



COMILLAS
UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA

ICAI

ICADE

CIHS

Document Version

Accepted versión

Citation for published versión:

Meneses-Falcón, C., Rúa-Vieites, A., & García-Vázquez, O. (2024). The Perceptions of Prostitution, Sex Work, and Sex Trafficking among Young People in Spain. *Sociological Research Online*, 29(4), 1016-1035. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13607804231212306>

General rights

This manuscript version is made available under the CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0 licence (<https://web.upcomillas.es/webcorporativo/RegulacionRepositorioInstitucionalComillas.pdf>).

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact Universidad Pontificia Comillas providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim

The Perceptions of Prostitution, Sex Work and Sex Trafficking among young people in Spain

Abstract

This article analyses the viewpoints of Spanish youth regarding prostitution, sex workers and their opinions on what the law surrounding sex work should be. Spain is currently in the grip of a great debate, tending to adopt the punishment of sex buyers. To investigate this issue, 3126 young participants aged 16-30 were surveyed through an online questionnaire in December 2020, which consisted of 21 questions. A factor analysis revealed three distinct perceptions of prostitution falling into three categories: “As a choice” (22.8%), “as coercive” (27.9%) and “as economic necessity” (49.3%). Correspondingly, the legal positions on prostitution varied depending on the perceptions of paid sex: viewing prostitution “as coercive” was associated with the criminalisation of prostitution, while considering sex work “as a choice” was related to the regulation of prostitution. In conclusion, the young Spaniards surveyed do not consider all those who offer paid sex as victims of trafficking; instead, they differentiate based on the connection between trafficking and the sex industry. These diverse perceptions contribute to policy recommendations aimed at preventing the negative consequences of prostitution, implementing harm reduction measures to safeguard sex workers, and moving beyond dichotomous policies of criminalization and regulation.

Keywords: prostitution, sex work, victim, sex worker, social perception, youth

INTRODUCTION

Background

Sex work is one of the most controversial activities in contemporary societies, drawing varying conceptions from academic, political, and social action contexts, such as NGOs. In Spain, in June 2022, the government introduced legislation with the aim of eradicating prostitution by criminalizing those who pay for sexual services. This legal proposal derives from the debate between different feminist perspectives and the anti-trafficking campaigns developed in Spain, reflecting similar debates and discussions that have taken place in other countries (Harrington, 2012). Presently, Spain's stance on prostitution is alegal, meaning it exists in a legal gray area, neither explicitly prohibited nor regulated. Despite the extensive media and political debate, little research has been done on people's opinions, attitudes and perspective regarding prostitution. Furthermore, there has been little discussion on whether amendments to the criminal code are necessary to address offenses related to prostitution. This paper aims to contribute to filling this gap.

Related and important aspects in many European countries are: the association of sex work with human trafficking as synonymous or closely related activities (Vanwesenbeeck, 2017); the perception or belief that all women engaged in prostitution are somehow coerced or forced to do so (Bettio, Giusta, and Di Tommaso, 2017); and the scarcity of rigorous data or the distorted use of existing data, which often justify restrictive policies on sex work and immigration across Europe (Feingold, 2011; Meneses-Falcón and Urío, 2021; Weitzer, 2014).

Positions or views regarding prostitution

Feminist approaches to sex work are diverse and nuanced, but they can generally be summarized into two main viewpoints (Di Nicola, Orfano, Cauduro and Conci, 2005). One theoretical perspective uses the term “prostitution” rather than “sex work” because it does not considered work (Sullivam, 2005). Within this perspective, prostitution is viewed as a form of violence against women or gender-based violence, thus perpetuating inequality and discrimination (Bindel, 2017). According to this line, prostitution is a consequence of patriarchy, which uses and commercializes women's bodies to satisfy men's sexual desires (Raymond, 2004). Consequently, women engaged in prostitution are considered victims, and no distinction is made between voluntary prostitution and sex trafficking (Farley, 2006). The notion of women's free choice is neither understood nor

1
2
3 accepted; instead, this activity is seen to be chosen because of external pressure, whether
4 from a pimp, limited alternatives or patriarchal structures that push women into
5 prostitution (Doezema, 2016). Therefore, the aim is to penalise the actors who contribute
6 to maintaining this inequality (clients, pimps or club owners), while women are perceived
7 as victims of the patriarchal system and would therefore not be penalised (Niemi, 2010).
8
9 This theoretical perspective seeks to criminalise the activity prevent the exploitation of
10 women's bodies in a capitalist system that buys and sells everything, and which is a
11 violation of human rights (Cobo, 2016). This perspective has generated much debate
12 around sexuality, prostitution and pornography. Initially, this perspective held a
13 moralistic and socially deviant viewpoint but has now evolved into a neo-abolitionist
14 feminist position (Bernstein, 2012). Therefore, it understands the gender perspective by
15 associating prostitution with sex trafficking and creating a social sensitivity from
16 trafficking against prostitution (Tarantino, 2021).
17
18

19
20 The other theoretical perspective, often referred to as pro-sex work feminism, understands
21 the transformations that contemporary society has undergone in sex and intimacy
22 (Giddens, 1995). Within this understanding, a new culture of sex, sexuality and new forms
23 of sexual experience has emerged (Agustín, 2005; Attwood 2006). Women in sex work
24 are seen as individuals who make their own decisions. Faced with limited job
25 opportunities, they opt for those activities that are most profitable and compatibility with
26 family responsibilities (Sanders, 2004). While it is recognised that sex work has an impact
27 on women, it is seen more as a consequence of the conditions under which they have to
28 work, and the associated stigma, rather than prostitution itself (Vanwesenbeeck, 2017).
29
30 Furthermore, two aspects mentioned above are key to understand this perspective: first,
31 the recognition of the agency of adult women who make their own decisions, so feminism
32 cannot treat them as voiceless (Tarantino, 2021); second, the notion that stigma serves as
33 an instrument of control of female sexuality within patriarchal and heterosexual culture.
34
35 Some authors argued that this stigma can be removed by normalising and positioning sex
36 work as a job with rights and obligations (Weitzar, 2018). Other authors stated that sex
37 work can be understood as a challenge to patriarchy (Juliano, 2002), and a means of
38 redistribution of economic wealth between men and women, taking advantage of women's
39 greater erotic capital (Hakim, 2010). Moreover, sex work is believed to enhance economic
40 growth, globalisation -through increased mobility- and a more tolerant attitude towards
41 women sexuality (Hakim, 2015). The lack of recognition of sex work as an employment
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 or survival possibility for women is linked with broader social concerns such as migration
4 or gender-based violence (Weitzer, 2006). This view advocates either the regulation of
5 sex work or rather the granting of rights to sex workers along the lines of the New Zealand
6 model (Armstrong and Abel, 2020). From this theoretical position, the aim is to enhance
7 the working conditions of sex workers, with decriminalisation seen as means of
8 improving their human rights (Abel, 2014). It has been reflected that the stigma associated
9 with prostitution may not be caused by the activity itself but rather to specific sexual
10 politics (Zatz, 1997). Although the fully or partially criminalised of sex work in many
11 countries, this fact does not prevent many women from engaging in such activity
12 (Tarantino, 2021).

13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21 These two views have been called oppression models or abolitionist policies on one hand,
22 and empowerment models or harm reduction policies on the other (Aronowitz, 2014;
23 Skilbrei, 2019). Furthermore, there is a close relationship between the different
24 viewpoints within the feminist movement, the various sexual policies adopted by different
25 society, the understanding of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, and the criminal
26 justice system (Bernstein, 2012). Regardless of regulation in their region, individuals
27 engaged in prostitution faced multiple forms of discrimination, including healthcare,
28 housing, employment opportunities, legal proceedings, social integration, and public
29 condemnation (Jordan, 2005).

