



MALMÖ HÖGSKOLA
FAKULTETEN FÖR
HÄLSA OCH SAMHÄLLE

FEMALE STREET PROSTITUTES' VIOLENT VICTIMIZATION: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

ANUKI BURDULI

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Burduli, A.

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Abstract

This master thesis investigates the causes of female street prostitutes' high level of violent victimization and based on the findings suggests the possible ways to better protect this group of women in order to reduce the harm they face. I chose a qualitative content analysis as a research method and focused on three main theories within the field of Victimology. Lifestyle model, Routine Activity and Neutralization and Desensitization Theories are the most suitable to explain the specific factors which make female street prostitutes' one of the most victimized groups of the society. The results of the analysis are the clear example that legalizing street prostitution is the so called basis to plan and develop further protective and preventive strategies. Though, the recommendation includes conducting the future research to compare the violence rate of legalized female street prostitution with an unregulated one.

Keywords: Female street prostitutes' victimization, international perspective, legalization, prevention and not punishment, stigmatization, the nature of the lifestyle, vulnerability.

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Chapter I. Introduction

*To women who live on the edge of loneliness and struggle everyday to survive.
To those who are beaten, raped and killed and their names stay unknown.
To those women who are the victims of negligence from the society and their
families ashamed, that they exist.
To the street prostitutes.*

The “whore” was a woman I always avoided to look at when I accidentally saw her in the street. The first time I started to overcome the stereotype which was stronger than my inner attitude, was the time when my friend asked me to write a script about the female street prostitutes for a documentary film.

Her name was Bolya and we met each other in the main district of street prostitutes in Georgia. She was young, good-looking and agreed to record the interview with a great generosity.

Bolya was 14 years old when five men raped her and kept her away for a week in an isolated garage. When everything was over and she finally returned to her parents, she had to lie to them. She said that she had been at her friend’s house. Threats from her rapists and the fear of the reaction of her parents caused her to lie: “They would never forgive me that I was raped”.

Bolyas’ family was vulnerable, uneducated, and under the pressure of public stereotypes and stigmas - the girl is accounted responsible if she is raped. That is why Bolya ran away from home when she was 15 and started begging on the streets of the capital. At the time, she was not aware why cars were stopping and picking girls up from the streets at night but someone explained to her that it is the way to earn the money. So she sat in the car of a stranger when he stopped his car next to her one night.

Now Bolya is 25 years old. She does not see herself as a victim. She tells me the stories full of beatings and rape from the time she had entered the street prostitution. And I understood that these stories are a part of her life, the life which she has not chosen.

Nevertheless I am aware that the above mentioned personal experience could not be generalized throughout the whole sub-culture of the female street prostitutes, this is a reality which I have faced in my home country during my late-night-street interviews. Respectively, this reality pushed me to choose female street prostitution as the subject of my master’s thesis - female street prostitutes with the high risk of being victimized.

Prostitution is the oldest phenomenon from the ancient times and is defined as “the act of selling the services for purposes of sexual intercourse”.(Coston & Ross, 1998:54) It is quite arguable if it is a profession or one of the universal forms of women’s offences. The definition of prostitution varies across the world and directly depends on the legislation framework within the specific country. In some countries prostitution is legal and regulated under the law, respectively it is called sex-work and women who are involved in prostitution are treated as sex-

workers. In many countries prostitution is illegal and prostitutes are fined or even sentenced to death. (Pros and Cons of Controversial Issues, 2015)

Within the theoretical literature, as well as according to the already conducted various researches, it is stated that female street prostitutes are one of the highly victimized groups among society. This statement is well documented and the statistical data is quite similar despite the different nations and cultures which are familiar with the phenomenon of the female street prostitution. (Sanders, 2004)

It should be mentioned that violent victimization is not equally distributed in the society as it is clustered within the definite groups. These groups have the characteristics which put them at a high risk to become violent crime victims compared to others. Members of culturally, socially and politically expendable groups are considered to be the “culturally legitimate targets” and consequently the violence used against them is somehow justified as it is seen as a way of removing unwanted elements from the society. Such persons are treated as worthless and their victimization gains only ignorance, encouragement or reconciliation. “Devalued” citizens are not treated as ordinary ones, who are having the same feelings and emotions as “ordinary” people and who deserve the same right to the justice in the case of victimization. Consequently, offenders who choose socially expandable persons as their victims are not seen as lawbreakers from the society. The police, as usual, are also indifferent to the above mentioned cases and their attitudes towards the offenders are full of leniency. (Fattah, 2003)

Steven Spitzer uses the term “social junk” referring to the marginalized groups of the society. These people are prone to become victims of crime due to the personal attributes and social attitudes. Personal attributes include deviant lifestyle, unproductiveness, etc, while the negative attitudes towards them facilitate their victimization. That is why they are the easy and “safe” targets for the perpetrators. (Spitzer, 1975)

The marginalization of certain groups due to their lifestyle nature exists in every society. The members of these groups formally continue to live in the society but practically they live on the margin of it and are totally isolated, that is why they form their subcultures as they have chosen the different lifestyle from the rest of the society. There are special slang words, which society calls them and victimization experiences they face are not accepted adequately. These attitudes create motives for their future victimization and the offenders are tolerated and acquitted. (Fattah, 2003, pp.774-775)

Female street prostitutes represent one of the above mentioned marginalized and socially expandable groups of the society.

To start with, prostitution market is segmented between the indoor and street venues and they differ from each other by working conditions, risk of victimization, job satisfaction and self esteem. The sex industry as a whole consists of the workers, managers, owners, agencies, clubs and trade associations, both legal and illegal varieties. As for the street prostitution, it is defined as one of the lower levels of sex work industry. (Weitzer, 2010, pp.1-13) Respectively, prostitutes differ from one another according to their reasons for entering the sex trade business, risk of being victimized, freedom to refuse the clients, dependence

and exploitation by third parties (pimps, intimate partners, etc), experiences with the police, public invisibility and influence on the surrounding community.

General rule which is strongly established within this phenomenon is that “The level at which the woman begins working in the prostitution world determines her general position in the occupation for much of her career as a prostitute. To change levels it is necessary to have contacts, also the new set of work techniques and attitudes”. (Heyl, 1979:198)

The most distinctive difference is stated between the street prostitution and all the other types of sex-work. Their business location is limited to the streets, more precisely, outdoor venues – sex in cars, alleys, parks, etc. Prices for the services are extremely low compared to the other types of sex work, for example, call girls or escort service workers. Exploitation level from the third parties is quite high, public visibility is also higher than the members of the other types. As a result, risk of being violently victimized is very high. Initial transaction in the case of street prostitutes occurs in a public place while the sex act takes place in either public or private setting. (alley, park, vehicle, hotel, etc.) (Weitzer, 2010)

Another difference between street sex worker and indoor worker is job satisfaction and self-esteem. Majority of indoor workers enjoy their job, they believe that their work has at least some positive effect on their lives and provide a valuable service. Their self-esteem is higher than street prostitutes and this fact is based on the several factors – education level is higher, they have more control on their working conditions, have much higher income, the level of their psychological well-being is resulted from the situation that they are not socially vulnerable and are operating in less dangerous situation than street workers. They feel “sexy”, “beautiful” and “powerful” and the prostitution is their own “choice”.(Bernstein, 2007)

Due to the fact that women involved in prostitution have different categories, their risk profiles and as a result, the consequences of the risk they face are various. Indoor and Outdoor female prostitutes have different degrees and types of violence based on their type of activity and location.(Gysels et al, 2002)

The nature of the street prostitution is remarkably vulnerable. T. Sander in her article discusses the phenomenon of “others” – when the specific group of the people is isolated from the society and female street prostitutes are considered to be one of such groups who due to its’ nature are separated from the whole population and are treated as a social threat to the moral. (Sanders, 2004, pp.1704-1706)

Female street prostitutes carry activities which stigmatize, criminalize and include threats of physical, emotional and psychological harm to them. (Hoigard & Finstad, 1992)

The so called occupational hazards towards female street prostitutes consist of two types of risk factors:

- ✓ Public risk – Street work experience makes female street prostitutes victims of violence from clients, pimps or dealers. Also there is a threat from the police in the form of fine or imprisonment and harassment from community protesters.

