis tie the mangalsuthra. The mangalsuthra is with pottu and with red and black beads. She used to dance during the village festivals and sometimes she was paid and sometimes not. Even if her husband dies, she is not supposed to remove her thali or other customs practiced in Hindu religion. She is now married to a man in Andhra Pradesh and has a boy of 5 years.

Case Study 17: (Singasamuthiram Block, Tirutani)

She is the oldest Mathamma in the village. She is around 80 years old. She was dedicated when she was very young and she doesn't even remember when she was dedicated. The dedication ceremony was similar to that of other devadasis. She was also dedicated because of her illness. When she was young her main duty was to do pooja in the Mathamma temple. She used to dance during the village festivals. She got married and has two children. That is, she has a husband, who is also present when she is engaged in the temple activities.

Case Study 18: (Viralimalai, Puthukottai District)

She is one of the oldest devadasis. She is around 80 years old. She belongs to Isaivellalar community. She was dedicated when she was six years

old. She was dedicated to Lord Murugan. The Murugan temple in Viralimalai is a well-known pilgrimage spot. Her dedication took place during the king's period. She used to dance during temple festivals in the kingdom of Pudukottai Raja after her dedication. Her daily routine like other devadasis, was to assist with poojas in the temple and also to prepare prasadam. They were also in constant attendance at the King's Palace. During Raja's period she got a lot of monetary and non-monetary benefits. She didn't get married. She has two children they were married and she has grandchildren. She is the only person who knows proper sadir dance. She has trained several contemporary dances on the proper techniques of sadir dance. Even now during the festivals she dances and initiates the festivals.

APPENDIX-C
High Profile Respondents
Karnataka

1. Mr. Ida Martin Bang(IPS Superintendent of Police, Bagalkot)

Mr. Ida Martin Bang is the Superintendent of Police in Bagalkot district. The district has high prevalence of Devadasi system. He has taken initiatives to educate the children of Devadasis. He has approached NGOs and residential schools to provide education and hostel facility for the children of Devadasis. The police are also involved in creating awareness about the Devadasi system. The police team visits the residents of Devadasis and places where the Devadasi system is prevalent and educate them about the evils of Devadasi system. He also mentioned that the Devadasis were initially afraid to interact with police, in fact they ran away doubting that the police has come to arrest them or they come for spying. It took a long time for the police team to gain trust from the Devadasis. The Superintendent of Police believes that educating the children of Devadasis is the best way to rehabilitate the Devadasis). “If one person is well educated in the family and start earning, they (the Devadasis will slowly retreat from prostitution because most of them indulge in prostitution mainly for money. Hence our focus is on educating the children of Devadasis and get them a good employment”.

2. Mr. B.L. Patil (VimochanaSangh, Belgaum)

Mr. B.L.Patil is the President of VimochanaSangh in Athani taluk of Belgaum. VimochanaSangh was established in 1990 for the welfare of Devadasis. They have a residential school for Devadasi children where they can study without any cost. They also provide opportunity for foreigners to adopt the Devadasi children. They arrange marriages for Devadasis and daughters of Devadasis. They have a hostel for children of Devadasis. There

are more than 650 students right now. They provide dress and other educational material to the children of Devadasis. The field workers monitor the family which has a chance for dedicating and educate them about the evils of the system.

3. Devadasi Schemes Implementation Officer(Karnataka)

A Devadasi Purvajana Kendra (Devadasis Rehabilitation Center) was established under the Women's Development Corporation, Karnataka. The work of the Devadasi Rehabilitation Center is to implement all Devadasis related schemes effectively. Currently Rehabilitation Centers are established in seven districts which has high prevalence of Devadasi system. The Implementation officer says "most of us working in the rehabilitation office are temporary employees. If there is any dedication or something wrong, we cannot take any strict action because we may face many issues after that and we don't have job security. We are provided Rs.1000 per month as travel allowance which is not at all enough for us to visit the field frequently. Moreover it is very difficult to identify the Devadasi, nowadays everyone claims themselves as Devadasis to avail the schemes".

Maharashtra

4. Prof. Rajan Gavas (Professor, Kolhapur)

Prof Rajan Gavas is a Professor of Marathi at Shivaji University, Kolhapur, Maharashtra. He has been working for Devadasis for the last 15 years. He has been creating awareness among the people about the Devadasi system. He has also written research articles and books on Devadasi system. He has acted in a Marathi movie called "Jogva" which explains the cycle of dedication and life style of Devadasis. He says that Devadasi system exists mainly due to superstitious beliefs. He has also mentioned that the "Jat"

(Matted Hair) which is one of the contributing factors for Devadasi system is manmade. They apply some kind of paste taken from the banyan tree. These Devadasis don't even receive the pension on a regular basis and he suggests an increase in the pension amount. He has also stated that Devadasis get money through begging and food grains also through begging. These are easy ways of earning money from them so they are simply not interested in the rehabilitation. He further stated that the government doesn't rehabilitate them properly and these governments are slowly taking back all existing schemes for Devadasis.

5. Prof Vittal Banne, (Professor, Kolhapur)

Prof Vittal Banne resides in Gadinglaj, Kolhapur, Maharashtra. He and his son Sidrath Banne work for the welfare of Devadasis. Mr. Vittal Banne is working in the field for the past 25 years. He had fought with the government to increase the pension amount under the Devadasi Pension Scheme. He and his son have written books about the Devadasi cult and dedication process. Both of them are still working for the welfare of Devadasis. Notably, Prof. Vittle Banne has received State Government Award for his work on Devadasi's welfare.

