

## LIFESTYLE OF WOMEN WORKING IN THE SEX BUSINESS IN THE CONTEXT OF EVERYDAY LIFE

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### Abstract

This article aims mainly to describe the lifestyle of women working in the private sex business in the context of everyday life. The study made use of qualitative research strategy and chose biographic-narrative interview for the data collection. The research set consisted of 36 women working in the private sex business, who advertised their services through web advertisements at Naprivat.cz, Agamaseznamka.cz and other portals in the South Bohemian Region and the capital, Prague. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed in the ATLAS.ti computer software. We used the method of anchored theory for data analysis. The following categories were identified based on the analysis: content of the day – waiting for the client; leaving home; social isolation; care for appearance and “normal work”. The results show that sex workers feel a freedom that is, however, only subjective, as they subordinate their day primarily to the clients’ orders. The sex workers’ everyday activities include beautifying activities, fitness centre visits and shopping for clothing. The results also showed that the sex workers lose the perception of their flat as a home where they spend time with family or friends, and they often leave their flat and spend time away from it.

**Keywords:** *Everyday life; Lifestyle; Sex business; Sex work; Sex worker*

### INTRODUCTION

Definitions of the “sex” business differ between authors and organizations. We can define the concept of a sex business as “a manifestation of violence against women” and the concept of sex business as “sex work” (Ditmore, 2006).

The sex business can be found in almost every society, with different states handling sex business related issues in different ways. One group of states may perceive the sex business as an illegal activity and use interventions in the form of sanctions, particularly concerning the provision and offering of sexual services; other

states may legalize the sex business as a profession and only clients are prosecuted; while a third group of states may adopt a neutral attitude toward the sex business and focus primarily on related problems (ultimately, all states have to deal with the related problems). The Czech Republic and its legal regulations could be included in the third group - where the sex business is neither legal nor illegal, and the state intervenes, for example, if the moral education of young people is endangered. Sex business associated problems include several socially pathological issues such as drug abuse, human trafficking, theft, etc. We can distinguish between different sex

businesses by the environment in which the sex trade takes place, i.e., street, road, club, hotel, private sex business, and escort services. Sex businesses can also be distinguished by those who provide the sexual services, i.e., female, male, and children. Few researchers have examined the day-to-day lives of sex workers. However, understanding, this aspect, as well as other aspects of the sex business can lead to better solutions for problems related to the sex business.

Our goal was to describe the day-to-day lives of women working in the sex business in the context of their occupation. This article is an output of the GAJU 029/2016/S project – Lifestyle of women in the private sex business and their self-reflections.

### **Theoretical foundation**

#### *Sex business in the Czech Republic*

Sexual services in the Czech Republic experienced a huge boom after 1989 when the state border opened and a considerable number of foreign clients started arriving (Bassermann, 1993). A high increase could be seen primarily in the street/road, but also in the club sex business. In the Czech Republic, we mainly find street/road sex business in big cities and in the border areas. The age composition of women who work as sex workers ranges from very young (often even underage), to those in the age group of 50+. In street sex business, more than in other forms, sex workers of Roma nationality can be found (Frýbert, 2013; La Strada, 2015).

However, because of different regulations and a decreasing number of foreign clients, the provision of sexual services has been moving to private flats which, at the same time, provide much more anonymity (Ditmore, 2006). According to the data of the Czech Statistical Office (2005), there were an estimated 9,741 persons providing sexual services in 2005 (that figure is an estimate only, and the actual number is currently higher). The Czech Republic does not have a unified regulation for the sex business and the provision of commercial sexual services; for the past several years there have been discussions about a potential introduction of a law to regulate the sex business and to enact its taxation (Pleasure without Risk, 2015).

#### *Private sex business*

Private sex businesses have unique characteristics that set them apart from other forms, such as the street sex business. Sex workers in private sex businesses often have a higher status within the sex trade hierarchy (Long, 2012). Another unique feature is the use of print advertising, mainly in the form of internet advertising, to offer sex services. Online advertising is more efficient at present (Cunningham and Kendall, 2011; Rigg, 2010). The advertisements contain phone numbers and the incomplete address of the given flat, and the client agrees upon the visit either directly with the sex worker or through an operator (Poláková, 2016). After arriving, the client chooses the specific worker, if the flat has multiple sex workers, and then passes to a separate room (Peršák and Vermeulen, 2014). The actual sex services often take place in private or rented flats, with one or more sex workers sharing the rent (Sanders, 2005). The said flats may serve only for work; however, in the case of private flats, the sex workers live in them as well (Di Nicola et al., 2009). The customer base for this form of sex business is relatively stable and mainly includes solvent individuals. The private sex business is virtually invisible to state authorities, thus providing much greater anonymity to both the sex workers and the clients, which may explain why the demand for this form of the sex trade keeps rising (Ditmore, 2006). Unlike the street form of the sex business, there are only rarely pimps in the private sex business (May et al., 2000); on the other hand, such a role may often be assumed by the sex worker's partner or by the owner of the rented flat.

