

Consent or Crime:
Examining the Perceptions of Prostitution
by
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ABSTRACT

There is a large debate surrounding the legality of prostitution that leads to a negative portrayal of sex entertainment. Research examining the history of sex entertainment was reviewed to establish common themes. There are many arguments in support of or against the legalization of prostitution. Public support for the legalization of prostitution has increased over time meriting research on recent perceptions. This study was based on a newly collected opinion survey (N=302). It is used to examine attitudes towards individuals who sell sex by using sex, education, religion, and age as independent variables against the Attitudes Towards Individuals who Sell Sex (ATISS) scale. The data set provided that a majority of individuals prefer the legalization of prostitution and webcamming models. Results indicated that religion was the only statistically significant predictor of attitudes towards those who sell sex which is aligned with past research. Moving forward, it is important to understand the discrepancies between attitudes towards those who sell sex and legalization of prostitution and current laws and policies.

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Introduction

Prostitution is considered the “world’s oldest profession,” and it often leads to conflict when discussing its intimate nature (Clarkson, 1998). Research surrounding the term “prostitution” depicts this word negatively. Definitions of prostitution throughout history have exhibited scenarios that involve women being forced or coerced to engage in sexual activity with another for profit (Rey, 1851; Ellis, 1936; Clarkson, 1939). However, the legal definition of prostitution described in laws is the following, “the crime of prostitution generally involves three elements: (A) some degree of sexual activity or conduct, (B) compensation, and (C) intent to commit prostitution,” (Davis, 2006). There is one significant factor to distinguish between these definitions, the idea of consensual versus nonconsensual sexual engagement. What is, then, the correct definition of prostitution, and does this definition hold the same meaning to anyone who provides sexual services? These are questions that will continue to be explored throughout this thesis.

Outlets for sexual engagement for profit have increased over the past forty years as research has shown that those who engage in this field are motivated by profit (Califia 1980; Wills 1981; Rubin 1984; Ahlburg and Jensen, 1998; Makin and Morczek, 2015; Makin and Bye, 2018; Jones, 2019; Poppi and Sandberg, 2020). The realm of sex entertainment has also expanded beyond prostitution and now has been established as a multi-billion dollar industry (Kibby & Costello, 2001). Yet in the United States, the sale of sexual services in person (e.g., prostitution, escorting, call girls) is currently illegal in all states except Nevada—where it is regulated in certain counties. These components are

contradictory to one another as there has been an increase in the desire for sexual engagement but there are laws prohibiting certain sexual acts. Why has there been an increase in sexual engagement while having laws that prohibit it? This question will be discussed later in this paper. Throughout this thesis the term “sex entertainment/sex entertainment industry” will be used to encompass all types of sexual services so long as consent is given. Sexual engagement without consent or by force is sexual assault (Kilpatrick, 2000).

Webcamming models sell sexual services via web cameras on various social media platforms and can be defined as sexual entertainment. The legality of the sex entertainment industry is highly debated because of the polarizing opinions on the legality of prostitution. This can frame people’s attitudes towards other sex entertainment. For instance, there is a perception that anyone involved in sex entertainment is committing illegal acts and should face consequences. These perceptions can be explained in a cyclic manner; the attitudes surrounding this industry are what determines its legality; however, it is also the legality that determines the attitudes of this industry. Since prostitution is mostly illegal, the legal status of other forms of sex entertainment are constantly being debated, regardless of the sexual service (Macfarlane, Fuller, Wakefield, and Brents, 2017). Therefore, my specific interest lies in examining current positive and negative perceptions of adults towards prostitution, the reasoning behind these perceptions, as well as whether or not these attitudes transfer to other types of sex entertainment.

Despite largely negative perceptions, research has shown that many individuals utilize sexual services for a multitude of reasons (Browne and Minichiello, 1995; Pateman, 1999; Cao, Lu, and Mei, 2015). Sex entertainers face stigmatization, harassment, and physical violence because of the illegality of this industry (Lutnick and Cohan, 2009; Benoit, Jansson, Smith, and Flagg, 2017). Therefore, it is important to determine whether public opinion is aligned with current laws to establish whether legality of this industry should be reevaluated. The goal of the following research is to understand attitudes towards individuals who sell sex, and to openly discuss an area which many have ignored. The proposed research question for this study is to what extent does education, religion, and age determine attitudes/perceptions towards sex entertainment. The types of perceptions this study will include is the understanding, interpretation, and emotional feelings towards sex entertainment.

Literature Review

History of Sex Entertainment in the United States

To understand how the sex entertainment industry has garnered negative perceptions, it is important to understand the historical context of this industry. There has been a long debate on the criminality and legalization of prostitution. This thesis aims to identify the common perceptions of the general public towards this industry and how that plays a significant factor in its legal status. Research has detailed both support and nonsupport for the legalization of prostitution. Research has shown that the sex entertainment industry continues to grow, encompassing multiple types of outlets that include the sale of sex and pornography (Macfarlane, Fuller, Wakefield, and Brents,

2017). However, those who are involved often face victimization as well as the harms and risks associated with this profession (Lutnick and Cohan, 2009; Benoit, Jansson, Smith, and Flagg, 2017). Since more and more people are involving themselves with this industry, it is important that research analyzes perceptions to help inform ways in which we can reduce harms for those involved.

Prostitution has been a part of the United States since its founding. Although it has evolved throughout the ages the first human records of prostitution can be traced back to 4000 BC (Clarkson, 1939). However, the notable aspects of this profession first came to life in the 19th century. Multiple descriptions of prostitution have occurred throughout time (Rey, 1851; Ellis, 1936) while also being at the forefront of attention in some eras during the women's right movement and during the system of "free love" and brothels (Toth, 1975). The concept of free-love was the ways in which women during the 19th century had to choose love or freedom. Their decisions were based on whether or not they were going to live a life of independence and sexuality or follow societal expectations (Toth, 1975). During the time of free-love, there was a transition where women were now refraining from sexual services, but the few who did lived in specific houses that catered to men—brothels.

In other regions of the world, prostitution existed differently. For instance, history has shown that the priestesses of Babylonian temples were prostitutes and during celebrations would engage in promiscuous activity. These customs were set forth by other ceremonies of worship of Astarte, Ishtar, and Aphrodite (Clarkson, 1939). In each one of these cases, they used sex as a form of liberation and acceptance. Around the 19th

and 20th century in the United States, legislators and social reformers wanted to rid the country of brothels, the red-light district, and the trafficking of women because many people believed prostitution was morally wrong. During this time, prostituting women had a “pimp,” or a man who forced women to prostitute themselves and would take a percentage, if not all of their earnings—their “pimp” often being a father, husband, or lover (Giobbe, 1993). As law and policy advancement occurred, anyone who was involved in prostitution was prosecuted. In 1910, the United States passed a federal mandate called the Mann Act which prohibited the transportation of women across interstate lines for immoral purposes (18 U.S.C. § 2421 et seq). By 1915, almost all states had passed laws that either banned brothels’ or regulated prostitution (Department of Justice Archives, 2020). Nevada is the only state that regulates prostitution in some counties through brothels (Symanski, 1974; Brehman, 2010; “Department of Justice Archives”, 2020). In chapter 201 of the Nevada Revised Statutes, if a county has a population of less than 400,000 residents, prostitution is legal (NRS 201.354).

