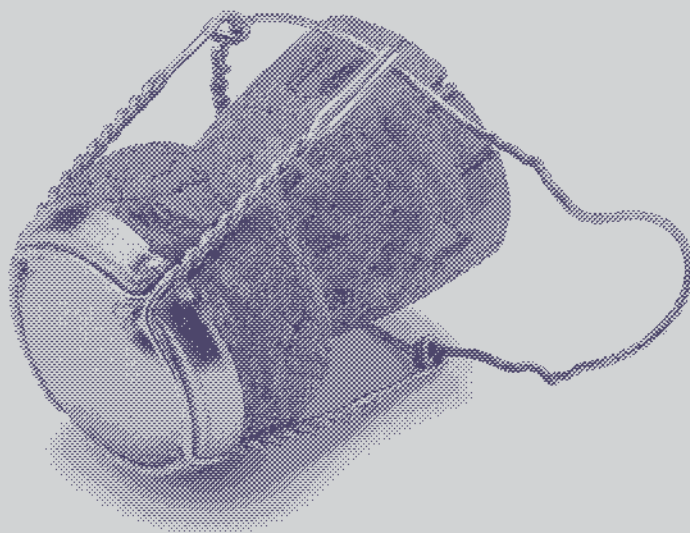


# EXPLORING THE DEMAND FOR PROSTITUTION

What male buyers say  
about their motives,  
practices and perceptions



**EXPLORING THE DEMAND FOR PROSTITUTION:  
What Male Buyers Say About Their Motives,  
Practices, and Perceptions**

**GHADA JABBOUR**

**EXPLORING THE DEMAND FOR PROSTITUTION:  
What Male Buyers Say About Their Motives,  
Practices, and Perceptions  
©2014, all rights reserved, KAFA (enough)  
Violence & Exploitation**

Typesetting and design by maajoun  
[www.maajoun.com](http://www.maajoun.com)



KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation  
PO Box: 116-5042 Beirut, Lebanon  
Tel/Fax: +961 1 392220-1  
[kafa@kafa.org.lb](mailto:kafa@kafa.org.lb)  
[www.kafa.org.lb](http://www.kafa.org.lb)

## About KAFA

KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation is a feminist, secular, Lebanese, non-profit, non-governmental civil society organization seeking to create a society that is free of social, economic and legal patriarchal structures that discriminate against women.

KAFA has been aiming to eliminate all forms of exploitation and violence against women since its establishment in 2005. It seeks to realize substantive gender equality through the adoption of a combination of different approaches, such as:

Advocacy for law reform and introduction of new laws and policies; influencing public opinion, practices and mentality; conducting research and training; and empowering women and children victims of violence, and providing them with social, legal, and psychological support.

Our focus areas are: family violence; exploitation and trafficking in women, especially in migrant domestic workers and women in prostitution, and; child protection, particularly from sexual and gender-based violence.



## Background and Acknowledgements

As a feminist advocacy organization working on preventing violence against women and combating patriarchy, KAFA's interest in tackling prostitution and trafficking in women and girls is linked to our work on exposing negative gender power dynamics, and the ways we seek to address the systemic oppression and subordination of women in our society.

Prostitution is one of the topics that sharply divide the feminist movement. The debate is polarized: some groups argue that prostitution could be liberating and empowering for women, while other groups understand prostitution as intrinsically exploitative and oppressive to those women, who are or have been involved.

Long before we initiated this research, KAFA team members were exposed to this debate. It took time, much reading, and discussions for us to come to a clear stance on prostitution: Prostitution is a highly gendered violation that incarnates and reinforces patriarchy. It constitutes a form of violence against women, and is an infringement of women's basic rights to personal security and human dignity.

It is from this particular stance that this action-based research emerged. The present study is the first publication of a larger research study on prostitution and human trafficking in Lebanon. This study examines the prostitution behavior of male buyers of sexual acts. The complementary studies take a closer look at the prostitution industry in Lebanon, and include the applied legal and policy framework, the links between the prostitution industry and human trafficking, and includes case studies focusing on women in street prostitution and on foreign women involved in the super nightclub entertainment business in Lebanon. This set of publications aim particularly at revealing the violence and exploitation that accompany prostitution and sex trafficking.

We hope that the findings and the recommendations presented in this research will stimulate the debate in Lebanon, from a gender lens, on the topic of prostitution and trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. We also hope that our work will encourage further research and inspire initiatives, policy-measures, and actions to address these violations of women's human rights.

KAFA would like to thank all those who contributed to this study. The report would not have been possible without the assistance and guidance of Gunilla S. Ekberg. A special thanks goes to Rola Abimourched and Maya El Ammar for assisting in the research, and for their professionalism and continuous dedication. The study benefited from the comments and feedback provided by Azza Charara Baydoun and Marie-Rose Zalzal. We would also like to thank everyone who contributed at different stages of the study, in particular Karin Werkman, Aline Rahbani, Nabil Tabbal, George Chidiac, Abbas El Husseini, Hussein Izzedine, Emily Diab, and El-sien van Pinxteren.

# Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Demographic Findings</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1	Age	
3.2	Nationality	
3.3	Education	
3.4	Employment and Individual Income	
3.5	Matrimonial Status and Sexual Relations	
<b>4</b>	<b>The Prostitution Act</b>	<b>21</b>
4.1	Number of Women in Prostitution Used by Men	
4.2	Location and Venues Where Men Buy Women in Prostitution	
4.3	Where the Act Takes Place	
4.4	What Do Men Pay for and How Much Do They Pay	
<b>5</b>	<b>Men’s Awareness of the Harms of Prostitution</b>	<b>25</b>
5.1	Awareness of Women’s Socio-Economic Vulnerabilities	
5.2	Awareness of Trafficking in Persons	
5.3	Awareness of Pimping	
5.4	Awareness of Exploitation and Violence	
<b>6</b>	<b>Men’s Justifications for Using Women in Prostitution</b>	<b>31</b>
6.1	It’s a “Natural Right”	
6.2	It Is Easy and Convenient	
6.3	Seeking Variety	
6.4	Seeking Leisure and Entertainment	
6.5	Sexual Discovery and Experimentation	
6.6	Shaping of Male Sexuality and Peer Pressure	
6.7	Buying Sexual Acts as an Addiction	

<b>7</b>	<b>Men’s Rationalizations of Their Demand of Prostitution</b>	<b>48</b>
7.1	Prostitution as a “Profession” That Women “Choose”	
7.2	Women in Prostitution Are Viewed as Commodities and Fundamentally Different From Other Women	
7.3	Paying Money for Sexual Acts Justifies Men’s Control and Exploitation of Women in Prostitution	
7.4	Prostitution as a Method for Prevention of Rape and Inevitability of Prostitution	
<b>8</b>	<b>What Would Deter Men From Using Women in Prostitution?</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Conclusion and Recommendations</b>	<b>60</b>
	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>63</b>





**Both prostitution and sex trafficking would not exist and would not continue to proliferate and be lucrative without men's demand for paid sexual acts. Simply put, in any market, if there is no demand, there would be no supply.**

# 1 Introduction

Prostitution is rarely questioned. It is often the case that prostitution is accepted by a society, tolerated, and considered as a necessary evil and therefore, is legalized, decriminalized, regulated or contained through different and often contradicting policies and regulations. Lebanon falls under the latter scenario. In Lebanon, prostitution is *de facto* prohibited while the industry is very present, highly visible, and constitutes a profitable local and regional tourist attraction.<sup>[1]</sup> In Lebanon, women involved in prostitution as well as facilitators of prostitution, are criminalized and could be penalized.<sup>[2]</sup> However, the prostitution industry is well established, its existence is known by everyone, including state authorities, and exploits thousands of Lebanese and foreign women every year.<sup>[3]</sup> This profitable industry often operates out of the public eye or through the use of entertainment businesses such as “Super nightclubs”<sup>[4]</sup> or “erotic” massage parlors as facades. These businesses are closely supervised by the authorities and regulated by clearly formulated administrative directives.

If prostitution is rarely questioned, the demand side, or the buyers of sexual acts, is even less so. Most of the research studies conducted in Lebanon and internationally over the past few decades have largely focused on women and girls in prostitution and on victims of sex trafficking, the sex markets and its owners, while giving rela-

[1] See Zak Brophy, “Vice, regulating Lebanon’s darker side”, *Executive Magazine*, Lebanon, August 3, 2012. Online at: <http://www.executive-magazine.com/economics-policy/vice-regulating-lebanons-darker-side>

[2] Prostitution in Lebanon is nominally legal; the 1931 Prostitution Law for Protection of Public Health regulated the licensing of brothels and “*maisons closes*” and requires women involved in these establishments to be licensed and to undergo regular health check-ups. However, in the 1970’s, the government stopped issuing licenses for new establishments, and over time most licensed establishments closed for business. As a result, all prostitution activities are in practice illegal. Article 523 of the Lebanese Penal Code, which criminalizes clandestine prostitution, is the applied law. This section states: “Anyone who repeatedly incites a person, male or female, under the age of 21 to debauchery or immoral acts, or helps and facilitates the commission of such acts, shall be sentenced to one month to one year imprisonment and a fine that ranges between the minimum wage and three times that value. Any person who practices secret prostitution or facilitates it shall face the same sentence.” Since 2011, human trafficking is also criminalized through Law No. 164 Punishment for the Crime of Trafficking in Persons of the Lebanese Penal Code.

[3] See Sigma Huda, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Mission to Lebanon*, E/CN.4/2006/62/Add., United Nations, 20 February 2006.

[4] Super Nightclubs, which are different from regular nightclubs, are entertainment institutions that are known to run prostitution activities and are solely allowed to employ foreign female workers, or “Artistes” who come to Lebanon under the “Artist Visa” scheme. Despite the fact that prostitution is illegal in Lebanon, super nightclubs are nonetheless regulated by specific directives issued by the Lebanese authorities as a way to indirectly supervise their activities. For more information refer to KAFA study on the prostitution industry (to be published in 2014).

tively modest attention to the actions of men who buy sexual acts.<sup>[5]</sup> The invisibility of the demand side in academic research and in public debate is also reflected at the policy level where governments may allow or prohibit persons, predominately women and girls, to engage in prostitution, but do not take any action against the buyers of sexual acts who are almost exclusively male. Prostitution buyers are rarely held accountable for their actions, and they benefit from impunity and non-implementation of prostitution related legislation. This is the case of Lebanon where the buying of a sexual act is not penalized.<sup>[6]</sup>

The fact is that the male demand for sexual acts constitutes the root-cause<sup>[7]</sup> or the *raison d'être* of prostitution and the trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation,<sup>[8]</sup> two phenomena that are closely linked.<sup>[9]</sup> Both prostitution and sex trafficking would not exist and would not continue to proliferate and be lucrative without men's demand for paid sexual acts.<sup>[10]</sup> Simply put, in any market, if there is no demand, there would be no supply. **Without the demand by men, there would be no supply of women for prostitution purposes, there would be no pimps or traffickers recruiting and managing women and girls to meet the varied needs of the prostitution buyers, and there would be no businesses and individuals operating nationally or trans-nationally to recruit or traffic women, eventually rendering the individuals and industry that profit from the sexual exploitation of women and girls obsolete.**

The importance of addressing the demand side in order to successfully prevent and combat human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation is recognized by international law. The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children ("UN Trafficking Protocol"), which Lebanon is signatory to, requires in Article 9 (5) States Parties to:

[5] Women and girls account for 75% of all trafficking victims. Trafficking for sexual exploitation accounts for 58% of all cases detected globally. See UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, United Nations, December 2012. Online at: [http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/Trafficking\\_in\\_Persons\\_2012\\_web.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/Trafficking_in_Persons_2012_web.pdf)

[6] Sweden was the first country to penalize buyers of sexual acts in 1999 as a way to address violence against women and sex trafficking. For more information about the Swedish model, see Gunilla S. Ekberg, *The Swedish Law that Prohibits the Purchase of Sexual Services: Best Practices for Prevention of Prostitution and Trafficking in Human Beings*, *10 Violence against Women*, 1187-1218, Sage Publications, United States, 2004.

[7] Janice G. Raymond, "Legalizing the Demand; Prostitution Buyers as Sexual Consumers", *Violence Against Women*, Vol. 10, No. 10, Sage publications, United States, October 2004, 1156-1186.

[8] For the remainder of the report, sex trafficking will refer to "trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation."

[9] On the linkages between prostitution and trafficking, see Catharine A. MacKinnon, *Trafficking, Prostitution, and Inequality*, *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review*, Vol. 46, No. 2, 271-309, Summer 2011.

[10] See Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children*, A/HRC/23/48, United Nations, 18 March 2013.