Being invisible also puts it outside the sphere of health and social services, making it difficult to implement health or social policies in relation to this group (Peršák and Vermeulen, 2014; Poláková, 2016). Reduced visibility of workers in private sex businesses is also a problem for researchers who wish to study the sex trade. Therefore, the private sex business is an under-explored component of prostitution.

#### *Lifestyle of women in the sex business*

Lifestyle has been explored by many authors, but the lifestyle concept is inhomogeneous. The term "lifestyle" was used by Max Weber

(1864–1920), to highlight different behaviors, clothing, speech, and thought, and subsequently to define different social groups and behaviour models for those aspiring to these various groups. Initially, lifestyle was closely related to consumer behaviour and marketing (Havinhurst and Feigenbaum, 1959). However, over time, the lifestyle concept was extended into areas such as food, exercise, economic situation, addictions, and subsequently to the risks related to these concepts (Schuit et al., 2002; Tatzel, 2002). Lifestyle can also be influenced by jobs and working conditions (Walsh, 2011). At present, there are several definitions of lifestyle; for example, Giddens (2006) defines lifestyle as a structured complex of ways to implement everyday human activities. Therefore, lifestyle is closely related to the concept of “everyday life or day-to-day living”.

Just as with lifestyle, “everyday life” has different definitions. Broadly speaking, the concept of “everyday life” includes the complex of regular, daily human activities, which can be anticipated to a considerable degree. More narrowly, it includes e.g., hygiene, diet, family, and working life (Law, 2002; Tomiyama et al., 2009). However, everyday life is influenced by behavior models (Wood et al., 2002) and social interactions, as discussed by Goffman (1959). Therefore, the everyday life concept can include almost all activities performed by humans on a routine or daily basis.

All social groups have their own lifestyle, which are specific in many respects. Those working in the sex business or in the private sex business are not exceptions. The lifestyles of sex workers were studied by Green et al. (1993), who developed a descriptive study to describe the lifestyle of sex workers who were active in the street sex business in Glasgow, Scotland. The study revealed that the average number of clients was about 6.4 per day and the women worked 5.5 evenings per week. The study also included information on drug abuse and found that 51 women (out of the 63 studied) used intravenous drugs (mainly heroin).

Working hours are also specific to the sex business, with commercial sex services, particularly street sex services, being provided mostly during evening hours (Dalla, 2001; Green et al., 1993; Tani, 2001). The difficult economic situation of women who are active

in the sex business is the primary reason for the overwhelming majority of those who enter the sex business (Murphy, 2010). The economic situation is also reflected within the sex business hierarchy; women in the street sex business use their income more often to finance their drug addiction, compared to women working in sex salons, who more frequently enter and remain in the sex business because of financial burdens related to single parenthood or problems finding a suitable job (Jeal and Salisbury, 2007). Rössler et al. (2010) found that the most frequent motive for working in the sex business consisted of debt and providing financial support for the family.

Data about the lifestyle of women in the private sex business is scant, which is likely due to most authors focusing on the more overt and accessible street sex business.

Many researchers often focus on pathological behaviors, e.g., drug addiction or violence, rather than on issues of everyday life. The daily life and pathological behaviour in sex workers was described by Cusick (1998) in an ethnographic study that focused on drugs, and the social and working lives of sex workers. It found that there were differences in motives for drug abuse between street sex business workers and brothel (sex parlor) workers. On a daily basis, street sex workers faced harsh working conditions and dangers that were unique to that form of the business; Cusick observed that drugs were often used as coping strategies. Brothel workers often use drugs to increase their work performance or eliminate boredom. Paradoxically, drug abuse often contributed not only to entering, but also remaining in, the sex business (Murphy, 2010).

