



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

## Buying sex as a privilege?

- *A qualitative study of middle class Turkish men and their views on sexuality, gender equality and prostitution.*

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Author: Erika Wikström

Supervisor: Jari Kuosmanen

## Abstract

Turkey is a country with regulated prostitution and an increasing number of migrant sex workers. It is also a country that has been going through a modernization process the last two decades; from a rural conservative to a more industrialized secular country. However, there are few researches targeting the Turkish sex industry, especially with a focus on the consumer side. Western researches regarding consumers have showed that sex buyers, in general, tend to have more conservative ideas regarding gender and sexuality. The aim of this study is to, by comparing sex buyers to non sex buyers, find out how ideas about gender and sexuality among Turkish middle class men, affect the understanding of the use of sexual services. Qualitative interviews with six middle class Turkish male sex buyers and non sex buyers, analyzed with discourse analysis, expose a pattern where conservative ideas regarding sexuality and gender equality, justifies a power structure where Turkish men are expected to utilize care from women. These structures are analyzed by theories regarding power in the male- female relationship and prostitution. The results show that there is a connection between conservatism and sex buyers, particularly a conservative view on male sexuality. There is a pressure on men in the Turkish society to sustain a position of superiority by sexual exploitation. In order to explain how the superior position is operationalized, the author has developed Westerstrand's model based on Svalastog's theory of the fragmented female sexuality. This model is called "The sustained male sex right" and it explains how the pressure to exercise the male sex right creates a privilege where exploitation and denial of women's subjectivity is normalized. Turkish men that don't buy sexual services are more convinced that sexual and social inequalities are socially constructed. Based on moral arguments, they are, to a bigger extent, able to deconstruct norms of exploitation and thus, abstain, the male sex right.

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Author: Erika Wikström

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When I started the process of writing this thesis, I was in the middle of my life's biggest struggle; the one to recapture my freedom. As a single mom I had to work fulltime to support my child. Writing a thesis at the same time as being a full time working single mom, wasn't easy. The idea that this thesis would ever be finished often felt like utopia. Many times, I was about to give up. There were many other struggles on the road and the horizon felt far away. I can, without doubt, say that to complete this goal would never have been an option if it wasn't for some significant people in my life.

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# 1. Introduction and problem area

This introductory section presents the problem background and a brief summary of the research in the area of focus; male sex buyers in general and Turkish middle class sex buyers in specific. To contextualize the theoretical perspective the study is based on, the author's preconceptions on the phenomena of prostitution will be presented here. The study's aim and research questions will also be presented. Some of the concepts, that are commonly used to facilitate the reader's understanding, will be presented as well.

## 1.1 Background

Article 1.6 in CEDAW states that:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women. (The UN Convention On The Elimination Of All Forms Of Discrimination Against Women 1979)

The convention of CEDAW<sup>1</sup> is signed and ratified by Turkey and many other countries. Yet, the legislations in different countries concerning prostitution are totally different. Some countries, that ratified the convention, have criminalized the act of buying sexual services and in some countries prostitution is legalized. The reason for this is that the phenomena of prostitution can be perceived in many different ways. On one hand, prostitution could be seen as a business agreement between two adults. As an example, a document from Amnesty International, that recently leaked out in media, suggests that governments shouldn't interfere with the activities of pimps and sex buyers (Morgan 2014). On the other hand prostitution could be viewed as a symptom of inequalities in power. In order to take a position on the issue, knowledge regarding both standpoints is required.

In research regarding prostitution, the main focus has almost exclusively been on the supply-side (Serughetti 2013). At the same time, international studies on prostitution agree that the demand for sexual services is the biggest cause for the existence of prostitution and sex-trafficking [Siddharth 2009; Cho, Dreher and Neumayer 2013]. In the last decades, the focus has started to change. Researchers in the western world have started asking questions about the demand for sexual services and clients of sex workers. This shift of focus could be a result of more awareness regarding gender equality and changed attitudes concerning norms of male sexuality. Since the consumers of prostitution are mainly men [Priebe and Svedin 2011; Farley, Bindel and Golding 2009], it was important to investigate how their ideas regarding sexuality and gender equality impact their view on prostitution. The researcher wanted to find out how norms regarding gender and sexuality are connected with sex buying.

The number of studies made on the subject is scant. There are relatively few studies regarding sex buyers. Studies in western European countries have shown that a minority of men use sexual services, about seven to twenty percent (Månsson 2005). The reason to buy sexual

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<sup>1</sup> Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

services is seldom lack of sex partners, researches shows that it rather has to do with a demand for female stereotypes and a desire for traditional sex roles; the fantasy of the whore and Madonna dichotomy [Månsson 2005; Sandell, Pettersson, Larsson and Kuosmanen 1996; Farley et al. 2009].

Studies comparing sex buyers with non-sex buyers in western countries show that there are no big differences in personality or sexual preferences; there can be bigger difference among different groups of sex buyers (Monto and Milrod 2013). However, when comparing views on women, there are some striking differences. Sex buyers express more stereotypical views regarding male and female sexuality (Xantidis, Clin and McCabe 2000). Men that adapted more androgynous roles had lesser tendencies to buy sex than men with more traditional roles. US researches [Monto and Milrod 2013; Farley et al. 2011] showed that it was common that sex buyers had served in the military. This also demonstrates that western men have more tendencies to buy sexual services when they are in an environment with traditional sex roles. As previous research has shown a connection between sexual stereotypes and prostitution, it's interesting to see how attitudes concerning prostitution materialize in a relatively modern country, with traditional views on men's and women's sexuality (see as an example Karlsson 2007), and how the views of gender and sexual stereotypes influence the tendency to use sexual services.

Turkey is a relatively new country<sup>2</sup> with its roots in the Ottoman Empire (Karlsson 2007). It's a country that has gone through a modernization process in the last twenty years and because of that, there are big differences between younger and older generations in terms of traditions. Furthermore, traditional values are particularly strong in rural regions that are less modernized (Bektay et al. 2004). It's still a country with roots in a traditional, Islamic value system (Siegel, Bunt and Zaitch 2003). The author has been interested in seeing how the view on gender and sexuality of middle class Turkish men has affected the views on the use of sexual services.

Turkey has been criticized regarding women's rights by international bodies such as United Nations and the European parliament<sup>3</sup> (Jarnhamn 2008). Although women have rights on the paper, there are still strong traditional gender norms in Turkey that encumber women's rights. The sexuality of Turkish women is often associated with reproduction and female virginity is seen as a sign of virtue and chastity is encouraged and some doctors still perform so called "virginity tests" (Boratav and Çavdar 2012). On the contrary, Turkish men are encouraged to be sexually active, and in order not to defile the chastity of Turkish women, many men use sexual services. Prostitution in Turkey is legal (Özbek 2010). It got regulated in 1884 with the motivation to benefit public health and social order.

Most research concerning prostitution in Turkey applies to sex workers in general and migrant sex workers in specific (as an example, Gülçür and Ilkcaracan 2002). One reason for this could be that the general view of male sexuality in the Turkish society is still based on traditional ideas. Another reason might be the taboo regarding sex in general; even if it is legal to buy sexual services in Turkey it is still a sensitive subject and informants are hard to find (Zengin 2007).

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<sup>2</sup> The republic of Turkey was declared in 1923.

<sup>3</sup> After negotiations for Turkey's membership in the European Union, started in 2005, one of the main criticism has been on gender inequality.

## 1.2 Aim

The aim of this study is to, by comparing sex buyers to non sex buyers, find out how ideas about gender and sexuality among Turkish middle class men, affect their understanding of the use of sexual services.

## 1.3 Research questions

How do middle class Turkish men view matters of gender equality?

How do middle class Turkish men view matters of sexuality?

What are their personal opinions and reflections regarding prostitution?

What possible impact do different understandings of gender equality and sexuality, for example conservative and social constructivist, have on the position on using or not using sexual services, and how can we understand this?

## 1.4 Perspective and preconceptions regarding prostitution

In order to be as transparent as possible with the preconceptions of prostitution, the theoretical “glasses” of the researcher will be presented below. The theoretical perspective presented here will not be applied on the empiric findings of the study; rather it is the author’s theoretical perspective on the research field. The purpose of this chapter is to give the reader an understanding of what perspective the author views prostitution from.

Many voices [Augustin 2008; Dolliet 2009] in the debate regarding prostitution claim that prostitution is a phenomenon that operationalizes outside the traditional sexual norms, challenging traditional, conservative sexual discourses where sex is connected to love and relationships. According to this idea, sex workers should be seen as active agents rather than passive victims of patriarchy, and traditional feminism is often blamed for reproducing traditional sexual values by portraying sex workers as victims.

There is not necessarily a conflict in viewing sex workers as victims of patriarchy at the same time as active subjects. It is important to acknowledge inequalities in power simultaneously as recognizing sex workers as active subjects within a specific context. This thesis will be written from a power gender perspective. Just as mentioned above, when talking about power in a gender perspective, it’s not the power-relation where an individual subject is exercising power over an object. Just as in Foucault’s fourth face of power, the power relation is created by social constructions and norms that shape power relations between objects. Digeser (1992) writes regarding the fourth face of power, that the significant issue is to analyze what subjects are produced in a society. He writes that power is transmitted through interactions. That power is integrated in our discourses and norms. Awareness of unequal norms and positions is therefore a fundamental element to achieve gender equality. Since the majority of consumers of sexual services are male, it’s important to create knowledge regarding what norms legitimize the act of buying sexual services. If referring to Digeser (Ibid.), the author wants to investigate how the male sexuality, as a subject, is produced. There are many researchers that



have approached the issue of prostitution from a gender power perspective. As an example, Månsson (2005) claims that prostitution is a symptom of male superiority:

The fundamental idea of prostitution, throughout time, has been that a group of women shall be accessible for men's sexual purposes; she is there for the man's lust. (Månsson 2005, p 278)

Furthermore he writes that the male role in the sex industry has been invisible:

If there has been an image of the client, it has mainly built upon a very rigid and one-dimensional view of men's sexuality, that is a biologically deterministic view of men's sexual desires as being constantly high and never changing. (Månsson 2005, p 278)

Pateman (1988) also sees prostitution as a result of what she calls *the male sex right*. This means that men in general, through history have been viewed as biologically superior to women. Women were seen as naturally subordinate to men. Men's rights to access women's bodies were a part of the contract of modern society. The right to have sex with women is, according to Pateman, seen as a male right.

To summarize the perspective, conservative ideas regarding male sexuality [Svalastog 1998; Pateman 1988], has formed a society where access to sex and sexual services, is considered to be a male right. These ideas are reproduced in the ideas and norms that shape our subjective perspectives of the world. This means that the inequality in power is upheld and reproduced by norms and subjective ideas rather than by intentional superiority or passive inferiority.

## 1.5 Definition of concepts

Below, a list of concepts that are frequently used in this thesis will be presented:

### ***1.5.1 Prostitution***

In this thesis, the definition from the 1977 Swedish prostitution investigation (mentioned in Olsson 2006, p. 9) will be used.

According to this view, prostitution can be defined as an action where, at least two parts buy or sell sexual services for financial compensation, which is a prerequisite for the sexual service. There are situations where the compensation could be in form of other things such as drugs or housing. This thesis however, will be focusing on the situations where the sexual service is traded with monetary finances.

There are many types of sexual services that don't involve body contact between the buyer and the seller. For instance: private posing, phone sex, pornography or sexual services on web cam. This thesis is focusing on sexual services that involve direct body contact between buyer and seller and where the buyer buys the right to "access" the body of the seller for a limited amount of time.

There are no clear distinctions between prostitution and trafficking. It is very clear in the description that trafficking is involuntary and involves some sort of coercion (and, of course, some sort of movement between state borders). The difference between prostitution and trafficking could thus be a matter of defining the degree of voluntariness. Since the definition of trafficking involves the definition “abuse of someone’s vulnerability”<sup>4</sup> it is hard to separate trafficking and migrant sex work. The lines between what’s voluntarily and what’s abuse of someone’s vulnerability are thus pretty blurred. It is based on subjective ideas regarding free will.

The word “sexual service” could be interpreted as many different types of sexual services, like mentioned above; private posing, phone sex, pornography etcetera. In this thesis, I alter between the word “prostitution” and “sexual service”.

### ***1.5.2 Buyer of sexual services***

In this context, a buyer of a sexual service refers to someone that buys a sexual service of the kind that is defined under the headline above; “prostitution”.

### ***1.5.3 Gender***

The definition of gender, will, in this thesis, be the same as the one used by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (2001):

[...] the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable [...] <sup>5</sup>

### ***1.5.4 Gender equality***

In this thesis, gender equality is defined in the same way as it is defined by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (2001):

[...] the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the

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<sup>4</sup> Trafficking in persons could be described as: “*the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs*” (Article 3:a. the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children . 2000). In this thesis, the word trafficking is limited to those who are trafficked for sexual exploitation.

<sup>5</sup> Available at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>.

same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women [...] <sup>6</sup>

### ***1.5.5 Sexuality***

Sexuality is, here, mostly focused on sexual behavior, which is, how sexual feelings are expressed and also how they are allowed to be expressed due to social norms on sexuality. Sexuality is, in this thesis, the same way as prostitution and gender, perceived as a social construction influenced by historical, social and cultural changes. In other words, sexuality is not seen as something essential.

This thesis will be mainly focused on heterosexual prostitution (because of the study's focus on conservative views on gender and sexuality) where the sexuality is of physical nature. Sexuality also plays a big part in the power relations between genders, which is something this thesis will be focused on.

### ***1.5.6 Modernization***

In this study, it's mentioned that Turkey has been going through a modernization process. The word modernization is a relative word that depends on context. In this context the definition of Norris and Inglehart will be used (2004):

[...] the process of industrialization, urbanization and rising levels of education and wealth [...] (Norris and Inglehart 2004, p. 25)

Turkey has in the last 20 years, gone through a social, cultural and economical development and transformed from a rural, agrarian country to an industrial country. According to Norris and Inglehart (Ibid.) modernity often brings more secular and non-conservative values. However, that presupposes that society can supply people with social security. It's not always certain that modernization and economic development generates this secularization. Poverty and big class differences are factors that can uphold the influence of conservative values.

### ***1.5.7 Middle class***

All informants have achieved a tertiary education which is one of the things that often define middle class. As an example Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) claim that academic education is connected to the cultural and social status that is upheld by the middle class.

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<sup>6</sup> Available at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>.

## 1.6 Limitations

Male sex buyers are a vast majority of sex consumers. As the author believes that the reason for this is gender inequality, the focus of the study will be on male sex buyers.

Since the purpose of the study is to look at the connection between gender inequality and prostitution, the focus is on people that identify themselves as males buying sex from sex workers that identify themselves as females. This is also the most traditional and common form of prostitution (as an example, see Westerstrand 2008).

Because of the fact that the interviews were handed out in English, the informants needed to be English speaking. This was a contributing reason to the fact that all the informants were well educated, middle class and living in the bigger cities. The class background of the informants is highlighted in the thesis since it will limit the generalizability of the study. The material won't be analyzed from a class perspective.

There would have been a more valid result if the number of respondents had been bigger. The fact that this research is limited to six participants is a cause of practical obstacles rather than scientific deliberations.

