

Refugee camps as a site of violence: An exploration into violence against women in Kalindi Kunj camp.

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Abstract

For the past several decades, scholars working in the field of migration, gender-based violence and refugee studies have often shed light on the difficult conditions experienced by refugees living in the camps. Although camps are established to provide temporary shelter along with protective environments for refugees in host countries, refugees still can experience various risks in such encampments. The pilot study I did in late December of 2019 gave me a glimpse of the problems faced by the residents of the Kalindi Kunj refugee camp. The camp hosts Rohingya refugees, who fled the ethnic genocide that happened to them by the Burmese military. Insufficient funds, limited economic livelihood, restricted opportunities for political participation and confined living conditions are just some of the issues experienced by them. Another prevailing problem that they face is violence. Even though all residents of the camp have encountered violence, females of the camp are at a high risk of being exposed to gender-specific threats of violence, such as sexual abuse. This threat is central to this paper which is inspired by the work of Ulrike Krause on ‘Violence Against Women in the Congolese refugee in a camp in Uganda. Similarly, the paper here is also attempting to reveal the forms and scopes of gender-based violence- sexual violence, domestic violence and structural discrimination faced by the female residents of the camp and their relation to the camp's site and situation.

For understanding the gendered experience of the women, the paper is using the qualitative methods of ethnography and case study. For conducting interviews the paper is using a method of semi-structured interview but is also relying on informal conversational interview with no

predetermined question in order to remain open and adaptable to the needs and priorities of interviewees.

KEY WORDS: Migration, Refugee, Violence, Sexual abuse