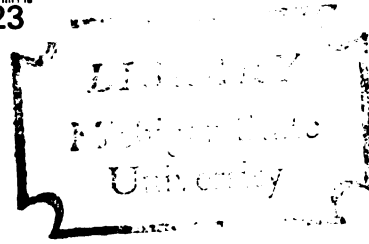




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ABSTRACT

LICENSED PROSTITUTES IN TEHRAN

By

Lili Shashaani

This thesis is concerned with the problem of prostitution in Tehran, the capital city of Iran. The purpose of this study has been to provide an overview of the significant objective and subjective factors associated with prostitution in Tehran. The definition of prostitution used in this paper is as follows: a prostitute is a woman who frequently offers her body indiscriminately to other persons, mostly of the opposite sex, to earn money.

Prostitution is tolerated in Iran as a necessary evil. One can distinguish between four types of prostitutes, namely, licensed prostitutes, street walkers, call girls, and prostitutes in the slums. The criteria normally used to distinguish these categories are residence and licensure. Our study is confined to licensed prostitutes who live in "Ghaleah".

The methodology employed in this study is the survey method. Since it was impossible to interview all prostitutes of "Ghaleah", a random sample of two hundred was selected. In order to explore social background variables, forty-four questions were constructed and used in the interviews. The data was collected and then analyzed using statistical methods of comparison.

Data from the total sample indicated that most of the prostitutes are from the lowest social strata in Iranian society. They are mostly illiterate and unskilled workers. A majority of them are migrants who came from broken families. Most of them were previously married, but none of them were married at the time of the study. These prostitutes had joined the profession at an early age. None were satisfied with their profession. They reported that they were forced to remain in the profession because they needed money and a shelter. Predominantly, they wanted to leave what they viewed as an undesirable job and find alternative ways to survive.

It was concluded that licensed prostitutes in Tehran are primarily products of poverty, discrimination and limited opportunities, all of which are related to the social stratification system of Iranian society. Until these aspects of Iranian society are considerably reduced, the problem of prostitution in Iran will persist.

LICENSED PROSTITUTES IN TEHRAN

By

Lili Shashaani

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Problem Setting and Relevance of the Study

In the sociological literature we find few studies of prostitution. Most of the literature deals with the question of why women become prostitutes - a rather normative approach.

In reviewing studies of prostitution, one finds four major perspectives presented on prostitution: sociological, criminological, psychological, and historical points of view. The data in these diverse studies have predominantly been collected through observing "night clubs", by interviewing prostitutes in a "public house" or arrested prostitutes.

Most of the literature on prostitution emphasizes the psychological perspective. In fact, the central focus in this approach has been on the prostitute as an individual rather than on viewing prostitution as a socially produced phenomenon. Glover, a representative of the psychological approach, points out:

Although the prostitute has apparently broken away from the family at an unusually early age, this sometimes ostentatious and rebellious independence is only skin-deep. Under the surface there exists a strong "fixation" as it is called, to the Oedipus phase.¹

¹Edward Glover, The Abnormality of Prostitution, (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1943), pp. 247-273.

The criminological approach to prostitution is different from the sociological approach and this difference has brought about some arguments between sociologists and criminologists. The central critical issue in this argument is whether or not prostitution can be considered a form of criminal behavior thereby falling under penal law, or a product of the social system to be studied as a "social problem" in the context of social science. As far as criminal behavior is concerned, prostitution in itself is not always regarded as a crime. It becomes a crime when this action is associated with other forms of violation such as drug addiction, drunkenness, and gambling.² As Walter Reckless points out, "Behavior becomes criminal when it transgresses legal norms and is brought forward for official action."³ Furthermore, Reckless indicates that, "the prostitutes themselves frequently commit violations other than prostitution per se."⁴ The word "prostitution" is not included in the penal law of most countries, but, the police are allowed to define a prostitute as a vagrant and penalize her under such a legal statute.⁵ In short, criminologists adopt a conservative stance when they consider prostitution as an offense to the social order - as a crime -, whereas sociologists are mostly concerned with the social mechanisms producing prostitution.

²Walter C. Reckless, American Society of Criminology, (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1955), p. 269.

³Ibid., p. 1.

⁴Ibid., p. 269.

⁵Ibid., p. 267.

The sociological perspective on prostitution, by contrast, focuses on how prostitution is socially perceived in a given cultural setting. The sociological approach asks how prostitution as a social phenomenon differs from one culture to another or, in fact, how it is perceived even by different social groups within the same culture. Another concern of sociologists has been to explore how prostitution affects various organizations in society. In short, then, the sociological perspective sees prostitution as a reflection of society in general rather than looking at the personal characteristics of prostitutes to explain the existence of prostitution.

Some sociologists adopt a functionalist approach to prostitution: that is, prostitution is seen as having an important role or "function" in society. Prostitution, in this view, is seen as a universal phenomenon and this fact is itself presented as evidence that prostitution is a necessary element in every society.

A different perspective to social problems has been presented by Marx, who distinguished between the substructure and superstructure of a society. His central thesis is that the mode of production determines the nature of the superstructure in a society, i.e., the nature of the family, political institution, forms of art, philosophy and theology. A Marxist approach sees social problems like "prostitution" rooted in the context of the economic structure. In this way, prostitution becomes a product of the infrastructure: that is, the

mode of production. According to this view, poverty, unemployment and unequal distribution of national income are the results of the dynamics of a capitalist society, and are conditions which contribute to the existence of prostitution.

The present study is about licensed prostitutes in Tehran, the capital city of Iran. Iran's socio-economic structure is changing as a result of industrial development in large cities. These urban areas are presently absorbing a large volume of the surplus labor population from the rural areas and smaller cities. This migration pattern causes a change in the culture and social organization of the bigger cities. Prostitution is, as we will document in this study, mostly a product of social stratification.

The main concern of this study is to discover subjective and objective factors associated with prostitution in Tehran. Objective factors include characteristics which the prostitutes themselves have no control over, such as poverty, discrimination, illiteracy, broken family life, and the like. From a subjective point of view the concern is with how the prostitutes respond to or manage their day-to-day life. This will include a close examination of how they see their childhood, how they see their present family life, their opportunities or perceived life chances, and their satisfaction with the profession.

Definition of Prostitution

A review of the literature on prostitution provides us with a range of definitions of this behavior. We will present

the definitions of psychologists, criminologists, and sociologists and then we will analyze some of the common elements in these definitions. In general, we find that the Oxford English Dictionary defines prostitution as "The offering of the body to indiscriminate lewdness for hire".

Ellis, a psychologist, suggests the following definition: "A prostitute is a person who makes it a profession to gratify lust of various persons of the opposite or same sex".⁶ On the other hand, Bogner, a noted criminologist, defines prostitution as follows: "The act of prostitution is intrinsically equal to that of a man or woman who contracts a marriage for economic reasons".⁷ Finally, Henriques offers this definition: "Prostitution consists of any sexual acts including those which do not actually involve copulation habitually performed by individuals with other individuals of their own or the opposite sex for a consideration which is non-sexual".⁸ In analyzing these definitions above, one realizes that the definitions have some elements in common. For example, the most frequent features are "lewdness", "gratification" and "sexual act".

