

## **E-Prostitution and its impact on society**

**Rashida Valika**

SZABIST, Karachi

This research study aims to find how women are used by men in this society in the form of prostitution, not through the typical medium of the “Red Light Area” but through the modern way of the internet. The sample for this study consists of college and university students who are much more aware of the internet medium. Also, this study tries to find out the possible causes for this menace and suggests remedial measures to curb the growing illness.

**Experimental results:** Respondents interviewed were between the ages of 15 and 23 with a sample size of 76 from 3 different universities: Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology, Institute of Business Management (previously known as CBM) and Iqra University. 18 of the respondents were female while 58 were male. Most of them did not disclose their names or residential addresses. The sample provided a near accurate picture of what our young generation does. The results support the belief that internet does aid prostitution. Further statistics clearly show their attitude and reflect their thinking. The sample chosen for this research was a purposive sample and the problems in data collection were numerous. This ranged from non-cooperation of the respondents to hostility encountered in certain places. Where logical arguments and reasoning did not work, I even resorted to emotional blackmail to extract a response.

**Does the internet aid/alert prostitution?** The majority of respondents – approximately 93% of males and 78% of females – believed the internet aids prostitution. Most have access to the internet in their own houses or to someone who has such access. This makes it easy for users to access internet without any control from someone over the material being viewed.

**Have you ever visited any porn sites?** The majority of respondents have answered with a yes to visit such sites. One of the strongest factors that influence people to visit such sites seems to be sexual frustration, while others include ‘just for fun or pleasure’ or curiosity to know what porn is about.

**Do these porn sites stimulate people to engage in prostitution?**

The majority of male and female respondents (66% and 78% respectively) believed porn sites act as stimulators to incline individuals or groups to enter into prostitution. For some of the respondents the internet gave arousal and satisfaction and for others it did not, so they try to enter into a real time experience of prostitution.

**Do you know of such sites which people use for pornography?**

Since a majority of females (78%) do not visit these sites they also do not know of the sites which people use for this activity which is logical. Yet some said they did know of such sites, which also goes to show that awareness is slowly spreading. Most of the male respondents said they knew such sites and listed some which are [www.sexwithme.com](http://www.sexwithme.com), [www.pinkworld.com](http://www.pinkworld.com), [www.desibaba.com](http://www.desibaba.com), [www.worldsex.com](http://www.worldsex.com).

**Did you meet someone on the net on pornography?** Regarding this question a majority of the respondents said that they haven't met anyone on the net who was interested in this sort of activity, i.e. prostitution. Since a person when sitting on the net (especially in café's) experiences or meets many sorts of different types of people it is not possible that the majority has not met any prostitutes or someone associated to the profession.

**Do you know anyone directly or indirectly who has used internet for pornography?** Many people replied that they knew people indirectly i.e. through a friend who have used the internet for prostitution. They didn't disclose the names of the people but said that their own friends were involved in this activity.

**Is internet a safe and easy way for these people to engage in prostitution?** The majority believed the internet is a safe and easy way since it helps in concealing their true identity and it also helps to engage in prostitution in a relatively safe environment. Some seem aware that the computer might be traced by a hacker and their identity revealed and people can actually end up getting caught.

**Why do you think people engage in prostitution?** Out of the total 76 interviewed, 44% and 46% believe that people engage in prostitution due to sexual frustrations and desire to get pleasure, respectively. About 9% of those interviewed believed that it is due to other

reasons such as financial needs. Very few, about 2%, believe that it is due to depression.

Sexual frustrations in most cases are the result of a lack of communication among family members, such as between parents and children, or among siblings. The frustrations also result from not having a trusted advisor which in turn leads to unanswered questions, embarrassment, feelings of loss and abandonment, or a loss of self-control.

**Conclusion and future directions:** During my survey, I encountered numerous problems in finding information about people's perception of the internet and prostitution. The problem was acute due to the sensitivity of the topic in a conservative society like Pakistan. However, I believe I was able to extract sufficient information from them to reach the results of my research. I could come to the conclusion that for the most part the younger generation is aware of the internet and its negative aspects, a major one being prostitution. I believe that besides giving education in schools and other institutions, children should also be given clear information about internet, prostitution and its evil effects because limited knowledge can encourage a child to experiment in a way that can eventually lead him to a wrong path.

**Recommendation:** It is also alarming that many people are sexually frustrated and some also want to engage in prostitution for pleasure, satisfaction and enjoyment. I agree that our nation should have strict laws regarding adultery and prostitution and anyone found guilty should be punished severely. It should be a lesson for others. Yet, we do need to create a consensus that besides education in schools, children should also be given complete information about the internet, and its pros and cons, particularly information about sex, prostitution and the darker side of unsafe or unprotected sex. As a matter of fact, information regarding changes taking place in adolescents should be discussed very diplomatically. Worrisome and frequently asked questions should be answered in schools and colleges. A trained and trusted counselor is the need of the hour.

The media which today plays a major role in our lives could help in educating youth in line with the above mentioned recommendations. The extent is not known to which men's experiences and behaviors are affected by using internet technologies. Early research in this area indicates that the impact is high and contributes to an escalation of

exploitation and abuse of women and children. Using the internet to access prostitution empowers men to sexually exploit women and children. The combined experience of using high tech computer hardware and software, finding a supportive community on the internet, and having a sexual experience can be reinforcing and empowering in mitigating the negative effects of the internet pornography among the youth.