UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY | THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY

# MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY
# CAPSTONE PROJECT

The Demand Side of the Prostitution Industry:
An Analysis of Clients' Attitudes towards Women in Prostitution

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Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of PPOL 623 and completion of the requirements for the Master of Public Policy degree

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# Capstone Approval Page

The undersigned, being the Capstone Project Supervisor, declares that

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Capstone Course PPOL 623 A&B

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3.9.2017

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Jack Mintz, my capstone supervisor, for his advice and guidance. Dr. Mintz provided me with the perfect measure of guidance and support by asking challenging questions and bringing up problematic issues while also giving me the freedom and trust to create this research paper.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Naama Maor, my friend and my guide, who helped me throughout this intensive time period. Naama spent countless hours reading my academic papers and her endless giving is something that I will always be grateful for. Lastly, I would like to express my deep appreciation to my partner, family, and friends for their personal support during this process.

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## Capstone Executive Summary

On July, 2017, the Ministerial Committee for Legislation in Israel approved a law designed to criminalize the purchase of prostitution services. The suggested law imposes a fine of 1250 NIS (440 CAD)[1] on first-time offenders and creates a *voluntary alternative* to paying the fine – participation in a preventive training course. This research paper offers an alternative policy that would more effectively target the attitudes and beliefs of consumers and specifically, a correlation between clients' endorsement of violence towards women in prostitution and their membership in an online portal for consumers of such services.

This research is based on an analysis of 750 posts written by 150 members of the online sex portal Sex Adir. Their statements about sexual encounters and women in prostitution were combed for violent expressions, based on a uniform definition of sexual violence. This data was then examined using several econometric regressions in an attempt to understand what influenced users to treat women in prostitution more violently.

The following significant results were found:

1. Relatively new members of the sex portal had, on average, 2.27 more violent phrases than the rest of the users.
2. Relatively passive members of the sex portal had, on average, 3.7 more violent phrases than the rest of the users.
3. Any reference to a woman in prostitution as nymphomaniac or to her enjoyment during a sexual encounter increased the number of violent phrases by 1.86.

This research paper claims that an anonymous online community, in which group identity is emphasized, manages to reinforce and re-shape the values and beliefs of its members. Moreover, Sex Adir may not only radicalize the rhetoric of portal users but reproduce this online violence in the streets. Thus, it illustrates how easily the prostitution industry could become more violent absent a policy for the treatment and education of men who purchase sex services. Therefore, this paper suggests that the attendance of first-time offenders in an educational and rehabilitative program should be *mandatory*. Such programs have already reduced recidivism among men arrested for soliciting prostitutes in several cities in the world. Finally, this study suggests that through these educational measures, a real change in the attitudes and behavior of the participants towards women in prostitution could be initiated.

## Introduction

The political and social debate about the criminalization of the purchase of prostitution services in Israel has raised many questions about the demand side of the prostitution industry – the customers. Although this industry is estimated to have an annual market value of 1.2 billion NIS (436 million CAD), there are almost no studies, academic or governmental, examining the characteristics of prostitution clients. In light of recent legislative initiatives that could change the legal status of individuals who pay for sex, this paper aims to provide some information about their attitudes towards women in prostitution and more specifically, about beliefs that make them more sexually violent.

This research project analyzes the content of postings by 150 users of the online sex portal Sex Adir in order to examine their level of sexual violence toward women in prostitution. The Sex Adir portal provides a platform for men who purchase prostitution services to rate and review women in prostitution based on their personal encounters and provide information about their appearance, attitude, and level of sexual performance.

The rapid growth of the internet has drastically changed the prostitution industry by allowing individual consumers to create an anonymous community with collective consumer power.[2] This project reveals that this unified power of consumers has the ability to shape and radicalize the beliefs of new members of the portal, making them more violent towards women in prostitution. These findings also show how misconceptions of the members of this online community about women in prostitution can increase their level of violence and encourage them to perform more aggressive sexual acts towards them.

This research project highlights the importance of addressing the beliefs and attitudes of men who consume prostitution services when implementing new policies. It

suggests that criminalization of the purchase of prostitution services would not provide a comprehensive solution to the problem, since it would not change men's attitudes towards women in prostitution. While criminalization could deter some clients, others, who would have to risk more to consume prostitution services, could violently demand greater value for their money.[3] Thus, this project provides recommendations for policy makers and legislators to emphasis the educational aspect of the new potential prostitution law.

**Literature Review**

Prostitution or the purchase of prostitution services is a criminal offense according to the Israeli Penal Code. More specifically, "The Penal Code – 1977" defines the following activities as prostitution-related offenses: procuring acts of prostitution; bringing a person to commit an act of prostitution or pushing a person into prostitution; exploiting minors for prostitution; human trafficking for prostitution; causing a person to leave the country for prostitution or slavery; possessing or renting a place for prostitution and advertising of prostitution.[4] In other words, the only activities that are punishable offenses relate to individuals who benefit from pushing women into the sex industry – the handlers – and not the procurers of such services – the consumers of prostitution services.

In choosing not to criminalize the consumption of prostitution services, the Government of Israel ignores the warnings of human rights organizations and feminist activists about the destructive influence of prostitution on both the women who offer these services and on their clientele. Studies show that prostitution contributes to women's objectification, and prospers in societies in which power relations between men and women favor the former's domination over the latter.[5] Thus, it is advisable for the Israeli

legal system to target "johns" – the consumers – and not only the handlers of the women involved.[6]

Although the Government of Israel started to pay attention to its flourishing prostitution industry about three decades ago,[7] it was only in 2015 that the Ministry of Welfare and Social Services conducted a comprehensive and first of its kind survey to study this field.[8] Generally, this survey collected data such as the demographics of women, men and transgender people in prostitution, the estimated extent of prostitution in Israel, reasons for entering the prostitution industry, etc.

The survey findings caught the Israeli political system and media by surprise. In 2014, the number of people in prostitution was estimated at 11,420 to 12,730. Between 10,840 and 12,160 of them (approximately 95%) were women. This estimation includes data from 265 discreet apartments, 90 massage parlors, and 130 businesses that offer escort services. In addition, an estimated number of 690 to 1,020 mature women engaged in street prostitution every week.[9]

Seventy one percent of all respondents stated that economic distress and/or financial bind were the main reasons they worked in the prostitution industry. Some women mentioned that they were doing so to cover their debts.[10] Most of the respondents (approximately 76%) expressed a desire to leave the prostitution industry.[11] Among the women who expressed this desire, the most common reasons were fatigue or detestation of the occupation. These women provided statements such as: "I'm too tired," "it's not compatible with my lifestyle," or "it's disgusting."[12]

However, the survey contains no information about the average Israeli consumer of prostitution services or the clients' reasons for purchasing these services. There are two

main findings that illustrate the demand factor of the prostitution industry. The first is that on average, each woman in prostitution serves 5.5 clients per day.[13] The second finding is that during 2014 customer payments for prostitution services were estimated at 1.2 billion NIS (436 million CAD).[14] Of this amount, slightly more than 510 million NIS (180 million CAD), or approximately 43% of the total annual customer payments, were estimated as payments for services in discreet apartments. 202 million NIS (73 million CAD), which are approximately 18% of the 2014 payments, were received for escort services. Customer payments for massage services were estimated at 190 million NIS (69 million CAD) or approximately 16% of all payments. For prostitution services in other forms (e.g. stripping), costumers paid 210 million NIS (76 million CAD), which are approximately 18% of the annual amount. Street prostitution was assessed at 70 million NIS (25 million CAD), which constitutes about 6% of all customer payments.[15] Although the information about consumers of prostitution services in this survey is extremely limited, it testifies to the large scope of the prostitution industry in Israel. It illustrates that a phenomenon that society perceives as marginal could flourish out of sight. This survey is the main reason that the demand factor of prostitution in Israel has recently become one of the primary issues discussed by members of the political system.