- ✓ Private risk – Stigmatization and marginalization of female street prostitutes is as stressful for the women, as the violence experiences. They fear that family members, friends or intimate partners reveal the fact of their activity. (Sanders, 2004)

1.1.Purpose

The purpose of my master thesis is to reveal the causes of high rate of female street prostitutes' violent victimization and to explore all the possible solutions to better protect this group of crime victims.

Based on the theoretical backgrounds and the literature review, as well as various researches within the field of Victimology, it is well-documented that female street prostitutes tend to experience a wide range of victimization and a high level of repeated victimization. Consequently, without examining and analyzing this issue, legalizing the prostitution as a type of the work or criminalizing it as a certain type of the offence could not be seen as an effective strategy to protect them from the potential offenders. While discussing the numerous cases of violence and abuse towards female street prostitutes it is clear that to deal with the problem it is essential to give it a proper name, deeply understand its nature and defeat it with the long-term effect.

Subsequently, the aim of the recent study is to fully comprehend the factors which put female street prostitutes at a high risk of being victimized and to determine better mechanisms to reduce the harm which they face throughout the world every day.

1.2.Research questions

Based on the aim and purpose of the recent study research questions for my thesis will be formulated in this way:

1. Why are female street prostitutes one of the most victimized groups among crime victims?
2. What are the possible ways to better protect female street prostitutes from the high risk of being victimized?

1.3.Disposition

The master thesis consists of the eight sections. The first section includes an introduction part with the problem formulation and general overview of the research subject. This section is followed by the aim, purpose and research questions of the study. In the second section methodology and research methods are presented, more specifically method of qualitative content analysis. Third, fourth and fifth sections include literature review, legislation review and theoretical background of the thesis.

Within the literature review part I have focused on the most common approaches to the prostitution in general. I have discussed already conducted researches within the field of criminology on the subject of the female street prostitutes' high level of victimization. I have also reviewed personal narratives of women from the previous research on the topic of the phenomenon of the prostitution. While discussing, I have selected those narratives which are directly related to my subject of interest. Legislation overview consists of the legislation regarding prostitution within the international perspective. In the part of the theoretical

background I have chosen three main theories within the field of Victimology to explore the causes of the high level of female street prostitutes' victimization.

In the section of analysis I have fitted the theories to the recent problem, in a detailed way explained all the possible causes and motives of the violent victimization of prostitutes and analyzed the results. Based on the findings I have discussed possible ways of better protection of female street prostitutes' in order to reduce those high risks which they face operating in the streets. The seventh and eighth sections are referring to the conclusion part of the thesis and bibliography which I have used as a secondary data to conduct the research.

Chapter II. Methodology

Methodology plays an important role in the process of conducting the research. Methodology consists of "the understanding of how to proceed from the findings of empirical research to make inferences about the truth, or at least adequacy of theories." (Perri & Bellamy, 2011:11) Findings about the empirical facts enable the researcher to deeper analyze and judge meanings under the facts. Methodology is the study of the problem which triggers researcher to conduct the research, while research methods refer to the techniques to collect data and to analyze it. (Perri & Bellamy, 2011:12)

Before I will start to represent the methods which I have chosen to conduct the research I would like to shortly discuss the main approach how I have described, explained and interpreted the problem of female street prostitutes' high level of violent victimization.

I have chosen an interpretive epistemology to conduct the research. Interpretive approach studies beliefs, ideas or discourses and explains the meanings in different ways. (Bevir & Rhodes, 2002:131) These explanations include understanding and interpreting actions and not simply making the conclusions. It also implies to explore hidden meanings between the lines.

The high rate of female street prostitutes' victimization is the problem which I have examined in order to identify the factors which put this group of women at a high risk to become crime victims. Analyzing and interpreting these factors lead to final stage – to develop the recommendation part of my thesis to better protect female street prostitutes from the high rate of violence used against them.

2.1. Method

The decision to choose the qualitative method to conduct the research was made due to the fact that my study is specifically focused on the research on violence and its' goal is to analyze complex structures of meanings, more specifically causes of the violence against certain group of women, female street prostitutes.

As investigating the causes of the violence, as usual, bring the various reasons, social conditions and motives, the best way to empirically organize them is to apply the qualitative method. (Bottger & Strobl, 2003:1203)

As a researcher I have used qualitative content analysis as a research method which gave me the possibility to collect and analyze large amount of the material. I have applied several stages in the process of content analysis which includes:

- ✓ Reducing the original material in order to maintain the important content. At this stage I have collected, paraphrased and generalized the whole material for my research;
- ✓ Applying the suitable theories to the prepared material and narrowing its' context to the recent problem.
- ✓ Analyzing the findings and openly discussing the limitations of the research.
- ✓ Reporting results.

My ultimate goal in the research process was to collect and critically analyze the theoretical literature and already conducted studies regarding the high rates of female street prostitutes' violent victimization. Apart from this, to find the related theories within the field of Victimology to explain the high risks of street prostitutes' victimization with the aim to answer my research questions.

2.2. Material

I have used secondary sources to conduct the research using qualitative content analysis as a method.

The data collection and investigation process covered two months. The secondary data sources which I have used to write the thesis were in the form of:

- ✓ Theoretical literature within the field of Criminology, Sociology and Psychology with the forms of books;
- ✓ Already conducted researches and scholarly articles gained via Malmo University Online Library;
- ✓ Statistical data from the conducted researches and case studies;
- ✓ Reviews of different legislations within the international perspective focused on the Nordic Model, Netherlands and USA as the most distinguishable legislation related to my subject of interest.

Books and articles which I have read and analyzed helped me to gain the knowledge about the phenomenon of prostitution in general and more specifically, about female street prostitution, pathways to street sex trade and stigma-related experiences.

Criminological and more precisely, Victimological approach investigation was aimed to research the violence against socially excluded and marginalized group – female street prostitutes and to choose Victimological theories to explain the causes of their violent victimization.

Various researches were collected and generalized in order to systematize statistical data comparing female street prostitutes with other types of sex industry workers regarding their violent victimization experiences, self-esteem and vulnerability. Moreover, analyzing a large number of researches gave me the possibility to create a clear picture of main forms of violence and tendencies despite the geographical and cultural differences.

As for the legislation overview within the international perspective, Nordic model (punishment of customers), Netherlands (all forms of prostitution legalized) and USA (all forms of prostitution prohibited, except Nevada), this section of the thesis is the so called basis to determine if the regulated street sex trade can be discussed as one of the solutions towards the reducing harm which female street prostitutes face.

Apart from this, I have used the primary source in the introduction part of the thesis which represents my private experience with the female street prostitute. This interview, used as a short narrative about the violence victimization experience of Georgian female street prostitute, was conducted within the framework of the documentary filmmaking in the past and not with the aim to use it in my thesis. Respectively, ethical consideration is stipulated.

2.3. Delimitation

Due to the fact that the prostitution in general is a versatile phenomenon and the subject of the various studies within the different fields and during the centuries, the all material which exists on this topic is impossible to investigate and analyze. The problem which pushed me to write my master thesis – the high level of the street prostitutes' violent victimization is distinguishable with the different approaches and theories in Criminology.

After collecting the necessary sources and suitable literature to examine the problem, I have focused on three main theories within the field of Victimology, which in my point of view are the most appropriate to explain the high level of victimization which female street prostitutes face : Lifestyle Model, Routine activity theory and the theory of Neutralization and Desensitization.

These three theories which I have chosen are suitable in analyzing the high risk factors of female street prostitutes' violent victimization due to the several reasons: This group of crime victims – female street prostitutes have the characteristics which distinguish them from the other victims of crime – they are extremely stigmatized and they carry activities which are associated with the high risks of being victimized. Respectively, crimes committed against them could be explained only with the specific theories which emphasize the roles of stigmas and the nature of lifestyles in the process of victimization.