Adopt or strengthen legislative or other measures, such as educational, social or cultural measures, including through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, to *discourage the demand*<sup>[11]</sup> that fosters all forms of exploitation of persons, especially women and children, that leads to trafficking.<sup>[12]</sup>

The following study is a first attempt to explore and better understand the demand side in Lebanon where little has been written on this critical component of the prostitution industry. Studies on male buyers of sexual acts are not only rare, but when they do exist, they often deal with the health side of the subject (e.g., the spreading of HIV/AIDS, use of condoms, use of drugs.)<sup>[13]</sup> This study collects and compiles insightful data and information on male buyers in Lebanon, their motivations and rationalizations for buying sexual acts, their behavior and practices, and their gendered interactions with and perceptions about women in prostitution. The study concludes by proposing policy recommendations to tackle the demand side, and more holistically, the resulting prostitution and trafficking of victims for sexual exploitation.

[11] Emphasis added.

[12] Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, United Nations, 2000, article 9(5). Online at: [http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final\\_documents\\_2/convention\\_%20traff\\_eng.pdf](http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final_documents_2/convention_%20traff_eng.pdf)

[13] See the National Aids Control Program and the Ministry of Public Health, *A Case Study on Behavior Change among Female Sex Workers: Interventions from 2001 - 2007*, Lebanon, 2008. Online at: <http://www.moph.gov.lb/Prevention/AIDS/Documents/FSW.pdf>

**The interviews with male buyers and their content affected the personal life of the transcribers and interviewers. As one transcriber stated: "It's traumatizing... It was a very emotional and charged process... It really affected me... After doing one transcription, or two, or three, I had to go out... I got really angry, I became an angry person..." Another transcriber and interviewer said: "It was definitely affecting my life. My work life, my love life... I became less tolerant, more irritated when doing the transcriptions of interviews."**

## 2 Methodology

**For this study, 55 semi-structured interviews were conducted with male buyers who had indicated that they had bought sexual acts at least once.**<sup>[14]</sup>

Buyers of sexual acts generally constitute a hard-to-reach population. They are difficult to identify primarily because they do not form one distinct group or have a specific profile. In fact, this study, as well as recent international research studies, show that they belong to diverse socio-economic, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. Moreover, and especially when prostitution is illegal as is the case of Lebanon, prostitution-related activities happen out of sight places, hence buyers may be unwilling to reveal their actions as they are probably afraid of ending up in the spotlight.

In order to mitigate this challenge, the interviewees in the current study were recruited through the use of a hybrid technique combining Snowball Sampling and the Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS) techniques. A first set of eleven prostitution buyers were identified through contacts with business “gatekeepers”<sup>[15]</sup> or through contacts with second degree acquaintances of the research team. This set constituted “the seeds” of the sample. The eleven interviewees were then asked to refer a maximum of three new contacts each, who, if they accepted, subsequently referred another three contacts, and so on.

In total, 11 seeds and 44 referred contacts (distributed over three waves) of male buyers were interviewed. The 55 male buyers came from a diverse cross-section of religious and geographic areas, and have, at least once during their lifetime, bought a sexual act. Interviewers used a semi-structured questionnaire of more than 100 open-ended and closed questions designed to capture information about personal characteristics, attitudes, practices, motivations, perceptions, and views about prostitution and the women involved in the prostitution industry.

The survey, which was conducted in 2011, and the data gathered, was entered and analyzed using the statistical software SPSS. Qualitative data was compiled and interpreted using thematic analysis, and themes were then coded and entered on SPSS.

[14] Open-ended interviews with five additional buyers preceded the preparation and use of the questionnaire. The data obtained from these interviews was not included in the survey results, but some of the interviewees’ statements are included in the study.

[15] Examples of business keepers are taxi drivers and bar-tenders. A set of criteria was established to ensure the diversity of the seeds; such as male buyers frequenting different prostitutions venues, with different age representation, different marital status, and different religious and geographical belongings.

Some challenges were faced during the implementation of the survey. One key limitation was the inability to reach the set target of 64 interviews.<sup>[16]</sup> In many instances, buyers delayed or canceled their scheduled interviews at the last minute. In other cases, respondents referred the interviewers to false contacts. As a result, the recruitment process was interrupted at 55, which became the final sample.

While qualifying as a relatively small sample, which may not be statistically representative, the data and the findings extracted from this study do uncover important and valuable inferences and trends about men who buy sexual acts. The information provided—even by a statistically small sample—remains valuable, indicative, and rich, particularly for future research work, and also for the purpose of the development of public policies.<sup>[17]</sup>

A second important challenge involved the logistic hurdles. The vast majority of interviewees accepted that their interviews be recorded. However, buyers from foreign countries working in or visiting Lebanon, refused to have their answers recorded for fear that the recording could be used against them. This hurdle was partially overcome by the interviewer taking written notes of the main points in formal Arabic (while the conversation was carried out in spoken Arabic). Although these notes contain valuable information, part of the content and indicative quotes were lost or overlooked. Moreover, a large number of interviews were conducted in cafes, restaurants, and other public places as per the request of the interviewees, which paradoxically caused an apparent discomfort to answer sensitive questions.

It is worth noting that the interviews with male buyers and their content affected the personal life of the transcribers and interviewers.<sup>[18]</sup> As one transcriber stated: “It’s traumatizing... It was a very emotional and charged process... It really affected me... After doing one transcription, or two, or three, I had to go out... I got really angry, I became an angry person...” Another transcriber and interviewer said: “It was definitely affecting my life. My work life, my love life... I became less tolerant, more irritated when doing the transcriptions of interviews.” One interviewer was asked to conduct more interviews but refused saying: “I don’t want to hear about this study anymore, it tired me.”

[16] The estimated sample size for the study was calculated based on the following sample size calculation formula:  $n = Z_{1-\alpha/2}^2 * (pq) / d^2$ . P was set at a conservative value of 0.5 as this is an under-researched subject. For a precision of 10% and a confidence level of 95%, a sample size of 49 buyers was obtained. Accounting for a refusal rate of almost 30%, the final target sample size is set at 64.

[17] Working with a larger sample, if that was attainable, would render the results more statistically significant but not expected to alter the main conclusions. It is safe to assume that the findings, which often corroborates with international studies, could be extrapolated nationwide and are representatives. A larger Lebanese sample may alter the ranking of a factor or slightly increase or decrease a certain ratio, but it is not expected that new revelations would be uncovered that will discredit the hypothesis and the conclusions of this study.

[18] Three male interviewers and two transcribers (one woman and one man) took part of the research team.



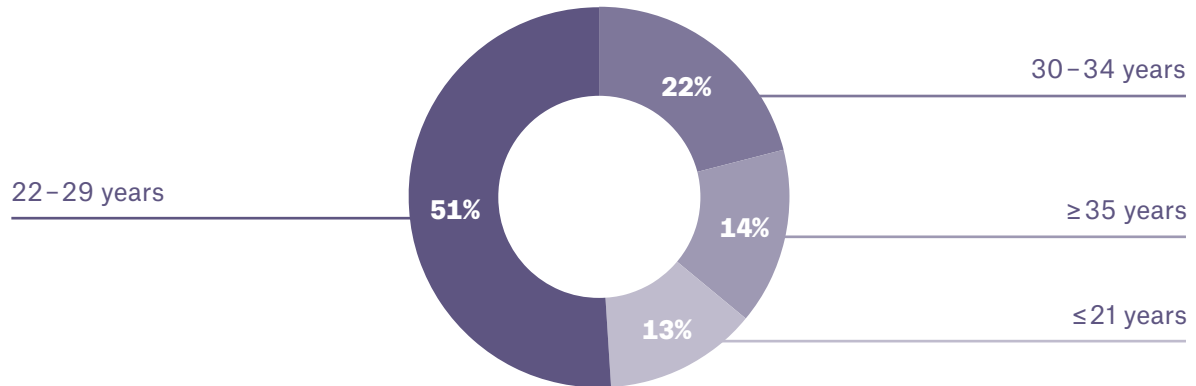
**Buyers, most of which Lebanese, had an average age of 28, and over 90% were employed with a median salary of \$1,000. Sixty percent held a high school or university degree and 67% were married or in a serious relationship.**

### 3 Demographic Findings

#### 3.1 Age

The ages of the interviewed men ranged between 18 and 44 years, with an average age of 28. A majority of the buyers were between 22 and 29 years old. This was in part due to the method of recruitment, as buyers generally referred to contacts of their own age group.

**Age Distribution of Male Buyers<sup>[19]</sup>**



#### 3.2 Nationality

Of the 55 interviewed men, 45 were Lebanese. The remaining ten interviewees held Syrian (4), Iraqi (2), Kuwaiti (2), Egyptian (1), and Qatari (1) citizenship. Most of the foreign nationals resided in Lebanon where they performed low-skilled work, while two of the men were visiting the country at the time of the interviews.

#### 3.3 Education

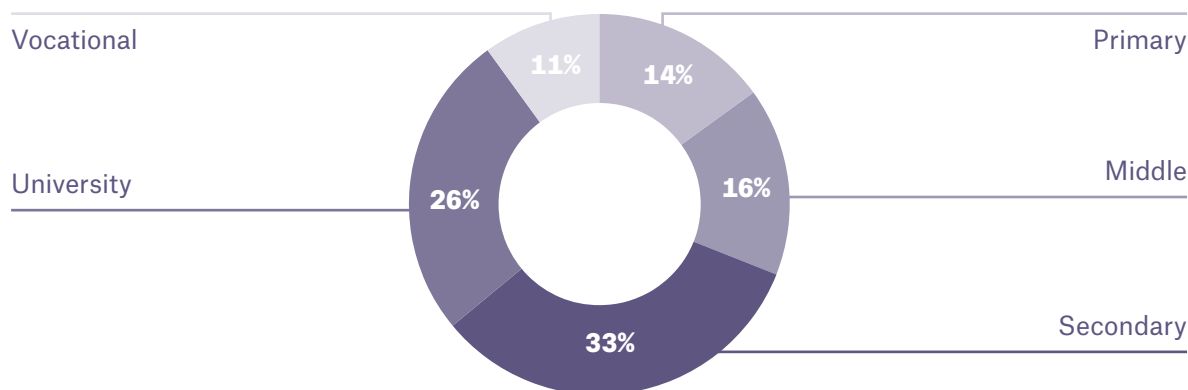
The educational background of the interviewed men varied considerably. About 70% had completed high school or higher education, and 15% had attended primary school. A quarter of the sample held a university degree.<sup>[20]</sup>

[19] In this study, all percentages are rounded up.

[20] Based on the Lebanese education system.

### — **Education Level of Male Buyers**

18



### **3.4 Employment and Individual Income**

Almost 80% of the buyers were working at the time of the interview, the rest were students, working students, or unemployed. Of the 55 men, 91% had a regular monthly income ranging from 500,000 LBP<sup>[21]</sup> (about 333 USD) to as much as 45,000,000 LBP (30,000 USD) recorded for nationals of Kuwait and Qatar. The median monthly income was 1,500,000 LBP (1,000 USD) and the average, excluding the three outliers with the exceptional high-earners from the Gulf States, was approximately 1,850,000 LBP (1,230 USD).

### **3.5 Matrimonial Status and Sexual Relations**

Twenty four percent of the interviewed men stated, at the time of the interview, that they were married, and four percent reported that they were officially engaged. Moreover, 35% mentioned that they were in a relationship, while 33% said they were single. In addition, 26% of the men reported having one or more children.

Contrary to common belief, men do not decide to buy a sexual act because they lack a sex partner. About 60% of the men in the study, or 33 buyers, reported that they had a regular sex partner at the time of the interview.<sup>[22]</sup> The remaining 22 reported that they had regular sexual relations with their wives, a sex friend or both. The majority of the men (25 out of 33) admitted hiding from their regular sex partners their paid sexual activities. These findings are consistent with international research about men who purchase sexual acts from women in prostitution. A study conducted on male sex buyers in Chicago shows that 62% of the interviewed men had a

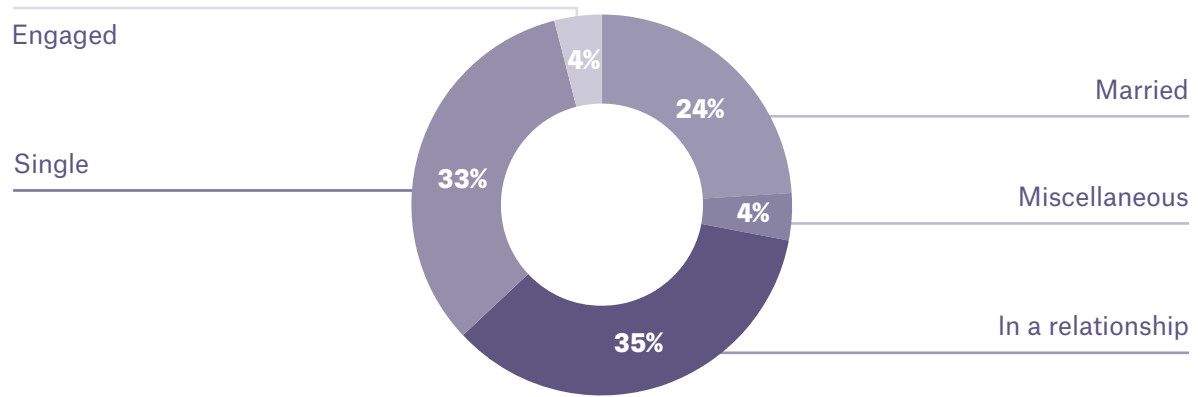
[21] Which was approximately equivalent to the minimum wage at the time when the survey was conducted in 2011. The following exchange rate is adopted throughout the study: 1,500 Lebanese Pounds (LBP)=1 USD.

