

Power & Participation

Sex workers voices in the Israeli Legislation Process of the Prohibition on Consumption of Prostitution Law

An Abstract of the Thesis by
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This research examined the legislative process that led to the passing of the new Prohibition on Consumption of Prostitution law (temporary order) in Israel, focusing on the participation of sex workers in this process. It aimed to get a deeper understanding of the different voices that took part in the discussion, and specifically the role that sex workers voices played in the debate. Data was gathered both from interviews and documents and was analyzed thematically and through content analysis accordingly. The theoretical framework of the discussion was based on Foucault's perception of power and Gallagher's work on participation. The findings indicated that the main narrative represented in the legislation process was a radical feminist narrative, led by politicians, activists, and aid service workers. Prostitution survivors who used aid services were invited to participate; however, the participation of sex workers who opposed the law was limited, and they received disrespectful and hostile treatment. Even though sex workers did not manage to stop the law from passing, they are not powerless, and continue the effort to resist it both in and out of the Knesset.

Keywords: participation, sex work, prostitution, governance feminism, legislation, Swedish model, client incrimination, power, Foucault