Three selected theories investigate the influence of stigmatization, marginalization and lifestyle of female street prostitutes on the risks of their victimization. Besides, they are still actual and tested with the large number of researches despite the nationalities and cultural differences. Empirical support of using these theories could be found in various victimization surveys.

Apart from this, the institute of prostitution exists in almost every country with different forms, different approaches, different public attitudes and legal response, so I have selected the most distinguishable models: Nordic model, USA and Netherlands with their outlined legislations towards prostitutes; though I have used different examples from various countries in the process of working on the thesis.

Due to the limited time frame, it was impossible to discuss and analyze other countries' legislation but the fact that researches which I have used in my thesis cover various nationalities and cultures, I think that the general picture will be quiet clear.

And at last, initially I have planned to conduct the research and investigate female street prostitutes' violent victimization in my home country Georgia, though the ethical issues and limited time frame pushed me to postpone it. In my point of view this study which relies on the secondary sources will be the basis for my future research.

Chapter III. Literature review

During the centuries throughout the world and within the different cultures prostitution was seen as a sin and accordingly "whores" were treated as immoral women who are the threat for the society. Early criminological approach discussed the phenomenon of prostitution as the result of inborn and pathological defects or the lack of morality. (Klein, 1973) This approach ignored the impact of social and structural factors on the prostitution.

To go through the general picture of the phenomenon of prostitution, the widely known approach is the so called monolithic perspective according to which oppression, abuse, exploitation and poverty are inherent to the prostitution. (Weitzer, 2007:28) This perspective sees prostitutes as the victims of physical and sexual abuse during the childhood which later pushes them to enter the prostitution.

Radical feminist approach defines prostitution as an "extreme male domination over women" where the distinction between forced and voluntary prostitution is just a myth as the element of force always is included even in the case when the prostitute is uninformed about it. They claim that legalized and regulated prostitution turns the state itself into the pimp and benefits from the women exploitation. Supporters of this approach fight for the eliminating of all types of the sex industry.(Weitzer, 2005:212)

The central idea of radical feminist approach is that it opposes sex workers' agency and the only exception of choice is when the woman decides to quit the prostitution and not when she enters it. Anti-prostitution feminists argue that women never choose this activity as a work and as a result prostitution is seen as a "paid rape". (Weitzer, 2005:213)

According to Sheila Jeffreys, who represents the radical feminist approach, prostitution originally is the sexual violence against women who are involved in it. (Jeffreys, 2008) Melissa Fairley American psychologist which is one of the famous feminist anti-prostitution activists also views prostitution as one of the forms of sexual violence and "volunteer slavery". According to Fairley, poverty, racism, sexism and women's subordination by gender are tightly connected with prostitution. The author does not accept the option of choice from the prostitutes

and claims that women engaged in prostitution are purchased on the basis of their vulnerability – child abuse experience or lack of education. (Farley, 2003)

Based on the supportive approach of the prostitution decriminalization, prostitution is a type of the service work which allows sex workers to operate under the same employment conditions as other professional groups. (Abel, 2014:581) Women involved in prostitution have the free choice of disposing their body and receive economic benefit for this act. This perspective does not deny that there are a lot of cases when women involved in prostitution have limited choice and are forcefully engaged in prostitution, but there are also women who have decided to become sex workers according to their own choice. Consequently, they practice prostitution safely and respectfully. (Klinger, 2003:16)

Prostitute advocacy groups, for example, American organization for prostitutes' rights Coyote (Call of Your Old Tired Ethics) fight for the prostitution decriminalization. They demand to regulate the process under which sex workers, customers and those who are involved in it are not prosecuted and that gives sex workers opportunity to improve their working conditions. They see prostitution as the way for women to freely choose their life style. (Donohoe, 2012:3)

International Committee for Prostitutes' Rights (ICPR) adopted the World Charter for Prostitutes' Rights in 1985, which establishes basic guidelines to protect sex workers and guarantees the defense of their free will. Based on the Charter, adult prostitution resulting from individual decision should be decriminalized; preventive mechanisms should be developed in order to eliminate abuse and stigmatization of prostitutes; criminal laws against force, violence, rape, racism, etc. should be implemented. Prostitutes have the same human rights and civil liberties as the other citizens. (World Charter for Prostitutes' Rights, 1985)

To look at the female street prostitutes as crime victims and taken victimization within the wide context results not only physical injury but also mental damage and emotional suffering, economic loss or impairment of fundamental rights. Female street prostitutes experience high levels of victimization included “assault, rape, abuse, theft, kidnapping, blackmail, harassment, and persecution from clients, residents, pimps, partners, managers, police, and co-workers.” (Prior et al, 2013:574)

The most common forms of victimization related to the female street prostitutes' is: violence from pimps, punters, partners and strangers against women involved in street prostitution. This violence includes: beating, torture, rape, killing and other forms of violence. (Matthews, 2014, pp.2-6)

While discussing rape as one of the most frequent form of violence used against female street prostitutes, it is necessary to briefly discuss the “rape myths” strongly established practically in every society. Rape myths are prejudicial, stereotyped or false beliefs regarding the rape, rape victims and rapists. These beliefs aim to justify or support the sexual violence against rape victims. This means that raped women in some way are responsible for their victimization. Such beliefs also include the idea that only sexually immoral women are raped. (Monto & Hotaling, 2001:277) In the theoretical literature rape myths support the idea that the rape of the prostitute is very problematic and the prostitute herself can not be raped. The acceptance of this attitude places greater risk on the victims

of sexual assault. The willingness to commit rape also arises from the potential offender as there is very little probability that he might be caught. The fact that female street prostitutes are the so called “other type of women” facilitates violence against them. (Monto & Hotaling, 2001:278)

Other form of violence, for example, beating is treated as much more unserious case which does not deserve even the attention from the police. Based on the reports of the female prostitutes, beating was perceived by the clients as part of the sex, as there is no limit in relation with prostitutes – everything is allowed. (Holzman & Pines, 1982:103)

An American study which aimed to investigate clients’ attitudes towards the phenomenon of prostitution, reveal that more than half of the clients who were interviewed during the research believe that prostitution should exist but they have negative feelings towards prostitutes (Weitzer, 2010)

The most serious form of violence which female prostitutes face is homicide. It is stated that prostitutes are 60 to 120 times more likely to be murdered than non prostitute women. The investigation of the murders of prostitutes is quite problematic and most of them are unsolved. The causes of the low rate of homicide investigation lies in the facts that there is a low public interest due to the low opinion about the victim, the lack of reliable witnesses, large amount of DNA evidence collected from the body of victim and the most important, both, prostitutes’ and clients unwillingness to talk to the police. (Salfati et al, 2008, pp.506-507)

Female prostitutes often become the victims of sex trafficking which is said to be one of the forms of modern slavery and there are a lot of cases when female sex workers are bought and sold all over the world. (Popa, 2010) Despite the fact that almost all international protocols and declarations respond to women who are trafficked, the actual help for them is very limited. Raymond and Hughes (2001) in their study of sex trafficking of women in the United States found that over 70 per cent of victims were denied freedom of movement and were unable to leave the sex industry. (Mettews, 2014)

The main perpetrators of violence identified in the study by Raphael and Shapiro (2004) were the purchasers who were responsible for about 60 per cent of violent incidents. Intimate partners were responsible for a quarter of the attacks on female street prostitutes, as for the pimps, they were identified as one of the frequent male perpetrators.

