
Profiling of Prostitutes

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Article Information*

Research Article • UDC: 343.544:176.5

Volume: 21, Issue 3, pages: 1–27

Received: October 15, 2024 • Accepted: November 20, 2024

<https://doi.org/10.51738/Kpolisa2024.21.3r.1b>

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I have no known conflicts of interest to disclose.

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* Cite (APA): Bjelajac, Ž. (2024). Profiling of Prostitutes. *Kultura polisa*, 21(3), 1-27, <https://doi.org/10.51738/Kpolisa2024.21.3r.1b>



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Abstract

There is a significant number of authors who have explored the phenomenology and etiology of prostitution as "the oldest profession," whose roots reach far back through history. It is evident that such an approach lacks coherence. Therefore, this paper includes various aspects of prostitution, focusing on the personal experiences and characteristics of women engaged in this profession. It analyzes different factors, traumas, and behavior patterns that lead women into prostitution, highlighting the repercussions on mental and physical health and the symptomatology of post-traumatic stress disorder. Through a socioeconomic and psychological profile of prostitutes, this paper introduces the concept of criminal profiling as an important tool and protective factor in a proactive approach to prevent young girls and women from entering the delinquent world of prostitution. It examines how profiling can aid in understanding antisocial behaviors and preventive actions starting in adolescence, addressing issues related to this social phenomenon both before its manifestation and, retrospectively, after it has occurred. The methods applied include quantitative and qualitative content analysis, comparative analysis (responses to prostitution), and descriptive and analytical statistics. The aim of this paper is to identify flexible risk factors, as well as protective factors, through the profiling concept, which can be planned in preventive and intervention strategies in pursuit of an effective community response in prostitution prevention policies.

Key words: prostitution, causes of prostitution, classification of prostitutes, characteristics of prostitutes, profiling of prostitutes, socioeconomic profile, psychological profile.

Profiling of Prostitutes

Introduction

The origin of the term prostitution derives from the Latin word "prostitutio," which can be translated as debauchery, or "prostitutus", meaning to expose or display. Over time, this word has acquired many synonyms, such as "harlot," referring to a promiscuous woman who, in satisfying her sexual impulses, disregards established social norms and acceptable forms of behavior.

Prostitution, as a form of deviant behavior, has been present throughout the history of human society. It essentially represents a historical category, which, in its evolution, has adapted its forms of expression to align with the class character of society. Prostitution is considered "the oldest profession" and has often served as a last resort for desperate women and girls who frequently and unwittingly became trapped in the vicious cycle of the sex industry, as it appeared to be their "only" option to improve their financial situation, status, or gain quick and easy income (Bjelajac, 2014: 120). This shared, striking, and generalized character trait often placed them in uncertain and challenging positions of exposure, pushing them to the margins of society.

Prostitution is a highly complex phenomenon that, in its intricacy, cannot be reduced to a single perspective but must be viewed through the philosophical, sociological, economic, psychological, and legal lenses. In this context, it is necessary to ensure a homogeneous interaction of multiple elements to establish an operational definition that is acceptable to legal professionals, criminologists, sociologists, psychologists, and theorists alike. Although we may define prostitution as legally unsustainable, we cannot overlook its detrimental sociological character, which, by inertia, brings with it various social side effects, such as lack of education, financial hardship, inadequate parental relationships, and more (Bjelajac, 2014: 121). Moreover, the undermining of psychological, moral, or broader social integrity aligns with the conceptual definition of prostitution, not only as a criminogenic but also as a psychopathological phenomenon, where, beyond the

pursuit or acquisition of money or other valuables, there exists a consistent element of primal sexual gratification that should not be underestimated.

According to Professor Lj. Lazarević, the most widely accepted view is "that it is the rental, for money or some other benefit, of one's body to others for them to satisfy their sexual drive" (Lazarević, 1995: 475). Under a broader definition of prostitution, Professor Z. Stojanović considers it "any sexual act performed in exchange for some form of compensation, which does not necessarily have to be monetary." Under a narrower definition, this author understands prostitution as making one's body available to another person for performing a sexual act in exchange for monetary compensation, with the intent that such activities, when repeated, generate income for oneself or another (Stojanović, 2006: 457-458). "Commercialized sexual submission, whether temporary or permanent, voluntary or coerced, involving the sale of one's body for the sexual satisfaction of others as a trade (profession), either as a primary or supplementary source of income; a form of sexual behavior that goes beyond the bounds of prevailing moral norms; it includes moral evaluation, as it cannot be exempted when it concerns human relationships" (Petak, 1980: 21). Prostitution is the practice of engaging in relatively indiscriminate sexual activities, generally with someone who is not a spouse or friend, in exchange for immediate payment in money or other valuables. Prostitutes may be women, men, or transgender persons, and prostitution may involve heterosexual or homosexual activity (Jenkins, 2024).