## 2. Sociocultural context

In order to contextualize the research material for a non-Turkish reader, a brief presentation of the Turkish history and how male and female sexuality is viewed in Turkey, will be presented below. Traditional norms regarding gender will also be presented. Lastly, there will be a chapter regarding prostitution in the Turkish law as well as in practice.

### 2.1 Turkey

Turkey is a relatively new country that was established in 1923 in the ruins of the fallen Ottoman Empire (Karlsson 2007). Atatürk formed the Turkish republic with inspiration from Europe. He made many reforms in order to turn Turkey into a modern, secular state. But even if Turkey became more gender equal on the paper, conservative ideas regarding gender are deeply rooted in the Turkish society (Bektay et al. 2004). As late as 2004, reformations were done regarding gender equality in the Turkish penal code: marital rape and sexual harassments at work were criminalized and the punishments for honor killings became harder (Anil et al. 2005).

Despite the fact that Turkey today has signed the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and improved the legal rights of women, they are still criticized regarding women's rights from international bodies such as the United Nations and the European parliament (Jarnhamn 2008). Even though women have rights on the paper, there are strong traditional gender norms in Turkey that hinder women's participation in the public life. Women are many times seen as the carrier of the family, or the men's honor- an idea that limits the freedom of the woman (Atkan et al. 2002).

### 2.2 Sexuality Turkey

Urbanization has contributed to a more open minded society, but Turkey is a heterogenic<sup>7</sup> society and conservative ideas about sexuality are still widely exhibited. There are big differences between urban and rural areas and rural regions tend to be a bit more conservative than urban regions.

It is still common that women are expected to be virgins at marriage and virginity-tests are still performed in some contexts, mainly in rural areas and north eastern Turkey (Boratav and Çavdar 2012). The sexuality of Turkish women is still quite restrained (Ibid.). Female sexuality still is a common motive for violence towards women in Turkey (Siegel, Bunt and Zaitch 2003). Women's sexuality is mainly connected to reproduction rather than sexual pleasure and female virginity is commonly seen as a sign of virtue. Young men, on the other hand are encouraged to be sexually active, and even if it's not as popular today, it still happens that men are taken to brothels by their fathers to lose their virginites (Koçturk 1991).

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<sup>7</sup> There are big differences in social welfare between rural and urban areas and the country and there are many different ethnical groups living in Turkey (see as an example Karlsson 2007).

Young people don't receive sexual education in schools. Instead, it is common that young men learn about sex from their friends while young women learn from their parents (Yazıcı et al. 2011). The sexual education that young men get from their friends tends to be more encouraging regarding sexual activities while the sexual education that young women get from their parents is more restraining. (Boratav and Çavdar 2012).

### 2.3 Traditional views on gender

Koçturk (1991) writes that the honor-culture is not something specific for only Islamic countries. Honor culture is, according to Koçturk, a product of patriarchy and conservatism than of Islam. According to old Turkish traditions, women equal the honor of the family or husband (Atkan et al. 2002). These values are particularly strong in rural regions (Bektay et al. 2004). The eastern society has traditionally been represented with a strict family unity that includes all the relatives. Sexuality in these societies has historically been seen as a public concern, decided by family, rather than something personal and private (Koçturk 1991). Men ruled in the public sphere and women were designated to the private sphere. Koçturk claims that many women in Islamic societies have not been entrusted with keeping their chastity, and therefore, had to be shielded and monitored by men.

According to the Koran, Koçturk (1991) writes, subordination of women needs to be guaranteed in order not to prevent chaos. Control over women's sexuality is, according to conservative norms, encouraged, and a man needs to make sure that unmarried female family members don't engage in premarital sex (Ibid.). The reputation of a man is, according to these traditions, depending on the chastity of the woman. The man's respectability is connected to the ability to control the sexual life of the woman. At the same time as women are schooled in a role of subordination and chastity. Men are, according to Koçturk, encouraged to be curious about women. She also writes that men after puberty are expected to appear masculine and be easily attracted to females.

### 2.4 The view on sex workers in Turkey

Siegel et al. (2003) write about the phenomena of Turkish men buying prostitutes<sup>8</sup>. These traditions have their roots in the Ottoman Empire, where women were seen as tools for male pleasure. Having many women was a symbol of high status. It was common for men to have prostitutes on the side of their marriage. During this era, there were markets in Istanbul where women were sold. Very often, these women came from other countries. Prostitutes were used as instruments of pleasure.

About twenty years ago, a rapist could have the sentence reduced if the victim was a prostitute (Zengin 2007). Female sex workers are, in the Turkish penal code, referred to as *genel kadın* which means "common women". The word common indicates that these women are public domain. There are two types of women represented; honorable and dishonorable women.

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<sup>8</sup> With a specific focus on Russian, or post-soviet women, since this group is highly represented among prostitutes in Turkey.

According to Zengin (ibid.) a respectable woman should not show any sexual characteristics outside the home:

[...] she should not wear short skirts, kiss her boyfriend on the lips or behave in an “excessively relaxed way” –as the saying goes-- like laugh at a high volume or sit in any way she prefers. These are thought to be the codes of prostitute behavior. [---] Other possible bodily emergings are punished by being stigmatized as “whorelike”. (Zengin 2007, p. 39- 40).

## 2.5 Prostitution in Turkey

Prostitution in Turkey is legal and regulated (Özbek and Müge 2010). The initiation to the regulation process started in the Ottoman Empire in 1884, as an attempt to battle venereal diseases. Sex workers were registered and obligated to undergo medical inspections. The regulation was motivated with benefits in public health and social order. The regulation was also a way of keeping the prostitution away from the public eye; instead it was moved to specific areas. In order to be registered and have a license as a sex worker in Turkey, you need to be a Turkish citizen. Once registered, regular health checkups are mandatory, the liberty of action is limited and the workload can be tough with long working hours.

## 2.6 Turkish law

In Turkey, there are state owned brothels (Zengin 2007). The legal framework, regulating prostitution in Turkey, can be drawn back to 1930. A commission called “fight against prostitution” (*Fuhuşla Mücadele Komisyonu*) was formed as a way to regulate prostitution.

The regulations are formulated under a decree called “General regulations on prostitutes and brothels in order to fight against sexually transmitted diseases” (Decree 30/3/1961, as cited in Westeson 2012, p.198). In order to be registered, there’s an investigation where it needs to be ascertained that the women are positive towards living life as prostitutes. The reason why the woman ended up in prostitution must be investigated (article 20). She also needs to be tested for venereal diseases (article 13).

When licensed, the woman is controlled by the brothel staff. The freedom of the registered sex worker is very limited. They don’t decide their working hours and their liberty of action is severely restricted. The police are responsible for registering female sex workers. They are also responsible for tracing up places with activities of illegal prostitution and closing illegal brothels.

It is specified in the Turkish law that the brothels should not be seen from the public avenues. In article 48, Turkish General Code on Hygiene (as cited in Zengin 2007) it says:

Article 48 -brothels; excluding venues where sex workers receive medical examination or treatment, cannot be in the vicinity of and visible from official buildings or establishments, venues of religious education, sports grounds, central squares, entertainment and festival venues or close to or within the locations

specified under article 178 of *Umumi Hyfzissihha Kanunu* (General code on Hygiene). (Quoted in Zengin 2007, p. 45).

## 2.7 Turkish prostitution in practice

Aslı Zengin (2007) has written an ethnographic study on how the Turkish prostitution system works in practice. The licensed women, interviewed in the research, describe the brothels like jails:

Your employer doesn't let you sit down, it's forbidden! I'm telling you, it's as if you are a slave. They made me work even when I had my period!! I told the state, at least give me my period days off. I have my period, blood runs down my legs and they're making me work! And they're supposed to be "my state"! They make me work when I have my period!! ...Why? Cos they make money. You starve while working there; you work hand to mouth. (Zengin 2007, p. 79)

Every time a woman is to leave the brothel, there are controls of where she is going and what time she is coming back. The women are forced to work long hours under slave like conditions.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, there has been an explosion of migrant sex workers in Turkey. Many of those women are trafficked into the country and sold on the black market (Smith 2005). Many of the sex workers are under aged (Erder and Kaska 2003). Trafficking in women is a big problem in Turkey, it is one of the biggest destinations for human traffickers and the government is trying to take measures to stop it (Zaman 2006).



### 3. Literature review

Below, previous studies regarding male sex buyers will be presented. Comparisons done between sex buyers and non sex buyers will also be reviewed.

#### 3.1 Research on sex buyers

So why do men buy sex? A number of international researches have been done with focus on the consumption of sexual services.

Augustin (2008) has studied commercial sex workers and their customers through fieldwork and anthropological methods. She criticizes studies that investigate the motivation to buy sex. She means that there is no difference between the demand for sexual services and other kinds of services. Continuously, the author writes that since there is such a big market, these men are not deviants. They aren't carrying any specific personality patterns. She draws the conclusion that men buy sex because they consider it permissible.

As an example, western men that buy sex abroad, enjoy the care they receive from less equal women. She writes that sex work can be seen as equal to any other kind of service. Augustin (Ibid.) mentions that sex workers are keeping an emotional distance from their job. But this is not happening exclusively among sex workers. The fact that the sex workers might feel disgusted about their clients, she means, is no different from people that are cleaning toilets or bodies. At least, she claims, there are sex workers that can enjoy sexual intercourse during work sometimes.

In a Swedish study from 1996 (Sandell et al.), the authors make an investigation about sex buyers; who they are and their motives behind buying sex. They did interviews with men that buy sex and the result is quite heterogeneous. The men come from all different classes and backgrounds, their personalities diverge and they present different motives behind buying sex.

From the men's stories, the authors could detect different ways of expressing feelings of powerlessness and inferiority (ibid.). Going to prostitutes and objectifying women, could convey a male dominance over women, and therefore, a way of sustaining command. In general, many of the men had problems with seeing sex workers as subjects. According to the writers, many of the men had problems with intimacy or communication in their relationships and used prostitution as a substitute for closeness.

When sexuality is connected to reciprocity, equality and genuine closeness between two people, it excludes the possibility to objectify manipulate and "buy" each other, and with that, also prostitution. (Sandell et al. 1996, p. 174. Author's translation).

The authors (ibid.) write that it's obvious that gender stereotyping and inequality during the upbringing shape the view of sexuality and relationships in a grown up age. In the modern Swedish society, the gender constructions are less stereotyped and not as clear cut as in the

past. According to Sandell et al. (1996), when men buy sex they purchase a fantasy about more stereotyped gender constructions. The double standard in society, regarding prostitution, has helped mislead men to build up a fake image of women as Madonnas or whores:

Men in general, and particularly sex-buyers, have a tendency to simplify and put women in categories in order to from this division find functioning sexual approaches. (Sandell et al. 1996, p. 176. Author's translation)

Another study (Farley et al. 2009), regarding sex buyers in the UK, was carried out by a human rights organization through surveys and interviews with about a hundred men. The researchers could rule out many prejudices about men that buy sex. Just as in the Swedish research, they found that, opposite from what many people think, most men don't buy sex because of problems to get in contact with women. In fact, half of the men in the survey were in relationships and a majority of the men had had more than ten sex partners. The authors also found that most sex buyers thought that buying sex was a common habit among men. In fact, only ten percent of British men have purchased sex- a Swedish research shows similar numbers; ten percent (Priebe and Svedin 2011).

Farley et al. (2009) shows that the more accepting the men were of prostitution, the more accepting they were to myths of rape culture (that a woman that says no really means yes etc.). A big percentage of the men also claimed that the rights of the prostitutes during the sexual act were limited. The authors also found that men with more hostile feelings towards women were also the men who mostly endorsed myths about rape. Many of the men in the survey (44 percent) had the idea that selling sex can be psychologically harmful. The prostituted women were often perceived as having special capacities that made them put up with things that no other women would do. The men often gave expression to the whore-Madonna dichotomy. A majority of the interviewed men thought that it is common that women are tricked or trafficked into the industry. According to the writers, it is common that those men are aware of the conditions for women in the sex industry and that the fact doesn't affect their decision to buy sex. Most of the men are aware that the women are acting during the sexual act, but want to ignore it. The authors (ibid.) call this a "denial of women's subjectivity" – that the lack of empathy is necessary in order to sexually objectify them. The authors also write that it is common that the men feel bad after the sexual act, that when they realized that the women were acting, they feel tricked.

In a Scottish report (Macleod et al. 2008), based on 110 interviews, the authors ask about:

[...] the extent to which their identity as men was based on valuing psychological and sexual dominance and about their suspiciousness and resentment toward women. (Macleod et al. 2008, p. 14)

They found that the men that were most accepting of prostitution were the most hostile masculine. Hostile masculinity is characterized by a desire for control and domination, mainly in relationships with women, at the same time as they have:

[...] an insecure, defensive and distrustful orientation to women. (Malamuth and Wilhelmssen 1994, p. 187.)

Macleod et al. (2008) found that a common opinion was that, just as in other researches, the men saw prostituted women as morally different from other females in society, not the kind of women they would choose as girlfriends, or a profession they would choose for their daughters. When asked how to stop prostitution the men claimed that all women would have to become constantly sexually available. But some of the men also had more social explanations:

Prostitution could end if there was less poverty, social exclusion, and if attitudes changed towards women. (Macleod et al. 2008, p. 25)

The majority of the men justify their sex-purchase with the arguments about men's sexual urges and with the existence of prostitution:

I think there will always be guys that go to prostitutes ... something in the paper about guys that have steak at home, still go out for burgers – because they can, it was there. (Macleod et al. 2008, p. 20)

Many of the men expressed the feeling of exercising dominance over the women as something positive. A majority of the men argued that prostitution was a free rational choice at the same time as many of them claimed that prostitution is a result of economical desperation and that the women didn't enjoy the sexual act. The alternative to control their sexual desire is absent in the men's stories and the writers argue that the legalizing of prostitution is equivalent to claiming that men are incapable of controlling their sexuality.

### 3.2 Comparing sex buyers to non- sex buyers

An Australian study (Xantidis, Clin and McCabe 2000) compares men that have and haven't bought sex, with the aim to examine certain personality characteristics. Just as in other researches, they found no differences between sex buyers and non-sex buyers regarding age, educational background, relationship history etc. However, they found significant differences when they looked at three different scales measuring sex-role orientation, social sexual effectiveness, and sensation seeking. Men that adapted more androgynous roles had fewer tendencies to buy sex, and the men with undifferentiated roles had a high tendency to buy sex. The sex buyers also showed lower social-sexual effectiveness. Social effectiveness is a scale that measures:

Scores on the MSSSES reflects a man's degree of comfort and confidence when interacting with women in dating and sexual situations. (Xantidis et al. 2000, p. 171)

The sex buyers also had a higher rate of sensation seeking than the others.

Monto and Milrod (2013) collected statistics on sex buyers in the United States and compared customers of sexual services to non-customers. They also compared different groups of sex buyers, as an example: street customers and internet customers. They found that buying sex is generally rare among US men; about 14 percent of the men had used sexual services. Over all, they found the most differences between the different groups of sex buyers. Although, there were some significant differences between sex buyers and non- sex buyers: Men that had

served in the military were more likely to have used sexual services. They also found that sex buyers tended to be slightly more sexually liberal, thought about sex more and participated in other elements of the sex industry in a bigger extent than non- customers. They were also slightly more positive towards extramarital sex.