There is an assumption that violence is the necessary part of the street sex trade and this assumption is based on the fact that the violence used against female street prostitutes is widespread. (Raphael & Shapiro, 2004, pp.126-139)

It is stated that victimization is socially and geographically concentrated. It is also recognized that specific groups face multiple and repeat victimization. Multiple victimization includes variety of victimization, as for the repeated victimization, it is the frequency of a certain form of victimization. The main difference between women involved in prostitution from other groups of women lies in the fact that they are more likely to experience a wide range of victimization and a high level of repeated victimization. (Mettews, 2014)

According to Farley and Kelly (2000) more than 25 studies stated an incomprehensible level of violence towards female street prostitutes. Farley and Barkan's study in 1998 is one of the largest and detailed study consisted of 130 women involved in the street prostitution in San Francisco. 82% reported that they were the victims of physical assault during prostitution. 68% were raped. (Farley & Barkan, 1998)

The study conducted in three cities of Britain by Church et al, in 2001 showed that female street prostitutes are extremely vulnerable to violence and robbery. According to the results 81% of female street prostitutes have experienced violence from clients, while only 48% of in-door working female prostitutes experienced the same type of violence. (Sanders, 2004:1705)

This study consisted of 115 female prostitutes and 125 worked indoor. Results revealed that street workers were much more likely than indoors to report robbery (37 % vs 10), beating (27% vs 1%), slapping/punching/kicking (47% vs 14%), rape (22% vs 2%), threatening with a weapon (24% vs 6%), kidnapping (20% vs 2%). (Church et al, 2001, pp. 524-526).

Other studies similarly find disparities in victimization between street and off-street workers with the reporting high percentages of indoor who have never experienced violence on the job. Street prostitutes are more likely to experience more frequent and more severe victimization.(Weitzer, 2010:10)

American study consisted of 113 street sex workers in New York stated that 32.1% of the sample group had suffered physical or sexual abuse in the previous year. (El-Bassel et al, 2001)

The study conducted by Kurtz et al. in Miami consisted of 294 female street prostitutes and was based on the survey and focus group methods to examine the characteristics and sex work-related behaviors of participants which make them more likely to be victimized by their clients or "dates." More than half of the women had experienced date violence. According to the results, strong predictors of high level of victimization include: economic desperation, using drugs while working, not controlling the location of the date and having sex in the car. (Kurtz et al, 2004, pp. 377-378)

Apart from this, it was also revealed that during the attack screaming for the help usually caused passerby to hurry away from the scene. Another surprising finding was that despite the fact that female street prostitutes have spent many years operating in the streets, only few of them had ever been contacted by a worker from a public health, research, HIV/ AIDS, or other human-service agency. Based on the results, it was also clear that the female street prostitutes were cut off from the rest of the community, and few were informed about sources of help. For example, those female street prostitutes within this study who had the experiences of the rape, were unaware about the availability of rape crisis centers. (Kurtz et al, 2004:379)

"Prostitution is not the problem. Society is" – this is an interesting attitude towards the street prostitution as a phenomenon with the eyes of a female street

prostitute who was attending the debates about the “rights and wrongs of prostitution”. (Hulusjö, 2013:21)

It will be quite important to involve within the recent thesis female sex workers’ own narratives and opinions about their experiences, how it feels to be a prostitute, how they perceive themselves and how society treats them. These stories and narratives in some cases differ from the dominant approaches supported within the theoretical field of Sociology, Criminology and Psychology. It should be mentioned that these approaches strongly established within the different cultures have a great effect on those women’s attitudes who are involved in the prostitution themselves. This effect typically has extremely negative influence on these women because it is transformed into stigmas which, on the other hand, violate their rights.

What is the prostitution for the women involved in it? – Work or violence, empowerment or exploitation? (Hulusjö, 2013:23) The first research on the women involved in the prostitution with the focus on their personal narratives was conducted by Kate Milett “The prostitution papers” in 1973. This was two long and unedited interviews with female prostitutes. Millet herself stated that the understanding of prostitution in general is impossible without discussing and analyzing women’s personal thoughts and beliefs regarding their activity. “If anything, ultimately, is to be done or said or decided about prostitution, prostitutes are the only legitimate persons to do so”. (Jeffreys, 2008:67).

There is a great variety of personal narratives about prostitution and these stories and experiences depend on the position of those who are the story tellers – “the victims”, “the survivors”, “the political activists”, “the sex workers”, or etc. Narratives of women involved in the prostitution are about the violence, force, exploitation, but on the other hand, there always exist stories which include power, control and emancipation.(Hulusjö 2013, pp.9-31)

The attitudes and perceptions regarding female prostitution are different with the point of view of those who tell and those who listen. Outcomes are based on the each specific story but the tendencies themselves are based on the facts and statistical data. Tendencies are those facts that no one can deface.

Research carried out by Anna Hulusjo based on the narratives of female prostitutes revealed that “the prostitute sign” which is stuck to one’s body could be transformed into an “appropriate target for violence/undeserving victim”. Most of the stories regarding female prostitutes’ victimization is full of stories about threats, violence and rape, including from the police and negligence from the court system. The results of the research show that in most of the cases female prostitutes lose deserving victim status and ideological sympathy. Compared to the indoor prostitution street level female prostitutes have greater risk of violence and the ability of managing these risks depends on one’s social location and personal biography.(Hulusjo, 2013:384)

Chapter IV. Legislation review

There are various perspectives on prostitution within different cultures and nations. Some view the prostitutes as directly responsible for the problem; some

view the clients in charge of the problem and consequently the prostitutes as the victims. Others view prostitution “as a private matter in which the state should not interfere”. (Scott & Dedel, 2006:2)

To begin with, the term “abolition” it aims to eliminate prostitution and prosecute only third parties (pimps and clients); In the case of “decriminalization” prostitution is not regulated by the law but is not punishable. “Legalization” of sex work means that it is controlled by the authorities and under the law. As for the “criminalization”, the prostitution is prohibited and all parties involved in it are punished according to the law. (Donohoe, 2012, pp.8-9)

Full decriminalization removes all criminal penalties which mean that street prostitutes could exist on any street. Partial decriminalization reduces but not eliminates penalties – the penalty might be a fine instead of incarceration or the charge may be reduced from a felony to a misdemeanor or violation. De facto decriminalization is the case when existing law is not implemented but the offense still is in the penal code. Decriminalization could be preceded by the legalization. Legalization implies regulation of some kind: vetting and licensing business owners, registering workers of sex trade, zoning street prostitutes, mandatory medical exam, special business taxes, official’s periodic site visits and inspections of legal establishments. (Weitzer, 2010, pp.21-22)

Opinions regarding prostitution legalization differ throughout the world. Two-thirds of the British and French populations believe that legal brothels would make it easier to control prostitution and this kind of change would not lead to the increase of sex-trade. (Weitzer, 2010:24) British population’s 59 % think that prostitution is a choice which women make freely.

The Nordic countries (Sweden, Norway and Iceland) represent the so called “Nordic Model” regarding prostitution policy and legislation and their progressive approach towards sex-workers. Sweden was the first country which introduced prohibitions against customers and not for those who sell sex in 1999. (Skilbrei & Holmstrom, 2014, pp.1-2) Norway and Iceland adopted the law regarding the criminalization of sex purchasers in 2009.

It should be mentioned that Nordic countries who share same societal developments in general always treated the problem of prostitution on the high level of public interest and made distinctive social and legal changes to eliminate the prostitution.