Historically, there has been a universal association of women as service providers and men as clients in this context. This dynamic involves deeper social, cultural, and economic factors that have shaped gender roles and sexual norms over centuries. Contemporary changes in this field have brought greater visibility, acceptance, and tolerance for various forms of prostitution (male prostitution, prostitution involving sex workers of various genders), and gender boundaries have become more flexible. However, the fundamental pattern in which women predominantly serve as providers of sexual services to men as consumers remains consistent.

It is evident from analyzing the above definitions and examining their content that prostitution (male or female) is the willingness to use sexuality or sex appeal as a means to achieve a direct or indirect goal, whether of a material or non-material nature. It is also observed that the content of these definitions includes both women and men who may engage in prostitution, which somewhat contradicts the widespread belief that only women engage in prostitution (Bjelajac, 2017: 298). According to contemporary understandings, prostitution can be broadly defined as: a sexual act that involves payment (usually in money), extreme promiscuity, and emotional indifference toward the sexual act and partner, with elements of dissociation (separation of emotions from the act).

If we delve deeper into the analysis of this phenomenon, we can observe that it essentially consists of three elements:

- **The first element** in the conceptual definition of prostitution is the association of every sexual act with money. Naturally, there are entirely valid opinions that payment can be made through gifts or rewards, or by achieving material benefits equivalent to the value of money;
- **The second essential element** of the definition emphasizes extreme sexual promiscuity (a large number of different and unfamiliar partners);
- **The third element** of prostitution is characterized by a feeling of emotional indifference, not only toward the partner but also toward sexual satisfaction itself.

On the other hand, the fundamental connection between money and sexuality remains not only the most important but also an evidently enduring and primary characteristic of prostitution. In the present time, prostitution is part of an international sex industry, which involves the mass distribution of pornographic books, films, the operation of numerous strip clubs and venues, advertising sex tours for men in impoverished "third-world" countries, and more. The pervasive and comprehensive display of female bodies and sexual organs, whether in images or as live bodies, may suggest that prostitution is a clear phenomenon at first

glance, yet it remains unresolved and ambiguous as a concept. This ambiguity is certainly fueled by differing debates and present challenges in analyses, where inconsistent approaches are evident regarding what activities are included under the term prostitution (Bjelajac, 2014: 126). Furthermore, scientific and technological advancements have introduced a completely new world today—an unlimited and uncontrolled space, the virtual world of the internet. While the global computer network offers immense positive possibilities, it also has a dark, negative side that can, with a single click, lead us into the unpredictable world of pornography, sex, internet pedophilia, and web prostitution, with children often being the victims—the most vulnerable and sensitive part of the population.

Finally, questions on how to penetrate the “delinquent mind” have always sparked curiosity and fascination. When we look into the minds of criminals, we can observe characteristic patterns of antisocial behavior, deviant thoughts and activities, impulsivity, disloyalty, selfishness, and lack of empathy. Understanding and detecting these signs of criminal intent can be instrumental in crime prevention. We might also venture to hypothesize the risk factors that led individuals into delinquency (Bjelajac, 2023: 19). The origin of criminal behavior is, in fact, an introduction or precursor to criminal profiling. By comparison, a doctor takes an anamnesis (patient history) directly from the patient or, in severe cases, from their close ones, which includes: administrative data, description of main complaints, current illness, system-specific anamnesis, personal history, family history, and socio-epidemiological data. Anamnesis is a conversation with the patient aimed at gathering necessary information important for identifying the true nature of the illness and successfully diagnosing it (Bjelajac, 2023:19-20). This is essentially a form of medical competence that requires knowledge, dedication, and experience that doctors acquire through practical work. We highlight this to draw a parallel: criminal profilers, in this context, are akin to doctors. They also take an “anamnesis” from both known and unknown individuals who have committed crimes or are inclined toward criminal behavior. Thus, these are “visible and invisible patients,” and the protocol of their anamnesis is contained within criminological literature, which discusses the origins of criminal behavior, with particular emphasis on risk factors.

