

Human Trafficking in Bangladesh: A Human Rights Perspective on Forced Labor and Sex Trafficking

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Abstract

Human trafficking remains a critical human rights violation in Bangladesh, with forced labor and sex trafficking posing the most significant threats. This study examines the impacts of these forms of trafficking on fundamental human rights, focusing on violations of freedom, dignity, and protection from exploitation. Using a mixed-methods approach, it explores legal and socio-economic factors contributing to trafficking and assesses the effectiveness of current policies and legal frameworks in addressing these issues. Findings highlight gaps between policy intent and enforcement, emphasizing the need for legal reform and stronger protections for victims. This research aims to deepen understanding of trafficking's impact on human rights in Bangladesh and to propose actionable recommendations for policy improvement.

Keywords: Human trafficking, human rights violations, sex trafficking, forced labor, Bangladesh, legal reform.

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1. Introduction

Human trafficking is a significant global issue and a profound human rights violation, primarily manifesting as forced labour and sex trafficking. According to the

International Labour Organization (ILO), approximately 21 million people worldwide are victims of trafficking, generating an estimated \$32 billion annually, making it the third-largest criminal industry globally (ILO, 2024; Islam, 2023). Despite international frameworks, such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), aimed at combating trafficking, the issue remains widespread, particularly in countries facing severe socio-economic challenges (Han, 2024; Huda et al., 2022).

Bangladesh, due to its strategic geographical position, dense population, and socio-economic disparities, has become a significant hub for human trafficking, especially sex trafficking and forced labour (van der Vink et al., 2024; Farhana and Abdul Mannan, 2024). Widespread poverty, limited educational access, and entrenched gender inequalities heighten Bangladesh's vulnerability,

making it both a source and destination for trafficking activities (Biswas and Chatterjee, 2021; Khan and Arslan, 2022). Women and children are disproportionately affected, frequently subjected to severe exploitation, particularly in regions such as the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, where young girls represent the most trafficking group (Franchino-Olsen, 2021; Ricard-Guay and Hanley, 2020; Nazer and Greenbaum, 2020; Shoji and Tsubota, 2022; Alam et al., 2023; Santana, 2022; IOM, 2024).

Reports from the UN Special Rapporteur and various NGOs indicate concentrated trafficking activities in high-risk areas such as Dhaka, Chittagong, and along borders with India and Myanmar. These regions, marked by socio-economic disparities, enable trafficking networks that exploit vulnerable populations for sexual and labour exploitation (Khondakar, 2024; Ahsan, 2022). The persistence of these crimes, despite the enactment of the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act (PSHTA) of 2012, reveals systemic weaknesses in Bangladesh's legal and institutional frameworks. Laws like the PSHTA and international conventions have been adopted, but implementation and enforcement remain weak due to issues such as corruption, limited resources, and lack of awareness within law enforcement (Sharmin and Rahman, 2017; Islam, 2023).

While existing research has examined the socio-economic drivers of trafficking in Bangladesh, gaps remain in studies that address the specific human rights abuses experienced by victims of sex trafficking and forced labour. These violations include denials of fundamental rights to freedom, dignity, fair working conditions, and protection from violence and exploitation. Furthermore, there is a lack of analysis on the effectiveness of legal and policy frameworks in addressing trafficking's human rights dimensions in Bangladesh (Faroque and South, 2022; Zafarullah and Haque, 2023).

Given the alarming increase in sex trafficking and forced labour cases and their significant impact on human rights, this research is both timely and essential. It aims to address these gaps by examining how sex trafficking and forced labour violate fundamental human rights in Bangladesh, critically evaluating the shortcomings in current legal and social responses. The study provides evidence-based recommendations for legal reform and strengthened protections for victims, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the human rights dimensions of trafficking in Bangladesh and informing future academic and policy discourse.