Nordic Model focuses on the criminalization of male purchasers in order to address and reduce the demand of paid sex. Male purchaser is seen as a lawbreaker whose desires are serviced in many cases at the significant cost to the women involved in prostitution. (Matthews, 2014:12)

Before the adoption of the law which prohibits the purchase of sex in Sweden, previous steps have been made towards changing the public opinion and attitudes regarding sex workers. Responses to the Government report in 1981 included that prostitution would be eliminated if there would be no demand for it and the punishment of customers instead of sex workers would improve gender equality and prevent the exploitation of women. (Waltman, 2011:137)

Those who oppose the punishment of customers argue that the criminalization of male purchasers lead the sex industry underground and the problem becomes more invisible and more difficult to overcome. (Matthews, 2014:13)

Netherlands is the country with liberal and at the same time controversial approaches towards sex industry. Amsterdam is said to be one of the oldest venues for visible and legal prostitution. (Aalbers & Sabot, 2012:1) Prostitution in Netherlands is officially legal since October 2000. Government established strict regulations for prostitution. Prostitutes should meet the age criteria - over 18, (later the limit was raised until 21) as for the clients, they should be over 16. Sex workers should be registered and have to pay taxes. Not only the outdoor prostitution is legal, brothels are also officially allowed with the imminent license and zoning requirements. The legalization of prostitution has separated the voluntary sex work from the forced prostitution. Pimping and an income from a sex worker are legal too if it does not contain coercion. (Pros and cons of controversial issues, 2015)

Researches which have been conducted after the legalization of prostitution revealed that decriminalization of sex work resulted the creation of two sectors of prostitution – the licensed sector of sex workers who were controlled by the police and local authorities and non-licensed sector with a lot of illegal prostitutes, coercion and variety of unregulated sex services. A lot of public interest was made to the opponents of the prostitution legalization who claimed that the conditions of sex workers which was the main goal of decriminalization, had not improved but instead violence, trafficking and pimping were more widespread than it was before. (Outshoorn, 2012, pp.237-238)

In 2008 the investigative unit of the national police published a report on human trafficking - three Turkish traffickers ran the prostitution network in three cities, including Amsterdam. At least 78 women were the victims of the gang. The investigation showed that there were a lot of cases of different types of violence against the women, forced tattooing, coerced cosmetic surgery and forced abortion. It should be mentioned that traffickers had acted openly even in the licensed sector during several years. The report stated that legalization had not eliminated the abuse of sex workers. Despite the strict monitoring and regulation of prostitution, women still work under threat of coercion. (Outshoorn, 2012:239)

Prostitution in USA is criminalized which means that solicitation to engage in an act of prostitution is illegal, except in certain countries in Nevada where about 30 legal brothels exist. Offences also include pimping, trafficking, operating a brothel, running an agency that offers customers with the sexual services. Most arrests in USA involve the street trade, indoor workers are also targeted in some cities. (Brents & Hausbeck, 2001)

Arrests regarding street prostitution have the effect of either:

1. Containment within a particular location, where street prostitutes are subjected followed by arrests, fines, brief jail and release, or
2. Displacement to another area where the same dynamic occurs. Containment is the norm, as for the displacement, it needs police crackdowns which are few. (Weitzer, 2010:21)

Chapter V. Theoretical background

Before discussing the main theories within the Victimological field referring to the female street prostitutes violent victimization, it is necessary to shortly go through the General Strain Theory by Robert Agnew which can be one of the most appropriate theories to reveal the motivations of prostitutes as well as those who use their services. (Bucher et al, 2014)

The main idea of the General Strain Theory is that when person experiences strain, it creates “pressure for deviant forms of coping”. (Bucher et al, 2014:1) Strain is the source of negative emotions and in this case, crime could be the possible way to reduce the strain or other negative emotion. Involvement in the street prostitution in this context is correlated with the various forms of life stressors, for example, economic coercion, victimization experience, drug abuse, family traumas.

Researches, conducted in order to test the above mentioned theory have showed that the strain increases the likelihood of engaging in prostitution and the solicitation of it. (Bucher et al, 2014:2)

According to GST, individuals who have experienced strain use three types of coping strategies: cognitive (reinterpretation of the strain in order to decrease its impact – are non criminal acts), behavioral (reduce strain) and emotional coping (decrease negative emotions resulted by the strain). Both of them could be criminal or non criminal acts. To discuss the above mentioned acts within the context of prostitution, a women, for example, who has the hopeless economic situation could engage in prostitution (behavioral coping) or seek help from family members or friends (emotional coping). (Agnew, 2006)

Already conducted researches have revealed that female street prostitutes are those who have experienced a large variety of strains in the past – physical and sexual abuse, homelessness, drug addiction. All of the strains decrease the level of social control as they destruct relations within the family members, isolate such persons from the society and limit their employment opportunities. (Bucher et al, 2014:4) This situation is used by pimps, in the case when a street prostitute, for example, is drug dependent and has no other way to earn money rather than continuing prostitution. (Chesney-Lind, 1989, pp.5-29)

Despite the fact that strains are said to be the so called risk factors for street prostitution, this correlation is indirect and firstly affects economic need. For instance, women who have the experience of abuse being a child deal with this by running from their home. So they engage in street prostitution when they realize that their sexuality have a little value to survive on the street. (Chesney Lind, 1989) Accordingly, this example proofs that street prostitution is one of the mechanisms of behavioral coping in order to reduce the strain of economic need.

Robert Agnew interestingly explains the motivation of male customers why they buy the sex within the framework of GST. According to this theory, the motivation of the called johns who are paying for sex is related with the strain of “goal blockage”. (Agnew, 2006) The most systematically revealed strain connected with use of prostitutes’ services is the failure to receive sexual satisfaction through the ordinary relationships. (McKeganey et al, 1996) For

example, some men solicit sex workers in order to experience those types of sex which they could not experience with their conventional partners – oral/anal sex. Some men choose sex workers to gain control over the woman. Some of the researchers state that in most of the cases men seek prostitutes to use violence against them.

In sum, within the theoretical framework of General Strain Theory, soliciting prostitution is used as a behavioral coping mechanism with the aim to get an excitement and fulfill their blocked sexual desires.

Due to the fact that traditional explanations of violence are inadequate regarding the marginalized groups' violent victimization, it is necessary to find the theories which analyze this process taking into the account all the specific characteristics of such groups. Socially excluded, marginalized and vulnerable members of our society differ from the whole population and respectively the violence used against them have distinctive nature. There are several theories within the field of Victimology which fully or partly discuss and explain the causes of female street prostitutes' violent victimization.

The lifestyle model and routine activity theory's explanations of victimization refer to the theme that individuals "help" their own victimization. These theories link the lifestyles or routine activities of individuals/groups to their rates of predatory victimization. (Encyclopedia of Victimology and Crime Prevention, 2010)

Looking through the theoretical point of view, it will be interesting to shortly discuss the "lifestyle model victimization" by Hindelang, Gottfredson and Garofalo which partly explains the female prostitutes' victimization. The above mentioned authors analyze those demographic characteristics which raise the likelihood of becoming the crime victim, in other words, discuss conditions which precede the victimization experiences. "The confluence of role expectations, structural constraints, adaptations, lifestyle associations, and exposure to crime" are said to be the so called preconditions to the personal victimization. (Coston & Ross, 1998:55)

According to that model, occupation of the person has the great influence on his/her lifestyle and the nature of this influence depends on several characteristics: where, when and with whom time is spent. (Hindelang et al, 1978) The nature of street prostitutes work necessarily includes spending a lot of time outside their houses and more specifically, in the streets. Apart from this, they have many interpersonal contacts, especially with the strangers. Other demographic characteristics discussed by Hindelang et al. consist of the marital status, family income and race. It is stated that married people spend more time at home than outdoors due to their attachments to the family.

This model states that "Different lifestyles imply different probabilities that individuals will be in particular places, at particular times, under particular circumstances, interacting with particular kinds of persons." (Fattah, 2003, pp.776-777) And all the above mentioned leads that lifestyle directly affects the probability of victimization.