In the 1960s the women’s rights movement emphasized women’s empowerment and the right to engage in sexual pleasures equal to that of men. Pro-feminists who were in favor of sex legalization focused primarily on the agency of sex workers and the empowerment found within it (e.g., Rubin 1984; Willis 2012a, 2012b). Therefore, pro-feminists suggested that women should be able to participate in the sale of sex if they want to—ultimately it should be their choice. On the other hand, radical feminists focused on the exploitative characteristics of sex work, particularly the misogyny within pornography as well as the coerciveness and victimization experienced by women (e.g.,

Dworkin 1981; Dworkin and MacKinnon 1988). They also believed that a majority of prostitutes have suffered from abuse (Chon, 2015).

Public Perceptions

National polls of legalization. There has been a brief explanation to some of the many public perceptions influencing the legality of the sex entertainment industry. This list is not exhaustive, but instead they are some of the most common areas that are often debated. Cao et al. (2015) conducted a study focusing on the public perceptions of prostitution in Canada over a 25-year time span using a multivariate analysis. This study found that the public had become more accepting of prostitution over time. Attitudes associated with pro-prostitution beliefs were determined by higher educational attainment, less religiosity, and less authoritarianism.

Although this study was not conducted in the United States, it has merit as these authors were able to identify plausible predictors that determine perceptions towards the sex entertainment industry. However, the question remains, has there been notable shifts in the level of support for legalization of prostitution in the United States. This question can be answered by examining nationwide polls (Smith, 1998). A national 1978 poll found 24% supported legalization, 37% opposed legalization, and 39% were neutral about legalization (Lewis et al, 1978). A recent national 2016 poll found 49% support legalization, 44% oppose, and 7% were neutral (“Marist Poll”, 2016). What can be determined by these polls is that, similar to the findings found by Cao et al., there has been an increase in individuals’ support for the legalization of prostitution. However, it is

important to note that there are numerous methodological differences in how the questions were asked in regard to legalization which makes the interpretation of the trends difficult to clearly determine. For example, a methodological difference that should be examined concerns the national 2016 poll which introduces the idea of “consent,” meaning that the parties involved understand and have accepted to engage in sexual service. Including the word “consent” changes the meaning of prostitution itself as history has portrayed prostitution that includes an idea of force or no choice.

Arguments against legalization. There are several themes among the arguments against legalization of sex entertainment. First, there are arguments that focus on harms caused to those who sell sex. These harms include how sex entertainers have suffered from traumatic experiences, victimization, childhood abuse, drug abuse, etc. This research has shown that those involved in the harms of prostitution often lead to a life of continued abuse (Pateman, 1999; Roe-Sepowitz, 2012). Second, religious or cultural beliefs lead to the idea that the sale of sex is morally wrong. The idea that prostitution is morally wrong can inform perceptions. For example, a person is engaging in morally wrong behavior therefore, they are no longer pure. These beliefs can cause a divide amongst people and often contribute to the stigmatization of this industry.

The first argument against legalization focuses on the harm this industry imposes. A common argument includes the health hazards within this industry. For instance, research has shown that a common myth around sex entertainment is that individuals working within the sex entertainment industry started the Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS)(Weiss, 1993). Research has

shown that this is not the case, but since there was an increase of outbreaks of HIV/AIDS by 1980, people are scared that sexual contact with an abundance of people will continue to spread illnesses similar to the HIV/AIDS outbreak and have created countless policies to address this concern (Benoit, Jansson, Smith, and Flagg, 2017; Biradavolu et al., 2009, Healy, Bennachie, & Reed, 2010, HIV.org).

Research has shown that those who choose to be involved in this industry report that they do not seek law enforcement at times of need. Similarly, it is found that the same individuals often do not seek aid from health care workers (Benoit, Jansson, Smith, and Flagg, 2018). Knowledge that sex entertainment individuals do not seek aid from these professionals reinforces the myths that they can spread certain illnesses regardless of factual evidence against this myth. This amplifies negative preconceived notions about sex entertainers to the general public. Although this harm has been researched, without the proper knowledge about this myth, people will continue to be fearful of anyone working within this occupation.

Another harm associated with this industry is the upbringing of individuals within the sex entertainment industry. There are multiple pathways that lead to a life of prostitution that have been identified by research (Potterat et al., 1998; Twill et al., 2010; Cobbina & Oselin, 2011). Research has shown that individuals who engage in prostitution often come from a life of abuse and trauma. Specifically, research has noted sex trafficking as an entry point into prostitution (Cobbina & Oselin, 2011).

Other arguments against the legalization of sex entertainment is due to moral beliefs and the perceived indecency of this industry. Religion may have an impact on the

perception of sex entertainment. In some religions, women are taught to keep their body chaste by refraining from sexual contact until they are married. The book of Proverbs, for example, a religious text revered by all three of the major world religions states that prostitution is immoral (Loke, 2017). Therefore, the acts performed within this industry violate religious moral beliefs. Research has shown that individuals who are more religious are less likely to have attitudes in favor of sex entertainment industry (Cao and Maguire, 2013; Ma, Chan, and Loke, 2017). There have been explanations that assess why those who are religious do not approve of sex entertainment. However, the most common reasoning is that religions often disapprove of prostitution (Pomeroy, 1965; Cao and Maguire, 2013).

Arguments for legalization. Arguments for the legalization of prostitution include the notion that people should have the ability to do as they wish with their bodies. Others believe that the expression of sexuality should not be demonized, and the sale of sex allows individuals to do that in a comfortable atmosphere where they are able to explore their sexual desires with whomever they choose. Those who choose to utilize sexual services provided by the sex entertainment industry also do so for numerous reasons. Some sex activists also believe that you should not be criminalized for something as simple as sex, as it is a natural and pleasurable activity that is programmed in human nature. Arguments for legalization also involves the idea that sex entertainment can be used as an educational tool for individuals to explore their sexuality and teach others sexual techniques (Boies, 2002).

Furthermore, arguments also suggest that engagement within the sex entertainment industry produces positive characteristics for all involved. Research has pointed out a reason some people partake in this industry include monetary value, but it is not the only reason. Those involved in the sex entertainment industry have been known to receive empowerment and a feeling of acceptance. (Kibby and Costello, 2001; Kibby, 2001). Marjorie Kibby and Brigid Costello (2001) conducted a study that examines the atmosphere and the use of interactive sex entertainment. Interactive sex entertainment is creating a connection between the images produced by sex entertainers and the act in pornography. During these experiences, results showed that the spaces created in these atmospheres allowed them to experience multiple and fluid roles that rewrite expected gender relations, thus showing the effects the sex entertainment industry has on individuals. Which allows all parties to freely explore their own imagination without the fear of being criticized or harmed and allows people to explore their inner desires and sexuality.

Previously mentioned was that arguments against the legalization of the sex entertainment industry include the negative effects associated with this industry, mainly experiences with law enforcement and health care professionals. However, arguments in support of legalization suggest that the legalization of sex entertainment will allow less harmful experiences with these professionals. Research conducted by Alexandra Lutnick and Deborah Cohan (2009) examined the perspectives of female sex workers in San Francisco, USA on their experiences and opinions on the legalization of sex-work. Results showed that a majority of the participants preferred removing statutes that

criminalize sex work to help establish an environment where they had legal rights and they had the ability to seek help when they were the victims of violence.

Scales Measuring Perceptions of Sex Entertainment

Recent research on the attitudes surrounding public perceptions have made use of various scales (Attitudes Towards Prostitution Scale [ATPS], Attitudes towards Prostitutes and Prostitution Scale [APPS], and Attitudes Towards Individuals Who Sell Sex Inventory [ATISS]). The ATPS was created by Steven Sawyer and Michael Metz (2009) to assess the beliefs of men who purchase sexual services from prostitutes. Sawyer and Metz surveyed 1,001 men who had been arrested for soliciting an undercover police officer and referred to a psychoeducational program. An analysis of the data showed three common themes that contributed to the men's beliefs of purchasing services from prostitutes; social/legal support of prostitution, beliefs about prostitutes, and family values. The alpha reliability for the three given subscales are as follows: social/legal support of prostitution .80; beliefs about prostitution .74; and family values .61. Overall, their results showed that the subscales in ATPS were strong factors that indicate the beliefs of men towards the purchasing of sexual service from prostitutes. However, the ATPS was developed to establish interventions to aid in reducing criminal behavior.