The definitions in the sociological literature emphasize the transactional element in prostitution. For example, Gebhard's definition of female prostitution is: "A female prostitute is a person who for immediate cash payment will

⁶Havelock Ellis, Studies in the Psychology of Sex, (New York: Random House, vol. vi, 1913), pp. 225-226.

⁷W. A. Bogner, Criminality and Economic Condition, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1916), p. 19.

⁸Fernando Henriques, Prostitution and Society, (London: Macgibbon, vol. 1, 1962), pp. 17-18.

engage in sexual activity with any person (usually male) known or unknown to her, who meets her minimal requirements as to age, sobriety, cleanliness, race and health."⁹

Another scholar in the field of deviance, Gagnon points out that: "The prostitute is indulged in through the exchange of money, and in this exchange the client allows himself all of the sexual freedom that he represses when in contact with women in whom he has invested emotional meaning."¹⁰ As we can see in this excerpt, Gagnon's notion of prostitution refers to an economic transaction. He sees the prostitute as a commodity, an object for sale, rather than the prostitute as a social actor. Therefore, any request that the buyer (the client) makes is perceived as legitimate.

An alternative interpretation of prostitution has been put forward by Mancini: "Prostitution is the act of women repeatedly and constantly practicing the sexual relationship with anybody on demand, without choosing or refusing any partner, for gain, freely and without force, her principal object being profit and not pleasure."¹¹

Finally, May in his definition of prostitution (in the Encyclopedia of Social Science, vol. 12, 1933, pp. 553-559) captures the dimensions of prostitution that the definitions

⁹P. Gebhard, Medical Aspects of Human Sexuality, (New York: Hospital Science Publications, 1969), p. 29.

¹⁰J. Gagnon, Sexual Deviance, (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 105.

¹¹J. Mancini, Translated by D. G. Thomas, Prostitutes and Their Parasites, Paris: Universities de France, 1962), p. 14.

above have listed. May emphasizes three basic elements of prostitution which make it a distinct institution in society. These elements are: promiscuity, payment, and emotional indifference. In the words of Kingsley Davis, summarizing the same elements in his definition: "The prostitute's affront is that she trades promiscuously. She takes money and other valuables for each act of intercourse. She is indifferent not only to sexual pleasure, but also to the partner. Her selling and her indifference, therefore, reflect a pure commercialization of the sexual relation."¹²

The definitions of prostitution above represent various perspectives. Psychologists, economists and sociologists have interpreted prostitution using different conceptual frameworks. Ellis talks about prostitution from a bio-psychic perspective, since he emphasizes the gratification aspect of those who drift into the profession without considering economic factors. Bogner points out that even marriage contracts entered for economic reasons can be considered a form of prostitution. Taken to its logical extreme, one may conclude that a large number of women can be regarded as prostitutes using the two definitions above. Henriques regards prostitution as any sexual act that is practiced for a nonsexual consideration with the opposite sex. This definition emphasizes again the economic aspect of prostitution. Gebhard's definition of female prostitution is more comprehensive. It includes two

¹²Kingsley Davis, "The Sociology of Prostitution," American Sociological Review, vol. 11 (No. 5, 1937), p. 360.

dimensions of prostitution, economic factors and indiscriminability. Gagnon's notion of prostitutes, which emphasizes the transactional aspects of human relations, also explains prostitution from the economic dimension.

Among all the definitions of prostitution it seems that Mancini and Kingsley Davis have offered the most comprehensive definition of prostitution. They suggest that prostitution not only involves the earning of money but also the repeated and constant performance of the behavior and the lack of pleasure prostitutes feel while engaged in that activity.

The definition of prostitution which will be used in this paper most closely focuses on May's and Kingsley Davis' conceptualization of the phenomenon. In other words, we will define a prostitute as a woman who frequently offers her body indiscriminately to other persons, mostly of the opposite sex, to earn money.

A Comparative Perspective on Prostitution

Throughout the history of mankind prostitution has existed but it has varied in its nature. In primitive societies a woman was an object for trade; who was bought, sold and exchanged. This slave-like status hardly gave her a possibility for making any contracts for the economic transaction in her "service".

Among the Greeks, prostitution was associated with religious life. As Henriques notes: "Among the ancient Greeks, copulation itself was at times an act of worship. But it is

in those societies where prostitution becomes an essential part of the worship of the gods that the most powerful expression of the union of sexuality and religion is to be found."¹³

The Babylonians had institutionalized prostitution for all country girls. Every young woman had to sacrifice her virginity for Venus. The custom was that she would reside in the temple of Venus and offer herself for sexual intercourse with the first man who so wanted in order to satisfy the gods.¹⁴

In Indian society, the prostitutes were more respected because the girls sacrificed their virginity to the temple and were engaged in temple prostitution. The custom of sacrificing virginity to the temple and acting as a prostitute for worship was prohibited by Constantine after he had destroyed the temple of Heliopolis. There was a custom among the Cyprians in ancient times in which they sent their daughters as prostitutes in order to save money for their dowry. This custom was found in the Mediterranean area during the Christian times, in Egypt in the classical period, among the Japanese in the nineteenth century, and it still exists in some parts of Africa.¹⁵

Among the Eskimos, on the other hand, prostitution has reflected hospitality. It was customary to offer the women to passing guests, and for this service, the males acquired some advantage for the family or the clan.

¹³Henriques, Prostitution and Society, p. 21.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 23.

The form of prostitution changed gradually from being a hospitable (among Eskimos) and religious practice (in Greece and India) to institutionalized and legal prostitution. Prostitutes worked for themselves and the priests could no longer exploit them. In this way prostitution became a business. Even from the ancient times there were two systems (in Greece and Egypt) which had opposite concerns about prostitution and they continue into the present. One system prohibits prostitution, the other one tolerates it and attempts to limit it.

In Greece, Solon was the first person who controlled prostitution. There were three types of prostitutes in Greece: The low grade prostitutes (mostly slaves), entertainers, and hetaerae. As Mancini points out: "There were three categories of prostitutes in Greece in ancient times. the hetaerae for the pleasures of the mind, prostitutes for the satisfaction of senses and between them the flute player and dancing girls to delight the eye and ear."¹⁶

In Rome, before the Empire, the society was full of idle people. Sexual intercourse was free, although there were two groups of women; the women who were freely promiscuous, and the slaves who did not have any rights (even regarding where they lived) and who were badly treated by their pimps and clients. During the Roman Empire there was no restriction on prostitution. In fact until the fifteenth century there was no control or prohibition on prostitution in Roman society.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 18.

The first great step was taken by the enactment of the Justinian laws. This law not only prohibited prostitutes, but also pimps, keepers and procuresses. Most of these prostitutes were involuntary victims; they fell into the hands of pimps and were exploited by them. The essential causes of prostitution, poverty and procuring, were present then as they are now.

