

A Criminological Exploration of Cyber Prostitution within the South African Context: a Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT: This paper reports a systematic review of the studies related to cyber prostitution within the South African (SA) context. Qualitative studies published in peer reviewed journals from 2006 to 2016 were reviewed in order to determine the extent and nature of cyber prostitution within the SA context, impact of cyber prostitution and the measures put in place to combat or deal with cyber prostitution within the South African context. The review revealed that (1) majority of research and interventions tend to focus on street-based prostitution (2) studies on the extent and nature of cyber prostitution within the SA context are underrepresented in the research field (3) the negative impacts of cyber prostitution are not clearly determined by existing literature (4) cyber prostitution has become a preferred method of prostitution in modern society for varied motives. Recommendations for further research on cyber prostitution within the SA context are also provided.

KEYWORDS: cyberspace, cybercrime, crime cyber prostitution, online prostitution, prostitutes, prostitution.

I. INTRODUCTION

Modern Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have opened a new arena for various prospects. Amongst other things ICTs have facilitated the prevalence of cyber prostitution in most countries and South Africa is no exception. According to Ari-Veikko (2006) "South Africa has the largest number of internet users within the continent". During 2000-2004 period South Africa had the highest number of internet users within the continent and also the internet use growth increased by 46.8 % during the same period (Ari-Veikko, 2006). During year 2000 there were 2,400,000 internet users and in year 2004 the numbers increased to 3,523,000 (Ike Udogu – 2012). However the prevalence of cyber prostitution is under represented in the South African Police Services (SAPS) and the Criminal Justice System (CJS). Available information report largely on the cases of sexual offences identified by police officers and reported cases of sexual offences including charges for street-based prostitution but however these figures do not incorporate charges for cyber prostitution. Street-based prostitution has mainly been the centre of interest by most government intervention and policies while omitting the modern and wide-spreading model of prostitution conducted on cyberspace.

Cyberspace has become an arena of opportunities for most people across the globe. Current figures indicate a raise in numbers of people who access and use the internet and prostitutes have also revolved to the net to conduct their business but however, more research still needs to be conducted in order to have an in-depth understanding of cyber-prostitution especially within the SA context. This paper seeks to examine cyber prostitution within the SA context in order to determine the extent and nature of cyber-prostitution within the country. As part of the research objectives, this paper investigates the impact of cyber prostitution, examines the factors which contribute to the prevalence of cyber prostitution and also look at the measures put in place by the SA government to eliminate or combat cyber prostitution.

CONCEPTUALIZATION

For the purpose of basic introduction to the topic and to provide the context in which concepts will be utilised, an orientation to the keywords of the study is necessary:

Cyberspace

Two decades ago, Featherstone and Burrows (1996:135) stated that we "might think of cyberspace as a utopian vision for postmodern times". Writers such as Stenger (1991) indicated that cyberspace exists but has no location, while others have acknowledged that cyberspace is "truly the technology of miracles and dreams" (Barrie, Sherman and Judkins, 1992:126-7 cited in Featherstone and Burrows, 1996:135). Smith and Kollock

(1999:3) used the term “information superhighway” as a reference to modern computer technology and he further stipulated that other metaphors such as global networks, cyberspace, the Net, internet, online and the Web can be used interchangeably to define the modern computer mediated technologies. According to Smith and Kollock, (1999:3) cyberspace “allows people to create range of new social spaces in which to meet and interact with one another”. Amongst other things people can share information interact, search for information, play games exchange ideas, communicate, conduct business, direct actions, create artistic media and transfer funds through the use of cyberspace.

Crime

Crime relate to a deviance or antisocial behaviour which is against the law and societal norms. However current studies and available literature indicate that the definition of crime may vary across certain countries and cultures. In many countries “an appropriate definition of crime remains one of the most critical unresolved issues in criminal justice” (Henny and Lanier, 2001). Young (1999) cited in Reiner (2000:71) also revealed that “in pluralistic, rapidly changing cultures that celebrate diversity and choice there is an increasing ambiguity about what constitutes deviance”. Centuries ago crime was viewed as an evil behaviour, but the emergent of the criminology schools of thought challenged this motion of viewing crime as “the product of meddling demons, demonic possession or irrational thought” (Henny and Lanier, 2001). Instead the classicists viewed crime as a “mere behaviour albeit outlawed by the state” while the positivists challenged the classicist perspective and argued that crime is an “extreme case of abnormal behaviour, the product of defective bodies or mind” (Henny and Lanier, 2001)

According to the Law commission of Canada (2005:8) “in the last half of the twentieth century, various scholars noted that crime is not an objective phenomenon and that the way society is structured reflect how certain behaviours are understood and responded as deviance than an indication of any inherent problem with those individuals regarded as criminals. Law Commission of Canada further states that understanding the law is useful in order to understand what constitute criminal behaviour but however it is vital to “consider the broader social process that help [to] give meaning to crime and its control [because] there is much more to the question than simply referring to what is written in the Law”.