An American study, handed out in Boston, from 2011 (Farley et al. 2011) Compared 101 sex buyers to 101 non sex buyers in a quantitative and qualitative study aiming to investigate men's perceptions of women and their attitudes regarding prostitution. Over all, the men who used sexual services turned out to be more sexually active than the non-sex buyers and they had had more sex partners throughout their lives. The men who bought sex also believed, to a bigger extent, that most men go to prostitutes. It was more common that sex buyers had done military service. Among the sex buyers that served in the military, 45 percent used sexual services during that time. Sex customers were significantly more frequent guests at strip clubs than non-sex buyers and they masturbated to pornography to a bigger extent. 65 percent of the non-sex buyers viewed prostitution as sexual exploitation, compared to 38 percent of the sex buyers and the sex buyers were more in favor of liberal legislations regarding prostitution. 80 percent of the sex buyers were in favor of legalized prostitution.

Both groups expressed knowledge of physical and psychological harm of prostitution and that it's common that women are tricked or trafficked into the business and that sex work often was a consequence of desperate life situations. Sex buyers believed, to a bigger extent, that prostitutes are different from other women and both buyers and non sex-buyers considered sex workers to have different morals and a diverse sex drive from other women (ibid.).

To sum up, studies from the western world, regarding sex buyers, has showed that the group of sex buyers is very heterogenic. However, there are some common denominators. Research has shown that conservative ideals regarding gender and sexuality are more common among sex buyers than among non sex buyers. Simultaneous to conservative values, sex buyers also tend to have slightly more liberal attitudes regarding the sex industry.

### 3.3 Comments on the literature review

The studies referred to above are all preformed in a western context. Studies, in English, on non western sex buyers haven't been found. Even though the literature research was not focused on western studies, the studies found were western. Studies targeting demand handed out in non western countries, is mainly focusing on western sex tourists. There are studies done regarding prostitution in Turkey, but the focus on those studies are mainly on the sex workers (some of those studies are presented under the headline above; 'sociocultural context'). Studies on Turkish sex buyers, which are published internationally, were not found. Since this research is focusing on the connection between sex buyer's and non sex buyer's views on sexuality, gender equality and views on prostitution, the focus was on studies targeting the demand side.

## 4. Theoretical perspective

To explain and substantiate the empirical material and the various themes that emerged from it, a construction of an analytical tool is required. This tool consists of different theories that are applicable to the empirical material. The different theories will be presented below.

### 4.1 The sexual contract

According to Pateman (1988), the classical contract theoreticians<sup>9</sup> claimed that women were lacking the abilities that created free individuals. Different status between men and women made the idea of individuals that were born free and equal impossible. In the subordination of women there was also a sexual contract where men's right to sex was built in. This sexual right is operationalized in society by marriage and prostitution; marriage for the private life, and prostitution for the public life. They are two sides of the same coin –men's right to sex and access to the female body. With the sexual contract the men also got the power over women's sexuality.

She writes that the idea of civil freedom was the idea of men's freedom over women. The difference and division by men and women are seen as natural in the modern society, and therefore, Pateman (Ibid.) means, it's not fruitful for equality to create gender neutral laws. Equality would only exist in theory since women would still be seen as naturally and biologically subordinate to men, and therefore, born into subjection. She means that since some individuals are assumed to be stronger than others by nature, and since it's also assumed that individuals are driven by self-interest, the civil contract will not create free individuals but masters and slaves.

Regarding prostitution Pateman writes that it can be compared to slavery, not because the woman's body can be seen as men's property but because the right to have sex with women is seen as a male right. Just in the same way as the slave master, by contract, has the right to the labor of the slave. Pateman writes that there is really no moral difference if women's prostitution is voluntarily or involuntarily, the problem, according to her, is the subordination and objectification that comes with male sex right:

When women's bodies are on sale as commodities in the capitalist market, the terms of original contract cannot be forgotten; the law of male sex-right is publically affirmed, and men gain public acknowledgement as women's sexual masters –that is what's wrong with prostitution. (Pateman 1988, p. 208)

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<sup>9</sup> As an example: Rousseau, Locke, Kant.

## 4.2 Fragmented female sexuality and coherent male sexuality

In her research: "Mellan mäns händer" Jenny Westerstrand (2008) uses Anna Lydia Svalastog's (1998) theory regarding gender construction. Svalastog's research (ibid.) deals with the process of abortion and how couples construct gender and sexuality during this process. Westerstrand uses this theory to understand how female and male sexuality is constructed in prostitution.

Svalastog (ibid.) talks about a fragmented female sexuality. According to traditional, conservative ideas of female sexuality, the woman is supposed to be sexually available for the man, but never outside the male control. She is therefore either seen as sexual or reproductive. The Abrahamic religions<sup>10</sup> have had an impact on the cultural norms and values regarding men's and women's sexuality. She describes in her theory how the dichotomy of the whore and the Madonna has been constructed as a way to control the female sexuality. This normative ideal was created in order to safeguard the biological fatherhood; in other words, to safeguard that the child is biologically his. This norm was adapted and reproduced in society.

The reproductive non-sexual woman is the classical Madonna ideal; a woman, only sexual within the male control (Ibid.). Women that are sexual and non-reproductive, the "whore figure", could jeopardize the biological fatherhood. A woman that is sexual and non-reproductive is seen as destructive for the family and for society. This whore figure, in contrast to the Madonna figure described above, is seen as a threat to the biological fatherhood. A woman that is labeled as a whore is therefore socially stigmatized.

A woman that is not sexually available for the man; a woman that is non-sexual and non-reproductive is described as a male made woman, a female joker. This woman is viewed as a reduction of a "real woman". To this patriarchic construction of the female sexuality, a woman that is sexual and reproductive does not exist. Svalastog's description of the fragmented female sexuality is portrayed by Westerstrand with the following model (Westerstrand 2008, p. 45):

	Non reproductive	Reproductive
Sexual	"The Whore"	
Non sexual	The male made Woman	"The Madonna"

The man is, according to conservative ideals not responsible for his own reproduction. Women hold the responsibility for the male reproduction. This means that the man can choose to take responsibility for or dismiss his child. Women, on the other hand, haven't had the same choice. She will, therefore, be responsible for the male reproduction. The responsibility

<sup>10</sup> Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

for male reproduction combined with a demand for sexual availability fragments the female sexuality while the male sexuality, on the contrary, is seen as coherent. It is not dichotomized in the same way as the female sexuality since there has never been a need in society to control the male sexuality in the same way. The man has an *optional reproduction* which means that he can choose to accept or dismiss the woman and/or the child. The man can be both sexual and reproductive without being labeled with a certain essence. The cultural male sexuality is seen as inconsistent while the female cultural sexuality is seen as essential and consistent.

Westerstrand means, contrary to many liberal researchers, that prostitution, because of this, should be seen as a part of the conservative sexual institutions since it confirms conservative ideas regarding women's sexuality instead of challenging them.

### 4.3 Love power

Jonasdottir (1994) argues that the male domination lies in the sexual relationship between men and women. Not only in sexual relationships limited to an individual level, but in all contexts in society where care and pleasure are unequally divided and where women's care enables pleasure and power for men.

She claims that there are two antipoles or elements of love: care and ecstasy. In the traditional gender constructions, women are "forced" into the role of caring, which enables men to exercise ecstasy. Ecstasy, according to Jonasdottir (ibid.), means self-realization, something that men are encouraged to strive for. Jonasdottir claims that it's not legitimate for women to exercise ecstasy in a completely self-directed way. On the other hand, it's not legitimate for men to exercise loving care, since its constraining their ecstasy:

[...] prevailing social norms, accompanying us from birth and constantly in effect around and in us, say that men not only have the right to women's love, care, and devotion but also that they have the right to give vent for their need for women and the freedom to take for themselves. Women, on the other hand, have the right to give freely of themselves but have a very limited legitimate freedom to take for themselves. Thus men can continually appropriate significantly more of women's life force and capacity than they give back to women. (Jonasdottir 1994, p. 26)

This means, according to Jonasdottir, that women's love power is exploited by men. Exploitation, contrary to oppression, Jonasdottir means, is associated with reciprocity. This means that there are mutual but unequal benefits and gains from this exploitive interaction, even though men have a hegemonic position and therefore, are the, so to say, main breadwinners. This also means that as long as men continue to see the access to female sexuality as a right instead of an advantage, women will continue to have the responsibilities to satisfy those needs.

#### 4.3.1 Love Power and modernity

Even though the modern society offers new aspects of love and sexuality there are still inequalities. Even with new, equal ideals, it is difficult to be entirely free from cultural contexts:

Self reflexivity is not, and cannot be, an entirely individualized project, as the modernity individualists would have it, because even in its self- consciously self-fashioning form it is nonetheless enabled and constrained by social context, cultural resources and the relation with others. (Jackson, S. in Jonasdottir, Bryson and Jones 2010, p. 26)

So even if the modern society is moving away from old conservative views on sexuality, with the current inequalities in distribution of care and ecstasy, the old views on gender will remain, but in a new setting. When men lose the right to women's care in one area (the traditional marriage and the conservative house wife-ideal), women's subordination is outsourced to other fields; internet pornography or trafficking where women outside the private context are used as a source of care for the male sexuality.

#### 4.4 Different points of view in explaining the reasons for buying sex

Eespere (2007) has sorted out different explanation models when explaining and motivating the demand for sexual services. The author means that a state's policies and attitudes towards prostitution have a big impact on the general attitudes towards women and the propensity to use sexual services. These models can be used to explain the view on prostitution from a society level as well as on an individual level. Four of Eespere's explanation models will be applied to the research material and presented here below:

##### ***4.4.1 Buying sex as a consumer activity***

This explanation model has a market oriented focus where prostitution is seen as a business transaction between two parts; the buyer and the seller. Prostitution is seen as a necessary service that, as any other service, needs to be regulated by laws and directions of the state. Usually this means the licensing of sex workers, health checks and that the sex workers pay taxes for their services to the state. Sex workers are seen as active agents whose actions are based on free choices. Prostitution is here seen as any other service:

Buying sex is similar to any other purchase of a good, where the customer chooses the one most suitable for him from a number of offers and pays the requested amount, gaining the right to consume the good. (Eespre 2007, p. 8)

##### ***4.4.2 Buying sex as violence***

In accordance with many feminist theories, this explanation model sees the act of buying sexual services as exercising a form of violence. Prostitution is seen as an expression of a patriarchic society where women (and sometimes also male prostitutes) are seen as trading objects and the men are the subjects and exercisers of power through sexual exploitation.



The male exercise of violence is not seen as a result of a biologically dominant position, but rather a result of culturally constructed gender constructions. According to this model, men are socialized to the understanding that it is their right to have their sexual desires satisfied by women. According to this model, the relationship between the buyer and provider of the sexual service is not equal. Supporters of this view believe that, since they see prostitution as a form of exploitation of people in a position of dependency, the actions of the exploiters should be punishable. Trafficking and prostitution should be eliminated and battled by going after the demand.

#### ***4.4.3 Buying sex as a social construct***

This model sees the demand for sexual services as something that is socially, culturally and historically constructed. Male sexuality is socially constructed to be more unrestrained than the female, which, instead, is restrained:

In other words, male sexuality is constructed in the context of power and competition, while female sexuality is constructed as nearly non-existent. Intensive sexual activity is normalized as the primary male sexual need. (Eespere 2007, p. 9)

In other words, males are encouraged to express their sexuality while women are encouraged to control theirs. In many cultures, fathers bring their sons to the local brothels to lose their virginity, as a symbol of manhood. When seeing the demand for sexual services as a social construction, the responsibility for the sexual inequality is not viewed on an individual level. Instead, it is seen as something that is created on a societal level.

#### ***4.4.4 Buying sex as a biological inevitability***

This explanation model is based in biological theories that claim that men's sexual urges are so uncontrollable that they can be compared to the need for water or food. Women's sexuality, according to these theories, is much weaker, and because of that, there is a need for prostitution. It is seen as a way for men to satisfy sexual urges that can't get satisfied by females in their surroundings, alternatively, it's seen as a way for single men to have access to sexual satisfaction.

According to these theories, men could be seen as victims of their uncontrollable libido and prostitution, from a societal perspective, is a way to protect women, who are not prostitutes, from men with unsatisfied sexual needs

### **4.5 Analytical Framework**

In this section, the theoretical perspectives will be put together into a theoretical framework. This is the analytical tool that has been applied on the empirical material.

Svalastog's theory regarding gender construction (1998) explains how conservative cultural norms regarding female and male sexuality are influenced by the Abrahamic religions<sup>11</sup>.

Since Turkey is a country with its roots in an Islamic value system and conservative ideas regarding gender are still prevalent, Svalastog's theory (1998) will be used to explain how conservative views regarding male and female sexuality are constructed and how the whore-Madonna dichotomy influences the position on using or not using sexual services.

Sexual access has, through history, been seen as a male right. The idea of the male sex right is, according to Pateman (1988), built on old ideas about men's biological superiority and women's inferiority. Pateman's theory regarding the sexual contract is culturally bound to a western context. However, it should be applicable on a Turkish context since the modern Turkish state was created after a European model (Karlsson 2007). The idea regarding male sex right will be used to explain how the conservative ideas regarding men and women, mentioned in Svalastog's theory (1998), are upheld and reproduced in the modern society and constructed in to a male right to sexual access.

Jonasdottir's theory regarding love power (1994) explains how the male sex right is maintained and reproduced by social roles. How these roles are mutually reconstructed in the relationships between men and women. It will be used to understand how male and female roles are reconstructed in society: How the idea of the male right to exercise ecstasy, by female care, enables access to sexual services in the Turkish society.

Women are forced into a role of caring, while men seek self-realization, or ecstasy. The female care enables the male ecstasy. This doesn't happen through oppression but by exploitation with mutual gains and benefits. Jonasdottir's theory (Ibid.) is mainly constructed in order to understand how gender inequality is reproduced in heterosexual relationships. However, it can also be applied to understand the relationship between men and women in society. One example of this is prostitution. Buying sex could be seen as a way of exercising ecstasy while providing sexual services could be interpreted as a form of care.

Since the idea is to determine whether the views on sexuality and gender could affect the position on using or not using sexual services, the author believes that different ways of reasoning about prostitution are connected to different views on sexuality and gender. Eespere (2007) is identifying the different ways of viewing and explaining the motives behind the consumption of sexual services.

In the analysis, Eespere's explanation models (2007) will be reconstructed into a number of discourses that emerged from the result. Those will be based on how the informants reasoned regarding prostitution. There are four different head-discourses that have been prominent in the result: "Liberal" (Buying sex as a consumer activity), "conservative" (buying sex as a biological inevitability), "Social constructivist" and "buying sex as violence".

"Consumer activity" will be named "Liberal" in the headline, because the explanation model has a liberal approach to prostitution. The focus is on individual freedom rather than social responsibilities.

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<sup>11</sup> Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

The “buying sex as a biological inevitability” model will be renamed as “conservative” since prostitution here is seen as an outcome of biological and natural differences in male and female sexuality. Just as in Svalastog’s theory (1998), the conservative view on men’s and women’s sexuality is based on ideas of biological differences. Therefore, in this thesis, biological and conservative views on prostitution will be put under the same headline; “conservative”.