During the Christian times, sexual intercourse outside of marriage became forbidden. The prostitute now became punishable under a religious code. During the Middle Ages, this view of prostitution was reinforced. However, the number of prostitutes increased because, during this time, any woman who wanted to become free of serfdom drifted into prostitution. There was strong social control of prostitution and we find not only that the prostitute was punished but many times her family was punished as well. Although there were prohibitions and strict control regarding prostitutes, prostitution still existed because of poverty.

Charlemagne prohibited prostitution in an ordinance, and this is the first document in the history of French law on the subject. The law was hard on the woman, who was whipped in the public square.

Nevertheless, Louis XIII felt that prostitution was necessary for the peace of the family, so he reopened the brothels in Paris in 1254. Across the English Channel, Henry II ordered the establishment of a brothel in London in 1161. Henry IV later (1469) prohibited prostitution and ordered prostitutes

to be punished as well as their pimps (by lashes for the first offense, and hanging for the second). Yet there were some rulers, like Joan I, Queen of Sicilies, who administered brothels as a source of state revenue.

During the sixteenth century, increasing Protestantism in Europe ended the dominance of the church in the political, social and economic sphere, in many countries. The change in society from a predominantly feudal, agricultural society to a more urbanized and industrial one also brought about changes in the way of life. As a response to the transformation of society, affecting values, norms, family life and the role of religion, stricter laws were enacted, notably toward prostitution.

A center for reform was established in Paris, "The court at Versailles attracted many disreputable people who brought women for the soldiers in the nearby camps. Louis XIV, who wanted to keep his troops fit, took terrible measure; anybody who protected prostitutes had his nose and ears cut off . . . The woman was whipped and exhibited on a wooden horse."¹⁷

The strict legislation against prostitution in France evoked the anger of some people, in 1770, against the crudeness and vocabulary of the police and the administration. After the revolution in France, new laws were enacted for prostitution. According to the law of July 19, 1781, "A message from

¹⁷Ibid., p. 26.

the Directory to the Council of the Five Hundred on the 17th of Nivose in the fourth year of the Republic shows clearly that the situation needed clarification. The message suggested that notoriety and recidivism should be the test of prostitution."¹⁸ As a result of the French revolution, human rights were not only recognized socially but legally as well. Prostitution became publicly recognized as an institution in society and public measures were initiated to control and regulate it.¹⁹

Today, although the social mores are more flexible, prostitution is still perceived as a social problem. Most societies have some kind of legislation prohibiting prostitution. However, the extent of prostitution has hardly declined and the reason is not so much biological as it is social. Modern society is witnessing its members become increasingly automized from meaningful contacts with other people, poverty and crime are increasing as the products of unequal growth in a capitalist society, and the family is changing its character and function. Hence, prostitution is a structurally produced phenomenon.

Thesis Outline

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter is confined to the problem setting and the objectives of this study. Chapter Two is composed of two sections: the first will deal with the structure of Iran and the second will present the different types of prostitutes in Iran. An emphasis is placed on licensed prostitutes from whom we selected our sample. Chapter Three will discuss the methods used in this

¹⁹Ibid., p. 29.

study and the variables selected for examination. Chapter Four presents an analysis of the data. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the socio-economic background of licensed prostitutes and their parents, the prostitutes' relationships with their parents, their perceived life chances, and their satisfaction with their occupation. The last chapter is devoted to a summary and conclusions.

CHAPTER II

PART 1: STRUCTURE OF IRAN

This chapter is composed of two sections. The first section is devoted to a brief description of the structure of Iran including its history and demographic characteristics, socio-economic structure, family and sexual relationships. In this part we compare the rural and urban socio-economic aspects and also explain the changes in the social structure of Iran after land reform. The second section will discuss the different types of prostitutes in Iran, with an emphasis on licensed prostitutes who live in "Ghaleah".

Geographic and Demographic Characteristics

Iran with an area of 636,000 square miles is situated in Southwestern Asia between the Caspian Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Gulf of Oman. It borders Russia to the North, Iraq and Turkey to the West, and Afghanistan and Pakistan to the East. Differences in altitude cause great climatic variation, i.e., the temperature varies from cold in the highlands to extreme heat in the lowlands. Mountains border all sides of Iran with the exception of its Southeastern corner.

The population of Iran has reached 34 million according to the last census held in November 1976. The rate of population growth in Iran is one of the highest in the world, i.e., 3 percent per year. The population density is 20 persons

per square kilometer. Most of the population is concentrated in the Northern part of Iran where agricultural and industrial activities are concentrated. Migration from rural areas and small cities flows toward the Northern part and to Tehran (the capital city), in particular. This movement has accelerated during the last five years. The proportion of rural residents has declined from 63 percent in 1966 to 52 percent in 1976. The rate of the population growth in Tehran is 6 percent per year, one of the highest rates in the world. The above figures indicate a large volume of migration in Iran from rural to urban areas.

Brief History of Iran

Iran is one of the oldest nations in the world. It has a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system of government. The history of Iran dates back to 1000 B.C. when a large group of people migrated from the Northern mountain of "Gaf-ghaz" and settled in the central plain of Iran. They established the first civilization of the Persian Empire. Since then, various political systems have come to power in Persia (Iran). During the age of the Persian Empire, the social class system consisted of aristocrats, priests, soldiers, peasants, and slaves. This social system persisted until the country was exposed to several invasions which changed the socio-cultural structure drastically. Alexander the Great, the Arabs, the Mongols, and the Turks invaded the country over the centuries and these invasions changed the structure of the society. The

Iranian culture is, therefore, the product of different cultures that penetrated the society during its long history.

Socio-Economic Structure

The economic system of the country has been mostly agrarian and feudal. Most of the population has resided in the rural areas and been peasants. They were exploited by landowners and deprived of elementary human rights. Feudal lords had great influence on the political structure which shaped the economic, cultural, religious aspects of the society. That system continued until 1962, when land reform was initiated. It is important to point out that the social hierarchy in Iran, as in most agrarian societies, reflects the kind of access that different groups had to land. Within these groups, individual status determined the amount and quality of land commanded. Many complex factors influenced the pattern of land ownership and land use; the political system, the structure of the economy, the social system, the legal system, the demographic situation, and the agricultural system. Thus, the network of social relationships arose from the above social institutions.

When the idea of land reform came about, it was not only a physical distribution of land, but it also established a new socio-economic structure which totally changed the society. Most of the property of land holders has been purchased by the government and distributed among the peasants. Some village cooperatives were established to help the peasants. After the

land reform, village farmers owned the land, but they lost services which their landlords had traditionally provided, such as agricultural means (seeds, water, agricultural equipment), and consequently economic support. Thus, most of the farmers left the rural area for the towns and cities, where they hoped to find work and achieve a higher standard of living. Rapid industrialization and urbanization further stimulated the peasants to leave rural areas, especially those who were displaced by land reform. Lack of training and education meant that many could not find permanent jobs.

While land reform came about, Iranian society was growing rapidly toward industrialization. The industrial sector in different parts of Iran and in Tehran in particular, began to improve. A melting steel factory established Isfahan, one of the large cities of Iran, as the greatest industrial center. In Tehran, several automobile factories grew, and in the Southern part of Iran oil refineries began to develop. Other parts of the country improved as well. This industrial sector had a great demand for a labor force, and a large proportion of the Iranian population which was isolated in rural areas was ready to join the industrial labor force. Tehran's population more than doubled from 1966 to 1976, seven million people were added to the urban population, whereas the rural population increased by only two million people (1976 census). The central province, including Tehran and a few small cities, now has 20.6 percent of the total population.

