

International Journal of Advanced Research

Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research LLP

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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-57591

Title: Bridging the Structural Divide: Evaluating the Efficiency and Challenges of India's Security Forces in Combating Human Trafficking.

Recommendation:
Accept after minor revision

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓,		
Techn. Quality		✓,		
Clarity	✓,			
Significance	✓,			

Reviewer Name: Abdul Haseeb Mir

Detailed Reviewer's Report

The manuscript titled "**Bridging the Structural Divide: Evaluating the Efficiency and Challenges of India's Security Forces in Combating Human Trafficking**" provides a critical assessment of the institutional framework governing anti-human trafficking efforts in India. It addresses the systemic disconnect between legislative intent—as seen in the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act (ITPA) and constitutional protections—and the operational realities faced by security personnel. The study's scope is both expansive and focused, examining the socio-economic drivers of trafficking alongside the specific "capacity deficits" within India's specialized Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs). By evaluating the roles of the police, border security forces, and the judiciary, the author seeks to identify the "structural divide" that prevents the efficient rescue and rehabilitation of victims in one of the world's most populous and geographically diverse nations.

The researchers utilize a mixed-methods approach, synthesizing empirical data from a survey of 104 security personnel and experts with a qualitative analysis of legislative frameworks and NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) statistics. The findings center on a "Capacity Building Paradox": while 96.8% of surveyed personnel recognize anti-trafficking training as essential, nearly 80% have never received formal instruction in this area.

Key results highlight significant institutional barriers, including the practice of "jurisdictional fiction," where cases are often misclassified or shuffled between departments to avoid administrative burden. Furthermore, the study identifies a "Crime-to-Courtroom" failure, characterized by judicial delays and a lack of robust victim protection, which results in low conviction rates and the re-victimization of survivors during the legal process.

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The manuscript's primary strength is its refusal to treat human trafficking as a purely criminal issue, instead framing it as a "human security" crisis exacerbated by technological shifts and institutional neglect. The analysis of the "digital frontier"—how traffickers use encrypted platforms for money laundering and recruitment—is particularly insightful and contemporary. The work contributes to the field of Indian criminology and public policy by exposing the internal administrative "frictions" that hamper AHTUs. The author successfully argues that bridging the divide requires more than legislative amendments; it demands a shift toward a victim-centric, technologically advanced policing model that prioritizes trauma-informed care over bureaucratic box-ticking.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Provide a more detailed breakdown of the "104 security personnel and experts," specifically clarifying the ratio of police officers to NGO experts or legal practitioners.
- Elaborate on the "Mixed Methods" section by specifying how the qualitative interviews were coded and how they were integrated with the quantitative survey data.
- Incorporate a table or chart detailing the "NCRB Data Trends (2010–2024)" discussed in the text to visually demonstrate the rise or fall of specific trafficking types (e.g., forced labor vs. sexual exploitation).
- Expand the "Methods" section to include the Cronbach's alpha or other reliability scores for the survey instrument used to assess the "Capacity Building Paradox."
- Address the specific legal challenges of the "Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act (ITPA)," providing a deeper critique of why this 1956 legislation remains inadequate for 21st-century cyber-trafficking.
- Include a discussion on the role of "Inter-State Coordination," explaining how the lack of a centralized national database affects the tracking of victims who are moved across state lines.
- Clarify the term "Jurisdictional Fiction"; provide a concrete case study or hypothetical scenario to illustrate how this practice manifests during an investigation.
- Discuss the "Victim-Police Gap" more deeply, specifically addressing the cultural or systemic reasons why victims may fear law enforcement as much as their traffickers.
- Strengthen the "Recommendations" section by proposing a specific curriculum for the "96.8%" of personnel who identified a need for training, including modules on digital forensics and victim psychology.
- Standardize the reference list to ensure all digital sources (e.g., UNODC 2024, Walk Free 2023) are cited with full URLs, access dates, and consistent DOI formatting.

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Recommendation for Publication

I recommend this manuscript for **publication with minor revision**. The research offers a compelling and evidence-based look at the operational failures within India's anti-trafficking machinery. The identification of the "Capacity Building Paradox" is a significant contribution that provides a clear roadmap for institutional reform. By refining the methodological descriptions and providing a more granular look at the legislative and digital challenges, the authors will deliver a vital resource for policymakers and security experts dedicated to eradicating modern slavery in India.