2. Overview of Human Trafficking in Bangladesh

Human trafficking in Bangladesh takes several forms, with sex trafficking and forced labour as two of the most pervasive types, each leading to widespread

human rights violations. According to the ILO, over 21 million people globally are victims of forced labour, with Bangladesh contributing significantly to these figures (ILO, 2024). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports that 60% of trafficking cases in Bangladesh involve forced labour, while 40% pertain to sex trafficking, disproportionately affecting women and children (UNODC, 2023). Despite the enactment of the PSHTA in 2012, trafficking persists due to systemic enforcement failures, leaving many victims without adequate protection or recourse. Women and children, particularly from impoverished backgrounds, are especially vulnerable, often forced into sexual slavery or exploitative labour conditions that strip them of their basic human rights to freedom, dignity, and security (Banarjee, 2020). For instance, data from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) show that in Cox's Bazar's Rohingya refugee camps, 99 confirmed cases of forced labour and sexual exploitation of young girls were reported in 2023, highlighting the crisis's severity (IOM, 2024).

While previous research has documented the socio-economic drivers of trafficking—poverty, gender inequality, and lack of education—critical gaps remain in examining how sex trafficking and forced labour directly violate human rights. Much of the research does not differentiate between trafficking types and their unique impacts on victims' rights to freedom from violence, exploitation, and fair working conditions. This lack of focused research has fostered a policy environment that inadequately addresses trafficking victims' distinct needs, resulting in insufficient legal and social interventions.

Additionally, intersectional factors such as gender, age, and socio-economic status, which amplify vulnerability to trafficking, remain underexplored in Bangladesh. Several UN reports indicate that socio-economic disparities elevate risks for certain groups, yet there is insufficient analysis of how these vulnerabilities intersect with weak enforcement of trafficking laws. The inability of legal and social frameworks to address these complexities has led to a persistent cycle of human rights violations affecting thousands of victims.

This study aims to address these critical gaps by focusing on the human rights violations specific to sex trafficking and forced labour in Bangladesh. Through an in-depth analysis of current legal and social responses, supported by qualitative and quantitative data, this research will provide evidence-based recommendations for enhancing victim protections and strengthening legal frameworks. In doing so, the study seeks to advance the understanding of trafficking's human rights dimensions in Bangladesh and advocate for more effective reforms.

3. Literature Review

Human trafficking in Bangladesh has been extensively researched, with substantial focus on socio-economic drivers and the impact on vulnerable populations, particularly women and children. Existing studies confirm that Bangladesh is a hotspot for both sex trafficking and forced labour, driven by factors such as poverty, limited access to education, and systemic gender inequality. These conditions create an environment ripe for exploitation, especially in areas like Dhaka, Chittagong, and along the borders with India and Myanmar (van der Vink et al., 2024; Uddin, 2017; Alam et al., 2023).

Research consistently shows that women and children are disproportionately impacted by trafficking in Bangladesh, often forced into sexual slavery or exploitative labour that deprives them of their basic rights to freedom, dignity, and security. Studies by Rosy (2016), Shoji and Tsubota (2022), and Joarder and Miller (2014) emphasize the severe human rights violations these victims face, including loss of autonomy, exposure to violence, and exploitation under harsh conditions. While these general violations are documented, a significant gap remains concerning the specific mechanisms through which sex trafficking and forced labour infringe upon human rights in the Bangladeshi context.

The existing legal framework, particularly the PSHTA of 2012, represents an important legislative step toward combatting trafficking. However, studies highlight its limitations, pointing to weak enforcement, corruption, and insufficient resources as major obstacles. Studied by Azad (2019), Paul and Hasnath (2000), Paul and Hasnath (2019), Azad (2017) and Norliza et al. (2021) argues that these shortcomings allow traffickers to operate with relative impunity, leaving victim protection mechanisms inadequate. Additionally, literature notes the disconnect between policy intentions and real-world outcomes, a gap further compounded by the socio-economic vulnerabilities of those affected (Ahmed, 2016; Biswas, 2015; Azad, 2019).

Despite considerable research into socio-economic drivers like poverty, lack of education, and gender inequality, there is a notable deficiency in studies that specifically examine the human rights violations faced by victims of sex trafficking and forced labour. While studies have broadly identified infringements—such as the denial of freedom, dignity, and security—few delve into how these rights are systematically violated in the Bangladeshi trafficking context. Furthermore, most studies address trafficking as a general issue, without adequately differentiating between forms of trafficking and their distinct impacts on human rights. This lack of specificity results in a policy environment that fails to address the unique needs of these victims.

