

PROSTITUTION: PROFESSION, NEED OR HELPLESSNESS

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Abstract

Prostitution, the oldest but least spoken about profession or we can say least spoken topic in broad daylight. Prostitution, a profession practiced all around the globe engaging a remarkable percentage of people around the world in one or the other way but still never openly discussed. Prostitution, which according to Indian cinema is always born out of helplessness. Prostitution, which according to general thoughts - limits only to female. Prostitution is believed to be practiced since god's era but also considered a sin in current civilizations. Prostitution, the profession which according to economists can never face recession. It has always been a debatable topic to legalize or to penalize prostitution in the corridors of Human Rights offices. This research paper discusses different aspects like legal status, reasons for entering into this profession, impact of prostitution on society and financial stature of the same. This paper also studies the digital presentation of this profession as it plays a vital role in shaping minds of the common man. It also covers the life and status of the individuals involved in this profession and opinion of others towards the people involved in this profession. It suggest some steps government should take to protect the human rights of the people involved in this profession. The paper is secondary data based, the data is collected from several articles, research papers, newspaper reports, government reports, movies, short films and several interviews of people related to this profession.

Keywords: Prostitution, Legal Status, impact on society, financial stature, digital presentation

INTRODUCTION

Prostitution described as a profession or service of engaging into sex activities for the exchange of money, good or other benefits. Prostitution majorly is believed that is practiced by females and therefore clients are believed to males. Prostitution is described as a profession or service of engaging into sex activities for the exchange of money, goods or other benefits. Prostitution majorly is observed that it is practiced by females and therefore clients are believed to males. It is one of the world's oldest profession as it has been in practice from ancient times. Under Indian mythology there are many illustrations of celestial demigods as prostitutes and it has been continued over centuries and is still being practiced in today's juncture, where it turns out that it has become a multi-billion industry, although being a massive industry and earning a lot of revenues every year, prostitution is still considered a taboo. The depiction of prostitution in the world cinema is always helplessness but that's just one side of the story, sometimes it's the need of an hour or their own choice and many a times they are forced into it.

Prostitution and its legal status have always been a dubious topic for the society. Some believe that it is an act of sin and should be penalized, while other believe it's not and should be legalized. So, is prostitution a need or profession?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jennifer Musto in her article titled **Prostitution and Sex Work** published in **International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences (Second Edition)**, 2015, described prostitution as a labor system related to gender, sex and racialism. Prostitution typically offers sexual services in exchange of money, goods, or other benefits. According to Jennifer, prostitution blur the boundaries between erotic, emotional, and economic labor by creating different types of special intimate environments. She further described prostitution as a part of an industry and commercial market that is global in reach and diverse in its spatial, legal, and occupational organization.

Sara Kallock, in her article titled **Gender and the Global Sex Market** published in **The Handbook of International Political Economy and Gender (2018)**, considers prostitution as an appropriate tool to analyze Feminist political economy due to its highly gendered socio-economic formations as it both impact women and shape gender discourses. She distinct female sex work into three feminist approaches namely abolitionism, sex-radicalism, and sex-work labourism.

Dr. Tulsing sonwani in her research paper titled **Prostitution in Indian society: Issues, trends and rehabilitation** describes prostitution as the oldest and hated profession in Indian society. She discusses the history of prostitution in India from the time of *vedas* by giving references of demigods Menka, Rambha, Urvashi and Thilothama. She also mentions the Vatsayayaan, an Indian sage of Third Century B.C., who gave *kamasutra*. She further talks about the times of Mughal leaders when words like *Tawaiifs* and *mujras* were introduced in the country. Apart from history she also differentiated Prostitutes in four types : brothel

prostitutes (prostitutes working in a brothel), call girl prostitutes (solicits through middlemen), street prostitutes (solicits on roads themselves) and other prostitutes (found in dance bars, massage parlors and other places).

