
Sex Victims Of Crimes

Sex workers generally work in an unregulated industry where protection is limited in comparison to other jobs, this gives an element of vulnerability which can be exploited by others (in particular criminals / sexual predators). As sex work is frequently linked with drug and alcohol abuse (in particular street workers) many sex workers find themselves in situations where they feel that there is no other option but to continue in making what they may feel is easy money to feed addiction, this is where criminal gangs are able to offer a level of protection, constant supply of drugs or alcohol and a client base in return for cash payment from this person selling their body for sex.

It is common knowledge that sex workers endure a high level of physical, sexual and emotional violence both in the UK and globally. There has been a number of investigations to try and grasp the extent of abuse sex workers have been subjected to, [Deering et al 2014] reported that workplace violence is experienced globally by 45-75% of sex workers over their lifetime. In Birmingham a survey found that out of a 110 women involved in sex work, 68% had experience violence at work [Kinnell 1993], in Liverpool a survey found that 80% of sex workers had experienced work-based violence [Campbell & Stoops, 2010]. Another survey of 240 sex workers across three cities within the UK found that 63% had experienced violence in their lifetime [Barnard et al., 2002]. Research also suggests that mortality rates are significantly higher amongst sex workers than in the general population [Goodyear & Cusick, 2007], one study found that female sex workers are twelve times more likely to be murdered than women from the general population [Ward, Day & Weber, 1999].

Defining the term victimisation: This could be when someone has treated you badly or subjects you to a harm, basically this is an unjust treatment against another.

Research found that Male, female and transgender sex workers could face a level of violence because of stigma associated with sex work, which in most instances is criminalized, or due to discrimination based on gender, race, HIV status, drug use or other factors. The majority of violence against sex workers is a mix of gender inequality and discrimination directed at women, or at men and transgender individuals who do not conform to gender and heterosexual norms, either because of their feminine appearance or the way they express their sexuality [addressing violence against sex workers].

The law which says you mustn't be discriminated against is called the Equality Act 2010. Discrimination which is against the Equality Act is unlawful. This means you can take action in the civil courts.

Within the UK the offence of controlling prostitution for gain (under the Sexual Offences Act 2003) is a very significant law in relation to the sale of sex. This law which can be exercised to prosecute anyone whom is found guilty of controlling or managing brothels or advertising sexual services i.e. online escort agencies. This law does offer a level of protection to a sex worker i.e. if they find they are being forced to work against will they could report a person or organisation to the police. However, there are questions being asked if UK laws are enough to reduce levels of sexual exploitation by criminal gangs. Criminals can evade prosecution by using tactics

should as pop up brothers where hotels or rented properties are only used for short periods of time meaning their activities can be hard to detect. Brothel laws within the UK prevent sex workers of having the safety of working with others making prostitutes vulnerable and those who are already in a vulnerable position, even more so. Perhaps allowing sex workers to work with others should be reviewed by law makers to add an element of security to the industry.

I feel governments around the world have an issue in both regulating the industry (morally accepting this could encourage people into sex work) or enforcing stricter policies as this may drive the industry further underground giving criminals greater control, its double edged sword effect, my personal view is a call for further regulation but reducing advertisement. I believe the level of victimisation could be linked to the areas sex workers are currently operating, i.e. an area of high crime will = greater level of victimisation against the sex worker due to operating gangs or clientele. Prior to researching I believed the level of abuse was higher than percentages stated within paragraph two of this paper, even though the percentages were high I would of guesed that anyone working within the sex industry of a length of time would be certain to endure a level of abuse. I believe many people forget that the sex industry is not just made up of women, male and transgender sex workers could be subjected to greater victimisation due to the level of gender inequalities. People suggest that prostitution is the oldest profession, I don't believe there will ever be a world without people selling their bodies for sexual gratification unless robotic science can offer a replacement. I don't believe sex workers will ever not be subjected to victimisation but I believe there could be less victimisation if there were great regulating bodies controlling this industry.

Stategies sex workers could use to prevent / reduce victimisation: -

- Work through sex advertising platforms where members are vetted
- Ensuring clients have a clear understanding or do's & dont's
- Avoid curb crawling or answering unknown mobile numbers
- Letting people know where they are keeping in regular contact
- Working in developed countries / low level crime area's
- Avoiding criminal gangs, pimps & trafficker's
- Avoid using drugs or alcohol
- Reporting crime i.e. violence endured.