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study used a qualitative research strategy, which consisted of an interview, specifically a biographic-narrative interview. This type of interview constitutes a specific form of open and non-structured interview; it assumes that subjective meaning structures will emerge during free narration (Mayring, 2002). Within the narrative interview, the questioner intervenes only minimally in the interview; therefore the respondent has space

to spontaneously structure the experience (Schutze, 1999). The research set consisted of 36 women from the South Bohemian Region ( $N = 19$ ) and from Prague ( $N = 17$ ), who work in the private sex business and advertise their services on Naprivat.cz, Agamaseznamka.cz, Eroticke-privaty.cz, and other internet portals. The researchers approached the respondents by phone or through the e-mail addresses stated. The average age of the respondents was 27 years. At the beginning of the research, two questions were asked: (1) *Tell me what your regular day looks like, from the moment you wake up to the moment you go to bed.* (2) *And, how would your regular day look like if you did a completely different job (and what work would you do)?* Most interviews took approximately one hour. The longest took two hours and the shortest took half an hour. The interviews were recorded on a voice recorder, with consent, and subsequently transcribed verbatim and analyzed with ATLAS.ti (using the grounded theory method). The interviews were encoded using open coding; and the acquired codes were reduced using axial coding. Subsequently, the following categories were identified: *Daily activities – waiting for clients, Time spent outside the home, Social isolation, Personal appearance, and “Normal work”*. To find relationships among the individual codes and categories, the program used the Code co-occurrence table function, and to present the resulting data in graphic form, the Networking function was used to create the individual diagrams. To preserve anonymity, no identification data which would enable recognition were required from the respondents. All interviews were identification-encoded too (IN1–IN36). The respondents also gave their informed consent, which included consent with the progress and the circumstances of the research; the consent was recorded on the voice recorder at the beginning of the interview. To ensure emotional and mental safety of the respondents (work in the sex business constitutes considerable societal stigma), the interviews took place at places chosen by the respondents.

## RESULTS

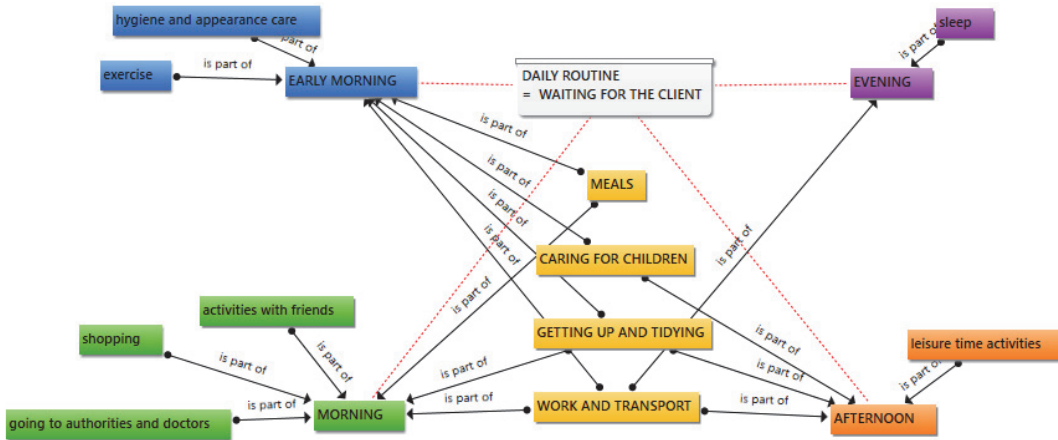
We found that the sex workers interviewed were a diverse group; their lifestyles were dif-

ferent, except for a common thread that they all shared. The issues that connected them all were concerns about daily life and their speculation about how their life would be different if they had a different job.

### Daily routine – waiting for clients

The private sex workers who participated in the study have a specific daily schedule (see Fig. 1). Some of the sex workers get up in the morning hours, then have breakfast, perform a morning hygiene and smarten themselves up: *“Well, in the morning I get up and then the hygiene and so on and then I have breakfast...”* (IN37, 26 years), *“... so if I have somebody booked for the morning, I get up, tidy up, have a shower, and do my face a bit...”* (IN5, 50 years). Breakfast is usually followed by tidying up, going out with a pet, or exercising: *“I tidy up a bit (IN37, 26 years), “... usually I get up in the morning, I make breakfast or go out for breakfast, I go out with my dog, then I prepare myself to look good, you know, to be somehow pretty, you know, for the client”* (IN3, 29 years). If the sex workers have children – our study included mostly single mothers – their morning ritual also includes preparing and taking the children to school: *“My typical day is: I get up in the morning, at 7, my daughter goes to school, then I tidy up my home”* (IN19, 34 years), *“I usually get up in the morning, take my children to school...”* (IN29, 35 years). The rituals and activities (hygiene, shopping etc.) after getting up are similar both for workers that get up in the morning and workers that get up in the afternoon.

