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# FACTORS INFLUENCING FEMALE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO ENGAGE IN PROSTITUTION

Joshua Juma Mugane Department of Counselling Psychology University of Iringa, Tanzania

Email: joshuamugane6@gmail.com

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#### Abstract

This study was conducted with an aim of determining the possible factors that influence female university students to engage in prostitution. A longitudinal research design was employed during the study, so as to collect the intended data/information within a planned period of time. The collected information and data were gathered from a sample size of 25 female university students, which was obtained through snowball sampling. With the use of semi-structured interview guide in accumulating data, the obtained findings were analyzed qualitatively, indicating the quotes of the respondents as obtained during the study. The analyzed and discussed data reveal that female university students often engage in prostitution due to several influential factors. Such factors include peer influence, sexual addiction, having a desire to attain satisfaction amidst insufficiencies, wanting to revenge after passing through several relationship breakups or after being infected with HIV/AIDS, and considering oneself as unworthy after a number of disappointments. Also, due to the diverse life experiences and psycho-emotional conditions, the female university students have finally engaged themselves in prostitution. For those cases, there is also a need of assisting all those who have engaged themselves in prostitution, so that they may not encounter other complications. This can take place through provision of psychotherapies and counselling services, together with psycho-educational sessions concerning the dangers and hazardous effects of prostitution. And also, it may be implemented through teaching them problem solving and crises intervention techniques, so that when they face insufficiencies and challenges (including financial matters), they would not turn into prostitution as a mean of finding solutions.

Keywords: Female University Students; Prostitution; Prostitutes; Sexual Affairs and Activities

### INTRODUCTION

Prostitution may be defined under a condition which involves unselective sexual activities, done by individuals who are not legally bound as spouses. Historically, prostitution began to take place as a secular rite done on paid basis (Sanger 2015). More studies indicate that prostitution was even practiced within the temples of ancient Babylon, because it was not seen as unethical. Such aspect made it to be considered as a public and legal custom,

mandating Babylonian women to give their bodies to foreigners on paid basis, as a prerequisite before performing sacred duties and tasks (Dufour 1902).

In places like Ancient Greece and Rome by the time of 260 BC, prostitution was publically and legally recognized as a formal business entity having an office special for the prostitutes and special attire for prostitutes (wearing "red bows" on their arms). Moreover, those who engaged themselves in prostitution were identified as

sexual workers, with an obligation of paying taxes because it was done on paid basis (Sanger 2015).

During the New Testament era as accounted by Holy Scriptures, prostitution was also recorded to be present. Different Biblical texts account some characters like Mary Magdalene as a female prostitute, who competently performed it within a city called Magdala. The city of Magdala was at the shore of Gennesaret Lake, about four miles north of Tiberias. The history reveals it as a residence city for Hasmonean leaders. Due to regular rebellions among the Jews, it was a special place for occupations for the Jews; and Cassius used it as a residence for those who he enslaved (Althaus-Reid 2006, p.83-90) Moreover, due to its geographical locality, the city was famous of different trade routes between Rome and its colonized territories, having a lot of businessmen, who could pay women for sexual activities (Bernabe 1994). Likewise, because in Rome and other places viewed women as unequal to men, such notions paved way for prostitution to not be seen as unethical. Thus, a lot of women like Mary Magdalene were influenced to join in prostitution (Brown 1992; Ricci 1994).

Under legal obligation, prostitution continued to be a normal business and practice for a lot of centuries. Its survival matched relatively with the advancement of erotic sectors that manifested sexual affairs practices. By the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, prostitution was highly taking place in areas like USA and Europe. Its rate was influenced by the existence of bawdy houses and brothels (D'Emilio and Freedman 1988). In places like Paris and London, the rate of prostitution developed because prostitutes were trained, so that they would work as professionals (Roberts 1992). Moreover, in African countries like Gambia, the rate of prostitution has increased due to the opening and availability of alcoholic centres like bars, which have guests houses or lodges around them (Pickering, Todd, Dunn, Pbpin &. Wilkins 1992). Then due to such facts, there have been about 90% of prostitutes as women and 10% as men (McGuire and Gruter 2003).