6. Prof. Sadhana Zadbuke (Professor, Mumbai)

Prof. Sadhana Zadbuke is a Professor of Social Work in a college in Mumbai and currently she resides in Kolhapur. Even though she is not from Devadasi background, her family has a strong belief in Devadasi system and dedication. Her family is closely associated with Devadasis. When she was a child many Devadasis have come to her house and begged. So she thought of working for Devadasis in early childhood itself. Since her family is associated with Devadasis, she started to help some Devadasis to open small vegetable shops and other small scale business. She also creates awareness among the

Devadasi families in order to avoid further dedication in the family. She strongly believes that the Devadasi system can be eradicated only by providing economic assistance to devadasis and educating the children of devadasis.

7. Mr. Vishnu Karampuri (Politician, Solapur)

Mr. Vishnu Karampuri is a Shiv Sena politician from Solapur, who has worked for Devadasi welfare. He has travelled across Maharashtra to create awareness about the Devadasi system. He has formed an association for Devadasis to fight for the rights of the Devadasis. Vishnu Karampuri is the leader of the Shiv Sena labor wing, so he strongly believes in the unity of the people. He says that there are many forms of abuses on devadasis. My job was to bring them together to fight for the rights. We have done many campaigns and protests to get many schemes for Devadasis”.

Andhra Pradesh

8. Mr. Nenu Venkaya (Duties - NGO, Nellore)

Mr. Nenu Venkaya is the founder of an NGO called Duties and he is the State NGO member. He has been working for Devadasis in the Nellore district for the past 20 years. Few other NGOs from other districts have joined hands to create awareness among the Dalit communities to prevent Devadasi dedication. He has conducted 249 devadasi marriages. He has also received an award from the Andhra Pradesh Government for this work on Devadasi Rehabilitation. He says that the dedication is no more but the rehabilitation process is not that effective. He further says that there is an Implementation Committee to implement the schemes for Devadasi which is not at all active. Further he said that, for better rehabilitation, all the schemes should be implemented properly.

9. Mr. Vishwananth (SSS – NGO, Chittoor)

Mr. Vishwananth is the head of Stri Shakti Sanghatana (SSS). He works for the development of Mathammas in Chittoor district. He works for the prevention and rehabilitation of the Mathammas. He has created awareness among the community about the Mathamma tradition. Through NGO, they provide some rehabilitation activities for the Mathammas in Chittoor district. The NGO has also arranged some marriages for Mathammas. Most of them are successful. They helped Mathammas to secure Government Certificates. He has also suggested to Welfare Department and SC Corporation to initiate welfare measures for their development.

10. Mr. Ramakrishna (RISE – NGO, Chittoor)

Mr. Ramakrishna is the founder of RISE NGO, which works for Mathammas in Chittoor district. He has conducted a survey on Mathammas and their children. The literacy rate of Mathammas and their children are very low and also there are many dropouts because they are ill-treated by others in the school. So he planned to start a separate school for Mathamma children to develop the next generation. He started a residential school for the education of the children of Mathamma and child Mathammas. The NGO is also engaged in many such activities like creating awareness in the community in various villages. He wants the government to take effective steps to provide some benefits for their livelihood.

Tamil Nadu

11. Dr. Swarnamalya Ganesh (Actress and Researcher, Chennai)

Dr. Swarnamalya Ganesh is a performer, dance historian, as well as a choreographer and tutor. She holds a Ph.D. in Dance History from the University of Madras. Her latest performance- series titled” From the Attic” is

based on her research and findings. She is emboldened to call her work and process as Sadir (the abandoned name of Bharathanatyam), as she embodies learning from the Devadasis she has trained with as her own vision in this realm. Apart from training with some Devadasi gurus and nattuvanars she is also involved in documenting their repertoire. She is the Director of Ranga Mandira School of Performing Arts and Research Academy, India, which works at educating students in performing arts and also creating a platform for sustainability for the hereditary artists. She is involved in dance history research and presents lecture demonstrations and writes paper for various forums. She is engaged in documenting rare and invaluable dance forms once practiced by the Devadasis (hereditary performers) communities in South India.

12. Ms. Burnard Fatima(SRED – NGO, Thiruvallur)

Ms. Fatima Burnard, a well-known Dalit woman activist, and the founder of the Society for Rural Education and Development (SRED) has been working among the Dalit community in Tamil Nadu for the past 37 years. She has become the leader in the social movement seeking greater economic opportunity and political influence for backward people and especially active in organizing Dalit Women. SRED mobilizes Dalit women, unorganized workers, farmers, sex workers and Mathamma women who are dedicated to temples to stand up against Human Right violations and to gain their rights. She has promoted various people movements; one of the movement is Mathamma Liberation Movement which actively focusses on the issues on Mathammas. Under the movement, Mathamma children are given Rs.200/- per month for their educational purpose. SRED also provides various monetary and non- monetary benefits for the development of Mathamma.