Cyber-crime

Cybercrime can be understood as a crime that is committed through the use of modern technology such as computer mediated technology networks. Types of cybercrime include but not limited to identity theft, hacking, internet fraud, child pornography and cyber-prostitution to name a few. According to Yar (2005) cybercrime refers not so much to a single, distinctive kind of criminal activity, but more to a diverse range of illegal and illicit activities that share in common the unique electronic environment in which they take place”. Moreover Wall (2007) stressed that “all too often claims about cybercrimes lack clarification as to what it is that is particularly ‘cyber’ about them”.

Cyber prostitution

Cyber prostitution can be defined in more ways than one. Chris (2006) consented that the cornucopia of commercial sex websites often uses the term ‘escort’ rather than prostitute. Therefore, the activities of an “escort” do add up to prostitution in the event that they incorporate ‘sexual administrations to someone else consequently for payment (Chris, 2006). In general prostitution entitle payment for sex or sexual activities (for example blow-job), likewise in cyberspace prostitution, clients pay prostitutes for sex or simulated sexual behaviour. “The activities of an ‘escort’ do now amount to prostitution if they include ‘sexual services to another person in return for payment or a promise of payment”. Therefore, cyber prostitution can be deemed as online prostitution performed for money or any other momentary gains and “one of the most popular cybercrimes is the act of prostitution through the use of the internet”.

Cyber prostitution- involves illegal engagement into cybersex in exchange for money, favours or any other gains. Flowers (1998) revealed that prostitution is an act of “sexual relations between a prostitute and a paying customer. In addition, Flowers (1998) acknowledged that in modern society the lines of what constitute prostitution are sometimes blurred and “it is not always black and white in real life as the dictionary suggests”. This paper will adapt Flowers (1998) definition of prostitution provided above. Cyber prostitution stands to be defined in more ways than one to a variation of extents cyber prostitution can be said to be the action of doing sexual facades using modern mediated technologies such as using the web cam, video screening or live two way channelling.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Current figures indicates an increase in numbers of prostitutes who access and use the internet for prostitution but however there has not yet been a series of research being conducted to examine the extent, nature and the impacts of cyber prostitution especially within the SA context. Gaining insights on the extent, nature and impacts of cyber prostitution in modern SA society and its complex, digital environment study would be useful

for government, public policy makers and other relevant stakeholders (such as the Criminal Justice System) seeking to address and combat cyber prostitution communities.

RATIONALE

The prevalence of cybercrime is not well documented within the South African context. Current statistics have mainly revealed figures of street-based prostitution with little to no reference to the modern type of prostitution spiralling in cyberspace. Available literature has not yet revealed the extent and nature of cyber-prostitution within the SA context. In order to develop effective policies and laws that attempt to eradicate cyber-prostitution it is vital to understand the extent and nature of cyber-prostitution within the country. Contemporary there is a growth in the number of escort sites and a rise in the number of commercial pages on prostitution, dating and networking sites. Cyberspaces have opened up new streams for sexual predation and encouraged the systematically organized sexual exploitation of certain vulnerable groups therefore it is vital to conduct a criminological exploration of cyber prostitution especially within the South African context.

From the above discussion, the study intends to examine the extent and nature of cyber prostitution within the South African context. The study consists of four research objectives and research questions of which the study intends to answer. Considering the insufficiency of information pertaining the extent and nature of cyber-prostitution it should become clear that there is a need for a research study which will bring about understanding of the extent and nature of cyber-prostitution, especially within the South African context.

According to White, (2008) objectives “identify the outcomes that are desired and point to the kind of questions that would need to be asked in order to achieve these outcomes”. The objectives of this paper are to explore the extent, nature and the impact of cyber prostitution within SA context and also determine the implemented measures by the SA government as an attempt to eliminate or combat cyber prostitution.

UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS

An increasing number of individuals within the South African context engage in cyber prostitution for myriad reasons. Social structural and financial factors also contribute to the prevalence of cyber-prostitution in the country. Prostitutes migrate to cyber prostitution due to the risk, victimization and public exposure associated with street based prostitution. Other individuals prefer cyber prostitutions due to its convenience and level of safety in contrast to the former street base prostitution.