By the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the market of prostitution expanded to veterans and other military officials. For instance, during World War I & World War II, prostitutes offered their services to veterans and other military officials (Head 2009). Likewise, during the Japanese war, about 200,000 women (called comfort women) were brought from China and Korea, so that they would serve as prostitutes to the soldiers and veterans. Those who were considered to be fit for prostitution services were weighed depending on some aspects. Issues like attractiveness due to facial beauty, age of the individual, the size of the breasts, body mass index and health factors were highly considered (Buss and Schmitt 1993; Prokop et al. 2018; Sohn 2016).

Later on by the late 20th Century, prostitution was not again considered as formal/legal business or practice. Factors like the eruption of venereal and sexual transmitted infections/diseases like syphilis led to its prohibition (Adriaenssens and Hendrickx 2012). Also, because prostitution great role prompting played a in condemnation, violence, illness, and a breakdown of individuals' life, it was then strictly fought against its existence. For instance, in European countries, 4 countries banned it, while in other 16 countries it was considered as illegal despite of its existence (Danna 2014).

Currently within Africa, the trend of prostitution is not constant across many countries. Due to its repercussions, many countries don't consider it as a legal/formal practice, although it makes its people to earn living. Several studies have depicted that poverty has been a catalyst for many women to engage in prostitution. Ampofo (2001) justifies such a point by saying: "the lack of obtaining economic and financial support from close people like mates, partners and

relatives has enforced women to finally engage in prostitution. Similarly, the macroeconomic shifts and changes that cause economic constrains have also accelerated women to work as prostitutes." In some places people have opted to be prostitutes due to the closure of their business ventures, which has persistently fostered insufficiencies (Chakwe 2005). Also, for those who are still schooling in secondary schools, colleges and universities, they are enforced to be prostitutes so as to earn funds for the payment of their tuition fees and other expenses (Sibanda 2003).

Prohibiting its survival, there have been several attempts in order to fight against its persistent incline. For instance, in countries like Nigeria, the government launched anti-prostitution campaigns and passed severe anti-prostitution law, which was followed by either charging of hefty fines or imprisonment for 2-10 years because, prostitution is considered to be anticultural phenomenon (Ibewuike Oladipupo 2002). Moreover, by the year at Migina—Remera 2005 District in Rwanda, the national police forces and local leaders managed to flush away and ban over 100 prostitutes (Sabiti 2005). Also currently, due to sexual and public health campaigns, promoters have worked hard in influencing people to not have either multi-sexual or extramarital affairs, due to uncured sexual transmitted infections/diseases like HIV/AIDS.

Amidst all such efforts employed in order to ban/prohibit prostitution, prostitution is reported to exist within our communities. From the report of International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) as presented by Kamala et al. (2001), it shows that prostitution still exists even among the children. It happens in a form of commercial sexual exploitation—children are sent by their caregivers to work as prostitutes for the purpose of making money for them. Others do engage themselves in prostitution due to peer influence. Moreover, cultures that practice initiation ceremonies were marked to be the reason influencing them to be prostitutes. This is because they teach children how to handle houses, while directing them on how to live with the other opposite sex during immature age. Finally, issues of single parenting that results into child abuse and torture, have often made children to run away from their homes. while engaging in prostitution for living (Kamala et al. 2001). Furthermore, tracing about those who are in higher learning institutions, there seem to be some cases regarding the prostitution among female university students. For instance, from the study that was conducted by Gbagbo & Gbagbo (2021) in Accra, Kumasi, Cape Coast and Winneba indicate that there are a large number of female university students engaging in prostitution. Most of them practice it within their hostels, brothels in streets, or within rented rooms like hotels and guest houses—this is followed by leaving their mobile phone contacts and pictures in order to receive appointments on either paid basis or not. For those cases, this study also sought to investigate factors influencing female university students to engage in prostitution. This is because there is still a demand of determining more reasons that prompt female university students to engage in prostitution despite of having prohibition measures.