[22] Among the 33 men the reported having a regular sex partner, 23 indicated that their girlfriend or "sex friend" was their sex partner, and 8 stated that their sex partner was their wife.

—  
19

regular sex partner at the time of the interview.<sup>[23]</sup> Another survey of male buyers in London, UK, reports that 54% of the interviewed men acknowledged that they were currently in a relationship.<sup>[24]</sup>

**Matrimonial Status of Buyers**



[23] Rachel Durchslag and Samir Goswami, *Deconstructing the Demand for Prostitution: Preliminary Insights from Interviews with Chicago men who Purchase Sex*, Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (May 2008), 9.

[24] Melissa Farley et al., *Men Who Buy Sex: Who They Buy and What They Know*, Eaves, London, December 2009, 9.

**When asked how many women in prostitution they had used over the course of their lives, male buyers reported numbers between 4 to 300 women with 42% reporting having used more than 50 women in their lifetime.**

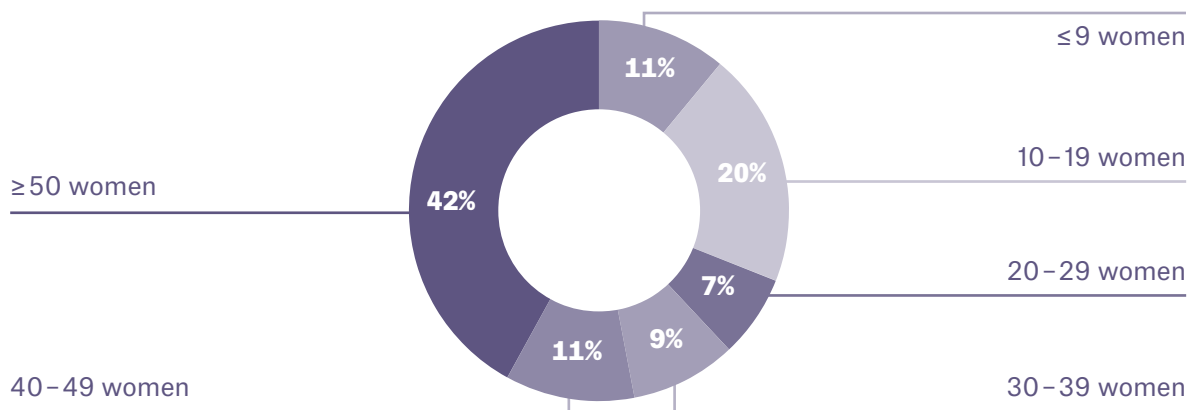
## 4 The Prostitution Act

### 4.1 Number of Women in Prostitution Used by Men

The median number of times the interviewed men paid for sex during the last twelve months preceding the interview was seven, with one man giving the answer of 110 times and more than one quarter of the buyers indicating that they had purchased a sexual act more than 15 times during the last twelve months.

When asked how many women in prostitution they had used over the course of their lives, male buyers reported numbers between four and 300 women, with 42% reporting having used more than 50 women in their lifetime.<sup>[25]</sup>

**Distribution of Buyers by the Number of Women Used in Their Lifetime**



### 4.2 Location and Venues Where Men Buy Women in Prostitution

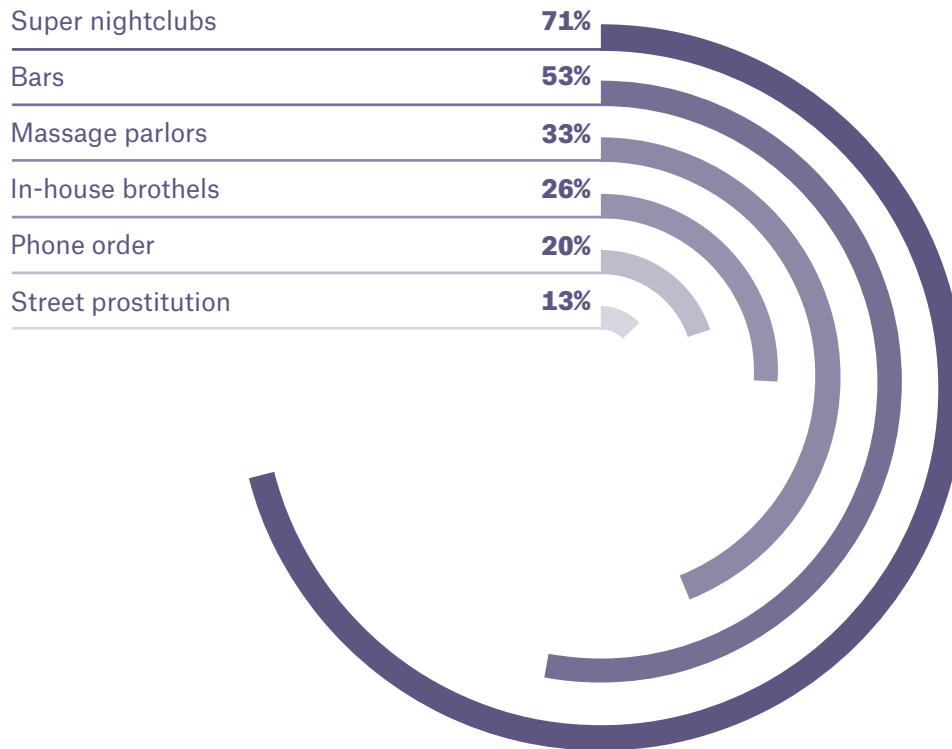
When asked about the location where men buy sexual acts, most indicated that they prefer to try several different venues and settings. The results show that Super nightclubs are the most popular venue, followed by (prostitution) bars, (prostitution) massage parlors,<sup>[26]</sup> in-house brothels, prostitution through phone order, and street prostitution.

[25] Other studies show that men had patronized women between 1 and 2000 times. However, their sample of study was bigger and interviewees were older. See Durchslag and Goswami, *Deconstructing The Demand For Prostitution*, 9; Farley Et Al., *Men Who Buy Sex*, 10.

[26] Those “Bars” and “massage parlors”, which are different from regular bars and massage parlors, are licensed to hire “barmaids” and “masseuses” and are part of the prostitution industry. Despite the fact that prostitution is illegal in Lebanon, these institutions are nonetheless regulated by specific directives issued by the Lebanese authorities as a way to indirectly supervise their activities.

## — **Frequented Locations**

22 *Multiple answers were recorded*



**Just over half of the men in the study (53%) stated that super nightclubs were their favorite venue to buy sexual acts from women in prostitution**, followed by bars (15%), house brothels (13%), and through phone delivery (11%). It is worth noting that street prostitution was mentioned by only one buyer as a preferred setting; this may be because buying women through street prostitution could be viewed as jeopardizing or degrading the self-image of the buyer.

Most men in the study preferred to frequent locations in **Jounieh, Maameltein, and Hazmieh**. This preference reflects the actual geographic distribution of prostitution venues in Lebanon as these regions have a high concentration of Super nightclubs—the preferred venue for most buyers. **Kaslik, Tabarja, Hamra, and Raoucheh** areas were the second most preferred locations.

### **4.3 Where the Act Takes Place**

For more than half of the buyers (51%), their last prostitution encounter prior to the interview took place in a hotel room. For the rest, it occurred in a room at the prostitution venue itself (22%), at the sex buyer's house (16%), or at the woman's house (4%). Despite Super nightclubs and bars being closely supervised by law enforcement agencies, some have illegal back door rooms or spaces inside the venue where the sexual act can occur during the working hours of the estab-

ishment. Although not mentioned by the interviewed buyers, the sexual act can also take place in a car in deserted areas as reported by women in prostitution or in massage parlors and in-house brothels. Prostituted women also mentioned that the act may take place in rented chalets and apartments.<sup>[27]</sup>

#### 4.4 What Do Men Pay for and How Much Do They Pay

The results show that almost all men who responded to the question on what types of sexual acts were purchased, requested fellatios as well as vaginal and/or anal sex.<sup>[28]</sup> Thirteen men (23%) did not specify any particular service, but indicated that they wanted “normal sex.”<sup>[29]</sup> In addition, 22% acknowledged having shared women in prostitution with friends or acquaintances, such as this buyer, who discussed his experiences of threesomes:

**I have done it several times. But not with just anyone, the person has to be a really good friend. Is there anything as good?** <sup>[30]</sup>

When asked whether he paid double for using the woman with his friend, the same buyer stated:

**Is it two fucks? It's one fuck; two are fucking her at the same time. I don't pay double. We pay her additional half fee or quarter fee. She actually spends the same amount of time with us.**

The responses of the interviewed buyers indicate that the fees of the sexual act are not fixed, but vary largely depending upon the location or prostitution venue, the terms of negotiation, whether there is an intermediary facilitating the contact between the woman and the buyer, the time of day, and the type of sexual act purchased. The price paid by the buyers at the last encounter they had prior to the interview varied between 40,000 LBP to 675,000 LBP (about 26 USD to 450 USD with a median price of 150,000 LBP or 100 USD). They reported that the price often included the pre-negotiated fees such as the price of the champagne or drinks in Super nightclubs and bars, the amount paid to the pimp, the price of the rental of a chalet or a hotel room, and/or the fees accompanying the encounter (such as lunch). In fact, interviewed women in street prostitution stated a similar range of prices from 20,000 LBP to more than 150,000 LBP (about 13 USD to 100 USD).

[27] Taken from interviews with women in street prostitution conducted by KAFA (to be published in 2014).

[28] To avoid erotizing the interview, the questionnaire contained only one question about the types of sexual acts requested during the last encounter of the interviewee with a woman in prostitution.

[29] It is not clear from the interviews how buyers define “normal sex”.

[30] These statements are taken from an open-ended interview with a male buyer, which was recorded as part of producing a documentary on prostitution in Lebanon for KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation, 2014.



**“From their look they seem happy. You feel they are happy, they dance and drink... but maybe if you look deep inside, it’s something else, another world. They don’t own themselves at all.”**

**“I know that I have paid her price, I want to sleep with her and that’s it.”**

**“I don’t care if she was beaten. I just care about my pleasure.”**

## 5 Men's Awareness of the Harms of Prostitution

The majority of interviewed men expressed varying degrees of awareness that women in prostitution are exposed to exploitation and violence.<sup>[31]</sup> Forty percent of the men recognized that women in prostitution are unhappy with what they are doing, while about 35% stated that some women were happy while others were not. Buyers also expressed varying degrees of awareness of pimping and trafficking of women into prostitution which are crimes punishable under Lebanese law. The statements of these two buyers reflect this awareness and the lack of choice and unhappiness of women in prostitution:

**I never asked but of course there is no woman who would be happy doing this. Usually, there is a man who makes them work and you know that the man is usually tough, yelling at her and mistreating her.**

21 year-old student, in a relationship

**No one likes slavery and exploitation.**

29 year-old married man with children, university graduate

### 5.1 Awareness of Women's Socio-Economic Vulnerabilities

When asked about why they think women enter prostitution, **80% of the interviewed men mentioned poor socio-economic conditions and the need for money as the most important reasons for why women enter prostitution.**

One man observed:

**So they can make money, poverty for sure is a factor, there may be other reasons; maybe she couldn't find work so she had to work in this profession.**

32 year-old man in a relationship, middle school education

Besides living in poverty and the need for money, buyers acknowledged that abuse in childhood and domestic violence could force women to enter prostitution. When asked about foreign women involved in Super nightclub prostitution, one man mentioned that women may enter into prostitution both for economic reasons, and because of a history of abuse:

[31] For the harms of prostitution, see Melissa Farley, et al., "Prostitution and Trafficking in Nine Countries: An Update on Violence and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder," *Journal of Trauma Practice*, 2: 3, 2004, 33-74. See also KAFA study on the prostitution industry and the women in prostitution (to be published in 2014).