Additionally, the intersectionality of factors such as gender, age, and socio-economic status, which intensify vulnerability to trafficking, remains underexplored. Existing literature does not adequately examine how these factors heighten the risk for certain groups, nor does it critically assess how effectively current laws and policies mitigate these risks. This gap is particularly evident in Bangladesh, where legal and social frameworks have struggled to adapt to trafficking's complexities and its impact on human rights.

Given these research gaps, this study seeks to provide a detailed examination of the human rights violations associated with sex trafficking and forced labour in Bangladesh. By focusing on the specific ways these forms of trafficking violate fundamental human rights, this study aims to offer nuanced insights that inform more effective legal and policy interventions. The research critically evaluates the shortcomings of current legal and social responses, particularly the PSHTA of 2012, and proposes evidence-based recommendations to strengthen protections for trafficking victims in Bangladesh. By addressing the underexplored areas of human rights violations specific to sex trafficking and forced labour, the intersectionality of victim vulnerabilities, and gaps in enforcement, this study aspires to inform the development of targeted and effective interventions that better protect trafficking victims' rights in Bangladesh.

4. Methodology

This research employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis of the human rights violations associated with sex trafficking and forced labour in Bangladesh. This approach aligns with the study's objectives, which focus on understanding the legal, socio-economic, and systemic factors contributing to trafficking and the subsequent violations of human rights. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods allows for an in-depth exploration of individual experiences alongside broader trends and patterns in trafficking. The study involved an extensive review of existing literature, legal documents such as the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act (PSHTA) of 2012, policy reports, and documents from NGOs, government agencies, and international organisations. This analysis was designed to gather detailed data on trafficking patterns, human rights violations, and the effectiveness of current legal measures. Relying on documentary analysis and case studies, the qualitative methodology is particularly suited to the study's aim of examining the human rights violations linked to sex trafficking and forced labour in Bangladesh. By focusing on secondary data, this research offers a thorough and critical examination of the legal and socio-economic factors contributing to trafficking, ensuring a resource-efficient analysis that aligns with

the study's objectives and addresses the complexities of human trafficking within existing legal and policy frameworks.

5. Human Trafficking: Conceptual Framework

This study's conceptual framework is designed to systematically analyse the processes through which sex trafficking and forced labour lead to specific human rights violations in Bangladesh. Rooted in identified research gaps, the framework synthesises the various stages of trafficking with corresponding human rights violations, making it particularly relevant for application in the Bangladeshi context. Before delving into the distinct phases of human trafficking, it is essential to briefly clarify the definitions of sex trafficking, forced labour trafficking, and human rights abuses.

5.1 Sex Trafficking

According to the United States' Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, severe forms of human trafficking include the recruitment, harbouring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for a commercial sex act, where such an act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or involves an individual under 18 years of age (Office on Violence Against Women [OVAW], 2000). In the Bangladeshi context, this definition encompasses the exploitation of women and children trafficked within the country or across borders under false promises of employment or better living conditions, ultimately coercing them into sexual slavery (Rahman, 2023; Countryman-Roswurm and Bolin, 2014; Cole and Sprang, 2015).

5.2 Forced Labor Trafficking

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVAW) defines forced labour trafficking as the recruitment, harbouring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labour or services through force, fraud, or coercion, resulting in involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery (Hoxha and Taho, 2023; Rood et al., 2020). In Bangladesh, this form of trafficking is prevalent in sectors such as domestic work, agriculture, and manufacturing. Trafficked individuals, including both children and adults, are coerced into exploitative work conditions, often deprived of freedom, forced to work without fair compensation, and prevented from leaving due to threats, violence, or other coercive tactics imposed by traffickers or employers.

5.3 Human Rights Violations

Human rights violations encompass transgressions against the basic rights and freedoms to which all individuals are entitled. This study examines these violations within the context of the abuse and exploitation faced by victims of sex trafficking and forced labour in Bangladesh. Violations include, but are not

limited to, the right to freedom from slavery and forced labour, the right to personal security, the right to freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, and the right to fair and just working conditions. The primary aim of this conceptual framework is to map the pathways through which human trafficking leads to violations of fundamental human rights, including freedom, dignity, security, and fair labour practices. Additionally, the framework highlights systemic failures and socio-economic vulnerabilities that intensify these violations.