OBJECTIVE

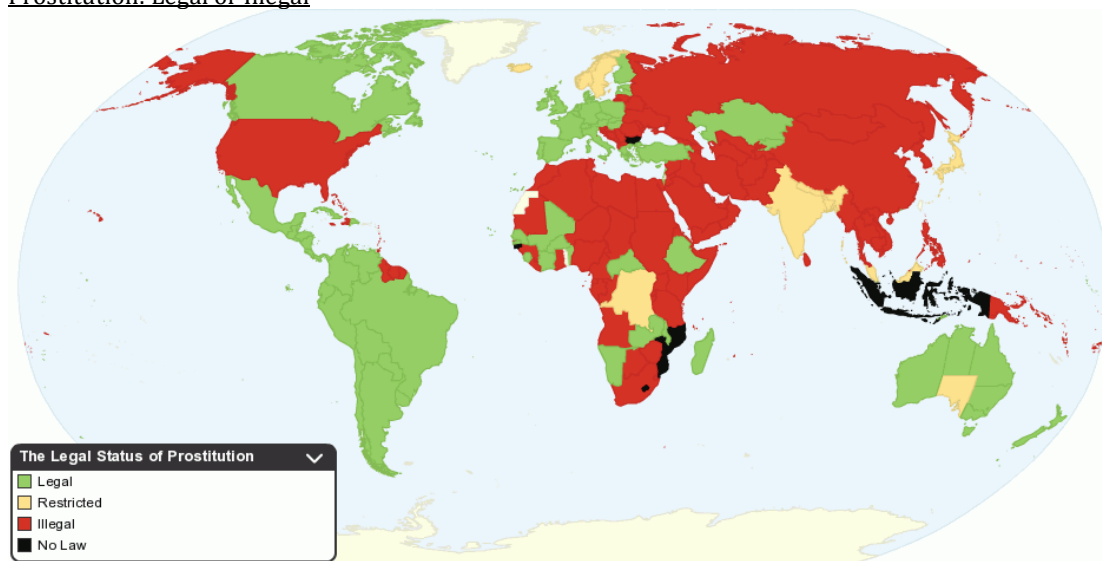
- ❖ To Study the legality, reasons, impact and financial structure of Prostitution.
- ❖ To Study the digital presentation of Prostitution and Prostitutes.
- ❖ To Study the lifestyle of prostitutes and opinion of others about them.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research paper is descriptive in nature. The paper is secondary data based, the data is collected from several articles, research papers, newspaper reports, government reports, movies, short films and several interviews of people related to this profession.

DATA ANALYSIS

Prostitution: Legal or Illegal



- ❖ Every country has different rules regarding prostitution. Prostitution in many countries like Australia (in major parts), Germany, Turkey, New Zealand and Netherlands is completely legal whereas in countries like Russia, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. But if we talk about countries like India, Canada and Japan prostitution is legal but restricted.
- ❖ If we talk about India in particular, the term Prostitution is legal according to the law, but several practices under prostitution are strictly prohibited and penalized. Activities like soliciting in public, child prostitution, running a brothel, kerb crawling and pimping is illegal in India. According to ITPA (a.k.a. PITA), Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, punishment in case of above mentioned activities ranges from imprisonment of 3 months as in case of pimping or prostitution in public or notified area to up to imprisonment for 7 years as in case of child prostitution. The level of punishment even rises up to life imprisonment in case of sex trafficking and procuring of minors. However prostitution at individual level happening in a non-public area (public areas like hospitals, places of worship, educational institutions, and hostels) or a non-notified area (notified area is a area declared 'prostitution-free' by state government under PITA) is considered legal in India.
- ❖ The primary reason for any state or country to declare or think about declaring prostitution illegal is forced prostitution. From a very long time prostitution is considered as very profitable business as sex might not be an open topic in places like India but is one of the most desired things of a normal human being. As everyone is not able to satisfy this desire from their personal relationships the scope for prostitution becomes huge. As the scope is huge so is the demand for prostitution. As prostitution depends on one and only factor human beings the demand for the same is also high and the number of people entering into this profession willingly is not sufficient to satisfy the demands of the market. So to fulfill this demand forced prostitution comes into action. Girls are being kidnapped, women are trapped into human trafficking cartels and many such activities takes place rising the crime rate and also violating human rights. Therefore, to keep these things in control, often there is a demand to ban and penalize prostitution.

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- ❖ While the people in support of legalizing prostitution often give the reason that it supports economically weaker single or separated females in getting a good amount of money for their survival. There also can be a possibility that by legalizing prostitution the number of women entering into this profession willingly would increase decreasing the rate of forced prostitution. Once legalized prostitution can also be regulated in a better manner thus preventing forced or child prostitution. One more argument by people supporting prostitution is it helps in preventing rape. It is believed that one of the primary reasons, other than personal disputes with the victim, of rape is the urge of sex in the minds of the rapists. If prostitution being legal can help such people to satisfy their urge in a more consent full manner thus preventing rape.