Israeli legislators are now engaged in debates over three different bills advocating for the criminalization of prostitution service consumers that await the approval of the Knesset (the Israeli legislative branch). These three bills have been promoted by MKs (Members of the Knesset) from different parties across the political spectrum in Israel.[16,17] The bill that seems most likely to garner support[18] was introduced by MK Zehava Galon (Meretz)[19] and MK Shuli Mualem-Rafaeli (The Jewish House).[20] Both MK Zehava Galon and

MK Shuli Mualem-Rafaeli view women in prostitution as victims, who, in many cases, suffered sexual abuse and incest before they turned to prostitution. In addition, they both claim that the consumers of prostitution services dehumanize women in prostitution and exploit them.[21] This bill was written in collaboration with the Task Force on Human Trafficking and Prostitution – one of the leading organizations in Israel to advocate for the prohibition of the consumption of prostitution services.[22] On July 16, 2017, the Ministerial Committee for Legislation in Israel approved this proposed bill, with the exception of the provision that the purchase of prostitution services can result in imprisonment.[23]

Originally, the bill suggested providing support to women/men/transgender people in prostitution, as well as imposing prison sentences or fines on individuals receiving services from an adult woman/man/transgender:

> "The recipient of an act of prostitution from an adult, shall be liable to imprisonment for one year … For the purposes of this section, "a recipient" – includes any person who had contacted another for the act of prostitution … The Minister of Public Security … may declare that the offense of consumption of prostitution services is reduced to a fine."[24]

The bill also states that taking a preventive training course operated by non-governmental organizations could serve as an alternative for a fine. To participate in the course, the offender would have to pay half of the amount of the fine. More specifically:

> "The Minister of Public Security … shall determine the rate of the fine for any fine offense and any repeated or additional fine offense committed by that person. The amount to be paid for the first offense shall be no less than 1250 NIS (440 CAD), and the fine shall be doubled for each additional offense.
>
> "The notice of payment shall be attached to a notice of penalty alternative by a preventive training course, as follows:
>
> (1) If a defendant charged with consumption of prostitution asks to substitute the fine with the course, he will be entitled to do so unless he had previously received such a notice of payment;
>
> (B) For participating in the course, the defendant will pay its operators half the amount of the fine;
>
> (C) If the defendant completed the course, the operating institution shall report the completion of the course and the defendant will be exempt from paying the fine."[25]

Although the policy of criminalizing consumers of prostitution services receives public attention in Israel nowadays, there are still few studies that focus on the clients' perspective and there is no data on acts of violence that clients perform on such women.[26] The rest of this section will present two pioneering studies – one conducted in the United States and the other in Israel – about consumers of prostitution and their views towards the women in this industry. Both provide the theoretical underpinnings for this paper. The American study identifies consumers as victims of these services alongside the women involved and suggests that these men should be treated and not just punished. The Israeli study emphasizes the power of online communities, and specifically ones for consumers of sexual services, to reinforce an existing balance of power but also re-shape the cultural space within which they operate (e.g. the prostitution industry).

In their study of clients' attitudes toward prostitution, Sawyer and Metz (2009) suggest that consumers of prostitution services are themselves victims, who end up victimizing others (e.g. women in prostitution) and should, therefore, receive guidance and help and should not only be penalized. They created a scale called "Attitudes Toward Prostitution Scale" (ATPS) to examine the beliefs and attitudes of these consumers. Sawyer and Metz assume that men who purchase prostitution services do not hold a uniform set of beliefs about women in prostitution. They argue that some hold "realistic, reasonable beliefs, whereas others hold distorted, unrealistic beliefs about sex work."[27]

In total, 1001 men participated in this study by answering a survey that was based on statements such as "*prostitution should be legal"* or "*there is nothing wrong with prostitution*." The participants were asked to rank their position on every statement by choosing a number from one to four when *1=strongly disagree* and *4=strongly agree*.[28] The

scale was designed to accumulate more accurate information about *individual* men who pay for prostitution services, to provide intervention if needed, and to track changes in their beliefs or views in psycho-educational programs.[29] However, it was not meant to provide conclusive findings about the characteristics of this general type of *population*.

The ATPS is based on three subscales. The Social/Legal Support of Prostitution subscale examines the level of support or objection to the legalization of prostitution. Participants with high scores view sex and intimacy as a consumption product and have little moral issues with purchasing prostitution services. The Beliefs About Prostitution subscale examines the level of support in statements that the researchers label as inaccurate stereotypes about the "attractive" life of women in prostitution. Participants with high scores believe that women in prostitution choose to do so and that they enjoy their job. Finally, the Family Values Related to Prostitution subscale reflects the views of participant about prostitution and family involvement. High scores in this subscale suggest that the participant would accept a family member's decision to enter the prostitution industry (e.g. support his daughter's decision to become a woman in prostitution), which reflects considerable acceptance of prostitution.[30]

Another important study about the customers of prostitution was conducted by Lahav-Raz (2016).[31] In her doctoral thesis, Lahav-Raz reviews several studies about the motives of men who purchase sex services from women in prostitution:

> "... the desire to have a sexual act with a woman with a unique background (ethnic, Sexual, physical, age, etc.); dissatisfaction with the normative sexual relationship; difficulties in finding a partner; the excitement of performing a "forbidden" act; a desire to avoid emotional commitment; a desire to disconnect from reality; addiction; loneliness; peer pressure and male brotherhood."[32]

Lahav-Raz, who is an anthropologist, was interested in exploring the demand factor of the prostitution industry in Israel and due to lack of data, decided to examine online dialogues via sex forums for men who pay for sex. Lahav-Raz discovered that the internet provides an easily accessible platform through which these men created a flourishing anonymous community linked by a phenomenon that used to be individual and hidden from the public eye – the purchase of prostitution services.[33] Members of this anonymous community have normalized and naturalized the consumption of prostitution services.[34] They created a space of partnership that reinforces men's ownership over women in prostitution. In this space, they support each other and provide emotional assistance and encouragement when one shares information about his struggles (e.g. addiction to sex or rejection by a woman in prostitution). According to Lahav-Raz, through their participation in the portal, as a community, consumers absolve themselves from moral responsibility.[35]

Perhaps more importantly, the online community turned sex clients to "prosumers," consumers who are also cultural producers. The online space gives users collective consumer power, which entails not only consumption but also the re-creation of the "product" by manufacturing content that changes the services they acquire. To achieve this, members validate each other's views that women in prostitution are the exploiters rather than exploited, that the women are the ones who have all the power to set prices or provide bad services, while men are powerless consumers. Thus, the main goal of this platform is to unite the customers of the prostitution industry in order to improve the terms of the services they receive.[36] As a result, these online interactions re-design the entire cultural space, while disguising the unequal balance of power between men who purchase prostitution services and women in prostitution.[37]

The power of an online community to re-shape and construct reality is extremely concerning when considering the concept of *group polarization*. It has been shown that group deliberation is likely to cause individuals to endorse more extreme opinions than before entering the discussion, based on the direction group members were drawn to. This phenomenon can thrive when the people who compose the group are like-minded people.[38] Thus, the internet and especially online forums have allowed like-minded people to create a virtual community that is based on solidarity and unity. The sex portal that this research paper examines can be a good illustration of that. Several studies have found that group polarization can exist in internet-like settings. High levels of polarization were found when group members met relatively anonymously and when group identity was emphasized.[39]

In conclusion, not only do consumers of prostitution in sex forums have the ability to change the face of the prostitution industry, but through an online community they can exacerbate the already harsh violent realities women in prostitution face. Thus, it is crucial to examine the beliefs and values of the members of this community and understand what kind of public policies could shield women in prostitution from additional harm.