# **RESEARCH METHODE Research Design**

This study employed non-experimental research design in a form of longitudinal research. It was employed because it often allows researcher(s) to collect data/information repeatedly, within different time intervals. It was also applied during the study because it is often beneficial in resulting both quantitative and qualitative data/information. Moreover, it was employed because it often allows researcher(s) to gather data/information from those who have experienced what is being studied by the researcher(s). Thus, allowing both the researcher(s) and the respondents to be in a relationship that would result the study to reach at its conclusions (Caruana, Roman, Hernández-Sánchez & Solli 2015).

# Area of the Study

This study took place in Iringa municipal council, Iringa region—Tanzania. The researcher chose to do his study in this area because: (1) Iringa region is well known of having high rate of sexual transmitted infections/diseases like HIV/AIDS, which might be due to unselective sexual activities like prostitution; (2) he knew some respondents living in this area, who were thought to be helpful in the study—the female university students coming from University of Iringa, Mkwawa University College of Education and Ruaha Catholic University, who showed themselves as commercial-sex workers/prostitutes in front of the researcher.

### **Population and Sample Size**

The population that constituted the study was of 25 female university students from University Iringa, of Mkwawa University College of Education and Ruaha Catholic University, who have been working as commercial-sex workers/prostitute. Such a sample size was obtained through nonprobability sampling, which employed snowball sampling technique (Sedgwick 2013). The study employed snowball because (1) the topic under study was sensitive and it needed vigilance, and (2) the technique helped the researcher in recruiting more respondents of the same criteria out of anonymous. For such a case, the researcher began with two female students who showed themselves commercial-sex as workers/prostitutes, then progressively others were obtained through Exponential Discriminative Snowball Samplingrespondents were selected from a multiple list basing on the nature of the study.

### **Data Collection and Instrumentation**

Within this study, the researcher used semi-structured interview guide, which had questions that were helpful in collecting the needful information from the respondents. Likewise, the researcher employed because, it is often used in a dialogue that seeks to determine the why and how information and details. Moreover, it was employed because it often allows the researchers to ask both closed-ended and open-ended questions during data collection, so as to obtain the direct and in-depth information the respondents from (Newcomer, Hatry & Wholey 2015, p.492-493).

### **Ethical Consideration**

During the study, the researcher adhered to several ethical issues like confidentiality, informed consent, safety and integrity, and issues concerning copyright. confidentiality, Beginning with researcher assured the respondents with anonymity by not mentioning their names, but rather pseudo-naming them. Also before collecting data from the respondents, the researcher informed the respondents about what was to take place, and by their willingness they accepted to participate in the study. Without neglecting respondents' safety and integrity, the researcher prepared a safe place that could enable respondents to feel comfortable and secure. Then finally on issues concerning copyright, the researcher was keen enough when quoting or citing, and through means of complete referencing, all the borrowed concepts are indicated.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

From the study conducted by Mgbako & Smith (2011), there are a lot of reasons that make women to enter into prostitution. This is because each individual may have

different historical background that influenced her to be a prostitute. That being a case, this section directly presents diverse opinions, testimonies and experiences of the respondents, as they were obtained during Such results/findings have study. covered the main objective of the study, which was to investigate the possible factors influencing university students to engage in prostitution, specifically within municipal council, Iirnga region—Tanzania. Moreover, within each result the author has tried to make generalization, following the similarity of responses. For that case, the following are the obtained results and their discussion, as they appear on distinct subtitles and explained paragraph(s).

# Disvaluing of One's self after a number of Relationship Breakups

Regarding this fact, more than 10 respondents tried to expose it as a catalyst for them to engage into prostitution. While tracing back their earlier commitments within betrothed relationships, most of the respondents said that they were not happy of such breakups. Such breakups have fostered them to feel as unloved, unattractive, undesirable and unworthy, especially when committed betrothed are within relationships. Recalling their commitments, they openly said: "It is not that we love being prostitutes, but because we have been in committed relationships without any success, then we have finally not see if it is profiting to continue to have one committed relationship. But rather, it is better to have friends, who might assist us when we will need sexual satisfactions." The same fact is justified by Rhoades et al. (2011), when they said: "broken relationships often make couples to develop a sense of fear, which

makes them to be dissatisfied when entering in new relationships. And the end of fear and dissatisfaction may influence an individual to disvalue him/herself, enforcing him/her to no more demand entering into any commitment, while formulating different kinds of defensive mechanisms as compensation."