Previous researches on the street prostitutes showed that most of the street female sex workers are single and they spend much more time outside alone or with other unattached persons. (Coston & Ross, 1998, pp.55-56) Moreover, as the family income and race are tightly connected to the lifestyle of a person, it is also proved that most of the street prostitutes live in the socially disorganized areas and are typically socially vulnerable. This means that they are not able to choose their lifestyle as they have limited income. Race is also closely related with the lifestyle. For instance, African-Americans tend to live in a financially homogenous areas. Respectively, those non-whites who live in such neighborhoods are at higher risk to be victimized than white population. (Coston & Ross, 1998, pp.55-56)

According to Skogan the probability to be victimized depends on the nature of criminal offence and across the population. (Skogan et al, 1990:7) The victimization of certain groups can be explained by the specific lifestyle models that expose people to be victimized. Based on this model Coston explains criminal victimization of female street prostitutes in the following way:

1. Criminal victimization is straightly connected to how much time an individual spends outside, especially during the night hours. Female street prostitutes spent most of the time in the street and at night, so it is common and not arguable that they become the victims of street crimes. (Feucht, 1993)
2. Personal victimization is connected with the demographic characteristics which a certain individual shares with offenders. Female street prostitutes share these characteristics with drug dealers, pimps, gamblers and thieves, so the likelihood that they could become crime victims is very high.
3. The proportion of time which an individual spends away from family members is seen as a function of lifestyle. Street prostitutes typically spend most of the time away from their family member due to the nature of their activity. So the risk of victimization increases.
4. "Desirability" of victims for criminal victimization. Offenders who choose female street prostitutes as their victims believe that their victims are unwilling or unable to report to the police about the incident due to the nature of their lifestyle. (Coston & Ross, 1998)

Routine activity approach by Cohen and Felson suggests various risk factors of victimization regarding the members of socially excluded groups. Authors discuss three minimal elements related to this kind of victimization experiences:

- ✓ Motivated offenders;
- ✓ Suitable targets;
- ✓ Absence of capable guardians against a violation; (Fattah, 2003:777)

The lack of any one of these elements is enough to prevent the successful commitment of a direct-contact predatory crime, and the combination of suitable targets and the absence of capable guardians in time and space may even lead to large increases in crime rates. (Felson & Cohen, 1980, pp.589-591)

Motivated offenders are not specifically defined by the routine activity approach. These are persons who might commit crime for any reason. This definition somehow has the double meaning, because the term "motivated offender" makes

no clear statement about the precise motivations for crime. Motivated offenders are seen as rational actors who try “to maximize the profit and minimize the pain”. (Encyclopedia of Victimology and Crime Prevention, 2010, pp.339-344)

Second element according the routine activity approach is the target suitability which can be defined as the material or symbolic attractiveness either to a person, or property target. The exact definition of the target attractiveness depends on the various motivations of the offender. In the case of the violent crime it can be physical visibility, easy access, etc.

And at last, the lack of capable guardian refers to the ability of persons or objects to prevent the crime. Two different contexts should be distinguished. Social guardianship means the availability of people, for example, friends, neighbors, police who have the possibility and will to prevent the crime from occurring. Physical guardianship includes such things which can help to prevent the crime by the suitable target/victim himself/herself – guard dogs, firearms, weapon for the self-defense, etc. (Encyclopedia of Victimology and Crime Prevention, 2010)

To fit the recent theory to the case of the female street prostitutes’ victimization, all of three necessary elements are obvious. Female street prostitutes are the suitable targets as they have the “great” attractiveness for the motivated offenders – they are accessible and easy targets as they have limited possibility to choose their clients. Their activities are carried out with the strict anonymity which results that potential victimizers can easily plan and realize their deviance. They have marginal status and are negatively treated not only from the society but from the officials too, for example, police.

Street prostitutes lack the possibility of capable guardian – they are operating in the streets, in most of the cases late at night and in the isolated areas. They lack the social protection as the society does not treat them as ordinary citizens. There is very little probability that someone, police or pimps help prostitutes to tackle the violence which they might face.

In sum, routine activities and lifestyle model theories both focus on the “contribution” of victims to their victimization and pay less attention to the social background and other factors which can lead to the high risk of specific group’s victimization. Though a lot of empirical support can be found in various victimization surveys conducted in the previous years. For example, the Canadian General Social Survey in 1990 revealed that the evening activity experiences have a big influence on the level of victimization of certain groups of people. Apart from this, street prostitution, whether male or female is said to be one of the most dangerous sphere with the high risk of violent victimization due to its’ nature – operating at the streets. (Fattah, 2003)

Another interesting theory to explain marginalized group’s violent victimization is the theory of Neutralization and Desensitization developed by Sykes and Matza in 1957. The central idea of the theory focuses on the justification for the deviance from the offender which makes the crime valid for him/her but not for the legal system or society in general. Two techniques of neutralization offered by the authors – the denial of injury and the denial of the victim are directly related to the violence used against marginalized group members of the society.(Fattah, 2003:778)

Neutralization is the mental process when the victimizer removes the moral and cultural barriers that typically obstruct the offender to commit the certain crime. This process neutralizes formal and informal social control mechanisms and enables the offender to overcome moral hesitations and preventive barriers. The second process – auto-legitimization has the focus on the act of the victimization itself when the act of violent behavior is mentally defined, rationalized and justified from the offender. This makes it easy to avoid the self-condemnation and the condemnation of others and, as a result, the image of the offender is not tarnished. The third process, desensitization focuses on the victim and gives the victimizer possibility to harm him/her – kill, rape, injure, etc, without feeling guilt. (Sykes & Matza, 1957)

All the above mentioned processes by their nature represent pre-victimization acts. While using the recent theory as an explanation of violent victimization of certain groups among the society, it is clear that negative attitudes, public prejudices and stigmas towards the socially excluded members of the society gives the offender ability to mentally prepare him/her to commit the crime. To sum the idea of this theory in several words: “The injury is not really an injury; rather it is a form of rightful retaliation or punishment. The delinquent moves himself into the position of an avenger, and the victim is transformed into a wrongdoer.” (Sykes & Matza, 1957:253)

Female street prostitutes are one of the marginalized and stigmatized groups in every society and the harm they experience in most of the cases are justified not only from the offenders themselves but also from the society too. This model offered by Sykes and Matza is still urgent and makes clear and logical explanations why female street prostitutes are one of the most victimized groups of the society.

Chapter VI. Analysis

6.1. Why at high risk of being victimized?

As I have already discussed several theories within the theoretical framework, which explain female street prostitutes’ victimization process considering all the specific characteristics of this marginalized group, I would like to deeply analyze all the three approaches – Lifestyle Model, Routine Activity and Neutralization and Desensitization concepts. The understanding of the above mentioned theories within the context of my subject of interest will help me to find the answers to my research questions.

Lifestyle model approach by Hindelag, Gottfredson and Garofalo focuses on the lifestyle of the specific person in explaining the risks of his/her victimization. This means that one’s lifestyle have the great influence on the probability of the personal victimization.

Female street prostitutes have their own sub-culture. They are socially isolated not only from the society in general, but also within the prostitutes’ community itself. They are distinguishable with the characteristics and features which are not arguable neither by the theorists, nor by the practitioners. The characteristics linked to the nature of their lifestyle can be represented as following:

- ✓ Female street prostitutes carry their legal or illegal activities in the street (it depends on the country where they live as the legislation regarding prostitution varies across the nations) and more specifically, in an isolated areas. Typically they share the same place of activity with the various types of hazards – drug dealers, pimps, thieves, etc.
- ✓ Female Street prostitutes operate not only in the street but also during the late hours – at night;
- ✓ Due to the nature of their profession female street prostitutes spend most of the time away from their family;
- ✓ Based on the specific type of the service they provide customers with, female street prostitutes have intimate relations with a large variety of people, including strangers; (this characteristic is directly linked to the inaccessibility to the option of “select the customers”.)
- ✓ Female street prostitutes are initially labeled due to their profession or offence despite their legal or illegal status according to the certain legislation. The fact in both cases remains the same – they sell their body in the street.

All the above mentioned characteristics meet the concept that different lifestyles include different probabilities that person will be “in particular place, at particular time, under particular circumstances, with particular kinds of persons” by Hindelang et al, and that these probabilities affect the risk of their victimization. (Hindelang et al, 1978, pp. 250-251)

It is clear that very specific lifestyle of the female street prostitutes consists of the tremendous risks of different types:

- ✓ Street location – most common place for violent victimization with less probability to seek for to the help.
- ✓ Same location with potential lawbreakers - high probability to meet the potential victimizer.
- ✓ Night time – most common time for violent victimization with less probability to seek for the help.
- ✓ Distance from the family – very little chance to feel secure.
- ✓ Tight relation with strangers – high probability to meet the potential victimizer.
- ✓ Strong stigmatization – very strong facilitator for potential offenders.