**Methodology**

The data for this study consists of posts in the forums of Sex Adir[40] – a virtual platform on an Israeli sex portal that has been serving as a prostitution-services guide for 21,487 adult users in Israel as of May 28, 2017. Sex Adir portal, which was established in 2007, includes 28 forums. According to the website:

> "Sex Adir Portal was established in order to provide a high-standard, convenient, and accessible solution for anyone who is looking for a variety of escort services throughout the country as well as sexy and enjoyable entertainment. The portal has been extremely popular in its field for more than a decade, and is considered a pioneer that made several

> of the categories in the field accessible for the first time in Israel. Every day, thousands visit the portal and enjoy a rich and up-to-date variety of hot ads from the best advertisers around the country: A selection of escort girls, massage and spa parlors, strip clubs, discreet apartments, erotic conversations, real pictures, high quality sex videos and of course the number one forum in Israel in the area of adult entertainment."[41]

The database for this study was created between May 15, 2017 and May 28, 2017 and includes 150 observations. Each observation is a user in the portal's forums. The analysis is based on the last five posts of each user who mentioned women in prostitution. Thus, a total of 750 posts were analyzed. The analysis is based on observations in all 28 portal forums, since there is no way to separate between the posts that each user posted in each individual forum. The portal displays each user's last two pages of post, which include only the last 100 posts. Thus, there is a limit to how far back researchers could go. All of the posts in this database have been published by users during 2016 and 2017.

Each user's last five posts were reviewed with the intention of analyzing the use of both sexual violence towards women in prostitution and violent language when describing the sexual encounters with these women. The number of sexually-violent words or phrases in the last five posts of each user was summed up in the database. The violent content was examined according to the following definition of sexual violence:

> "Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."[42]

This definition highlights all forms of violence and ranges from verbal abuse to sexual assault, emotional trauma, robbery, confinement, and even murder.[43] The use of a uniform definition is meant to prevent inconsistencies in the count of sexually-violent words deployed by each user.

The following examples demonstrate the counting process that was carried out for the purpose of this study.[44] The bolded parts were counted as violent content. For instance:

- Telavivi Harpatkan (Adventurer from Tel Aviv): "She has no problem with aggressive sex in different positions (**maybe she actually does, but she dealt with it heroically**). The girl has an amazing body with a flat belly and **unlike her face, the rest of the skin on her body is as pleasant and smooth as a dolphin**. Not really thin but definitely very sexy."[45]

This post includes two violent phrases that were incorporated in the database. The first bolded phrase suggests that the user may have performed sexual acts against the woman's will. The second describes the woman's facial features in a demeaning manner.

- Tom2013: "It was surprising that she did not reach up toward my face and did not bring her breast forward… something that girls usually do in these types of places. **It was a little strange that when she was on top of me, she did not make any eye contact, but mainly closed her eyes or looked to the side**. Other than that, relaxation is indeed effective and provides a nice release."[46]

This post has one violent phrase, in which the user describes the woman feeling uncomfortable during a sexual encounter and trying to avoid making eye contact with him.

- Tiptipa: "I will not come back to see her, because *I prefer adult women who really enjoy my uncompromising tongue*. In general, **it seems inappropriate to me to sleep with women who look like my daughter. However, I do not think I will stop doing it.** Generally, there are no extras: shallow kisses without tongue and her behind is off-limits."[47]

This post has one violent phrase. The user questions his habit of paying young women for sex, especially one that "look like my daughter." However, he expresses his intention to continue doing so. The sentence in *Italics* addresses the user's assumptions about the enjoyment of women in prostitution from his performance. It was not counted as violent content but as a part of an independent variable that addresses the number of times the user mentioned that the women he was visiting enjoyed the act. This independent variable will be explained in detail below.

The 150 users were randomly chosen from a narrow group of 653 users out of the 21,487 members of the portal. This group includes users that had posted at least 100 posts since they joined the portal. They were selected to guarantee that the database consists of users that are engaged participants in the forums of the portal as well as to reduce the likelihood that passive users will make their way into the data. These 653 users received a ranking based on the assessment of the portal administrators. Users are divided into 6 ranking group as follows: Reliable Sex Reporter on The King's Highway[48] (2 users), Active Sex Reporter on The King's Highway (22 users), Reliable Reporter – Honorary Member of the Israeli Hall of "Players"[49] (9 users), Reliable Sex Reporter with a Future (10 users), Contributing Sex Reporter with a Future (101 users), Active Users (509 users).

Since the number of group members varies, a simple function was created to calculate the accurate number of users in each group that will not distort the random selection for the database. The function is $\frac{X}{653} \times 150$ when $X$ stands for the number of users in each group. The final calculation, includes one user from group 1, five users from group 2, two users from group 3, 2 users from group 4, 23 users from group 5, and 117 users from group 6 – for a total of 150 users.[50]

According to a post by the administrators of the portal, each user's ranking is left to the discretion of the administrators. Usually, the guiding principles are as follows: every new user receives a beginner's ranking until he contributes 100 posts. Until then, every post must be approved by the chief administrator or his deputy. After 100 posts, the user earns his first star, which allows him to post new posts without their approval. In addition to users are ranked based on the quantity of their posts, they are also assessed based on the quality of their reports. The credibility of the posts is another important consideration. Finally, the administrators highlight the importance of respectful behavior towards other users as one of the determining principles. To its users, the portal outlines five main criteria according to which they are evaluated: seniority, helpful and useful posts, new discoveries, reliability while respecting the portal rules, and loyalty to the portal and its members.[51] However, this explanation – provided by the administrators – shows that there is no systemic way to rank the six groups according to their level of influence and engagement in the portal's forums. Thus, the analysis cannot fully examine the differentiation between the groups.[52]

This study examines correlation between the level of violence (number of sexual violent words of each user) and several variables. The analysis is based on an econometric regression that examines the relations between the user's level of violence ($Y$), based on the amount of violent content in his last five posts, as the dependent variable and six independent variables that could provide explanation for the different levels of violence.

The first two independent variables "duration of time the user has been a portal member" ($X_1$) and "the user's average number of posts per day" ($X_2$) were created to understand if the user's level of violence is affected by the extent and frequency of his

participation in the portal's forums. Due to the fact that the portal has been operating since 2007, the duration of time these variables are based on can vary from a few of months to almost a decade. The assumption of the researcher here is that the anonymous community of consumers of prostitution services this portal creates encourages more violent behavior towards women in prostitution. Thus, the expected result is that when the level of engagement (extent and frequency) in the portal's forums increases, the level of violence increases as well.

The following three independent variables are based on the element of the woman's choice to work as a prostitute: a dummy variable for "student/not student" ($X_3$), "number of times user mentions that the girl had fun" ($X_4$) and "number of times user argues that there is no exploitation in the purchase of prostitution services" ($X_5$). From exploring hundreds of posts in the portal it seems that many consumers are captive in the myth that prostitution is a profession that one voluntarily chooses, a myth that is encapsulated in the image of a female student who turns to prostitution to "make easy money" and cover her tuition fees. The assumption of the researcher here is that this myth helps legitimize more violence in the eyes of consumers. These variables are based on expressions such as:

- Chico: "Ukrainian prostitutes are not on my list of donations and will never be. The relationship is absolutely businesslike and this is how it should stay… there is a crazy inflation in prostitution prices and we should not encourage it. If you want to think about the welfare of the weak, then think about the soldier, the broke student or the production worker who earns a minimum wage."[53]
- Almoni2009: "I do not understand why she came back to Israel to work here if she hates what she does so much."[54]

- Jerassi: “What prostitutes do is take advantage of men's money. We are the exploited here – not the prostitutes.”[55]

The final independent variable is another dummy variable that examines if “the user is married or not” ($X_6$). The assumption of the researcher here is that many men believe that there is a difference between love and marriage and sexual intercourse. Thus, purchasing prostitution services allows them to practice sexual acts that their wives would not agree to. The user “Bigus Dickus” is an example: “The reason I use prostitution services rather than one-nightstands is that I don’t want any emotional involvement. The heart and emotions belong only to my wife and family.”[56]

The independent variables were constructed separately from the dependent variable to avoid the possibility that the construction of the independent variables would be affected by the level of violence in the posts. In other words, as the example of the user Tiptipa above indicates, observations about women’s enjoyment from the act and other violent phrases were counted separately. The variables were considered separately even though one could claim that by assuming that these women enjoyed the acts, men were performing acts of violence. This, however, is not the position of this study’s researcher.