Migrants to cities came largely from the Southern part of the country to Tehran where slums have emerged. The pattern of settlement in urban areas follows regional criteria: migrants from specific areas tend to reside in the same locations where they can find friends and relatives.

As a result of the growth in the gross national product due to increasing oil production, other economic activity in the society began to develop, and as a consequence, economic activities increased dramatically.

Migrants who were able to get jobs adapted more easily to the urban life style and moved rapidly up the social ladder and joined the urban middle class. The unskilled migrants were less likely to find work and were concentrated in slums and increased the number of poor people in the cities. During the last five years the middle class has become richer at the expense of the lower class. The emerging income differences in urban areas increased the gap between classes. This social differentiation is reflected in the pattern of urban differentiation of major cities.

The upper class occupies zones in the city which enjoy a better condition, climate, and other public and social facilities, whereas the lower class districts and working class areas are completely separated from this "Gold Coast." In short, there are clear cut class differences between the upper, middle, and lower classes in Iran.

Most of the power, wealth, prestige and advanced education have been concentrated within the upper class or elite. The upper class comprises the Shah and his family, high government

officials, wealthy industrialists, top religious and military leaders and large landholders. Since 1970 this group is estimated to be one percent of the total population.

The middle class, increasing rapidly after the land reform, is divided into an upper and lower middle class. The upper middle class consists of professionals, leaders of bazaars, and less wealthy industrialists. The middle class is well educated but does not have as much power and wealth as the upper class. The lower middle class is comprised of the craftsmen, shopkeepers, and low level government employees. They usually take other part time work to supplement their income.

The lowest social stratum in the urban centers is composed of factory workers, servants, and migrant laborers. The latter belong to the "agricultural reserve army" who were displaced by mechanization in agriculture and were attracted to the industrial sector. The lower class has retained a traditional life style in the cities. At the bottom of the stratification scheme is the "lumpen proletariat," prostitutes and beggars.²⁰

Family

Family, by definition, consists of a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood or adoption. It provides security, identity and social orientation for its members and its functions are social, economic and religious. The family is an important basic unit in the Iranian society.

²⁰Harvey H. Smith, Area Handbook For Iran, (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 127.

In general the structure of the family and the pattern of marriage in the rural areas of Iran is dramatically different from that of the urban areas. The type of family one finds in the rural areas is mostly the extended-patriarchal family. It consists of a man, who is the head of the family, his wife (or wives), his unmarried children and sometimes his married sons with their wives and children. When the sons are married, it is traditional in the rural areas for them to remain in their parents' household but the daughters are expected to leave the parents' household and live with their husbands' family. The patriarchal family is authoritarian; absolute power and control is in the hands of the father. His wife and his children are subordinate to his authority. He makes all decisions in the family and only rarely does his wife influence him. The sex roles of men and women can clearly be distinguished from each other in the rural life style. The male role is related to activities outside the home. If a husband does help his wife in the home, he will be despised by others. A village woman is not only considered a housewife, but she does work together with the men on the farm, for example, milking and making dairy products. In other words, she has a very important role in the family's economy.

Rural families have many children, because the children can work and help the family budget. Thus children, especially sons, are greatly desired and valued in a rural family.

In contrast, the nuclear family has become more prevalent in the urban areas, especially among the upper and middle

classes. This type of family consists of a father, mother, and unmarried children. The children are independent of their parents after marriage. There is a notion of equality of the husband and the wife. Decisions are made by the husband, his wife and sometimes with the participation of their older children. Some of the women have part time jobs outside of the home and contribute to the support of the family. The father and the mother share in rearing the children, but in the earlier ages the mother has more responsibility for the children.

Marriage and family are closely related to each other in Iran. "Family as an organization is a consequence of marriage, and therefore the patterns of marriage determined several organizational and functional characteristics of the family. Similarly, the pattern of marriage of an individual is determined to a great extent, by the structural and functional characteristics of the family in which he is born."²¹ Thus the pattern of marriage is different in the urban and rural areas. In general, marriage tends to be contracted among persons of similar social background. The degree of freedom in selecting the marriage partner is determined by customs and economic position. In rural areas and among the lower classes, marriages are arranged by families and traditionally the bride and groom are not supposed to meet before the marriage. In urban areas, marriage offers men and women greater freedom and influence in the selection of their spouses.

²¹Jeffrey K. Hadden, Marriage and the Family, (Itasca: Illinois, Inc., 1969), p. 81

Marriage in all social classes entails some kind of material transaction between the families of the bride or groom. The transaction may take the form of a dowry (e.g., some house appliance is made by the bride's family for young partner) or shirbaha, a practice in rural areas. The purpose of this shirbaha paid by the family of the groom, is to compensate the bride's family for the losses of the bride's service.

In Iran, women usually marry at an earlier age than men. Article 1041 of the Iranian Civil Law specifies a minimum age at marriage of 15 for females and 18 for males. If a girl wishes to legally marry before this age, she must have the permission of her parents as well as be examined by a court doctor to establish whether she has reached the age of puberty.²² In spite of this law, one can find in rural areas a lot of married women, eleven or twelve years old. The marriage rate is higher in rural than urban areas, because urbanities tend to delay this decision.

Polygamy is regulated by tradition as well as Islamic law, but the Family Protection Law of 1968, forbids a husband to choose a second wife unless his first wife permits. Until the passing of the Family Protection Law, it was, in almost all cases, a man's prerogative to initiate divorce. He could even divorce his wife in absentia. After the passage of this law,

²²Jacqueline R. Toubia, *Marriage and Family in Iran*, (Tehran: Institute for Social Studies and Research, 1972), p. 12.

women were given the right to initiate divorce. Moreover, all cases of divorce were henceforth to be mediated by the court.²³

The rural-urban differences in family structure and the pattern of marriage is related to influences of industrialization and urbanization.

Sexual Relations

Premarital sexual relationships are restricted for both sexes, especially for girls in Iran. Girls are expected to preserve their virginity until marriage. Virginity at marriage has an important value, because if a bride was not a virgin the marriage could be terminated. If a girl becomes pregnant before marriage she must leave her home. In the rural areas the expectations are much more severe than in the urban society because of strong traditional values and customs related to virginity in the rural society. A girl who loses her chastity easily drifts into prostitution because of normative sanctions exhibited in her community.²⁴

Iranian men have more sexual freedom than women. They seek sexual relations from the age of 14 or 15. A man can always have sexual intercourse with a prostitute or by deceiving girls and inducing them to make love.

As we have described above, the family and the sex roles in the Iranian society are quite traditional in nature. The

²³Smith, Area Handbook for Iran, p. 138.