5.4 Stages of Human Trafficking

5.4.1 Recruitment and Deception

This stage marks the initial contact between traffickers and victims. Victims are often recruited through deception, coercion, or abduction, exploiting socio-economic vulnerabilities such as poverty, lack of education, and unemployment. At this stage, the right to autonomy and freedom is violated, as victims are manipulated or coerced into trafficking situations under false pretenses.

5.4.2 Transportation and Transfer

Following recruitment, victims are transported, frequently across borders or to isolated locations within or outside the country. This stage typically involves the illegal movement of victims, isolating them from support systems and subjecting them to confinement. Here, the right to freedom of movement and personal liberty is violated, as victims are unlawfully detained and transported against their will.

5.4.3 Exploitation and Abuse

Once under the traffickers' control, victims endure various forms of exploitation, including forced labour, sexual exploitation, and servitude. This stage witnesses the most severe human rights abuses, where the rights to dignity, security, and fair labour practices are grossly violated. Victims are compelled to work under exploitative conditions without fair compensation, often in hazardous environments.

5.5 Processes of Human Rights Violations

- **Denial of Freedom:** Victims experience systematic denial of freedom throughout the trafficking process, including physical confinement, coercion, and psychological manipulation, stripping them of autonomy and personal liberty.
- **Exploitation of Labor and Body:** In the exploitation stage, victims' labour and bodies are commodified, resulting in severe violations of dignity and bodily integrity. Forced labour and sexual exploitation directly

infringe on victims' rights to fair working conditions and respect for their personhood.

- **Systemic Violence and Coercion:** The trafficking process is characterised by systemic violence and coercion, leading to continual violations of victims' rights to security and protection from harm. This includes threats, physical abuse, and the perpetuation of fear to maintain control over victims.

This conceptual framework highlights key research gaps, such as inadequate legal protections, socio-economic vulnerabilities, and the neglected intersectionality of victim identities, which exacerbate trafficking-related human rights violations in Bangladesh. By mapping human rights violations at each trafficking stage—recruitment, transportation, and exploitation—the framework demonstrates how these processes deny victims their rights to freedom, dignity, and security. It also underscores systemic failures, including weak legal enforcement and harmful social norms, that perpetuate these violations. The framework proposes targeted legal, social, and economic interventions to enhance victim protection and prevent trafficking.

6. Study Findings

This study reveals several significant findings that align closely with its objectives, examining the impact of forced labour and sex trafficking on human rights in Bangladesh. The findings highlight the complex interplay of social, economic, and cultural factors that perpetuate human trafficking and underscore the urgent need for comprehensive solutions. Bangladesh's challenging socio-economic landscape has allowed trafficking to become deeply entrenched in the country's societal fabric.

Factors such as child labour, poverty, and high unemployment rates are closely linked to trafficking patterns in Bangladesh. These issues are intensified by population size and growth rates, which may contribute to increased criminal activity and greater vulnerability to exploitation. The socio-economic environment is further complicated by high poverty levels, recurring natural disasters, and migration from rural to urban areas in search of employment. Such conditions raise the risk of violence against women, forced labour, and sexual exploitation through human trafficking.



Population: 167,184,465 (2023 est.)
 Population Growth Rate: 0.91% (2023 est.)
 Birth Rate: 17.5 births/1,000 population (2023 est.)
 Unemployment Rate: 4.2% (2023 est.)
 Population below poverty line: 24.3% (2016 est.)
 Gross Domestic Product per Capita: \$5,900 (2021 est.)
 children ages 5-14: Child labor remains a concern in Bangladesh, with children aged 5-14 often engaged in various forms of work, particularly in informal sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, and domestic work.
 Net Migration Rate: 2.9 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2023 est.)
 Unemployment: 5.23% (2021 est.) Youth ages 15-24: total: 14.7%, male: 12.5%, female: 19.6% (2021 est.)
 Population below poverty line: 24.3% (2016 est.)
 Land boundaries: Total: 4,413 km. border countries (2): Burma 271 km, India 4,142 km

Source: Pen Picture of Bangladesh, CIA World Factbook, February 15, 2024 (Central Intelligence Agency)

6.1 Human Rights Violations

The study reveals extensive human rights violations associated with sex trafficking and forced labour in Bangladesh, including the denial of fundamental rights such as freedom, dignity, security, and fair labour practices. These violations occur at multiple stages of trafficking—recruitment, transportation, and exploitation—each exacerbated by systemic factors that contribute to abuse.