Lia Levin and Einat Peled (2011) created a new measure of attitudes towards prostitution: the APPS. The development of APPS was focused on capturing information about prostitution through the lens of various disciplines. Initially two pilot studies were

administered and analyzed to create a final version. Four subscales of the APPS aimed at identifying people's attitudes towards prostitutes and prostitution: prostitutes as normative/deviant, prostitutes as choosing/victimized, prostitution as normativeness/deviance, and prostitution as choice/victimization. Based on the reliability and convergent validity of these four subscales, results showed that the APPS is a useful tool for social work researchers to utilize when examining attitudes towards prostitutes and prostitution.

Finally, the ATISS, created by Madeline Stenersen and Elin Ovrebo (2020) creates a new assessment tool that measures attitudes towards individuals who sell sex. Stenersen and Ovrebo (2020) evaluated the ATPPS and ATPS scale and found fault within these scales. These researchers determined that the ATPS and the APPS shared limitations, specifically surrounding the terminology used. Both scales assume that the individual who is selling sex is female and that their customer is male which reinforces the idea that sex entertainers are always female and consumers will always be male. Such assumptions surrounding each party's identities prevents the consideration of other sex/gender roles within the sex entertainment industry—whether they be providers or consumers of sex. Another critique of previous scales is that neither scale was assessed for test-retest reliability in subsequent studies. Therefore, Stenersen and Ovrebo, address these issues in their scale by testing their questionnaire throughout multiple levels.

Each of these scales measures the attitudes towards the sex entertainment industry. There were overlapping themes between all three of the given scales. For example, the subscale social distance in the ATISS measures the behavioral component

of attitudes by individuals similar to the APPS. When utilizing the ATPS scale, those who have been personally associated with sex-workers have displayed less negative stereotypical attitudes towards them (Long, Mollen, and Smith, 2011). Those who focused on a sense of higher social desirability had more negative attitudes towards sex-workers. Social desirability is established by wanting to be accepted by reinforcing the most common norms of a society. Understanding the overall perceptions of sex-work within a particular society can aid in informing the policies surrounding sex entertainment and the effects that legalization or non-legalization creates. In order to more clearly understand the most common perceptions of sex-work, we need to examine both individuals who support or are against legalization.

There were reoccurring themes identified in current literature: the debate surrounding legalization, impact of public perceptions, both positive and negative effects of involvement, and the change of public perceptions. The literature has established that this topic is highly controversial and because of this, it has led society to maintain the current legality stances of this industry. However, it is clear, that this industry has continued to grow and with that those involved are facing dangerous situations. Therefore it is necessary to reevaluate the current perceptions of society to further understand whether or not there is a more efficient way to create a solution that involves every party in the decision of legality. Research has shown that public perceptions have changed throughout history and it has concluded that there has been an increase in those who are in favor of people being able to sell sexual services. It is clear that public perceptions have the ability to change. Therefore, to address this the rest of this paper will include an

analysis of adult public perceptions of the sex entertainment industry using the ATISS assessment tool.

Methods

My research question is, *to what extent does sex, education, religion, and age determine attitudes towards prostitution? As well as, understanding how public perceptions predict the legalization of prostitution and webcamming.* To assess this, I will be conducting a survey that will be using closed ended questions to gauge public perceptions of individuals who are 18 years old and older. There are many issues surrounding sex entertainers, one of which is the legal status of their professions. The focus of this study is to understand correlates of public perceptions of the sex entertainment industry. To assess this, a survey of individuals over the age of 18, assessing their attitudes towards prostitution was used. Researchers have found that there are many predictors of attitudes towards sex entertainment. The most prominent variables that contribute to these attitudes are levels of education and religiosity. Therefore, these variables were included within the survey to contribute to the knowledge of attitudes towards sex entertainers. Understanding the attitudes towards sex entertainment in current society provides evidence to help clarify policies surrounding the criminalization and legalization of this industry.

The survey was based on the Attitudes Towards Individuals who Sell Sex (ATISS) instrument created by Madeline Stenersen and Elin Ovrebo. Stenersen and

Ovrebo (2020) The ATISS is comprised of four subscales: social distance (seven items), human value (five items), impact on society (six items), and parenting (three items). Each category had a set questions targeting the overall theme. Each question had seven choice responses that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Higher scores on the ATISS scale indicate more negative attitudes towards individuals who sell sex. See Appendix A for the full text of ATISS items as well as other items included in survey. For the purpose of this study, additional questions were included that address the demographics of my sample to analyze the differences or similarities between generations by comparing younger adults to older adults. This will allow me to establish whether or not the predictors of common attitudes towards prostitution play a role throughout my survey.

Hypotheses

For this study, there are five hypotheses. 1) Males are more likely than females to be in support of individuals who sell sex. 2) Individuals who have a higher level of education compared to a lower educational level are more likely to be in support of individuals who sell sex. 3) Religious affiliation will be related to support of individuals who sell sex. 4) Adults above the age of 40 compared to those who are under 40 are less likely to be in support of individuals who sell sex. 5) Those who have a lower score on the ATISS compared to a higher score will be more likely to support the legalization of prostitution and webcamming.

Sampling

For the study a new dataset was created by distributing a survey to individuals above the age of 18 using Qualtrics that took approximately 15 minutes. Convenience sampling was used to collect various ages of participants by posting the survey to social media platforms to have a greater number of participants with various educational levels. The survey was conducted anonymously in order to increase the chances that individuals were forthcoming and honest with the questions being asked. At Arizona State University, professors within the criminology and criminal justice departments were asked to distribute this survey throughout their classes. These surveys were used as an incentive for extra credit in some courses. To keep the identity of the students anonymous, it was suggested that each student screenshot the completion of the survey as evidence to submit to their professors. To increase the amount of participants the survey was also distributed via social media platforms. There were a total of 302 participants.

Measurement

There are two key dependent variables for this study—attitudes towards the sale of sexual services and attitudes towards the legalization of prostitution and legalization of webcamming. As mentioned, public perceptions have varied over time. The most common predictors of perceptions towards prostitution are religion, education, and sex. Therefore, these will be the independent variables for the first analysis. Religion was measured by three concepts (religious affiliation, faith influences of daily decisions, and faith attendance). Religious affiliation was measured in six different categories (protestant, catholic, Jewish, atheist, none, and other). Education will be measured by the

highest level of education completed in six categories (some high school, high school diploma or GED, some college, bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctoral degree).

Sex will be measured into three categories (female, male, and other). The control variables for this study will be age and race. As well as how strongly is their religious preference, questions addressing legalization, and questions regarding supplying or purchasing sexual entertainment.

Analysis

The dependent variable for this study will be measured by utilizing the ATISS measurement tool which is where a majority of the questions have been drawn from. There will be a two-step analysis. The first analysis will focus on the predictors of attitudes towards the sale of sexual services using the ATISS as the dependent variable. To measure this, an OLS regression will be used. The second analysis will focus on the predictors of attitudes towards the legalization of sexual services using a logistic regression. The dependent variable for this being the attitudes towards legalization of prostitution and webcamming which is coded dichotomously. All other variables will be the same as analysis one.