Etiological aspects of prostitution

Earlier perspectives on this phenomenon mostly focused on the individual psychophysiological traits of prostitutes, interpreted by some analysts as an attempt to avoid societal responsibility. However, it is now undeniable that prostitution is a deviant sociopathological phenomenon whose "seed" and development should be sought in social causes. Prostitution is not merely a social deviation but is also a form of sexual deviation, characterized by various forms of distorted sexual gratification (Bjelajac, 2011). Contemporary research in the field of prostitution, despite objective challenges (such as public stigma, which often prevents prostitutes from discussing their lives), could address many causal relationships, such as interactions with the environment, psychophysiological predispositions, the relationship between crime and prostitution, educational, economic, and marital status, and the impact of family and sexual violence. In examining prostitution as a highly complex phenomenon, various causes of this deviation have been identified. Some of these are particularly notable, such as: material factors, childhood rape, parental alienation, family issues, the influence of a social environment in which the prostitute's biopsychological and sociological personality development occurred (Bjelajac, 2017: 301), including the capacity of certain forms of religious incentives, where the female body is exploited for highly specific purposes (Zirojević, Bjelajac, 2013). As observed, the causes of prostitution are quite complex and interact with various social, economic, psychological, cultural, and religious factors. Understanding these causes—which include the level of human development, governance, and rule of law; repression and lack of human rights; family milieu and endogenous factors; violence against women; gender inequality; corruption; the rise and diversity of organized crime; regional militarization; social exclusion; various childhood traumas and abuses; drug or alcohol addiction; limited educational opportunities; lack of awareness; and human trafficking for sexual exploitation—is essential for establishing and developing prevention strategies and support systems for those integrated into the system of prostitution.

Legal and social aspects

It is a fact that, in principle, prostitution as a phenomenon has been socially stigmatized as improper and regulated and sanctioned by legal norms. However, it has never been effectively eradicated or suppressed in any class-based society. Its development has always been supported by favorable factors arising from persistent social contradictions, which has led to inconsistencies and lack of clear definition in social activities concerning legal regulations, penal policy, and even the church's stance on this phenomenon (Bjelajac, Jovanović, 2012). Realistically, in today's world, circumstances regarding this issue are somewhat more defined. To recall, there are three legal regimes through which states regulate and define the issue of prostitution:

- **Prohibitionism:** Treats prostitution as an offense. The prostitute, pimp, and client can be legally prosecuted;
- **Reglementarism:** Views prostitution as a “necessary evil” that can be controlled, treating it as a public service subject to regulations;
- **Abolitionism:** Involves the legalization of prostitution. Under this regime, pimping and solicitation are prohibited and punishable.

Contemporary debates on the moral status of prostitution are polarized between the view that paid sex is a type of service industry and, as such, should not be condemned, restricted, or prevented, as it is, in other words, legitimate, and the opinion that prostitution deserves criticism and even condemnation because it degrades women. The following reasons are cited as factors that degrade women (Primorac, 1991: 675–692):

- Because paid sex is impersonal;
- Because the prostitute is reduced to a mere instrument of use;
- Due to the intimate nature of sexual relations; and
- Because the prostitute sells her body or herself.

Supporters of the idea of legalized prostitution justify their stance with the argument that legal sanctions against prostitution cannot effectively suppress it, which is why it should be allowed but regulated

by law. This approach would create conditions for establishing some degree of control, while efforts against prostitution would be conducted through non-repressive measures: preventive, educational, economic, medical, promotional, and others (Delibašić, 2010: 9). However, one should not "turn a blind eye" to the fact that prostitution is a way for girls from lower social classes to earn money. In conditions of unemployment and poverty, women are not provided with many job choices. Undoubtedly, they feel discriminated against, without any protection or means of livelihood, with a genuine sense of being on the margins of society (Bjelajac, 2017:302). On the other hand, in developed countries that advocate a more liberal approach to prostitution, there are opportunities for good profit in the sex industry. This reality channels women into this profession, where the work is considerably more profitable than in other, less accessible occupations.

It is evident that, like no other social phenomenon, prostitution has always provoked—and will continue to provoke—contradictory reactions from society, primarily because sexual needs are among the most significant human needs, under strict socialization and social control processes. Prostitution as a phenomenon has been and will definitely remain the subject of numerous studies, analyses, varied theoretical interpretations, and conceptualizations (Bjelajac, 2017: 300–301). However, despite many disagreements and debates surrounding the understanding of this phenomenon, there is a consensus that prostitution is highly adaptable, mobile, latent, and inventive, and that it withstands different socioeconomic, legal, cultural, and political variations through the centuries precisely because of these characteristics.

Stages of the process of becoming prostitutes and manifest forms

Two distinct paths into prostitution have been identified. Running away had a dramatic effect on entry into prostitution during early adolescence, but less so later in life. Childhood sexual victimization, on the other hand, nearly doubled the likelihood of entering prostitution throughout a woman's life. Although drug use prevalence was significantly higher among prostitutes than non-prostitutes, drug abuse

did not explain entry into prostitution (McClanahan et al., 1999). The process by which women enter the world of prostitution, or the process of becoming prostitutes, generally involves several stages (Bjelajac, 2014: 130–131):

- **First stage:** A gradual shift from promiscuous behavior to the first act of prostitution. This stage is often marked by behavior beginning in adolescence, typically within a family environment where one parent is frequently absent, or in dysfunctional families lacking adequate parental control.
- **Second stage:** In this stage, certain skills and knowledge specific to providing sexual services are acquired. This "education" is facilitated through daily interactions with colleagues in the same "profession." Additionally, prostitutes in this stage become familiar with the side effects of their activities (infectious diseases, arrests, punishment, moral condemnation, alcoholism, drug addiction, physical and psychological abuse, etc.).
- **Third stage:** Commercialization, or economic gain, becomes the primary and sole motivation for engaging in prostitution. Selling one's body becomes an occupation, where the individual unreservedly submits their being, including their physical and mental constitution, to the job, accepting all its downsides. By adopting the behavior patterns typical of the trade, this person also incorporates them into their identity, where moral prejudices are absent in achieving the goal, i.e., earnings.