²⁴Herbert H. Vreeland, Iran, (New Haven: Human Relation Area Files, 1957), p. 260.

rigid norms of female behavior, restricting the women in their choices in life, leaves little flexibility for "deviance" caused by structural changes in the Iranian society. Existing migration patterns by the rural surplus population to cities have not seen equivalent changes in the nature of sex roles in the urban society. For many lower class women, prostitution is one of the only routes they can resort to in order to independently earn an income.

Prostitution is tolerated in Iran as a necessary evil, and in most cities one can find special districts where prostitutes offer their services. One can distinguish between four types of prostitutes--the licensed prostitutes, street walkers, call girls, and prostitutes in the slums--using the criteria of residence and licensure.

PART 2: TYPES OF PROSTITUTES IN IRAN

"Ghaleah" and its Prostitutes

"Ghaleah" (135,000 square kilometers) is located in the Southwestern part of Tehran. It is almost a city in the heart of Tehran. It is not only physically separated from the rest of Tehran, but also in terms of values, customs, and culture.

In 1920, the prostitutes who had been located in other places were removed by the government to this place which later became called "Ghaleah". Since then, this part of the city has become a place for prostitutes to conduct their business. In 1952, "Ghaleah" was fenced in by the police, and the police

authorities were assigned the task of collecting all prostitutes, scattered throughout the city, and moving them to the "Ghaleah".²⁵

"Ghaleah" has two streets, and thirty alleys which connect the two streets to one another. The streets and alleys are dirty and rough and the prostitutes are housed in 417 old, unkept and rundown buildings. Each house has on the average of seven rooms. The inhabitants of "Ghaleah" included 1395 prostitutes, 210 supervisors, and 347 custodials. The inhabitants of "Ghaleah" have their own groceries, their own tailors, and their own varieties of shopping places. There are two theaters, nine tailor shops, two restaurants, twelve ~~bar~~^bber shops, eight small grocery stores and sixteen appliance stores which usually sell used appliances. Each prostitute occupies a private room, furnished according to her budget. Most of the prostitutes live permanently in "Ghaleah" and just a few of them have another place for sleeping. The supervisors were formerly prostitutes and work in "Ghaleah" as part of the prostitute population. They supervise the prostitutes and attain around 50 percent of the prostitutes' income, as tax, rent and ~~loan~~^{an} interest. The supervisors are the middle women between prostitutes and clients. When the client enters the houses, he confronts the supervisors who offer him a ticket while selecting one of the prostitutes. The fee of prostitutes is related to her age, sobriety, and appearance. The

²⁵Satareh Farmanfrmaeian, Prostitution, (Tehran: Tehran School of Social Work, 1970), p. 3.

custodians who live in "Ghaleah" are responsible for cleaning and cooking in the house. Usually every four or five prostitutes have a pimp. The pimps, who are males, protect prostitutes from clients' threats. The role of the pimp is not confined to protection, for he also tries to find more customers for prostitutes. Unwanted children by prostitutes are kept in a child-care center outside of "Ghaleah", and social workers and volunteer groups care for the children. Licensed prostitutes have to carry a health card, which is renewed every three months by doctors who check for venereal disease.

Street Walkers

This group of prostitutes practice illegally and find their clients on the streets. They dress in very eye-catching clothing and colorful make-up so that clients can easily recognize them. The client frequently has a car and he invites them inside his car. After they agree about the price, they go to a place that the client suggests. Prostitutes must, however, be careful about their clients, because some of them may cheat and not pay them, and others may be policemen arresting them.

The Call Girls

This type of prostitute practices illegally in her own home. Clients cannot directly get in touch with them. The pimp arranges for the prostitute and her client to meet. This group of prostitutes is able to make more money than other prostitutes. They dress in expensive clothing and live in the most expensive residential section of Tehran city, where most of the upper class lives. They charge high fees for their services.

Prostitution in the Slums

Among poor people who live in slums, in the Southern part of Tehran, one can find some illegal prostitutes. This group of prostitutes usually has the poorest clients and low prices for their practice. The districts where they live have very poor sanitary conditions. Sometimes residents in this area rent their rooms to street walkers to conduct their trade.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodological and technical aspects of this study before presenting and discussing the results. The nature of the sample and related variables are discussed in this chapter.

The present study is concerned with the socio-economic aspects and professional life of licensed prostitutes in Tehran. As was mentioned earlier, the prostitutes in Tehran can be classified into four categories; prostitutes of "Ghaleah," call girls, street walkers, and prostitutes of the slums. Only licensed prostitutes situated in "Ghaleah," the official district allocated to the prostitutes, were included in this study.

Research on prostitution in Tehran seems more difficult than other kinds of studies. An examination of an illegal profession like prostitution provides several methodological problems in terms of data collection which might affect the degree of reliability of the results. Yet a study of prostitution in an official place like "Ghaleah" in Tehran represents a fairly representative sample of licensed prostitutes because the prostitutes are aggregated here from most parts of the country. Our study of prostitution in Tehran has been conducted for the purpose of describing the nature of this form of

prostitution in this city. The unit of the analysis is the prostitutes who are practicing in "Ghaleah".

Procedure of Study

An examination of the nature of prostitution has long been neglected in the social research in Iran. The only scientific research that has been done so far is, "The Study of Prostitution in Tehran", conducted by the Tehran School of Social Work in 1970.²⁶ This study is a comprehensive study which obtained information about the socio-economic situation of prostitutes in Tehran. The findings of this study were presented as numerical tables or a material framework without utilizing any sociological concepts which might have been useful in understanding prostitution as a social phenomenon. The neglected concerns in this study encouraged me to go beyond the statistical representation of the problem of prostitution and to try to give a sociological explanation of this social problem. An expansion of the study required a review of the literature concerning prostitution and collection of new data on prostitutes in "Ghaleah".

The following data was collected in order to describe the socio-economic situation of the prostitutes:

- I. Individual Status
 - A. Age
 - B. Place of birth
 - C. Occupation (before joining the profession)
- II. Parents' Status
 - A. Parents' educational status
 - B. Parents' occupational status
 - C. Parents' income
- III. Size of Family

- IV. Family Atmosphere
 - A. Parents' relationship
 - B. Family members' relationship
- V. Family Build-up
 - A. Broken family
 - B. Unbroken family
- VI. Marital Status of Respondents
- VII. Husbands' Status
- VIII. Professional Life
 - A. Cause of joining the profession
 - B. Period of joining the profession
 - C. Economic status of respondents
 - D. Life expenditures
 - E. Prostitutes' aspirations for future
 - F. Prostitutes' evaluation of their present job
 - G. Respondents' advice

In order to explore these social background factors a questionnaire of forty-four questions was constructed and used in interviews. The collected data were tabulated and compared.

Sampling Procedure

The population in "Ghaleah" was made up of 1399 prostitutes during the Summer of 1976. Since it was not possible to interview all prostitutes, I selected a sample size of 200. In order to get a random sample, I drew the sample from a list of all the resident prostitutes and selected 200 at random. The process was a systematic random selection; every seventh prostitute on the list was singled out as a subject in the survey. The questionnaires were filled out through door-to-door interview. Two students and one faculty member of Law and Political Science of Tehran University assisted me in the interviewing from July 30 to August 30, 1976.