After the data was collected an analysis assessing the public perceptions of individuals using the ATISS was conducted. If there is a statistically significant difference showing those who are more educated, religious affiliation is related to the support of those who sell sex, and assessed the relationships between age and attitudes of those who sell sex, then this will support my hypothesis. However, if this survey demonstrates that education and religiosity is not a predictor of attitudes, then this will

fail to support the proposed hypotheses. The second analysis draws on the hypothesis that those with more favorable attitudes towards those who sell sex, as measured by the ATISS, will be more likely to support the legalization of those who sell sex. However, if results indicate that individuals do not follow this pattern, then it will fail to support the hypotheses.

Results

The following sections will provide analyses to answer the research hypotheses. Descriptive statistics will be presented for all the variables used in the regressions. Results indicated that hypothesis 1, 2, 4, and 5 failed to reject the null hypotheses. Whereas hypothesis 3 rejected the null hypothesis indicating that religious affiliation is related to support of sex entertainment.

| Table 1: Descriptive Statistics | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------|------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| Variables | | N= 290 Frequency/ Mean | Percent/ SD | ATISS Mean (SD) | ATISS P- value | Support for Legalizing Prostitution Mean | Support for Legalizing Prostitution P-value |
| ATISS | | 2.21 | 1.08 | | | | 0.00* |
| Legalize Prostitution | Yes | 190 | 66.20 | 1.86 | 0.00* | | |
| | No | 97 | 33.80 | (0.84) 2.92 (1.15) | | | |
| Age | | 32.39 | 8.44 | | 0.17 | | 0.08 |
| Sex | Female | 244 | 84.14 | 2.23 | 0.15 | 0.63 | 0.06 |
| | Male | 42 | 14.48 | (1.08) | | 0.76 | |
| | Other | 4 | 1.38 | 2.19 (1.08) 1.18 (0.22) | | 1.00 | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-----|--------|--------|-------|------|-------|
| Race | Latinx/Hispanic | 42 | 14.48 | 2.45 | 0.21 | 0.52 | 0.07 |
| | Caucasian | 186 | 64.14 | (0.81) | | 0.69 | |
| | African American | 7 | 2.41 | 2.23 | | 0.71 | |
| | Native American | 7 | 2.41 | (1.14) | | 0.29 | |
| | Other | 15 | 5.17 | 2.07 | | 0.80 | |
| | Mixed | 33 | 11.38 | (0.92) | | 0.69 | |
| | | | | 2.43 | | | |
| | | | (1.16) | | | | |
| | | | 1.73 | | | | |
| | | | (0.75) | | | | |
| | | | 1.96 | | | | |
| | | | (1.07) | | | | |
| Education | Some High School | 7 | 2.41 | 2.81 | 0.22 | 0.50 | 0.63 |
| | High School diploma/GED | 42 | 14.48 | (1.27) | | 0.59 | |
| | Some College | 122 | 42.07 | (0.09) | | 0.68 | |
| | Bachelor's Degree | 86 | 29.66 | | | 0.71 | |
| | Master's Degree | 29 | 10.00 | 2.27 | | 0.62 | |
| | Doctorate's Degree | 4 | 1.38 | (1.16) | | 0.50 | |
| | | | | 2.14 | | | |
| | | | | (1.03) | | | |
| | | | 2.11 | | | | |
| | | | (1.05) | | | | |
| | | | 1.15 | | | | |
| | | | (0.31) | | | | |
| Religion | Protestant | 24 | 8.28 | 2.61 | 0.00* | 0.36 | 0.00* |
| | Catholic | 37 | 12.76 | (1.07) | | 0.59 | |
| | Atheist | 36 | 12.41 | 2.54 | | 0.92 | |
| | None | 89 | 30.69 | (0.82) | | 0.79 | |
| | Other | 104 | 35.86 | 1.47 | | 0.55 | |
| | | | (0.61) | | | | |
| | | | 1.97 | | | | |
| | | | (1.01) | | | | |
| | | | 2.46 | | | | |
| | | | (1.18) | | | | |
| Faith Influences Daily Decisions | Strongly Disagree | 45 | 15.52 | 1.81 | 0.01* | 0.86 | 0.00* |
| | Somewhat Disagree | 20 | 6.90 | (0.93) | | 0.75 | |
| | Neutral | 12 | 4.14 | 2.22 | | 0.75 | |
| | Somewhat Agree | 92 | 31.72 | (1.02) | | 0.73 | |
| | Strongly Agree | 54 | 18.62 | 2.34 | | 0.57 | |
| | | 35 | 12.07 | (1.04) | | 0.49 | |
| | | 32 | 11.03 | 2.05 | | 0.44 | |
| | | | | (0.97) | | | |
| | | | | 2.35 | | | |
| | | | (1.03) | | | | |
| | | | 2.61 | | | | |
| | | | (1.31) | | | | |
| | | | 2.52 | | | | |
| | | | (1.20) | | | | |
| Faith Attendance | Less than Once a Month | 218 | 75.17 | 2.09 | 0.00* | 0.73 | 0.00* |
| | Once a Month | 15 | 5.17 | (1.00) | | 0.40 | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|-----|-------|----------------------------------|-------|------|-------|
| | A Couple Times a Month | 22 | 7.59 | 2.32 (1.00) | | 0.41 | |
| | Weekly | 13 | 4.48 | 2.87 | | 0.38 | |
| | A Couple Times a Week | 12 | 4.14 | (1.48) | | 0.42 | |
| | Everyday | 10 | 3.45 | 2.95 (1.25) 2.50 (0.64) | | 0.80 | |
| | | | | 1.92 (1.16) | | | |
| Sex Purchase | Yes | 105 | 36.21 | 2.00 | 0.01* | 0.73 | 0.08 |
| | No | 185 | 63.79 | (1.00) 2.33 (1.10) | | 0.63 | |
| Sex Sold | Yes | 39 | 13.45 | 1.56 | 0.00* | 0.84 | 0.01* |
| | No | 251 | 86.55 | (0.60) 2.31 (1.10) | | 0.63 | |

NOTES: The study analyzed the demographics of 290 participants and their perception of prostitution and legalization using the ATISS scale. *p <.05 indicating statistical significance.

The survey administration took place during a forty-eight hour time period. There was a total of 302 responses. There were a total of 12 responses that were dropped due to missing data and the final sample size was 290. The descriptive statistics sample can see a disproportionate representation of sex. There were far more females (84%) in the sample rather than males (15%). This disproportion could be due to the social media platforms used to disperse the survey as the researcher has a larger female network than male network. This variance does not reflect an accurate interpretation of the population. The age of the sample was well distributed with an age range of 18-62. The bivariate relationship of the ATISS scale p-value column illustrates significant differences between some of the variables. For instance, there were statistically significant relationships between the ATISS scale and whether or not a person believes that prostitution should be legalized, religion, faith influence, and faith ceremonies. The support for the legalization

of prostitution p-values vary across categories. The specific categories that showed statistical significance are the ATISS scale, religion, faith influence, and faith ceremonies, and whether or not an individual has sold sex.