## 5. Methodology

Since the object of the study was Turkish middle class men and the intention was to explore their views on gender equality and prostitution, this would best be illustrated directly by the men themselves. The ambition was to go in depth into these stories and create a diverse picture as possible. It appeared that a qualitative survey was preferable to a quantitative one. The qualitative research interview was the data collection method best suited to answer the questions contained in the survey's inception. This section describes the data collection methodology and how the study is conducted.

### 5.1 Qualitative interviews

When researching the reasons behind a phenomena and how people reason regarding a certain subject, the most suitable research method is qualitative research (Svenning 2000). Qualitative methods construct sociological data from social and interpersonal interaction. Since the research objects are Turkish men that used, or didn't use sexual services, and the aim was to, by comparing sex buyers to non sex buyers, find out how ideas about gender and sexuality among Turkish middle class men, affect the understanding of the use of sexual services, the best way to get an understanding for these experiences would be through qualitative interviews.

In qualitative research, you explore the concepts and discourses that create the subjective experiences of the individual – and sometimes also normative ideas in society (Kvale 1997). With qualitative research, the purpose is to find out and interpret the meaning of the phenomena that is created in the interpersonal conversation. The qualitative interview consists of a conversation where the interviewer defines the purpose of the interview and the frames for the subject of discussion. Through questions and listening the interviewer receives knowledge about the subjective world of the interviewed and, therefore, also about the researched phenomena.

### 5.2 Selection

In qualitative research, there is no need for a random sample. Instead, the selection needs to be specific (Svenning 2000), this as the purpose of qualitative studies is to exemplify, not generalize. In a selective sample, the most important thing is to find people that are suitable for the aim of the study (ibid.). Since the plan was to investigate the connections between views of gender equality and the “demand side” of prostitution in Turkey, a suitable sample would be Turkish males (since the majority of sex buyers are men).

There were no criteria regarding the sexual orientation of the participants, but all participants were informed of the fact that the study focused on gender inequality in relation to prostitution. Since there was an interest in investigating how views on gender and sexuality collaborate with the attitudes regarding the use of sexual services, the decision was to interview both men that have chosen to buy sex but also men that have chosen not to do so.

The reason for this was to see if there is a difference in how consumers and non consumers reason regarding gender and sexuality.

One fact that hampered the sampling was that the researcher was situated in Sweden, and the research objects needed to be Turkish. In order to reach Turkish informants, an information letter was sent out that contained information about the purpose of the research (see appendix 1) and the requested category of respondents. This letter also contained information about confidentiality and contact information on the researcher and supervisor.

Since attitudes regarding sexuality and prostitution are relatively sensitive subjects and earlier experiences have found that it's difficult to find research objects willing to attend, meticulousness would have intricated the research process. Because of this, the main goal was to reach as many men as possible with the information letter. The letter was sent out with the help of a Turkish friend working at a government agency. This friend had contacts in different civic centres and town halls in various Turkish cities such as Izmir, Istanbul and Ankara. The information letter was also sent out to private contacts that the author came in contact with during field studies in Istanbul. It was also sent to some Turkish people living in Sweden. They, in turn, sent it to Turkish people that could be of interest of the study.

Some of the letters were sent out with the help of snowball sampling. According to Gilbert (2008) this method is useful when the research target is a relatively small group. Snowball sampling means that you contact one member of the research population and ask them to find other people that could be suitable for the study. All the interviewed participants were asked to hand out the information letter to their male friends. One of the participants got recruited by this method.

After the letter was sent out, nine men who were interested in participating replied. All of them replied by email or by private message on Facebook. The men who were willing to participate in the study were given a questionnaire (see appendix 2) with questions regarding their age, city, profession, civil status and whether or not they had used sexual services.

Unfortunately three men dropped off. In the end there were six informants. Three of them sex buyers and three of them non sex buyers. The majority of the informants lived in Turkey, but a couple of them were staying in Sweden at the moment. All of them were Turkish citizens that had their main housing in Turkey. Even though the researcher was situated in Sweden, the informants in Turkey could be reached through the internet. One big advantage with internet is the possibility to access populations that are hard to reach in "real life" (Nosek, Banaji and Greenwald 2002).

Since the informants had to be able to read and speak English, all respondents turned out to be young (between 25 to 35 years old) well educated men from the bigger cities. This could of course affect the validity of the study but since earlier research has shown that men that buy sex are not related to a special age group, class or ethnical background, the chosen informant don't have to represent a specific group of men. The informants will be presented below. The names of the men that didn't use sexual services are marked with **bold text**.

### 5.2.1 The informants

**Akay** is a 31 year old with an academic background in international relations. He lives in Istanbul. He is single and has never bought sexual services.

**Barış** is a 34 Year old engineer from Istanbul. He is single and he has bought sexual services.

**Cezmi** is a 32 year old academic (cultural field) living in Ankara. He is in a relationship and has never bought sexual services.

**Dirlik** is a 29 year old academic working in the cultural sector. He is single and he has been buying sexual services many times, in Turkey and abroad.

**Ebher** is a 35 year old engineer from Istanbul. He is in a relationship and he has bought sexual services.

**Faik** Is a 25 year old university engineer student from Izmir. He is single and he has never bought sexual services.

### 5.3 Data collection

As mentioned before, the data was collected by qualitative interviews. These interviews were structured, based on the research questions, into different themes and questions (see appendix). Kvale (1997) calls this an *interview guide*. Based on these topics and questions, semi-standardised interviews were performed. This means that there are some main questions that are asked in all interviews, but there is still some flexibility based on the respondent (Gilbert 2008). Through the whole interview, the author tried to be flexible at the same time as being careful to cover all questions. Some of the informants were very verbal and in those cases, several of the questions were covered automatically, without having to ask them.

When interviewing the respondents situated in Sweden, the interviews were taped with a digital tape recorder, but most of the interviews were done over the internet with the help of the online chat programme; msn messenger. Nosek et al. (2002) writes that one strategy to avoid distracting environments during online interview is to hand a list of requirements before performing the interview. As an example: “be in a quiet place” or “be alone”. Unfortunately, such a list was never handed out. But the researcher tried to arrange a time for interview that was convenient for the informant. The informants were informed about how long time it would take to perform the interview, and it was made sure that they weren’t occupied by other things during that time.

As mentioned above, the online interviews were performed by “chatting” on msn. The interviews started by giving informed consent. Besides that, the informants were also reminded to delete their chat history from their computers after the interviews were performed. One advantage with interviewing over the internet is that the absence of face to face interaction can make it easier to talk about sensitive subjects. This means that it can be easier to talk about subjects such as sexuality or buying sex, when you aren’t face to face with the interviewer. Nosek et al. (2002) writes that this removes a source of coercion that might

occur when getting interviewed face to face. This, they mean, is a huge advantage. One mistake made in the online interviews was regarding time. The interviews made over the internet took approximately 30 minutes longer, in average, than estimated in the information letter.

One disadvantage with performing interviews over the internet is the various environments where the interview could be handed out. Nosek et al. writes that:

The traditional laboratory environment is usually designed to minimize distracting information and to create the same basic state in all participants. (Nosek et al. 2002, p. 169)

It was harder to safeguard a neutral environment with the interviews performed online. One of the respondents turned out to have a sick relative that he was nursing in the house. Because of that, the interview had to be interrupted at two occasions and continue the next day. Luckily, since the conversation was written down in the msn chat, it was easy to catch up from where we finished. The interviewer could just copy-paste the text from the previous day. One other disadvantage with conducting interviews online is that it can be harder to perceive shades in the language or irony, since the body language of the informant isn't visible. However, this problem was slightly compensated with the use of smileys.

The interviews made in Sweden were performed in a small classroom, quite similar to the laboratory environment. These interviews were recorded with a tape recorder. The informants were reminded of the confidentiality before the interview. One advantage with the interviews conducted face to face was of course that the body language of the informants was observable.

## 5.4 Transcribing the data

Except for information that could identify the subject of the interview (such as names or certain places), the interviews were written down word by word. The interviews that were conducted online were already written down when interviewing. Every interview was inserted in specific tables with two columns where the left column had information about the respondent, coded with a letter, and every sentence with a number. The sentences were in the right column.

When reading through the material, the data was sorted in different themes that were of importance for the research topic. A few different discourses, regarding the different topics, became obvious. Those discourses were used when analysing the result. As an example: "sexuality", "prostitution", "gender equality" etc. After this, every sentence that was representative for a certain theme was coded under this theme or headline.

## 5.5 Analyzing

Since the researcher, at the starting point of the thesis, already had a theoretical perspective at the same time as being open for the need for new theories that could derive from the empirical

material, the material was analyzed from an abductive analysis. Abductive method commutes between inductive and deductive analysis. It means that you, based on well known facts strive to find explanations to your thesis and that new perspectives, questions and theories can derive from the empirical material. The knowledge is developed in the communication between the empirical material and the theories. In order to explain this, Pierce (1990) writes:

The surprising fact, C, is observed. But if A were true, C would be a matter of course. Hence, there is reason to suspect that A is true. (Pierce 1990, p. 237.  
Translated from Swedish)

If Pierces' theory (ibid.) would be applied to this research, one could say that C is the hypothesis regarding male sex buyers, that their views on sexuality, gender equality and prostitution would affect their approach to buying sex. A is the previous theories that connect prostitution and conservatism.

Based on the theoretical framework, the different themes (mentioned above) were analysed in order to answer the research questions. When analysing the text, the author started by sorting out the material that could be important to the research purpose. This was done with the help of discourse analysis. This method allows the researcher to analyse how the respondent's sense of reality is constructed. This is done by analysing how the reality is reflected through concepts in the language of the respondent (Jørgensen and Philips 2000). These concepts were then collected and sorted under different themes based on the different structures that could be interpreted from the material. The discourses could be sorted in to three different main parts.

The first part had a more contextual nature: how the informants reasoned about the changes of gender equality in the Turkish society and how prostitution was perceived in general in the Turkish society. Since there was a general consistency regarding those topics among the respondents, there was no comparison between sex buyers and non-sex buyers in this part.

The second part was regarding the view of gender and sexuality. Since the sex buyers and the non sex buyers had different ways of reasoning about sexuality and gender equality, I chose a comparative approach when interpreting the data in this part

The third part was regarding the view on prostitution. In this part, it became obvious that the informants reasoned differently. The sex buyers used more liberal and conservative discourses than the non sex buyers. Eespere's theory (2007) was therefore used to structure the various discourses regarding the view on sexual services.

When the sentences were put below each representative headline, different theories were used in order to analyse the material further. Apart from the research presented in the literature review, Pateman (1988) and Jonasdottir (1994) were used to analyse the material from a power gender perspective. During the analysing process, the need for a new theory that explained the connection between sexuality and conservatism became pretty obvious. Thus, Svalastog's theory (1998) was used in order to explain the connection between the sex industry and conservative norms regarding sexuality.



## 5.6 Validity and reliability

In qualitative research, validity is not limited to the method. Validity pervades the whole research. According to Gilbert (2008):

[...] data are valid when they provide accurate measurements of a concept.  
(Gilbert 2008, p. 515).

However, what is an accurate measurement of a concept is dependent on how the concept is perceived. In qualitative research, the concept itself is not seen as objective phenomena that can be found through the right measurement (Kvale 1997). The concept itself is created through the research process, in the interaction between the researcher and the interviewee. Because of this, the trustworthiness of the researcher becomes important in order to get a valid result. There has been an aim to be as transparent as possible through the whole research, from the collection of informants and data to the result, which is one part of validating the thesis.

According to Jørgensen and Philips (2000) there are three ways to ensure that a research is valid. The first way is through the context. It's important with correlation between the study's aim and the research itself. It's also important that there is coherence between empirics and theory. The abductive method is one way to safeguard the connection between empirics and theories, since there is constant reciprocity between them. The other way is to make sure that the analysis is lucrative enough to explain the research question, but also the ability to generate new explanations. The author has strived to safeguard the validity by keeping the research questions in mind through the whole research process, maintain distinction and clarity in the way of reasoning and by being open to new questions and new explanations. The third way to safeguard validity is, as mentioned previously, through transparency. It's also important that the research instruments are suitable for the aim. Because of this, it is important to have a good reliability in order to get a valid result. Below, it will be explained how the reliability has been safeguarded.

A good reliability is one part of safeguarding a valid thesis. In order to get a valid result, it is important that the preunderstanding of the concept and the theoretical perspective of the researcher is transparent through the whole research. In this research, the subjective experiences and views of the informants have been in focus. Therefore, to keep the study as valid as possible, it has been important to find a balance between the subjectivity of the informant and the contextual interpretations when analyzing the material. In order to get a reliable and valid interview, a good interview technique is crucial (Kvale 1997). In order to avoid misunderstandings summaries and follow up questions were used during the interview. The researcher also tried to be aware of prejudices and preunderstandings in order to avoid as much as possible for them to affect the result of the study.

When transcribing the data material, there is always a risk of losing information. Kvale (ibid.) writes that it is vital that the translation from spoken to written language is valid. The interviews were transcribed as literally as possible. When listening to the recorded interviews, the researcher tried to make sure to transcribe the sentences as accurate as possible by listening through the material several times and compare to the transcript. One advantage to the online-based interviews was that they didn't have to be transcribed. They were written down directly by the informants. In some cases the grammar was corrected because of language mistakes, but the author was careful not to change the contents.

In order to safeguard the validity when analysing the material, it is important that the interpretations of the material is logically accurate (Ibid.). The accuracy of the interpretations was safeguarded by questioning the logic and trying different viewpoints in the argumentations. Since the focus has been to contextualize the reasoning regarding gender equality, sexuality and prostitution, theories that operate on a contextual level were used.

## 5.7 Generalization

When doing qualitative research you explore norms, concepts and discourses about the researched subject that can be generalized to a bigger population. Because the structures and the themes that can be described from the result of a qualitative interview are very often structures built on norms in society (Kvale 1997).

As mentioned above, in order to be able to generalize the result to Turkish men, there was a need to interview men that grew up in a Turkish context. In order to generalize the result of the study to a bigger population, people that could work as type examples and represent the bigger population of middle class Turkish men, were chosen. The men that took part in the study were all middle class men from the bigger cities, thus, the generalizability is limited to middle class Turkish men. Since most international research has showed that there's no specific group of men that buys sex, and because of the difficulties in finding research objects, there was no certain criterion for participation besides the fact that they had to identify themselves as men and be able to speak English.

Since this study investigates connections between conservative norms of male sexuality and the understanding of the use of sexual services, the result could be generalized to other similar contexts. This because Turkey is not the only country where conservative norms regarding gender and equality exist, mechanisms and norms of traditional views on gender can be found in most societies.

## 5.8 Ethical considerations

One important consideration regarding ethics and research is to reflect on what consequences the research could have on the field of the study (Gilbert 2008). The aim of this study is to, by comparing sex buyers to non sex buyers, find out how ideas about gender and sexuality among Turkish middle class men, affect the understanding of the use of sexual services. This knowledge could contribute to bringing knowledge on how to combat demand for sexual purchases and, with that, also social problems that come along with demand for sexual services, such as violence, abuse and trafficking. It could also contribute to further discussions on advantages with gender equality, for the individual but also for the society. This thesis will especially shed light on the importance of gender equality from a male perspective; what effect patriarchal ideals have on men and, in extent, on society.