The level of cyber-prostitution is on the rise in modern society as a result of the technological era. In South Africa and other parts of the world prostitution is criminalized. The study will bring about the understanding of the level of cyber prostitution within South Africa and its impacts. It will enlighten relevant stakeholders within criminology and the criminal justice system about the impact, factors, extent and nature of the parties involved in cyber prostitution. It will also reveal how society perceives cyber prostitution and the preventative measures put in place by the South African government to deal with cyber prostitution and whether or not cyber prostitution has yet been criminalized in South Africa.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section of the paper discusses the literature reviewed in the field of study in order to establish the gap and what other authors have said or wrote about cyber prostitution. A literature review was conducted with particular focus to the themes of the study. This literature review will cover the following themes: cyber prostitution, street prostitution, prostitution and pornography online international and local measures and the advantages of cyber prostitution.

Due to limited literature on cyber prostitution it is evidence that online-prostitution' and the effect of the cyberspace on sex work and the criminal law has been under-examined. “Most research focuses exclusively on street prostitution and female workers, with much less attention devoted to [cyber prostitution and] indoor prostitution, male and transgender workers, customers and managers” (Weitzer, 2005). Client engage into cyber prostitution or into prostitution in general for wild variety of motives, scholars such as McKeganey and Barnard (1996) cited in Ashford (2008) identified some aspects that motivated clients to engage into paid Sex”, they stressed that these aspect includes the ability to indicate specific acts that clients wished to perform, or have performed on them, the ability to have intercourse with a scope of various ladies or prostitutes, the capacity to search out prostitutes with particular physical qualities or showing specific pictures, the rush of accomplishing something that was socially disliked and the constrained and unemotional nature of the contact with the prostitutes (Ashford, 2008).

Cyber prostitution

According to Lane (2001) cyber prostitution and pornography is said to be a trending activity in our day and age. With particular focus on online pornography Lane (2001) indicated that “Ashe and other online pornographers [including cyber prostitutes] are the newest participants in an industry that over the last quarter-century has grown from approximately \$2 billion in a total revenue to at least \$10 billion”. This indicates that

the online prostitution and pornography industry generate large sums of money. That being said it is not surprising to state that as much as the cyberspace has taken into account and made significant changes in the business and e-vote based system. To support this notion Ashford (2008) revealed that just as e-commerce has allowed for the transformation of business and e-democracy has begun to change government and the democratic process, so too has technology impacted upon sexuality and commercial sexual transactions making 'traditional vices' ever more accessible to the general public. Recent reports indicate that cyber prostitution (or cyber-sex) is becoming a large cooperation big business Holt *et al* (2015).

Kendall (2009) "finds that [sex] workers who solicit online largely represented growth in the overall prostitution market, as opposed to simple displacement of the off- line, street- focused market". In addition "most sex workers who solicit online engage in lower risk behaviors than traditional street-based [sex] workers" (Kendall, 2009). Traditional street-based prostitution is said to be riskier when compared cyber prostitution. Risk associated with street-based sex work includes but not limited to the danger of brutality from clients, pimps, police, drug dealer and the general public which might not be the case for prostitutions who operate on cyberspace. Kendall (2009) stated that prostitutes "experience intimidation and harassment from the communities where they work and sometimes live. Current studies and "empirical findings demonstrate the high likelihood of street workers experiencing violence from other working women, predatory men involved in prostitution, the general public (Benson, 1998) and severe physical harm from boyfriends/pimps" (May *et al.*, 2000, p. 18) cited in (Kendall, 2009).

Prostitution and Pornography (Online)

Cyberspace provide a wild variety of social content ranging from online pornography which includes video, audio, text, photos and images of porn-stars. However, a distinction must be made between cyber-prostitution and cyber-pornography. Thus cyber prostitution entitles payment for sex on cyberspace on the other hand Akdeniz (1997) argued that there is no static definition of cyber pornography, due to social, moral and legitimate varieties all around the globe it makes it hard to characterize pornographic content' in a path adequate to all. What is considered essentially sexually unequivocal however not foul in one nation may well be revolting in numerous different nations; then again what is viewed as legal yet not explicit may well be disgusting under the present enactment in a few nations. However cyber pornography is said to comprise online sexually explicit content which comes in various formats such as images and video files which reveal naked people and sexual content in order to stimulate sexual excitement.

Pornography in cyberspace is said to be flourishing, for example, Black *et al* (2012) reported that the use of online pornography has increased over the past decade. Furthermore "the effects of internet pornography uses are widespread and are both negative (e.g., relationship and interpersonal distress) and positive (e.g., increases in sexual knowledge and attitudes toward sex)" (Black *et al*, 2012).