Multivariate Linear Regression

Analysis 1. The focus of this analysis was to focus on hypotheses 1-4 by analyzing how sex, education, religion and age play a role in determining an individual's perception of people who sell sex which can be seen by utilizing the ATISS scale (Table 2). Setting all categories against each other by performing a linear prediction, education and religion had statistically significant p-values, meaning that sex, education, and religion predict the outcome of someone's perception of those who sell sex. The results of the regression showed that being Atheist compared to being Protestant had a statistically significant p-value. In addition, having a Doctorate's degree predicted that they were in support of the legalization of both prostitution and webcamming. However, a Wald test showed that overall the education categories do not jointly predict variation in the ATISS scale (the p-value indicating a nonsignificant value of 0.34. It is important to note, that selling sex entertainment has a statistically significant p-value. An interesting finding to note is that both those who sold sex and purchased sex had statistically significant p-values. If the participant had sold or purchased sex prior, it better predicted more accepting attitudes to those who sell sex.

| |
|---|
| Table 2: Linear regression of public perceptions of those who sell sex. |
|---|

| Variable | ATISS Model 1 N= 290 B (SE) |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Age | 0.01 (0.41) |
| Sex | |
| <i>Male</i> | 0.13 (0.18) |
| <i>Other</i> | -0.69 (0.53) |
| Race | |
| <i>Caucasian</i> | 0.14 (0.20) |
| <i>African American</i> | -0.09 (0.42) |
| <i>Native American</i> | -0.04 (0.43) |
| <i>Other</i> | -0.45 (0.31) |
| <i>Mixed</i> | -0.05 (0.25) |
| Education | |
| <i>High School diploma/GED</i> | -0.55 (0.41) |
| <i>Some College</i> | -0.54 (0.39) |
| <i>Bachelor's Degree</i> | -0.71 (0.39) |
| <i>Master's Degree</i> | -0.67 (0.42) |
| <i>Doctorate's Degree</i> | -1.48 (0.63)*** |
| Religion | |
| <i>Catholic</i> | 0.04 (0.23) |
| <i>Atheist</i> | -1.07 (0.28)*** |
| <i>None</i> | -0.46 (0.26) |
| <i>Other</i> | -0.21 (0.23) |
| Faith Influences Daily Decisions | 0.01 (0.04) |
| Faith Attendance | 0.07 (0.05) |
| Sex Purchase | 0.33 (0.13)* |
| Sex Sold | 0.71 (0.18)*** |

NOTES: The model analyzed 290 individual's perception of legalizing prostitution. The category sex has a reference group of females. Reference group for race is Latinx/Hispanic individuals. For the category education, the reference group is those who have some high school. The category religion has a reference

group of Protestants. The reference groups for sex purchase and sex sold are those who have either purchased or sold sex. $p < .001$ *** $p < .01$ ** $p < .05$ *

Checks for goodness of fit. It is necessary to consider how well this current model fits. Therefore, a series of diagnostic tests were conducted. A linktest produced a nonsignificant value for the predicted value and the squared value. Which means there are no issues regarding specification. Following this, a test to measure heteroskedasticity was performed. An ivhetttest shows that the model is not heteroskedastic. There are some concerns with multicollinearity. For this model, the acceptable base for a vif is a number no greater than 10 and an overall vif mean no greater than 1 (Hair, 1992). When running the estat vif command to examine the variance inflation, there are multicollinearity with education. However, this is common between educational dummy variables. Other concerning variables would be the category race (Latin American) and religion. Also, the mean vif produces 3.08, which is considerably larger than 1 demonstrating additional issues with multicollinearity.

Logistic Regression

Analysis 2. For the second analysis a logistic regression was used to analyze the second research question regarding legalization. 1) “should prostitution be illegal” and 2) “should webcamming be illegal”. Two logistic regression models were estimated for each question: one without and one with the ATISS scale. These questions will be broken up into two subsections to discuss their overall findings.

For question number 1 (should prostitution be illegal), the regression dropped the category other within the “sex” variable as it perfectly predicts the outcome, so 283

observations were used instead of 290. For model 2, the key independent variables (age, sex, religion, and education) were included along with other demographics and the ATISS scale was not controlled for. Religion was the only variable with statistical significance when predicted legalization of attitudes for prostitution. Model 3 was a variation of model 2 which included the ATISS scale. Once the ATISS scale is considered, the ATISS scale, age, and religion become statistically significant in predicting the attitudes of legalization for prostitution. If individuals score a high value on the ATISS score, then they are more likely to believe that prostitution should be illegal.

| Table 3: Multivariate logistic regression comparison of the legalization of prostitution and webcamming models. | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Variable | Model 2 N= 283 B (SE) | | Model 3 N= 283 B (SE) |
| ATISS | | | -0.97 (0.18)*** |
| Age | | -0.02 (0.02) | -0.01 (0.02) |
| Sex | | | |
| | <i>Male</i> | 0.61 (0.48) | 0.89 (0.55) |
| Race | | | |
| | <i>Caucasian</i> | 0.91 (0.47) | 1.26 (0.51)* |
| | <i>African American</i> | 0.66 (1.07) | 0.52 (1.04) |
| | <i>Native American</i> | -1.44 (1.23) | -1.61 (1.44) |
| | <i>Other</i> | 1.46 (0.82) | 1.15 (0.83) |
| | <i>Mixed</i> | 0.81 (0.62) | 0.96 (0.68) |

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Education | | |
| <i>High School diploma/GED</i> | 0.66 (1.16) | 0.25 (1.25) |
| <i>Some College</i> | 1.07 (1.11) | 0.72 (1.21) |
| <i>Bachelor's Degree</i> | 1.29 (1.13) | 0.80 (1.22) |
| <i>Master's Degree</i> | 0.76 (1.18) | 0.16 (1.28) |
| <i>Doctorate's Degree</i> | -0.27 (1.51) | -1.75 (1.61) |
| Religion | | |
| <i>Catholic</i> | 1.20 (0.67) | 1.50 (0.73)* |
| <i>Atheist</i> | 2.50 (0.81)** | 1.67 (0.87) |
| <i>None</i> | 1.40 (0.60)* | 1.27 (0.66) |
| <i>Other</i> | 0.72 (0.52) | 0.63 (0.57) |
| Faith Influences Daily Decisions | -0.17 (0.10) | -0.18 (0.11) |
| Faith Attendance | -0.13 (0.12) | -0.07 (0.13) |
| Sex Purchase | -0.62 (0.33) | -0.38 (0.36) |
| Sex Sold | -1.00 (0.53) | -0.24 (0.56) |

NOTES: The model analyzed 283 individual's perception of legalizing prostitution. The category sex has a reference group of females. Reference group for race is Latinx/Hispanic individuals. For the category education, the reference group is those who have some high school. The category religion has a reference group of Protestants. The reference groups for sex purchase and sex sold are those who have either purchased or sold sex. p<.001*** p<.01** p<.05*

Similarly, additional testing on this model was also conducted to assess the goodness of fit for both model 2 and 3 (Torres-Reyna, 2007; Maxfield & Babbie, 2018). When running a linktest, both models had no issues regarding specification. However, model 2 does not pass an additional specification test (estat gof) while model 3 passed by failing to reject the null hypothesis that the variables are not statistically significant. The closer this number is to one the better the model is. Model 2 had a lower sensitivity and specificity (66% and 70%) than model 3 (74% and 80%). Finally, using the iroc command, both models produced a high number for the area under the ROC curve as (.77

and .84). Given that the area under the ROC curve is closer to one rather than zero, it is likely to be a good fit (Maxfield & Babbie, 2018). Figure 1 illustrates the marginal effect of attitudes towards those who sell sex in comparison to whether or not prostitution should be legalized based on model 3. Results indicated that those who score higher on the ATISS scale are less likely to support the legalization of prostitution.