36 37 **Previous studies on attitudes to prostitution**

38
39
40 Prostitution or sex work is seen in a polarized manner. On the one hand, and simplifying
41 the positions significantly, it is often perceived as an immoral occupation associated with
42 criminal activities, gender violence and human trafficking. On the other hand, it is seen
43 as a job or occupation that should be regulated under labour laws, with rights and working
44 conditions, as it meets the needs of many women who are excluded from the formal labour
45 market (Ma, Chan and Loke, 2017; Outshoorn, 2004). These perspectives generate
46 different attitudes and perceptions in the population. The perception and portrayal of
47 individuals involved in prostitution have been explored among professionals and the
48 general public, to a lesser extent among young people. This is a demographic that may be
49 involved in both demand and supply sides and may hold positive or discriminatory
50 attitudes towards women engaged in prostitution.
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 Focusing on the general population, several studies have examined attitudes towards
4 people engaged in prostitution and towards the law in Spain. Attitudes towards
5 prostitution have been related to gender equality attitudes. Räsänen and Wilska (2007)
6 investigated attitudes towards commercial sex in a sample of Finnish students aged 18-
7 30 and found that men held more positive attitude than women. Jakobsson and Kotsadam
8 (2011) explored attitudes towards commercial sex in a sample of 1716 Norwegians and
9 1815 Swedes, and found a relationship between negative attitudes towards prostitution
10 with conservative views, as well as and positive views with gender equality. Similarly,
11 an international sample of 48630 participants from 53 countries revealed that favourable
12 attitudes towards gender equality and the religiosity of the population were linked to an
13 unfavourable view of prostitution, whereas high social status and weak beliefs in the
14 institution of marriage were more favourable to prostitution (Chon, 2015).
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23

24 Valor-Segura, Expósito and Morales (2011), in a study involving 620 Spaniards, found
25 that a legalising position was related to a benevolent perception of the sex buyer and a
26 tendency to view women as sex workers. Conversely, a prohibitionist position blamed the
27 woman engaged in prostitution for being assaulted by her clients. Levin and Peled (2011),
28 with a sample of 229 Israeli university students, tested a scale to measure attitudes
29 towards prostitution and prostitutes, and highlighted the view of prostitutes as victims and
30 deviants. Morton, Klein and Gorzalka (2012) surveyed 238 Canadian students on
31 perceptions of prostitution and concluded that there was greater coercion and
32 victimisation in female than in male prostitution, and that street prostitution had a more
33 negative perception than indoor one.
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41

42 Another Spanish study conducted through a telephone survey with a random sample of
43 1048 men showed that 81.9% believed that “prostitution should be regulated like any
44 other economic activity” and 93.6% understood that “women in prostitution engage in it
45 due to economic need” (Meneses, Rúa and Uroz, 2018). A recent study involving 1364
46 medical students in Sheffield (UK) has shown that students had little knowledge about
47 sex workers and expected prostitution should be legal in the UK to enhance their safety
48 (El Jassar, 2020).
49
50
51
52
53

54 Furthermore, Fernández-Cornejo et al. (2020), with a sample of 997 people aged 17-79,
55 highlighted that 72.7% of the sample favoured decriminalisation and 45.7% favoured
56 abolitionism. Women and those who considered prostitution as a form of violence tended
57 to support the abolition of prostitution. In addition, a systematic review of 49 publications
58
59
60

1
2
3 analysing attitudes towards prostitution showed that: 25 of these studies highlighting a
4 greater tolerance towards prostitution in the last 20 years; 6 studies showed negative
5 attitudes towards sex workers; outdoor prostitution face more condemnation than indoor
6 prostitution, and prejudice and stigma towards sex workers persisted; 7 studies were
7
8 against the legalisation of prostitution, while others supported it (Ma, Chan and Loke
9
10
11
12 2018).

13
14 The sex industry in Spain is linked with the country's culture, presenting a paradoxical
15 blend of moral repulsion and resigned toleration (Agustín, 2005). In this sense, the latest
16 national survey (CIS, 2023)¹ revealed that 32% of the Spanish sample believed that
17 “paying a woman for sex” should be punishable by law, 32.2% expressed that it was not
18 acceptable but should also not be subject to legal punishment, while 28.1% stated that it
19 was acceptable under certain circumstances. In this sense, much of the cultural perception
20 of prostitution and research in Spain traditionally focuses on women, with limited
21 exploration of the experiences of men (Miranda and Muñoz, 2023)² and trans women
22 (García-Vázquez, 2023)³.

23
24 As numerous authors have noted (Weitzer, 2009a; McCarthy et al., 2012;
25 Vanwesenbeeck, 2017), negative attitudes towards sex workers and the presence of
26 criminalising legislation can have a negative impact on the working conditions, and on
27 violence against sex workers. This can result in increased secrecy that leads to poorer
28 health and safety outcomes. It is therefore important to understand the attitudes and
29 opinions held by general population, particularly young people, regarding sex workers
30 and prostitution. This understanding can inform the awareness-raising campaigns that
31 align with these perceptions. A more tolerant view can contribute to reducing violence
32 and stigmatisation of sex workers. Young people's views towards sex workers may be
33 polarised and diverse, mirroring the ongoing debates in Spain. These questions lead to
34 the following objectives: 1) exploring the perspectives of young Spaniards' engage in
35 paid sex, 2) identifying the position or view of young people regarding potential
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

51
52
53 ¹ CIS-Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas. (Enero 2023). Encuesta sobre cuestiones de actualidad: la
54 violencia sexual contra las mujeres avance de resultados. Estudio nº 3393.

55 https://datos.cis.es/pdf/Es3393marMT_A.pdf

56 ² Miranda, G., & Muñoz, L. (2023). Caracterización de los Trabajadores Sexuales Masculinos en España
57 (2020-2021). *Interacción y perspectiva: Revista de Trabajo Social*, 13(2), 121-143.

58 ³ García-Vázquez, O. (2023). The experiences of Latina transgender women in prostitution in Spain
59 during Covid-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social and Community Studies*.

60 <https://doi.org/10.18848/2324-7576/CGP>

1
2
3 legislation in Spain, and 3) determining if any socio-demographic characteristic influence
4 attitudes towards legislation or sex workers.
5
6
7

8 **METHODOLOGY**

9
10 **Design.** This is a cross-sectional study conducted through an online sociological survey.
11 The questionnaire remained accessible for one month, from 30/11/2020 to 30/12/2020. In
12 addition. It was possible to answer the questionnaire using any technological device with
13 Internet access (including mobile phone, computer, tablet) via a provided link.
14 Participation in the survey was entirely voluntary.
15
16
17
18

19
20 **Sampling.** A two-pronged approach has been adopted. The main approach involved the
21 use of Twitter to map and identify the youth organisations throughout Spain. Numerous
22 youth organisations very different in their aims were approached for collaboration. These
23 included national and regional institutes, councils and official youth institutes, youth
24 associations or groups, youth from political parties at national and regional level, activist
25 youth associations related to migration, feminism and gender diversity, youth-focused
26 magazines and research institutions, non-profit organisations and religious groups
27 dedicated to youth. Youth-related associations were contacted via Twitter to facilitate the
28 dissemination of the questionnaire.
29
30
31
32
33
34

35
36 On the other hand, snowball sampling was used to a lesser extent. Contacts were reached
37 out to and requested to participate in the survey and encourage others to do the same. The
38 survey link was disseminated on multiple social media platforms, including Twitter,
39 Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and Instagram. In cases where youth organizations
40 lacked a social media presence, emails were utilized. The only exclusion criteria were
41 respondents' age (between 16 and 30 years old) and being based or located in Spain.
42 Consequently, organizations, regardless of their affiliations with prostitution, sex work,
43 or sex trafficking, were invited to partake in the study.
44
45
46
47
48
49
50

51 **Procedure.** The survey was conducted among young Spaniards, using social networks for
52 its dissemination (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn e Instagram). Various youth organizations
53 with diverse purposes, ages, and socio-demographic characteristics played a crucial role
54 in facilitating the survey's dissemination. These organizations included youth segments
55 of political parties with different ideologies, trade unions, NGOs, foundations, religious
56 organisations, youth associations, public bodies, educational centres, vocational training
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 entities, universities, researchers' websites, feminism activists and sexual contacts
4 websites.
5

6
7 The questionnaire consisted of 21 questions: 10 socio-demographic and control questions,
8 5 questions on opinions with Likert scale (disagree 1, strongly agree 4), 5 questions on
9 behaviours related to paid sex (with dichotomous responses) and 1 question on opinion
10 about what the law should be around sex work. Six reasons for engaging in prostitution
11 (for pleasure, normal work, economic necessity, having family members to care of, victim
12 of trafficking, debts incurred when coming to Spain) were recoded into dichotomous
13 variables (ticked or not). The socio-demographic characteristics of the selected women
14 offering sexual services included their nationality, their level of education, whether they
15 work, whether they have children and the respondents indicated their response in four
16 categories, with respondents indicating their perceptions in four categories. The
17 questionnaire was pre-tested with a group of 35 individuals to ensure that it was
18 comprehensible and suitable for the target population. The estimated completion time for
19 the questionnaire was 5 minutes. Despite its analytical depth and gender-focused
20 approach, the term "sex" was used instead of "gender" because the latter would have
21 necessitated multiple analytical responses and was not deemed sufficiently representative.
22 Similar to most studies involving young people, the questionnaire was specifically
23 designed to capture the perspectives of young Spaniards.
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35

36
37 **Participants.** A total of 3330 young people in Spain responded to the questionnaire, of
38 which 3126 met the specified criteria of age between 16 and 30 years. Most of the sample
39 came from the six Spanish provinces, namely Madrid, Asturias, Granada, Barcelona,
40 Salamanca, and Valencia. The vast majority of the sample currently reside in Spain
41 (98.9%), especially in municipalities with between 50 thousand and 500 thousand
42 inhabitants (52.6%). The average age of participants was 22.93 years, and the mode was
43 24 years.
44
45
46
47
48