The morning hours are dedicated to shopping, visits and lunch with friends, going to authorities and to doctors: *“I go shopping, sometimes to the authorities, and so on”* (IN16, 36 years), *“I arrange things related for example to authorities, to medical treatment, and similar things”* (IN12, 25 years). Some sex workers get up only in the afternoon: *“I usually sleep and get up around three. Then I get prepared for the evening somehow”* (IN10, 25 years), *“... well I get up about one...”* (IN4, 28 years). The afternoon is usually devoted to leisure time activities, exercise, and also to picking up the children from school. The sex workers usually work during the day, but there are also some who work in the evening or in the night: *“I only start about 6 when the*



**Fig. 1 – Daily routine – waiting for the client** (source: GAJU 029/2016/S)

guys end their work” (IN10, 25 years), “... at 6 in the evening we open, and at 4 in the morning we go to bed” (IN6, 30 years).

The nature of sex work introduces an element of randomness, but not chaos, to the daily lives of sex workers. While the hours and days worked can vary, their daily plans, if they can be called such, are very similar. Working days do not have fixed hours, deadlines, or routines, and lack any semblance to the stereotypical “normal life”, as the interviewees call it. It is paradoxical, but even when sex workers had a lot of spare time, they could do little more than wait for the next visit from an “unscheduled client”. Clients can arrive at any time, and interrupted meals were just part of the work: “... one calls on Monday saying that he will arrive between one and four; while another can only come over in the morning. So, just another Monday. Some clients visit me, some clients are visited by me” (IN2, 23 years). However, sex workers often say that they are free to do what they want and to organize their own time. However, as we observed, that was not entirely true. Their time always had to conform to visits from clients: “Sometimes a client calls me unexpectedly; if I can, I adapt my daily program and oblige him accordingly, depending on who he is” (IN12, 25 years), “... it depends on the time I have a client. I usually know it one or two days in advance, but sometimes they call at short notice or somebody is sent to me by XXX; then everything is a bit different” (IN13, 31 years), “... I am on my work mobile

phone all day long, waiting to see if somebody wants to come over...” (IN31, 25 years). Sex workers adapted their “free time” around their clients or used it to arrange meetings with them. When asked about the events of their days, they often mentioned waiting around, with free time filled with chatting and e-mailing: “... then I look at my mail to see if there are any potential clients and I switch on my second mobile phone that serves for orders...” (IN37, 36 years). Many reported spending time on Facebook: “... I sit down to chat and then I wait...” (IN25, 24 years), “... well, and then I wait for somebody to call, on Facebook, of course, or I chat with the amateurs...” (IN24, 23 years). The sex workers in our study appeared to be deeply involved in the virtual world.

Nevertheless, when asked about their typical day and about the advantages of their lifestyle, they always mentioned their freedom to arrange their schedules, and that they had lots of free time considering the money they made. Which, by the way, also turned out to not be entirely true, since very few of the respondents had incomes that were significantly better than wages that could be earned working other jobs.

### Time spent outside the home

Another characteristic identified in our study was the large amount of time spent outside the family home. The household stereotype was completely missing. We failed to find any mention of morning routines, such as pre-

paring breakfast for the family. Additionally, there was no mention of afternoon activities like house cleaning, doing homework with children, common leisure time, preparation of evening meals, or meeting with the family or partner for dinner.

Many workers reported that when they got up, they would clean the house and then leave the home to go shopping: “... then I go for a walk around the city, to avoid staying closed in at home...” (IN10, 25 years). Or they have coffee or lunch with a friend: “Then I sometimes meet my friends and have lunch...” (IN9, 26 years), “I go to eat, I visit some friends and I go to work” (IN16, 36 years). Eating outside the home was frequently mentioned, with virtually no mention of cooking, preparing breakfast, dinner, or similar activities: “... then I go to the city to have a coffee, to eat, or do some shopping...” (IN21, 33 years).