According to Kvale (1997) it is important to consider how participation in the study could affect the informants. The participation in this study could allow the persons involved in the

research; sex buyers and non sex buyers, to reflect on their own role as contributors/non contributors to a system of sexual exploitation.

Regarding the interview situation, the respondents were given informed consent. This means that the researcher has to make sure that the research subject understands the purpose of the interview and their right to quit the participation at any time. This also means that the respondents will be informed about the confidentiality and how it will be safeguarded (Gilbert 2008).

The respondents were informed about their confidentiality in the information letter but also in the beginning of each interview. According to Kvale (1997) it is important to take into account all possible consequences for the informants during the interview. To make sure that the subjects of research didn't feel that they exposed themselves and their private stories more than necessary during the interview situation, the interviews were carefully structured based on different themes. As written above, the fact that the interviews were handed out online eliminated many elements of feelings of obligation towards the interviewer. It is easier for the informant to talk about sensitive subjects and it is easier to quit the interview without having to explain why. Of course, the informants were also informed about the fact that they could leave the interview at any time. Some of the respondents were a bit nervous regarding what kind of questions they would be asked, so they were sent the main themes in beforehand.

For the informants, to take part in the research would be mainly positive when they get to reflect on their own views regarding gender equality, sexuality and prostitution. It could enlighten their thoughts and, maybe, also reflect about their own contribution to the norms and values regarding gender equality in society.

According to Kvale (1997), it is important that the interviewer reflect about its own role and the impact it could have on the informant. Since many of the research questions (regarding sexuality and prostitution) could be sensitive to talk about, the fact that the interviewer was a woman could, from a power gender perspective, have a certain inhibitory effect on the interviews. This could constrain the informants to be fully open regarding their views on these sensitive topics, especially for the sex buyers. However, the interviews with the sex buyers were all handed out online. This could eliminate some of these constraints since, as Nosek (2002) claims, the absence of a face to face researcher could eliminate some of the coercion that is embedded in the interview situation.

According to Nosek et al. (ibid.), one risk when conducting interviews online is that the participant could, due to a broken internet connection, involuntarily end participation. This was avoided by keeping contact with the informants through email. As mentioned previously, one of the participants had to interrupt the interview due to a sick family member, but due to email contact, the interview could continue the next day.

According to Kvale (1997) it is important to safeguard the anonymity of the informants during transcription. Through the whole research, as much as possible was done to safeguard the confidentiality of the respondents. This was done by changing specific names and other details that could identify the researched person when transcribing the interviews. When transcribing the data of the interviews recorded with tape recorder, all names and other information that could identify the respondents was changed. After transcribing the data, the interviews were deleted from the tape recorder and the transcripts were stored on a USB together with the interviews handed out online.

The majority of the data in this study was collected from interviews handed out online. The biggest difference from the face to face interviews in terms of safeguarding the confidentiality is that the interviews handed out on msn might be automatically stored in the computer. After conducting the online interviews, all personal information about the participants was encrypted and the interviews were then collected and stored on a USB kept in a safe place. The chat history was deleted from the computer and from MSN. The informants were in the beginning of the interviews, apart from the informed consent, reminded to delete their chat history after the interviews were conducted.

During analysis, Kvale (ibid.) writes that it is important to reflect on how deeply the information can be analyzed. It is also important to involve the informants in how their information is interpreted. The researcher tried to safeguard this by asking many follow up questions in order to make sure the understanding was correct. It is also important that the data can be verified. This could also partly be safeguarded by follow-up questions and conclusions during the interview, but also by being transparent with the interpretations. This was also a good way of avoiding complications in communication due to language, since neither informants nor the interviewer had English as a first language.

## 6. Findings and analyses

Below, the findings will be presented and analyzed. In the end, the result will be concluded with a summary of the results. The names of the men that didn't use sexual services are marked with **bold text**.

### 6.1 Gender

Turkey is a country where the public space is mainly dominated by men and the domestic space by women. Even though the country is changing, these patterns are still prominent.

On one hand, modernity made the Turkish society more liberal regarding gender equality and sexuality. But the increase of capitalism also reduced some of the old moral values in society. All informants agree that capitalism has changed the Turkish society; however, they claim there is no real difference between the sexual inequality deriving from conservative religion and the sexual inequality in capitalism. The respondents claim that sexual inequalities in Turkey that used to be sanctioned by religion are now sanctioned by capitalism. Some of the respondents claim that prostitution has increased because of this. Jonasdottir (1994) writes that the rising sex industry can be seen as a consequence of modernity. When women become more sexual and economically autonomous, patriarchy shifts from private to public. The male control over the female body, moves to other fields in order to care for the male sexuality; internet, pornography or prostitution. The Turkish modernity could have resulted in a shift from private to public patriarchy.

Below it will be shown how the two groups; sex buyers and non-sex buyers, perceive the gender inequality in the Turkish society. The respondents' own views of gender equality and how it's constructed will be presented.

#### *6.1.1 Non sex buyers*

The non-consumers believe that traditions and social roles are the biggest reasons behind the gender inequalities on the Turkish labor market. As an example, **Cezmi** says:

If you take one hundred years of male miners, people will assume that it's for men. It's not. People will start thinking like that because it's the only picture they can see.

None of the non-consumers believe that biology should have any impact on people's choices on the labor market. Akay, Cezmi and Faik believe that there are no physical differences between men and women that would matter in a modern society.

**Akay:** Postmodern life and contemporary world make that question meaningless. No, there is no difference in what men and women are good at. I don't see anything in life that women are better at because they are women, except giving birth –which is biological.

**Cezmi:** I don't think so; I don't think anyone is better because of the advanced society that we live in. Even if we take the biological, simple evidence that people gather from the genders when comparing them, we are living in such an advanced society that handicap, even if it's very physical ill, can be overcome, so there is nothing that is for men or for women.

The sexual contract (Pateman 1988), is based on the idea that men are biologically superior to women. According to the classical contract theoreticians, women did not have the personal attributes that require becoming a free individual. Based on this idea, the traditional gender construction is onwards upheld by the male dependence on female care for their self-fulfillment, and thereby, be able to exercise ecstasy. Thus, women are expected to take responsibility for the domestic areas. The idea that there are no biological differences of importance would endanger those traditional notions and challenge them. **Akay** believes that despite our social and biological backgrounds, we can get high status if we use our skills in the right way:

The modern life introduces a lot of roles in society. Not only biology. Personal skills, abilities and capabilities. A clever woman does not have a similar role in society with a stupid man if she can use the knowledge better than him.

### **6.1.2 Sex buyers**

When looking at previous studies [Sandell 1996; Farley 2009; Macleod et al. 2008; Xantidis et al. 2000] regarding men that buy sexual services, it is clear that men that use sexual services express a more traditional view regarding gender. This tendency is also observable among the informants in this study. The men that used sexual services express to a bigger extent, ideas regarding traditional gender roles. Concerning the unequal division between men and women at the labor market, the sex buyers are unanimous that traditional roles affect people's choices. As an example Ebher says:

Neither man nor women are expected to divert too much from what roles are expected from them. For example, let's say a woman could be a military genius, but in case of war, the public maybe wouldn't want her to become the chief commander because that doesn't suite their perception of a woman.

As written above, the pursuit to maintain the idea of biological differences might sometimes be very strong in society. In order to sustain the male dominance in the public sphere, it is more important to live up to the stereotypes regarding male and female roles rather than the actual capabilities of people. However, the inequalities in possibilities in workforce are considered to be unfair by the sex buying respondents. Regarding women's lower salaries Ebher says:

Maybe companies think they add less value? I think it is pure injustice. If they get pregnant for example, they go away for one year. Maybe this? It should be equal if you ask me.

Even if the differences are considered to be unfair, the reasons for the differences are often explained on an individual level. According to the men that bought sex, men and women have

different preferences which results in different choices. Barış means that women, because of traditional roles, have fewer ambitions to work. At the same time as he assumes that inequalities in the workforce are based on conservative ideals, he also claims that women are more fit for certain jobs:

In many countries (not only Muslim countries) people think that men are money earner in family. It is thought that women don't have to earn money. That is the job of men. So, some women are not working or working without ambitions. They are not enthusiastic to improve their career, they are working just for helping men or for their special needs (make-up), or just not to sit at home (it can be boring to sit at home). [...] Some jobs are well fit for women, for example; selling makeup.

The sex buyers believe that women's domination on the domestic field is a result of choice. Barış claims:

Researches show that while men want beauty, trust... at the first lines of list of what they want from women for marriage, at women's list power and money are occupying some important lines. So, there is such belief and acceptances in society.

Furthermore, Dirlik says:

Women mainly choose to marry and live at home. They are not so brave to do such work (male dominated work, author's remark). They prefer to find a man with a good income and stay under his wings.

Additionally, these different choices and preferences are often explained with biological differences. Barış, Dirlik and Ebher think that there are areas where the sexes divide in proficiency:

Barış: Yes. At the job of taking care of babies, women-mothers are better of course. And men are better at the jobs in which strength is needed.

Dirlik: Muscle work is mainly preferred by men. I mean, construction workers, miners, road workers etc. are mostly men. But brainworks, for example teaching or drawing, are preferred by women –or the percent is higher than for muscle work. [...] This is a traditional idea dressed up with the powerful, physical advantage of men. Women are the weakest link. This comes from ancient life and life conditions; manpower has been demanded all the time. Women don't want to do those jobs that men mostly prefer.

Ebher: Yes, as a result of their physical differences; World record for running, for example. Men perform better, in general, at physical things. Women tend to be less aggressive and more caring so I think they'd be better in politics for example.

The superior position of men is, by the sex buyers, explained by men's and women's different choices, which are based on different biological conditions. According to Pateman (1988), this idea of biological male supremacy is what upholds inequality between men and women, even when men and women have the same rights on the paper. In other words, the importance

that biological differences are given will contribute to inequality in power. One interesting fact is that both Ebher and Dirlik claim that female abilities make women better at intellectual chores, such as teaching or politics. However, Ebher also mentions that this is because women are more caring. Both teaching and politics are jobs where certain care is exercised, since they both involve responsibility and guidance over others. According to Jonasdottir's theory (1994), women's pursuance of care also enables male supremacy.

## 6.2 Sexuality

Despite the modernization process, Turkey is a country where conservative ideas regarding sexuality are common. Men are encouraged to be sexually curious while women's sexuality still is rather restrained [Koçturk 1991; Boratav and Çavdar 2012]. Here below, it will be presented how the different groups; sex buyers and non- sex buyers, reason about sexual norms and their personal views on men's and women's sexuality.

### 6.2.1 Sex buyers

Many of the interviewed sex buyers argue that the unequal view of men's and women's sexuality in the Turkish society is unfair. As an example Dirlik says:

For men, it seems like they have all rights, but if a woman does the same thing, it is looked upon as a crime. The same actions, but two different understandings of it. It is not fair. In some societies, if a man cheats on his wife with another woman, other men say: 'wow, you're a real man now'.

Bariş also claim that the expectations of male and female sexual behavior are very different:

When men have many relations people say that, oh this man is "çapkın"; every time changing partner, many girlfriends... This is many times good for men [...] this is like a skill for men. But, for women, it is not so good. It is not pride for women. If women have many relations in the past it means that women are going from point A to point B, from good to Bad. From pureness to badness.

Bariş and Dirlik describe how men are encouraged to embrace their sexuality in the Turkish society. It is even encouraged among men to cheat. Sexually active women are, at the same time, looked down on. A woman can't be sexually outgoing and, at the same time, keep her dignity. Just like Svalastog (1998) writes, according to conservative ideas regarding sexuality, women should only be sexual within the male control. A woman that is considered sexual and non-reproductive will be stigmatized and viewed as a bad woman. The man can be seen as *çapkın* and *husband material* at the same time. His sexuality is not dichotomized but coherent. Just as Koçturk (1991) writes, women are schooled to chastity while men are encouraged to be sexually active.

As mentioned previously, all of the sex buyers prefer a partner with sexual experience. The respondents also find it unfair that women aren't allowed to embrace their sexuality in the same way as men. This could be seen as a consequence of the Turkish modernization. The



view on female sexuality has become more secular. At the same time as the traditional norms of men's and women's sexuality are perceived as unfair, there is a tendency among the sex buyers to explain this unfairness with biology. As an example, Dirlik means that there are different rules for male and female sexuality, and that it derives from biology:

It's not provable if a man has had sex before marriage. You can see if a woman has had sex. This causes a situation where men can have sex in secret while women can't. This gives people the idea that it's only women that can't have sex before marriage.

According to Yazıcı et al. (2011), there is no sexual education in Turkish schools. The lack of knowledge regarding sexuality enables conservative ideas regarding male and female sexuality. This consolidates the idea of a fragmented female sexuality (whore-Madonna) and forces women into biological subordination. The myth of the female hymen as something that reveals women's sexual history is widely spread. And in some contexts (Boratav and Çavdar 2012), it is still common with so called "virginity tests" as a way to control the female sexuality and Dirlik believes that the bigger acceptance for men to have sex mainly has to do with biology:

Because of genetic rules; men need sex more than women. But another view that should not be passed is that social life and social pressure makes it harder for women. This must be considered [---] Women don't need sex as often as men [---] In Britain, it was done an experiment at a university. A girl offered men sex randomly and all men accepted. A boy did the same to the girls but all refused. So this shows the reality. And the experiment tells this to prove it too.

Men are, according to the sex buyers, seen as biologically more sexually active than women. Female sexuality is considered to be more focused on reproduction. At the same time as these different expectations of men's and women's sexuality are seen as unfair, they are also considered to be natural. The inequality between men and women is unjust but, at the same time, biologically induced, and therefore, unchangeable. As Pateman (1988) writes, gender inequality will keep on existing as long as women are seen as biologically subordinate.

The idea of women as less sexual consolidates the fragmented female sexuality that Svalastog (1998) talks about. It dichotomizes women into sexual and non-sexual women. There are women that are non-sexual and reproductive (Madonnas), and there are women who are non-reproductive and sexual (whores). At the same time as women are seen as biologically less sexual, the whore is seen as excessively sexual. Women aren't considered to be sexual for their own needs. The whore is a sexual woman, but only with the purpose to satisfy the male sexuality. This view is also maintaining the idea that men have an indefatigable libido. That it is a duty as a man to maintain this inequality by expecting sexual care in order to be satisfied.

### **6.2.2 Non sex buyers**

The non-consumers also bring up the fact that the unequal expectations of male and female sexuality are unfair. Men are encouraged to be sexually active while women are encouraged to be more modest. **Cezmi** says:

Young boys are encouraged to lose their virginity (...) so when the boy reaches a certain age, he would be taken to a prostitute and they would get rid of their virginity as soon as possible. Then they will become a man of course.

Just as Kocturk (1991) mentions in her research, **Cezmi** talks about a pressure on young men to lose their virginites. It is not unusual that men are taken to brothels by their fathers for this purpose. The ideal regarding male sexuality is enforced upon young men, especially men that don't suit the sexual stereotype. **Cezmi** tells me that he himself was encouraged to go to the brothel when he started coming out as homosexual:

I was encouraged to, even in situations when I revealed that I was gay to people, I was encouraged to go to the whore house to experience sex to understand that I really wanted to have sex with women. Even if you are gay you are not immune to the pressure.

