

The Ethical and Hinduism views on Prostitution

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Abstract- Prostitution is undoubtedly a very ancient practice and the debates about this practice are very old and still persist. Various books and articles are being published about prostitution and various theories are being presented. Although scientific, literary and religious debates on prostitution are alive and well, philosophical discussions on it seem to have never been serious. Now the question is how to explain it in a philosophical discussion? Is there any logic? Could it be that the subject of prostitution is not so amenable to philosophical discussion. Or is it the case that although prostitution can be discussed philosophically, it does not raise any serious philosophical questions? There is no reason to think that prostitution is not a matter of philosophical discussion, as the profession involves many ideological and evaluative issues. Could it be that prostitution as a moral question is appropriate for ethics rather than moral philosophy? And it does not give rise to any higher moral principles. And it may seem that prostitution is related to the ethics of religion and religious disobedience. Can't philosophy have philosophical discussions with religious views on prostitution?. This article discusses the brief history of prostitution, how it existed in ancient India. An attempt has also been made to show the moral aspect of prostitution and to show briefly how Hinduism treats prostitution.

Keywords: Prostitution and it's brief history, ethics, Hinduism.

INTRODUCTION:

Prostitution is simply defined as the sale of sexual acts. Most sociologists define prostitution as sexual activity that involves the exchange of goods in return for the performance of sexual services and involves direct physical activity between the buyer and the seller, along with negotiation, solicitation, emotional gratification . A prostitute, as a woman who temporarily refuses to use her body to various men in exchange for money, is obviously very narrow and limited. However, there is much more involved than defining the practice in this way, and there are complex dynamics between clients of prostitution. The debate regarding the study of prostitution was started by the Archimedean society who considered prostitution a controversial subject. Different philosophers have given different views on it. For example, Fredrick Angel said prostitution is a form of domination by men over women. Benjamin and Masters comment that physical intercourse with a prostitute is probably morally, and perhaps aesthetically, on a higher level than non-affectionate intercourse between husband and wife, such as the loveless spousal relationship that is so common in our present society.¹

Many writers have also commented that prostitution is generally a religious matter. It involves adultery, and philosophical visions associated with the idea of women's contented virginity . Prostitution existed in almost all countries and in all types of civilizations but it did not develop in the same way everywhere. In Greek civilization there was a clear dividing line between a prostitute and common women. Women who entered male society were deprived of the status of ordinary women. The Roman prostitution is a very old profession but it is very difficult to say when and how this profession originated but it can be said that prostitution is one of the oldest practices in the world since the formation of organized society's. had many oriental gods and their society prostitutes were associated with temples. In India there was also a practice of a type of prostitute associated with the temple known as Devadashi.

The moral view of prostitution is not very significant but many countries have recognized it as a legal practice. In many countries, this practice is regarded as the worst crime and the people associated with this practice are even given the death penalty. Prostitution is generally defined as providing physical intercourse in exchange for money. According to Karl Marx's theory, prostitution is caused by the economic and productive system of society, the general social condition of women under capitalists production, especially economic deprivation and exploitation. The most popular general view of prostitution is that prostitution is unqualified evil, and that it is an undesirable social phenomenon that needs to be eradicated. From the point of view of those who adopt this view, sex work is associated with exploitation, torture and lawlessness. According to this perspective, girls who established themselves as prostitutes were shamed, humiliated and subjected to various deceptions at various times in their lives. If this practice is legalized, these incidents are more likely to happen. But there are some people who see prostitution as an independent profession, a way to break free from male slavery, they demand to legalize prostitution.

Objective of the Research:

Today we live in a sexist environment. Now perhaps more than ever, sexism has apparently permeated our culture. The mass media – advertising, television, movies, books and magazines, popular music – together with the fashion industry, shout that sexuality is central to our lives and remind us that there is a wide range of sexual attitudes and behavior's, greater openness about sexuality that characterizes the current scene. Because of that, the profession of adultery, rape and prostitution has developed a lot in the society.²

The profession of prostitution has existed in the society since the beginning through various ups and downs of the society. In modern times, much progress has been made, from the ancient temple-related prostitution profession to the current industry. There is much debate in the apprenticeship community about this profession. Some see this profession in a good light and some see it in a very bad light. Different people interpret this vocation in different ways which is endlessly debated, from laymen to philosophers, laymen to philosophers all arguing about vocation. This profession is also debated among feminist philosophers, and it can be seen that there are differences of opinion in different societies on this issue. If we look at the legal systems of different countries, we see prostitution or sex outside of marriage, there are different types of legal systems. In such a situation, we try to find a solution to prostitution in the light of Hinduism. The purpose of this essay is to try to find out how the subject is described in this religion.