**Social isolation**

Time spent enjoying cultural or other leisure activities was most frequently spent with a friend (or less frequently, with several friends) who knew about their job or who were also sex workers: “I have friends who do the same. We often talk about it. We always meet and talk about the guys, about some who are really nasty and so on” (IN31, 37 years), “I have friends from the digs, and they know about it, of course” (IN4, 28 years), “... I like to meet my friend who does the same work, we go to have a coffee and talk about what clients we had and so on” (IN35, 23 years). Sometimes

their friend has arranged the work in sex business for them or vice versa: “Yes, I confide in one friend. She understands me, she has started thinking about it too, because when we speak, she sees the money, and money is quite attractive to everybody” (IN30, 28 years).

We observed that their social relationships were limited and their social bonds weak. An important piece of information resulting from the interviews was that they often avoided their family and had little or no contact with them. Therefore, there were relatively few people with whom they could speak openly and freely. Nonetheless, respondents usually reported having a friend with whom they were not afraid to open up to, and candidly talk about their life as a sex worker. They reported that chats over coffee made them feel like “normal people” for a while: “... or I devote my time to the only friend I have...” (IN7, 24 years). They often stressed the word “normal” in the interviews. They often reported that their days were completely normal days, just like those of normal people. “... typically, I do what normal people do...” (IN17, 34 years) “I normally go out, go skating, go to the cinema, go shopping, and have lunch or dinner with my friends, just like normal...” (IN1, 26 years). “My day is not very different from the normal day of a common person...” (IN9, 26 years). This led us to conclude that they do not consider their job (or themselves) to be normal, although they do not realize it. The analysis of this topic is in Fig. 2.

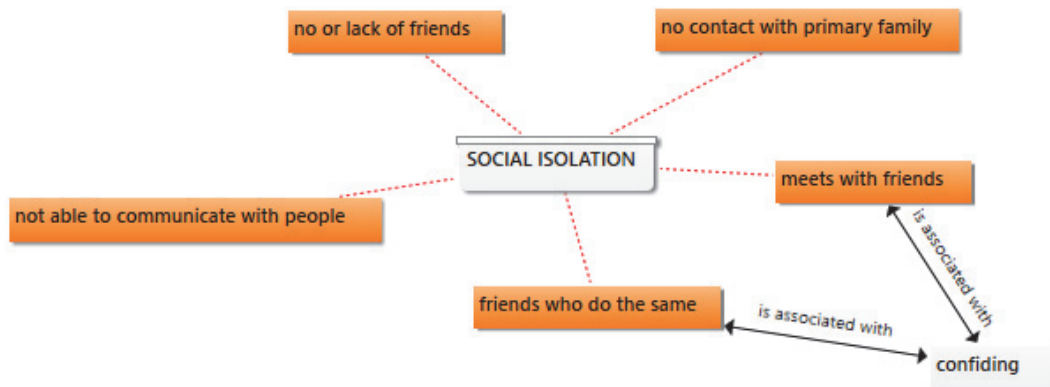


Fig. 2 – Social isolation (source: GAJU 029/2016/S)

**Personal appearance**

Shopping is another common feature we identified during encoding (see Fig. 3). Some sex workers are interested in fashion and follow the clothing trends: *“I like to follow fashion and spend the money I earn on nice clothes”* (IN34, 25 years). In some cases, a specific type of clothing and smartening up may subjectively increase the sex worker’s self-evaluation. *“I am quite elegant... no extravagance, piercing, tattoo, ultra-mini or such things, only classical elegance. Thanks to this, I can work as a hostess, not only as a prostitute”* (IN13, 31 years). Due to this, the existing hierarchization may deepen.

All respondents pointed out that they have to smarten up, wash, and care for themselves every day; the sex workers also very often go to different sporting and fitness centres to maintain their figure. *“I exercise regularly every day, at home or in the gym. I go to yoga once a week, but I meditate at home too”* (IN12, 25 years), *“... well, I usually get up in the morning, do some exercise or I just go to the gym...”* (IN8, 24 years). The care over their appearance also includes visits to different hairdressing and cosmetic salons where further care for the appearance takes place: *“I also often go for cosmetic procedures; I go*

*to the hairdresser’s twice a month, for a manicure once a week, and so on”* (IN13, 31 years), *“I like to go to the tanning salon, to do my nails, hair, and so on, well”* (IN8, 24 years). As well as sports and exercise, the sex workers also keep to a regular or irregular diet, including different slimming diets.

Caring for their appearance is important to sex workers: *“I prepare myself to look good, you know, to be somehow pretty, you know, for the client”* (IN3, 29 years), *“I maintain myself because I have to look good”* (IN9, 26 years); it can be seen here how highly the sex workers appreciate their body.