Prostitution, as a deviant phenomenon, has three forms: manifest, covert, and latent. The dominant features of manifest prostitution are payment, promiscuity, and emotional indifference between individuals of different or the same sex, which is also possible. The predominant forms of prostitution here are female heterosexuality and male homosexuality. At the manifest level, there are several types of prostitution: unorganized (street), organized (brothels), intermediary agencies, and business escort services (call girls). At this level, a person engaging in prostitution perceives themselves as deviant, having gone through a deviant career. This deviance is shown in their approach to

the job, their clothing style, entertainment choices, and value orientations. This type of prostitution is socially organized (prostitute – pimp – institution) and visible (Gavrilović, 2016). Covert prostitution differs from manifest prostitution in its invisibility. Those involved in covert prostitution do not entirely perceive themselves as deviant, usually being at the beginning of a deviant career, where a degree of conformity remains. Engaging in prostitution is rationalized in various ways, most often for financial reasons. Covert prostitution is typical in professions like housekeeping, waitressing, singing, modeling, secretarial work, and business escorts. What sets this type apart from manifest prostitution is the lack of organization, as individuals engage in prostitution occasionally or infrequently. In covert prostitution, there may be sexual relations, but the compensation does not always come in the form of money; it can be a service, right, or privilege. At the level of latent prostitution, femininity and sexuality may also be used to achieve goals but without sexual contact. The benefit here is typically non-material in nature (Gavrilović, 2016). In today's often contradictory society, many such situations exist, with the participants themselves rarely morally stigmatized, unlike "true" prostitutes and clients (Škulić, 2003: 476–477). From the perspective of sexual morality upheld by society, even when a person engages in marital sex and endures it to secure the economic benefits of marital status, this is no less a transaction than sex sold on the street to anyone who comes by and, therefore, is no less wrong or immoral (Primorac, 2007: 122–123).

Established stereotypes contribute to the mistaken perception. Specifically, when the word prostitution is used, the first association is often with a street prostitute—scantily dressed, with a cigarette in hand, intoxicated by alcohol or drugs, heavily made-up, and disoriented in time and space. This stereotype has been largely reinforced by Hollywood productions. Street prostitutes are on the opposite end of the spectrum compared to "call girls" (Bjelajac, 2017: 304). Most of them are uneducated, poorly informed, dependent on alcohol and drugs, and at high risk for sexually transmitted diseases. They also face increased risks of abuse, beatings, exploitation, rape, murder, involvement in various

criminal activities, arrest, and a significant likelihood of becoming victims of human trafficking.

In "elite prostitution," the sexual services provided to "clients" are the most expensive. The women offering these services are paid according to the status and position they hold within the illegal world of prostitution. Typically, these are educated and attractive women who speak foreign languages, are highly eloquent, and mobile in their search for wealthy clients. Their education helps them access the internet more easily, which can connect them with many more "clients." Recently, an increasing number of female students have engaged in this type of prostitution, claiming it allows them to cover the costs of attending expensive and prestigious universities. They may offer services continuously or occasionally, such as during cruises or vacations for wealthy clients on exotic destinations (Bjelajac, 2014: 133). Unlike street prostitution, elite prostitution is shrouded in secrecy and is characterized by exclusive access to the women only through intermediaries and recommendations within closed circles, with no public advertising.

It is evident that, of all the mentioned types of prostitution, the most insidious is the latent type. It is less noticeable, and its manifestations, in a state of general social apathy and unchecked permissiveness, are easily justified. Society has even adopted the term "sponsor girl" for this type of prostitute, though this is merely a modern alternative to the term "prostitute." In discussing the consequences of this type of prostitution, they are just as detrimental as those of the other two types—covert and manifest prostitution (Bjelajac, 2011). The promotion of latent prostitution is largely driven by mass media, as well as by family and societal influences, which elevate a distorted value system where the work, effort, and education of young women are placed in the background, while female physical attractiveness and sexuality are prioritized as models for success in life—a perspective that is, of course, entirely misguided.