APPENDIX-D

List of Place visited

1. Vimochana, Athani, Karnataka
2. Suvdatti Yellamma temple, Belgaum, Karnataka
3. Kokatnoor Yellamma temple, Kokatnoor, Karnataka
4. Devadasi Punarvajana Kendra, Dharwad, Bagalkot & Bijapur.
Karnataka
5. District Superintendent of Police, Bagalkot.
6. Karnataka, University, Dharwad, Karnataka
7. Rani Channamma University, Belgaum. Karnataka
8. Women's University, Bijapur, Karnataka
9. Police Station, Bagalkot, Karnataka
10. Chitanya Mahila Saba, Bagalkot, Karnataka.
11. Brothels in Mudhol, Jamakandi, Turve and Rabakavi, Karnataka.
Miraj, Sangli, Mumbai, Maharashtra
12. Women and Child Welfare Office, Solapur, Kolhapur, Sangli,
Mumbai. Maharashtra
13. Shivaji University, Kolhapur, Maharashtra
14. Tata Institute of Social Science. Mumbai, Maharashtra
15. Solapur University, Solpaur, Maharashtra
16. Solapur, Police Station.
17. Collector Office, Medak, Telangana
18. Social Welfare Department, Telangana
19. SC Corporation, Telangana
20. Police Station, Medak, Telangana
21. Women and Child Welfare Office, Telangana

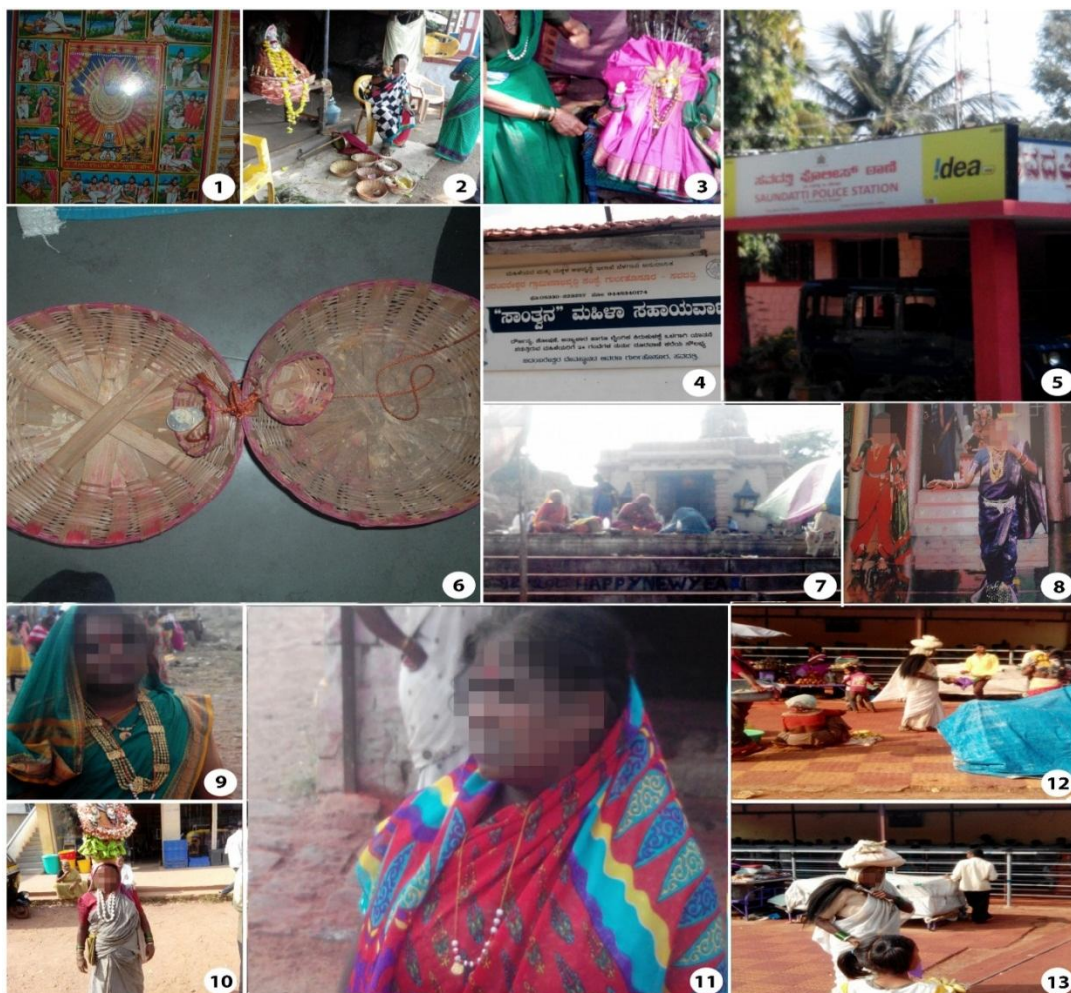
22. Women and Child Welfare Office, Andhra Pradesh
23. Social Welfare Department, Andhra Pradesh
24. SC Corporation, Andhra Pradesh
25. MahilaMandali, Hyderabad, Telangana
26. RISE NGO, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh
27. SSS NGO, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh
28. Shri PadmavathyMahila Viswavidyalayam University, Andhra Pradesh
29. Shri Venkateswara University, Andhra Pradesh
30. Collector Office, Nellore, Andhra Pradesh
31. Duties NGO, Nellore, Andhra Pradesh
32. The Superintendent of Police, Nellore, Andhra Pradesh
33. Social Welfare Department, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
34. Social Welfare Department, Thiruvallur, Tamil Nadu
35. Thanjavur University, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu.
36. Collector Office, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu.
37. Welfare Department, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu.
38. Collector Office, Pudukottai, Tamil Nadu
39. Social Welfare Department, Pudukottai, Tamil Nadu
40. Aids Control Society, Pudukottai, Tamil Nadu
41. The Superintendent of Police, Pudukottai, Tamil Nadu
42. Aids Control Society, Viralimalai, Tamil Nadu
43. Welfare Office, Viralimalai, Tamil Nadu
44. Police Station, Viralimalai, Tamil Nadu
45. Integrated Rural Community Development Society, Thiruvallur, Tamil Nadu
46. SRED NGO, Thiruvallur, Tamil Nadu