**There is no work in her country and sometimes her social conditions are difficult. Many of them were raped when they were young.**

28 year-old university graduate, single

## 5.2 Awareness of Trafficking in Persons

Five men suggested that women enter prostitution because they might have been deceived about the nature of work, such as being promised a job in a Super night-club as a waitress, but then being used by a trafficker and becoming victim of trafficking. As stated by this buyer:

**Many of them don't come to work like this. There are people who promise them work abroad, for example, 'You can come to study' but instead they force them to work. Many of them come as virgins, losing their virginity here.**

25 year-old man in a relationship, university graduate

The awareness that women in prostitution are victims of human trafficking did not seem to affect the behavior of the buyers. One man states that:

**For some of them, circumstances force them [to enter prostitution] and for some, they come to work as something else, but it turns out to be prostitution...They talk a lot, but you don't want to listen.**

30 year-old married man with children, secondary school education

## 5.3 Awareness of Pimping

The vast majority of the interviewed men were aware that women in prostitution do not act alone, but that they are sold for prostitution purposes by their pimp.<sup>[32]</sup> When asked to describe the last sexual encounter with a woman in prostitution prior to the interview, **82% of the buyers reported that they understood that the woman was under the control of a pimp, and 73% (or 40 buyers) stated that they had direct interaction with the pimp.** Of these 40 buyers, 22 used the woman without paying her (their payment was made directly to the pimp), while 11 paid the pimp as well as the woman.

The primary role of a pimp is to facilitate contact between a buyer and a woman, negotiate the price, the types of services requested, and decide the conditions and

[32] For this study the word pimp refers to individuals (both men and in some cases women) who facilitate the prostitution of women. The pimp could be a manager, supervisor or owner of the prostitution venue or setting. When the pimp is a woman, it is very often the case that she has been, in the past, exploited by a pimp.

the time allowed for the man to use the woman. In the following account, a buyer describes this process:

**I contact [the pimp] on the phone saying that I want a pretty girl and he says to me: “I have five girls, I will bring them to you and you can choose the one you want” [...] he comes in his car, he turns the light on and I pick the girl I want. If for example, I want her for an hour, he will ask for 150 USD, I pay him and I take her [...] she gets paid from him.**

34 year-old married man with children, middle school education

#### 5.4 Awareness of Exploitation and Violence

**Sixty-one percent of the interviewed men reported that they were aware of the exploitative conditions that women are subjected to as a result of being in prostitution.** A considerable number of men mentioned economic exploitation by the pimp as well as by the men who use the women (15 buyers). Some men mentioned that women in prostitution are bought and used by the man and, therefore, are subjected to all his demands (9 buyers). Other men noted that women in prostitution are also victims of slavery or are forced into prostitution, and that their freedom is restricted (8 buyers). One man observed that:

**The bar owner financially benefits from her, he is exploiting her [...] I am exploiting her because she is pleasuring me the way I want, and she does what I want. Maybe there are some things she does not like to do but she has to do them because of the money she is receiving.**

27 year-old divorced man, university graduate

The account of this buyer also clearly demonstrates the ways in which women's vulnerability can be exploited to the advantage of the pimp as well as of the buyer:

**Of course, those who are in need are victims of exploitation. If it is known that she needs money, then she will be treated differently, they would make her do what they want, they would make her work what they want and for the price they want and the client cannot be unsatisfied. For example, when the client finishes having sex with her and he goes to the bar, they ask him if she was good or bad...he cannot be unsatisfied, she has to fulfill all his desires.**

32 year-old in a relationship, primary school education

Men also spoke about women in prostitution as being victims of threats and blackmail,<sup>[33]</sup> theft, emotional exploitation, deception, and starvation. This buyer describes the ways in which a woman involved in phone delivery prostitution can be threatened if she tries to work independently:

**For those who are in delivery prostitution, if one of them wanted to leave her pimp and work as a freelancer, the man [i.e. the pimp] would report her to the police; he would give money to the police to act as he wishes. He could threaten her or send somebody to harm her. There are hundreds of ways.**

34 year-old married man, middle school education

Along the same line, this man explains:

**When she is in the super night, [...] the person who is making her work, forces her to do things, he enslaves her, he takes away her passport, he takes away her freedom of movement, he imposes on her this thing, he threatens her, he shames her.**

23 year-old man in a relationship, university graduate

Men also stated that women in prostitution were forced to take drugs and “have sex” in exchange for favors or “have sex” with their pimps or supervisors. One buyer stated that:

**Women are exploited by the owner of the venue. If he wants to provide a service to somebody or ask a favor from somebody, he sends him a woman. The owners of the company where women are working exploit them. All of them, owners, managers, and employees [exploit women].**

30 year-old married man with children, secondary school education

Several men described noticing signs of physical violence on the bodies of the women they purchased: “Her body was covered in marks, it seemed that it had been the first time for this man or he was criminal...I asked her and she told me he was crazy and a beast.” Similarly, another buyer noted that:

[33] Such as filming the woman during the sexual act and then threatening to disclose the video.

**The last one I was with was blue all over. She told me that two young men came and took her and her friend and they acted like children and they seemed to have taken pills to last longer, and they had sex with them until they escaped from the room. I think [the women] were bitten.**

30 year-old single man, university graduate

Despite the fact that men were aware that women in prostitution often are subjected to sexual, physical and/or economic exploitation, namely by pimps and male buyers, this understanding did not result in a behavioral change. Eleven of the interviewed men reported that they had used a woman in prostitution with visible signs of physical and/or sexual violence, while only one man refrained from engaging in a sexual act.

Men justified their conduct by the mere fact that they had paid money for the sexual act, as highlighted by this man, who stated that:

**I know that I have paid her price, I want to sleep with her and that's it.**

27 year-old married man, middle school education

Another buyer stated that he only thinks about his pleasure:

**I don't care if she was beaten. I just care about my pleasure.**

30 year-old married man with children,  
secondary school education

The buyer who was with the woman with blues all over her body, refused all responsibility for his actions by claiming that:

**If somebody broke the pinball or poker machine the day before, it wouldn't stop you from playing poker again.**

30 year-old single man, university graduate

**“... it is a basic necessity just like food and water”**

**“It’s something easy to access, you go, you pay, you do it and you leave”**

**“A man doesn’t want to eat moujaddara every day, he wants chicken too”**

## 6 Men's Justifications for Using Women in Prostitution

During the interviews, men were asked about the reasons why they buy sexual acts, what brought them to buy sexual acts the first time, and what made them continue to buy women for prostitution purposes. By and large, interviewees provided similar responses to the three questions:

### 6.1 It's a "Natural Right"

**Men justified using women in prostitution as a means to fulfill their sexual desires and needs.** When asked why they purchase a sexual act, more than half of the men (53%) said it was to satisfy their sexual drive or instinct. This result is comparable to other studies on the prostitution behavior of men,<sup>[34]</sup> and indicates that understandings of male desire and masculinity are similar across cultures.

The reasons and justifications stated by the buyers reflect their perceptions of male entitlement, normalization of abuse through prostitution, and an (false) understanding of the male sexual drive as a biological imperative.

The assumption that using women in prostitution fulfills male desires and needs falls within the biological theory which is one of the oldest and most commonly accepted explanation of men's demand for prostitution.<sup>[35]</sup> According to this theory, having sex is a biological imperative and the greater male sex drive is seen as instinctive and uncontrollable as the need for food and water.<sup>[36]</sup> Buying sexual acts helps alleviate this need, which reinforces the normalization of prostitution. Indeed, the statements of men interviewed for this study indicate clearly that having sex was perceived as natural, and as a biological imperative, which men cannot live without. Or as one man stated, **"God has granted the sexual impulse to men."** Other sex buyers claimed that this is how **"the nature of men is constituted"** and that **"it cannot be overcome because it is a basic necessity just 'like food and water'."**

[34] See Jan Macleod et al., *Challenging Men's Demand for Prostitution in Scotland, A Research Report Based on Interviews with 110 Men Who Bought Women in Prostitution*, Women's Support Project, 2008, 19; Farley et al., *Men Who Buy Sex*, 20.

[35] Katri Eespere, *The Hidden Side of Prostitution: Sex Buyers Speak*, Social Policy Information and Analysis Department, Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Estonia, 2007, 9.

[36] Ibid; Hanny Ben-Israel and Nomi Levenkron, *The Missing Factor. Clients of Trafficked Women in Israel's Sex Industry*, the Hot-line for Migrant Workers, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, 2005, 18. Also see Margaret Jackson, "Sex Research and the Construction of Sexuality: A Tool of Male Supremacy?", *Women's Studies Int. Forum*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1984, 43-51. According to Jackson, "The analogy is consistently made between the sexual appetite and hunger, and even though it is usually qualified by the admission that indefinite abstinence from sex does not have quite the same disastrous consequences as indefinite abstinence from food, the repetitious use of the analogy seems calculated to imply that the consequences of sexual abstinence might be equally disastrous."



***Justifications for Using Women in Prostitution as Stated by Male Buyers***

*Multiple answers were recorded*

Sexual drive/Need/Instinct

---

No current sex partner/Living far from partner

---

Seeking variety

---

For leisure/Entertainment

---

Peer pressure/Encouragement

---

Addiction/Hobby

---

Don't want to commit

---

Doing acts i can't do with partner

---

To avoid masturbation

---

Convenient/Easy

---

Curiosity/Want to experiment

---

Pleasure from first paid experience

---

Improve the impression left by the first paid experience

---

Improve sexual performance/Relationships with women

---

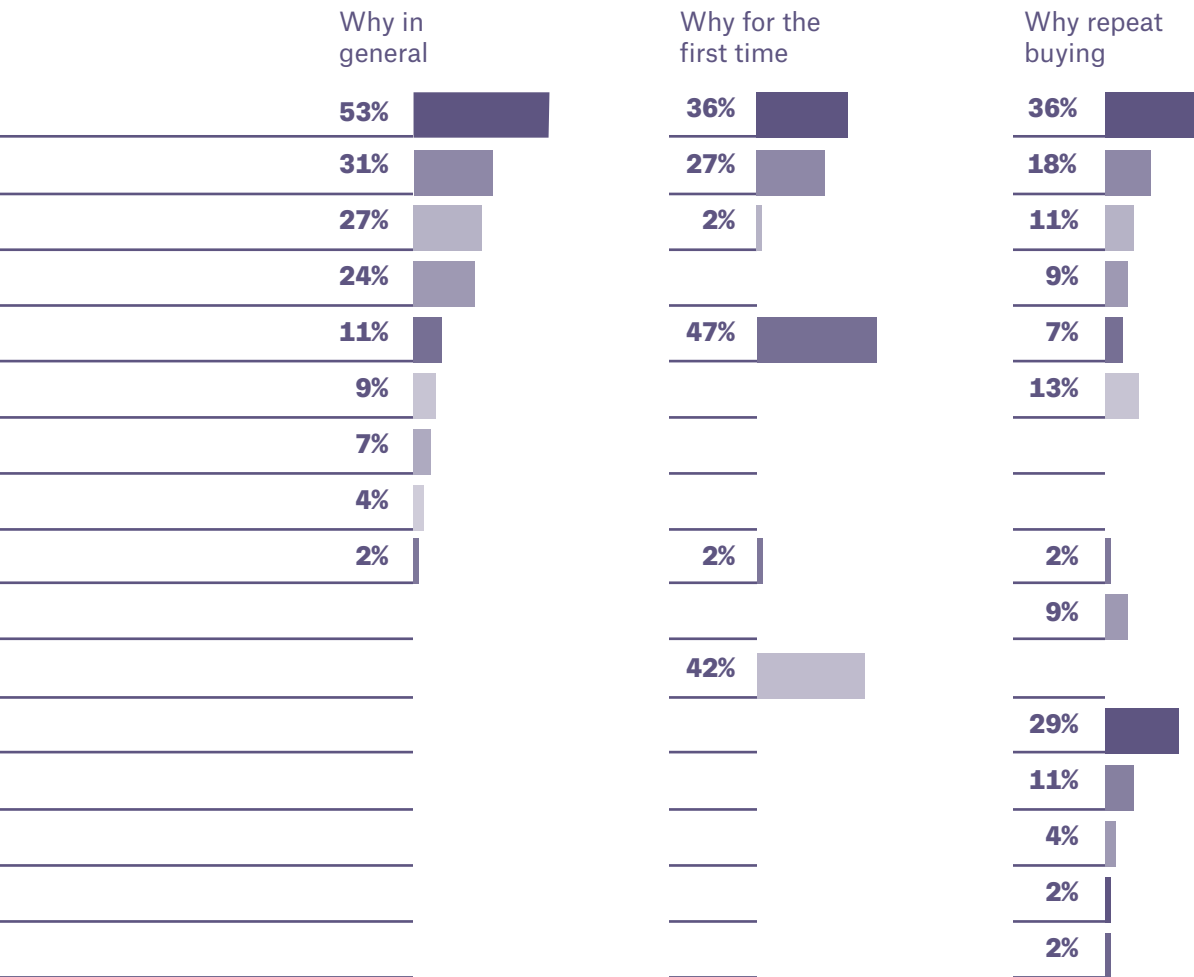
Take revenge on women

---

Need for affection

---

—



Interviewed buyers perceived the need for sex as a **biological imperative for men**, thus their perceived need for **constant access to sex** was another justification for buying and exploiting women in prostitution. Thirty-one percent of the men stated that they purchased a sexual act because they did not have a partner or their partner was geographically distant. Notably, in at least four interviews, the buyers actually referred to the unavailability of their partner to have sex at the precise moment when they felt the sexual urge, rather than that they did not have a partner at all. One man acknowledged that sex is “something in the blood,” and despite another, have multiple partners, pays for sexual acts because, “those who I usually have sex with are busy.”