Socioeconomic profile of prostitutes

The socioeconomic profile of prostitutes can be quite complex and depends on the interaction of various factors, such as the environment

in which a person lives, socioeconomic status, access to education, and social norms surrounding the issue of prostitution. Some of the key elements commonly considered in analyzing this profile include:

- **Economic reasons:** Poverty, unemployment, lack of alternative options to address financial difficulties;
- **Family environment:** Growing up in dysfunctional families with a history of violence, neglect, abuse, substance abuse, and general parental psychopathology;
- **Association with antisocial peers:** During the highly sensitive period of adolescence, peer influence is heightened, so if one individual enters the world of prostitution, there is a high probability that others in their social circle will follow;
- **Access to education, school dropout, educational failure, and lack of school attendance:** Many teenage girls who lack adequate access to education or have poor academic achievements may become involved in sexual activities;
- **Migration factors:** Migrant women are a particularly vulnerable group for both traditional prostitution and human trafficking for sexual exploitation due to limited job opportunities in a new country;
- **Stigmatization, marginalization, and discrimination:** In many societies, prostitution is stigmatized, leading to social exclusion (difficulty in obtaining support, other employment opportunities, and escaping the prostitution system);
- **Limited access to healthcare:** Lack of healthcare, issues with sexual and mental health, and exposure to sexually transmitted infections;
- **Lack of education and information:** People engage in prostitution, pimping, or trafficking victims and are forced into involuntary work, partly because a lack of education leaves them without alternatives. Education gained at school, in the family, and in society fosters responsibility, understood not only as the acceptance of certain obligations but also as the ability to

understand life circumstances and professional alternatives (Bunu, Petrov, 2001: 58). A lack of awareness about specific social issues narrows an individual's perspective, making them less capable of responding effectively. As a result, the world of prostitution often attracts naive young women who cannot recognize the deceptive nature of certain job offers that subtly introduce them to prostitution;

- **Regional differences:** The socioeconomic profile of prostitutes varies between developed countries (higher incomes, better working conditions, access to healthcare) and poorer countries (sexual exploitation, human trafficking, violence);
- **Legal and social aspects:** In countries where prostitution is legalized or decriminalized, prostitutes have access to health and legal protection, including social benefits. In countries where it is illegal, they predominantly work in more dangerous conditions and are more exposed to violence and exploitation, along with stigmatization, marginalization, and discrimination;
- **Media influence:** Many reality shows and media content that promote prostitution, alcoholism, drug use, promiscuity, and immorality, filled with vulgarities, banalities, and profanities, have large audiences and can especially negatively impact prepubescent and adolescent children. Significant publicity is given to figures in these reality shows, such as so-called starlets, "sponsor girls," prostitutes, and people from criminal backgrounds. Young girls, who have not yet developed critical judgments about value criteria, unconsciously idolize these personalities who display antisocial behavior, which is often correlated with certain forms of crime (Bjelajac, 2017: 672–673). Therefore, we must continually consider how to protect children from various forms of abuse (Bjelajac, Filipović, 2020; Bjelajac, Matijašević, & Počuča, 2012), especially in terms of education and awareness that digital violence and sociopathological phenomena in the virtual world spill over into the real world, encouraging delinquent behaviors.

Psychological profile of prostitutes

Studies on how women engaged in prostitution manage various aspects of risk and develop specific characteristics and coping mechanisms for the challenges their work entails (Sanders, 2004) are crucial for creating a psychological profile. Identifying and profiling prostitutes requires an understanding of their psychological characteristics, motivations, social context, and operational methods. This is a complex topic, as pimps and prostitutes may be found in different social, economic, and cultural environments. The psychological profile of prostitutes cannot be generalized due to its social and cultural complexity and historical roots in communities. Moreover, the specific experiences, motives, and personal traits of each individual involved in this phenomenon vary and require specialized profiling skills to understand their psychological profile.

The identification of traits and behaviors in prostitutes is closely linked to the motivation focused on the projection of quick earnings and an easy life. However, this path, in reality, is paved with psychophysical traumas, dependency on alcohol and drugs, and coercion that leads to a loss of autonomy in making decisions about their own lives. Operational characteristics include work locations (streets, apartments, adapted spaces...), often places under the constant supervision of pimps, and a clientele that may be regular, occasional, unknown, and toward whom they may exhibit ambivalent behavior.

Many prostitutes provide their services exclusively in "brothels" alongside other prostitutes, as this type of prostitution offers certain advantages, such as solidarity, safety, and protection compared to working on the streets. Additionally, in an organized "brothel," there is a lower likelihood that a prostitute will be caught by the police (Bjelajac, 2017: 306). Clients usually come by recommendation, where "full-body massage for gentlemen" is offered—a common terminology used to mask prostitution as a seemingly legal business.

Consequently, forensic analysis is of great importance for profiling and identifying pimps and prostitutes, involving the collection of evidence such as audio and video recordings, emails, SMS messages (used to arrange meetings), financial traces, and statements from

prostitutes, clients, pimps, and witnesses. Communication analysis, despite the use of coded messages, false identities, and secret locations to avoid criminal liability, can provide insight into operational methods and the contact network, which is crucial for criminal investigations. This is especially important as individuals involved in prostitution are often unwilling to testify due to fear of retaliation.