Victims of forced labour and sex trafficking in Bangladesh suffer from severe human rights infringements, enduring physical violence, psychological trauma, and coercion that lead to long-term mental and physical health consequences. Their freedom of movement is severely restricted, especially in cases of bonded labour and sex trafficking, violating their basic rights to freedom and dignity. Moreover, trafficked individuals frequently lack access to basic necessities, further compounding their vulnerability.

6.2 Socio-Economic Drivers of Trafficking

Findings indicate that traffickers exploit socio-economic vulnerabilities, particularly among marginalised communities. Factors such as lack of education, poverty, and unemployment drive individuals—especially young people—to seek job opportunities, often in high-risk environments where traffickers take advantage by making false promises of employment, education, or marriage. Economic hardship and limited social support significantly increase the

vulnerability of women and children to trafficking, making them primary targets for exploitation.

6.3 Systemic Failures and Inequities

Systemic failures—including inadequate victim support services, social stigma, and entrenched cultural norms—pose substantial barriers to effective anti-trafficking efforts in Bangladesh. These systemic issues hinder both the prevention of trafficking and the rehabilitation of victims, underscoring the need for comprehensive, coordinated responses.

Bangladesh’s historically patriarchal social structure and prevalent gender-based discrimination contribute significantly to patterns of human trafficking. The study reveals that women and girls are disproportionately victimised, with a substantial proportion exploited for sexual purposes. Harmful cultural practices, such as the dowry system, child marriage, and gender-based violence, are widespread, creating an environment where young people, particularly girls, are vulnerable to being coerced or deceived into trafficking. Child labour and child marriage further exacerbate these vulnerabilities, highlighting the need for cultural and legal reforms to address trafficking risks.

6.4 Effectiveness of Legal Frameworks

The effectiveness of current legal frameworks, particularly regarding the enforcement of the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act (PSHTA) of 2012, is hindered by significant gaps. These limitations reduce the law’s impact on protecting victims and prosecuting traffickers, allowing trafficking to persist in Bangladesh. While Bangladesh has ratified international agreements aimed at curbing human trafficking, including the Palermo Protocol that supplements the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, gaps in legal and policy frameworks continue to weaken anti-trafficking efforts.

The enforcement of anti-trafficking laws suffers from inadequate resources, insufficient training for law enforcement personnel, and corruption within enforcement agencies. As a result, traffickers often operate with impunity, while victims rarely receive justice. Additionally, support services for trafficking survivors—such as safe shelters, psychological counselling, and legal assistance—are critically lacking, which frequently forces victims back into vulnerable situations, perpetuating the cycle of trafficking.

6.5 Community and Societal Attitudes Towards Trafficking

Community attitudes, societal norms, illiteracy, and a lack of awareness play a crucial role in either perpetuating or mitigating trafficking practices. Findings reveal that victims of sex trafficking face substantial social stigma and shame, which discourages them from seeking help or justice. Moreover, the cultural

mentality in some communities may lead individuals to exploit victims further or ostracise their families. Limited community awareness about the risks of trafficking and the rights of victims restricts community-level prevention efforts and impedes the reintegration of survivors.

6.5 Emerged New Trafficking Trends

The study indicates an alarming emergence of new trafficking trends influenced by social media, globalisation, technological advances, and economic shifts. Increasingly, traffickers exploit digital platforms and social media to recruit and manipulate victims, making detection and prevention more challenging. Additionally, there is a rising trend of cross-border trafficking from Bangladesh, facilitated by porous borders with neighbouring countries. These borders allow for various crimes, including trafficking, as traffickers utilise land, air, and sea routes to move victims across borders undetected, leveraging transportation networks to expand their illicit operations (Rahman & Islam, 2024).



