

When daughters sell sex and Uncles buy it

Nigeria's unspoken scandal

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In Northern Nigeria today—from Kano to Katsina, Kaduna to Abuja, Gombe to Adamawa and beyond—prostitution is being redefined, repackaged, and repurposed in ways our society is yet to fully grasp or confront. Once seen as an explicit, stigmatized trade practiced by women living in brothels or in the fringes of urban society, prostitution has now assumed a form that is more discreet, deceptive, and dangerously normalized. The new face of prostitution no longer resides in dingy motels or poorly lit street corners. She may very well be your neighbor's daughter or your daughter, your cousin, your niece, or even your girlfriend (wives too have been reported). She lives at home, speaks decently, dresses modestly in public, attends school or has a small job, and blends perfectly into her conservative community. Yet, she is actively engaged in transactional sex.

This new wave of commercial sex work is cloaked in deception. Unlike the “traditional” prostitutes who often migrated far from their family homes to avoid shame and suspicion, these girls remain within the comfort of their homes. The family remains unsuspecting; society remains blind. They are not seen as sex workers and they don't identify as such. But the reality is, they sell their bodies to men—usually for money, phones, rent, trips, and more.

Who Are the Clients? They are not their peers. Young men, even those with questionable morals, typically frown at paying for sex—especially with women their own age especially since there is the looming risk of exposure. The real clients, therefore, are middle-aged and elderly men—the “uncles.” These men, often above 50, use their financial power to exploit vulnerable young girls. Many are married, influential, and sometimes respected members of the community. They book hotels, arrange flights, and fund the lavish lifestyles of these girls, all in exchange for sexual gratification. They are the shameless engines driving this trade, creating demand and sustaining the illusion. They are the reason a girl from a struggling family can suddenly afford the latest iPhone, expensive clothes, designer handbags, and weekend trips to Lagos, Abuja or Dubai.

How Does It Happen? It starts with a desire—often triggered by poverty, peer pressure, or social media fantasies. The girl feels a pressing need for money, attention, and a lifestyle far beyond her family's means. She may resist menial jobs or honest work, not because she is lazy, but because those options won't fetch her the quick cash she believes she deserves. Then comes the network. A friend introduces her to someone. A “pimp”—male or female—slides into her DM. The network is simple but effective. A few conversations, a meeting, a test run. Then the money starts flowing. Once she gains footing, she establishes a base of loyal clients—uncles who can be called upon for any service, at any time, for the right price. Her life becomes a web of deception. School hours, “friend visits,” or supposed job responsibilities become covers for interstate flights, secret hotel bookings, and clandestine transactions. The richest among them reportedly offer services like anal sex, which are in high demand by some of these predators.

Who Are These Girls? They are typically from low-income or struggling homes. They reject being categorized as “poor” in public, and they will go to great lengths to appear middle-class or affluent. Many of their families are unaware. In some extreme cases, parents even give silent consent, as long as the money keeps flowing home.

Their greatest assets? Physical beauty, curvy figures, and the naivety that predators exploit. These girls have no business with brothels or

street corners. They have gone digital. They operate through WhatsApp groups, TikTok algorithms, and private Facebook pages. With just a few clicks, they are matched with high-paying clients—sometimes in entirely different states.

Why Poverty Is Not an Excuse Many will point fingers at poverty. But we must be careful not to romanticize or rationalize prostitution as a legitimate response to hardship. Poverty is real, yes—but so is integrity. There are girls in the same communities who, despite hunger and hardship, have chosen honest paths. They work as waitresses, hairdressers, salesgirls, and tutors. They manage small businesses, survive on tight budgets, and still hold their heads high. Prostitution, especially in this form, is not a product of poverty alone—it is often a product of greed, laziness, entitlement, and a corrupt value system. The growing belief that one must “look rich” or “live big” regardless of how the money is made is at the core of this moral collapse. Religious warnings are being ignored. Even when confronted, some girls say, “Allah will forgive.” But repentance requires remorse and a firm commitment to change—not a continuous indulgence in sin while hiding behind religious phrases.

The Role of Social Media. Social media is a major culprit. The platforms that were meant to connect and educate have become virtual marketplaces for flesh trade. TikTok glorifies vanity, consumerism, and “soft life” narratives. WhatsApp becomes the digital brothel where clients and sex workers finalize deals. Facebook hosts secret groups where sex work is promoted in coded language. The constant bombardment of luxury lifestyles, body flaunting, and materialism fosters insecurity and desperation among impressionable girls. The result? An endless race to fake perfection—even if it means trading dignity for money.

The Damaging Effects. Many families remain oblivious, and by the time they discover the truth, the damage is irreversible. Reputations are destroyed. Trust is lost. The normalization of secret prostitution threatens the very foundation of our cultural and moral values. When immorality becomes invisible, it becomes unstoppable. This trend contributes to rising distrust in relationships and marriages. Husbands are becoming suspicious, wives are growing insecure, and divorce rates are climbing. Increased sexual activity with multiple partners, often without protection, raises the risk of STDs, including HIV/AIDS. Yet, this danger is seldom discussed. The erosion of fear of Allah and the disregard for Islamic teachings show how deep this problem runs.

Critical Questions We Must Ask. How did we get here? Who failed our girls—parents, clerics, or the government? Why is the society silent? What kind of men are sleeping with girls young enough to be their granddaughters? Will we allow another generation to grow up in a society that calls evil “smartness” and shamelessness “hustle”? This is not a rant. It is a wake-up call. What we are witnessing is not just immorality—it is moral suicide. If we continue to ignore this, we risk raising a generation that believes fornication is business, pimps are mentors, and prostitution is hustle. Let the uncles be warned: your lust is destroying the daughters of the land. Let the girls know: no amount of iPhones or Dubai trips will cleanse the burden of shame you're carrying. And let the parents rise: your silence is no longer innocent—it is complicity. May Allah guide us all.