Despite its popularity among the interviewed men, the biological needs theory is questionable, and has been contested by research based on theories of social constructivism.<sup>[37]</sup> Some researchers reject the natural pre-determinism argument, noting that the male sexual drive can be controlled. Even some studies that claim that men have a greater sex drive than women, most likely as a result of both biological and cultural influences, conclude that:

The difference in sex drive should not be used to justify coercive or exploitative behavior. Men may not be able to prevent themselves from desiring sex... but they can prevent themselves from acting on those desires.<sup>[38]</sup>

The demand for prostitution is a negative social construction based on society’s and individual men’s perceptions of masculinity and male sexuality, which falsely promotes the idea that men have a greater sexual drive, that their “need” for sex is instinctual, urgent, and requires immediate gratification.<sup>[39]</sup>

## 6.2 It Is Easy and Convenient

Interviewed male buyers believe that buying sexual acts is easy, convenient, and accessible. Although not explicitly stated by the men as a primary reason, **almost 100% of the interviewed male buyers of sexual acts (53 out of 55) approved of the statement: “Buying sex is easier and more convenient than having a relationship with women not in prostitution.”**

Moreover, many of the interviewed men acknowledged that by “paying for sex” they could avoid the hassle of dating and the constraints of commitment. They reported

[37] Ibid, 46; Also see Steven Seidman, *The Social Construction of Sexuality*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003. According to Seidman, feminists such as Rich and Mackinnon see sex as fundamentally social and political and that sexuality reveals men’s wish for control and dominance.

[38] Roy F. Baumeister et al., “Is There a Gender Difference in Strength of Sex Drive? Theoretical Views, Conceptual Distinctions, and a Review of Relevant Evidence”, *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 2001, 264.

[39] Ben-Israel and Levenkron, *The Missing Factor*, 18.

that they look for a relationship that ends once the sexual act ends. As these two buyers put it:

**It's something easy to access, you go, you pay, you receive and you leave. Not like I have to both-er and make an appointment with my girlfriend... I want to see you, are you able or not... The other is available all the time.**

32 year-old man in a relationship, primary school education

**You go have sex and pay money so you don't trouble yourself to get to know a girl, make an effort, and take her out.**

32 year-old man in a relationship, middle school education

Many of the buyers noted that it is easy to find and access prostitution premises. One buyer was initially apprehensive about accessing a prostitution bar as adolescent because, according to the law, only adults have the right to frequent such venues. But after his first successful attempt, he realized that it was simple and risk free:

**It was easy even though I was scared. I used to hear that [buying sexual acts] for men who are below 17 or 20-21 years old was something prohibited... But I found it was very easy.**

27 year-old divorced man, university graduate

Five other men in the study also reported that ease of access led them to repeat the first experience of buying sexual acts.

**The large prostitution industry in Lebanon offers a vast array of choices for male buyers.** They are provided with a number of "shopping-for-sex" facilities all over Lebanon that cater to every preference and taste. The buyer can select a specific venue, setting, and woman depending on his taste, fantasies, and the experience he is looking for. Those men who look for a quick fix often prefer to purchase women in bars, massage parlors, and in-house brothels. According to one buyer, and unlike in a Super nightclub, "The sex in the bar is guaranteed. You go and it only takes half an hour; you pay half the amount, and you go and enjoy the moment."

Another regular buyer preferred house brothels because "it is easier to reach and easier to deal with [...] At a brothel you knock, you pay, and you have sex with her."

Those men who want to have “a good time” and use a woman for a “longer period” generally prefer to access women in prostitution through phone order or in Super nightclubs. As one man explains:

**At a super night you open a bottle of champagne and the next day the owner of the club gives her [the woman] to you and you stay with her the entire day.**

27 year-old divorced man, university graduate

Another buyer preferred ordering women through phone delivery because:

**You can take your time; for example, instead of fucking for only 15 or 30 minutes and then leaving, you can stay with her until morning, get drunk and fuck and no one can tell you anything.**

32 year-old man in a relationship, middle school education

If a man does not find what he is looking for in one venue, other options are always available and accessible, as the fees vary and can accommodate every budget from “cheap sex” to high-end prostitution premises. One man explained that:

**If you don't like what you see in one place, you can go to the place next door, and the next and the next.**

29 year-old engaged man, university graduate

In addition to the ease, convenience, and accessibility of paid sex, another motive is that men buying sexual acts are not penalized. While women are arrested if caught involved in a prostitution activity, buyers usually are considered as witnesses and remain free.<sup>[40]</sup>

Moreover, the prostitution industry in Lebanon is so widespread, normalized, and easily accessible that it appears to be legal<sup>[41]</sup>. Many interviewed buyers did not have any knowledge about the prostitution laws in Lebanon. While the majority of buyers (78%) correctly stated that the client is not penalized for buying sexual acts, 62% of the total number of buyers erroneously believed that prostitution is legal in Lebanon. In addition, 55% of the men assumed that women are not infringing any laws by being involved in prostitution.

[40] Nizar Saghieh and Ghida Frangieh, *Prostitution, a Moral Crime or a Crime of Exploitation: A legal Analysis of 228 Cases of Women Arrested for Prostitution Crimes*, KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation, 2013, 57 (in Arabic language).

[41] By examining articles in the press, the vagueness on the legality of prostitution is observed as some articles consider prostitution legal in Lebanon while others do not. For more information refer to KAFA study on the prostitution industry (to be published in 2014).

### 6.3 Seeking Variety

Twenty-seven percent of the interviewed men stated that they pay for sexual acts because they are looking for variety in the choice of women. As one buyer put it: "To change taste... for difference, for variety." Another interviewed man noted that **"Change is nice - you wouldn't want the same thing every day, you would get bored."** Married buyers also seek variety:

**The married man does not sleep with his wife every-day; he will surely sleep with other women. A man doesn't want to eat mujaddara<sup>[42]</sup> every day, he wants chicken too.**

28 year-old man in a relationship, primary school education

One of the most common reported reasons by the interviewed men for choosing a particular prostitution venue is the wide availability, choice, and variety of women. This is the case in many forms of prostitution, but interviewees specifically mentioned Super nightclubs where a buyer can pick a woman from a relatively large pool of nationalities.

Buyers also described specific images and fantasies which shape their choice of women in prostitution. Buyers always look for specific pre-defined characteristics regarding the nationality, ethnicity, and appearance of the prostituted woman. Almost half of the interviewed men emphasized that the nationality of the woman is an important factor when they decide to purchase a sexual act.

The interviewed men identified fifteen nationalities and two ethnic groups as their preferences, including Lebanese, Moroccan, Syrian, Russian, and Ukrainian women. It is clear that in the context of prostitution, men eroticize and racialize nationality and ethnicity and associate them with sexual stereotypes. One man acknowledged that he likes Romanians and Africans because:

**They are wild, they come hot. The Romanian makes you feel good. She has a fucking way to do sex. The African is similar; she gives you many good positions.**

32 year-old man in a relationship, middle school education

Another buyer who likes Ethiopian women because of their "black color and they are hot" and Tunisian women because they are "very good in these [sex] matters".

It is worth noting that **78% of the interviewees preferred Lebanese and other Arab women because, among other reasons, "these women speak Arabic and it is easy to communicate with them."** One buyer had a preference for Lebanese women because:

[42] Lebanese vegetarian dish made of lentils.

**I usually like the local production. I like the Lebanese girl; I feel she is wild and I can understand her language and so.**

20 year-old man in a relationship, middle school education

For some men, the nationality of the woman indicates whether she is beautiful or has other desirable features, as highlighted by this buyer who likes Russian women because of their:

**[...] Skin and beauty. And in sex, they are perfect. None of them makes you unhappy. And they are hygienic; this is the most important thing.**

25 year-old man in a relationship, secondary school education

The vast majority of the buyers made very emphatic statements about which ethnicity/nationality they were or were not attracted to. Overtly racist comments were common. Some men indicated that they were not attracted to women from the Philippines because “they are small” or to Africans because “they have dark skin” or to Sri Lankan women because “they are disgusting, they smell like bleach<sup>[43]</sup>” or to Tunisians and Moroccans because “they are disgusting, their skin is dirty, their skin feels like sand paper” and because “they are hairy.”

Men juxtaposed socio-economic class, ethnicity, and nationality of women to create a hierarchy in which some women were perceived to be of a higher class and racially superior, while others were perceived to be of a lower class and racially inferior. This hierarchy varied according to each buyer, whose preferences clearly are shaped by personal experiences and perceptions as well as by common prejudices in Lebanese society, as illustrated by this man:

**If you see a dark skinned woman and someone tells you she is Ethiopian and there is another dark skinned woman and she is Colombian, you would pick the Colombian, or if there are two blond women and one is from Uzbekistan and the other is Russian, you would pick the Russian.**

30 year-old single man, university graduate

In addition to racist stereotypes about nationality, buyers based their selection of women in prostitution on a set of characteristics mainly related to the physical features of these women. For example, one buyer wanted women who are “dark skinned and have a coca cola body shape. A good product.” Other men noted that they preferred women who have “a nice body, be clean, and free of physical

[43] Bleach in reference to Sri Lankan domestic workers in Lebanon who are employed to do cleaning tasks.

impairments,” or must be “tall, with big breasts, not be fat, have a good body and long hair.”

The wish for variety also applies to the prostitution act itself. A couple of men emphasized that they buy sexual services because this will allow them to perform sexual acts that they cannot do with their wives or partners. One man admitted that:

**My wife... she is the mother of my children and I respect her, and I don't think she would accept [to perform such acts.]**

39 year-old married man with children, university graduate

Another buyer said that sex with his wife became boring and that “she doesn't know much about sex as do women in prostitution who perform more pleasurable acts.” Moreover, three men reported buying a sexual act to avoid masturbating, as this practice is “strongly forbidden by religion.”<sup>[44]</sup> Here again, men's sexuality appears to be socially constructed, in this case shaped by religious beliefs.

#### 6.4 Seeking Leisure and Entertainment

In addition to the wish for variety in the selection of women and the sexual act, more than 20% of the interviewed men saw the buying of sexual acts as a leisure activity. The buying of a sexual act does not only fulfill a sexual need in this case, but is also a quest for a “fun” and entertaining experience.

Some of the buyers preferred a particular prostitution setting because it allowed them to spend a longer time with the prostituted woman or because the sexual act is preceded by social and entertainment activities. For instance, the mode of operation in the Super nightclubs,<sup>[45]</sup> allows the buyer to have “fun” in addition to enjoying the sexual act. Several buyers preferred to visit Super nightclubs because “one can spend the evening with the woman and have fun, you open a bottle for her and the next day you go with her to the hotel.” Or as another man said:

**In a super nightclub... there's a show, the body of the women is exposed and they do strip tease. While in the bar, things are very quick, it is like going to a supermarket.**

33 year-old single man, university graduate

[44] The majority (69%) of the interviewed men were Muslims, with Christians making up the remaining of the sample (25%). Three men preferred not to share their religious affiliation. When asked whether they practiced their religious rites, 24 out of the 55 interviewees answered in the affirmative.

[45] i.e., the dancing or striptease performed by the women, as well as the ritual of picking a woman, opening a bottle of champagne and sitting with her for an hour and a half, then picking her up the next day or later for a longer time. For more information refer to KAFA study on the prostitution industry (to be published in 2014).