47. Bharathidasan University, Department of Women Studies, Trichy, Tamil Nadu
48. Centre for Women Studies, Ethiraj Collage, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
49. Centre for Women Studies, JBAS Collage, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
50. Department of History, Loyola Collage, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Appendix E

Photos

Karnataka



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|--|--|
| 1. Photo of Goddess Yellamma | 9. Transgender devadasi |
| 2. Transgender Begging | 10. Devadasi begging with Yellamma statue in Dharwad |
| 3. Devadasi Begging with Yellamma Statue | 11. Beads of the Devadasi |
| 4. NGO in Belgaum | 12. Devadasi begging by moving around the Suwadatti temple |
| 5. Suwadatti Police Station | 13. Devadasi begging by moving around the Suwadatti temple |
| 6. Basket used for Begging | |
| 7. Devadasis Begging in Suwadatti temple | |
| 8. Transgender Devadasi Performing Dance | |

Maharashtra



<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Devadasi Musical troop 2. Statute of Jamdagini 3. Devadasi with begging basket 4. Hostel for girl children of devadasis 5. Devadasi begging in Solapur bus stand 6. Beads of Devadasi 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Yellamma Statue 8. Photo of the Transgender Devadasi 9. Devadasi with the Musical instrument called Chowdiki 10. Saffron cloth used for begging 11. Pooja items 12. Photo of Transgender doing Pooja for goddess Yellamma
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Andhra Pradesh



1. Mangalsuthra of Jogini
2. Jogini & Basavi from
Mehabubnagar District
3. Mangalsuthra of Basavi
4. Goddess Mathamma
5. Goddess Yellamma

6. Devadasis from Mehabubnagar
District
7. Mathaiya from Chittoor District
8. Devadasi's Village in
Mehabubnagar District

Tamil Nadu



1. Viralimalai Temple, Pudukottai District	8 Goddess Mathamma
2. Tamil University, Tanjavur	9 Mathamma from Tiruvallur District
3. Tanjavur Temple	10 Village Administrative Office
4. Mathamma from Tiruvallur District	11 Mathamma from Tiruvallur District
5. Collector Office, Tanjavur	12 Mathamma from Pudukottai District
6. Mangalsuthra of Mathamma	13 Goddess Mathamma
7. Collector Office, Pudukottai	

Pamphlets

[illegible]

APPENDIX-F**THE KARNATAKA DEVADASIS (PROHIBITION OF DEDICATION) ACT,
1982.**

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS.

Sections:

1. Short title and extent.
2. Definitions.
3. Dedication as devadasi to be unlawful.
- 3A. Power of district magistrate or executive magistrate to issue injunction prohibiting dedication
- 3B. Rescue, care, protection, welfare and rehabilitation of woman
- 3C. Offences to be cognizable and nonbailable
- 3D. Appointment of Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officer
- 3E. Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officers to be public servants
4. Marriage of devadasi.
5. Penalty.
6. Protection of action taken in good faith.
7. Power to make rules.
8. Repeal.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

I Act 1 of 1984 - The Devadasi Abolition Act of Bombay State and a similar Act of Madras Government are in force in the Bombay Karnataka Area and in Bellary District respectively. It was also found that in some parts of Karnataka the

Devadasi System is still in force and the women who are inducted to this system are in a pitiable condition and this has led them to take up prostitution for a living. Therefore it is found necessary to bring forward a legislation to minimise this social evil and to rehabilitate the victims. Dedication of a woman as Devadasi is made an offence and in order to make the provisions more effective, higher punishment is provided for a person abetting the offence if he happens to be the parent, guardian or relative of the woman.

Hence the Bill.

(Published in the Karnataka Gazette Part IV-2A (Extraordinary) No. 75 dated 3-2-1982 at page 5.)

II

Amending Act 1 of 2010 - It is considered necessary to amend the Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act, 1982,-

(1) to empower the district magistrate or executive magistrate to issue injunction prohibiting likelihood of taking place of dedication to devadasis.

(2) to provide for the rescue, care, protection welfare and rehabilitation of woman from dedication.

(3) to provide that the offences under this Act are cognizable and non-bailable.

(4) to provide for the appointment of Devadasis dedication prohibition officers with powers to prevent such dedication.

Hence, the Bill.

(L.A.Bill No. 4 of 2009, File No. Samvyashe 08 Shasana 2008)

[Entries 1, 2, 5 and 23 of List III of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India.]

KARANTAKA ACT NO.1 OF 1984

(First published in the Karnataka Gazette Extraordinary on the Thirty-first day of January, 1984)

THE KARNATAKA DEVADASIS (PROHIBITION OF DEDICATION)

ACT, 1982

(Received the assent of the President on the eleventh day of January, 1984)

(As amended by Karnataka Act 1 of 2010)

An Act to prevent dedication of women as devadasis in the State of Karnataka.