I would like to draw your attention on the stigmatization of the female street prostitutes, as I think this is one of the most important topics in the process of analyzing and explaining the motives why are street sex workers highly victimized compared to other members of society.

To start with the term “stigma”, it was introduced by the Greeks and had a meaning of the mark which was cut or burned into the body of a criminal, betrayer or slave. As for the term of social stigma, it was defined by Goffman in 1963 as a “spoiled social identity based on the premise that a stigma represents a deviation from the attributes considered normal and acceptable by society”. (Harvey, 2001:175) Such attributes are seen as failings and as a result individuals with deviant attributes are excluded and isolated from the society. According to Phelan, stigma involves extreme negative perception and social rejection of the marked person and disqualifies stigmatized individual from the social acceptance. (Phelan et al, 1997:323); Corrigan discusses two types of impacts of the social stigma:

robbing social opportunities and diminishing of the self-esteem (Corrigan, 2004:614)

It is stated that women who are involved in street sex-work industry are stigmatized not only from the society but also within their own culture. (Baker et al, 2004, pp.85-86). Other female sex-workers themselves consider street prostitutes as the lowest class within the business. (Heyl, 1979:197) Extremely negative attitudes from the society and from the members of the sex industry itself effect their psychological well-being and, as a result, their behavior. But the most dangerous aspect of stigmatization regarding female street prostitutes is the fact that negative attitude of the society towards them plays as a facilitator as well as justification for offenders.

To look at the stigmatization as a facilitator for using violence against the female street prostitutes the theory of lifestyle model is very relevant. The “whore” stigma gives an impression to the potential offenders that “this type of the woman” is the lowest and cheapest. Earning money in such way makes street prostitutes most suitable targets who are easy to access, insecure, with great anonymity. Apart from this, some forms of violence are considered as “part of the sex” from the offenders - “whore” – the woman who sells her body and does not have any moral principle. How she can be raped? This is the most common attitude towards the female street prostitute. Street prostitutes are treated as persons whose consent is already meant related to the any kind of actions – beating, raping, torturing, etc, and these actions are not seen as deviant neither by the offenders themselves, nor by the society.

Routine activity approach underlines three main elements according to which the high level of female street prostitutes’ violent victimization could be explained:

- ✓ Motivated offenders;
- ✓ Suitable targets;
- ✓ Absence of capable guardians against a violation;

Female street prostitutes’ violent victimization meets all the three minimal elements:

- ✓ Motivated offenders have different motives to harm the female street prostitutes in order to maximize the profit. Profit could be for example, sexual satisfaction gained through the violent act, the demonstration of the masculinity, punishment of the moral lawbreakers, etc.
- ✓ Suitable targets are the exact term for the female street prostitutes. Their lifestyle influences their suitability. They are “available”, they are isolated, they are treated as “others”, the fact that someone has committed crime against them has the different interpretation from the society than it has in the case of the “normal woman’s” victimization. On the other hand, offenders are sure that their deviant behavior will remain unknown as street prostitutes have no capable guardians.
- ✓ Capable guardians could prevent the act of violence but due to the fact that female street prostitutes lack the social and physical guardianship, motivated offenders easily choose their “suitable victims”. The street prostitutes are isolated from the society, both with the meaning of physical isolation, (operating in the isolated areas) and figuratively, as they live on the margins of the society. Besides, in most cases they have no mechanisms for self-defense. When the fact of violence occurs offenders believe that victims typically do not report about the incidents to the

police. And this is a true presumption – female street prostitutes have very low level of reporting about violence. Opinion polls and public condemnations reveal that sex workers engage in normalization strategies to cope with stigmas – compartmentalizing deviant work persona from their “real identity”. (Hulusjö, 2013)

And at last, I will draw your attention on the theory by Sykes and Matza. The mental pre-victimization processes include three elements:

- ✓ Neutralization process disables moral hesitations from the point of view of the offender – society is on the side of the potential victimizer. – “Whore” – she is the threat to the “normal society”.
- ✓ Auto-legitimization – the act of violence is justified from the offender. As the “whore” is the threat, “social trash”, “devalued women”, if she is beaten she deserves it.
- ✓ Desensitization – committing the crime without feeling guilt as the offender in this case do not considers himself/herself as offender, but instead he/she is sure that the act of violence is the punishment and not an offense.

As the reader has already noticed, the stigma plays the most important role in all of the discussed theories which explain the high risk of female street prostitutes’ violent victimization. Stigmas have their influence on the society in general, on the potential offenders, on the police and on the street prostitutes themselves.

As a result, the act of violence against marginalized group members – street prostitutes are morally facilitated, justified or ignored from the society. On the macro level crimes committed against the female street prostitutes are in most cases tolerated.

Police – the specific institution responsible for the justice treats female street prostitutes as “others”. In most cases their complaints are not taken serious. There are a lot of cases of negligence. The source of these attitudes is the same – “whore stigma”.

Potential victimizers under the influences of stigmas and previous experiences of the female street prostitutes’ violent victimization have the feeling of impunity and/or no feeling of guilt.

Female street prostitutes are stigmatized too – the society is the problem, but they do not seek problem in themselves. They are accustomed that in the case of reporting, the police will ignore them, and/or their families and friends will find out their real profession and/or the revenge will occur from the potential offenders especially if street prostitutes know them.

The circle is simple and all its’ elements are interconnected with each other. The stigma “whore” is in the center of this circle. Society needs changes and these changes should start on an individual level and as the female street prostitute is the victim, the change of the attitude should start from the victim herself.

But what would happen if we forget that stigmas exist, if we do not call street prostitutes “whores” and imagine that the society, the police, the potential offenders and street prostitutes are free from the prejudices and stigmas, as well as stigma related experiences, would the female street prostitutes still remain at a

high risk to be violently victimized? The only way to make stigmas disappear is the legalization of the prostitution as it is the basic for the changes on an individual, societal and legal levels. I would like to note that I will develop my assumption in the part of preventive mechanisms of the thesis.

Another logical question rises while discussing risks of the street prostitutes' victimization and it could be formulated in this way – whether it is this ease of availability and increased opportunity that makes female street prostitutes more prone to attack than other women, or whether it is due to the fact that they sell their body? In other words, are prostitutes attacked just because “they are there,” or are they targeted because they are prostitutes?

The problem of the time and the place play a major role in the high risk victimization process of street prostitutes, for example, they are “attractive” for thieves and burglars, serial killers or rapists, and drug dealers. The actual act of prostitution is inherent with risk. Their high visibility and ready availability, together with their willingness to perform their business in secluded areas, makes the prostitute an easy target to attack and murder. (Ressler & Shachtman, 1997)

Lifestyle of the female street prostitution, in my point of view is another clearly identified factor of the high level of their victimization and not only the one. To prove this argument I will recall the victim surveys which include the levels of violent victimization of indoor and outdoor female street prostitutes. The difference between these two sectors is obvious and the reason of this discrepancy lies in the fact that the nature of female indoor prostitutes and female street prostitutes differ from each other. Outdoor street prostitutes are not engaged in the “survival sex”, they are not selling their services in the streets at night and have more access to protection. They do not share the same place with potential offenders and their material wealth in most of the cases is enough to protect themselves from unwanted customers, accidental occupational hazards or drug dealers. They usually are more satisfied with their faith than street prostitutes and this discussion pushes me to underline another risk factor for the high level of female street prostitutes' violent victimization – their vulnerability.

The phenomenon of vulnerability of female street prostitutes is strongly connected with the pathways to prostitution – why they engage in the “survival sex”? The large number of already conducted studies stated that the background of female street prostitutes is quite dramatic. The number of these women has experienced abuse and violence being child. For example, rape, beating including from the family members, when the early victimization experiences push them to devalue their body and become prone to sell sex. (Flowers, 2001; Herman, 2003). They find the solution in running away from home and make themselves vulnerable. Running away as a mechanism to tackle with abuse and violence puts them in more difficult conditions. Their psychological well-being is damaged and they do not see other alternatives in order to escape.