It appeared from the statements of the interviewed men that some perceived the purchase of a sexual act as a sort of dating experience with women in prostitution. These buyers sought companionship in addition to the sexual act. According to one buyer, being with Russian and Ukrainian women:

**[...] Is like really sitting with your girlfriend. She doesn't make you feel that you have to have sex and leave.**

24 year-old single man, university graduate

Speaking about Russian and Moldavian women in Lebanon, another buyer reported:

**[Going out with] a foreign girl to a restaurant, she does not embarrass you. She will look like she works in a cabaret, but she will be more presentable [than women from other nationalities].**

37 year-old single man, middle school education

Some men spoke about their wish to spend “the day with a pretty woman who is presentable, cute, well made, and sexy.” Other interviewed men underlined that they want a woman who has a certain way of thinking: “I will not have sex with a woman if I dislike her way of thinking; I need to talk to her.” Several men expressed a preference for the women they purchase not to look or behave like women in prostitution. One man emphasized that “She has to be a sex master, an expert. She has to give me pleasure, and not look like a prostitute,” while another man required of the woman in prostitution “to treat him with tenderness as if she had not been paid money.”

However, while they pretend that the woman is their girlfriend, **several men were very aware that women in prostitution “act” and are not sincere in their feelings.** Some men were aware that prostituted women fake pleasure and happiness. As described by one man, who believes that:

**[T]here is no prostitute who will give you what you want from her heart. She screams and does other things but it's all a lie.**

33 year-old single man, university graduate

Another buyer noted that:

**[W]omen in prostitution fool you into thinking they are enjoying themselves. But no, they work [in prostitution] just so they can live. They fool you into believing she is enjoying herself so you become satisfied.**

27-year-old, in a relationship, middle school education

This is reflected in the interviews with women in street prostitution who use their agency to develop tactics such as faking sexual pleasure so that the men finish the sexual act more quickly.<sup>[46]</sup> However, despite their awareness that women fake their feelings, men patronize women in prostitution because, as one buyer acknowledges that “Sexual instinct is strong and controls a man’s actions at times,” regardless of whether or not the woman is pretending to have pleasure.

### 6.5 Sexual Discovery and Experimentation

Curiosity is another reason given by men to use women in prostitution, particularly for the first paid sexual experience and for adolescents and teenagers. **About 42% of the interviewed men reported that they purchased a sexual act for the first time because they wanted to discover what prostitution was about and to experiment buying and using women in prostitution,** as stated by these two buyers:

**I am like everyone else in this world. A young man...A young man like me wants to do everything in this world, so the first thing he does is fuck, get drunk, buy women.**

27 year-old man in a relationship, middle school education

**I wanted to experience buying prostitutes and having sex with someone other than my wife. My friends were with me and they advised me to try it.**

39 year-old married man with children, university graduate

The fantasies and sexual imagery that pornography and prostitution generates in men may be at the source of this curiosity. For Sven-Axel Månsson, a Swedish professor in social work and academic researcher, one of the motives for buying a sexual act is the “dirty whore fantasy.” According to Månsson, many men are keen to come in contact with a woman in prostitution at least once in their lifetime. They are aroused and excited by the image of the “dirty whore” who makes herself available and ready for men.<sup>[47]</sup>

### 6.6 Shaping of Male Sexuality and Peer Pressure

For many of the interviewed men, buying a sexual act constituted a rite of passage from adolescence to adulthood. **For almost half of the interviewees (49%), the first time they had sexual intercourse, it was with a woman in prostitution.** Many of the interviewed men were very young when they first bought a sexual act;

[46] Interviews with women in prostitution show that they develop self-defense mechanisms and protection tactics to avoid the dangers of prostitution. For more information refer to Kafa study on the prostitution industry (to be published in 2014).

[47] Sven-Axel Månsson, “Men’s Practices in Prostitution and Their Implications for Social Work,” *Social Work in Cuba and Sweden: Achievements and Prospects*, eds: Sven-Axel Månsson and Clotilde Proveyer Cervantes, 2004.

Forty four percent were under the age of 18; of these, 15% were 15 years old or younger. As expressed by some men, buying a sexual act for the first time made them feel “manly” (11%) and/or gave them a sense of accomplishment and regeneration (13%). This is well illustrated by one buyer whose first sexual experience was with a woman in prostitution, and who stated that this experience helped him establish his status as an adult man:

**You feel that you did something good. You’re a man now. Look at me, I became a man. I am not a virgin anymore, I grew up from adolescence [...] This is something you keep thinking of, it makes you happy.**

27 year-old man in a relationship, middle school education

Peer pressure also plays a role in why young men decide to use women in prostitution, particularly the first time. **Almost half of the interviewed men (47%) stated that the first paid encounter was the result of peer pressure or encouragement by friends or family**, as noted by these buyers:

**When guys are together doing nothing, one of the guys would suggest something, everybody then gets excited... you feel pressured to go.**

23 year-old man in a relationship, university graduate

**I used to have friends older than me and they used to go [to prostitution venues] and I went with them. They made me excited and convinced me to go.**

30 year-old married man with children, secondary school education

When asked about the first time the interviewed men purchased a sexual act and about the social circumstances in which they did so, in **the case of 64% of the buyers, the first purchase of a woman in prostitution was either arranged by friends or sometimes by male family members**. In addition, the vast majority of interviewed men were not alone when they first used a woman in prostitution. In the study, 77% of the buyers reported that friends accompanied them, while five percent were accompanied by family members (such as a brother, uncle or a cousin). One man described how an uncle initiated him in purchasing sexual acts:

**I felt a bit timid and unable to get sex anytime, so my uncle was paying for sex, he took me with him to his house and brought two girls.**

33 year-old married man with children, university graduate

In addition to being a rite of passage to adulthood, the study shows that the first experience in buying a sexual act can be a common form of **male-to-male socialization** or a **male bonding experience**, often taking place during a peer group-outing. Some men noted that buying and using a woman in prostitution was also a way to prove to the peer group that they were “**real men**”:

**I went out (of the room) and I was embarrassed to tell what happened inside. They [friends] asked me what did you do, and I told them to ask her, she will tell you if I am a man or not. Deep down I felt stupid but I told myself it's your first time. I was afraid that they would think that I am not a real man and that I was lured.**

34 year-old married man with children, secondary education

This finding is in line with other research studies on male buyers. For example, a recent in-depth study on male buyers in London in the United Kingdom found that male bonding and peer pressure was one of the reasons stated for purchasing a sexual act.<sup>[48]</sup>

Men surveyed in Lebanon were asked about their feelings after the first experience of buying a woman in prostitution. Their answers indicate a variety of impressions, and sometimes contradicting feelings. **While a number of men reported feelings of accomplishment, virility, contentment or pleasure, for a large group of the interviewed men, the first experience left them with negative feelings.** Rather than deterring men from using women in prostitution, these negative feelings pushed some of the men in the study to buy a sexual service a second time, in order to erase the bad experience they had the first time (11%). Negative feelings reported by buyers included feelings of disgust (9%), disappointment (36%) and/or regret (31%).

Some men reported being **disgusted** by the experience and particularly by the woman. One buyer reported that:

**[I felt] disgust. I did not even feel like touching the girl when I finished with her.**

28 year-old single man, secondary school education

[48] Farley et al., *Men Who Buy Sex*, Table 7, 21.

Another man shared a similar feeling of disgust:

**I felt happy that I had sex, but I felt disgusted by the idea of paying money for sex. At the end, you enter the bar for a quick 15 minutes and you feel disgusted kissing her.**

31 year-old man in a relationship, vocational school graduate

Feelings of **disappointment** were often generated by the fact that the men had preconceived ideas about paid sexual acts (or sex in general). Indeed, the reality of the first experience seldom matched these fantasies, as expressed by a couple of men in the study:

**I felt that it is manly but the result is the same, it does not differ from masturbating, and I felt a bit of regret at the end.**

29 year-old married man with children, university graduate

**It is strange. It did not match my expectations of what I see in movies.**

25 year-old single man, primary school education

**I felt strange. It is not worth all this quest and greatness we think of.**

26 year-old single man, secondary school education

The study indicates that some men may regret buying sexual services, not because of a particular concern for the women in prostitution, but rather because they are not getting the expected value for their money. Most of the men who expressed regret related this feeling, not to the experience itself, but to the payment of money. According to one buyer, "I felt remorse. I regretted paying money; I thought that my wife and family have more right to it." Other men regretted paying a substantial sum of money for a pleasure that lasted only a few minutes:

**I threw away 50-60 thousands LBP for 5-10 minutes. I did not enjoy it, it is something I loved and did not love at the same time.**

20 year-old man in a relationship, middle school education

**I was stupid for paying 100 [US] dollars for a few minutes of pleasure.**

21 year-old student, in a relationship

## 6.7 Buying Sexual Acts as an Addiction

Only seven buyers of the 55 interviewed, stated that “sex addiction” or buying sexual acts as a habit or a hobby was for them the reason for continuing to patronize women. However, when asked directly whether **“buying sex is an addiction that buyers cannot abandon easily,” almost 38% (or 21) of the respondents agreed to this statement.** The sizable increase—from 7 to 21—underscores that buyers perceive “sex addiction” as an important reason for why men continue to buy sexual acts. According to some buyers: buying sex becomes an “obsession,” a “hobby... [similar to] the hobby that some people have for playing basketball or driving fast cars, it becomes a hobby.”

Addiction as a motivation to purchase sexual acts is not unique to the Lebanese context. Similar studies across the world showed an even higher percentage of respondents who considered “sex addiction” as a driver. In a study of 113 men in Chicago, 83% felt that the use of women in prostitution constitutes an addiction,<sup>[49]</sup> and in another study of 103 men in London, 78% considered their purchase of sexual acts as an addiction.<sup>[50]</sup>

One possible factor in reinforcing “sex addition” is men’s exposure to and use of pornography. The positive correlation between the use of women in prostitution and the use of pornography is confirmed in the 2005 Monto and McRee study. The study compared the use of pornography by 1,672 men in the United States, who had been arrested for trying to purchase women in street prostitution with national samples of U.S. men, who had not used women in prostitution.<sup>[51]</sup> The findings showed that buyers are more likely to report using pornography than national samples of non-buyers, and repeat buyers of sexual acts were also more likely to use pornography than first-time buyers.<sup>[52]</sup>

In this study, **about 80% of the male buyers acknowledged that they use pornographic videos and/or photos.** One quarter of the interviewed men use pornography occasionally, 22% every month, 20% every week, and seven percent of the men use pornography every day.

**The majority of the men (70%), who use pornography, recognized that the use of pornography has an impact on their sexual behavior.** Some men acknowledged that pornography significantly increases their sex drive and that it creates an addiction to sex (and possibly to paid sex if unpaid sex is not available). As stated by some of the interviewed men: “After watching the movie, I want to have sex;” “One stores all this and you become unable to hold it anymore;” “It becomes an urge, you keep thinking of it.”

[49] Durchslag and Goswami, *Deconstructing the Demand for Prostitution*, 13.

[50] Farley et al., *Men Who Buy Sex*, 23.

[51] Martin A. Monto and Nick McRee, “A Comparison of the Male Customers of Female Street Prostitutes with National Samples of Men”, *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, Vol. 49, 2005.

[52] Ibid.

Some men explained that pornography teaches them new sexual positions, which they try to re-enact during their sexual “encounters” with women in prostitution, whereas other men look for women in prostitution with similar traits to the women they have seen in pornography movies:

**[Pornography] influences your choices. If I like a woman in the movie, I try to buy a woman similar to her. And if I like a [sexual] position, I will try to do the same.**

30 year-old single man, university graduate

Similarly, one man underlined that he purchased sexual acts because his wife did not accept to perform certain acts:

**[Pornography] is the main motive that drives me to buy sex; my wife does not accept to do what is done in these movies, and I like to try what I see.**

37 year-old married man with children, primary school education

**For many men in the study, paying money for a sexual act justified their exploitation of women and fueled their expectations that all their wishes would be met. Eighty percent of the buyers agreed to the statement that “When a man pays money for a sexual act, the woman in prostitution must answer to all his wishes and desires.” Additionally, 78% endorsed the myth that “prostitution reduces the crime of rape in society”**



## 7 Men's Rationalizations of Their Demand of Prostitution

The responses of the interviewed men to why they buy sexual acts provide a rich source of information about men's understanding and rationalizations of their prostitution behavior. These rationalizations reflect patriarchal assumptions about both male and female sexuality, sexual behavior, and prostitution.

### 7.1 Prostitution as a "Profession" That Women "Choose"

Some men in the study believe that prostitution is a profession, a legitimate business, something women willingly choose, either because it is financially beneficial and/or because they "love sex". This point of view constitutes one of the forms of rationalization that justify men's demand for women in prostitution.<sup>[53]</sup> **Twenty-nine percent of the buyers endorsed the statement that "prostitution is a profession that does not differ from any other profession,"** thus implying that prostitution is a legitimate and equal business transaction between the "supplier", i.e. the woman, and the buyer.