WHEREAS the practice of dedicating women as devadasis to deities, idols, objects of worship, temples and other religious institutions or places of worship exists in certain parts of the State of Karnataka ;

AND whereas such practice leads women so dedicated to a life of prostitution;

AND whereas it is expedient to put an end to the practice;

BE it enacted by the Karnataka State Legislature in the Thirty-third Year of the Republic of India as follows:-

1. Short Title and Extent - (1) This Act may be called the Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act, 1982.

(2) It extends to the whole State of Karnataka.

2. Definitions - In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,-

(a) "dedication" means the performance of any act or ceremony, by whatever name called, by which a woman is dedicated to the service of any deity, idol, object of worship, temple, other religious institutions or places of worship ;

(b) "devadasi" means a woman so dedicated ;

(c) "temple" means a place by whatever designation known, dedicated to, or used as a place of religious worship ;

(d) "woman" means a female of any age.

3. Dedication as Devadasi to be Unlawful - Notwithstanding any custom or law to the contrary, the dedication of a woman as a devadasi, whether before or after the commencement of this Act and whether she has consented to such dedication or not, is hereby declared unlawful, void and to be of no effect and any woman so dedicated shall not thereby be deemed to have become incapable of entering into a valid marriage.

[3A. Power of District Magistrate or Executive Magistrate to Issue Injunction Prohibiting Dedication - (1) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this Act, if on an application of the Devadasi Prohibition Officer or on receipt of information through a complaint or otherwise from any person, a District Magistrate or an Executive Magistrate is satisfied that a dedication in contravention of this Act, has been arranged or is about to be solemnised, such Magistrate shall issue a prohibitory injunction against any person including a member of an organisation or an association of persons prohibiting or restraining from such dedication.

(2) An application or a complaint under sub-section (1), may be made by any person having personal knowledge or reason to believe and a non-governmental organisation having reasonable information, relating to the likelihood of taking place of such dedication.

(3) The District Magistrate or the Executive Magistrate may also take suo motu cognisance on the basis of any reliable report or information or complaint as the case may be.

(4) For the purpose of preventing en-mass dedication as Devadasis on certain days such as full moon day during Jathras, the concerned District Magistrate shall be deemed to be the Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officer with all powers as are conferred on a Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officer by or under this Act.

(5) The District Magistrate shall also have additional powers to stop or prevent dedication and for this purpose, he may

take all appropriate measures including use of the minimum force required.

(6) No prohibitory injunction under sub-section (1) shall be issued against any person or member of any organisation or association of persons unless the magistrate concerned has previously given notice to such person, members of the organisation or association of persons, as the case may be, and has offered him or them an opportunity to show cause against the issue of the injunction:

Provided that in the case of any urgency, the magistrate concerned shall have the power to issue an interim injunction without giving any notice under this sub-section.

(7) An injunction issued under sub-section (1) may be confirmed or vacated after giving notice and hearing the party against whom the injunction was issued.

(8) The District Magistrate or the Executive Magistrate may either on its own motion or on the application of any person aggrieved, rescind or alter an injunction issued under sub-section (1).

(9) Where an application received under sub-section (1), the District Magistrate or the Executive Magistrate shall afford the applicant an opportunity of appearing before it either in person or by an advocate. After hearing the applicant, the District Magistrate or the Executive Magistrate rejects the application wholly or in part, he shall record in writing its reasons for so doing.

(10) Whoever knowing that an injunction has been issued under sub-section (1) against him disobeys such injunction shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years but which shall not be less than two years or with a fine which shall not be less than rupees two thousand but which may extend to rupees ten thousand or with both.

3B. Rescue, Care, Protection, Welfare and Rehabilitation of Woman - The State Government shall take all necessary steps to rehabilitate the woman rescued from dedication, under the "Devadasi Rehabilitation Programme" by providing counselling

and awareness and shall be economically empowered by involving the said woman in income generating activities, if necessary by providing protection or shelter in remand home upto six months and see that the said woman shall become self-sustained by availing subsidy and loans through banks.

3C. Offences to be Cognizable and Nonbailable - An offence punishable under this Act shall be cognisable and nonbailable.

3D. Appointment of Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officer-

(1) The State Government may, by notification, in the official Gazette, appoint for whole state or such part thereof, as may be specified in that notification, an officer or officers to be known as Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officer having jurisdiction over the area or areas specified in the notification.

(2) Without prejudice to sub-section (1), the concerned Deputy Director, Assistant Director, Women and Child Development Department or the Project Officer shall be the Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officer in their respective jurisdiction. 4

(3) The State Government may also request a respectable member of the locality with a record of social service or an officer of the Gram Panchayath or Municipality or an officer of the Government or any public sector undertaking or an office bearer of any non-governmental organisation to assist the Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officer and such member, officer or office bearer, as the case may be, shall be bound to act accordingly.

(4) It shall be the duty of the Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officer,-

(a) to prevent dedication by making an application under sub-section (1) of section 3A and by taking such actions as he may deem fit;

(b) to collect evidences for the effective prosecution of persons contravening the provisions of the Act;

(c) to advise either individual cases or counsel the residents of the locality generally not to indulge in promoting, helping, aiding or allowing the dedication of devadasi;

(d) to create awareness of the evil which results from dedication;

(e) to sensitize the community on the issue of dedication;

(f) to take action to write the Panchanama report at the place of incident itself and obtain the signatures of witnesses;

(g) to furnish such periodical returns and statistics as the State Government may direct; and

(h) to discharge such other functions and duties as may be assigned to him by the State Government.