We must emphasize that there are several common characteristics and behavior patterns associated with this phenomenon, as observed in the testimonies of many women who have entered this dark world. Their mental framework, through verbal and/or non-verbal cues, suggests:

- Living in dysfunctional families;
- Unemployment and poverty;
- Single-parent households/broken homes;
- Lack of education and information;
- Traumatic experiences with a history of abuse and childhood sexual victimization;
- Association with antisocial peers;
- Exposure to criminal structures;
- Poor school performance;
- Running away from home in early adolescence;
- Alcohol and substance abuse;
- Adaptability to people and situations;
- Need for control and independence;
- Ability to understand clients by building empathetic relationships or a lack of empathy;
- Development of defense mechanisms such as dissociation (separating emotions from actions), cynicism, and a sense of detachment from their own identity;
- Development of feelings of inner conflict or shame, or building self-confidence with defiance toward social norms, stereotypes, and the general stigma surrounding their profession;
- Avoidance of emotional attachment;

- Resilience and endurance under emotional and physical pressures;
- Naivety and susceptibility to manipulation by third parties;
- Financial need as motivation.

For a broader understanding of prostitution, it is essential to consider how prostitution affects the mental and physical health of prostitutes. Even at the first encounter, especially with women involved in the lowest level of prostitution—street prostitution—signs of certain health problems can be observed, reflecting an integral element of their psychological profile, such as:

- Malnutrition;
- Poor hygiene;
- Confusion and inconsistency in statements, vague responses;
- Signs of drug or alcohol use;
- Dehydration;
- Sexually transmitted diseases;
- Visible signs of rape or sexual abuse;
- Bruises and scars on the body, burns, cuts, broken bones or teeth, or other signs of untreated medical issues;
- Chronic illnesses, such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer;
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD);
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) involves a complex and severe symptomatology (Farley, Barkan, 1998), which includes: depression, anxiety, emotional numbness or blunting, intrusive thoughts and flashbacks, insomnia, hypervigilance, irritability, anger, phobias, and loss of life purpose. It is known that prostitutes and victims of human trafficking are more likely to suffer from PTSD compared to the general population, with the symptomatology being more complex and prolonged when the stressor is "human-made." Additionally, as a result of emotional turmoil, pervasive violence, and marginalization, suicidal thoughts, self-hatred, low self-esteem, and dissociation (separation of the body from the mind) may also occur.

In a study conducted in the Netherlands examining the characteristics of prostitution and associated factors, the question of motivation for engaging in prostitution was explored. In open-ended responses regarding reasons for prostitution, nearly half of the participants (48.9%) reported engaging in prostitution for financial reasons. This included responses such as earning money, financial needs, lack of alternative jobs, desire for more luxury in life, and preference for easier work or fewer working hours. The financial reasons reported indicate whether the motivation is more based on financial needs versus desires for a more luxurious lifestyle. Among those who explicitly stated their reasons, the responses were fairly evenly split between engaging in prostitution due to financial need (15.9% of the sample) and using prostitution to achieve a better lifestyle (14.8% of the sample). The second most frequently reported reason for engaging in prostitution was fun and/or excitement (22.8% of the sample) (Krumrei-Mancuso, 2017). Although this is a relatively small sample of 88 women engaged in prostitution, it is consistent with other studies and reflects a fairly realistic view of the motivational factors for engaging in prostitution, which unequivocally include financial need and misconceptions about quick earnings and an easy life.

Interaction of prostitution with crime and other forms of sociopathological behavior

The phenomenon of prostitution represents a significant aspect of social relationships. This phenomenon is, of course, an expression of social disorder that has a specific causal relationship with certain similar forms of sociopathological behavior or, more broadly, "social diseases" (Bjelajac, 2014:135). Prostitution is multilayered in its connection with crime, where involvement in criminal activities and other behaviors may be incited through blackmail, coercion, or the pursuit of material gain. The connection between prostitution and crime exists regardless of whether it is permitted or prohibited by the normative system (Milutinović, 1985:37). According to Tomislav Marković, there is a correlation between prostitution and criminal intentions, which is reflected in the following ways (Marković, 1965):

- Prostitution is part of the social circle that also includes criminals;
- The prostitute often participates in concealing criminals;
- The prostitute may act as an accomplice or co-perpetrator of criminal offenses;
- The prostitute can be an instigator of crime and other antisocial activities;
- The prostitute may act as the direct perpetrator of criminal offenses.

