

SEX WORK IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC: DEVELOPMENT, TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

Kamil Janiš

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Information about human sexuality, of all kinds, can always attract students to a large extent. Human sexuality and its manifestations have several dimensions. These are not always positive effects, but also a number of problems at the level of relationships, which can affect the life of each individual indefinitely.

The publication entitled Sexual work in the Czech Republic: development, trends, and challenges focuses on two areas, namely sex business and prostitution. The content of the presented publication is, in essence, divided into two relatively separate parts, namely the part focused on the issue of prostitution and the second part, which complements the whole issue with the current results of the prostitution survey in the category of university students.

The introductory part states: "The publication presents the issue of prostitution in the Czech Republic as a complex social phenomenon. It briefly deals with an introduction to the history of prostitution and its development up to the present dated to 2021. In the context of prostitution, the book presents the preventive approaches of the non-profit sector to this phenomenon and their involvement in addressing not only sexually transmitted diseases. The publication provides the reader with up-to-date data on the psychological and social effects of prostitution on practitioners and their immediate surroundings (p. 7).

In relation to the studied field of social pathology and prevention, a comprehensive view of prostitution is particularly beneficial. One of the introductory chapters focuses on approaches to solving prostitution and its regulation (p. 27-36). Given that the history of prostitution dates back to the beginnings of human society, a different approach to each issue being chosen in each period. On the one hand, there was a realistic view that proclaimed the necessity of the social service; on the other hand, prostitution was approached repressively. There is no need to convince each other that this is a big business that brings with it numerous undesirable phenomena, including economic impacts. The authors state on page 25 that in 2017 there were about 10,000 prostitutes in the Czech Republic and it is estimated that in 2003 alone, earnings from prostitution amounted to CZK 8.7 billion. At the same time, the authors present an approximate estimate of prostitutes worldwide, which is around 42 million.

The next chapter (p. 27 onward) focuses on approaches to solving prostitution and its regulation. Regulation can be basically of three kinds: abolition, repressive,

and regulatory. Throughout history, individual approaches have been applied under the conditions of the Czech Republic (or Czechoslovakia). The authors also present examples of individual approaches in various countries outside the Czech Republic. Naturally, the legal areas belong to the monitored areas.

Chapter 3. Forms of prostitution and sexual work as well as the following chapter New forms of sexual work not only in the online space and the next chapter Characteristics of persons working in the field of prostitution (p. 37–58) present well-known facts and clarify a number of relatively well-known terms. However, a new element is emphasized here, which represents cyberspace. The authors draw attention to the danger of psychological deprivation in children, CAN syndrome, but also the motivations that lead to the realization of prostitution. At the same time, there is a great danger to contact with persons engaged in prostitution, especially the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. The effects of a given danger (gonorrhea, HIV, etc.) will in many respects manifest themselves in the later age of individuals and can lead to major problems, such as infertility, etc.

Undoubtedly one of the very interesting chapters is the chapter Sexual work in the environment of interest of the state and the non-profit sector (p. 67–78). On the pages of the chapter, we can get acquainted with ten recommended preventive measures (p. 67–68), such as the fight against poverty and social exclusion, the fight against cultural and spiritual poverty, discussions in schools that are aimed at increasing caution, Sex education in schools, Streetwork, etc.

One of the most interesting parts of the whole publication is the chapter that focuses on Czech college girls and paid sex (p. 79 onwards). It is very valuable to present the results of the research survey among university students (n = 425 respondents – p. 85). The opinion of the respondents about university students who engage in prostitution (according to the number of sexual partners) is interesting. It is mostly about tolerance. The finding concerning the provision of services for remuneration (p. 92) is also interesting, in relation to the number of „own“ sexual partners. Suffice it to say that: „A total of 59.3% of female respondents with more than 21 sexual partners said they could imagine providing paid sexual services and only 40.7% of them would not provide paid sexual services.“ p. 93) The presented data are also very interesting, which relate to the evaluation of respondents' answers to other questions, and from their answers is a very interesting table No. 10 (p. 100), which captures respondents who provided paid sexual activity / intercourse for remuneration. An important part is the number of those who state that the service was perceived as extra income. The faculties in which the respondents studied were also interesting.

In general, it can be stated that the described publication is suitable for all students of social pathology and prevention, as well as students who work with social work. Its advantages include the comprehensibility of the text itself and the presentation of a number of specific examples.

For the sake of objectivity, it should be noted that the chapter on the history of prostitution is too „concise.“ But it is really a „little freckle on beauty.“

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