(5) The State Government may, by notification, in the Official Gazette, subject to such conditions and limitations, invest with the Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officer with such powers of a police officer as may be specified in the notification and the Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officer shall exercise such powers subject to such conditions and limitations, as may be specified therein.

(6) The Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officer shall have the power to move the court for an order under section 3B for rehabilitation of rescued woman.

(7) The Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officer shall report the same to the Secretary to Government, Women and Child Development Department, the Managing Director, the Karnataka State Women's Development Corporation and the Deputy Commissioner of respective Districts whenever the incident of dedication occurs or likely to occur in his jurisdiction.

3E. Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officers to be public servants - The Devadasi Dedication Prohibition Officers shall be deemed to be public servants within the meaning of section 21 of the Indian Penal Code (Central Act 45 of 1860).]¹

1. Inserted by Act 1 of 2010 w.e.f. 6.2.2010.

4. Marriage of Devadasi - Notwithstanding any custom or rule of any law to the contrary, no marriage contracted by a woman shall be invalid and no issue of such marriage shall be considered as illegitimate by reasons only of such woman being a devadasi.

5. Penalty - Any person who, after the commencement of this Act, performs, permits, takes part in, or abets the performance of, any ceremony or act for dedicating a woman as a devadasi or any ceremony or act connected therewith shall on conviction be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years and with fine which may extend to two thousand rupees:

Provided that where the person referred to in this section is the parent or guardian or a relative of the woman so dedicated, he shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description which may extend to five years but which shall not be less than two years and with fine which may extend to five thousand rupees but which shall not be less than two thousand rupees.

Explanation - A person referred to in this section shall include the woman in respect of whom such ceremony or act is performed.

6. Protection of Action Taken in Good Faith - No suit, prosecution, or other legal proceedings shall lie against the Government or any person for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done under this Act.

7. Power to Make Rules - (1) The State Government may, after previous publication and by notification in the official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

(2) without prejudice to the generality of the power conferred by sub-section (1) such rules may provide,-

(a) for the manner of investigation of offences under this Act ;

(b) for custody, care, protection, welfare and rehabilitation of devadasis;

(c) for any other matter which in the opinion of the State Government has to be prescribed.

(3) Every rule made under this section shall be laid as soon as may be after it is made, before each house of the State Legislature while it is in session for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the sessions immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule or both Houses agree that the rule should not be made, the rule shall from the date on which the modification or annulment is notified by the State Government in the official Gazette have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be ; so however, the modification, or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.

8. Repeal - The Bombay Devadasis Protection Act, 1934, (Bombay Act 10 of 1934) and the Madras Devadasis (Prevention of Dedication) Act, 1947 (Madras Act 31 of 1947) are hereby repealed :

Provided that section 6 of the Karnataka General Clauses Act, 1899 (Karnataka Act 3 of 1899) shall be applicable as if the said enactments are repealed and re-enacted by this Act.

THE KARNATAKA DEVADASIS (PROHIBITION OF DEDICATION) ACT, 1982

has been amended by the following Acts, namely -

Amendments (Chronological)

Sl. No.	Act No. and Year	Sections Amended
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Remarks

1 of 1984 -

w.e.f.31.1.1984

Amendments (Section - wise)

THE BOMBAY DEVADASIS PROTECTION ACT, 1934

Adapted and modified by the Adaptation of Indian Laws order in council.

Adapted and modified by the adaptation of Laws order, 1950.

Amended by Bom. 20 of 1950.

Adapted and modified by the Bombay Adaptation of Laws (State and Concurrent Subjects) Order, 1956

Amended by Bom.34 of 1958.

Adapted and modified by the Maharashtra Adaptation of Laws (state and Concurrent Subjects) Order, 1960.

An Act to protect devadasis and to prevent the dedication of women to Hindu deities, idols, objects of worship, temples and religious institutions in the [state of Bombay]

WHEREAS the practice of dedicating women as devadasis to Hindu deities, idols, objects of worship, temples or other religious institutions exist in the ²[State of Bombay];

AND WHEREAS such practice, however ancient and pure, its origin, now leads such women to a life of prostitution;

AND WHEREAS it is now desirable and expedient to end such practice, wherever it exists,in the ²[State of Bombay];

AND WHEREAS the previous sanction of the Governor - General required by section 80A (3) and of the Governor required by section 80C of the Government of India Act have been obtained for the passing of this Act; it is hereby enacted as follows:

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1. (1) This act may be called the Bombay Devadasis protection Act, 1934. ^{Short title and extent}

³[(2) It extends to the whole of the ⁴[State of Maharashtra).]

2. In this act unless there is something repugnant in the subject or context,- ^{Definitions.}

⁵[(aa) "Collector" includes a Deputy Commissioner;]

(a) "devadasi" means any unmarried woman who is dedicated to any Hindu deity, idol, object of worship, temple or other religious institution;

(b) "temple" means a place by whatever designation known, dedicated to or used by, the Hindu community, or any section thereof, as a place of religious worship; and

(c) "woman" means a female human being of any age.

3. The performance of any ceremony ¹[or act] intended to dedicate or having the effect of dedicating a woman as a devadasi, whether such woman has or has not consented to the performance of such ceremony ¹[or act] is hereby declared unlawful and to be of no effect, any custom or rule of Hindu Law to the contrary notwithstanding.