Some female street prostitutes enter prostitution forcibly. When for instance, intimate partner forces them to enter the prostitution, there are also cases when women engage in the survival sex voluntarily to support their drug habit. Of course, there also exist women who do not have any previous victimization experiences which push them to enter the streets, but we are discussing tendencies and various researches within the field prove that vast majority of street

prostitutes had entered street prostitution as “the only way to survive” or forcefully.

All the above mentioned examples lead to the fact that the female street prostitutes have experienced serious psychological stress and as usual their material well-being is also critical. Victims, who are distinguishable with these characteristics, could be harmed easily, they have limited access to the different kinds of protection mechanisms, as they typically live in the socially secluded areas, use drugs, have no systematic relations or if they have families they hardly afford them, so they lack the possibility to quit the streets as this is the only source for their earnings.

In sum, women who socially and psychologically vulnerable, marginalized and stigmatized from the society and at systematic danger to victimize due to their activities are much more likely to be violently harmed than any other women within the society, including other types of prostitutes. Female street prostitutes have those characteristics which initially include danger of being victimized and in the next section of my thesis I would like to discuss and analyze all the possible ways to better protect them.

6.2. What should be done to better protect them?

Based on the analysis, all of the three identified factors of female street prostitute’s victimization - stigmatization, nature of their profession and vulnerability lead to the cornerstone of the concept of legalization.

I would like to consistently discuss the above mentioned hypothesis. To begin with, legalization of the street prostitution is the minimal requirement in the process of developing the strategies of street prostitute’s protection. Stigmatizations of the street work woman and of the society in general are influenced with the belief that street prostitution is offence itself which includes the risk for moral principles. If the prostitution will be considered as a legal kind of the work, society itself will be ready for the changes. Changes of public attitudes, negative prejudices and ignorance towards the marginalized group of people will be both, “de facto” and “de jure” possible.

Legalization is also an essential precondition to make street less dangerous for the female prostitutes as they have limited access to the police. If they live in the country where all forms of prostitution are prohibited and penalized, or live in the country where prostitution is legal but street prostitution is unregulated, (Britain) they could not seek the legal help. They have the fear of police and they have to choose either penalty for soliciting, or reporting to the police about the incident. In most cases they do not report to the police as they are afraid to lose their only source for the money. In this case the factor “vulnerability” plays also an important role.

Taking into the account that legalization of this special form of prostitution, operating in the street, stipulates other mechanisms of protection, I think that it is necessary to conduct the research, both qualitative and quantitative and compare the levels of victimization of legally operated female street prostitutes with illegally operated street sex workers. As I have examined a large amount of theoretical literature, as well as, studies throughout the world, there is not exists the detailed study about these rates – is the violent victimization equally spread

among the community of regulated female street prostitutes and among the community of unregulated ones.

If we have imagine that female street prostitution is legal and regulated, the next step in protecting this highly victimized group of women could be divided into several phases:

- ✓ Changes of public perceptions with the focus on the society;
- ✓ Changes of perceptions and prejudices with the focus on the police;
- ✓ Changes of strongly established stigmas with the focus on the female street prostitutes.

It should be mentioned that change of the attitudes on a societal, structural and individual level is the matter of time. This process due to its long-term nature requires time and great efforts – awareness rising programs, centers for psychological and legal help not only for the victims of violence, but also for those prostitutes who are safely operating in the streets.

Time is essential to make society overcome stereotypes which were accumulated during the centuries. But when I was discussing the changes of female street prostitutes themselves, I meant that reporting about the violent incidents should be established within the practice. The numbers of reporting should be adequate to the committed crimes against female street prostitutes. Only in this case police will pay respectively adequate attention to the facts of violence. Only in this case statistical data will be more than authentic. Only in this case there will be at first insignificant but stimulant changes within the society. Though the process of change is very slow and with no guarantee of the success. (Fattah, 2003:780)

In my point of view other mechanisms could be also used to protect female street prostitutes from the high level of violent victimization and this mechanism represents the change regarding the legislation – establishing the special norms in the criminal code with the focus on the special protection of those groups of people who are vulnerable, marginalized and with high probability of being victimized. But it should be taken into consideration that this effect would carry more symbolic meaning than real. It will be seen as a message that could be effective only with the long run effect.

Apart from this, special protection could be provided in the form of security services, for example, as it is in the legal brothels or strip bars, when women have the ability to get rid of unwanted clients, partners or potential threats.

All of the discussed ways to protect female street prostitutes are impossible without legalizing street prostitution. And once again I want to state that future researches are needed to use these mechanisms as protection ways for highly victimized female street prostitutes, to turn the highly victimized group of women into women who can be victimized as any of us.

On the other hand prohibiting street prostitution could not be seen as a solution. Due to the fact that this phenomenon has existed during the centuries and, despite the different forms of punishment from simple fines to the death penalties, it still exists and it will exist together with the human beings. Prostitution is social institution which needs to be recognized and only after the recognition is adequate to deal with the various problems which it is accompanied by.

It is not enough to only summarize the forms of violent victimization which street prostitutes face and explore and analyze the causes of their victimization, it is also necessary to reduce these harms and to put on the agenda preventive mechanisms rather than punitive. Street sex workers should be treated as victims and not offenders in the case of violence. They should be treated as group of women who provide customers with the specific services, if the violence does not occur in their lives.

In my subjective point of view, decriminalization of street prostitution and criminalization of customers, leads to the more aggression towards the street work women. Street prostitution itself will move to the underground, will become more invisible and more dangerous for the potential victims.

I think that special areas are the most suitable solutions for the female street prostitutes, the so called “zoning” will put them at more safe level and the mechanisms of the protection will be more effective. The strict control within this area will be the primary goal of the local authorities. Street prostitutes themselves do not have the fear to call the police anymore and the potential offenders will understand that they are going to commit crime not against the marginalized, secluded and immoral women, but against the sex worker.

Once again I want to highlight that future researches have to be carried out and during the whole thesis I am discussing tendencies according to the already conducted researches and theoretical literature. Exceptions exist, but tendencies in the case of my subject of interest have the primary meaning.

Chapter VII. Conclusion

The high level of female street prostitutes’ violent victimization is the problem which exists and no one argues that it exists being aware of the tendencies and statistics within the specific country and culture.

The research questions of my thesis were focused to better understand this problem and to propose the strategy to deal with it:

1. Why are female street prostitutes one of the most victimized groups among crime victims?
2. What are the possible ways to better protect female street prostitutes from the high risk of being victimized?

I have read books dedicated to the “whores”, books dedicated to the “victims” or “survivors”. I have examined articles, researches and statistical findings, I have deeply understood the “prostitution” as a social phenomenon but still I could not say that I have covered all the necessary aspects of this institution. But when it comes to violence, experiences, tendencies, reports, and qualitative studies are more concrete and systematic – female street prostitutes are at high risk of being violently victimized due to:

- ✓ The nature of their profession which is directly linked to their lifestyle.
- ✓ Stigmatization and marginalization from the society and as a result their own stigmatization;

- ✓ Vulnerability which refers to the pathways why they engage in “survival sex” and not in the sex industry itself.

Analyzing the above mentioned causes brought me to the conclusion that all the ways to protect female street prostitutes from the high level of violence and to reduce the harm lead to the concept of legalization.

Legalization is the minimal requirement to develop further strategies of protection and prevention. And due to the fact that while working on the material I have not found any suitable research which demonstrates the difference between legal and illegal female street prostitutes' violent victimization rates, my recommendation is to conduct the future research on this topic.

As for the legalization as an only solution to tackle the high rate of violence, it will serve as a basis to develop and construct all the mechanisms of prevention and protection: change of public perceptions, change of the police attitudes, change of the female street prostitutes inner way of thinking in order to: report about the incidents, do not tolerate the violence towards sex workers, to ban the negligence from the authorities and to develop other short-term strategies with more focus on the prevention and harm-reducing.

Female street prostitutes are workers of special kind, they are not victims by nature; they are not offenders by nature too. They are women who earn the money in a different way and they deserve to be treated as all the other women who work and live not on the margins of the society but in it.

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