Even if both Jonasdottir (1994) and Pateman (1988) argue that there is a freedom that men enjoy with the exploitation of women's care, there is also a very strong pressure to conform to the expected roles. If a man chooses not to uphold the male sex right it is seen as if he is doing something wrong. At the same time as the man, according to Svalastog (1998), has a coherent sexuality where he is not seen as a bad man if he is sexually active, there is a pressure to conform to a certain idea about male sexuality (This idea will be more developed in the chapter 'buying sex as a privilege'). He continues:

Once a man had sex with a woman it seems like if they conquered the woman. It is the opposite for women: When a girl is supposed to have sex. It's something that happened and should be kept, sort of, under covers. [...] virginity is a huge thing for men but the idea is not the intrinsic value of the woman.

He also means that women's purity is something that, according to this idea, is supposed to be controlled by the father:

Just as a good mother is expected to take care of the children no matter what happens, to sacrifice themselves to the end, a father is supposed to buckle the family down and it's his responsibility to keep the children safe. Like keep their daughters from having sex.

Here it is very obvious how man is not only expected to uphold the male sex right, he is also expected to safeguard and uphold the idea of the female fragmented sexuality. That's the idea about male sexuality that males are expected to conform to. By safeguarding the chastity of his daughters, he is also reproducing the idea of sexually active women as something bad. This endorses the idea of the whore and Madonna. As Kocturk (1991) says, the reputation of the man depends on the chastity of his women. **Akay** believes that women's sexual needs are overlooked:

In Turkey, male sexuality is always prior to the female. There are too many marriages in Turkey where the wife gets old without even having one real orgasm.

Unlike the respondents that used sexual services, he means that this is unfair because men's and women's sexual needs are similar:

We are created by the same god. We are all human beings. The genital organs were just designed diversely.

Unlike the sex buyers, the non sex buyers explain the different expectations of male and female sexuality with cultural and social constructions. According to Svalastog (1998), the female is, according to traditional ideas, only supposed to be sexual within the male control. They are not expected to be sexual for their own pleasure. The respondents that acknowledge female subjective sexuality are also against the exploitation of women for sexual purposes.

## 6.3 Prostitution

Prostitution has been regulated in Turkey since 1930. Historically, visiting the brothel has been seen as a way to exercise masculinity. Below, the respondents' views on prostitution in the Turkish society will be presented. Further down the respondents' personal views and experiences of prostitution will be featured.

### *6.3.1 Turkey and prostitution*

Eespere (2007) claims that state policies and attitudes towards prostitution have had a big impact on the general attitudes on the use of sexual services in a country. When looking at Eespere's different explaining reasons for buying sex (Ibid.), one could argue that the Turkish state has taken the liberal view of looking at prostitution as a consumer activity in the sense that prostitution is seen as a profession in Turkey, it is legal and regulated. Just as Augustin (2008) argues, prostitution is seen as a service provided by the state. There are licensed workers that have a regular salary. Augustin (Ibid.) states that men that buy sex simply do so because they find it convenient and there is a big market.

At the same time as prostitution is treated as a business in Turkey, it is also viewed as something bad, and therefore, it is explicated that the sex workers need to be controlled by the state in order not to cause deterioration in the public order and health, and prostitution was seen as something that could cause social disorder. The goal of the regulation was to keep the prostitution off the streets and outside the public eye. In other words, the main reasons for regulating prostitution were mainly because of conservative values, not liberal. Concomitantly the Turkish state takes a liberal standpoint to regulate it as a business; they also do it based on conservative morals regarding sexuality. Especially female sexuality, since there are women who need to be controlled in order to safeguard the public health of men. The main focus is on the women selling sex. As an example; the prostitutes are seen as responsible not to spread venereal diseases and their freedom is limited, they are treated like criminals by the state.

According to Zengin (2007), women that are seen as too promiscuous could also be put under surveillance by the state, in order to ascertain that they are not indulging in prostitution. Just as Svalastog (1998) writes, women who are sexual without being reproductive are considered to be a threat to the family and to society. It is a good example of the whore – Madonna dichotomy.

Even though there is legal and regulated prostitution in Turkey, these legal brothels have a bad reputation and they are seen as shabby. This is a consequence of the connection between liberal views on prostitution and conservative views on sexuality. The “whore” is rather treated like a criminal than a respected worker. Another contradictive fact is that the respondents that advocate legal and regulated prostitution claim they don’t visit legal brothels. Ebher, as an example, claims that hardly any modern men visit the legal brothels in Turkey:

Those general houses you mention, they look really bad. There’s a feeling of desperation and they are really bad.

So, even if there is already regulated prostitution in Turkey, these places are not well-liked among Turkish middle class sex buyers. One of the reasons could be that the slave like conditions in the legal brothels, described by Zengin (2007), are more intimidating than the migrant sex workers on the streets. The bad working conditions for the women working in the brothels are more obvious than the conditions of the unlicensed sex workers. This means that, even though these women, many times, are victims of trafficking, pimps or corrupted police men their working conditions could be just as bad.

Continuously, Ebher and Dirlik claim that, when buying the service, few sex buyers are really concerned about the background of the sex worker. Dirlik says:

The trader offers you 600 USD for a Russian prostitute to stay with you for a week. You can keep her and do what you want, she is yours. I don’t think the buyers think of the fact that she is a trafficking victim. I think no one cares. I mean, the customer never care about the situation, sad but true.

Just as Augustin (2008) and Macleod et al. (2008) write, the main reason for men to buy sexual services might be pleasure and convenience rather than morals. According to Pateman (1988), there is a norm about men’s right to have sex from women that is deeply established in society. This means that the consumer could not be entrusted with the responsibility to ensure whether or not there is trafficking involved. The driving force is convenience, not morals. Jonasdottir (1994) means that men, from birth, have been socialized with the idea to exercise their freedom over women; that women should care for them. Because of this, when men buy sexual services, they don’t exercise care for the sex worker, they exercise ecstasy. Prostitution is society’s way of safeguarding the male right to ecstasy.

The Turkish state is considering men’s sexuality as something that is necessary for the state to satisfy. The male libido is seen as uncontrollable and prostitution is a way for society to please the sexual needs of men. Since the sexuality of Turkish women, traditionally, is seen as much weaker, the function of prostitution is to fill the gap between men and women’s unequal sexuality. As mentioned above, since the men who buy sex, don’t seem to be the most conscious consumers, it could be an idea to put the responsibility for the consciousness on society instead of the consumer.

### ***6.3.2 Respondents personal views on prostitution***

Since there are differences between customers of sexual services and non-customers, regarding their views on prostitution, Eespere’s (2007) theories will be used to explain these differences. When looking at the different discourses, deriving from Eespere’s theory (Ibid.),

it is clear that the non-sex buyer uses arguments in line with the “social construction” and the “buying sex as violence” discourse. The men that used sexual services, to a bigger extent, use explanations that go in line with liberal (buying sex as a consumer activity) and conservative (buying sex as a biological inevitability) discourses. Below the different prostitution discourses from Eespere (Ibid.) will be used as headlines to demonstrate these differences.

### *6.3.2.1 The non-sex buyers view on prostitution*

The non- sex buyers reflect more regarding moral issues and social inequalities in the sex business. They describe a pattern of gender inequality that they don't want to be a part of. They see the inequalities between men and women as a product of social constructions. But foremost, they don't see the inequalities between men and women and the different choices men and women do, as something natural. Because of this, they see prostitution as a way of reproducing these unequal roles.

#### *6.3.2.1.2 As violence*

According to Eespere (2007) this model considers prostitution as a form of sexual exploitation which is a consequence of the patriarchal society. The non sex buyers refer, in a bigger extent, to prostitution as a way of upholding unfair positions and inequality in society. As an example **Cezmi** says:

To fulfill the idea that men need to have sex, and they want to control women into doing it under more controlled environments so that it doesn't touch upon their moral ideas and the women they're acquainted with. It seems like they want to keep it as something that is not within their environment but someplace else.

The non sex buyers argue that even if prostitution, in Turkey, is officially regarded as a profession and a business arrangement, it is based on inequality in power and, therefore, the relationship has an exploitative nature to it. Just like in Eespere's “buying sex as violence” discourse (Ibid.), the respondents consider prostitution to be a result of patriarchal structures and inequalities in power.

**Akay:** Human being's body (whatever the sexual orientation) should be protected from misuse/exploitation by civil society.

**Faik:** It's a power position that can only exist with the social imbalance and economical imbalance it's like the driving force of cheap transfer that goes from one stage to another. [...] You know there are always the social inequalities and they, especially in prostitution, feel satisfaction in that way when they buy sex. They feel powerful and potent.

Just like Pateman (1988) argues, the respondents see prostitution as a result of the male sex right. **Faik** sees the exercise of power as a driving force for buying sex itself. The satisfaction comes from the feeling of superiority. This idea is also supported in research; Sandell et al. (1996) finds in their research that the sex buyers many times objectified women as a way to sustain dominance over women.

Most of the non sex buyers refer to moral values as a reason for the choice not to buy sexual services. As an example, **Akay** says:

As god is my witness I have never had sexual intercourse in my whole life with paying a prostitute, neither Turk nor foreigner because I perceive prostitution as a violation of human rights.

Farley et al. (2011) found that it was more common that non consumers viewed prostitution like sexual exploitation. They also found that non sex buyers were less likely to see sex workers as women with special sexual capacities. Xantidis et al. (2000) found that it was common that non sex buyers adapted more androgynous, less stereotyped roles, and thereby, they could easier see prostitutes as subjects. In other words, non sex buyers are less likely to adapt conservative masculine values. According to Svalastog's theory (1998); objectification of women is connected to conservative views on male and female sexuality. Thus, the non sex buyers have less conservative views on gender.

#### *6.3.2.1.3 Social constructivist view*

According to Eespere (2007), this view means that norms, of both male and female sexuality, are products of social, cultural and historical constructions. As an example, men are socialized to be sexually unrestrained. Apart from seeing prostitution as a way to express power, the non sex buyers also see prostitution as a result of unequal power structures in society:

**Cezmi:** Just as any other men, they are under pressure too. Because most men, the first time they go, I'm assuming they feel that they have to have sex. Then there's the kind that enjoy having sex with women and also some men that like to talk about having sex with women. Or they feel left out because they haven't had sex or there's the kind that likes to abuse people and to go and have sex with prostitutes. Or they feel very outcast in general and they are desperate. You can't say that all men that goes there are just bad assholes.

Regarding the nature of prostitution, **Cezmi** states that prostitution could be seen as a profession providing a service for people who are not able to socially achieve sexual relationships. But since it:

[...] has almost a criminal status, even though its legal and the women are not very protected. If we are to call it a profession then it should be treated as any other profession.

As long as the traditional views regarding norms about women's sexuality exist, it won't be respected as a real job according to **Cezmi**:

If you are talking about a woman who is in a position that is not respected. And if you put the least likable profession there is, according to many people, on them. It's not going to get many people to respect it as a job. If you see it as something that people volunteers to do. Even if it is so. It won't make it more respectable for anyone. Because people judge... women are judged for talking about sex even.

Because prostitution presupposes inequality (the exploitative relationship), and because the profession is based on a culturally and socially stigmatized role: the whore, it can't be a normal profession. The non sex buyers are, in general, more aware of the power structures in prostitution.

### *6.3.2.2 The sex buyers view on prostitution*

The sex buyers tend to have more liberal (Buying sex as a consumer activity) and conservative (Buying sex as a biological inevitability) attitudes towards prostitution. They believe that prostitution could be seen as a business deal between two persons, a service. At the same time, they have the idea that the conservative norms of female and male sexuality have natural, biological causes. Based on that thought, prostitution can be seen as a natural cause of biological differences between male and female sexuality.

#### *6.3.2.2.1 Liberal*

As mentioned previously, all informants that have used sexual services believe that there would be big advantages if prostitution was more regulated. According to Eespere (2007), the liberal (consumer activity) explanation model is based on the idea that sexual services are a crucial part of society that needs to be regulated as any other service. Ebher, as an example, thinks that the function of prostitution is to satisfy a human need:

In general, its human needs. People need eating, shelter, fucking. They want to access resources. And in order to reach these resources, they need to pay. Because those are not for free.

He compares sex with essential needs as shelter and food. Even though most people have sex without paying for it, he also sees it as a commodity. Prostitution is, according to Ebher, just the same as any other business agreement:

Ebher: Yes, because you're selling a service, a sexual service. Lap dancers and gigolos too.

Interviewer: It's not so common that anyone sells kisses....

Ebher: Yes but less common doesn't mean that it's not ... Actually, you know, prostitutes don't kiss."

Interviewer: Why do you think that is?

Ebher: Because kissing may involve feelings. Maybe they don't want to feel.

The fact that prostitutes have to shut off their feelings while working, he sees as similar to doing other undesirable jobs:

I don't think anyone would want to think what a prostitute/gigolo thinks yes. When you get your toilet cleaned, you don't think about what the guy is going through, you just want it cleaned.

Just as Augustin, he argues that other professions also require emotional distance from what they are doing, and that it, in other situations is seen as “being professional”. Ebber is using the profession “toilet cleaner” when he is exemplifying a profession with equal status as prostitution. Just as cleaning a toilet, prostitution can sometimes be an unpleasant work. Sex workers are, according to the liberal view, free agents or subjects, acting out of free choices. But, just as Pateman (1988) argues, gender equality in theory does not result in gender equality in practice as long as women are seen as naturally and biologically subordinate to men.

Even if Ebber equals sex work to other services, he also admits that shutting off your feelings during the sexual act, or while cleaning a toilet, could be a way of avoiding awareness of something odious. Furthermore, it seems to be accepted that it is easier to shut off your feelings during sex than it is while kissing, even though both sex and kissing consists of close body contact and a certain exchange of body fluids. Farley et al. (2009) calls this *denial of women’s subjectivity*, most of the sex buyers are aware of the fact that women are faking and shutting off their feelings during the act. But in order to focus on the pleasure, they need to ignore it. The fact that women are playing a role, can also make the men feel bad or tricked. One example of this could be Barış, who claims that buying sex doesn’t always make him feel fulfilled:

For the body, yes for the heart or brain many times no. You miss the relationship with other things than sexuality, not only the sex.

Farley et al. (2009) found that it was common that sex buyers were aware of the, many times, bad situation that sex workers are in. However, this is something that many of the men choose to ignore. Barış answers the question if he would consider selling sexual services himself:

If very qualified conditions, with little job and people who I selected, without the stigma, I say yes. With the social conditions of today, I say no. [...] It must be with better conditions. But if there was, many people might want to become prostitutes. With perfect conditions even me.

He believes that it could be seen as a normal profession if everyone would consider it a normal job:

In this case, I will also think that this is normal job. Now it is very bad thing of course. It would be like a utopia, everybody can make sex with everybody.

Barış and Dirlik believe that prostitution could be viewed as any other service or business if it wasn’t for the social circumstances surrounding prostitution. Monto and Milrod (2013) found that sex buyers in general were more sexually liberal than non sex buyers (they thought about sex more and used other services in the sex industry to a bigger extent than non- customers). This is also a prominent pattern in this research. However, this liberal view is embedded with conservatism. On one hand, the informants would like sexual services to be more normalized. The circumstances mentioned are often connected to the social stigma surrounding prostitution or the bad working conditions.