Finally, it should be reemphasized that the construction of the dependent variable was done with a specific definition of sexual violence in mind. One might wonder whether the construction of the dependent variable, which was done with some degree of personal judgment, created an artificial statistical relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables. Although the data was compiled in a systematical process, it is clear that a study of this sort also invites a certain degree of discretion and interpretation by the researcher. Therefore, it is plausible that this study is sensitive both to the definition

chosen for sexual violence and to the judgment of the researcher in assembling the database. In other words, it is not inconceivable that changes in the definition of sexual violence could result in different findings.

## Findings

*Descriptive Statistics*

The database for this study is composed of six groups. This section provides an overview of the similarities and the differences between these groups, which will help assess the hypotheses of this study and will serve as the basis for an econometric analysis.

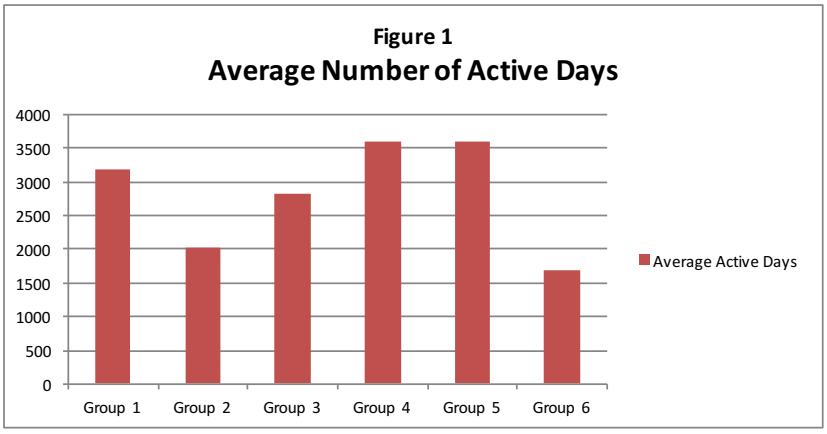



Figure 1 above demonstrates the average amount of active days in the portal for each of the six groups.[57] This data refers to the entire period in which the portal has been active. Groups 4 and 5 – Reliable Sex Reporter with a Future and Contributing Sex Reporter with a Future – have the highest average of a little more than 3600 days. In other words, these groups contain, on average, the most senior members of the portal. Group 1, Reliable Sex Reporter on The King's Highway, has the third highest average with approximately 3200 days. Group 6, Active Users, has the lowest average with approximately 1700 days. This result is not surprising. As mentioned before, group 6 is the largest group and is based

on a threshold of 100 posts per user. Thus, most of its users are considered relatively new members of the portal.[58]

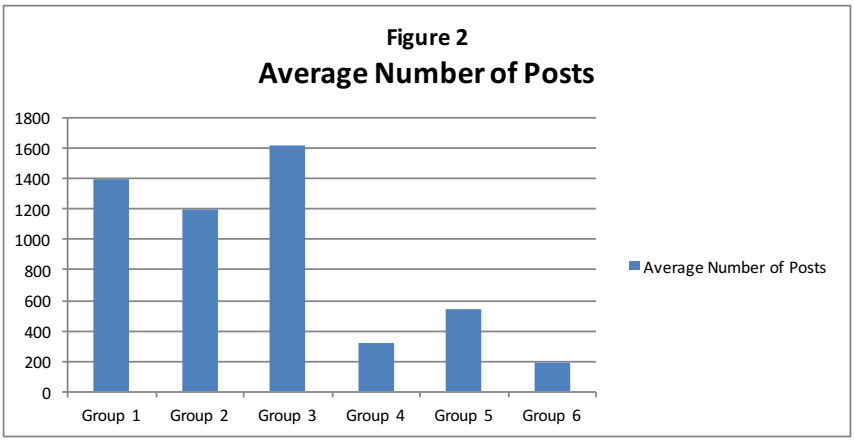
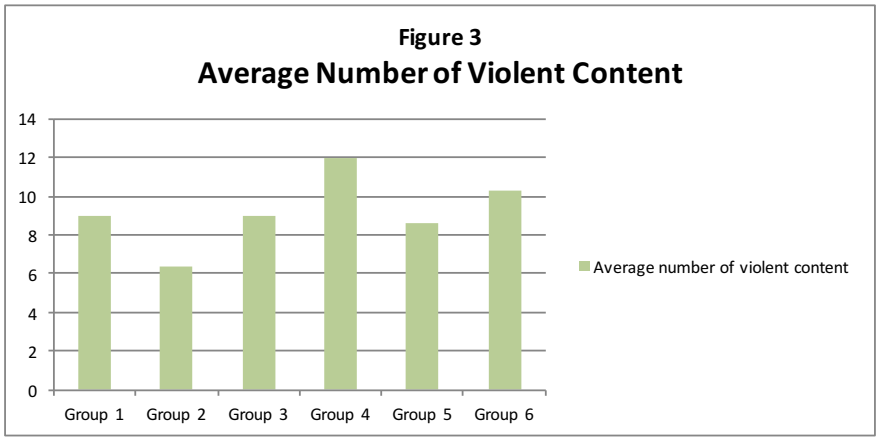



Figure 2 demonstrates the average of the total number of posts for each group in the portal. As mentioned above, the data here as well refers to the entire period in which the portal has been active. The total number of posts for each user in a certain group was summed with the rest of the group's members and the result was divided by the number of users in the group. The members of group 3, Reliable Reporter – Honorary Member of the Israeli Hall of "Players" – have the highest average with a little more than 1600 posts. This group has nine members that might be the nucleus of the portal's sample in terms of recommendations and general engagement in the portal. The second highest average is of group 1 with approximately 1400 posts.

Not surprisingly, groups 4-6 have the lowest average. One can assume that groups 4 and 5 are not as prestigious as groups 1-3 based on their names – Reliable Sex Reporter with a Future and Contributing Sex Reporter with a Future. The word future is mentioned in the nicknames of both groups, which might imply that the members of these groups still have to develop and learn more before their comments could pass a new threshold of

quality and reliably defined by the portal operators. The result for group 6 is consistent with the result in Figure 1 – they are the newest members as well as the least active ones.

The results introduced so far do not reveal a connection between seniority and engagement in the portal except for in group 6. However, there might be a connection between one or even both of these characteristics and the level of violent phrases. The following figure displays the average number of violent phrases in the last five posts for members of each of the six groups.




As demonstrated in Figure 3, group 4 has the highest average of violent references in the last five posts per user – 12 references to sexual violence towards women in prostitution or uses of violent language when describing the sexual encounters with these women.[59] Group 4 has the highest average of active days in the portal while being one of the least active groups in the portal. In other words, these findings combined might imply that long-term passive membership in the portal can encourage violent behavior and legitimize it in the eyes of the consumers of prostitution services. However, due to the fact that this group includes only ten members, it is not possible to reach a definite conclusion based on these results. In addition, group 6 has the second highest average of violent phrases in the last five posts per user with a little more than ten mentions. These results

could lead to the opposite conclusion that relatively new users are more violent than senior users. These potential conclusions will be examined in the next section.