49
50 **Ethics.** This research is part of a larger study that received approval from the authors'
51 University Ethics Committee. The survey ensured participant anonymity and
52 confidentiality by explicitly explaining these safeguards prior to initiating the
53 questionnaire. The research's purpose was also explained in the online questionnaire, so
54 there was an informed consent for the research. Furthermore, the socio-demographic data
55 requested did not identify the participants.
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 **Limitations.** This study has some limitations. Although a broad sample of Spanish youth
4 has been collected and the questionnaire has been disseminated in very different youth
5 social networks, it is not a representative sample. Consequently, there may exist other
6 views and perspectives that are not represented in this research. The absence of a
7 representative sample means that the findings of this study may not be generalizable to
8 the broader population of Spanish youth. Moreover, online surveys suffer from the
9 limitation that the identities of the questionnaire respondents remain unknown. While the
10 questionnaire was constructed along the lines of other similar questionnaires, the validity
11 of the instrument was not pursued. Furthermore, the chosen method also has
12 disadvantages, a quantitative methodology offers limited space for exploring the reasons
13 behind individuals' opinions. In addition, there exists ambiguity regarding how different
14 individuals interpret the 'choice points' on a Likert scale. A mixed method approach might
15 have been beneficial, it would have resulted in a longer article than the one presented.

16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26 **Analysis.** It started with a descriptive and bivariate analysis, followed by the multivariate
27 analyses to meet the objectives of the study. SPSS v.24 for Windows was used. A factor
28 analysis of the variables was carried out, showing how people who offer sex for money
29 were perceived, using principal components with Varimax rotation with Kaiser
30 normalisation, fulfilling the requirements demanded by this type of analysis
31 (KMO=0.645; Bartlett's test of sphericity (Approx. Chi-square= 3862.1, pvalue=0.000)).
32 Three sociologically significant dimensions or factors were obtained regarding
33 respondents' perceptions of people who sell sexual services.

34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41 In order to obtain a typology of perceptions based on the women in prostitution, the set
42 was segmented into different groups through a non-hierarchical K-means cluster analysis.
43 This multivariate technique obtained groups, segments or clusters that are different from
44 each other but internally homogeneous. This generates a certain typology about the
45 images of women in prostitution. The cluster analysis was carried out on the factors
46 obtained from the factorial analysis previously carried out on the initial set of variables,
47 which gathered information on the different motivations underlying perceptions about
48 women. Finally, multiple correspondence analyses relate the three cluster profiles found
49 with the fundamental socio-demographic variables (gender, age and education) and to
50 variables of legal view of prostitution.
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

RESULTS

The average age of the sample was 23 years ($s=3.51$), of which 28.3% ($n=884$) were male and the rest female ($n=2242$). It has been mentioned that women respond more than men on this topic because they are more concerned about it (Fernández-Cornejo, et al., 2020). The level of completed studies was: 5.4% secondary education ($n=169$), 33.4% high school ($n=1043$), 7.6% vocational training ($n=238$), 27.8% undergraduate university studies/bachelor ($n=870$), 24.6% postgraduate or master studies ($n=768$) and 1.2% doctoral studies ($n=38$).

In addition, 18.2% ($n=569$) of the sample knew someone who offered paid sexual services, and 1.3% ($n=40$) have offered paid sexual services. Regarding the reasons for offering sexual services, in the opinion of the young people of the sample, we found that the majority indicated *economic need* (93%), *victim of human trafficking* 82.6%, *having debts* 59.6%, *having relatives to care* 58.9%, *it is a normal job* 9.1% and *liking sex* 5.5%.

With the items that made up the survey question "What do you think is the most common profile of a person who offers sex for money?", with possible values 1: Not frequent; 2: Uncommon; 3; Frequent and 4 Very frequent, a factor analysis has been carried out, which is detailed in Table 1. The variable "STD / HIV infected" has not been considered, because it has a very low communality of 0.246. Three dimensions or factors stand out in relation to the image of people who sell sex. The first factor brings together the perception of these people as *victims* (those with a higher factor load with factor 1 being the items "It is forced", "It is a victim of TSH ..." and "It is minor"). The second factor brings together the variables involved in offering of sexual services out of economic necessity (those with a higher factor load with factor 2 being the items "Is unemployed or works part-time", "Has children ...", "Is immigrant ..." and "Has low level of studies..."), which would be main aspect, rather than victimisation. Finally, the third factor offers an view of *sex workers* (those with a higher factor load with factor 3 being the items "Has university studies" and "Is national ..."), being a voluntarily chosen occupation.

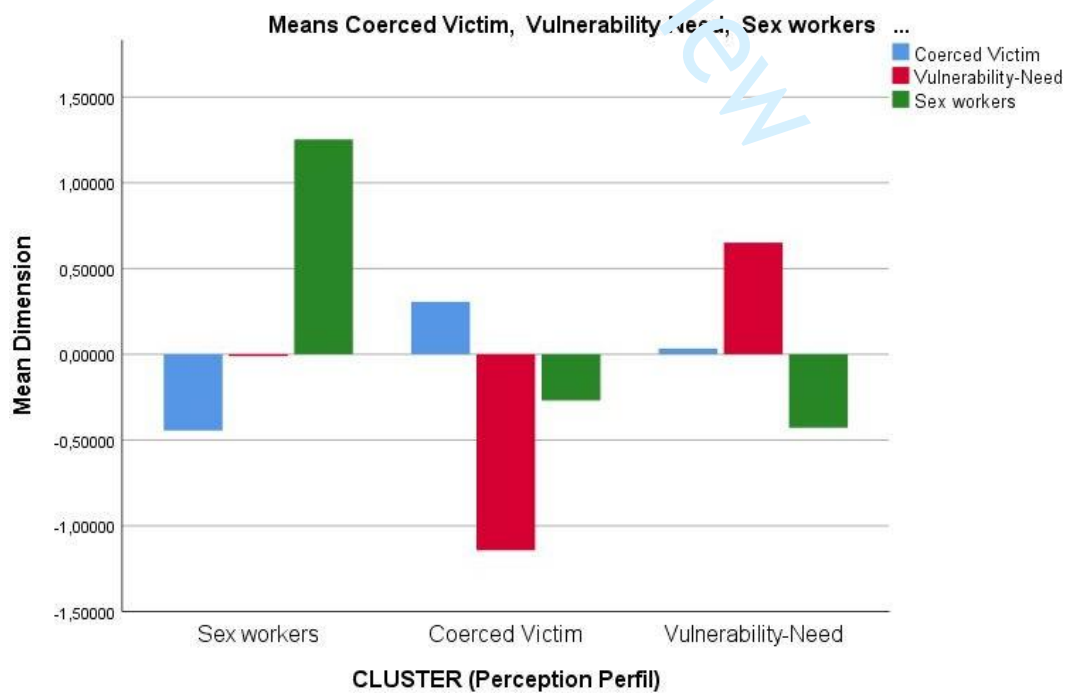
Table 1. Factor analysis on the perceptions of young people (Factor Loading, Communalities and % variance explained)

Variables	Component			Communalities
	F1	F2	F3	
Is forced into prostitution	.870			.761
Is victim of human trafficking	.866			.767

Is minor/under-age	.541			.342
Is unemployed or works part-time		.704		.520
Has children		.634		.492
Is immigrant		.566		.415
Has a low level of studies		.535	-.461	.501
Has university studies			.779	.620
Is national			.643	.437
% variance explained by each factor	21.596	17.450	14.905	
% total variance explained			53.95	

With these results, a cluster analysis has been carried out to group these respondents's perceptions into possible social groups (Graphic 1). The first group is made up of 23% of the sample, called *perception as a choice*, presented above average scores in the sex workers factor while the other two factors are at or below average. The second group is made up of 28% of the sample, called *perception as coercive*, is slightly above average on the factor that considers them as victims or forced into prostitution while the other two factors are below average. The third group is made up of 49% of the sample, called *perception as economic necessity*, with the economic necessity factor above average while the victim factor is almost average and sex worker factor is below average.

Graphic 1. Perception Profile (Cluster Analysis) (Mean Factor Loading by cluster)



Of the variables studied, Table 2 has analysed the existence of differences between the groups obtained in the cluster. The results showed significant differences between the three groups, except for the gender variable. In the *perception as a choice*, the highest scores occurred in the variables “is national” and “has university studies”; It is also the group where the highest percentage is reached in “know someone who sold sexual services”, specifically 28.2%; and in the option to “have sold sex”, 2.8%. In the *perception as coercive*, the scores for being a “victim of trafficking” or “forced into prostitution” stand out. Finally, in the *perception as economic necessity*, they emphasise that the person “is immigrant”, “minor”, “with low-level of study”, “is unemployed or works part-time”, although to a lesser extent than the previous group, was also made of “victim of trafficking” or “forced prostitution”.