4. No marriage contracted by a women shall be invalid and no issue of such marriage shall be illegitimate by reason of such woman being a devadasi, any custom or rule of Hindu law to the contrary notwithstanding.

5. Whoever, other than the woman to the dedicated, performs, permits, takes part in or abets, the performance of any ceremony ²[or act] referred to in section 3, shall, on conviction, be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year or with fine or with both.

³[5A. The offence punishable under section 5 shall be cognisable.

5B. No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against any person for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done under this Act.]

6. (I) Notwithstanding any adjudication or settlement made under the Bombay Rent - free Estates Act, 1852, the Exemptions from Land- revenue (No.1) Act, 1863, and the exemptions from Land- revenue (No.2) Act, 1863, or rules made thereunder⁴[or under any law for the time being in force], or the terms of any grant made or sanad issued by ⁵[or on behalf of the ⁶[Government]], when lands are assigned as emoluments for the performance by a devadasi of any services as such,

the Collector shall, after holding such inquiry as may be prescribed, by order in writing, direct that the land shall be released from liability for performance of such services and that there shall be paid by the holder of such land in lieu of such services such rent as the Collector shall determine in the prescribed manner:

Provided that if a woman who is a devadasi at the time when this Act comes into force is the holder of such land or performs services as a devadasi for which such land is assigned and appears at such enquiry or gives notice in the prescribed manner and objects to the release of the land and the payment of rent under the provisions of this section, the Collector shall pass orders directing that the land shall not be released and rent shall not be payable under this section during the lifetime of such devadasi.

(2) Rent directed to be paid under sub-section (i) shall, when the performance of such services is for the benefit of a Hindu deity, idol, object of worship, temple or other institution, be payable by the holder to or on account of such deity, idol, object of worship, temple or other religious institution and in other cases to ⁷[the State Government].

¹[Explanation. - "Land" includes benefits to arise out of the land and things attached to the earth or permanently fastened to anything attached to the earth, and also shares in, or charges on the revenue or rent of villages, or other defined portion of territory.]

7. (1) ²[The ³[State] Government] may make rules generally for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act and in particular for the manner in which the Collector shall hold an inquiry and determine the rent under section 6 and the manner in which notice of objection shall be given under the said section.

(2) The rules to be made under this section shall be subject to the condition of previous publication.

(3) Rules made under this section shall be laid ⁴[before each of the state ⁵[Houses] of the ³[State] legislature] at the

session ⁶[thereof] next following and shall be liable to be modified or rescinded by a resolution ⁷[in which both the ⁵[Houses] concur], and such rule shall, after notification in the ⁸[Official Gazette,] be deemed to have been modified or rescinded accordingly.

ANDHRA PRADESH DEVADASIS (PROHIBITION OF DEDICATION) ACT, 1988

10 of 1988

An Act to prohibit the dedication of Women as Devadasi in the State of Andhra Pradesh. Whereas the practice of dedicating Women as Devadasis to Hindu dieties, Idols, objects of worship, temples and other religious institutions or places of worship exists in certain parts of the State of Andhra Pradesh; and Whereas such practice, however ancient and pure in its origin, leads many of the women so dedicated to degradation and to evils like prostitution; and Whereas it is necessary to put an end to the practice. Be it enacted by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Andhra Pradesh in the Thirtyninth Year of the Republic of India as follows:

Section 1 Short title, extent and commencement

(1) This Act may be called the Andhra Pradesh Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act, 1988.

(2) It extends to the whole of the State of Andhra Pradesh.

(3) It shall come into force on such date as the Government may, by notification in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette, appoint.

Section 2 Definitions

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(a) dedication means the performance of any act or ceremony by whatever name called, by which a woman is dedicated to the service of a Hindu diety, Idol, object of worship, temple or other religious institution or place of worship and includes tying "tali with jakini" to a woman or tying a woman by a garland to a Garnda Khambham, dhaarana and deeksha ;

(b) "Devadasi" means any woman so dedicated by whatever name called and includes Basavi, Jogini, Parvathi, Mathamma and Thyamma;

(c) "Government" means the State Government;

(d) "notification" means a notification published in the Andhra Pradesh Gazette and the word "notified" shall be construed accordingly;

(d) "Woman" means female of any age.

(e)

Section 3 Dedication as Devadasi to be unlawful

(1) The dedication of a woman as Devadasi, whether before or after the commencement of this Act and whether she has consented to such dedication or not, is hereby declared unlawful and void; and any woman so dedicated shall not thereby be deemed to have become incapable of entering into a valid marriage.

(2) Any custom or usage, prevailing in any Hindu community such as the Begum, Kalavanthula, Sani, Nagavasulu, Devadasi, Kurmapulu, Basavi, Jogini and Parvathi and the like, that a woman of that community who gives or takes part in any melam (nautch), dancing or music performance in the course of any procession or otherwise is thereby regarded as having adopted a life of prostitution and becomes incapable of entering into a valid marriage, and the performance of any ceremony or act in accordance with any such custom or usage, whether before or after the commencement of this Act and whether the woman concerned has consented to such performance or not, are hereby declared unlawful and void.

Section 4 Marriage of Devadasis

No marriage contracted by a woman in accordance with any law, custom or usage shall be invalid and no child of such marriage shall be considered as illegitimate by reason only of such woman being a Devadasi.