Likewise, if such a condition is not early intervened, it may manifest development of brief psychotic disorders like hallucination and delusions, which are concerned of misinterpretation of the senses. Such disorders drive people to perceive things, events, objects and mankind in inappropriate manner or interpretation. And when they will also be experienced without any intervention, individuals may experience extreme emotional turmoil, overwhelming confusions, rapid shifts from one state of affect to another, poor judgments and sometimes fail to adhere to hygienic principles (APA 2013). That being the case, individuals who will reach this stage after a number of relationship breakups, they may end up disvaluing themselves, losing a sense of homeostasis. Then finally, bad behaviors like of prostitution may be developed and practiced.

# A mentality of revenge after experiencing a lot of pains

With this factor, several women do engage in prostitution so as to revenge what was done to them. Respondent 12NM4 and 06HB1 proved this statement by saying: "With us, we have decided to not have single lover because our previous ex-boyfriends were unfaithful, having more women apart from us." Respondent 12NM4 continued to say: "It reached a point when my boyfriend's telephone had naked pictures of women,

who were sexing with him. Such a habit made me to not value men at all; then finally I decided to enter into relationships with committed men, while also having extra boyfriends." Moreover, respondent 19KZ3 shared her testimony which made her to engage in multi-sexual affairs. On her side, developed hatred on men witnessing how her sister was cheated and humiliated by her fiancé, few days before their wedding. Such a scenario made her to view men as playboys, wanting sexual intercourse and then depart. This made her to make an oath that she will never trust men anyhow; and if it happens she enters into any relationship, she will make sure she disappoints them. Then due to such a notion, she has been with a lot of men for sexual pleasure and finally disappointing them.

### Attaining Satisfaction due to insufficiencies

For couples to be satisfied within their committed relationships, they are obligated to manifest some aspects to one another. Shaver. Hazan. & Bradshaw (1988)mentions them as attachment, caregiving and sexual mating. All these are necessary for emotional wellbeing of both couples, while maintaining the quality and stability of their commitments (Hazan & Zeifman, 1994; Sprecher & Cate 2004). Likewise, they are influential in controlling/regulating couples' sexual motives, attitudes, and behaviours (Feeney, 1999). If so, when they are available in whatever relationship, then it is possible for both couples to be satisfied of the relationship. But when they are not manifested, it is possible for any couple (mostly women) to find other side in order to attain such aspects, despite of being in a committed relationship. Such aspects are proven from the experience of respondent 17BQR8. With her, she has always been in relationships which had no sexual gratification, caregiving and close attachments. Such conditions have made her life to be boring, thinking of finding other side(s) in order to get them. Thus, the more she tries to find men who could implement such aspects, the more she ends up in dating with men, while regularly doing sexual activities.

Tracing as to why such behaviour emerges, contemporary studies have often linked it with a psychological condition known as "Anhedonia". Such a condition is often regarded as inability of an individual to not experience pleasure from positive stimuli, due to previous experiences. In some cases, anhedonia is believed to happen of because the declined emotional attachments that keep the couples together, with developed together mental complications (APA 2013). That being the case, it may influence a couple (especially woman) to be interested on other men, so as to compensate the unfelt pleasure. And if she doesn't get what she intends, she will keep having more men (while doing sexual activities) because of insufficient pleasures. Hence, prostitution becomes inevitable for the fulfilment of unfelt pleasure.

# "I won't die alone" Slogan

This point is linked with how the respondents were infected with HIV/AIDS by their boyfriends/sexual partners. They view such aspect as unfair to the innocents, thinking that the world is not fair. While blaming themselves, they said: "Our blind love to the unfaithful sexual partners has made us to now live a hopeless life, thinking of dying any day due to attainment of uncured disease. If it was not our

carelessness, we wouldn't have reached this far." Respondent 14AC6 continued to say: "This blind love made me to disregard health issues, and finally I dated with a man without knowing if he was HIV/AIDS positive or not." All these are too heavy for them to uphold and accept such health status, while thinking of dying anytime. To mark the worst part of it, they made decisions of rapidly spreading it to other men via sexual affairs, so that their lives may also be shortened by HIV/AIDS. And by doing prostitution, they think it may be one of the techniques of fulfilling their desire.