The interviewed men drew a clear line between whom they perceived as being "good prostitutes" and "bad prostitutes." They view women, who are forced or lured into prostitution or whose socio-economic circumstances left them with no alternative but to enter prostitution as "good prostitutes", while "bad prostitutes" freely choose to engage in and enjoy prostitution. When asked why women enter prostitution, 33% of the buyers responded that they do so because of their love for sex. Twenty-five percent of the men believed that women enter prostitution to make money, because they love sex, and it is their own choice. In summary, for these men, women enter this "profession" mainly because "prostitution is what a woman loves most, and she is gaining money at the same time," "it is her hobby... she has a very strong sexual drive," and "she is hitting two birds with one stone."

The men in the study consistently minimized the harms of prostitution and attempted to liberate themselves from the guilt associated with purchasing a sexual act by presenting prostitution as a profession and by labeling the woman in prostitution as "bad." This allows them to blame women in prostitution for being available and ready for a large number of men, while representing themselves as "socially respectable and moral innocent."<sup>[54]</sup>

### 7.2 Women in Prostitution are Viewed as Commodities and Fundamentally Different From Other Women

The views men hold towards women in general, and especially women in prostitution, can also explain men's demand for sexual acts. Men's responses clearly

[53] See Macleod et al., *Challenging Men's Demand for Prostitution in Scotland*, 20.

[54] Månsson, "Men's Practices in Prostitution".

indicate that they hold degrading views about women in prostitution, which justifies their purchase of sexual acts.

Generally, the interviewed men viewed women in prostitution as fundamentally different from non-prostituted women. Although nine men in the study answered that there is no difference between prostituted and non-prostituted women, four out of the nine explained this similarity by saying that all women are prostitutes. For example, this buyer stated:

**Both of them are prostituting themselves, I find all women are whores and prostitutes.**

20 year-old man in a relationship, secondary school education

However, the majority of buyers in the study positioned women who are not involved in prostitution as more respectable, and having higher “ethics” and “morals,” as well as unwilling to “sell themselves” for prostitution purposes:

**You desire the woman who does not work in prostitution because she is clean. The other no matter how pretty she is, remains a prostitute, a whore, she remains like a public toilet.**

37 year-old married man with children, secondary school education

**Almost half of the men in the study (47%) claim that women in prostitution are “immoral” and “dirty.”** One buyer compared women in prostitution to garbage:

**They are the garbage of women. She’s simply a whore.**

23 year-old single man, secondary school education

Another buyer compared them to trash and to a jackpot machine:

**I consider them the trash of society. She works for money; she has sold her respect and honor and her family, and her family’s honor for the sake of money. She became like a jackpot machine; the more you put money in it, the more it turns.**

37 year-old married man with children, secondary school education

**Approximately a third of the interviewed men considered women in prostitution “as commodities.”** According to one man, patronizing a woman in prostitution is “as if you are buying a product; once you are done with it, you throw it and walk away.” Another buyer also pointed out that these women are like commodities:

**Girls in prostitution are not clean. They are just commodities. I use her one day, and after half an hour she's with someone else, everyday with a different person, and with the price you pay you take her, meaning you negotiate with her as if you are buying a pair of pants or a jacket. I negotiate with the seller for the price I want, she also negotiates the pay. She is a product to satisfy some sexual desires.**

32 year-old man in a relationship, primary school education

It is interesting to note that several buyers could not imagine a different existence for women in prostitution other than as sexualized beings. As one man stated:

**The only thing that the woman who works in prostitution does is sex, nothing except this, she does not think of anything else... She has no social life and no responsibilities; she has nothing to do at all. All she does is to take care of the client she is with.**

29 year-old engaged man, university graduate

Another man claimed that:

**Girls in prostitution only work for this purpose. They don't have any other meaning except this. They have nothing in their lives. They have nothing to lose.**

28 year-old man in a relationship, primary school education

These statements show that men, who buy sexual acts, view women in prostitution as commodities, while dehumanizing them and reducing them to the sole function as providers of sex.

Some of the interviewed men went even further, and claimed that women in prostitution are the "real" exploiters. Eleven per cent of the buyers stated that women in prostitution are exploitative and/or untrustworthy. Men reversed the roles when they argued that it is women who exploit men's sexual needs in order to take their money, as highlighted by one buyer:

**They are talented actresses, they exploit the men's need for sex [...] and they sell themselves for money. They are despicable and exploitative.**

33 year-old single man, secondary school graduate

In fact, when prostitution buyers reverse roles by portraying themselves as victims, they make sure that they avoid the guilt and minimize the harms of prostitution.

### 7.3 Paying Money for Sexual Acts Justifies Men's Control and Exploitation of Women in Prostitution

For many men in the study, paying money for a sexual act justified their exploitation of women and fueled their expectations that all their wishes would be met. **Eighty percent of the buyers agreed to the statement that “when a man pays money for a sexual act, the woman in prostitution must answer to all his wishes and desires.”** Men further explained that paying money for a sexual act meant the woman in prostitution had to guarantee their pleasure as demonstrated by this buyer:

**[I] am paying 50,000 LBP, it's not a small amount at all. She has to do whatever I ask her to do.**

22 year-old single man, secondary school education

The responses of buyers also revealed that paying money justified to men their control over or “ownership” of the woman for the specified amount of time he spends with her was justified. The buyer, as a consumer, can expect that he will get his money's worth, and thus, he does not have to consider the wishes of the woman in prostitution, nor does he have to act in a considerate manner towards her. According to this buyer, he can do what he wants with her because:

**She is my property, wasn't she paid money? Doesn't she work [in prostitution]? She has to accept whatever I ask of her.**

19 year-old single student

Another buyer similarly expresses this sense of ownership of the woman when paying money for a sexual act, as well as the pleasure of having the ability to buy a sexual act from any woman:

**[Y]ou are out and you like a woman, it's so nice to be able to buy her when you want. How much does she cost? How much would her maximum price be? 200 USD? 300 USD? You sleep with her, you finish and you go.**

22 year-old man in a relationship, secondary school education

At the same time, prostitution buyers perceive that it is their right to exploit every minute paid for the sexual act, as explained by this buyer:

**[I have the right] to fuck her. There is a specific time. She is not allowed to go to someone else or something else, until I finish from her.**

20 year-old man in a relationship, middle school graduate

However, men's sense of ownership, as well as financial calculations, extended to other sexual relations. When asked about their preference for paid or unpaid sex, ten men out of the 42 who preferred unpaid sex reported preferring this type of sex because it is free of charge, eight men because they enjoy exclusivity and control over their partner, and five because they don't feel restricted in terms of time and conditions as with paid sex.

For this buyer, sex with a woman not in prostitution was better because:

**You know that this girl is yours. There is no one behind you who will ride her.**

21 year-old man in a relationship, secondary school education

Other buyers provided similar responses with the addition of preferring unpaid sex because of financial reasons or for other benefits:

**Because it's free. Because you have to work to get her, you have to search for her, and she is clean. Because you teach her.**

27 year-old man in a relationship, middle school education

**For the one you pay, you sleep with her for a specific thing, you finish and you leave. For the one you don't pay, she is with you the whole day and she does whatever you want. You sleep with your girlfriend any time you want. For the one you pay, you have to pay for a specific time, like for 15 minutes or half an hour or 3-4 hours... this is your time, so it's rush, rush.**

28 year-old man in a relationship, primary school education

When men pay for a sexual act, they may also expect the prostituted woman to act a certain way. During this half an hour, night or day, the buyers' desire might go beyond the sexual act itself. Men reported that paying for a sexual act also gave them

the right to ask the woman in prostitution to act affectionately towards them, as if she was experiencing “real” emotions, as stated by these buyers:

**Whatever I want, she does. Everything I ask her to do she does. For example, if I wanted to have a conversation with her, she has to speak with me, not that she tells me let's have sex and finish.**

23 year-old single student

**Everything I ask of her she does. Also, she has to give me affection, and not act like a piece of wood.**

23 year-old man in a relationship, vocational school graduate

From the buyers' perspectives, paying money for a sexual act gave men the right to exploit women in prostitution. Men did not seem obligated to follow the rules that could govern other relationships or consider the woman's wishes or feelings.

#### **7.4 Prostitution as a Method for Prevention of Rape and Inevitability of Prostitution**

Men also claimed that prostitution is a vital institution that preserves public order. The vast majority of interviewed men did not question the perceived absolute and “natural right” of men to satisfy their sexual urges whenever, wherever and with whomever they choose. Accordingly, if male desire is not instantly gratified, men's uncontrollable sexuality could pose a problem to society, particularly to women not in prostitution. Of those interviewed, **78% endorsed the myth that “prostitution reduces the crime of rape in society”**. Men present prostitution and their need to buy sexual acts as a buffer and a safety valve that prevents men from raping women who are not involved in prostitution—a necessity for preserving public order. While there is no empirical basis for the assumption that prostitution decreases rape, the view that it does is commonly held and endorsed by buyers.

When asked about what would be the result if prostitution is abolished (an open-ended question), men were either skeptical about this possibility or imagined negative scenarios. Seven of those interviewed stated that the idea that prostitution could vanish completely was inconceivable. As one buyer said:

**It will be a big problem, for all men not only me. Where are men supposed to empty this [sexual] energy? It won't stop, it can't stop.**

22 year-old single man, university graduate

Often the idea of inevitability of prostitution was accompanied by accounts reinforcing the myth that prostitution is a timeless phenomenon and will always exist because it is “the oldest profession in the world.” For one buyer, the end of prostitution “would be the end of the world. Prostitution started when the world started and will end when the world ends.”

The assumption that prostitution helps control men’s uncontrollable sexuality figures strongly in the responses to the above-mentioned question. More than one-third of the interviewed men stated that rape and sexual assault would increase if prostitution is abolished. One man added that sexual abuse of children would increase.

Other men reported that men would start acting violently, irrationally and like animals, as expressed by these buyers: “If prostitution disappears, there would be more rape. Men would be crazy;” and “there would be chaos in prostitution, rape... [People would be ruled] by animal instinct.” Another man similarly reported that:

**[If prostitution is abolished] Every day, every day, at the break of dawn, there would be a minimum 20 cases of rape...**

53 year-old single man, university graduate

About 10% of the interviewed men claimed that the end of prostitution would lead to an increase in “homosexuality” among men (homosexuality is seen as negative by the interviewees). One buyer stated that:

**[T]here would be cases like the ones in the Gulf here. Right away, there would be sexual inhibition, homosexuality.**

22 year-old man in a relationship, secondary school education

Two buyers believe that if prostitution ends, it will affect family relationships by increasing domestic violence and increasing relations and marriage, including early marriage for men, polygamy and “pleasure marriage.”<sup>[55]</sup> Seven other buyers pointed to serious repercussions on society at large, such as a decrease in tourism, which in turn would negatively impact the economy:

[55] “Pleasure marriage” or *zawaj el mout’aa* is usually a short-term marriage arrangement (sometimes only for hours) in which the duration and compensation are agreed to by both parties in advance.

**Lebanese society would face a depression because the Lebanese economy depends upon this field-on this informal economy... going out and nightclubs... -Meaning that 90% of the tourists do not come to Lebanon for its forests and sea.**

24 year-old, single, secondary school education

Paradoxically for four buyers, if prostitution were to end, prostitution-like activities would be widespread in society as demonstrated by these statements: "Society would become irreligious. Prostitution would be everywhere," and "Prostitution would be everywhere in society, meaning that every time a guy sees a woman he would try to seduce her so he can fuck her."