Street and Cyber Prostitution

According to Van Zyl (2008) "possibly the safest form of prostitution is cyber-sex which is sometimes even committed at work". Much scholastic composition appears to liken prostitution with road prostitution whereas it is alleged that prostitutes in some parts of the globe have restrain from street prostitution and as a substitute they have chosen to engage in different forms of prostitution such as cyber prostitution. Weitzer, 2005 highlighted that "in the United States, Britain, The Netherlands, and many other countries, however, only a minority of prostitutes work on the streets". There are multiple online sites and forums that support sex work and due to the risk associated with street prostitution, cyber prostitution on the other hand is deemed as effective and safe. According to Weitzer (2005) "victimization and exploitation are highest among street prostitutes and among those who have been trafficked into prostitution". On the other hand, "other workers [such as cyber prostitutes] are much less vulnerable to violence, exercise more control over their work, and derive at least some psychological or physical rewards from what they do" (Weitzer, 2005).

Furthermore, "street prostitutes occupy the lowest stratum and receive the strongest dose of stigma; upscale workers are somewhat less reviled (Weitzae, 2005). Ashford (2008) revealed that the growth of the Internet and, in particular, online forums built around 'commercial sex scene' sites often allow clients to seek out a prostitute to perform a specific sexual act" which is much more convenience for both the client and prostitute rather than standing on the street waiting for clients or looking around the streets for prostitutes. Cyberspace enables both clients and prostitutes to exchange information through the use of the intranet. "This exchange allowed the potential client to explore his sexual desire without a revelation of his identity or a physical encounter taking place thus reducing any possible rejection of his request". Kendall (2009) found that "workers who solicit online largely represent growth in the overall prostitution market, as opposed to simple displacement of the off- line, street- focused market". In some cases cyber prostitutes engage physically with their clients to have sexual encounter when the deal has been done on cyber space. However Van Zyl (2008) revealed that cyber prostitution "sites are created to promote commercial sexual activities although they do not physically take place

IV. INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

“In January 2006 the United Kingdom (UK) government published a ‘prostitution strategy’ that set out four core aims” (Chris, 2006). Chris (2008) stated that the strategy aims to produce better enforcement of laws against kerb-crawling and seeks to create more opportunities for women to leave prostitution. However Chris (2006) has criticized this strategy and states that “the approach of the UK government focuses on 'street sex', yet in the cyber age we have seen a growth in the number of escort sites and a rise in the number of commercial pages on dating and networking sites”. In addition, it seems, by all accounts, to be that the UK government urges law authorization offices to target restricted assets on street prostitution whilst prostitution bolstered by the internet is by all accounts flourishing (Chris, 2006). Ashfords (2008) argued that “It is striking that within the 75 pages of the [UK government] report there is no focus upon the role of cyberspace within modern prostitution”. Most interventions directed to prostitution also focus on female as prostitutes whilst omitting male prostitution. Moreover “radical feminism sees prostitution as the quintessential form of male domination over women” (Weitzer, 2005). “This narrow focus is surprising in the context of a rise in the number of websites dedicated to varying forms of prostitution” (Ashford, 2008).

In an attempt to deal with sex offenses on cyberspaces and offline with precise focus on violent crimes against children, the “Innocent Images program investigated child exploitation and pornography cases online, while the [Crimes Against Children] CAC program handled cases of child prostitution, abduction and sex tourism” (Holt *et al.*, 2015). On the same vein Holt *et al.* (2015) identified that International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC) “has national operational centers in Belgium, Greece, Romania, South Africa, US and also has regional offices in Singapore and Latin America”. Amongst other things, the ICMEC is said to be responsible for investigating child exploitation cases, especially the sexually and cyber related cases.

SOUTH AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTS

The expansion of Africa’s online population is underrepresented. A number of studies have reviewed and examined the evolution, trend and use of Internet Communication Technologies (ICT) for criminal activities in Africa (Ayoku, 2005; Longe *et al.*, 2008; Longe & Chiemekwe, 2007, Smith *et al.*, 1999; Ribadu, 2005, Adomi & Igun, 2007, Sylvester, 2001). Current literature reporting on local SA measures to deal with cyber prostitution is scarce to none. In most cases, the South African government in collaboration with relevant stakeholders has targeted specifically street prostitution. In South Africa police have arrested countless prostitutes on the street and authors have written on the measures put in place in attempts to eradicate prostitution on the street. The SAPS introduced the South African Crime Stop program which was launched in 1992 in an attempt to combat crime in SA. While sex work is currently a criminal offence in South Africa, providing sufficient evidence that a "sex for reward" transaction had taken place, is very difficult” (South African Law Reform Commission, 2009; Richter, 2008 cited in Richter and Massawe, 2010).