The social stigma is, according to Svalastog (1998), based on conservative ideas regarding sexuality. The “whore” is a negatively charged discourse as a result of the fragmented view



on the female sexuality. This means that even if there is a will to normalize prostitution from the liberal perspective, there is a conservative sexual dichotomy embedded in the phenomena of prostitution. Prostitution presupposes inequality in sexuality, gender and economy of course. The utopia that Barış mentions could maybe be possible in a world without gender inequality. However, one could argue the necessity to buy sexual services in such a world. As Pateman (1988) argues, the liberal idea to legitimize the act of buying sex based on the idea of consent and freedom, does not consider the subordination and objectification that is a result of the male sex right. The conservative ideas regarding gender are, somehow, imbued in the liberal view on prostitution.

#### 6.3.2.2.2 *Conservative*

As mentioned previously, Eespere's (2007) biological explanation model "buying sex as a biological inevitability" model will be renamed as "conservative", since prostitution according to the traditional conservative view is seen as an outcome of biological and natural differences in male and female sexuality (see Pateman 1988). According to the conservative view, the natural imbalance in male and female libido makes prostitution a necessity. The sex buyers refer to prostitution as a tool to satisfy the sexual requests of men. Prostitution is seen to function as a compensation for "sexual poverty" that arrives from conservative sexual morals and lack of gender equality in Turkey. As an example Barış says:

Turkey is a conservative country and half of the women wear scarves. It is hard to have sex if you aren't married [...] Some men, they have girlfriends but they don't have sex, so they are going to prostitutes sometimes for this subject.

Because men need to have sex before marriage, they use prostitutes for this purpose. He thinks that if Turkey would be more sexually free, prostitution would decrease.

Augustin argues that there is no reason to investigate the motivation for men to buy sex because the motive is that men want to have easy access, that western men prefer the care they get from women in countries where women aren't as feminist. This is actually a conservative standpoint regarding men's sexuality, based on the idea of men's right to access the female body. The male sex right is based on conservative ideas, but it is also, as Pateman (1988) argues, based on the idea of the male biological dominance over women.

When looking at prostitution there is, as mentioned previously, a connection to conservative views on gender and the biologist explanation model of Eespere (2007); the inequality between men and women, where dichotomized gender positions and sexuality are acknowledged as something constant. Carole Pateman (1988) means that a liberal society where men and women, on the paper, have equal rights, but where women are considered to be biologically born to subjection, and men are assumed to be biologically more powerful, will, in practice be a society of masters and slaves. The biologically and/or culturally given male sex right, is what justifies the male pursuit of ecstasy, while they expect female care in return.

As mentioned above, selling sexual services is, by many of the respondents, considered to be unpleasant work. As an example, Dirlik wouldn't sell sexual services unless it was his last option:

I believe that if life conditions are too bad, everyone has the right to choose something you wouldn't do in normal conditions. I remember one man that ate his friend after a big snowstorm in a village because of big hunger. The friend was already frozen to death. The struggling to stay alive can make people do things they wouldn't want to do otherwise.

Prostitution is here compared to cannibalism, something that would only happen in extreme exceptional cases. Farley (2009) mentions that it's common that men believe that sex workers uphold special qualities that makes them cope with circumstances that other people wouldn't handle. This is an example of how Dirlik is aware of the fact that selling sex is many times a result of a desperate situation.

Prostitution is seen as a consequence of "sexual poverty", as a result of women's limited sexuality in Turkey; the Madonna ideal, where women's value is based on her chastity. But the demand for women's chastity is just like the whore ideal, based on women's fragmented sexuality. It is a part of the conservative norms regarding female sexuality. The dichotomization of the female sexuality is a way to uphold the male sex right. Just like Jonasdottir (1994) argues, the male ecstasy is dependent on women's care. The construction of the whore-figure is also a way to uphold the male sex right. As a way to justify the male right to access sexual services, the whore is constructed as an object that is always sexually available.

All respondents share the idea that buying sex is somehow connected to the idea of the male sex right. Some see it as a result of nature and biology, and some see it as a result of socially constructed inequalities of power. The men that are using sexual services see, to a bigger extent, the inequalities as a result of biological differences between women and men, where the male sex drive is bigger. Male sexuality is considered to be connected to sexual needs, while female sexuality is seen as more connected to reproduction. In this way, conservative and biological ideals are reconstructed in the act of buying sexual services. As an example, Ebher describes how buying sex isn't in women's nature:

That wouldn't make a good impression on me [...] In ancient times, prehistoric times, men were going hunting and provided food and women were, let's say, taking care of the cave. Then they need to reproduce at some point like all other animals in nature. Male caveman want to make sure that the female caveman is carrying his child, not some other caveman's child because he provided food and stuff and want to make sure his investments comes back as his baby. So male caveman maybe wants to make sure as much as possible that female cavewoman doesn't go around sleeping with others and he wants her as dependent as possible of him. If she goes to a male prostitute and likes it, he might lose her. She'll be less dependent on him.

The conservative idea about male and female sexuality almost makes buying sex a natural act.

## 6.4 Buying sex as a privilege

Based on the findings in this study, one additional category will be added to Eespere's discourses: *Buying sex as a privilege*. It will be explained with help of Anna Jonasdottir's theory about Love Power (1994) and Carole Pateman's theory about the sexual contract (1988). The idea that sex buying is a privilege is, of course, grounded in an idea that buying sex is a consequence of conservative gender constructions. Thus, 'buying sex as a privilege' is somewhat related to the 'buying sex as a social construct' model. The difference is that by portraying the act of buying sex as a privilege, it will be obvious how liberal and conservative views on male sexuality and gender are so deeply incorporated in our gender constructions, that the right to exploit others is normalized into a privilege. In other words, the male sex right becomes a privilege.

As mentioned initially, many of the Turkish sex buyers don't investigate the background of the sex worker. Just as many writers mention [Augustin 2008; Macleod et al. 2008], men buy sexual services for pleasure. Moral considerations aren't in focus. Because of the traditional idea of male sexuality, there is an expectation of having sexual services accessible. The ethical aspects of sex work aren't a prioritized issue for consumers. The informants state reasons of gender inequality as the main cause of the fact that the majority of the users of sexual services are men, The privilege to be in the position where someone else is expected to satisfy your needs, is seen as a part of the male role in society:

Bariş: Men are freer in Turkey and in the world.

Dirlik: In some societies it is a given right for men. Mainly men ruled.

The respondents expressed that, regardless of how they interpret the nature of it, prostitution is a chore with low status and there seems to be a subordination included in it. They all talk about the bad circumstances surrounding the sex industry. Desperate life conditions and economic inequality is seen as the driving force for women to sell sex rather than a specific personality. Bariş says:

Women who are looking after someone, women who can't get a job and need money, women with dreams of luxury. Maybe some foreign women or small girls are being deceived; some Slavic girls come to Turkey for any kind of job. In some cases the mafia takes their passports and makes them work for them.

Despite this awareness, the pleasure and the thrill of satisfying your desires is superior the moral arguments:

Bariş: If I miss to have sex, then I can go. If I have no girlfriend.

Interviewer: So lack of sex is your motivation?

Bariş: That is the main motivation. Second motivation is to have sex with different people although there is girlfriend, but this is very small motivation for me.

Interviewer: What was the main reason for you to buy sex?

Ebher: Fun, boredom.

Interviewer: What function did it fill for you?

Ebher: I just passed some time.

Interviewer: So it could have been eating an ice-cream instead? Or reading a book?

Ebher: Yes.

For Dirlik, it also has to do with pleasure:

To try a different feeling of pleasure. New and different tastes. I feel like I'm outside of regular life when I buy sexual services. You feel free, like a bird, no restrictions.

The idea of buying sex as a privilege also becomes obvious when the respondents were asked about trafficking. Just as mentioned previously, none of the respondents believes that sex buyers really care about the women's background. Ebher says:

I don't think anyone asks and they wouldn't care either [...] you eat eggs for instance, but no one, maybe 90 percent, doesn't question how its produced.

The informants also explain that foreign prostitutes are more popular among sex buyers. Partly because the women from post-Soviet countries are considered more attractive, but also because the state owned brothels are seen as shabby. The sex buyers are positive towards a more regulated sex industry at the same time as they prefer to buy sex from migrant sex workers that could be victims of trafficking. This contradictory standpoint is possible just because morals are not in focus when buying sexual services. The driving force for buying sexual services is pleasure and convenience. It is also possible because the access to sex is seen as a male right.

As written above, prostitution presupposes conservative ideas about men's and women's sexuality. Just as and Carole Pateman (1988) argues regarding the sexual contract, it is difficult to be free and equal business partners when there is a built in inequality in the business agreement. This means that prostitution, by itself, reproduces conservative ideas about male and female sexuality. The expectation of having access to sexual services is so common among men, that it is a norm. The act of buying sex becomes a male privilege. Because of this privilege, providing that service will be someone's obligation. The conservative sex roles, created in the sexual contract, are preserved and recreated, regardless of modernity or conservatism, through the unequal distribution of love power. This means that Turkish men, due to conservative and/or biologist ideas about gender, will have the privilege to take advantage of women's care, without being concerned with, or feel responsible for how this affects women.

All informants share the idea that the act of buying sex is connected to the idea of men's right to have their needs satisfied. But, as mentioned previously, the reason for this is explained differently by sex buyers and non sex buyers. Either, it has to do with biological reasons that

put men in a power position or it has to do with social inequalities in power, where men have more advantage in society. **Akay** reflects about how prostitution is a symptom of a male sexual privilege:

Traditionally, prostitution was frowned upon in the Turkish society, but everyone knew secretly that they were necessary in a way.

**Akay** talks about the tradition where young men had their first sexual experience with prostitutes. They even had special names like “Eğreti Gelin” (= borrowed bride) for women that worked as instructors for young men in order to train their sexual skills. **Cezmi** means that it is a part of what he calls “the patriarchal game”:

They are trying to stop all women from having sex unless they are their possessions. I own her within the confines of the understanding of marriages. Then I, as a man, encourage my nephew to go and have sex with a woman. I pay for it or, I don't know, it's just a phenomena that happens. And this is the game. They are playing with the idea that they can conquer women although they are preventing them from having sex.

The non sex buyers are using their ethical and political awareness as a reason to not use sexual services. But making decisions based on ethical standpoints is not always easy. It requires that you reflect over and question your own power position. It also requires that the superiority is seen as unwarranted. Just as consumers on a capitalist market, the pleasure or the comfort to have something is sometimes superior to the story behind the product and the consequences of the consumption. The individual gain of superiority is the biggest reason for superiority to remain.

At the same time as the unequal power structures, the male ecstasy (provided and upheld by female care) and the fragmented female sexuality all contribute to the privilege to buy sex, there is also a strong expectation on Turkish men to conform to a certain ideal. This expectation of male sexuality contributes to a norm system where Turkish men are expected and encouraged to be sexually active and outgoing. The norm system regarding male sexuality enables the privilege of buying sex without any ethical responsibility.

In order to understand how this norm system regarding the male sex right is upheld and sustained in the Turkish society, Westerstrand's model (2008) on Svalastog's theory (1998) will be reconstructed in order to be applicable on male sexuality. On one hand, this might contradict the idea regarding the coherent, male sexuality. One could claim that the male sexuality is still coherent in the way that male sexuality is not dichotomized between sexual and reproductive.

Despite the coherent sexuality and less stigma surrounding male sexuality in general, there is a strong pressure on men to exert and uphold traditional male sexuality. In fact, the sexual objectification and dichotomization of women is a way for men to sustain power. Male sexuality has not been controlled in the same way as female sexuality, but the informants talk about a strong social pressure to conform to a traditional idea about male sexuality. There is a pressure on Turkish men to be sexual and reproductive. A man that is non sexual and non reproductive however, would face a certain social stigma. Below, it will be explained how the male sex right is sustained.

*The sustained male sex right:*

	Non reproductive	Reproductive
Sexual	“çapkın” (Casanova)	The “normal” man.
Non sexual		The family father

This model could be explained as follows: According to the traditional norm, the Turkish man is expected to be sexual<sup>12</sup>. Whether or not it is within a reproductive context doesn't matter. The “normal” man is a man that is both sexually outgoing and reproductive. He has relationships but is still sexually outgoing. The sexual and non reproductive man; “çapkın” is something encouraged in the Turkish society. A man is expected to be sexually curious and to have many different women. A man that has been sexually outgoing previously, created a family and settled down, is also socially accepted. However, a man that is neither sexual nor reproductive is not socially accepted. As an example, a man that is not in a relationship is still expected to be sexually outgoing and curious of women. One example of this is Cezmi that was encouraged to visit female prostitutes when he revealed that he was homosexual. One way to be sexually active outside a relationship is to buy sexual services (This especially since Turkish women, traditionally, are not expected to be sexually active outside a relationship). In this way, the sustained sex right works as a norm that upholds the privilege to explore women.

As long as the hierarchy between men and women is seen as an outcome of a natural, and given, process, there will be no reason to question the injustice either. In the same way as consumers of meat, don't want to think about the slaughter of the animal when they eat it, the sex buyer is primarily focused on their pleasure when they buy sex, not the situation of the seller. And if they do think about it, their actions are often motivated with the traditional sex roles, where the hierarchy of men and women is seen as a natural order. In this way, buying sex can be seen as a privilege; the privilege to be sexually satisfied, without being responsible for the person satisfying you; the privilege to consume sex for pleasure.

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<sup>12</sup> Sexual here means heterosexual, since this model describes the conservative and traditional norms regarding male sexuality.

## 7. Conclusion

This section will start with a summary of the purpose, research questions and result. This summary will be followed by a discussion regarding the research result.

### *7.1 Summary*

The aim of this study was to, by comparing sex buyers to non sex buyers, find out how ideas about gender and sexuality among Turkish middle class men, affect their understanding of the use of sexual services.

*How do middle class Turkish men view matters of gender equality?*

Despite the modernization process that has introduced a more liberal view on sexuality, there is still a prevailing conservatism regarding sexuality that is quite visible. According to the respondents, Turkey has exchanged the religiously conservative frame with a more liberal capitalistic one; however, the inside is the same. The reason for this is that the power structures aren't questioned in the liberation process. Traditional ideas regarding men and women's sexuality are still widespread. Capitalism has moved the patriarchal structures from the private to the public sphere.

All respondents acknowledge gender inequality in the Turkish society and they all find it unfair. However, the explanations to these inequalities differ among the two groups; sex buyers and non sex buyers. The non sex buyers don't see any importance in biological differences while the sex buyers do.

*How do middle class Turkish men view matters of sexuality?*

In the same way as gender inequality, the different ideals about male and female sexuality are considered to be unfair by the respondents. But the informants have different explanations for the reasons behind those different ideals. Non sex buyers think that the conservative ideals are based on social constructions while sex buyers, to a bigger extent, see the causes for the differences as natural and unchangeable. The conservative ideals about male and female sexuality enables prostitution since, according to this view, women are expected to be sexual only for reproduction purposes or to satisfy the male libido. There is also a pressure on men to uphold and sustain the male sex right by exploiting the female care. One way to do that is by using sexual services. The informants acknowledge a strong social pressure on Turkish men to be sexually outgoing (in terms of conservative norms regarding male and female sexuality). A man that is neither reproductive nor sexual<sup>13</sup> is quite socially stigmatized in the Turkish society. The norm regarding male sexuality is portrayed in the following model:

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<sup>13</sup> "Sexual", as in sexually outgoing towards women.