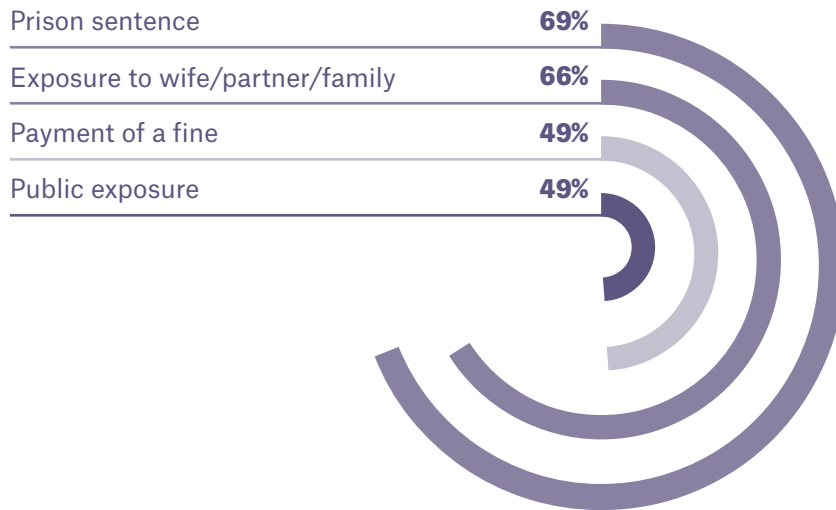
**Public exposure and the risk of being legally penalized might be the most effective tools to discourage men from buying and using women for prostitution purposes.**

## 8 What Would Deter Men From Using Women in Prostitution?

In the study, men were asked about what might deter them from purchasing sexual acts and were offered a list of four factors:

### **Factors That Deter Men From Buying Sexual Acts**

*Multiple answers were recorded*



**The responses clearly show that exposure and penalization may be the most effective tools to discourage men from buying and using women for prostitution purposes.** In particular, most of the interviewed men stated that spending time in prison and being exposed as a buyer of sexual acts to the family/friends/partner as the most effective deterrents. Other studies in Chicago (USA), Scotland, and London (UK), reveal similar findings although with higher rates reported for each of these deterrents.<sup>[56]</sup> A reason for this difference could be that the rule of law is stronger in these countries than in Lebanon where law enforcement is weak and there is a lack of trust in the judiciary and the police.

When asked if there is anything else that may deter them, 23% of the men answered “nothing else,” and 53% indicated that a love relationship or becoming engaged or married would deter them. However, as shown in similar research, as well as in this study, being engaged or in a relationship does not necessarily deter

[56] A study of 113 male buyers of sex in Chicago found that 83% of the buyers interviewed would be deterred by having to spend jail time and 79% would be deterred if a letter was sent to family saying you were arrested for solicitation (Durchslag and Goswami, *Deconstructing the Demand for Prostitution*, 24). Also, see Macleod et al., *Challenging Men’s Demand for Prostitution in Scotland*, Table 7, 27; Farley et al., *Men Who Buy Sex*, Table 8, 22.

buyers from using women in prostitution. In fact, most studies demonstrate that men who purchase sexual acts, are in committed relationships and have a high level of sexual contact within and outside these unions.

**A society that allows women to be prostituted by men, and to be sold and bought as commodities, cannot achieve gender equality. Such a society not only discriminates against but also among women themselves as normalizing prostitution reflects on the overall status of women and creates two groups of women: one that can be bought and another that cannot.**

## 9 Conclusion and Recommendations

It is clear from the above findings **that prostitution does not establish a contractual relationship between two equal parties** where a service is rendered in exchange for money. What is in fact established is an exploitative relationship, which is normalized by a complex scheme of patriarchal justifications and rationalizations presented by male buyers as truths.

**Prostitution is about male sexuality**, and is justified by male buyers of sexual acts as a necessity for satiating their sexual impulses and needs, and for maintaining public order. Without the possibility of buying sexual acts, men claim they would become uncontrollable and society would suffer, particularly women not in prostitution. According to the majority of the interviewed male buyers, prostitution reduces the rape of women who are not engaged in prostitution, and prevent other forms of abuse. Many male buyers claim that it is easy and convenient to use women in prostitution as opposed to going through the hassle of dating and commitment. Prostitution is also justified as a means to seek variety, leisure, entertainment, discovery, and experimentation, and as paving the way to adulthood and manhood. These patriarchal assumptions about men's sexuality institutionalize prostitution and normalize it as a viable "profession" for women that they may "choose" and even "like."

Men rationalize prostitution through the act of paying money. The vast majority of the interviewed buyers believed that when a man pays money for a sexual act, the woman in prostitution is required to answer to all his wishes and desires. ***By buying, men not only commodify the woman and consider her as an object- just like any other product on the market - but they also buy the right to control the woman for the duration of the encounter and to exploit her.*** In this "transaction", men are in a position of power where they dictate matters and control the real choices. It is in this context and this reality that forces women to develop different self-defense mechanisms and tactics to reduce, often unsuccessfully, the inevitable harm generated by the exploitative nature of prostitution.<sup>[57]</sup>

Such justifications and rationalizations allow men buyers, despite their awareness of the deplorable conditions for women in prostitution, to continue to purchase and exploit women, while their demand fosters and causes the expansion of this profitable industry. The prostitution buyers in the study did not change their behavior despite being fully aware that is often difficult socio-economic conditions and an acute need for money that lead women to enter into prostitution. Nor did their awareness of the level of control and abuse exercised by pimps, traffickers, or

[57] For examples about tactics and self defense mechanisms developed by women in prostitution, see the case study of women in street prostitution in Kafa study on the prostitution industry (to be published in 2014).

— clients impact in any way on their choice to purchase and exploit women through  
61 different prostitution activities in Lebanon.

**A society that allows women to be prostituted by men, and to be sold and bought as commodities, cannot achieve gender equality.** Such a society not only discriminates against women but also among women themselves; normalizing prostitution reflects on the overall status of women and creates two groups of women: one that can be bought and another that cannot.<sup>[58]</sup>

This same society cannot also effectively combat sex trafficking. Prostitution and sex trafficking are closely linked; not only are they driven by the same demand and thrive on the vulnerability of women,<sup>[59]</sup> but they share the same end purpose of sexual exploitation of women. Sex trafficking is just a process of delivering women into sexual exploitation. According to the UN Trafficking Protocol definition, sex trafficking is a way of recruiting, receiving, or transfer of a person through certain means (such as the abuse of vulnerability of the person) for the sole end purpose of sexually exploiting her,<sup>[60]</sup> which prostitution, as seen in this study, is the most flagrant example.

**To properly address prostitution and sex trafficking while preventing and combating their root-causes, Lebanon should counter the demand for prostituted women and challenge current conceptions of prostitution and male sexuality. The following actions are recommended:**

- Amend the Penal Code to criminalize the buying of sexual acts and introduce change and counseling programs for buyers;
- Challenge attitudes that normalize prostitution by outlining the harms of the sex industry, and address the culture that fuels prostitution such as pornography and the sexualisation of women and girls in media and popular culture.
- Carry out accountability and deterrence campaigns outlining the responsibility of buyers in creating and fueling sex trafficking and prostitution, and depicting the realities of the victims.

[58] Gunilla S. Ekberg, "The International Debate regarding Prostitution and Trafficking in Women: Refuting the Arguments" published in *The Effects of Legalization of Prostitution Activities: A Critical Analysis*, Stockholm, Sweden: Division for Gender Equality, Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, 2003, p. 2.

[59] Most women trafficked into sexual exploitation come from countries or regions where the status of women is seriously impaired, gender inequalities are rampant, and are often disadvantaged socially, economically, legally and politically.

[60] Article 3 of the UN Trafficking Protocol defines trafficking

- Conduct preventive and education programs targeting adolescents and young men who are potentially approaching their first sexual experience;
- Sensitize law enforcement officers and the judiciary on prostitution and sex trafficking and their inter-linkages, on the consequences for women in prostitution and society-at-large, and on the role of the buyers in the creation and retaining of prostitution markets in Lebanon.

In addition to tackling the demand side of prostitution and sex trafficking, a holistic approach is warranted which addresses the industry and the persons exploited. For this, the following actions are recommended:

- Repeal all criminal and administrative measures that penalize persons practicing prostitution as they are victims of a serious form of violence and exploitation, and their human rights are violated;
- Abolish the Artist Visa scheme and all other regulations and policies that facilitate prostitution directly or indirectly;
- Criminalize all aspects of the prostitution industry including the persons and businesses involved such as the “Super Nightclub” sector;
- Establish adequately funded exit programs and specialized protection programs for victims of sex trafficking and prostitution, and individuals at risk.

## Bibliography

Baumeister, Roy F. et al., "Is There a Gender Difference in Strength of Sex Drive? Theoretical Views, Conceptual Distinctions, and a Review of Relevant Evidence", *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 2001.

Ben-Israel, H. and Levenkron N., *The Missing Factor. Clients of Trafficked Women in Israel's Sex Industry*, the Hotline for Migrant Workers, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, 2005.

Brophy, Zak, "Vice, Regulating Lebanon Darker Side", *Executive Magazine*, Lebanon, August 3, 2012.

Durchslag, Rachel and Goswami, Samir, *Deconstructing the Demand for Prostitution: Preliminary Insights from Interviews with Chicago Men who Purchase Sex*, Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation, May 2008.

Eespere, Katri, *The Hidden Side of Prostitution: Sex Buyers Speak*, Social Policy Information and Analysis Department, Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Estonia, 2007.

Ekberg, Gunilla S., *The Swedish Law that Prohibits the Purchase of Sexual Services: Best Practices for Prevention of Prostitution and Trafficking in Human Beings*,<sup>10</sup> *Violence against Women*, 1187-1218, Sage Publications, United States, 2004.

Ekberg, Gunilla S., "The International Debate Regarding Prostitution and Trafficking in Women: Refuting the Arguments" published in *The Effects of Legalization of Prostitution Activities: A Critical Analysis*, Stockholm, Sweden: Division for Gender Equality, Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, 2003.

Ezeilo, Joy Ngozi, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*, A/HRC/23/48, United Nations, 18 March 2013.

Farley, Melissa et al., *Men who Buy Sex: Who They Buy and What They Know*, Eaves, London, December 2009.

Farley, Melissa, et al., "Prostitution and Trafficking in Nine Countries: An Update on Violence and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder," *Journal of Trauma Practice*, 2: 3, 2004, 33-74.

Huda, Sigma, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Mission to Lebanon*, E/CN.4/2006/62/Add., United Nations, 20 February 2006.



Jackson, Margaret, "Sex Research and the Construction of Sexuality: A Tool of Male Supremacy?", *Women's Studies Int. Forum*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1984, 43-51.

Lebanese Penal Code, Article 523.

MacKinnon, Catharine A., *Trafficking, Prostitution, and Inequality*, *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review*, Vol. 46, No. 2, 271-309, Summer 2011.

Macleod, Jan et al., *Challenging Men's Demand for Prostitution in Scotland, A Research Report Based on Interviews with 110 Men Who Bought Women in Prostitution*, Women's Support Project, 2008.

Månsson, Sven-Axel, "Men's Practices in Prostitution and Their Implications for Social Work," *Social Work in Cuba and Sweden: Achievements and Prospects*, eds: Sven-Axel Månsson and Clotilde Proveyer Cervantes, 2004.

Monto, M and McRee N., "A Comparison of the Male Customers of Female Street Prostitutes with National Samples of Men", *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, Vol. 49, 2005.

National Aids Control Program and the Ministry of Public Health, *A Case Study on Behavior Change Among Female Sex Workers: Interventions from 2001 – 2007*, Lebanon, 2008. Online at: <http://www.moph.gov.lb/Prevention/AIDS/Documents/FSW.pdf>

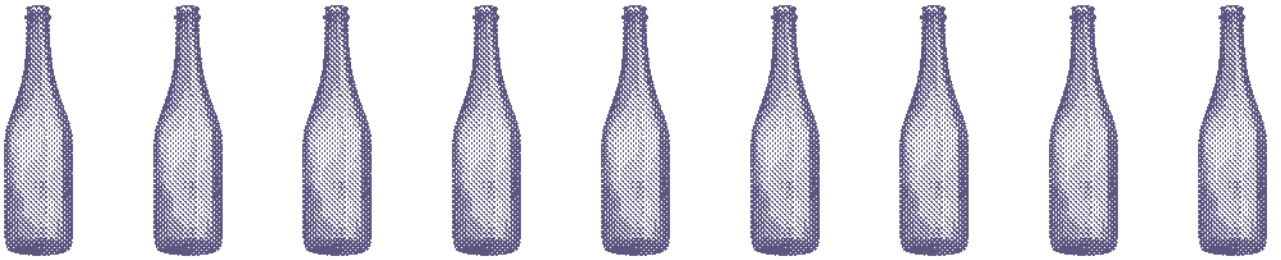
Raymond, Janice G., "Legalizing the Demand; Prostitution Buyers as Sexual Consumers," *Violence Against Women*, Vol. 10, No. 10, Sage Publications, Unites States, October 2004.

Saghieh, Nizar and Frangieh, Ghida, *Prostitution, a Moral Crime or a Crime of Exploitation: A Legal Analysis of 228 Cases of Women Arrested for Prostitution Crimes*, KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation, 2013.

Seidman, Steven, *The Social Construction of Sexuality*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003.

UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, Unites Nations, December 2012. Online at: [http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/Trafficking\\_in\\_Persons\\_2012\\_web.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/Trafficking_in_Persons_2012_web.pdf)

UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, United Nations, 2000. Online at: [http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final\\_documents\\_2/convention\\_%20traff\\_eng.pdf](http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final_documents_2/convention_%20traff_eng.pdf)



[www.kafa.org.lb](http://www.kafa.org.lb)