Furthermore, “recent amendments to the Sexual Offences Act make it an express crime to buy sex. As such, the police could prosecute sex workers clients, but the same problem arises with providing sufficient evidence (Richter and Massawe, 2010). On the same vein the films and publication act 65 of 1996 intends to regulate sexual context on published material, Van Zyl revealed that (2008) “if a person exhibit himself or herself by means of photographs or webcam or video clips on the Internet via email or a chat room it constitutes an offence within section 19”. On the other hand, however, “where these sites are privately available and these prostitutes do not lure the public into their webs, one could argue that these actions take place privately and that the law has no interest therein”. Van Zyl (2008) further stated that no indication exist as to where these indecent actions [cyber prostitution] must take place for it to constitute an offence, one can argue that online-sex, webcam sex and telephone sex for reward are all criminal offences.

[However] it is difficult to determine whether or not an open and democratic society would condemn prostitution as such but will tolerate online sexual activities for reward. Socially most indecent and illicit sexual activities are condemned and promoters thereof are usually outcasts of the community. Furthermore, since these prostitutes have no physical contact with the customers, can it still be seen as prostitution or a mere form of business? If this online prostitution cannot be regarded as actual prostitution wouldn’t these actions be protected under the sections 16(c); 18 and 22 of the Constitution? (VanZyl, 2008)

Therefore any type of accessibility of pictures or movies or alike on the Internet and mobile smart phones can be viewed as a publication. In the event that these distributions contain material that would sensibly have made it be XX or X18 appraised, such a production would constitute a criminal offense.

V. RESEARCH METHOD

Research Paradigm

According to Christensen *et al.* (2013) a research paradigm is a world view or perspectives held by a community of researchers that is based on the set of shared assumptions, concepts, values and practices. This paper used qualitative research methods. Qualitative research approach can be applied to better understand any phenomena

which little is yet known about (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Qualitative research reports are typically rich with detail and insights into participants experience or world view. Qualitative research paradigm will help to better understand the extent and nature of cyber prostitution within the South African context and to generate thick descriptions of the subjects experience's and world view. "Qualitative research generates narrative data-that is, data described in words instead of numbers.

According to Babbie (2001) 'sampling is the process of selecting observations'. Observations for the study were the secondary sources of information. Published data in relation to the research topic was examined in order to determine the extent and nature of cyber prostitution in South Africa. According to Vartanian (2010) "secondary data can include any data that are examined to answer a research question other than the question(s) for which the data were initially collected". Furthermore, "qualitative data can include data retrieved second hand from interviews, ethnographic accounts, documents, photographs or conversations" (Emma, 2008).

Research design

Research design refers to the researchers overall plan or blue print of how the research is to be conducted (Barbie& Mouton, 2001). The research design selected for this study is descriptive design. According to Monsen and Van Horn (2007) "descriptive research is an effective way to obtain information used in devising hypotheses and proposing association". In addition Monsen and Van Horn (2007) revealed that important examples of descriptive investigation are descriptive epidemiologic research and qualitative research studies. In this regard, the descriptive design is used in qualitative research study.

Data Resources

Data collection is the process of gathering information that will help to answer the main research question(s) and achieve research objective(s). The data was searched through the google scholar and University of KwaZulu-Natal library electronic resources database search engine, books, government gazette, published statistics documents and published journal articles. Search through internet database search engines retrieve data from multiple data sources such as Santa Clara University - School of Law, Taylor and Francis online, ebscohost, sage journals and Journal of Criminal Law to name a few. Information was also obtained through general communication education, social sciences, criminology and psychology database. Technical reports, scholarly journals, literature reviewed articles and reference books were all used as a sources of information. The key words used to search for relevant information that will help in answering the research questions of the study were: *cyber prostitution, cyber prostitution in South Africa, cybersex/online sex, online prostitution, prostitutes/prostitutes online, impact of cyber prostitution, extent and nature of cyber prostitution in South Africa, South Africa and measures to deal with cyber prostitution.*

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria for this study was as follows: (a) a study had to report significant factor(s) associated with cyber prostitution within the South African context, which means qualitative research articles were included in the review; (b) the study reported on the extent and nature of cyber prostitution within the SA context (c) the study outline the impact of cyber prostitution and the measures put in place by the SA government (d) the articles were published in English; (e) the articles have been peer reviewed; (f) full text can be accessed (f) they were published between 2006 to 2016; (g) participants were cyber prostitutes, excluding the prostitutes from non-cyber space (h) studies were conducted in South Africa.