Three types of perceptions have been found among young people as to why some people engage in sex work. In the *perception as a choice*, the pleasure of sex, the normality of the work and economic necessity stood out compared to the other two groups. In the *perception as coercive*, being a victim of trafficking stood out compared to the other two groups. Finally, in the *perception as economic necessity*, having relatives to care, financial need, having a debt contracted for coming to Spain and being a victim of human trafficking stood out. Table 2 showed the perceptions of the young people surveyed, which reveals different profiles and situations of women in sex work.

Table 2. Perceptions of what the most common profile of a sex worker looks like and other variables for the whole sample and by cluster of membership (X: mean; σ : deviation standard; n: absolute frequency; % percentage)

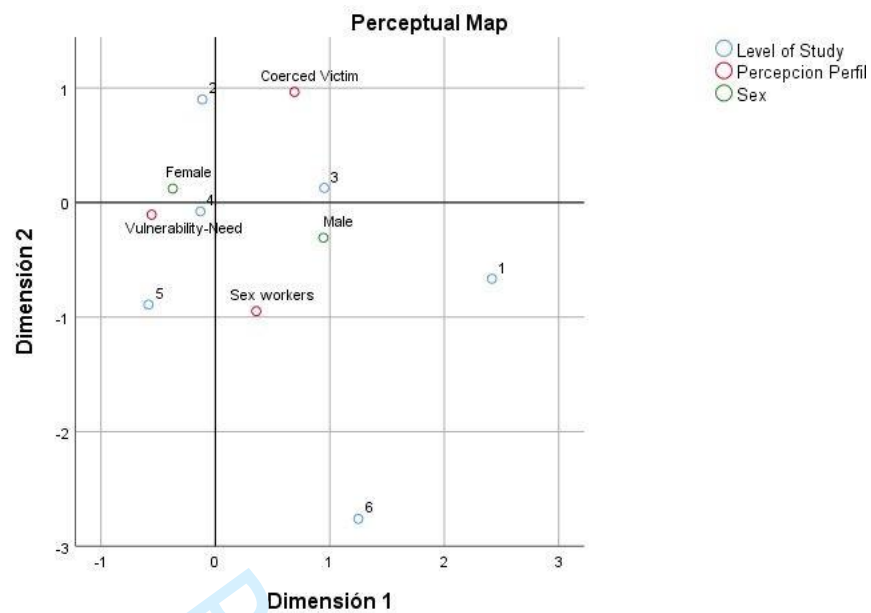
		All	C1 (As a choice)	C2 (As coercive)	C3 (As economic necessity)	pvalue
Size	n(%)	3126 (100%)	714 (22.8%)	871 (27.9%)	1541 (49.3%)	
PERCEPTION PROFILE (1: Not frequent; 2: Rare; 3: Frequent; 4: Very common)		All	C1 (As a choice)	C2 (As coercive)	C3 (As economic necessity)	pvalue
Is national	X / σ	2.327 / 0.577	2.854 / 0.546	2.142/0.477	2.187/0.490	0.000
Is immigrant	X / σ	3.639 / 0.522	3.473/ 0.575	3.370/ 0.575	3.868 /0.342	0.000
Is minor	X / σ	2.357 / 0.671	2.258 / 0.679	2.284/ 0.674	2.445 /0.655	0.000
Has low level of studies	X / σ	3.506/0.594	3.142/0.576	3.230/0.612	3.831 /0.375	0.000
Has university studies	X / σ	1.912 / 0.611	2.447 / 0.616	1.807/ 0.531	1.724/ 0.497	0.000
Is unemployed/has part-time job	X / σ	3.276/ 0.729	3.420/ 0.606	2.637/ 0.689	3.570 / 0.559	0.000
Has children	X / σ	3.103 / 0.687	3.191/ 0.670	2.626/ 0.623	3.332 /0.589	0.000
Has STI/HIV	X / σ	2.502 / 0.733	2.352/ 0.731	2.425/0.747	2.615 / 0.708	0.000

Is victim of trafficking	X / σ	3.444/ 0.684	3.119/0.797	3.568 /0.647	3.524 / 0.596	0.000
Is forced into prostitution	X / σ	3.458/ 0.669	3.172/ 0.797	3.604 / 0.647	3.507 / 0.596	0.000
OTHER VARIABLES		All	C1 (As a choice)	C2 (As coercive)	C3 (As economic necessity)	pvalue
Age	X / σ	22.94/3.517	23.36 / 3.68	22.49. 3.58	23.00 / 3.38	0.000
Sex	Male (%)	28.30	28.6	31.1	26.5	0.056
Level of studies (completed) (%)	Secondary	5.40%	7.40%	6.90%	3.60%	0.000
	High school	33.40%	29.10%	38.20%	32.60%	
	Vocational training	7.60%	8.30%	9.00%	6.60%	
	Bachelor	27.80%	26.20%	26.60%	29.30%	
	Master's studies	24.60%	27.20%	18.50%	26.80%	
	Doctoral studies	1.20%	1.80%	0.80%	1.20%	
Know someone who sold sexual services	Yes (%)	18.20%	28.20%	14.40%	15.80%	0.000
Reasons for engaging in prostitution (%)	Liking sex	5.50%	11.50%	5.50%	2.70%	0.000
	Normal job	9.10%	19.60%	7.10%	5.30%	0.000
	Economic need	93.80%	94.10%	90.90%	95.20%	0.000
	Have relatives to care for	58.90%	59.70%	44.50%	66.60%	0.000
	Victim of trafficking	82.60%	73.40%	84.50%	85.80%	0.000
	Debts incurred in coming to Spain	59.60%	51.50%	54.60%	66.10%	0.000
Has offered sex for money	Yes (%)	1.30%	2.80%	1.60%	0.40%	0.000
Legal view of prostitution (%)	Total prohibition	17.5%	12.9%	21.5%	17.5%	0.000

En Table 2, a significant difference among the three groups or clusters is tested. This is done through the appropriate statistical hypothesis test (one-way ANOVA), where the null hypothesis states that there are no significant differences among the three groups, and the alternative hypothesis suggests that at least one of the three groups is different (when the null hypothesis is rejected, we have highlighted in bold the value of the mean or percentage that is highest among the group or groups showing differences compared to the others, in order to clarify which group or groups are driving the observed differences).

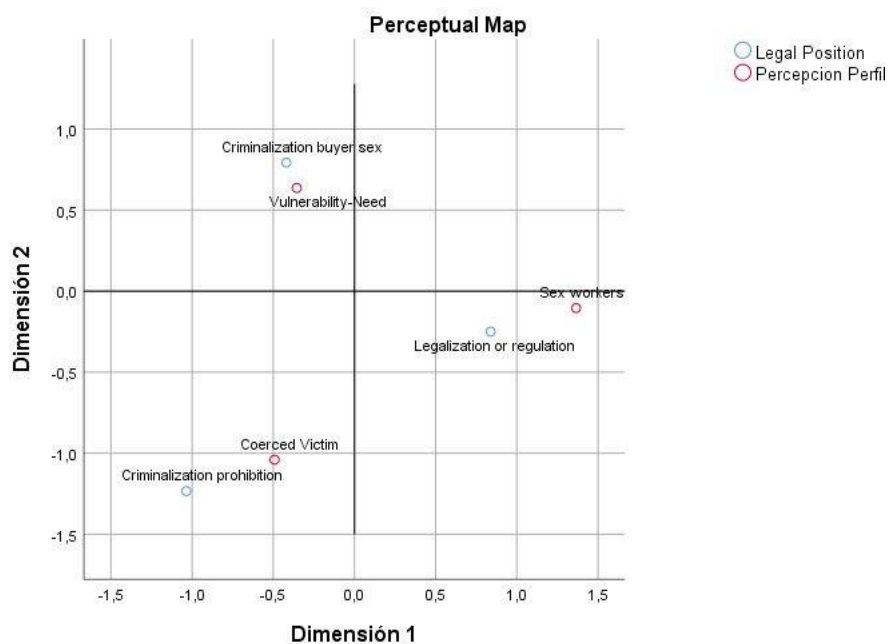
Finally, the possible multivariate association between the groups with the sociodemographic variables sex and educational level has been investigated (Graphic 2). Women, high school students and university students showed a clear perception that these people are victims or act out of necessity. The perception of women as sex workers was more prevalent among male respondents and individuals with a higher level of education.