Reasons behind people entering prostitution

- ❖ It is generally believed, specially in India, that prostitution is always forced on girls and it is because of the helplessness of the prostitutes that they are being part of this profession. But surveys show that only 35% of the prostitutes enter this profession due to this reason. These 35% prostitutes are usually females who are either kidnapped and trapped in human trafficking cartels or been misguided by some agents into this profession in name of other works like offering jobs in big cities, modelling or in name of getting roles in movies. People believe that majority of the prostitutes are in this profession due to this reason only because the society only talks about stories of women who are forced into this. The newspapers only report news like women saved from this brothel or from this or that human trafficking cartel, but the truth is there is a remarkable percentage of women being part of prostitution willingly, may be due to poverty, but willingly.
- ❖ Another major reason of people entering this profession is money. It has been observed in big cities prostitution is seen as tough but profitable mode of survival for females. It is observed that girls staying in hostels, single mothers, separated or divorced females in big cities use prostitution for earnings for their survival and some of the time for the lavish lifestyle the money earned offers. It is also observed that in places women enter into sexual relationship with landlords or loan givers if the women or her family is unable to pay-off the loans.
- ❖ One more major reason for people entering into prostitution is family. In many researches it has been found that 90% of female children of prostitutes end up in prostitution. There are also tribes which have prostitution as their tradition. For example the Banchchara tribe in Madhya Pradesh. They have the tradition that every female member of the tribe as soon as reaches late pubescent will do the sex work while the males will do pimping for them. In Banchchara community, the birth of a girl child is celebrated like no other place in India as for them it is the birth of another earning member for the tribe. This tribe practice prostitution in their village itself near the Neemuch highway. Every house has separate rooms made specially for this work. Their clients are usually Men from nearby villages and people passing by the village through the highway.
- ❖ There can be several other reasons as well for entering into this profession like disowned by family or society for any reasons like rape, failed runaway marriages, mental illness, etc.

Income of Prostitutes

- ❖ As mentioned above the market of prostitution is huge. In few countries like Germany and Austria governments make a huge profit of this market as prostitution is taxable there. Whereas in countries like India, New Zealand and Netherlands where prostitution is legal (irrespective of extent) the government hardly takes any interest in revenues generated through them. The prostitution industry (in monetary context) here is similar to that of the countries where it is illegal. It is called the underground economy similar to that of drugs.
- ❖ According to a report, annual global revenue generated through prostitution worth up to \$ 186 Billion. The majority of which coming from China (\$73 Billion) where it is illegal. If we talk about countries where it is legal and regulated Germany stands first with an annual worth of \$18 Billion followed by Netherlands (\$800Million). The stats shows us that in countries where prostitution is illegal this industry earns much more as compared to the countries where it is legal and regulated.
- ❖ If we talk about India, according to the same report mentioned above, it worth around \$ 8.4 Billion. In India major part of this revenue is generated through high-end prostitutes also known as Elite prostitutes. These prostitutes are believed to serving to the high profile society of India. A huge amount of money of this revenue is also believed to be generated through brothels. Despite being illegal brothel owners are able to generate a huge amount of revenue. Revenue generation is that high that it is more than sufficient to bribe the regulating authorities and run the business uninterrupted and also take care of all sex workers and their children.
- ❖ The majority of the women being willingly part of this profession are attracted towards the same due to this particular reason. Many of the same believe that others use brain for their living they use their body. The money involved in this business is mainly in cash form or goods form which directly benefit the prostitutes as they don't need to show the record of their income thus are able to spend it as they want.

The earning of a high-end prostitute from a single visit is believed to be more than that of a month's salary of a Software Engineer or a MBBS doctor.

Presentation of Prostitution

- ❖ Media is considered the fourth pillar of democracy as it plays a vital role in shaping mindsets of the people. People's awareness in present era is highly dependent on media. Therefore, it is important to understand how media presents prostitution.
- ❖ If we talk about movies, there have been a lot of movies made about prostitution in India and abroad from the beginning of cinema. Almost 90% of the movies made in India talks about women being forced into this profession. Thus, shaping Indian minds towards the fact that all the prostitutes are forced prostitutes. In some movies even when the girl is shown entering prostitution willingly or due to lack of money in later part is shown falling in love with a person and fighting to get out the business. Very less countable movies in Indian Cinema are made showing different factors being reasons for people entering into prostitution and sustaining in the system.
- ❖ Modern societies rely heavily on mass media which helps in constructing the reality for the people. Medias portrayal on prostitutes make it seems like in demand and living a luxurious life, which de-emphasizes their needs for legal protection, sexual health etc. Cinemas glorified sex don't portray the brutal reality of human trafficking, child abuse and many other horrible conditions like low salary, long term contract, no health security and lack of choice in requesting protected sex.
- ❖ Hyper sexualization of the women in media just make them seem like sex commodities. Also, by glorifying these woman and men, it passes a moral judgement that they are impure and sinful which make it even harder for them to seek the help which they need.
- ❖ The way how cinematic media presents the end of these woman in a happy ever after like in **pretty woman**, well the reality is quiet depressing these are the women who are subject to extreme body invasion, violence, stigma, betrayal. Their life's harsh truth is with more experience they earn less and they are thrown out of the business with lots of debts and multiple diseases.