Studies were excluded from the review if (a) they were quantitative in nature; (b) were not peer-reviewed (c) had low levels of evidence; (d) researched participants included non-cyber prostitutes (e) did not report on the impact, extent and nature of cyber prostitution within SA (f) were written in non-English language; and (g) unpublished studies. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were chosen to narrow down the focus of the review. After relevant articles were identified, each article was further examined and checked on the reference list in order to determine additional relevant articles to include in the study review.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Various theoretical frameworks may be utilized to understand cyber prostitution within the South Africa context. This paper utilized two theoretical framework namely: feminist theory and ecosystems theory. The feminist theoretical framework was utilized to understand the nature of gender inequality in relation to cyber prostitution. Socialist feminism, in particular, guided the study. According to Monsen and Van Horn(2007) socialist feminism provides a synthesis of radical and Marxist feminist perspectives with recognition that both capitalist and patriarchal systems play a part in the subordination of women.

On the other hand, Meyer (1983) revealed that ecosystems perspective allow us to understand any social problem and human behavior within the social context. From the ecosystems perspective behavior needs to be understood as a function of families, groups, organizations and communities which exist at micro, meso and macro levels. This theoretical framework was used to assess interaction among the different levels of the eco-

system to better understand cyber prostitutes' behavior within the South African context and to understand factors that contribute to such practices. In addition, the theoretical framework assisted in understanding how social networks contribute to cyber prostitution. Social networks are "a set of relational linkages and communication pathways that influence the behavior of members" (Germain, 1981 cited in Greene, 2011).

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

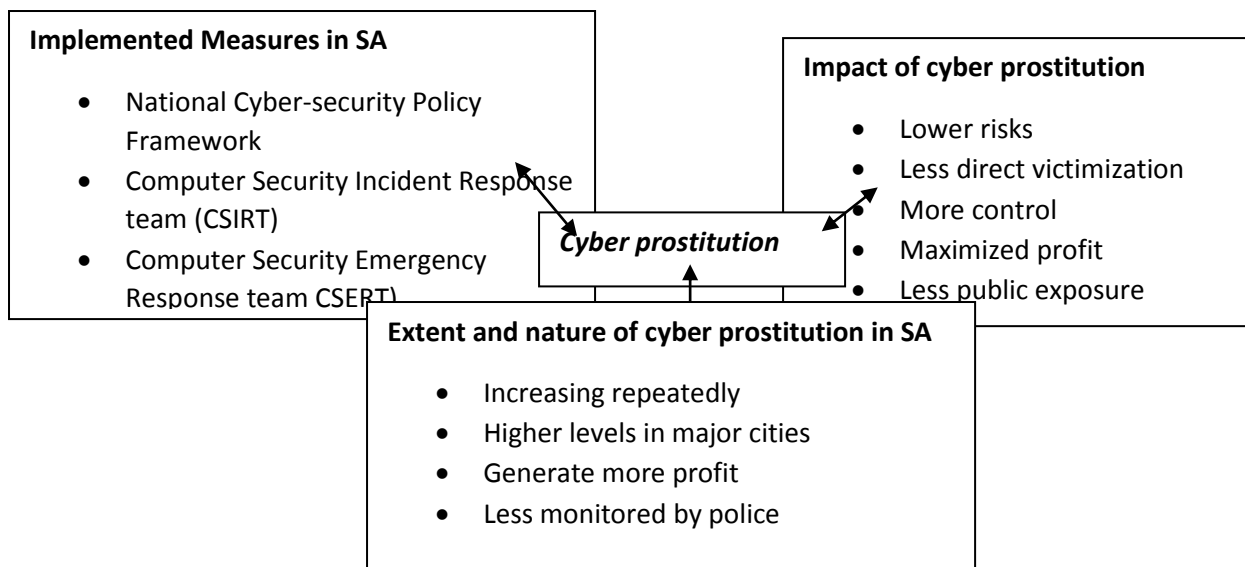
A data analysis refers to the categorizing, ordering, manipulating and summarizing of data to obtain answers to the research question(s) (De Vos, 2005). Thus, the study analyzed secondary data and according to McArt and McDougal (1985) "when data resources are available, secondary analysis represents a potentially efficient and cost effective method of research for both students and more advanced investigators". Therefore, secondary data analysis can be understood as a process of "re-analysis of data for the purpose of answering the original research question(s) with better statistical techniques, or answering new questions with old data" (McArt and McDougal, 1985). Secondary data analysis entitles analysis of research collected by other researchers with an intention to answer new research questions. Secondary data also has its own pros and cons, amongst the negative aspect of secondary data, McCaston (2005) revealed that secondary data assists in understand a particular group, "but compared to primary data they are imperfect reflections of reality. Without proper interpretation and analysis they do not help us understand why something is happening". Therefore it is vital to proper interpret and analyze secondary data in order to aid in understanding a particular phenomenon.