**Alimentation**

When asked whether they have specific diets, most sex workers gave a positive answer. They primarily reported to try to eat so that their BMI would not increase, achieving this through healthy diet (see Fig. 4): *“I try to eat a healthy diet, a lot of vegetables, primarily not to put on weight”* (IN13, 31 years). *“... I am getting older, you know, so the calories rise, so I really try to eat a healthy diet now...”* (IN3, 29 years). Therefore the diet includes a higher amount of vegetables and fruits, and less fatty and greasy meals. It also includes less so-called “white” bread and an obser-

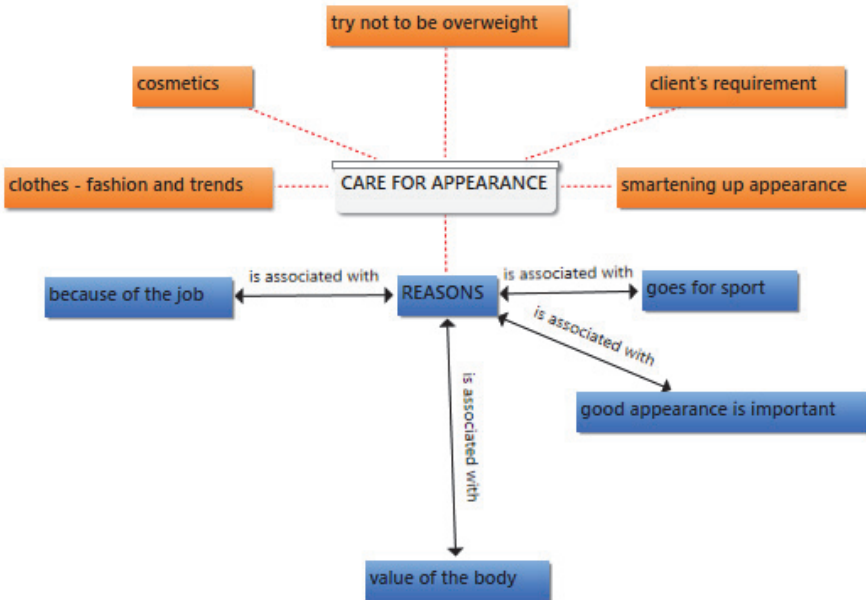


Fig. 3 – Care for appearance (source: GAJU 029/2016/S)

vance of fluid intake: “I eat a lot of fruits and vegetables, I observe fluid intake...” (IN30, 28 years). The decision to observe a healthy diet may be related to current social trends, which can be seen in one statement: “Well, I have started with healthy nutrition now. Because it is quite a trend and I like it quite a lot...” (IN3, 29 years). The study even included sex workers who focused on a vegetarian or vegan diet: “Well, I have been eating a raw and vegan diet recently...” (IN7, 24 years). “I am a vegetarian, so I only eat vegetables...” (IN12, 25 years). Or they are on different diets, which, however, may not have the desirable outcome. “Well, I have tried some diets, but I never stuck to them for long” (IN18, 24 years). Of course, private sex workers constitute a heterogeneous group in the area of alimentation (and of sports) and there are some who do not set any higher value on alimentation. Interestingly, in spite of the fact that the sex business in general puts emphasis on the attractiveness of the sex worker, including her slenderness, there are clients

who seek the opposite: “Well, I don’t want to lose weight, but I want to be in good shape. Because being overweight brings me a lot of money at present. There is nobody else like me...” (IN24, 23 years).

With respect to the observance of regular and healthy diet, the sexual work in itself, or the working hours, may constitute a problem and the sex workers reflect that fact: “... well, I try to eat a healthy diet, but it is difficult, if I get up in the afternoon I only eat small snack, and in the night I don’t eat much...” (IN4, 28 years). “I try to eat a healthy diet, yes, but I eat rather irregularly, I often don’t have time to eat, or I don’t feel like eating, and then I pig out, and it starts all over again...” (IN8, 24 years). In some cases, in connection with the specific daily regime, sex workers report increased consumption of coffee and the caffeine contained in it, which may replace common alimentation: “... I usually work during the night, so I drink a lot of coffee and then I am not hungry...” (IN11, 21 years).