Generally, groups 1 and 3 share similarities in all three figures. As for average number of active days in the portal, the first got 3200 days whereas the latter got about 2800 days. The average number of posts for group 1 was 1400 posts while members of group 3 posted 1600 on average. Finally, the average number of violent phrases in the last five posts per user in both groups was nine. These findings could indicate that there are similar characteristics between the two groups. However, due to insufficient data in the Sex Adir portal, it is impossible to continue this analysis.

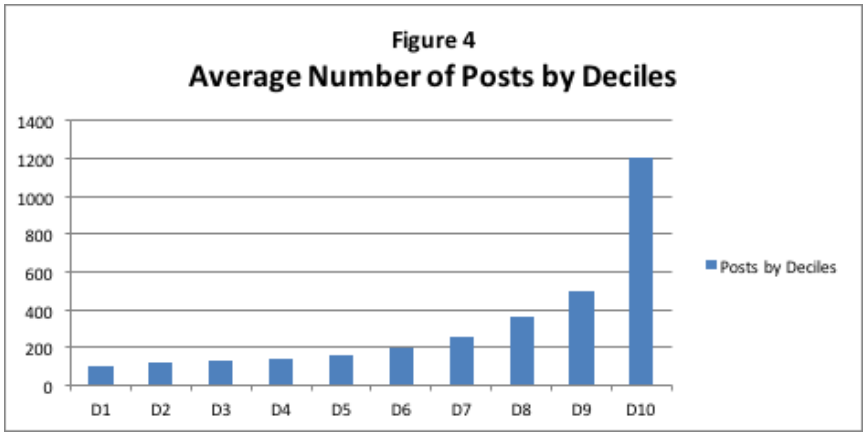



Figure 4 displays the distribution of the average number of posts of all 150 users in the database per decile, when each decile represents 15 users.[60] For example, the first decile, D1, shows the 15 users with fewest posts. One obvious trend revealed here is that while the slope of deciles D1-D9 increases monotonically and gradually, the slope between D9 and D10 is significantly sharper. The ninth decile has an average of roughly 500 posts whereas the tenth has an average of approximately 1200 posts. This gap means that there are 15 users in the database that represent the "nucleus" of the sample. They are extremely engaged in the portal – more than two-fold compared to the next highest average.[61]

*Econometric Analysis*

Econometric analysis is the empirical field of economics. This analysis aids in examining and assessing the validity and accuracy of a research hypothesis. As mentioned in the methodology section, this analysis tries to explain what influences a user in the portal to be more violent in his posts in both direct and indirect ways. "Direct" refers to the use sexual violence towards a woman in prostitution and "indirect" refers to violent language to describe sexual encounters with certain women.

**Table 1**

| Variables | (1) Violent_content | (2) Violent_content | (3) Violent_content | (4) Violent_content |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | 9.292*** | 7.343*** | 5.732*** | 8.976*** |
| | (0.524) | (1.011) | (1.837) | (0.565) |
| Girl_fun[62] | 1.759*** | 1.860*** | 1.843*** | 1.720*** |
| | (0.355) | (0.353) | (0.354) | (0.355) |
| Days_active_total[63] | -0.000464*** | -0.000421*** | -0.000473*** | -0.000482*** |
| | (0.000142) | (0.000142) | (0.000141) | (0.000142) |
| Group 6 | | 2.278** | | |
| | | (1.015) | | |
| Groups 4-6 | | | 3.704** | |
| | | | (1.833) | |
| No_exploitation[64] | | | | 0.653 |
| | | | | (0.447) |
| Observations | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| R-squared | 0.151 | 0.180 | 0.175 | 0.164 |

Standard errors in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

The column "Variables" describes the independent variables used in the analysis. Originally, six variables were tested. However, due to lack of information in the database or lack of significance, the following variables were omitted: "the user's average number of posts per day," "student/not student" and "the user is married/not married." Two new variables were added – "Group 6" and "Groups 4-6." Group 6 is the largest group, which includes the newest and least active members of the sample. As an independent variable, this group could help examine whether relatively new membership combined with low levels of engagement lead to less violent content. The independent variable, "Groups 4-6" consists of 142 users out of the 150 in the database. As noted earlier, members of these groups produced the lowest number of average of posts per user. This variable would help examine whether the assumption that relatively passive membership in the portal increases the number of violent phrases produced by each user is econometrically true.

As Table 1 shows, four regressions were used in this analysis, that is four different sets of independent variables to examine what makes users' content more violent and, as a result, might lead the prostitution industry in Israel on a more violent path.

Regression 1 includes the following variables:

$$Violent\ content = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * girl\_fun + \beta_2 * \ days\_active\_total.$$

This equation is the base case of the econometric analysis presented in this paper. It can be seen above that any mention of a woman's enjoyment during the sexual encounter or a depiction of her as a nymphomaniac by a user increased the number of violent phrases by 1.75. This connection is significant at the 1 percent level.[65] The second result indicates a weak negative correlation of –0.00046 between the user's seniority in the portal and the level of violence in his posts. This connection is significant at the 1 percent level.

Regression 2 includes the following variables:

$Violent\ content = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * girl\_fun + \beta_2 * days\_active\_total + \beta_3 * group\ 6.$

The connection between references to a woman's enjoyment and the number of violent phrases has not changed. References of this kind increase the number of violent phrases by 1.86. This connection is significant at the 1 percent level. The weak negative correlation between the user's seniority in the portal and the level of violence in his posts appears here as well and stands on –0.00042. This connection is significant at the 1 percent level. Furthermore, it can be seen that the members of group 6 had, on average, 2.27 more violent phrases than those who are not members of this group. This connection is significant at the 5 percent level.

The results of variables "group 6" and "days_active_total" can be interpreted in two ways. First, one could argue that long-term membership in the portal reduces the level of violence of users. An alternative explanation is that relatively new members have an inferior status on the ranking scale of the portal since they are automatically considered "active users" (members of group 6) once they posted over 100 posts. Thus, the use of violent language or mention of violent sexual acts is meant to establish their reputation and help them win the appreciation and recognition of senior members.

Members of the portal mainly reward reliable and contributing reporters. Many users provide positive feedback on a woman and note that they will share her contact information only with members they know or members who are engaged in the portal. They warn that they will ignore passive members. For example, User Tom2205 once stated on his recommendation, "anyone who is interested can contact me and get the details, provided that he is a 'proven contributor' to the portal."[66] Another example is the user

Tuvcmhmh, who noted at the end of a positive post that he "will provide the phone number to contributing users only."[67]

These examples show that there is an incentive for new members to build their status as reliable or contributing users. These criteria, set by senior and engaged members, signal to new users that they will have to work hard to get contact information of women who provide high quality services. Moreover, they signal that entry to this male online community must be approved, to a certain degree, by the rest of the members of the portal. Only true members are allowed to reap the benefits reserved for engaged portal provides.

Lahav-Raz's study supports this conclusion. The consumption of prostitution services has always been a ritual that provides manly confirmation. In the past, group rapes and collective visits to brothels were a prevailing way for men to validate their masculinity by partaking in violent actions. Today, this traditional male collectivity has been demolished. Instead, online sex portals gain dominance and constitute the modern "men clubs." These clubs justify and legitimate the purchase of prostitution services. Lahav-Raz claims that the ability to judge other users' posts introduces modern means of validating the masculinity of portal members. Thus, engagement is these portals creates a sense of recognition and belonging to the community of "real" men.[68]

Regression 3 includes the following variables:

$$Violent\ content = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * girl\_fun + \beta_2 * \ days\_active\_total + \beta_3 * groups\ 4 - 6.$$

The connection between references to a woman's enjoyment and the number of violent phrases has not changed. References of this kind increase the number of violent phrases by 1.84. This connection is significant at the 1 percent level. The weak negative correlation between the user's seniority in the portal and the level of violence in his posts

appears here as well and stands on –0.00047. This connection is significant at the 1 percent level. In addition, members of groups 4-6 had on average 3.7 more violent references than to the rest of the groups. This connection is significant at the 5 percent level. In other words, the assumption that relatively passive membership in the portal increases the number of violent phrases produced by each user is econometrically true. This result is consistent with the explanation provided above. Generally, violent content is a tool for new and passive members to attract the attention of senior members and to elevate their status in this closed online community faster.