Graphic 2. Perceptual Map for Level of Study, Perception Profile and Sex (Multiple Correspondence Analysis)



Regarding the opinion on what the law surrounding sex work should be, we found that the prohibition of both the buyer and the seller is supported by 17.5% (548) without differences between the sex of the respondents; more girls (45.3%, n=1014) than boys (28.5%, n=252) were in favour of fining only the client of prostitution; regarding the legalisation or regulation of sex work, it was supported more by boys (52.3%, n=471) than girls (37.5%, n=839) with statistically significant differences ($\chi^2=82.11$; $p=0.000$). In relation to age, a difference in means was observed in the three legal views ($F=18.30$; $p=0.000$), with those who showed a younger average age supporting prohibition ($\bar{M}=22.15$; $\sigma=3.5$), compared to those who were older ($\bar{M}=23.23$; $\sigma=3.5$). A significant correlation was also observed between level of studies and opinion on what the law surrounding sex work should be: the higher the level of studies, the greater the bias in favour of the legalisation position ($r=0.05$; $p=0.005$). A significant association was also observed between the opinion on how the law surrounding sex work should be and the three perception groups found (Figure 3). Thus, the group “as a choice” is clearly associated with legalising, the group “as coercive” with prohibitionist notion penalising everyone, and the group “as economic necessity” with prohibiting, penalising only those who pay for sex.

Graphic 3. Perceptual Map for Legal View and Perception Profile (Multiple Correspondence Analysis)



DISCUSSION

Perceptions about sex workers

The results obtained are consistent with the diversity of positions on sex work in Spanish society and in the European studies cited below. The diversity of perceptions obtained underscore the complexity of the reality surrounding sex work/prostitution. It emphasizes that this issue cannot be reduced exclusively to a one-size-fits-all narrative of victimisation of all women in sex work, because it harms those who are really victims of human trafficking. Many articles (Doezema, 2016; Farley, 2006; Raymond, 2004) analyse sex work and trafficking from a feminist perspective as if there were a single view. However, there is no consensus regarding the definition of this activity or the most appropriate approach within the context of patriarchy and from a feminist perspective. While there is agreement on the gender inequalities that arise in, with women predominantly in the role of sex workers and men as clients, the underlying causes differ depending on the specific feminist position (Kempadoo, Sanghera and Pattanaik, 2016). Our results showed three different views among those involved in prostitution.

1
2
3 On the one hand, there is the view that women in prostitution are always being **victims**
4 of trafficking or coercion, which is the primary reason to engage in prostitution. This
5 group of the sample, defined as “perception as coercive” cluster, sees women engaged in
6 prostitution as “prostituted”, placing the action of prostitution on a third party, the sex
7 buyer. This view of “prostituted” is related to woman in vulnerable situations or those
8 who have been forced into prostitution. This considers prostitution as an activity that
9 exposes women to risks and dangers in terms of violence and adverse effects on their
10 health (Farley, 2003). The perception of women in prostitution as victims has emerged
11 more strongly, particularly since the adoption of the Palermo Protocol in 2000. This treaty
12 is an instrument of international cooperation against international organised crime, which
13 includes the crime of human trafficking (Stoyanova, 2017). This convention defines a
14 victim of trafficking as a person who has been recruited, with or without deception,
15 threats, coercion or violence, and transported to another location (either within or outside
16 the borders of a country) for the purpose of exploitation. From this perspective,
17 prostitution is understood as a patriarchal institution that provides women’s bodies to
18 satisfy men’s affective-sexual needs (Lagarde, 1990). These imbalanced commercial
19 relationships perpetuate gender inequalities and the violence against women within the
20 patriarchal system. Therefore, it is only possible to address these inequalities by punishing
21 the purchase of sex (Bernstein, 2012).
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35

36
37 On the other hand, there is an image of a **sex worker** who makes autonomous and
38 voluntary decisions, perceiving sex work as an occupation that fulfils their needs or
39 projects. In this sense, this group or cluster of the sample, defined as “perception as a
40 choice”, view women engaged in prostitution as sex workers because they are considered
41 to have made a free and rational choice to engage in this activity. This group also
42 considered that sex work should be recognised as an occupation, with rights and duties,
43 akin to other service-oriented and personal care occupations (Agustín, 2008). In other
44 studies, it was found that a third of students believed that women were engaged in sex
45 work because they enjoy sex (Polk and Cowan, 1996). From this perspective, prostitution
46 is understood as a challenge to patriarchy’s control of female sexuality (Juliano, 2002).
47 It's argued that women possess greater erotic capital that allows them to trade their
48 sexuality and obtain significant benefits from men, who had had a higher demand for sex
49 compared to women (Hakim, 2010). In this view, women offer sexual and affective
50 services, while men, who have greater economic wealth, are the clients. Sex work
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 involves two activities, one sexual and the other economic, with women taking a leading
4 role (Juliano, 2002). Thus, sex work can offer women independence, power and control
5 over their lives, elements that may be perceived as threats to a patriarchal society.
6
7

8
9 Between the above-mentioned views, another perspective emerges which perceives
10 women involved in paid sex as vulnerable driven by **economic need**, which leads them
11 to be engaged in prostitution. This third view, called “perception as economic necessity”,
12 aligns with previous research that has indicated that decisions to enter prostitution are
13 often associated with poverty and limited opportunities (Footer et al., 2020).
14
15
16

17 **Sociodemographic characteristics associated with prostitution views**

18
19
20 Certain sociodemographic characteristics have been associated with the perception of
21 greater acceptance or intolerance toward prostitution. Factors such as gender, age,
22 religiosity, social class, educational level, among others, explain the different perceptions
23 (Cao and Maguire, 2013; Chon, 2015). These differences are more apparent in opinions
24 regarding the legal status of sex work than in attitudes toward women engaged in paid
25 sex. In this regard, men and individuals with more liberal views on sexuality tend to be
26 more supportive of sex work, whereas conservative people or those who support gender
27 equality were less favourable to sex work (Jakobsson and Kotsadam 2011). In our sample,
28 older age, high educational level and being male gender were associated with pro-
29 regularisation, which aligns with findings from other studies (Chon, 2015; May, 1999;
30 Räsänen and Wilska 2007). In this sense, in our sample ‘having met a sex worker’ was
31 higher in our survey (18%) than in other previous research, around 5% (Roberts et al.,
32 2010), but this sample suggested that individuals with direct knowledge of sex workers
33 tended to adopt the sex work 'as choice' paradigm and consequently were more favourable
34 to legalisation.
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

47 The respondents in our survey held highly polarized views regarding the appropriate legal
48 approach to sex work, with the most frequently mentioned options being "penalise the
49 sex buyer" and "regularise sex work", compared to the lesser option ("prohibition" which
50 involved penalizing both sex sellers and sex buyers). Interestingly, respondents who
51 perceived individuals engaged in prostitution as victims of trafficking or vulnerability
52 tended to align more closely with the positions advocating “prohibition” and
53 “penalization of buyers”. Conversely, when these women were perceived as sex workers,
54 they were more inclined to support “regulating” of sex work. These findings are
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 consistent with similar trends observed in the Finnish population (Jakobsson and
4 Kotsadam, 2011), which corresponded with Sweden legal trajectory of punishing sex
5 buyers. Conversely, it has also been argued that countries with decriminalised laws are
6 more tolerant than those that criminalise prostitution (Skilbrei, 2019). In Spain, there is
7 still no clear opinion regarding the appropriate legal framework for prostitution, and this
8 fact is reflected in the diversity of views observed in this sample.
9
10
11
12

13
14 Prostitution is generally not perceived as an activity that is as positive or well valued
15 (Jakobsson and Kotsadam, 2011). The perceptions that are projected on these women are
16 related to the different perceptions that exist about sex work. Stigma has been identified
17 as the main disadvantage (Tomura, 2009; Sallmann, 2010; Weitzer, 2017), not only for
18 sex workers but also for those who have been trafficked and marked by prostitution and
19 criminal networks. Negative attitudes can often be attributed to ideological, religious, and
20 moralistic positions, but they sometimes impact on the decisions and well-being of people
21 engaged in prostitution (Alexandre, 2009; Weitzer, 2009b). Thus, it is crucial to promote
22 values of respect, inclusivity, and non-discrimination to prevent the humiliation and
23 stigmatization of sex workers (Ma, Chan and Loke, 2020). Societies that punish and
24 penalize prostitution tend to an attitude of greater violence and discrimination towards
25 sex workers (Platt, 2018). In this line, European societies should carefully deliberate on
26 the most appropriate legal framework to generate a tolerant attitude towards individuals
27 engaged in prostitution, while keep the existing legislation to combat trafficking and
28 exploitation (Oliveira et al, 2020).
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40

41 **Trafficking and prostitution connections**

42
43 Operationally, a trafficking victim is one who is identified by the police. It has been noted
44 in the literature (Feingold, 2011; Weitzer, 2014) that the media and many activists often
45 point to many victims of sex trafficking, however, the numbers of identified victims
46 remain quite low. In Spain, according to data from the Prosecutor General's Office (2019)
47 830 victims for the purpose of sexual exploitation were officially identified, most of them
48 women. It's important to acknowledge that there are various biases and obstacles affecting
49 the detection and identification of victims. In connection to that, it is estimated that there
50 are 100 thousand individuals engaged in prostitution in Spain (Sanchís and Serra, 2011).
51 Victim identification data, although underestimated, are scarce and do not correspond to
52 the image of women in prostitution as victims of trafficking on a massive scale (Meneses
53 and Urío, 2021).
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 As Anderson and Andrijasevic (2008) have pointed out, anti-trafficking policies
4 encompass various aspects, including the legal context of prostitution, migrant workers,
5 labour policies and citizenship rights, especially for non-nationals. The portrayal of
6 trafficked women, often recruited in developing countries and characterized by high
7 vulnerability and being brought to Europe for prostitution, serves as a justification for the
8 restrictive migration policies currently implemented within the European Union
9 (Feingold, 2011; Meneses-Falcón and Urío, 2021; Weitzer, 2014).