| Table 4: Multivariate logistic regression comparison of the legalization of webcam models. | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Variable | | Model 4 N= 229 B (SE) | Model 5 N= 229 B (SE) |
| ATISS | | | -1.00 (0.24)*** |
| Age | | 0.10 (0.03) | -0.02 (0.03) |
| Sex | | | |
| | <i>Male</i> | 1.63 (0.87) | 2.00 (0.95)* |
| | <i>Other</i> | | |
| Race | | | |
| | <i>Caucasian</i> | 0.52 (0.65) | 0.81 (0.70) |
| | <i>African American</i> | | |
| | <i>Native American</i> | -1.39 (1.17) | -1.30 (1.24) |
| | <i>Other</i> | | |
| | <i>Mixed</i> | 0.51 (0.84) | 0.68 (0.57) |
| Education | | | |
| | <i>High School diploma/GED</i> | 2.27 (1.27) | 1.79 (1.38) |
| | <i>Some College</i> | 1.55 (1.11) | 1.18 (1.22) |
| | <i>Bachelor's Degree</i> | 1.82 (1.16) | 1.23 (1.28) |
| | <i>Master's Degree</i> | 0.20 (1.23) | -0.56 (1.40) |
| | <i>Doctorate's Degree</i> | -0.19 (1.65) | -2.00 (1.80) |
| Religion | | | |
| | <i>Catholic</i> | 1.23 (0.91) | 1.14 (0.98) |
| | <i>Atheist</i> | 2.85 (1.25)* | 1.67 (1.36) |
| | <i>None</i> | 1.64 (0.88) | 1.29 (0.98) |
| | <i>Other</i> | 1.05 (0.68) | 0.91 (0.78) |
| Faith Influences Daily Decisions | | -0.16 (0.16) | -0.13 (0.19) |

| | | |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Faith Attendance | -0.43 (0.17)* | -0.46 (0.20)* |
| Sex Purchase | -0.86 (0.51) | -0.64 (0.57) |

Sex Sold

NOTES: The model analyzed 229 individual's perception of legalizing prostitution. The category sex has a reference group of females. Reference group for race is Latinx/Hispanic individuals. For the category education, the reference group is those who have some high school. The category religion has a reference group of Protestants. The reference groups for sex purchase and sex sold are those who have either purchased or sold sex. p<.001*** p<.01** p <.05*

The sample size for models 4 and 5 decreased to 229 observations because the category other for the sex variable perfectly predicts the outcome. This can also be said for category of African Americans and other defined in the race variable. The observation decrease was also due to the those who have sold sex also successfully predicting the outcome. For model 4 religion was a statistically significant factor in one's attitudes towards the legalization of webcam modelling. Specifically, those who were Atheist in comparison to Protestants were more supportive of the legalization of webcamming. Ceremonial attendance was also a significant finding for model 4. Model 5 included the use of the ATISS scale. Results indicated that the ATISS scale, sex (male in comparison to females), and ceremonial attendance were statistically significant in predicting one's attitudes towards the legalization of webcamming models. Subsequently, models 4 and 5 underwent supplemental testing to assess the goodness of fit (Torres-Reyna, 2007; Maxfield & Babbie, 2018). In reference to specification using a linktest, both models had no issues. Additional findings were seen in the estat gof application. Model 4 had a lower sensitivity and specificity (67% and 80%) than model 5 (75% and 85%) (Ochlibe, Oboh, & Ogah, 2016). Finally, both models had a high IROC score (.82 and .88). Likewise to

figure 1, figure 2 illustrates the marginal effect of attitudes of those who sell sex to the legalization of webcamming based on model 5. These results showed that those who score higher also are less inclined to support the legalization of webcamming models.

Figure 1: Marginal effects of the legalization of prostitution

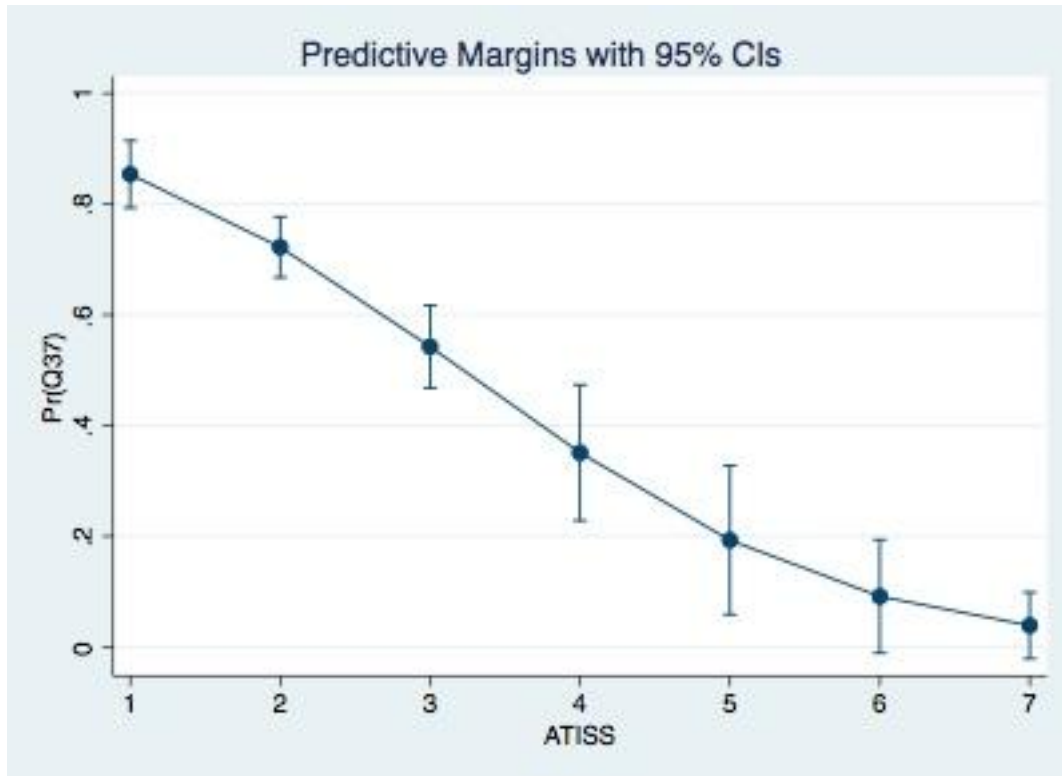
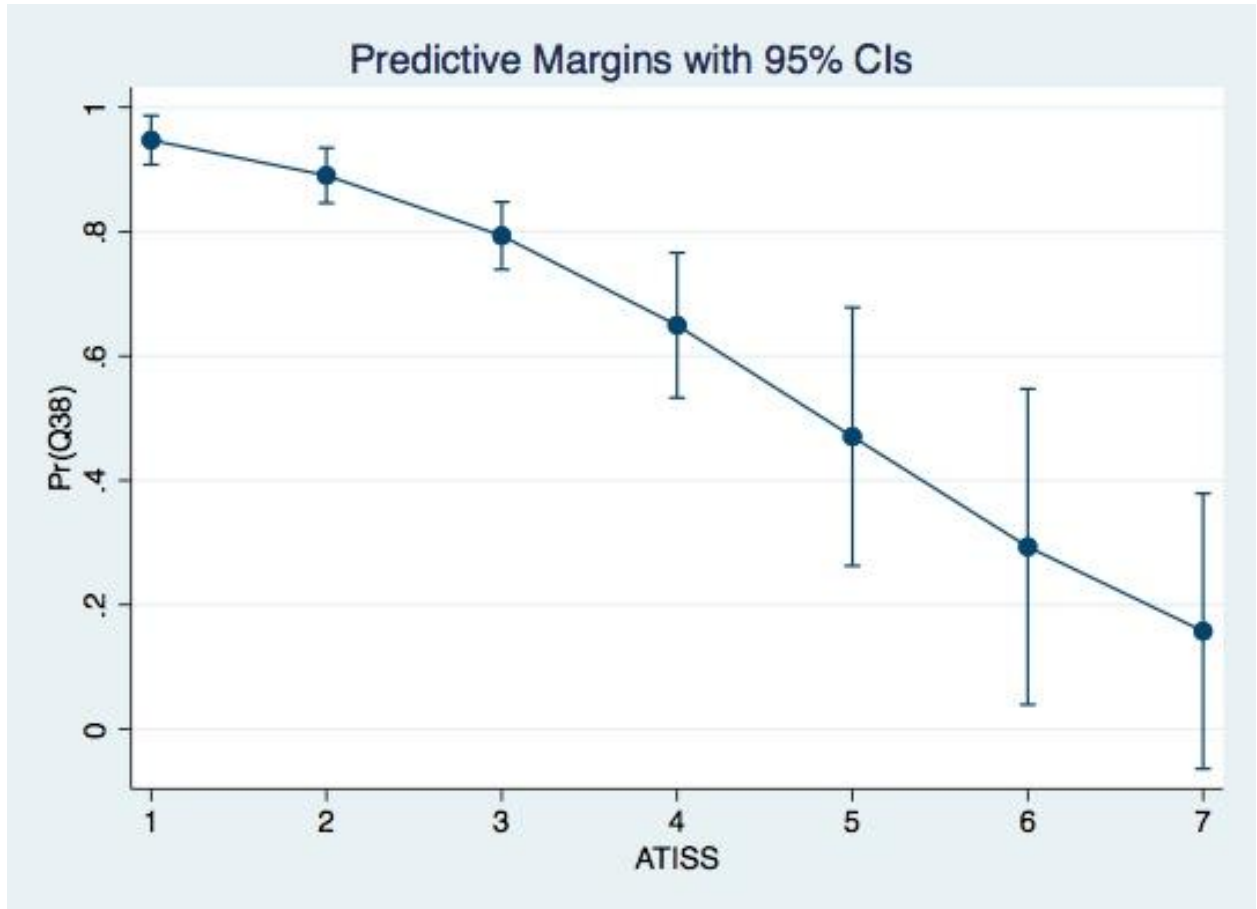