Brief History of prostitution:

Prostitution is a very old profession but it is very difficult to say exactly when and how this profession originated but it can be said that prostitution is one of the oldest practices in the world since the formation of organized society. Prostitution was common in almost all countries and in all types of societies, but its form varied from culture to culture. Many ancient religious rules and social practices made women polygamous. For example, the historian Herodotus mentions in his book "Sacred Prostitution" that in the ancient city of Babylon, it was obligatory for women to enter the temple of Aphrodite and have sex with strangers for at least once in her lifetime.³ In many parts of ancient Africa, kings had the right to have sex with any girl. According to Westermarck, among the Acamba tribes of British East Africa it was customary that a pregnant girl was considered the most suitable wife, and in the Bogas of Upper Mongolia in France, women who already had a child were selected for marriage by men. In various parts of the world, in the past there was a rule that if one brother married, the other brothers had equal opportunities to have sex with that wife. In various parts of the world, women were considered the common property of men for sexual activities. According to Theompas, the law was valid among the Tyrrhenion that women were the property of the common people for sexual activity. In modern terms, the above activities are different forms or types of prostitution.

Vedas India's oldest literature. Vedic Puranas mention high-class celestial courtesans like Menoka, Rambha, Urboshi. Kalidasa's writings suggest that Aryan rulers in India organized guest prostitution following the celestial court system. Kings used to gift perfect virgin women to other kings as a symbol of their friendship. It was also customary to give virgin women as ransom to the conquerors. Prostitution in ancient India was largely regulated by state institutions and the profession was considered a prestigious profession and also conformed to social institutions in a male-dominated society. Abdur Razzak who was the Persian ambassador to the prosperous state of Vijayanagara wrote in 1443 that prostitution in India was permitted, regulated and subject to royal revenue. A form of sacred prostitution practiced in various famous temples of India consisted of women whose parents sent them to serve God. These women stayed in the temple, engaged in the service of God, served the temple and performed dances and songs in the temple ceremonies. These dancing women were given a place of honor. But gradually there was moral decay among the temple priests abusing the rituals dedicated to this sacred cause giving rise to clandestine prostitution. These women devoted their lives to religious service. Known as devadasis, they have a significant place in the history of prostitution in India. The word devadasi literally means servant (servant) of God and these devadasis were not in common marriage, a devadasi was married to God and thus remained sadasuhagan or married, hence always blessed i.e., she became the wife of the powerful. In different states devadasis were different name.⁴

Ethical view on prostitution:

Sex is a common human need. In married life the question of morality does not arise in enjoying sex on the basis of mutual love between husband and wife because society morally supports it. But when discussing prostitution, the question of morality arises, whether prostitution is morally justified or not?. When it comes to the ethical discussion of prostitution, there are two types of viewpoints: one view is that prostitution cannot be morally justified, and the other view is that it is ethically justified. The first view is that ideal sex consists of pleasure, expression of mutual desire, extreme vulnerability, trust in each other, kindness and respect, love, a means of achieving peace of mind with mature concerns. But because these things are not related to prostitution, prostitution is not acceptable. Those who do not support prostitution from a moral point of view show that the prostitute is a sinful creature who should not have a place in civilized society. Prostitutes disregard common decency, prostitutes are a menace to the family and society, and they corrupt the youth and damage character. Such a life choice is unfit for polite society. A prostitute's fate is worse than death, lowering herself to prey on men's lust. It is humiliating for all those involved in prostitution especially women. Those who see it from the second perspective, on the other hand, think prostitution is morally acceptable because it represents women's freedom, self-reliance and freedom from male slavery.

Sex is one of the most interesting, most intriguing aspects of human life and sex is a big mysterious puzzle. Many books have been written by many people in search of definitive solutions out of this puzzle. Some of them declare that we should suppress our free sexual nature, we should not have free sexual relations like prostitution because sex is not only about the body, it also involves the soul, free sexual intercourse is animal behavior and it is dangerous or sinful for the spiritual life. Some encourage promiscuous sex, while others describe it in physiological, scientific, and medical terms. The teachings derived from these doctrines create a complication like six blind men touching an elephant.⁵

We need more perspectives to consider the complexities of sexuality and sex-related prostitution. In this sense I have tried to understand the Hindu religious views on prostitution. This religions oppose prostitution and say that prostitution is immoral and sinful. Many statements do not use the word prostitution directly but use the word sex outside the marital bond, such as adultery, fornication. Prostitution is sex outside of marriage. So we can assume that when it is said that adultery or sex outside marriage is

forbidden, prostitution is also forbidden. The problem is, this religion implicitly show many examples that there are some exemptions for engaging in prostitution, and that those involved in prostitution can have no sin.⁶ we will try to look at the Hinduism aspects of prostitution below .