10
11
12
13
14
15
16 The perception of women engaged in prostitution among Spanish youth is very similar to
17 data from other European countries (Räsänen and Wilska 2007; Valor-Segura, Expósito
18 and Morales 2011; El Jassar 2020). It is possible for both laws to coexist: those that
19 enables sex workers' rights and those that prevents or reduces coercive prostitution or
20 trafficking. Although trafficking and sex work have connections, there are two different
21 social phenomena, the same laws cannot be applied to both, as they will have negative
22 consequences for women. Societies should work to prevent women from entering in
23 prostitution due to the potential consequences that it has for many individuals; while also
24 ensuring the safety and protection of those engage in this activity, controlling the most
25 extreme forms of exploitation or abusive.

26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34 In conclusion, the perception of sex workers among Spanish young varies significantly
35 depending on their relationship with trafficking. Women were perceived as sex workers
36 when they decided to engage in sex work, while they were perceived as victims when
37 there was coercion to engage in prostitution. Each of these perceptions was associated
38 with an opinion on what the law surrounding sex work should be, either to prohibit
39 behaviours that abuse women or to regulate the conditions of sex work. These different
40 viewpoints have provided insights for proposing policies that prevent the adverse
41 consequences of prostitution, minimizing harm to individuals involved in prostitution,
42 and moving beyond binary approaches of criminalization versus regulation.

43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 **REFERENCES**

52
53
54 Abel, G. M. (2014) 'A decade of decriminalization: Sex work 'down under' but not
55 underground', *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 14(5), pp. 580-592.
56
57 doi:10.1177/1748895814523024
58
59
60

- 1
2
3 Adriaenssens, S., Geymonat, G. G., & Oso, L., (2016) `Quality of work in prostitution
4 and sex work. Introduction to the special section´. *Sociological Research Online*,
5 21(4), pp. 121-132. doi:10.5153/sro.4165.
6
7
8
9 Agustín, L. (2005) `New Research Directions: The Cultural Study of Commercial
10 Sex´, *Sexualities*, 8(5), pp. 618–631. doi:10.1177/1363460705058400
11
12 Agustín, L. (2007) *Sex at the Margins: Migration, Labour Markets and the Rescue*
13 *Industry*. London: Zed Books.
14
15
16
17 Alexandre, M. (2009). Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll and Moral dirigisme: toward a
18 reformation of drug and prostitution regulations. . *UMKC LAW REVIEW*, 78,
19 101-137.
20
21
22
23 Anderson, B., & Andrijasevic, R. (2008) `Sex, slaves and citizens: the politics of anti-
24 trafficking´, *Soundings*, 2008(40), pp. 135–145.
25 doi:10.3898/136266208820465065
26
27
28
29 Armstrong, L., & Abel, G. (2020) `Sex Work and the New Zealand Model:
30 Decriminalisation and Social Change´, Bristol University Press.
31
32
33 Aronowitz, A. (2014) `To punish or not to punish: What works in the regulation of the
34 prostitution market?´, In N. a. V. Peršak, G. (Eds.) (Ed.), *Reframing Prostitution.*
35 *From Discourse to Description, From Moralisation to Normalisation?*,
36 MakluPublishers.
37
38
39
40 Attwood, F. (2006) `Sexed Up: Theorizing the Sexualization of
41 Culture´, *Sexualities*, 9(1), pp. 77–94. doi:10.1177/1363460706053336
42
43
44
45 Bettio, F., Della Giusta, M., & Di Tommaso, M.L. (2017) `Sex Work and Trafficking:
46 Moving beyond Dichotomies´, *Feminist Economics*, 23:3, pp. 1-22.
47 doi:10.1080/13545701.2017.1330547
48
49
50
51 Bernstein, E. (2001) `The meaning of the purchase: Desire, demand and the commerce
52 of sex´, *Ethnography*, 2(3), pp. 389-420. doi:10.1177/14661380122230975
53
54
55 Bernstein, E. (2012) `Carceral politics as gender justice? The traffic in women and
56 neoliberal circuits of crime, sex, and rights´, *Theory and society*, 41(3), pp. 233-
57 259. doi:10.1007/s11186-012-9165-9
58
59
60

- 1
2
3 Bindel, J. (2017) 'The Pimping of Prostitution Abolishing the Sex Work Myth',
4 Macmillan Publishers
5
6
7 Cao, L., & Maguire, E. R. (2013) 'A test of the temperance hypothesis: Class,
8 religiosity, and tolerance of prostitution', *Social Problems*, 60(2), pp. 188-205.
9 doi:10.1525/sp.2013.60.2.188
10
11
12 Chon, D.S. (2015) 'Gender Equality, Liberalism and Attitude Toward Prostitution:
13 Variation in Cross-National Study', *J Fam Viol* 30, pp. 827–838.
14 doi:10.1007/s10896-015-9713-y
15
16
17
18 Cobo, R. (2016) 'Un ensayo sociológico sobre la prostitución'. *Política y Sociedad*,
19 53(3), pp. 897-914. doi:10.5209/rev_POSO.2016.v53.n3.48476
20
21
22
23 Di Nicola A, Orfano I, Cauduro A, & Conci, N. (2005) 'Study on national legislation on
24 prostitution and the trafficking in women and children'.
25 <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2005/360488/IPOL->
26 [JOIN_ET\(2005\)360488_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2005/360488/IPOL-)
27
28
29
30
31 Doezema, J. (2016) 'Now You See Her, Now You Don't: Sex Workers at the UN
32 Trafficking Protocol Negotiation', *Social & Legal Studies*, 14(1), pp. 61-89.
33 doi:10.1177/0964663905049526
34
35
36
37 El Jassar, O. (2020) 'Knowledge, perceptions and attitudes of medical students at the
38 University of Sheffield towards sex workers - a cross-sectional survey',
39 *Education for Primary Care*. doi:10.1080/14739879.2020.1772122
40
41
42
43 Farley, M. (2006) *Prostitution, Trafficking, and Cultural Amnesia: What We Must Not*
44 *Know in Order To Keep the Business of Sexual Exploitation Running Smoothly*,
45 18, *YALE JOURNAL OF LAW & FEMINISM*. Available at:
46 <https://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/yjlf/vol18/iss1/5>
47
48
49
50 Farley, M. (2003) 'Prostitution and the invisibility of harm', *Women and Therapy*,
51 26(3/4), pp. 247–280. doi:10.1300/J015v26n03_06
52
53
54 Feingold, D.A. (2011) *Trafficking in Numbers: The Social Construction of Human*
55 *Trafficking Data*. In: Andreas, P. and Greenhill, K. M. (eds.). *Sex, Drugs, and*
56 *Body Counts: The Politics of Numbers in Glo-bal Crime and Conflict*. Ithaca:
57 Cornell University Press, pp. 46-74. doi:10.1080/13545701.2010.541863
58
59
60