Figure 2: Marginal effects of the legalization of webcam modelling.



Discussion

This research has provided some insight on attitudes towards individuals who sell sex. This research sought to determine whether age, religion and education influenced attitudes towards those who sell sex. Religion was found to be a statistically significant predictor of attitudes while other demographics did not affect these attitudes. What remains unclear is why religion was a significant predictor while other demographics had little to no significance. There were a few components that have become transparent

throughout the study: suggestions about terminology, the sex entertainment industry, and public perceptions are discussed further in the following sections.

Religion

The study has set out to explain variation in public perceptions of prostitution. A trend has shown that there has been an increase in prostitution throughout the years (Smith, 1998; Lewis et al, 1978 ; Cao et al. 2015). Similarly, results of the study showed that there were more people who wanted prostitution legalized rather than remain illegal. Originally, individuals were less likely to want prostitution legalized, however, the desire for legalization has increased (“Social Science Research Center”, 1995; Smith 1998; “YouGov”, 2012; YouGov”, 2015; Marist Poll”, 2016). There are many reasons as to why attitudes about prostitution may be changing. One possibility is that attitudes are changing as religious preferences change. The study included multiple religion questions to better understand how “religious” someone is and how that corresponds with the likelihood that they would be accepting of prostitution and individuals who sell sex. Based on these components, it was concluded that religion did play a significant role in an individual’s attitude towards individuals who sell sex. Results showed that atheists held more positive views toward individuals who sell sex compared to protestants. It is possible that attitudes towards prostitution are changing as society secularizes. For example, Protestantism has decreased and Atheism has increased (Bainbridge, 2005; Smith, 2005; Barber 2012).

Terminology

As mentioned, there are two definitions of prostitution that have been established. Most commonly, those who involved themselves in the physical sale of sex for profit can be seen as prostitutes. Research dating back to the 19th century has used terminology that included the term forced or coerced to define prostitution (Rey, 1851, Ellis, 1926; Clarkson, 1939). If one were to disregard the idea of “profit,” during this time era, this definition would be closely related to the definition of sexual assault. Also, an important consideration is the fact that when this exchange was taking place, those “selling” their body were not the ones benefiting from their exchange, instead there was often a third party. The definition of prostitution used in laws involve the use of selling one’s body for profit (Davis, 2006).

Both definitions of prostitution include the idea of “profit,” but they differentiate in terms of the idea of coercion. Terminology that is primarily used to describe prostitution often has negative connotations due to its origins—individuals were forced to engage in sexual engagement (Rey, 1851, Ellis, 1926; Clarkson, 1939), whereas the desire for sexual engagement has become more apparent and thus individuals have engaged by choice (Overall, 1992; Kim, 2001; Benoit, Jansson, Smith, and Flagg, 2018; Poppi and Sandberg, 2020). Why is there a difference in attitudes between prostitution and other sexual engagement? Is it due to the idea of coercion within these sexual acts? In order to test whether or not prostitution and other sexual services were viewed in differently, it should be noted that the study defined sex entertainment in the context of being consensual.

Given the results of research study, a majority of individuals found that prostitution and webcamming should not be illegal. However, those who believed that prostitution should not be illegal was 66% compared to an 86% for webcamming models. There is a significant difference in the percentages between these two services. What is the difference between these two types of services that is causing this disproportion? The reasoning behind this can be assumed by looking at the differences of how they are described, emphasizing the need to define specific terms but also pay attention to the terminology being used when discussing a controversial matter. It is possible that a description could have swayed opinions of participants. The survey questions included a statement where it described webcamming falling into the category of sex entertainment representing a sexual service. This emphasizes that the sexual engagement was consensual between both parties whereas the study neither defined prostitution as consensual or nonconsensual. Specifically, prior to someone answering whether or not they engaged in purchasing or selling sex entertainment, this statement was shown, “Sex entertainment can be identified as any type of sexual service provided through physical involvement or via technology with CONSENT. This includes but is not limited to pornography, escort, webcamming, stripping etc.” Are more people willing to regulate webcamming because of that fact that it was described as consensual? This question needs further investigation and consideration. It is unclear whether or not people believe that both these services should be legal because of consent. However, terminology involving prostitution is something that should be explored to clearly separate those who chose to involve themselves in sexual services.

Consensual Sex Entertainment

People seek out a variety of legal and illegal services (Ahlburg and Jensen, 1998; Makin and Morczek, 2015; Makin and Bye, 2018). Yet, prostitution remains mostly illegal and other sex entertainment services are often scrutinized for their services. When prostitution became illegal, it was during a time where many individuals were being forced to sell their bodies. However, since the involvement of sexuality, social desirability, and other sexual services, society has begun to alter their perceptions of sexual engagement. Perceptions surrounding prostitution have negative connotations embedded into its origin because of its coercion and victimization which leaves no room for the idea that sexual services can be consensual. Those who engage in sexual services consensually become at risk of physical and emotional harm because of the idea that sexual engagement cannot be consensual. Therefore, it is necessary to also differentiate the idea behind consensual versus nonconsensual sexual engagement in hopes of understanding what is needed as far as policies and safety occurs.

A higher percentage believed webcamming should be legalized. Is it possible that this is due to the terminology that was used to define webcamming as a consensual engagement? It can be assumed that this is because society have become more accepting of these services and sexuality—however, more research is needed to determine whether or not this is case. There are possible differences in how each of these services are viewed. Prostitution has and continues to be portrayed in a way that is negative, causing countless individuals to be victimized. Whereas the idea of those who are involved in services such as webcamming creates the impression that webcamming empowers

sexuality, individuality, and independence (Califia 1980; Wills 1981; Rubin 1984; Jones, 2019; Poppi and Sandberg, 2020). Determining whether or not terminology used when involving consensual and nonconsensual sexual services sway public opinions need to be examined through qualitative investigation. Examination is important since there is a proportion of individuals engaged in prostitution and webcamming through coercion and trafficking (Dworkin 1985; MacKinnon 1988; Snyder 2008; Hamilton, 2009).