	Non reproductive	Reproductive
Sexual	“çapkın” (Casanova)	The “normal” man.
Non sexual		The family father

*What are their personal opinions and reflections regarding prostitution?*

In Turkey, prostitution is regulated and treated like a business. Prostitution is explained from a liberal point of view; it's looked upon as a service. However, at the same time, it's treated as something “dirty”. The goal of the regulation was to keep prostitution away from the public eye. There is a liberal intention to treat prostitution as a normal profession at the same time as the sex workers are controlled in order not to jeopardize the public health of men. It is clear that prostitution is a tool to uphold the male sex right. When liberal legislations are introduced without addressing inequalities in power, the unequal power structures between men and women will remain.

A consequence of this normalized inequality is that that the main focus when buying sex is the pleasure. The sex buying informants claim that the legal brothels are shabby, and that most men buy sexual services elsewhere. The informants also claim that sex buyers aren't the most conscious consumers. They aren't interested in the background of the sex worker when they buy sex. The conservative male sex role means that the main focus is satisfaction rather than the responsibilities of others well-being. One consequence of the male sex right is that the endeavor for satisfaction presupposes someone else's effort. This creates an understanding of the availability to sex as a matter of course.

The non sex buyers use arguments that deconstruct the idea about the male sex right. They refer, to a bigger extent, to moral arguments regarding power inequalities and social construct. This means that they, because of this, can be aware of the patterns that create those social norms regarding sexual availability. One of the informants claim that prostitution can't be considered a normal profession since it has almost a criminal status even if it is legal and regulated. This is because the power inequality is built into it. Prostitution presupposes inequality in power.

Men that buy sex explain the phenomena of prostitution with liberal arguments; buying sex is like using any other professional services. At the same time as they view sexual services as “normal” services, they have a conservative view on sex buying. None of the sex buyers could imagine selling sex themselves during current circumstances. This is motivated by the social stigma prostitution and prostitutes have in society. Many of the informants describe it as a last option and one of the informants compares selling sex to the desperate situation of being forced to cannibalism during starvation. Simultaneously as prostitution is considered a normal profession in accordance with liberal views, selling sex is considered as something no normal human being would do voluntarily. Despite this, the sex buyers are expecting someone to provide them with this service.



Moreover, sexual services are seen as a volatile amusement; something that is not reflected upon. One reason for this is the norms regarding male sexuality that uphold an idea that normalizes the exploitation of others for personal satisfaction. The informants describe a social pressure regarding the male sex right, that there are social expectations on men to be sexually outgoing. The conservative ideas about the male sexuality and the idea that being provided with sexual pleasure, is a male right, creates a society where the exploitation of others becomes a privilege. Buying sex is a male privilege. One consequence of this privilege is that the exploitation becomes a normal expectation.

*What possible impact do different understandings of gender equality and sexuality, for example conservative and social constructivist, have on the position on using or not using sexual services, and how can we understand this?*

Many of the middle class Turkish sex buyers claim that gender inequalities in Turkey are unfair, but when they reflect on the reasons behind the inequalities, they tend to choose explanation models that see inequalities as a result of different choices and biological differences (conservative). In the same way, the sex buyers tend to argue that biological differences between men and women have a big impact on male and female sexual behavior as well. The male sex drive is seen as bigger than the female. However, there is still an expectation on females to grant men their sexual right. The whore is someone that is expected to be sexual for the sake of the man. She is not sexual for herself, she is an object. This conservative view on male and female sexuality results in a denial of the female subjectivity. The denial of women's subjectivity presupposes an idea about a "right to exploitation", an idea that there is a natural given right to enjoy the freedom that comes from someone else's obligations; a privilege to exploit. Based on the result in this thesis, conservative views on especially male sexuality have a big impact on men's approach to buying sex. The "sustained sex right" pressures men into exploitation of women. The patriarchal and cultural pressure on men to maintain and reproduce the male sex right might have a bigger impact on the propensity to use sexual services than conservative norms on female sexuality. Because of this, liberal legislations will, in practice, reproduce the male sex right as long as conservative values and explanation models are norms. Liberalism doesn't consider non written power structures. And a free choice without awareness of the conservative frames limiting us will be a choice within the frame of conservative values. In this way, the male sex right and the privilege to exploit will remain.

## *7.2 Discussion*

With this thesis it was found that middle class Turkish sex buyers use more conservative, biologist and liberal discourses to explain gender inequality compared to non sex buyers. Since the Turkish modernization, norms concerning sexuality have become less conservative. But at the same time, many respondents argue that the sexual *freedom* has resulted in a much harder climate. The moral values established by the religious society were replaced by more liberal and capitalistic values at the same time as informal conservative power systems, regarding gender equality, remained. When a conservative society becomes liberal and capitalistic without questioning or changing the basic conservative values, it will be a society without traditional morals, but with remaining inequalities in power. Because of this; the choices made by people in the name of freedom, will be affected by a traditional value system.

An example of this is the rising sex industry in Turkey. The sexual “taboos” are not as strong as they used to be. Short term satisfaction is superior to moral values. The background of the sex buyer is not in focus when buying sexual services and it is common to buy sex from unlicensed migrant sex workers. This because buying sex is a result of the male sex right. The right to have access to sex is prioritized before the well being of the sex worker. Many liberals and sex positive feminists fight for sex work to be accepted as an ordinary profession. It is said that the sex industry challenges traditional discourses and conservative ideas about sexuality. And that it’s moralizing to legislate against sex buyers. Based on the research and result presented in this thesis, it will, on the contrary be argued that, since traditional power relations are deeply grounded in society, the sex industry is upholding and reproducing traditional power gender relations. Prostitution presupposes inequality.

Just as Pateman (1988) argues, conservative gender positions are reproduced because of a historical, biological hierarchy between genders. This inequality is upheld by an expectation from men, that women should provide them with care that enables them to focus on their own pleasure. Shortly, to buy sex becomes a privilege given by the normative superiority. Sexual availability becomes an expectation in a patriarchal society. Not only does this expectation create a male privilege to be free from moral responsibility. It has also created a culture where men are expected to uphold and reproduce this privilege. Men are expected to seek out pleasure in order to uphold and reproduce their superior role. The traditional male sex-role does not provide any option for men to be non-sexual. A non-reproductive, non-sexual man is socially stigmatized. There is a big pressure on Turkish men to uphold the male sex right.

The non sex buyers also experienced this pressure, but they used more moral arguments as a reason for their choices not to buy sex. One reason for this could be that they see gender inequality as socially constructed and changeable. If gender positions are not given, it’s possible to change them. Foremost, as a Turkish man, it is possible to go against traditional expectations regarding male sexuality. Not buying sexual services is in that way a standpoint to avoid upholding or manifesting traditional ideas about male sexuality.

Since sex buyers, to a bigger extent, see their superiority as something “natural”, they don’t see themselves as responsible for upholding or reproducing sexual inequality by buying sexual services. According to them, the inequality will be there no matter what they do. Since men traditionally are seen as biologically more sexual than women, sexual services are considered a way to even out inequalities in libido. The social pressure on Turkish men to be sexually active (at the same time as Turkish women are expected to be sexually prude) also contributes to the idea of dissimilarity in sexual desires between men and women. This way, the myth of sexual dissimilarity is upheld and reconstructed. That is the sustained sex right. When inequalities in power are seen as natural, one’s own superiority will hardly be noticed. The power position becomes normal, nothing you reflect on. Just as written previously; when investigating power inequalities and how they are constructed, it’s important to look at the subject that is being produced: What choices are we making as subjects and what norms make us take those decisions?

The inequality in power is considered natural. That is the reason why sex buyers can be aware of the life conditions surrounding prostitution and still take advantage of the services. The main motive to buy sex is to get at thrill. - To get excitement and cure boredom. In short words; buying sex is one way to achieve ecstasy. This is what makes buying sex a privilege; the privilege to be provided with services in order to maintain ecstasy, and not having to take

responsibility for the fact that the consequence is exploitation, because it's seen as natural. The fact that this exploitative relationship is considered normal, thus nothing controversial, makes a good foundation for oppression.

One of the informants uses the metaphor of buying eggs; you are not interested in the history of the chicken when you buy eggs. In the same way, when you buy sexual services, you're not interested in the background of the prostitute. This means that sex buyers, over all, aren't especially aware consumers. In fact, many of the middle class Turkish sex buyers prefer to buy sex illegally. This could be one reason for the increasing trafficking in Turkey. A growing demand needs a variety of supply. The privilege to be unaware of one's exploitation of others results in ignorance; the Ignorance of the sex worker's situation. Because of privilege and unawareness of their power position, Turkish sex buyers become perpetrators. They are responsible for the situation and they do commit an action that contributes to exploitation. But at the same time as they are perpetrators, they are also victims. They are, as explained with the model 'the sustained male sex right' victims of structures and norms that promote conservative ideas about male behavior. Men are forced into a role of exercising exploitation through their privilege. This could be explained with the theory of *the sustained sex right*. There is a social pressure on Turkish men to be sexually outgoing according to traditional norms. The conservative norms on male sex right don't sanction any ways to deter the sustained sex right.

In order for Turkish men to be able to break this pattern, they need to be aware of these social constructs. At least, that is the first step. Is it a coincidence that the non sex buyers use more moral arguments than the sex buyers? Probably not. It is possible to be aware of the immorality in ones actions and still acting them out. But in order to avoid cognitive dissonance, it is helpful to have arguments that support, or at least explain, ones actions. And as long as inequalities are seen as a natural result of biological differences, that will be a strong argument to uphold and recreate patriarchal structures. In order to combat conservative views on male and female sexuality in Turkey could be to focus more on sexual education in schools.

Even if this research is based on a limited group of informants, it reveals a pattern of conservatism that is embedded in the prostitution discourse. Turkey is a country with clearly conservative roots. But these roots can be found in every society (which is also clear when looking at research on sex buyers from western countries). Unfortunately, the focus in media and politics has been almost exclusively on the sex workers. The debate of the sex workers right to act as free subjects is, in the current debate, superior to the debate regarding sex buyers. Whether or not the male access to merchantable sexual objects should be a part of an equal and just society is never debated. This is unfortunate since it cements a very old fashioned idea about male sexuality. Because of this, it is remarkable when representatives of international human rights organizations are discussing the rights of using sexual services without taking into account what the use of sexual services is an expression for.

Worth noting in the context is also the role of state policies. As Eesperer (2007) mentioned, state policies towards prostitution have a big impact on the general opinion. Just as Cezmi mentions, prostitution in Turkey, and sex workers in specific, almost have a criminal status, despite the fact that it is legal. As long as sex work is not treated as a profession it can't be considered a profession. The Turkish state policies enable an environment of exploitation, an environment where exploitation is seen as a right and privilege. Especially since the state employed sex workers are working under terrible conditions. The situation of sex workers

should be highlighted further and there should be a change of focus in research towards the different factors that enable this exploitation.

One result in this thesis, the idea of sex buying as a male privilege, brings out further questions that would be interesting to develop. Since the informants talk about a culture where buying sex is not an act of conscious consuming, but rather a volatile amusement, it would be interesting to investigate the connections between the legalized sex industry and the trafficking for sexual purposes. Many respondents acknowledge how sex buyers aren't interested in the background of the sex worker and how many sex buyers prefer to buy sexual services outside the legal brothels. Some of the informants also talked about a rather corrupt system in Turkey, where different organs in society seemed to cooperate with organized traffickers. Since Turkish government has been concerned with combating sexual trafficking, it would be lucrative to analyze the connections between trafficking for sexual purposes and legal prostitution.

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## Appendix 1

Hi,

My name is Erika Wikström and I'm a student at the international Master Program in Social Work and Human Rights at Goteborg's University. I am now writing my master thesis. It is a qualitative study with the purpose to:

*Find out how urban, Turkish men perceive the phenomena of prostitution, sexuality and the relationship between genders.*

A qualitative study means that I am looking for the subjective ideas and concepts of the informants. Because of this, I'm looking to do interviews with English-speaking Turkish men, related to the topic. Since I won't be able to travel to Turkey, the interviews will be done over the internet. In order to make the interviews as conversation-like as possible, I am looking to do the interviews in chat form. It could be MSN, Skype or similar. I am open to other suggestions as well. The subjects that will be touched are the following:

- *The phenomena of prostitution in society*
- *Personal opinion regarding prostitution*
- *Views of sexuality*
- *Gender equality*
- *Views on criminality/law connected to prostitution*

The interviews will take about 1 to 1,5 hours. They will follow research ethical guidelines which mean that anonymity and confidentiality will be granted. The participation is voluntary which means that you are free to leave the study at any times without explanation.

Thank you for your participation!

### *Contact information*

Erika Wikström

Email: erikawikstroem@hotmail.com

Telephone: +46 (0) xx xxx xx xx

Supervisor:

Jari Kuosmanen Ph.D.

Email: jari.kuosmanen@socwork.gu.se

Telephone: +46 (0) xx xxx xx xx

## Appendix 2

Hi.

Thank you for helping me with my thesis. I need some short information about the informants. I would be glad if you could answer the questions listed below, and then send them back to me.

Note: You will still be anonymous in the thesis. This is just information I need to keep track on the informants.

Name:

Age:

City:

Profession:

Civil status (single, married etc.):

I have been using sexual services (yes or no):

Email me this information and I will get back to you to arrange a time for interview as soon as possible.

Thank you!

Erika Wikström

[erikawikstroem@hotmail.com](mailto:erikawikstroem@hotmail.com)

## Appendix 3

### Interview questions

*How do middle class Turkish men perceive the phenomena of prostitution in society?*

- What is the function of prostitution?
- Can prostitution be seen as a “normal profession”? ( If so, how?)
- Why mainly men are buyers?
- Why mainly women are sellers?
- What would a society without prostitution look like?
- 

*What is the personal opinion regarding prostitution?*

- How is buying/not buying sex motivated?
- (if buying) what function does it fill ?
- What do they think about women that sell sex? (Could it be a girlfriend, mom, sister?)
- What do they think of men that doesn't/does buy sex?
- If they were a woman, would they consider working as a prostitute?

*How do middle class Turkish men view matters of sexuality?*

- Is there differences between female and male sexuality, and if so how?
- How do expectations in society of female /male sexual behavior look?
- In what ways have the views of female/male sexuality changed in the modern Turkish society?
- What are the preferences of the sexual behavior of a partner? (sexual experience etc)
- How would they feel about a woman that visited male prostitutes?

*How do middle class Turkish men view matters gender equality?*

Are there differences on what gives high status for men and women, if so how?

What do they see as the main reasons why some professions are male/female dominated?

What do they see as the main reasons to why men usually have higher salaries than women?

*How do they view criminality/law connected to prostitution?*

- *What are their views on working conditions-violence against prostitutes?*
- *What are the views of human trafficking?*
- *What are their views of minors in prostitution?*
- *What do they think of the idea of illegalizing sex-buying?*