- 1
2
3 Fernández Cornejo, José Andrés y Escot Mangas, Lorenzo y Belope Nguema,
4 Sabina y Cruz Calderón, Selene Fabiola. (2020) 'La reforma del marco legal
5 sobre prostitución. ¿Por qué varones y mujeres no piensan igual?', *International*
6 *review of Economic Policy*, 2 (2). pp. 124-152. doi:10.7203/IREP.2.2.19353
7
8
9
10
11 Footer, K.H.A., White, R.H., Park, J.N., Decker M.R., Lutnick A. & Sherman
12 S.G. (2020) 'Entry to Sex Trade and Long-Term Vulnerabilities of Female Sex
13 Workers Who Enter the Sex Trade Before the Age of Eighteen', *J Urban*
14 *Health* 97, pp. 406–417. doi:10.1007/s11524-019-00410-z
15
16
17 Giddens, A. (1995) La transformación de la intimidad. Sexualidad, amor y erotismo en
18 las sociedades modernas. Madrid. Cátedra.
19
20
21
22 Hakim, C. (2010) 'Erotic Capital', *European Sociological Review*, 26(5), pp. 499-518.
23 doi:10.1093/esr/jcq014
24
25
26 Hakim, C. (2015) 'Economies of desire: sexuality and the sex industry in the 21st
27 century', *Economic Affairs*, 35(3), pp. 329-348.
28
29
30
31 Harrington, C. (2012) 'Prostitution Policy Models and Feminist Knowledge Politics in
32 New Zealand and Sweden', *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 9(4), pp. 337-
33 349. doi:10.1007/s13178-012-0083-4
34
35
36 Jakobsson, N., & Kotsadam, A. (2011) 'Gender equity and prostitution: An
37 investigation of attitudes in Norway and Sweden', *Feminist Economics*, 17(1),
38 pp. 31-58. doi:10.1080/13545701.2010.541863
39
40
41
42 Jordan, J. (2005) *The sex industry in New Zealand: A literature review*. Wellington:
43 Ministry of Justice.
44
45
46 Kempadoo, K., Sanghera, J., & Pattanaik, B. (2016) *Trafficking and prostitution*
47 *reconsidered: new perspectives on migration, sex work, and human rights*.
48 Routledge.
49
50
51
52 Lagarde, M. (1990) Cautiverios de las mujeres: madresposas, monjas, putas, presas y
53 locas. México: Siglo XXI.
54
55
56 Levin, L., & Peled, E. (2011) 'The attitudes toward prostitutes and prostitution scale: A
57 new tool for measuring public attitudes toward prostitutes and prostitution',
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Research on social work practice, 21(5), pp. 582-593.

doi:10.1177/1049731511406451

Ma, P.H.X., Chan, Z.C.Y. & Loke, A.Y. (2018) 'A Systematic Review of the Attitudes of Different Stakeholders Towards Prostitution and Their Implications', *Sex Res Soc Policy* 15, pp. 231–241. doi:10.1007/s13178-017-0294-9

May, D. C. (1999) 'Tolerance of nonconformity and its effect on attitudes toward the legalization of prostitution: A multivariate analysis', *Deviant Behavior*, 20(4), pp. 335-358. doi:10.1080/016396299266443

McCarthy, B, Benoit C, Jansson M & Kolar K. (2012) 'Regulating Sex Work: Heterogeneity in Legal Strategies', *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*, 8:1, pp. 255-271. doi:10.1146/annurev-lawsocsci-102811-173915

Meneses, Rua, A. & Uroz, J. (2018) 'Exploring motives to pay for sexual services from opinions about prostitution', *Revista Internacional de Sociología* 76(1):e091. doi:10.3989/ris.2018.76.2.17.47

Meneses-Falcón, C. & Urío, S. (2021) 'Trafficking for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation in Spain: Estimates and Reality', *Revista Española de Investigaciones Sociológicas*, 174, pp. 89-108. doi:10.5477/cis/reis.174.89

Morton, H., Klein, C., & Gorzalka, B.B. (2012) 'Attitudes, Beliefs, and Knowledge of Prostitution and the Law in Canada', *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice* 54(2), pp. 229-244. <https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/472022>

Niemi, J. (2010) 'What we talk about when we talk about buying sex', *Violence Against Women*, 16(2), pp. 159-172. doi:10.1177/1077801209355239

Oliveira, A., Lemos, A., Mota, M., & Pinto, R. (2020) *Less equal than others: The laws affecting sex work, and advocacy in the European Union*. Porto: FCPEUP/The Left (Group of the European Parliament).

Outshoorn, J. (2004) 'Introduction: Prostitution, Women's Movements and Democratic Politics', in Joyce Outshoorn, ed. *The Politics of Prostitution: Women's Movements, Democratic States and the Globalisation of Sex Commerce*, pp. 1–20. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

- 1
2
3 Platt, L., Grenfell, P., Meiksin, R., Elmes, J., Sherman, SG., Sanders, T., et al. (2018)
4
5 `Associations between sex work laws and sex workers' health: A systematic
6
7 review and meta-analysis of quantitative and qualitative studies', *PLoS Med*
8
9 15(12): e1002680. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1002680
10
- 11 Polk, R. K., & Cowan, G. (1996) `Perceptions of female pornography stars', *Canadian*
12
13 *Journal of Human Sexuality*, 5(3).
14
- 15 Räsänen, P. & Wilska, T.A. (2007) `Finnish Students' Attitudes towards
16
17 Commercialised Sex', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 10:5, pp. 557- 575.
18
19 doi:10.1080/13676260701597243
20
- 21 Sanchís, E. and Serra, I. (2011) `El mercado de la prostitución femenina. Una
22
23 aproximación desde el caso valenciano', *Política Y Sociedad*, 48(1), pp. 175 -
24
25 192. <https://revistas.ucm.es/index.php/POSO/article/view/POSO1111130175A>.
26
- 27 Stoyanova, V. (2017) *Human Trafficking and Slavery Reconsidered. Conceptual Limits*
28
29 *and States' Positive Obligations in European Law*. Cambridge: Cambridge
30
31 university Press.
32
- 33 Sullivam, M. (2005) What Happens When Prostitution Becomes Work. An Update on
34
35 Legalisation-of-Prostitution-Australia, *Coalition Against Trafficking in Women*,
36
37 Australia.
38
- 39 Roberts, R., Sanders, T., Myers, E., & Smith, D. (2010) `Participation in sex work:
40
41 Students' views', *Sex Education*, 10(2), pp. 145-156.
42
43 doi:10.1080/14681811003666507
44
- 45 Sallmann, J. (2010) `Living With Stigma: Women's Experiences of Prostitution and
46
47 Substance Use', *Affilia*, 25(2), pp. 146-159. doi: 10.1177/0886109910364362
48
- 49 Sanders, T. (2004) *Sex work. A risky Business*. London: Routledge
50
- 51 Skilbrei, M.L. (2019) `Assessing the Power of Prostitution Policies to Shift Markets,
52
53 Attitudes, and Ideologies', *Annual Review of Criminology*, 2:1, pp. 493-508.
54
55 doi:10.1146/annurev-criminol-011518-024623
56
- 57 Tarantino, M. S. (2021) `No víctimas ni criminales: trabajadoras sexuales. Una crítica
58
59 feminista a las políticas contra la trata de personas y la prostitución'. Ciudad de
60
México, Fondo de Cultura Económica.

- 1
2
3 Tomura, M. (2009) 'A Prostitute's Lived Experiences of Stigma', *Journal of*
4
5 *phenomenological Psychology*, 40(1), pp. 51-84. doi:
6
7 10.1163/156916209x427981
8
9
10
11 Valor-Segura, I., Expósito, F., & Morales, M. (2011) 'Attitudes toward prostitution: is it
12
13 an ideological issue?' *European Journal of Psychology Applied to Legal*
14
15 *Context*, 3, pp. 159-176.
16
17 Vanwesenbeeck, I. (2017) 'Sex Work Criminalization Is Barking Up the Wrong
18
19 Tree', *Arch Sex Behav* 46, pp. 1631–1640. doi:10.1007/s10508-017-1008-3
20
21 Weitzer, R. (2006) 'Moral crusade against prostitution', *Society*, March/April, pp. 33-
22
23 38.
24
25 [http://www.policeprostitutionandpolitics.net/pdfs_all/Duplicate%20PDFS/2006](http://www.policeprostitutionandpolitics.net/pdfs_all/Duplicate%20PDFS/2006%20290%20Moral%20crusade%20against%20prostitution%20(Weitzer,%20Society)%20(1).pdf)
26
27 [%20290%20Moral%20crusade%20against%20prostitution%20\(Weitzer,%20So](http://www.policeprostitutionandpolitics.net/pdfs_all/Duplicate%20PDFS/2006%20290%20Moral%20crusade%20against%20prostitution%20(Weitzer,%20Society)%20(1).pdf)
28
29 [ciety\)%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.policeprostitutionandpolitics.net/pdfs_all/Duplicate%20PDFS/2006%20290%20Moral%20crusade%20against%20prostitution%20(Weitzer,%20Society)%20(1).pdf)
30
31 Weitzer, R. (2009a) 'Legalizing Prostitution: Morality Politics in Western
32
33 Australia', *The British Journal of Criminology*, Volume 49, Issue 1, pp. 88–105.
34
35 doi:10.1093/bjc/azn027
36
37 Weitzer, R. (2009b) 'Sociology of Sex Work', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 35(1), pp.
38
39 213-234. doi:10.1146/annurev-soc-070308-120025
40
41 Weitzer, R. (2014) 'New Directions in Research on Human Trafficking', *The ANNALS*
42
43 *of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 653(1), pp. 6–24.
44
45 doi:10.1177/0002716214521562
46
47 Zatz, N. D. (1997) 'Sex work/sex Act: Law, Labor and Desire in constructions of
48
49 prostitution', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society*, 22(21), pp. 277-
50
51 208.
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Table 1. Factor analysis on the perceptions of young people