Public Perceptions

What has been determined throughout the study is the fact that prostitution is still a relevant profession and has continued to be highly debated. This is represented in the data by showing that support for legalization was about 50 percent. By looking at various polls, it has also been shown that public perceptions have also been altered throughout time as more and more individuals have become more accepting of prostitution (“Social Science Research Center”, 1995; Smith 1998; “YouGov”, 2012; YouGov”, 2015; Marist Poll”, 2016, Cao, Lu, and Mei, 2017). Therefore, this provides evidence that it is necessary to research the opinions of people by gathering data continuously. Since it is necessary to examine these public perceptions it is equally important to consider how these perceptions determine laws. Currently, based on the results, the findings contradict the laws currently in place that prevent many from engaging in prostitution. A notable difference between prostitution and webcamming is the physical exchange of sexual services. Prostitution takes place physically whereas webcamming provides service via

web platforms. Prostitution falls under offering sexual service in the exchange of profit, it is often criminalized by law enforcement and society. This result often leads to situations that victimizes individuals for participating within this industry (Poppi and Sandberg, 2020). Without proper consideration of the effects occurring because there has yet to be laws that replicate societal wants. Therefore, harm continues to be done those who do engage within this. Therefore, it is important to create laws that regulate, replicate, and educate societal views pertaining to individuals who sell sex.

Limitations

There are a few limitations to this study. For one, the survey only includes a few key variables that can have been linked to be predictors of attitudes towards sex entertainment. Therefore, attitudes towards this industry can be affected by other variables not covered in this study. Another limitation of the study is the fact that convenience sampling is not a full representation of the general population. Therefore, the findings of this study may not be generalizable to the all ages across the nation. Although, there were a total of 296 participants within the study, not all participants were used due to missing information within the data. Also, the sample was mostly female which creates a disproportionality of sexes in the data.

Future Research

The limitations of this study provided insight to possible changes moving forward. Future research that should be conducted is a qualitative examination of the attitudes towards those who sell sex. This research should examine the precursors to such attitudes in order to understand why people either support or do not support individuals

who sell sex and the legalization of sex entertainment. Furthermore, results indicated that religion played a significant role in determining a person's attitudes towards individuals who sell sex. Questions that remain are how religion ties into cultural expectations and whether or not certain beliefs originate from cultural aspects or religious values. Therefore, surveys to assess the attitudes would be highly beneficial. Once, these questions are explored policies can be re-examined to replicate the societal views.

Conclusion

Results indicated that religion was the only statistically significant predictors of attitudes towards those who sell sex. Although currently illegal, the majority of respondents in this survey preferred that prostitution be made legal. Therefore, there needs to be a deeper understanding of how these services can be regulated and legalized to reduce harm. The sex entertainment industry has continuously grown and perceptions surrounding it has continued to evolve. The focus of this research is to educate the conversations within this industry as it is extremely active. Background knowledge from various sides of the debate is needed to make informed decisions about the legalization of this industry. Understanding how demographics plays a role in determining public perceptions towards sex entertainment can help to inform policy revolving around sex entertainment and create safety measures that are of current concern in those involved within this industry. Laws have been established that limits and prosecutes sex entertainers, studies such as this one and future progression can present new information on evolving perceptions surrounding sex entertainers that can present a clearer understanding of the debate regarding the legalization of this industry.

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APPENDIX

Questions addressing demographics

1. What is your age? (type in your answer)
 - a.
2. What is your sex? (Sex refers to the biological assignment you were given at birth)
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
 - c. Other
3. What is your race? Mark all that apply.
 - a. Latinx/Hispanic
 - b. Caucasian
 - c. African American
 - d. Native American
 - e. Asian/Pacific Islander
 - f. Other
4. What is your highest level of education completed?
 - a. Some high school
 - b. High school diploma or GED
 - c. Some college
 - d. Bachelor's degree
 - e. Master's degree
 - f. Doctorate's degree
5. What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, some other religion, or no religion?
 - a. Protestant
 - b. Catholic
 - c. Jewish
 - d. Atheist
 - e. None
 - f. Other
6. How strongly would you say you are (PREFERENCE NAME IN RELIG)?
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Somewhat disagree
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree

7. How strongly would you say your faith influences your daily decisions and opinions?
 - h. Strongly Disagree
 - i. Disagree
 - j. Somewhat disagree
 - k. Neutral
 - l. Somewhat agree
 - m. Agree
 - n. Strongly agree
8. How often do you participate in ceremonies associated with your faith?
 - a. Less than once a month
 - b. Once a month
 - c. A couple times a month
 - d. Weekly
 - e. A couple times a week
 - f. Everyday

Sex entertainment can be identified as any type of sexual service provided through physical involvement or via technology with CONSENT. This includes but is not limited to pornography, escort, webcamming, stripping etc.

9. Have you purchased any form of sex entertainment before?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
10. Have you sold sex entertainment?
 - a. Yes-currently
 - b. Yes-previously
 - c. No

Questions that address Social distance:

14. If I knew someone who sold sex, I would tend to avoid that person
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. somewhat disagree
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree

15. If a person who sold sex asked to live with me or my family I would decline
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - somewhat disagree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
16. If I had a friend who told me they sold sex, I would tend to avoid that person
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - somewhat disagree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
17. I would be upset if someone I'd known for a long time revealed that they sold sex
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - somewhat disagree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
18. I avoid individuals who sell sex as much as possible-
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - somewhat disagree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
20. If I can help it, I won't associate with individuals who sell sex
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - somewhat disagree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

21. I would not feel comfortable working with someone I knew had previously sold sex
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. somewhat disagree
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree

Questions that addresses Human Value

22. An individual who sells sex should have the same access to healthcare as any other Person
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. somewhat disagree
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree
23. An individual who sells sex is a human being with their own struggles just like the rest of us?
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. somewhat disagree
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree
24. An individual who sells sex is a valuable human being
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. somewhat disagree
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree

25. An individual who sells sex should have the same workplace rights as any other person
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - somewhat disagree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
26. Job discrimination against an individual who sells sex is wrong-
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - somewhat disagree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

Questions that address the Impact on Society:

27. Individuals who sell sex break down society's values of marriage-
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - somewhat disagree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
28. Individuals who sell sex damage society's morals
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - somewhat disagree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat agree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
29. Individuals who sell sex have a negative impact on society
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - somewhat disagree

- d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree
30. An individual who sells sex probably has a disease
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. somewhat disagree
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree
31. An individual who sells sex spreads STIs
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. somewhat disagree
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree
32. An individual who sells sex is sexually perverted
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. somewhat disagree
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree

Questions that address Parenting:

33. An individual who sells sex can parent just as effectively as those who don't sell sex
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. somewhat disagree
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree
34. An individual who sells sex should have custody of their children just like everyone else
- a. Strongly disagree

- b. Disagree
 - c. somewhat disagree
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree
35. An individual who sells sex can be a good parent
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. somewhat disagree
 - d. Neutral
 - e. Somewhat agree
 - f. Agree
 - g. Strongly agree

Questions Addressing Legalization

37. Should prostitution be illegal?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
38. Should webcam modelling be illegal?
- a. Yes
 - b. No