To ensure proper interpretation and analysis of the data, the researcher has familiarizethemselves with the information from the secondary sources in order to better understand the data and to know which interpretations go with the data and which interpretation to assign to it. Themes were induced and data was coded by marking relevant themes or instances. Coding gavea fresh view of the data and allowed for comparison of sections that appeared to belong together. Elaboration was done in order to capture the finer nuances of meaning which may have not beencaptured by the original coding system. The data was interpreted and checked in order to identify if there wasany new information emerging, to improve the overall data quality and reduce the possibilities of researcher bias. The following section presents the findings of the study.

FINDINGS

Findings of the study will be discussed in relation to the research objectives and the themes that emerge in the data. **Figure 1** presents how the themes are linked to each other as they will be discussed below:

Figure: 1 (Theme diagram)



The study was aimed at obtaining an understanding of the impact of cyber prostitution and the measures put in place to deal with cyber prostitution within the SA context. In addition, the study explored the extent and the nature of cyber prostitution within SA and gains an understanding of the factors that contribute to cyber prostitution and how these can be eliminated. The purpose of this chapter is to present the key findings of the study in relation to the research questions.

Impacts of Cyber Prostitution

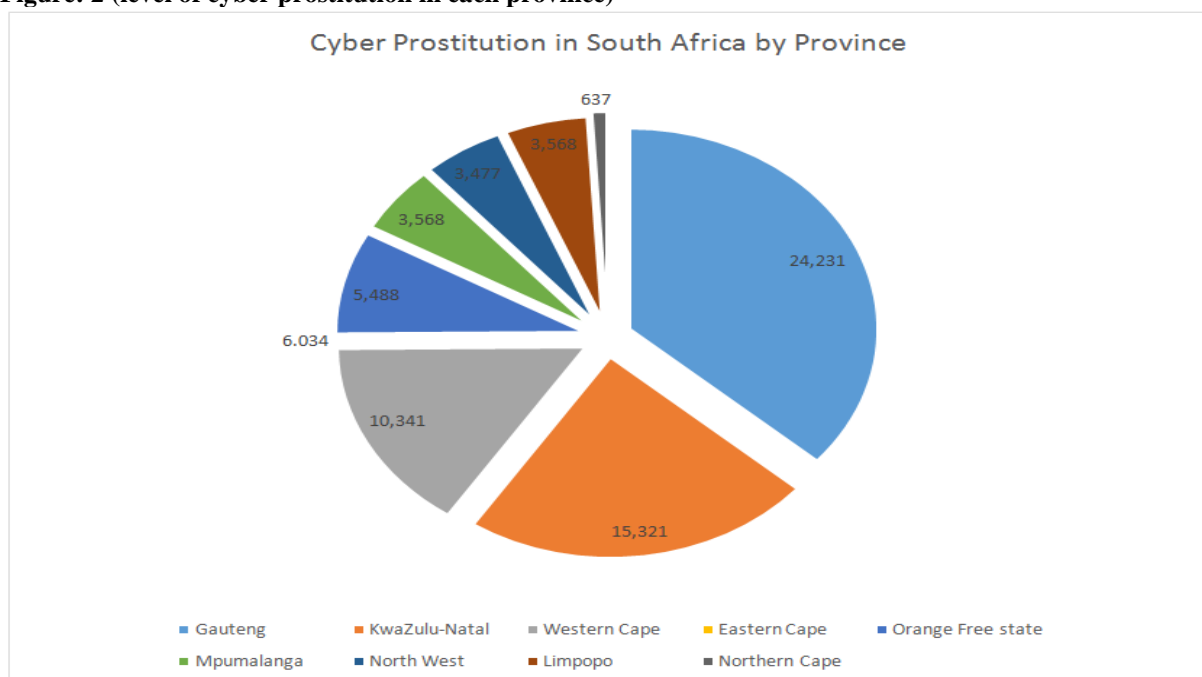
In relation to the first aim of the study, which was to understand the impact of cyber prostitution, the following was found. Cyber prostitute experience less victimization than street prostitutes. Cyber prostitutes are less vulnerable to violence and they are able to exercise more control over their work when compared to street based prostitutes. There are therefore less likely to experience psychological or physical victimization due to their work. The impact of cyber prostitution on prostitutes may vary, for example, some cyber prostitutes are victimized by their client when they have physical encounter but this is not always the cases since some cyber prostitutes do not engage physically with their clients and everything is done on cyber space. Kendall (2009) most workers who solicit online engage in safer sex practices, and on average, see substantially fewer clients than found in the literature on streetwalking prostitutes. This study found that cyber prostitutes differ substantially from their street-based counterparts in terms of sexual risk behaviors with their clients and they have a lower risk of being arrested or prosecuted by the police and CJS. Jones (2015) noted that “sex workers use the internet to maximize profits and reduce risk exposure”. The use of cyberspace by prostitutes to conduct their business decreases the chances of victimisation by the police, pimps and clients. Through the use of cyberspace prostitutes are able to eliminate public exposure and maximize their profits.