Prostitution is a highly dangerous criminal activity associated with organized and transnational organized crime, as it often involves the corruption of authorities responsible for combating prostitution, allowing criminal organizations to commercialize this criminal activity more freely and openly (Bošković, 2003: 171). Crime and prostitution are closely interconnected in certain aspects, making it difficult to explain the causes of such direct links in a single sentence. However, it is known that prostitution indirectly encourages crime. Additionally, substantial funds from criminal activities are funneled into prostitution, as the organizational structure of prostitution is one of the common forms of professional and organized crime. The fact is that the profits from prostitution benefit not only the prostitute but also entire teams of procurers, criminals, pimps, and other "parasites" associated with prostitution (Bjelajac, 2014: 136), including corrupt elements, as prostitution has always operated under a covert form of protection from certain parts of the police and some local officials who found personal benefit in it.

Juvenile delinquency is a very sensitive and socially troubling category. It involves antisocial activities by individuals who have not reached adulthood (in most countries, between 18 and 22 years of age). When the most vulnerable population, namely young people, becomes involved in prostitution, conditions are created that allow them to enter the world of juvenile delinquency through a side door (Bjelajac, 2014: 137). It is well-known that prostitution and juvenile delinquency are closely and mutually linked. Many young prostitutes come from backgrounds involving dysfunctional families with histories of sexual,

physical, and emotional abuse, along with experiences of alcohol and substance abuse. These negative experiences have resulted in the formation of a "violent sexual identity."

Alcoholism and drug addiction are the most common causes of criminogenic behavior. These two factors, when interacting with prostitution, have a destructive effect on the body, as they lead to a neutralization of consciousness and an increase in suggestibility. Recently, organized prostitution has included the use of opiates as a proven ritual to "bind" the client and enhance the overall ambiance, creating a "better" virtual reality experience. At the same time, there is a large number of prostitutes who are drug addicts, making the risk of spreading AIDS, hepatitis, and other infectious diseases more than likely (Bjelajac, 2011). The interaction between prostitution and certain forms of sociopathological behavior implies the strengthening of sociopathological modalities and leads to the emergence of various criminal phenomena and content, including crimes against humanity, such as human trafficking/modern slavery.

Many researchers argue that there is an "invisible thread" between prostitution and human trafficking, based on the understanding that prostitution can never fundamentally be voluntary and therefore implies trafficking in women. This perspective emphasizes the marginalized and disenfranchised status of women in society, which directs them toward selling their bodies to men (Bjelajac, 2008:10). In contrast, other views defend the notion that a woman has the right to control her own body as she wishes, meaning that engaging in prostitution can be part of her voluntary choice. Based on this, prostitution is clearly differentiated from trafficking in women for sexual exploitation. When a woman is a victim of human trafficking, she is deprived of the freedom of choice and has no control over what happens to her—that is, she cannot choose whether to engage in it, how, to what extent, and with whom, with no corresponding earnings. A woman who is a victim of human trafficking finds herself in a specific form of slavery, brought about through coercion and deceit, involving brutal abuses of human rights and freedoms. Daily sexual exploitation with numerous "clients," without adequate protection, exposure to sexually transmitted

and other diseases, physical and psychological torture, rape, and intimidation are only part of what trafficking victims endure (Bjelajac, 2014:138; Bjelajac, Marković, & Pavlović 2012). Human trafficking is a serious problem, affecting human rights, public health, and overall human development, as it entails numerous human and strategic risks. Although there is a clear interaction between prostitution and human trafficking for sexual exploitation, prostitution can also stem from other causes and is not always linked to human trafficking. However, engaging in prostitution is also akin to “walking a tightrope,” where one can easily slip into an abyss and fall into the “clutches” of traffickers, entering a state of lost dignity and freedom.

Discussion

Sexual services are considered the oldest profession in the world, practiced by people since ancient times. As the years go by, we can witness the significant growth of the sex industry. Over time, various types of sexual services have been introduced, encompassing both direct and indirect interactions such as prostitution, phone sex, webcam modeling, strip clubs, OnlyFans, and more (Sex Worker Statistics..., 2024). Often, the question arises: what percentage of people use sexual services? The percentage of individuals who use the services of sex workers varies by gender and country, with most clients being men. According to one study, an estimated 16% of men use the services of female sex workers, while 1% of women reported using the services of male sex workers. Globally, there are a total of 52 million sex workers, of whom 41.6 million are women, while 10.4 million are men, indicating that 80% of sex workers worldwide are women. Sexual services are common in most countries, regardless of their legal status. In the U.S., 14% of men admitted to paying for sex, while only 1% of women acknowledged paying for sex, with the majority of men who pay falling in the age range of 30 to 44 years (Sex Worker Statistics..., 2024). It should be noted that assessing the scope and prevalence of prostitution is challenging, and the reported data may be misleading due to the covert, inventive, and mobile nature of the phenomenon.

The key terms we should use in this discussion are education, profiling, and legalization. History teaches us that it is impossible to eradicate prostitution as a deviant social phenomenon, but it is possible to reduce it to a level that is "tolerable for society" through a system of continuous education and public awareness. Educating minors about the risks and harmful consequences of prostitution should be part of school curricula and primary prevention efforts.