Limitation of Study

There is, of course, a limitation in terms of generalization of this study. All prostitutes under study were selected from the "Ghaleah". The prostitutes who lived in "Ghaleah" are the only group of licensed prostitutes. In general, our sample is selected from the licensed prostitutes who live in the "Ghaleah" which is located in Tehran. Therefore, the results of this research cannot be attributed to other prostitution groups in Tehran, or all prostitutes in Iran.

CHAPTER IV

THE BACKGROUND DATA

In this chapter a number of questions related to the background of prostitutes are addressed and discussed. The background of prostitutes, their parents, and their professional lives are examined. An emphasis is placed on the socio-economic background of prostitutes and their parents, the prostitutes' relationship with their parents, their opportunities of life chance, and their satisfaction with the profession.

Age of Respondent

Table 1 demonstrates the age structure of the group under study. The age of the respondents ranges from 15 to 55. More than 50 percent of the respondents are 20 to 30 years old, and 40 percent fall between 30 and 44. Only 3.5 percent are 45 years and over. The median age of the sample is 25 years, which indicates a very young population, a finding which is hardly surprising since youth is a most important factor in this profession. Usually the older women gradually leave the district, since they will not be able to continue to recruit clients. Thus, the age composition in this population is young, and those who are older are not working as prostitutes. Instead, they work as maids, custodians and supervisors.

TABLE 1
AGE DISTRIBUTION

<u>AGE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
15-19	19	9.5
20-24	60	30.0
25-29	44	22.0
30-34	40	20.0
35-39	18	9.0
40-44	12	6.0
45-49	2	1.0
50-54	5	2.5
TOTAL	200	100.0

Educational Background

One important dimension of the social background of the prostitutes is their educational level. As Table 2 illustrates, almost 71 percent of those interviewed reported that they had no education at all. The years of schooling of the remaining 29 percent ranged as follows: 3.5 percent (1-3 years), 15 percent (4-6 years), 8 percent (7-9 years) and only 2.5 percent had (10-12 years) of educational background. The low educational background of the respondents in our sample is related to their economic background, because most of the respondents' parents had not been able to afford to educate their children. As Table 2 shows, the rate of illiteracy is higher among the older respondents: Most of those over 39 years of age are illiterate. In a society like Iran, where

TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE AND EDUCATIONAL STATUS

Age	EDUCATION			Total
	Illiterate	Elementary	Secondary	
15-19	10	5	4	19
20-24	40	11	9	60
25-29	31	9	4	44
30-34	29	7	4	40
35-39	13	5	-	18
40-44	12	-	-	12
45-49	2	-	-	2
50-54	5	-	-	5
TOTAL	142	37	21	200
PERCENT	71.0	18.5	10.0	100.0

more than 64 percent of the population is illiterate, it is not surprising that more than 71 percent of the prostitutes are illiterate. After further investigation of the prostitutes' background, we notice that they also have grown up in a family whose members also were illiterate. (This fact is illustrated in Table 10 and 11 which indicate that 62.5 percent of the respondents' fathers and 85 percent of the mothers were illiterate.)

Those who suffer from illiteracy will find it hard to enter a professional career or a job that would enable them to enter the middle class, a status most migrants to urban areas are aspiring to. Women in developing nations who lack education

but need an income may enter prostitution as one of the relatively few available income sources.

Residential Background

Residential factors such as rural or urban residence or migration are often contributors to prostitution. As Table 3 indicates only 8.5 percent of respondents were from Tehran, and 89.5 percent of the prostitutes were from other rural or urban areas in Iran. Tehran has not only emerged as the largest city in Iran, but it is also a central place for trade, markets and tourism in both national and international terms. Tehran tends to attract migrants from other parts of Iran. As Table 4 demonstrates, 11 percent of the population under study came from larger cities and 80.5 percent from small cities and rural areas.

TABLE 3
PLACE OF BIRTH

<u>Area</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Tehran city	17	8.5
Rural and other cities	179	89.5
Foreign	4	2.0
TOTAL	200	100.0

The only distinguishing factor separating urban from rural in Iran like other societies, is the size of population. Areas including more than 5000 people are considered a city and less

TABLE 4
PLACE OF BIRTH

<u>Area</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Tehran city	17	8.5
Large cities	22	11.0
Small cities and rural	161	80.5
TOTAL	200	100.0

than 5000 is counted as a rural district. This statistical distinction is not considered a criterion for our analysis, since the purpose of the classification of rural and urban areas as separate is the difference in life styles. Among developing countries in general and in Iran in particular, there is a big difference between large cities and small cities, and small cities are very close to the rural areas from the point of view of simplicity and homogeneity. In the rural areas there is a similarity of economic activities, customs, values, common laws, language usage, whereas this uniformity cannot be found in the urban areas. In other words, there is less disparity between individual and group values in rural areas in Iran, where the process of urbanization has not been a long-time phenomenon, and the divergence between rural and small cities is not very wide from the point of above similarities. There are a number of cities with more than 30,000 population that are very similar to the rural areas. From a sociological point of view, population size is not the

only criterion for urban-rural differentiation, particularly in Iran, where there is a wide divergence between large cities and small cities.

Migrants carry with them their norms, values, and customs to the cities. Many fail to adjust to their new environment and consequently fail in the job market, but they also become isolated and part of the anonymity of big cities.

Respondents' Family Situation

From a sociological point of view, the family is an important institution which, however, varies in its form depending upon the socio-economic structure of the society. In Iran, a developing country with rapid industrialization, the family is still a basic unit in society.

In this section our attempt is to explore prostitution in terms of the nature of the family in the Iranian society. The question here is, does type of family background influence the likelihood of becoming a prostitute?

As Table 5 demonstrates, 48 percent of the respondents' fathers and 36 percent of the respondents' mothers were deceased at the time she joined the profession. This means that in most cases the main breadwinner of the family (the father) was not present, a circumstance which contributed to the poverty of the household.

Table 6 indicates the general character of the family life and happiness in the respondents' childhood. 48 percent of the respondents indicated that their parents had a happy or average happy marriage, but 31 percent of them mentioned an unhappy relationship between their parents.

TABLE 5
RESPONDENTS' PARENTS LIVING OR
NOT BEFORE SHE JOINED THE PROFESSION

	Father		Mother	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Living	87	43.5	114	57.0
Deceased	96	48.0	72	36.0
No Response	17	8.5	14	7.0
TOTAL	200	100.0	200	100.0

TABLE 6
EVALUATION OF PARENTS' MARITAL HAPPINESS

<u>Degree of Happiness</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Happy	62	31.0
Average	34	17.0
Unhappy	62	31.0
Do not know	42	21.0
TOTAL	200	100.0

The respondents were also asked to explain the cause of their parents' unhappiness. Their answers are tabulated in Table 7 where we find that 32 percent of them thought poverty had been the main reason for their parents' unhappiness, and 29 percent mentioned that their parents' remarriage had been

the main cause. Among the responses, parents' drug addiction was another factor in family disorder. Further, more than 16 percent asserted that the death of either parent was a reason for the parents' unhappiness.