Variables	Component			Communalities
	F1	F2	F3	
Is forced into prostitution	,870			,761
Is victim of human trafficking	,866			,767
Is minor/under-age	,541			,342
Is unemployed or has part-time job		,704		,520
Has children		,634		,492
Is immigrant		,566		,415
Has a low level of studies		,535	-,461	,501
Has university studies			,779	,620
Is national			,643	,437
% variance explained by each factor	21,596	17,450	14,905	
% total variance explained			53,95	

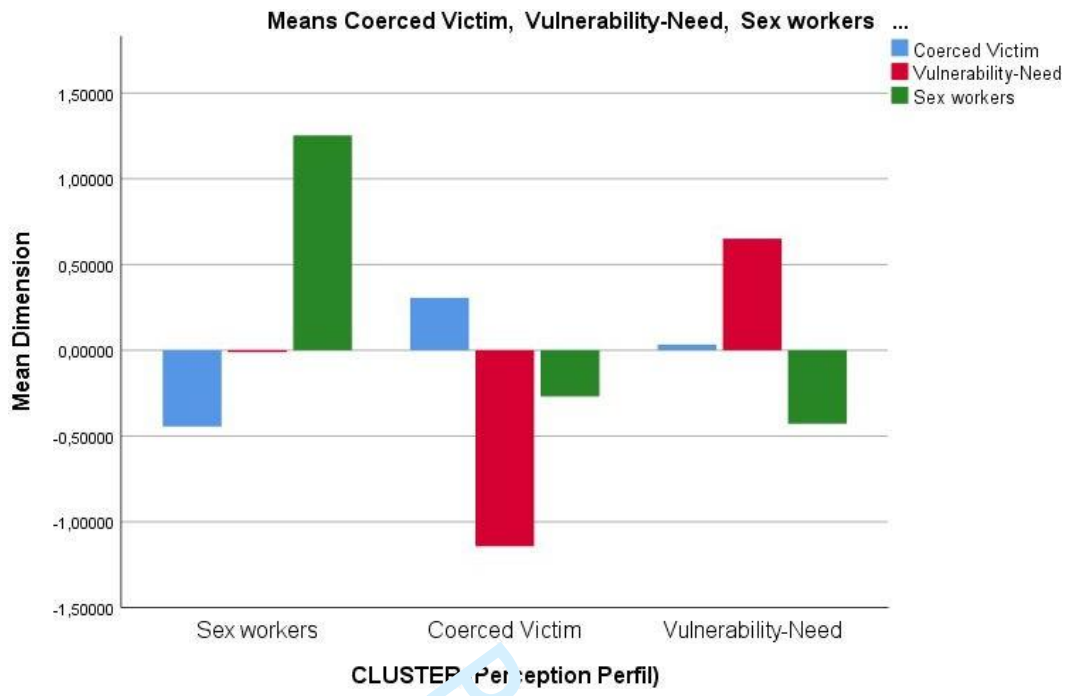
Table 2. Behaviour of beliefs about what the most common profile (perception profile) of a person who offers sex for money looks like and other variables for the whole sample and by cluster of membership

		All	C1 (By option)	C2 (By coercion)	C3 (By necessity)	pvalue
Size	n(%)	3126 (100%)	714 (22,8%)	871 (27,9%)	1541 (49,3%)	
PERCEPTION PERFIL (1: Not frequent; 2: Rare; 3: Frequent; 4: Very common)		All	C1 (By option)	C2 (By coercion)	C3 (By necessity)	pvalue
Is national	X / σ	2,327 /0,577	2,854 /0,546	2,142/0,477	2,187/0,490	0,000
Is immigrant	X / σ	3,639 / 0,522	3,473/ 0,575	3,370/ 0,575	3,868 /0,342	0,000
Is minor	X / σ	2,357 /0,671	2,258 / 0,679	2,284/ 0,674	2,445 /0,655	0,000
Has low level of studies	X / σ	3,506/0,594	3,142/0,576	3,230/0,612	3,831 /0,375	0,000
Has university studies	X / σ	1,912 /0,611	2,447 / 0,616	1,807/ 0,531	1,724/ 0,497	0,000
Is unemployed/has part-time job	X / σ	3,276/ 0,729	3,420/ 0,606	2,637/ 0,689	3,570 / 0,559	0,000
Has children	X / σ	3,103 /0,687	3,191/ 0,670	2,626/ 0,623	3,332 /0,589	0,000
Has STI/HIV	X / σ	2,502/ 0,733	2,352/ 0,731	2,425/0,747	2,615 / 0,708	0,000
Is victim of trafficking	X / σ	3,444/ 0,684	3,119/0,797	3,568 /0,647	3,524 / 0,596	0,000
Is forced into prostitution	X / σ	3,458/ 0,669	3,172/ 0,797	3,604 / 0,647	3,507 / 0,596	0,000
OTHER VARIABLES		All	C1 (By option)	C2 (By coercion)	C3 (By necessity)	pvalue
Age	X / σ	22,94/3,517	23,36 / 3,68	22,49, 3,58	23,00 / 3,38	0,000
Sex	Male (%)	28,30	28,6	31,1	26,5	0,056
Level of studies (completed) (%)	Secondary	5,40%	7,40%	6,90%	3,60%	0,000
	High school	33,40%	29,10%	38,20%	32,60%	
	Vocational training	7,60%	8,30%	9,00%	6,60%	
	Bachelor	27,80%	26,20%	26,60%	29,30%	
	Master's studies	24,60%	27,20%	18,50%	26,80%	
	Doctoral studies	1,20%	1,80%	0,80%	1,20%	
Meet a person who offers	Yes (%)	18,20%	28,20%	14,40%	15,80%	0,000
Reasons for engaging in prostitution (%)	Liking sex	5,50%	11,50%	5,50%	2,70%	0,000
	Normal job	9,10%	19,60%	7,10%	5,30%	0,000
	Economic need	93,80%	94,10%	90,90%	95,20%	0,000
	Have relatives to care for	58,90%	59,70%	44,50%	66,60%	0,000
	Victim of trafficking	82,60%	73,40%	84,50%	85,80%	0,000
	Debts incurred in coming to Spain	59,60%	51,50%	54,60%	66,10%	0,000
	Has offered sex for money	Yes (%)	1,30%	2,80%	1,60%	0,40%
Legal position of prostitution (%)	Total prohibition	17,5%	12,9%	21,5%	17,5%	0,000

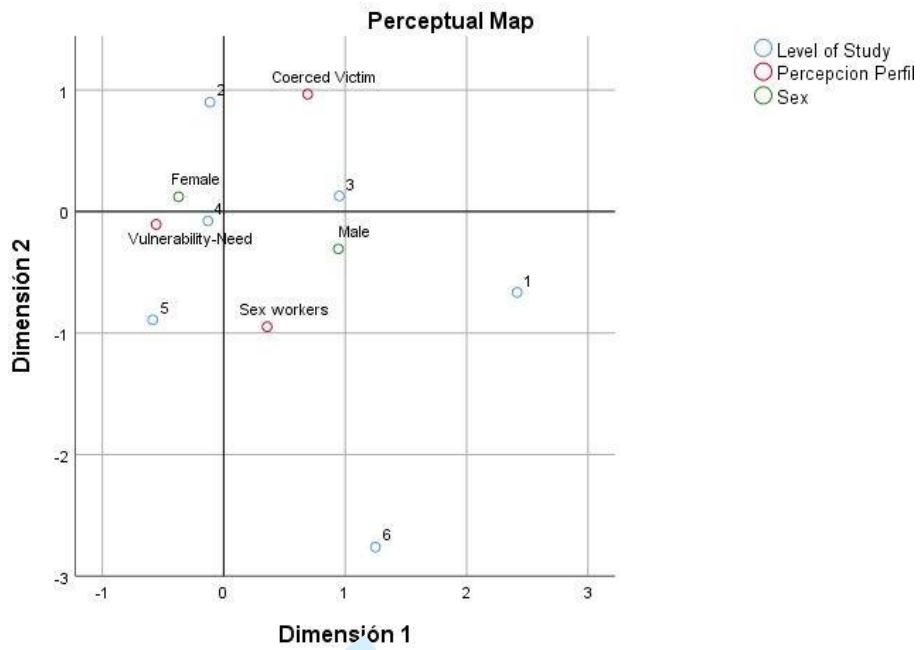
	Prohibit paying	40,5%	35,6%	39%	43,7%	
	Regulate and legalise	41,9%	51,5%	39,5%	38,8%	

For Peer Review

Graphic 1



Graphic 2



Peer Review

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

Graphic 3