Map: Human Trafficking Routes of Bangladesh (Source: Rahman & Islam, 2024)

Human trafficking syndicates operate in multiple countries, including Turkey, Libya, Bangladesh, India, and Nepal, exploiting the desperation of low-income individuals. They smuggle people into Middle Eastern, Latin American, and European nations.

6.6 Limited Resources and Funding

One of the primary challenges in Bangladesh's anti-trafficking efforts is the constraint of limited resources and funding. Adequate financial support is essential for implementing effective prevention, protection, and prosecution

measures. Without sufficient resources, the establishment of robust victim support systems and comprehensive awareness campaigns is impeded, weakening the overall response to trafficking.

6.7 Capacity Building and Training

The study highlights a critical shortage of skilled law enforcement, immigration officers, and other personnel essential to combating trafficking in Bangladesh. Continuous capacity-building initiatives are required, with training programs focused on updating personnel about evolving trafficking trends, investigative techniques, and victim-centred approaches. A lack of specialised expertise presents challenges in effectively addressing trafficking and protecting victims.

6.8 Underreporting and Data Collection

The study indicates that the true extent of human trafficking, particularly forced labour and sex trafficking, may be significantly underestimated due to underreporting. The clandestine nature of trafficking, along with the fear and stigma experienced by victims, hampers accurate data collection. Strengthening mechanisms for reporting and data collection is essential to assess the prevalence and trends of trafficking in Bangladesh more accurately.

6.9 Rehabilitation and Reintegration Challenges

Providing effective rehabilitation and support to trafficking survivors remains challenging, particularly in ensuring sustainable reintegration into society. Stigmatisation, limited economic opportunities, and psychological trauma can severely impact survivors' ability to rebuild their lives. Although awareness campaigns exist, gaps in public knowledge about trafficking risks and indicators persist. More extensive educational initiatives are needed to empower communities to recognise, report, and prevent trafficking, fostering a more vigilant society that actively opposes human trafficking.

These findings underscore the complex, interwoven factors contributing to human trafficking in Bangladesh and highlight the urgent need for more targeted, comprehensive interventions. Addressing both the root causes and immediate consequences of trafficking requires enhanced protection and enforcement mechanisms, as well as strategic, multi-faceted approaches to reduce vulnerabilities and support survivors.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study provides an in-depth examination of the human rights violations associated with sex trafficking and forced labour in Bangladesh. Through a mixed-methods approach, it addresses key gaps in understanding how these abuses persist and the conditions enabling them. Findings highlight the pervasive nature of these violations, the limitations of current legal frameworks, the socio-

economic factors contributing to trafficking, and the systemic failures hindering effective interventions. The conclusions underscore the urgent need for strengthened legal enforcement. While the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act (PSHTA) of 2012 is a vital step toward combatting trafficking, the study suggests that it remains insufficient in its current form. Recommendations include bolstering enforcement, enhancing law enforcement training, increasing prosecution rigor against traffickers, and providing better legal protections for victims.

The study also emphasizes the importance of addressing socio-economic vulnerabilities that make individuals susceptible to trafficking. Poverty, lack of education, and gender discrimination are identified as primary drivers, indicating that a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy must include initiatives to alleviate these conditions. Policy interventions promoting education, economic opportunities, and gender equality are recommended to reduce these vulnerabilities. Victim support is another critical area for improvement. The research highlights gaps in current support services, such as limited access to legal aid, psychological counselling, and safe shelters. It calls for a more coordinated approach among NGOs, government agencies, and international organisations to deliver comprehensive and effective support for trafficking survivors.

Finally, the study advocates for enhanced collaboration between NGOs and the government, as both play crucial roles in combatting trafficking. Greater synergy in their efforts, along with stronger partnerships, improved resource allocation, and a proactive government role in enforcing anti-trafficking laws, is essential for protecting human rights. In summary, this study seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on human trafficking and human rights by offering actionable insights to inform policy and practice in Bangladesh. By focusing on legal reform, socio-economic intervention, victim support, and institutional collaboration, the study presents a comprehensive approach to addressing the complex and pervasive issue of human trafficking in the region.

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