Lifestyle Of Prostitutes, their impact on society and Societies Perspective

- ❖ As mentioned above people believe that majority of the prostitutes are forced into prostitution thus there life are miserable. But not every prostitutes life is like this. Yes, the life of women forced into prostitution is unimaginably miserable and painful. They are forced to do sex, which is equivalent to rape, with men who are none less than dogs scratching meat of a body. The first timers or the ones in initial stages are often thrown in front of such wild men because the resistance shown by these women and sense of power practiced by these men at that moment satisfy men to the core and destroys the thinking ability of the women. This continuous torture destroys there willingness to live or to fight back making them use to for this pain and thus making them mature permanent prostitutes. The pain they face is not only physical but also mental. They are separated from their families mostly at a younger age and pushed into this never-ending one-sided path. Some rescued, some saved, some survived and some died. The ones who survive the pain in their initial stages become use to to the pain and later become a part of the same system which pulled them into prostitution. Some who are lucky enough escape from the system or are saved by the police. The ones who cannot bare the pain die by committing suicide or due to excessive bleeding if not taken care of. The ones who survive and later become part of the system afterwards get many chances of leaving this profession or to run away from this cartels but they get so use to it and also their fear of being dragged back into the same if ran away stops them from doing so.
- ❖ Being in this profession also restricts prostitutes to develop feelings. They are trained to be lifeless dolls which can offer their clients whatever they want except feelings like attraction or love. There have been cases where prostitutes fall into love and denied there work but only few were able to escape and rest were never found.
- ❖ If we talk about the ones entering this profession willingly have starting life a little less miserable. They always have a upper hand over the ones who are forced into the same. They have the right to choose their client, they can choose when to go and when not to go. They usually enter to be high end prostitutes, as most of them have primary agenda as to earn money faster.
- ❖ Most of the prostitutes end up hiding their profiles in public, specially in India, because it is considered immoral in our societies irrespective of the fact that their clients also come from this society only. Society perspective from the god's era towards prostitutes has remain of hatred. They have been used as a materialistic good in the society, a thing which most of them want to use but doesn't want to own one. Even the prostitutes hide this fact from their families because they frightened to be disowned by the family or they feel this would bring in dishonor to their family. The places where brothels are situated are

called red light areas in India and people ignore going there or letting their loved ones to even go near to that area.

SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ The authors believe that prostitution should be legalized and regulated in India and other countries as well because despite being illegal this business has grown remarkably, thus by giving legal status to the same wouldn't effect the system instead could help in revenue generation and also help in improving the conditions of the people involved.
- ❖ The government should also make some strict rules to stop forced prostitution and should help the victims of the same to start a new life.
- ❖ The society needs to change their perspective and behavior towards prostitutes and others involved in prostitution in some or the other way.
- ❖ The government should try and secure human rights of prostitutes and help them live a respectful life.

CONCLUSIONS

Prostitution, someone's profession, someone's need and somebody's helplessness. Prostitutes, untouchables for some, materialistic for many and normal working women for few. This research paper shows the main reasons for people entering into the profession of prostitution. Majority of them being forced into this profession but not all. Some joining the profession due to poverty some in aspiration of rich lifestyle. If we talk about legality, legal for some nations, illegal for many and complicated for few. For us it is just another profession which should be made legal and regulated by government so that forced and child prostitution can be prevented.

LIMITATIONS

- ❖ The research is secondary data based thus rely on the authenticity of other resources.
- ❖ People feel shy/afraid talking about this topic in public therefore, collecting primary data is a difficult task.
- ❖ The paper can be affected from researcher's bias.
- ❖ There are preset ideas about prostitution in the minds of people thus challenging the same could be dangerous.

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