

Uncovering the Horrid Realities of “Prostitution”: A Perspective



As the evening dawns, the jilted corners of the dingy forgotten lanes start buzzing with activity. The hours strike as women get ready inside their small rooms. Applying bright rouge lipstick with dark kohled eyes, they look through the iron rods of their window, waiting to spot and greet customers. By day, this place is like any other locality, where families live in unison, and people go about their usual routine. But by night, it acquires the notorious title of Asia’s largest red-light area, Sonagachi.

A similar veil of the population lives in the narrowed lanes of Garstin Bastion Road in Delhi. The two-lined roads have multi-story buildings covered with brothels. As the shops on the ground floor close by night, out comes the 3000 or more sex workers prepared to begin their day. Most of these female workers were trafficked at an early age, forced to submit to the oppressing trade. A bare

testament to the country's sex slavery crisis, it is further normalized by poverty and the rulings of a stereotypical culture.

Sex as Prostitution: The Loopholes

Known in history as one of the oldest professions, the persuasive myths surrounding this industry lies unseen. Ask me what is so wrong with this job, and I will say 'everything.' The term sex work is 'work,' but it becomes demeaning, immoral, and criminal when you call it prostitution. The normalcy in this practice pacifies all the terrors associated with it. In a neoliberal economy, this is a grim and serious problem.



The illicit commercial sex trade takes away women's freedom under the garb of legalization. The illegally operating brothels preach worker's harassment, all in the name of a job. The cases of trafficking come with the news of violent attacks on women, and the majority of them are marginalized. Their world is a tainted reality of a dark lobby with unfulfilled dreams. You can hear men knock on these bolted doors, as a call for social acceptance, in a society that ironically considers sex a taboo.

Read: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-24530198>

Consent or Coerce: A Modern Day Violence



The topic is sensitive, but the business thrives on sheer exploitation.

The condition of the Perna women is one such example of the disgrace we call society. The men from this community practice inter-generational sex work, where they pimp their wives into prostitution. Women usually leave their houses late at night with a male escort. Some trout for customers in crowded

the sex trade has not materialized. Rather it has regularized illegal prostitution, exploitation, teenage trafficking, and killings.

Read: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-women-sexcrimes-idUSKBN1EC1Y9>

Read: <https://theprint.in/india/governance/why-sex-workers-are-opposing-a-bill-that-aims-to-protect-them/166087/>



When any job is hidden from the public view, the authorities barely need to keep a tab on it. The situation worsens as decriminalization pushes it further underground. Now imagine its impact on the sex workers. Society exploits them like second-class citizens fit to be recipients of the male domination, and they remain stuck at the end of a continuum.

Read: <https://www.youthkiawaaz.com/2010/01/prostitution-a-case-for-legalisation-or-decriminalisation/>

“Which is your most experienced employee?”

“Who is the youngest girl?”
“Do you have any new girls?”

The fine line between choice and force becomes indistinguishable.

And respect, where is it? At a time when people fight for women’s rights and emancipation, sex workers are yelled at with cheap and blatant sexist remarks. Their plight falls on deaf ears as their endurance leaves them pale and tired. But do we care?

Read: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/opinion/respect-please-why-prostitution-should-not-be-a-term-of-abuse/story-cMqINtFdT5uQVGsKRQyHIL.html>

“I Choose, Hence I Do”



Stigmatization comes from its basic idea itself. Ask any man if they want their daughters doing this job, and they will hurl abuses at you. Irony right?

Whenever a women's job involves sex, the eyebrows are raised. We call them a whore and show disgust. Men, on the other hand, are entitled by law to 'buy' women.

Reformation

Discussions and disclosures have proved that while prostitution is a problem, sex workers are the 'victims' to save. The practice portrays its origin from diverse trends, but it needs rectification. Morality should not be the answer to a question that asks if prostitution is a worthy profession. Rather we should stop considering women's bodies a workplace for sexual activity and abuse.

Today, several welfare organizations are aiming to bring the sex workers' perspective within the humanitarian agenda. These women wish to live a respectful life with access to basic healthcare and treatment. They want their children to receive education. Women sex workers in NGOs are a trending topic, with a larger focus on gender equality and rehabilitation.

Delve deeper, and you will find millions of untold stories, where the voice is one of pain and suffering.

The world needs committed people to reach out to those working in this industry, no matter the spectrum of exploitation they fall into. The outcry is for a desperate change.

Women's bodies are not just sexual vessels for male consumption. Prostitution is not a pejorative profession, but your male gaze is.