Regression 4 includes the following variables:

$Violent\ content = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * girl\_fun + \beta_2\ days\_active\_total + \beta_3 *$ no_exploitation.

The connection between references to a woman's enjoyment and the number of violent phrases has not changed. References of this kind increase the number of violent phrases by 1.72. This connection is significant at the 1 percent level. The weak negative correlation between the user's seniority in the portal and the level of violence in his posts appears here as well and stands on –0.00048. This connection is significant at the 1 percent level. In addition, any comment according to which consumption of sexual services does not entail exploitation has a positive but not significant impact on the level of violent phrases. Any reference of this kind increases the number of violent phrases by 0.65.

Generally, in all four regressions the R-squared is relatively low and is no more than 20%: $R^2 = 0.15$ for regression 1, $R^2 = 0.18$ for regression 2, $R^2 = 0.17$ for regression 3 and $R^2 = 0.16$ for regression 4. In other words, the explanatory power of these regressions is relatively low. This means that there are some unobservable characteristics that affect the level of violence of portal users. This finding is not surprising, since several useful variables

could not be explored due to the anonymity of the users: age, income, socio-economic status, marital status, etc. However, this analysis still provides important information about significant explanatory variables that contribute to an understanding of the influences on the level of violence of the users.

In conclusion, there are three key takeaways from the studies presented in this section. First, attempts by new users of the portal, mainly members from group 6, to win the appreciation of senior and experienced members and become an integral part of this online community increase their level of violence. Second, it was seen that this conclusion is true not only for new members but also for members that are relatively passive in the portal – mainly members from groups 4-6. Finally, the perception of women in prostitution as "sex freaks" or as women who enjoy their work helps legitimate the violence of customers of prostitution services who are more inclined towards violence.

Ultimately, this study claims that the engagement of consumers of prostitution services in sex forums could re-shape the prostitution industry as well as exacerbate the already violent experience of women in prostitution. The following section will provide policy alternatives that could help mitigate the negative impact of these trends on the prostitution industry in Israel and create a safer environment for women in prostitution.

*Future Research*

As mentioned in the methodology section, the database of this research study was built manually by randomly selecting 150 users and analyzing 750 posts in total. This process generated two main issues. The first is that it made it difficult to reach statistical significance due to the small sample. The second and the more problematic of the two is

that the dependent variable of this research, the user's level of violence, contains a certain level of personal judgment that may have affected the statistical results presented above.

Future research could benefit from a program that will automatically sample observations. This program, which would allow a researcher to analyze thousands of observations, will solve the first issue and could potentially reduce the effect of personal judgement. Not only would it create a greater data set that will strengthen the statistical significance but it would also minimize the discretion and sensitivity of the method in which the dependent variable was constructed.

This change in methodology would replace an econometric research based on a small sample with a Big Data research that will be conducted without an estimated model. This Big Data research will be based on the examination of correlations in thousands of observations. This expanded scope will help produce a list of several dozens of most common expressions used by portal members. This list of common expressions, some more violent and others less violent, may assist in predicting the characteristics of the user who has the highest probability of writing certain expressions. For instance, this Big Data research could help determine if a user's seniority affects the probability that he would write the phrase "she was not worth the money."

This future research will identify common expressions and build the statistical profile of the average user who wrote them. This solution can minimize the researcher's involvement in counting the violent expressions and will allow readers to personally assess the level of violence of each common expression. In addition, it will provide a means of ranking the data based on levels of violence and analyze the differences between different standards of definitions for sexual violence. This process will minimize the influence of the

researcher's personal judgment and will allow greater flexibility in examining the sensitivity of the tests, which determine what sexual violence is.

**Policy Recommendations**

The following section explores three legal models of addressing the problem of clients' violence against women in prostitution: legalization of prostitution, criminalization of the consumers, and criminalization of consumers alongside mandatory educational rehabilitation program for individuals convicted of prostitution-consumption offenses.

*Legalization and Regulation of Prostitution*

Supporters of the legalization of prostitution argue that this policy creates a safer and healthier environment for women in prostitution. They claim that legalization promotes the well being of these women, as it provides them with health, social, sexual, and labor rights. Based on a liberal worldview that sanctifies the freedom of choice, legislators, policy makers, and organizations around the world support this alternative. The International Committee of the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe is one example of an organization that advocates for the institutionalization of prostitution, while highlighting sex workers' "right to work, to free choice of employment, and to just and favorable working conditions."[69]

Another argument for legalization of prostitution is that it could contributes to the public order and relieves some of the burden on the legal system. Should the Israeli government choose this policy, it could protect individuals involved in voluntary prostitution and forcefully react to involuntary prostitution.[70]

A main example of a country that adopted this legal model is the Netherlands. The Dutch government issues licenses to businesses such as bawdy houses, intimate massage companies, Windows, clubs, etc. These permits force the owners "to follow the criteria outlined by the government."[71] Thus, legalization of prostitution helps define strict behavioral limits for consumers of prostitution and prevent situations in which consumers abuse their powers during their encounters with women in prostitution.

However, these standards could also lead women to other unsupervised industries, where they will not receive the same protection. The regulation of prostitution in the Netherlands led to the growth in the country's escort services industry, which is more difficult to monitor.[72] This trend was enabled by the lack of uniform municipal policy for the regulation of escort services and maybe more importantly, by the pervasiveness of the internet.[73,74] Through the internet, clients can make unauthorized and unregulated arrangements with women in prostitution. It has been claimed that this illegal sector is substantially larger than the regulated sector of prostitution in Netherlands.[75]

Generally, government studies of the effects of prostitution legalization in the Netherlands show that this measure did not have the expected results in terms of protecting sex workers and guaranteeing their rights. Approximately 50% of women in prostitution state that the new prostitution laws did not improve their well-being, did not create a safer environment for them or reduce the occurrence of criminal acts. Studies show that due to the high level of violence in prostitution, it is almost impossible to assure the safety of these women.[76] In addition, women in prostitution usually do not have complete information about their rights or an understanding of their legal status. Most women who enter this industry know very little on how to protect their health and avoid

sexually transmitted diseases.[77,78] Thus, this legal model cannot guarantee that women engaged in prostitution would be able to enjoy the basic rights of safety and health.

*The Criminalization of the Act of Purchasing Prostitution Services*

The alternative of criminalization of the act to purchase prostitution services recognizes the vulnerability of women in prostitution and views consumers as the exploiting party in these power relations. As mentioned in the Literature Review section, this legal model is currently being debated in the Israeli Knesset.[79] However, this research suggests that the criminalization of the purchasing of prostitution services is not a sufficient solution for the elimination of prostitution. While criminalization could deter some clients, others who would have to risk more to consume prostitution services could violently demand greater value for their money.[80]

The findings of this research show that participation in an anonymous online community of sex portals reinforces the perspectives of portal members, who view themselves as legitimate consumers. Moreover, this "members only" club encourages new users to be more violent in order to feel accepted and appreciated by senior users. This study also indicates that men who purchase prostitution services hold misguided views of women in prostitution. They believe that many of them are nymphomaniacs who love their job and enjoy aggressive sexual acts. As a result, they treat these women more violently.