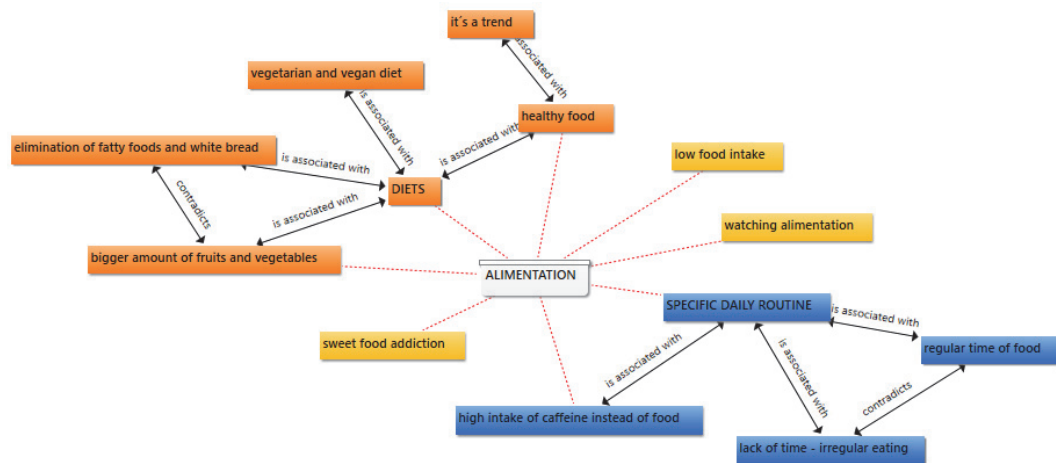


Fig. 4 – Alimentation (source: GAJU 029/2016/S)

### Sports and exercise

In connection with healthy diet, most sex workers focus on some sports or exercise, using them primarily to keep “their figure” (see Fig. 5): “... I often do some exercise, as I have to look good...” (IN9, 26 years). They primarily go to different gyms or fitness centres: “... I have a favourite gym and try to go there quite often, even daily, if I have time” (IN9,

26 years). “... I try to keep fit, so I go to the fitness centre, if I can, I go every day, if not, I go at least every other day” (IN3, 29 years). Other exercise mentioned by the sex workers in the interviews includes yoga, jogging, but also walks with the dog.

Some sex workers see the work in the sex business as physically strenuous, and therefore they don’t seek other exercise: “... Any



extra movement pisses me off, you know, I have quite a strenuous work, and I can't imagine jumping somewhere in the evening... no and no..." (IN8, 24 years). "Well I think there is a lot of exercise in the work itself. So

it's enough. A date of an hour, if somebody is active, can destroy you for the rest of the day. And if I have such clients, three in succession..." (IN15, 27 years).

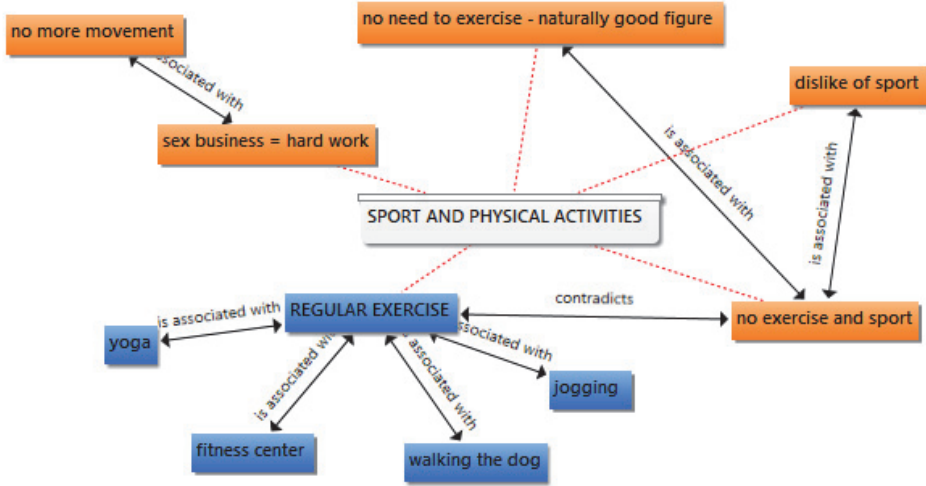


Fig. 5 – Sports and exercise (source: GAJU 029/2016/S)

**“Normal work”**

Thoughts about life without sex work were very similar among respondents (see Fig. 6). They always imagined having to do jobs that were low-level for little money, or jobs that were boring, depressing, and monotonous, where they would work most of the day and make little money: "... I would be in a job where they pay you little money, you do dreadful work, and if you want to earn good money, you would have to be there all the time..." (IN7, 24 years). "My day would be different since I would work from morning to

evening and earn little money. I would have no time for myself and it would hardly pay for all my expenses" (IN34, 25 years). Virtually none of the sex workers imagined having a well-paid position or working in an office. Instead they saw themselves as barmaids, waitresses, shop assistants, factory workers on an assembly line, or working in similar jobs. Many answers almost seemed to imply a contempt for jobs with eight-hour working days and livable wages: "I don't want to be a poor girl" (IN19, 34 years).