Section 5 Penalties

Any person who performs, promotes, takes part in or abets the performance of any ceremony or act for dedicating a woman as Devadasi or any ceremony or act connected therewith shall on conviction be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years but which shall not be less than two years and with fine which may extend to rupees three thousand but which shall not be less than rupees two thousand:

Provided that where the person referred to in this section is a parent or guardian or relative of a woman so dedicated, he shall on conviction be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to five years but which shall not be less than two years and with fine which may extend to rupees five thousand but which shall not be less than rupees three thousand;

Provided further that the woman who is dedicated in such ceremony or act or in respect of whom such ceremony or act is performed shall not be punishable.

Section 6 Punishment for propogation

Whoever propogates the practice of dedication of women as Devadasi shall on conviction be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years but which shall not be less than one year and with fine which may extend to rupees five thousand but which shall not be less than rupees two thousand.

Section 7 Powers to be conferred on Collector

The Government may confer such powers and impose such duties, on the Collector or any other officer of the Revenue Department not below the rank of Mandal Revenue Officer, as may be necessary to ensure that the provisions of this Act, are properly carried out and may specify the local limits within which such powers or duties shall be carried out by such officers.

Section 8 Duties of Collector and other officers

It shall be the duty of every Collector and other officers specified under Section 7 to inquire whether after the commencement of this Act, the system of Devadasi is being practised and if as a result of such enquiry, any such practice is found to exist, he shall forthwith take such action as may be necessary to put an end to such practice.

Section 9 Offences to be tried by Executive Magistrates

The Government may confer, on an Executive Magistrate, the powers of a Judicial Magistrate of first class or of the Second Class for the trial of offences under this Act; and on such conferment of powers, the Executive Magistrate, on whom the powers are so conferred, shall be deemed for the purposes of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 to be a Judicial Magistrate of the first class, or of the Second Class, as the case may be.

Section 10 Offences under the Act to be cognizable and nonbailable

Every offence under this Act shall be cognizable and nonbailable.

Section 11 Power to make rules

(1) The Government may, by notification, make rules for carrying out all or any of the purposes of this Act.

(2) Every rule made under this Act shall immediately after it is made, be laid before the Legislative Assembly of the State if it is in session, and if it is not in session, in the session immediately following for a total period of fourteen days which may be comprised in one session or in two successive sessions and if, before the expiration in one session in which it is so laid or the session immediately following the Legislative Assembly agrees in making any modification in the rule or in the annulment of the rule, the rule shall, from the date on which the modification or annulment is notified, have effect only in such modified form or shall stand annulled, as the case may be ; so however that

any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.

Section 12 Repeal and Saving Act XXXI of 1947

(1) The Andhra Pradesh (Andhra Area) Devadasis (Prevention of Dedication) Act, 1947 is hereby repealed.

(2) On such repeal the provisions of Sections 8 and 18 of the Andhra Pradesh General Clauses Act, 1891, shall apply.

**THE TAMIL NADU DEVADASIS (PREVENTION AND DEDICATION) ACT,
1947**

Act 31 of 1947

1.Devadasis (Prevention [1947: T.N Act XXXI] of Dedication).
It extends to the whole of the [State of Tamil Nadu]

2. In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the
subject or context -

(a) "dedication" means the performance of any ceremony , by
whatever name called, by which a women is dedicated to the
service of a Hindu deity, Idol, object of worship, temple or
other religious institution, and includes 'pottukattu',
'gajjepuja', 'mudrai', and dancing by 'Kumbaharathy';

(b) "devadasi" means any woman so dedicated;

(c) "woman" means a female of any age.

3. (1) The dedication of a woman as a devadasi, whether
before or after the commencement of this Act and whether she
has consented to such dedication or not, is hereby declared
unlawful and void; and any women so dedicated shall not
thereby be deemed to have become incapable of entering into a
valid marriage.

Nothing contained in this subsection shall be deemed to
affect the operation of ²[section 34 of the Madras Hindu
Religious and Charitable Endowments Act,1951] or the rights
to which a devadasi is entitled under this section.

(2) Any custom or usage prevailing in any Hindu community
such as the Bogum, Kalavanthula, Sani, Nagavasulu, Devadasi
and Kurmapulu, that a woman of that community who gives or
takes part in any melam (nautch), dancing or music
performance in the course of any procession or otherwise is
thereby regarded as having adopted a life of prostitution and
become incapable of entering into a valid marriage and the
performance of any ceremony or act in accordance with any
such custom or usage, whether before or after the
commencement of this Act and whether the woman concerned has

consented to such performance or not, are hereby declared unlawful and void.

(3) Dancing by a woman, with or without *Kumbaharathy*, in the precincts of any temple or institution or at any festival or ceremony held in respect of such a deity, idol or object of worship is hereby declared unlawful.

4. (1) Any person having attained the age of sixteen years who after the commencement of this Act performs, permits take part in, or abets the performance of any ceremony or act for dedicating a woman as a devadasi or any ceremony or act of the nature referred to in section 3, sub-section (2), shall be punishable with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine which may extend to five hundred rupees, or with both.

Explanation. - The person referred to in this section shall include the woman in respect of whom such ceremony or act is performed.

(2) Any person having attained the of sixteen years who dances in contravention of the provision of section 3, sub-section (3), or who abets dancing in contravention of the said provisions, shall be punishable with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine which may extend to five hundred rupees, or with both.

5. No court inferior to that of a Presidency Magistrate or a Magistrate of the first class shall inquire into or try any offence punishable under section 4.