Parents and teachers should take "small steps" to apply basic knowledge of profiling to proactively respond and prevent early cases of maladaptive behaviors from developing into more serious issues. For example, changes in mood, behavior, appearance, hygiene, and psychophysical health could raise suspicions that a child may be using drugs. Signs of drug use can easily be identified by checking for odors on breath, hair, and clothing, or noticing changes in the eyes (redness, heavy eyelids, constricted pupils). Preventive measures and early actions can begin by checking common areas where the child sleeps and spends time. Do not overlook mobile phones and other digital devices, which may indicate suspicious contacts and activities. Getting to know your children's friends and being involved in their lives is a positive approach. Lastly, do not hesitate to occasionally test your child for substances. Remember, if a high school girl suddenly has an expensive new iPhone and claims it was a gift from a friend, it could be an early sign of sexual exploitation. Sometimes, neglecting or failing to notice new clothes, makeup, and other items without a clear explanation of how they were acquired can be an early indication of a classic scenario involving prostitution (Bjelajac, 2024). Profiling minor girls who exhibit delinquent behavior and responding in a timely manner can be an effective protective factor as part of proactive measures before entry into prostitution occurs.

In conclusion, strategies to combat prostitution must more seriously consider the framework of accepting this phenomenon as a legal form of business, which is a particularly rational model for controlling this sociopathological behavior. This is especially relevant because, in many countries that legally incriminate this phenomenon, there is a high level of tolerance in real-life situations (including mass

media), resulting in a significant gap between the "normative and the actual."

Conclusion

The structure, content, and essence of this paper can serve as a good starting point for understanding prostitution and profiling prostitutes from different perspectives. Each section of this paper provides a unique viewpoint on prostitution as a universal phenomenon, which has existed since ancient times and continues to generate numerous controversies in modern society. Though concise, the presented etiological, legal, and social aspects of prostitution, along with the stages in the process of becoming a prostitute and its various forms, hold substantial potential for enabling a comprehensive understanding of this complex topic.

The socioeconomic profile of prostitutes suggests an interaction of multiple factors that make young people vulnerable to early entry into prostitution, while the psychological profile reveals several common patterns and behavioral matrices associated with this phenomenon, with a particular emphasis on traumatic experiences and the psychophysical consequences for women involved in this sociopathological activity. The connection between prostitution, crime, and other forms of socio-pathological behavior is notably emphasized. Prostitution aligns with organized criminal activities as a source of profit through illegal networks engaged in human trafficking and drug distribution. Additionally, prostitutes may be exposed to various forms of violence and criminal activities.

The concept of profiling as a protective factor can be useful in preventive programs by enabling the identification of risk factors and early signs that might lead to entry into prostitution. On the other hand, profiling can also support the process of exiting prostitution through personalized approaches and rehabilitation programs that take into account the specific experiences, needs, motives, and personal characteristics of each individual involved in this phenomenon. In this way, it is possible to facilitate the transition and social reintegration.

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Profilisanje prostitutki

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Sažetak

Postoji značajan broj autora koji su se bavili fenomenologijom i etiologijom prostitucije "kao najstarijeg zanata" čiji koreni dosežu daleko kroz istoriju. Očito je da takav pristup nije koherentan. Stoga su u ovom radu uključeni različiti aspekti prostitucije koji sugerišu na lična iskustva i karakteristike žena koje se bave ovim poslom uz analizu različitih faktora, trauma i obrazaca ponašanja koji vode žene u prostituciju, sa reperkusijom na mentalno i fizičko zdravlje i simptomatologijom post-traumatskog stresnog poremećaja. Kroz socioekonomski i psihološki profil prostitutki, ovde delegiramo koncept kriminalističkog profilisanja, kao važan alat i zaštitni faktor u proaktivnom pristupu da se spreči upliv mladih devojaka i žena u delinkventni svet prostitucije uz razmatranje na koji način profilisanje može pomoći u razumevanju asocijalnih ponašanja i preventivnog delovanja još u adolescentskoj dobi i rešavanju problema vezanih za ovaj društveni fenomen pre njegove manifestacije, ali i nakon toga sa zakašnjenjem. Primenjene su metode: kvantitativne i kvalitativne analize sadržaja, komparativne analize (reakcije na prostituciju) i deskriptivne i analitičke statistike. Cilj ovog rada je da se identifikuju fleksibilni faktori rizika, a ujedno i zaštitni faktori kroz koncept profilisanja koji mogu biti planirani u preventivnim i interventnim strategijama, u težnji ka delotvornom odgovoru zajednice u politici suzbijanja prostitucije.

Ključne reči: prostitucija, uzroci prostitucije, klasifikacija prostitutki, karakteristike prostitutki, profilisanje prostitutki, socioekonomski profil, psihološki profil.