Another matter that should be addressed when considering this legal model is the fact that prostitution is an open market. Thus, attempts to reduce demand in one market might increase the demand in another. When the members of Sex Adir portal discuss possible changes in prostitution laws in Israel, many of them simply state that they would

turn to prostitution services in other countries, mainly in Europe and Thailand. The user Sex_Master, for example, claimed that the new law "is a conspiracy to encourage sex tourism abroad."[81] A different user, Lexer, said: "the new law will encourage me to purchase sexual services abroad only. I have been considering it for a while now… since my last sex vacations in Germany and Switzerland, which exposed me to high quality services and an infinite supply. This is despite the fact that the supply and quality in Israel have greatly improved in the last couple of years."[82]

Ultimately, criminalization of prostitution consumption would not be an effective long-term solution, since it would not create the desired transformation in men's attitudes towards women in prostitution. Men, who will seek sexual services abroad, will still hold similar beliefs about women in prostitution and maintain the power imbalance between genders. Thus, this paper suggests that in addition to changing the legal status of consumers of prostitution services, the policy should be accompanied by an educational program that will fundamentally change consumers' perceptions of women in prostitution.

The new prostitution law currently discussed in Israel allows men to choose between paying a fine and attending a "preventive training course."[83] However, by leaving the decision in the hands of the consumers, the Israeli government fosters the continued ignorance of the offenders, who could avoid all information about the cruel realities women in prostitution face. By doing so, the proposed system might not fully deter violent consumers, the ones whose thinking is imbued with misconceptions about women in prostitution. Thus, criminalization in the shape of a 1250 NIS fine, might not be as effective as a combination of criminalization and *mandatory* educational and rehabilitative program.

*The Combination of Criminalization and Mandatory Educational and Rehabilitative Program*

This paper argues that this legal model could effectively mitigate the problems of the prostitution industry in Israel. Alongside the important role that criminalization will play in decreasing the demand for prostitution, rehabilitative programs will help educate clients on the experiences of women in prostitution. As mentioned above, the consumers of prostitution services are captive in the myth that prostitution is a profession that women who are "sex freaks" voluntarily choose. Thus, a mandatory educational program, in an Israeli "John School," could play a significant role in reducing demand for prostitution services by exposing the social and cultural assumptions that underlie clients' attitudes towards prostitutes.[84]

The first "John School" was established in 1995 in San Francisco, California. Today, there are dozens of John Schools around the world – 48 centers in the United States, one in South Korea, 20 in Canada and 15 in England.[85] In San Francisco, first-time offenders who were convicted in purchasing prostitution services attend a one-day session under the First Offender Prostitution Program. The charges against offenders who complete the workshop are dropped if they refrain from committing similar offenses within one year of their attendance.[86]

The school curriculum in San Francisco features six areas that "generally correspond to separate sessions within each John School class": prostitution law and street facts; health education and the health risks women in prostitution face daily; the mental and physical effects of prostitution on prostitutes; the dynamics of pimping, recruiting, and trafficking; the effects of prostitution on the community; and sexual addiction.[87]

The administrative costs of 12 years of the program in San Francisco amounted to

approximately $244,000 – an annual average cost of $20,000.[88] However, the program also produced revenue of over $3.1 million from 1995 to 2007. These funds were used to support the school's program and additional programs for women and girls involved in prostitution.[89] The annual average number of participants in each class from 1995 to 2007 was 442 participants.[90]

More importantly, this program has significant positive results:

- *The program has significantly reduced recidivism among men arrested for soliciting prostitutes* in San Francisco after the first program started. The decline in recidivism occurred although many of the participants in the program reported that the training had no impact on the probability they will re-purchase prostitution services. These statistics suggest that the program produced a positive change in the behavior of participants, even if they do not testify to a change in approach towards the act of purchasing prostitution services and towards women in prostitution.[91] The National Institute of Justice states that "the reduction was not the result of displacement of sex purchasing or other significant shifts that would explain the decline in reoffending, a finding that strongly suggests that the First Offender Prostitution Program was responsible for the change."[92,93]
- *The program is cost-effective*. The program does not rely on taxpayers' money and is funded in full by the participants.[94] Furthermore, the program produces revenue that could be directed to the rehabilitation of women in prostitution, not just offenders.

## Conclusion

Consumers of prostitution services have several misconceptions about women in prostitution that influence them to be more violent towards such women. Whether they do so in an attempt to be validated by a closed masculine community or believe that women in prostitution are sex freaks, their behavior cruelly impacts the already harsh realities of women in prostitution.

The findings of this project indicate that a new policy, which aims at treating and educating men who purchase prostitution services, could be more effective and valuable. This research paper suggests that the criminalization of the purchase of sexual services alone could not be a long-term solution because it does not encourage a conceptual change in these men's attitudes. The consumers of prostitution services are victims of false ideologies that, with the increasing power of online sex portals, could resonate with men who do not share these views to begin with. They are victims who end up victimizing others – women in prostitution – and should, therefore, receive guidance and help. Thus, a mandatory educational and rehabilitative program for first-time offenders who purchased prostitution services can help end the cycle of victimhood.

Generally, this paper underscores that the elimination of the demand factor of prostitution is a process that must accompanied by ongoing attempts by policy makers and researchers to learn about the characteristics of the consumers of prostitution services and their attitudes towards women in prostitution. The establishment of a first official John School in Israel can pave the way for the familiarity of officials with this community of clients and by doing so, improve and adjust regulations that will assure the well-being of women in prostitution.

## Notes

1. New Israeli Shekels. As of July 6, 2017, the exchange rate is 1 CAD = 2.74 Israeli Shekels.
2. Ye'ela Lahav-Raz, "Behind the Discreet Curtain – Clients Discourses and the Internet as an Active Actor in the Sex Industry," *Ben-Gurion University of the Negev*, July 28, 2016, 103.
3. Susanne Dodillet and Petra Östergren, "The Swedish Sex Purchase Act: Claimed Success and Documented Effects," *Conference paper presented at the International Workshop: Decriminalizing Prostitution and Beyond: Practical Experiences and Challenges*, March 3, 2011, 1-2, Accessed on July 21, 2017, http://www.plri.org/sites/plri.org/files/Impact%20of%20Swedish%20law_0.pdf.
4. Israel, "Penal Code – 1977," Chapter 8: Harm to the regime and social order, Section 10: Prostitution and Obscenity, 83-87, Accessed on June 30, 2017, http://www.health.gov.il/LegislationLibrary/Veter14.pdf.
5. Rachel Tal-Hadar, "The Perceptions of Consumers of Prostitution About the Use of Paid Sex and the Interactions with Their Male Identity," *Tel Aviv University*, March, 2015, 65.
6. Lia Levin and Einat Peled, "The Attitudes Toward Prostitutes and the Prostitution Scale: A New Tool for Measuring Attitudes Toward Prostitutes and Prostitution," *Research on Social Work Practice* (2011): 582-593.
7. Ye'ela Lahav-Raz, "Behind the Discreet Curtain – Clients Discourses and the Internet as an Active Actor in the Sex Industry," *Ben-Gurion University of the Negev*, July 28, 2016, 17.
8. Data collection started in 2008.
9. Israel, Ministry of Welfare and Social Services, *"The National Survey on Prostitution in Israel,"* December 2015, 22-26.
10. Ibid., 54.
11. Ibid., 58.
12. Ibid., 60.
13. Ibid., 45.
14. New Israeli Shekels. As of July 6, 2017, the exchange rate is 1 CAD = 2.74 Israeli Shekels.
15. Israel, Ministry of Welfare and Social Services, *"The National Survey on Prostitution in Israel,"* December 2015, 34.
16. As of July 2017.