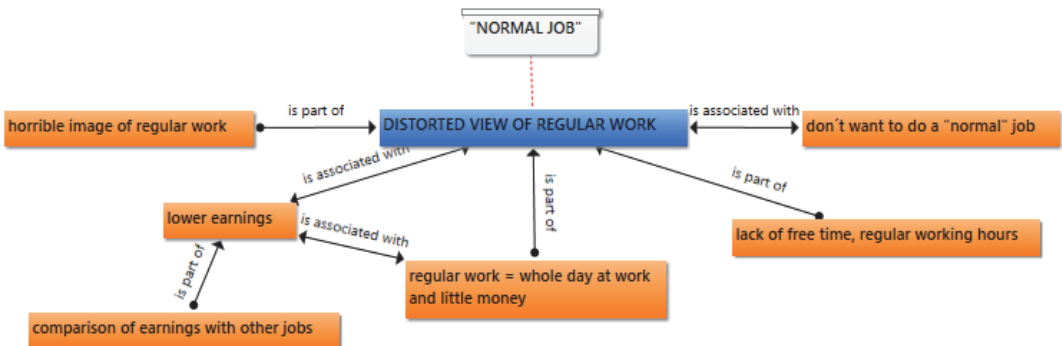


Fig. 6 – “Normal job” (source: GAJU 029/2016/S)

## DISCUSSION

The sex workers we interviewed often spoke of “normal work” and “normal life”. When asked how they perceived their work, all of them answered that it was just a job to them. However, there were two contradictory feelings reported by the respondents in our study. On the one hand they reported that the provision of sex services was little different to any other “normal” job. On the other hand, they expressed little desire to do “normal work” or have a “normal life”, which suggests that they do not internally perceive that the work they do is “normal”. The degree of internal contempt related to provision of sexual services was described by de Meis (2002), who reported that if a sex worker accepted their identity, they had a higher level of self-respect, had greater solidarity with other sex workers, and more strongly perceived the sex business as just a job. Our respondents had a strongly distorted idea of “normal work”. Their current work guarantees them subjective freedom, which they allegedly would not have with a normal job.

By offering and providing sex services from their own flat, women stay at the “workplace” even after working hours are over. This can lead the sex worker to perceive that their work has not been completed. This problem was identified by Crosbie and Moore (2004) who explored the work-life balance associated with working from home. This may cause sex workers to stop seeing their workplace as also their home, which could lead to neglecting basic activities like cooking, spending time with the family, or socializing with friends.

The results from our study show that everyday activities included visits to beauty parlors, fitness centers, and shopping (particularly for clothing and cosmetics). The increased attention to appearance is likely associated with the greater emphasis placed on a sex worker’s attractiveness, since attractiveness is related to both the number of clients and the prices sex

workers can charge for their services. Sometimes, being overweight can lead to reduced income or even practicing risky sex (Chang and Weng, 2012). Increased personal hygiene may be related to the character of the work.

## CONCLUSIONS

Sex workers manifest several contradictions with respect to how they perceive their role in the commercial sex business, as well as how they perceive the business itself. On the one hand, they may claim that they entered the sex business in order to have more time for their hobbies; but in practice, since their lives are subordinate to their work, they seem to have little free time for hobbies, much less anything else. General references, by sex workers, about the sex business “offering a lifestyle with more freedom” may seem unexpected. However, we must realize that it may be a defensive strategy used by sex workers who do not want to admit the limitations and restrictions their lifestyle imposes on them, i.e., they may be reluctant to admit that they are “slaves” to their work. Nevertheless, one of the main results of our research is that that they do not internally perceive that the work they do is “normal”. Sex workers also sometimes have problems with social isolation in society because of what they do. According to our research, they also have some specific habits in alimentation and in most cases in the care about their appearance and figure. Caring about one’s figure was mainly associated with sport activities. The increased attention to appearance is likely associated with the greater emphasis placed on a sex worker’s attractiveness. To conclude, it is necessary to say that sex workers have (in some aspects) a specific everyday lifestyle.

### Conflict of interests

The authors have no conflict of interests to declare.

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