TABLE 7
CAUSE OF PARENTS' MARITAL UNHAPPINESS

<u>Cause</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Poverty	20	32.0
Death of either parent	10	16.0
Parents' remarriage	18	24.0
Do not know	10	16.0
Narcotic addiction	4	7.0
TOTAL	62	100.0

Another experience to be examined in this context, is the relationship between the respondents and their parents before joining their present profession. Table 8 shows that the respondents felt closer to their mother than their father. 52 percent of the respondents were close to their mothers and 34 percent to their fathers. Considering that the family is an important unit in Iranian society and the relationships between the members of the family is very tight, it was expected that a large proportion of respondents would have a close relationship with their parents. Thus, the percentages suggest a significant lack of close relationships between respondents and their parents.

TABLE 8

RESPONDENTS' RELATIONSHIP WITH
PARENTS BEFORE JOINING THE PROFESSION

Degree of Intimacy	Father		Mother	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Close	68	34.0	104	52.0
Average	41	20.5	33	16.5
Not close	91	45.5	63	31.5
TOTAL	200	100.0	200	100.0

During the interview situation, the respondents expressed anger against their fathers. In some cases, respondents indicated that their fathers were to blame for forcing them into their present situation.

Table 9 shows the respondents' answers to our question about relationship with their parents at the present time. 80 percent of the prostitutes said that they did not have any contact with their parents, but ten percent mentioned that they had a close relationship and even supported their family financially. Those who helped their family financially said that this action makes them feel less guilty and brings them psychological satisfaction.

In reviewing the data presented, one can conclude that the role of the family is most important in molding its members' behavior. A broken family does not provide the bond of economic

and moral support that a young girl needs in order to pursue a traditional way of life as prescribed by the sex role stereotypes in Iranian society. Looking at the family atmosphere of the prostitutes, one can conclude that the unhappy relationship between parents or between the respondent and one of the parents contributed to the lack of a support group for these prostitutes. In a country like Iran, where the family is a very important institution, any threat to the family situation is a threat to the future security of its members.

TABLE 9
RESPONDENTS' RELATIONSHIP WITH
THEIR PARENTS AT PRESENT TIME

<u>Degree of Intimacy</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Close	20	10.0
Average	20	10.0
Not close	160	80.0
	—	—
TOTAL	200	100.0

Socio-Economic Background

In order to analyze the socio-economic status of prostitutes, information was gathered about members of their family, parents in particular.

As Table 10 and 11 show, not only were a majority of prostitutes illiterate, but a high percent of their parents were also illiterate: 62.5 percent of respondents' fathers and 85.5 percent of respondents' mothers were illiterate.

TABLE 10
EDUCATION OF RESPONDENTS' FATHERS

<u>Education</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Illiterate	125	62.5
Elementary	52	26.0
Secondary	18	9.0
Do not know	5	2.5
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	200	100.0

TABLE 11
EDUCATION OF RESPONDENTS' MOTHERS

<u>Education</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Illiterate	170	85.0
Elementary	23	11.5
Secondary	3	1.5
Do not know	4	2.0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	200	100.0

The rate of illiteracy of respondents' parents, as compared with Iran's illiteracy rate, is much higher, a clear indication of lower educational status among the parents of prostitutes. The illiteracy rates of respondents' parents are shown in Table 12. The illiteracy rate of respondents' fathers is 11.5 percent higher than the illiteracy rate of total male population and the illiteracy rate of respondents'

mothers is 11.0 percent higher than the illiteracy rate of total female population.

TABLE 12
EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF IRAN POPULATION

<u>Education</u>	<u>Percent Male</u>	<u>Percent Female</u>
Illiterate	51.0	74.0
Elementary	37.3	19.8
Secondary	10.9	5.5
Advanced	.5	.6
Other	.3	.1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: Plan Organization, Statistical Center, "Statistical Report of 1971," no. 349, Tehran, Iran.

Table 13 shows the occupational status of respondents' parents. 2.5 percent of those interviewed had fathers who were skilled workers, ten percent reported that their fathers were semi-skilled workers, and 55 percent were daughters of unskilled workers. However, 12.5 percent of their fathers were unemployed.

The mothers' occupational status is shown in Table 14. 67.5 percent of the respondents' mothers did not have access to any job outside of the home. Thus, the family income was restricted to the father's job or some other family members, if any. 21.5 percent of the respondents' mothers were unskilled

workers and one percent were semi-skilled workers. About 20 percent of the respondents could not identify their fathers' occupation and about ten percent did not know their mothers' occupation. This failure may mean that they left home or lost their father or mother early.

TABLE 13
OCCUPATIONS OF RESPONDENTS' FATHERS

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Skilled worker	5	2.5
Semi-skilled worker	20	10.0
Unskilled worker	110	55.0
Unemployed	25	12.5
Do not know	40	20.0
TOTAL	200	100.0

TABLE 14
OCCUPATIONS OF RESPONDENTS' MOTHERS

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Skilled worker	0	0
Semi-skilled worker	3	1.0
Unskilled worker	43	21.5
Unemployed and housewife	135	67.5
Do not know	20	10.0
TOTAL	200	100.0

The rate of unemployment of respondents' parents as compared with the nation's population is higher. The proportion of skilled and semi-skilled workers in our sample is lower as compared with the total population. See Table 15 for figures.

TABLE 15
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF
OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF TOTAL POPULATION

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Skilled worker	13.1	6.3
Semi-skilled worker	29.3	10.1
Unskilled worker	46.4	18.1
Unemployed and housewife	9.0	59.0
Other	2.2	6.5
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: Plan Organization, Statistical Center, "Statistical Report of 1971," No. 349, Tehran, Iran.

The subjects were also asked how many members there were in their family. More than half of them reported to have come from large families consisting of around 5-8 members. The average size of family is 7.4. The average size of family in the nation is 6.5 in urban areas and 8.5 in rural areas. Therefore, the average size of our sample as compared with the nation's population is larger than the average urban family and smaller than the average rural family. This information is reflected in Table 16.

TABLE 16
RESPONDENTS' FAMILY SIZE (INCLUDING PROSTITUTE)

<u>Number of Members</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1- 4	38	19.0
5- 8	105	52.5
9-12	35	17.5
13-16	18	9.0
More	4	2.0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	200	100.0

In response to the question, "How do you estimate your family's economic situation?" most prostitutes perceived their family background as lower class. As Table 17 illustrates, only five percent of the respondents indicated that they belonged to the richer stratum. More than 50 percent of the respondents said they came from a poor or very poor family background. 22.5 percent of respondents also marked their family as average, or in other words, they identified their parents as middle class. Considering the occupational and educational background of respondents' parents. It is obvious that the respondents perceived their parents' socio-economic position higher than was actually the case.

Our findings concerning the respondents' family background such as education, occupation and economic status document the fact that our sample of prostitutes has been recruited from a lower socio-economic class.