17. Vered Lee, "Who are the Members of the Knesset that Support in the Criminalization of Consumers of Prostitution Services?," *Haaretz*, April 22, 2017, Accessed on July 6, 2017, http://www.haaretz.co.il/blogs/veredlee/1.4038138.
18. Thirty-eight MKs are signed on this bill and expressed their support – about 30% of the members in the Knesset.
19. Meretz defines itself as the leading left wing party in Israel.
20. HaBayit HaYehudi in Hebrew. The party is identified with the religious Zionist public in Israel.
21. Yarden Ben Gal Hirschhorn, "The Joint Battle e of Zahava Galon and Shuli Moalem: The Elimination of Prostitution in Israel," *Onlife*, December 13, 2016, Accessed on July 10, 2017, https://goo.gl/mjuKfc.
22. "About Us," *Task Force on Human Trafficking and Prostitution*, Accessed on July 6, 2017, http://tfht.org/about-us/.
23. Moran Azoulay, "The Ministers Approved: You Purchased Prostitution Services? You Have Committed a Criminal Offense," *Ynet*, July 16, 2017, Accessed on July 17, 2017, https://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4989858,00.html.
24. Zehava Galon and Shuli Mualem-Rafaeli, *A Bill on the National Battle Against the Consumption of Prostitution, and the Assistance for Women Who Survived Prostitution – 2017*, Jerusalem, The Twentieth Knesset: Private Bills, Episode 2, Accessed on July 10, 2017, https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:5LyOe63_V2MJ:https://www.nevo.co.il/law_word/Law04/20_lst_381857.doc+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=il.
25. Ibid.
26. Israel, the Knesset, Research and Information Center, "Criminalization of Consumers of Prostitution: Key Issues," September 23, 2008, 5, Accessed on January 2, 2017, https://www.knesset.gov.il/mmm/data/pdf/m02820.pdf.
27. Steven P. Sawyer and Michael E. Metz, "The Attitudes Toward Prostitution Scale: Preliminary Report on its Development and Use," *International journal of offender therapy and comparative criminology* 53, no. 3 (2009): 336-337.
28. Ibid., 336-337.
29. Ibid., 344.
30. Ibid., 341-342.
31. I wish to thank Dr. Ye'ela Lahav-Raz for sharing her paper with me and being an aspiration for this capstone project.
32. Ye'ela Lahav-Raz, "Behind the Discreet Curtain – Clients Discourses and the Internet as an Active Actor in the Sex Industry," *Ben-Gurion University of the Negev*, July 28, 2016, 11.

33. Ibid., 17-18.
34. Ibid., 31-37.
35. Ibid., 71-73.
36. Ibid., 31-32.
37. Ibid., 74-75.
38. Cass R. Sunstein, *Republic.com 0.2*, Princeton University Press, 2007, 60-64.
39. Ibid., 70.
40. Great sex in Hebrew.
41. "About Section," *Sex Adir Portal*, Accessed June 27, 2017, http://www.sexadir.co.il/page.asp?PageID=2.
42. Cecilia Benoit and Leah Shumka, "Sex Work in Canada," Centre for Addictions Research of BC, University of Victoria, May 7, 2015, http://www.understandingsexwork.com/sites/default/files/uploads/2015%2005%2007%20Benoit%20%26%20Shumka%20Sex%20Work%20in%20Canada_1.pdf.
43. Ibid.
44. To avoid the use of inappropriate language, this section does not include the full posts. The average violent content in each user's five posts that are in the database is 9.3.
45. To view the full post (in Hebrew), see: http://www.sexadir.co.il/forum/forum_posts.asp?TID=46267&KW=&PID=349781#349781.
46. To view the full post (in Hebrew), see: http://www.sexadir.co.il/forum/forum_posts.asp?TID=32638&KW=&PID=260183#260183.
47. To view the full post (in Hebrew), see: http://www.sexadir.co.il/forum/forum_posts.asp?TID=53430&KW=&PID=391456#391456.
48. The king's highway is a phrase that means the correct and convenient way to achieve a goal.
49. A male who is skilled at manipulating ("playing") others, and especially at seducing women by pretending to care about them, when they are only interested in sex.
50. See Appendix 1.
51. Ranking rules in Sex Adir Portal, *Sex Adir portal*, Accessed June 10, 2017, http://www.sexadir.co.il/forum/forum_posts.asp?TID=40714.
52. During the process of analysis, the researcher created several more dummy variables that will be explained in the next section.
53. To view the full post (in Hebrew), see: http://www.sexadir.co.il/forum/forum_posts.asp?TID=53982&KW=&PID=397029#397029.

54. To view the full post (in Hebrew), see: http://www.sexadir.co.il/forum/forum_posts.asp?TID=44354&KW=&PID=356800#356800.
55. To view the full post (in Hebrew), see: http://www.sexadir.co.il/forum/forum_posts.asp?TID=55498&KW=&PID=406411#406411.
56. To view the full post (in Hebrew), see: http://www.sexadir.co.il/forum/forum_posts.asp?TID=44691&KW=&PID=342919#342919.
57. See Appendix 1 for more information about the group sizes.
58. See Appendix 2 for more information about Figures 1-3.
59. In the last five posts of each user.
60. See Appendix 3 for more information about Figure 4.
61. Due to the limited size of the sample, the composition of the tenth decile in terms of groups does not provide useful information and thus, this paper does not include it.
62. Number of times user mentions that the girl had fun.
63. Duration of time the user has been a portal member.
64. Number of times user argues that there is no exploitation in the purchase of prostitution services.
65. The results can be significant at the 1 percent level, the 5 percent level and the 10 percent level. The lower the percent level, the more significant the result is. In this study, level of 5 percent or lower is considered to be significant.
66. To view the full post (in Hebrew), see: https://goo.gl/fn7xtQ.
67. To view the full post (in Hebrew), see: http://www.sexadir.co.il/forum/forum_posts.asp?TID=54107&KW=&PID=398793#398793.
68. Ye'ela Lahav-Raz, "Behind the Discreet Curtain – Clients Discourses and the Internet as an Active Actor in the Sex Industry," *Ben-Gurion University of the Negev*, July 28, 2016, 47.
69. Rochelle L. Dalla Lynda M. Baker, John Defrain, and Celia Williamson, eds, *Global Perspectives on Prostitution and Sex Trafficking: Europe, Latin America, North America, and Global*, Vol. 2, Lexington Books, 2011: 6.
70. Manpreet Abrol, "The Criminalization of Prostitution: Putting Women's Lives at Risk," *Prandium: The Journal of Historical Studies at U of T Mississauga 3*, no. 1 (2014): 6.
71. Ibid., 7.
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## Appendix

*Appendix 1*

| Name of group | Number of users in each group | Weight of group | How many users from each group in the database | Users as integers |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reliable sex reporter on the king's highway (group 1) | 2 | 0.003062787 | 0.45941807 | 1 |
| Active sex reporter on the king's highway (group 2) | 22 | 0.033690658 | 5.053598775 | 5 |
| Reliable reporter – Honorary member of the Israeli hall of "players" (group 3) | 9 | 0.013782542 | 2.067381317 | 2 |
| Reliable sex reporter with a future (group 4) | 10 | 0.015313936 | 2.297090352 | 2 |
| Contributing sex reporter with a future (group 5) | 101 | 0.15467075 | 23.20061256 | 23 |
| Active users (group 6) | 509 | 0.779479326 | 116.9218989 | 117 |
| **Total** | 653 | | | 150 |

*Appendix 2*

| | Average Number of Posts | Average Active Days | Day_Posts | Average number of violent content |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Group 1** | 1391 | 3198 | 42 | 9 |
| **Group 2** | 1201.4 | 2028.2 | 33.072 | 6.4 |
| **Group 3** | 1612.5 | 2812 | 54.5 | 9 |
| **Group 4** | 325 | 3608 | 9 | 12 |
| **Group 5** | 541.5652174 | 3610 | 26.43782609 | 8.565217391 |
| **Group 6** | 195.4396552 | 1699.810345 | 15.10344828 | 10.26724138 |

*Appendix 3*

| Decile | Posts by Deciles |
|---|---|
| D1 | 104.7333333 |
| D2 | 117.375 |
| D3 | 131.3125 |
| D4 | 144.6153846 |
| D5 | 157.4 |
| D6 | 198.4666667 |
| D7 | 254.3333333 |
| D8 | 367.1333333 |
| D9 | 500.2 |
| D10 | 1200.5 |