Extent and Nature of Cyber Prostitution

With regards to the extent and nature of cyber prostitution, this study found that the number of sex workers who work independently through Internet chat-rooms and other online endeavours has increased constantly. The *Find a Prostitutes, South African Hookers* website revealed that there are 6,034 cyber prostitutes in the Eastern Cape, 24,231 in the Gauteng region, 15,321 in KwaZulu-Natal, 1,917 in Limpopo, 3,568 in Mpumalanga, 3,477 in North-West, 637 in the Northern Cape, 5,488 in the Orange Free State and about 10,341 cyber prostitutes in the Western Cape (<http://www.find-prostitutes.com/za/>). This clearly indicates an increase in number of prostitutes who solicit sex online. Gauteng region has a higher number of cyber prostitutes followed by KwaZulu-Natal and on the other hand the Northern Cape region has the smallest number of prostitutes who solicit sex online.

The use of internet for various motives is on the rise in SA and amongst other things prostitutes and their clients use modern technologies to engage, communicate and share information on cyberspace. “South Africa like many other countries has become dependent on the Internet to govern, to conduct business and for other social purposes. The Internet has become indispensable to many South Africans and will continue to be, as more people access the information highway”. As more people access the internet prostitutes use such platforms (internet) to solicit sex online which is clearly indicated by the high figures on cyber prostitution. Accessibility of sexual activities in cyberspace is not only limited to adult but children are increasingly exposed to these components through internet searching, online chats and while playing internet games.

Figure: 2 (level of cyber prostitution in each province)



Websites such as www.offersupply.co.za/com, www.cougarcheaters.com/co.za and www.fuckfreebuddydaing.co.za, to name a few, facilitates cyber prostitution within the South African context. These website provide a platform for both prostitutes and clients to engage in sexual activities online and to also to meet physically for sexual intercourse. To attract potential clients statements such as *Linda* (46) is looking for a sexual encounter, are you interested?, *Cindy* (23) wants to share her nude private pictures with you and, do not pay for a South Africa hooker when you can get laid by swingers that want to have sex, create a free account on our adult swingers site and meet them in just minutes (cited in <http://www.find-prostitutes.com/za/>). In addition a list of active nude prostitute's pictures and contact details are usually shown on these website in order for clients to choose the type of prostitute they desire to engage in sexual activities with. Some websites and the content on these websites can only be accessed by registered users only. This requires the client to first reveal his or her personal details and subscribe in order to register and have access to these websites.

Implemented measures

In South Africa prostitution is illegalized whether it is done online or offline but however little has been done to deal with cyber prostitution. With regards to measures implemented to deal with cyber prostitution within the South African context, this study found that the South African government's State Security Agency has implemented the National Cyber-security Policy Framework in order to address the prevalence of cybercrimes. Amongst other things this policy framework intends to "create a secure, dependable, reliable and trustworthy cyber environment that facilitates the protection of critical information infrastructure whilst strengthening shared human values and understanding of Cybersecurity in support of national security imperatives and the economy". Cyberspace comes with new types of challenges to the government and it therefore introduces a further dimension to the national security. From Selebi's point of view "it rather seems that the legislator finds it too difficult to combat prostitution and online prostitution but legalising it seems to be the easier option to dispose of this ever growing problem" (cited in Van Zyl, 2008)

VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The level of cyber prostitution is on the raise in SA. Cyber prostitutes are less vulnerable to violence and they are able to exercise more control over their work when compared to street based prostitutes. There are less likely to experience psychological or physical victimization due to their work since they operate in virtual space. Available information indicates an increase in number of prostitutes who solicit sex online. Gauteng region has a higher number of cyber prostitutes followed by KwaZulu-Natal. On the other hand the Northern Cape region has the smallest number of prostitutes who solicit sex online. The use of internet for varies motive is on the raise in SA and amongst other things prostitutes and their clients use modern technologies to engage, communicate and share information on cyberspace. Along with other attempt, the South African government's State Security Agency has implemented the National Cyber-security Policy Framework in order to address the prevalence of cybercrimes.

It is suggested that further research in the field of study or area of enquiry still needs to be conducted in order to gain in-depth understanding of cyber prostitution in SA. The following are the recommendations regarding research on cyber prostitution in SA:

- More primary research should be done in order to understand the existence and prevalence of cyber prostitution in SA.
- The South African government and relevant stakeholders should implement effective measures that will address the existence of cyber prostitution within the country.
- There is a need for new policies that will effectively address cybercrime in general and cyber prostitution in particular

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