Such a decision and practice is not a normal behaviour. It is regarded to be a "Conduct disorder" because it aims in violating other people's rights, while putting the innocents at risks or physical harm. APA (2013, P.470) substantiates it to be associated with sexual malpractices like sexual assaults, harassment, rape, sexual tricks, etc. For that case, even those who intend to spread HIV/AIDS to uninfected people via prostitution are lying on this disorder.

### Sexual Addiction

After keen interviews with the respondents, the researcher discovered that sexual addiction catalyses female university students to practice prostitution. This is proven by the statement of Respondent 18ER9 and Respondent 15TR7: "With me, I am always uncomfortable when I don't do sex. If it passes a week without having sexual intercourse, I often feel inadequate and unhappy, unless if it is during menstruation period." Respondent 15TR7 continued to say: "Such aspect has made me to always look after men (whether on paid basis or not), so that I may get sexual gratification."

Tracing as to why such a factor emerges, Goodman (1998, p.140) proves it to be a result of impaired self-regulatory mechanism within an individual—The more an individual do sexual activities, the more he/she can't abandon them. At the end of it all, an individual develops a maladaptive behaviour that can't be controlled or cut down due tolerance and withdrawals on sexual desires. Moreover, the accessibility to sexual and erotic materials that empowers individuals to do sexual activities, have as well made individuals to develop sexual addiction after regular practices. These all have finally led even female university students to do prostitution—having sexual relationships with more than one man, while regularly doing sexual activities with them (Birchard 2011).

### Peer Influence

With this factor, the respondents seem to engage in prostitution due to the influence from their friends and relatives. It all depends on what is said, shown, exposed or narrated in relation to the rewards that prostitutes attain due to prostitution. Most of those who are influenced to engage in prostitution have insufficiencies that are accompanied by the demand of meeting some personal needs like expensive clothing, using expensive technological tools, residing in an expensive and beautiful apartment, etc. And if it happens an individual gets them after having sexual relationships with men (prostitution), it is possible for her friends to be influenced to do it in order to as well meet the same demands/wishes. Moreover, regular parties/ceremonies arranged by friends, or regular visits to the leisure centres like night pubs, have influenced students to often drink and finally do sexual activities with different men—This makes other people to regard them as prostitutes. Hence, the more they visit night pubs (while getting drunk), the more they are influenced to go for sexual activities with different men (Gbagbo & Gbagbo 2021; Okafor & Duru 2010).

### **CONCLUSION**

The issue of prostitution among female university students seem persistently incline due to the influence of some factors: the influence from peers, sexual addiction, having a desire to attain satisfaction amidst insufficiencies, wanting to revenge after passing through several relationship breakups or after being infected with HIV/AIDS, and considering oneself as unworthy after a number of disappointments. Also, depending on diverse life experiences and psycho-emotional conditions, female university students have developed maladaptive behavioural pattern known as "prostitution," without considering health aspect or cultural norms of the societies. Thus those who become identified as prostitution are often considered as unethical and unclean. while living without veneration.

### Recommendations

Rescuing female university students from prostitution, there must be an implication of strategies, techniques and professional skills, so as to alleviate such a maladaptive behaviour. That being the case, universities should trace and identify if their students have engaged in prostitution, while putting strategies of assisting those who would be identified. The possible strategies may include providing psychotherapies and counselling services to those who have engaged in prostitution, so as to shape and rehabilitate their mentality and behaviours.

Moreover, psycho-education should not be abandoned because it enlightens the dangers hazardous effects of prostitution. topics concerning Furthermore. relationships, problem solving and crises intervention techniques should be conveyed to the university students, so that when they face insufficiencies and challenges, they would not turn into prostitution as a mean of finding solutions. Finally, parents/caregivers should be responsible in fulfilling the obligations financial by providing necessary/basic needs/requirements to their children (female university students), so that they would not be tempted to engage in prostitution for the attainment of financial supports.

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