Hinduism:

Hinduism is the oldest religion. Various deities are worshiped in this religion, The goddess is worshiped as a woman by looking at women with respect. “Kama” is one of the four purusharthas of Hinduism. Kama or sex purushartha, but not all types of sexual intercourse are purusharthas. In Hinduism sex approved only those are married couples . In Manusamhitas 9:101 says that “May mutual fidelity continue till death”,⁷—this, in brief should be understood as the highest duty between husband and wife”. Husbands and wives need to keep their relationship intact until death, without leaving each other and not looking for another sexual partner. In Manusamhitas 8:352 says that “Those men who are addicted to intercourse with the wives of other men, the king shall banish after having branded them with terror-inspiring punishments”.⁸ In Hinduism sex in outside marriages bond not allowed , prostitution is sex in outside marriage bond so prostitution also prohibited and it considered “bad karma” and one will suffer it in another life, those who prostitute the whole profession for survival (money) and those who indulge in it are more sinful, then those who provide it. According vishnu purana 3:11 “ A man should not think too much of another’s wife.⁹ He should be addressed very little for that purpose. Such a man will be reborn in a future life as a vine.” In shanti parva Mahabharata adultery is said to be a great sin and consider punishment for it . According bhagabata geeta 1:40-42 A corrupt woman destroys the dignity of the family further need to be destruction of the clean.¹⁰ Manus law 8.357 “Giving a gift to a woman, chatting with her, touching her ornaments and clothes, sitting in bed with her are all considered adulterous acts” adultery is sinful act .

From the above discussion it is clear that prostitution is not justified in Hinduism. Prostitution and having sex with prostitutes is a form of adultery Since adultery is not supported so the profession of prostitution is also prohibited. If we notice that in this religion, both the profession of prostitution and those who go to prostitutes for sexual pleasure are immoral and sinful, but in some cases there is some tolerance for engaging in extramarital sexual relations.

Hinduism directly not considers prostitution as valled but if we see the Hindu scriptures indirectly considered prostitution as morally acceptable. Purana, Ramayana, and Mahabharata show us many of the famous names. Namely Urbashi, Menoka, Tilottoma, Gritachi, Sukeshietc . Those women are prostitutes even highly respected women. In Manusamhitas, Manu many several times consider prostitution as legal. Manu mentioned 2:167 “women are naturally bitch”. If women are naturally bitch then it is not Immoral to her engaged prostitute. Manu also says 12:38 “intercourse is permitted with a wanton women, who belong to another then the Brahmin caste or a prostitute or a female slaves not restrained by her master if those women belong to a lower caste the one self but with the wanton of superior caste intercourse is prohibited”. In Narodasmriti 12: 61 “A man is not punishable as an adultery for having intercourse with a woman separated from her husband, or the wife of the homosexual if the woman herself desire and consent to it.¹¹ So we can say that sex in outside marriage also permitted in many particular cases.

Conclusion:

Although Hinduism does not consider extramarital sexual relations as immoral or sinful in some cases, we cannot say that Hinduism supports extramarital sexual relations or prostitution. Prostitution is a sinful and immoral act from a religious point of view, this religion has given more importance to this matter.

Today, as our society has evolved, so too has the profession of prostitution, which was originally associated with temples, turned into an industry today. Now there are about 42 million prostitutes all over the world. Not only women but also men are now involved in this profession. Presently prostitution is divided into different types such as 1 brothel prostitutes, 2 call girls, 3 night club dancing girls, 4 park prostitutes, 5 actors of pornography, 6 massage parlors, 7 hotel girls, and so on. Presently many countries consider prostitution is legal like, New Zealand, Finland, Denmark, Israel, Austria, Switzerland and so on. Many countries consider prostitution is illegal like, Albania, Jordan, Romania, North Korea, and Afghanistan etc. And many countries consider it is limitedly legal like, Armenia, Ireland, Malaysia and India. Nowadays, sex trafficking has become a global business with most countries involved in this business in some way. It is commonly smuggled from developing countries to developed countries such as Thailand and the Philippines to Japan, Australia, Europe and the United States. Various organizations at the international, national and local levels are trying to stop sex trafficking, but sex trafficking continues to increase worldwide. If this continues, it will be harmful to the society and the country. People from all walks of life should come forward so that this issue can be stopped.

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