TABLE 17
PARENTS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC POSITION

<u>Socio-Economic</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Rich	10	5.0
Average	45	22.5
Poor	40	20.0
Very poor	70	35.0
Do not know	35	17.5
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	200	100.0

Marital Situation

Since marriage and the family are two important institutions shaping the lives of women in Iran, we were interested in studying the marital situation of the prostitutes, especially if they had any children from a marriage. Marriage is strongly supported in the Iranian culture and married women and men enjoy a higher social prestige than unmarried people. In contrast, any broken family is considered an economic disaster for women. Divorced women generally lose their previous social prestige.

As Table 18 illustrates, 64.5 percent of the total population under study were already married and 35.5 percent of them had never married. 53 percent of those who had previously married, were between 20-29 years old. None of the previously married prostitutes were married at the time of the study. This information is shown in Table 19.

TABLE 18
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE
AND MARITAL STATUS

Age	Marital Status				
	Married		Never Married		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
15-19	5	3.8	14	19.7	19
20-24	40	31.0	20	28.2	60
25-29	29	22.5	15	21.1	44
30-34	26	20.1	14	19.7	40
35-39	13	10.0	5	7.0	18
40-44	10	7.7	2	2.8	12
45-49	1	.8	1	1.4	2
50-54	5	3.9	-	-	5
TOTAL	129	100.0	71	100.0	200

TABLE 19
SITUATION OF MARRIED PROSTITUTES

<u>Marital Status</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Divorced	94	72.9
Separated	22	17.0
Widow	13	10.1
TOTAL	129	100.0

Table 20 also shows that 38.8 percent of the married prostitutes have not had any children. Most of them asserted that their husband divorced them, because they were not able to have children. But 60 percent of prostitutes have a child, and 43 percent of them have more than two children. The

Table 20
RESPONDENTS' CHILDREN

Number of Children	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0	50	38.8
1	45	34.9
2	21	16.3
3	8	6.2
4	3	2.3
5	2	1.5
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	129	100.0

prostitutes' children are raised in a kindergarten outside the district. Although the social workers and volunteer groups try to keep the children away from their mothers, some prostitutes reported that their daughters have followed their profession.

Pattern of Mate Selection

The married prostitutes were asked how they had selected their husbands. Around 49 percent of the prostitutes' marriages had been arranged by their parents, and 20 percent of them got

married by "suit selection" and parents approval. In other words, only 31 percent of them independently selected their spouse. These figures are shown in Table 21.

TABLE 21
PATTERN OF MATE SELECTION

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Parents' enforcement	63	48.8
Suit Selection and Parents' approval	26	20.2
Independent Selection	40	31.0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	129	100.0

Husbands' Socio-Economic Position

The prostitutes were asked about their husbands' education. Table 22 illustrates that 64.3 percent of their husbands were illiterate, 22.5 percent had only elementary school background, and 13.2 percent had a high school background.

TABLE 22
HUSBANDS' EDUCATIONAL STATUS

<u>Education</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Illiterate	83	63.4
Elementary	29	22.5
Secondary	<u>17</u>	<u>13.2</u>
TOTAL	129	100.0

In our interviews, some prostitutes asserted that their husbands had pushed them to prostitution, because of poverty. Some of the prostitutes also mentioned that their husbands had not been able to support them and had deserted them. She needed a job to support herself and her children, and considering the job opportunities for this group of women, prostitution was one of the open sources of independent income.

Reasons for Joining the Profession

The reasons for why and how the respondents entered the profession of prostitution are summarized in Table 25. This Table shows that 22 percent of the respondents thought they became prostitutes because of deception. They asserted that pimps, other prostitutes, and males were responsible for their move in this direction. Other important factors were poverty, death of either parent or the parents' divorce. In fact, 8 percent of the subjects reported that the remarriage of their parents, especially the father, directly affected their lives. For example, one of the prostitutes pointed out:

I was twelve years old, when my mother died. After three months my father got married again. My step-mother did not like me. She did mind when my father took care of me. One day in the absence of my father, she invited a woman to our house and introduced her to me as a friend. She was so kind with me and every other day she met me. I did not know what was going on, and after two months I found myself in "Ghaleah".

Nine percent of the respondents felt that the rejection by their families was the cause of being in prostitution. Many did not have a good relationship with their parents. For example, one of them asserted, "The client was the first person

Prostitutes were also asked about their husbands' occupational status. As Table 23 shows, 2.3 percent of the husbands were skilled workers, 32.6 percent were semi-skilled workers and 53.5 percent were unskilled workers. However, 11.6 percent were unemployed.

TABLE 23
HUSBANDS' OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Skilled worker	3	2.3
Semi-skilled worker	42	32.6
Unskilled worker	69	53.5
Unemployed	15	11.6
TOTAL	129	100.0

As Table 24 also shows, 67 percent of the prostitutes indicated that their previous husbands belonged to a poor or very poor class, 21 percent thought their husbands were average, and 11.6 percent marked them as belonging to a rich stratum.

TABLE 24
HUSBANDS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC POSITION

<u>Position</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Rich	15	11.6
Average	27	21.0
Poor	55	42.6
Very Poor	32	24.8
TOTAL	129	100.0

who cared for me and loved me, who was more kind to me than my parents".

TABLE 25
REASONS FOR JOINING THE PROFESSION

<u>Reasons</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Deception	44	22.0
Death of either parent	24	12.0
Remarriage of parents	16	8.0
Family rejection	18	9.0
Husbands' death	10	5.0
Divorce	24	12.0
Husbands' cruelty	16	8.0
Husbands' remarriage	10	5.0
Poverty	32	16.0
Enjoyment of profession	6	3.0
TOTAL	200	100.0

Thirty percent of the respondents attributed their present position to breakdown in marriage and 5 percent indicated they became prostitutes because of the husband's death. Twelve percent mentioned that divorce was the only factor for joining the profession. Most of the respondents reported that they did not have any information about their husband before marriage, and their parents forced them to marry. The prostitutes also mentioned that after divorce they were not able to go back to their families, so they became prostitutes in order to survive.

Five percent reported that their husband got married again and they could not tolerate the new rival so they left their husbands' home and came to this district, "Ghaleah".

Eight percent explained that they ran away from home because of the husbands' cruel treatment. Since they did not have any place to go they became prostitutes. In fact, 16 percent reported poverty in itself had been the major cause for joining the prostitutes in "Ghaleah". Only three percent answered that sexual enjoyment had attracted them to the profession.

From the data in Table 25, it is clear that the most important reasons for joining the profession have been economical in terms of a breakdown of the family, death of either parent, remarriage of parents, husbands' death, divorce or husbands' remarriage. It has already been pointed out previously that a majority of the prostitutes came from lower class families. In conclusion, prostitution in "Ghaleah" can be seen as a product of poverty and breakdown of the prostitutes' families.

Table 26 illustrates the age of the respondents at the time they joined the profession. 56 percent of the respondents entered the profession before they were 22 years old, and 40 percent became prostitutes between 28-34 years of age. These figures show that the prostitutes were fairly young when they joined the profession. According to Iranian law, there is no age limitation for licensing as a prostitute. However, pimps and supervisors try to hunt younger girls, because they tend

to attract more clients, stay longer in the profession, and are more obedient than older women. The data shows that 17.5 percent of all the prostitutes were between 11 and 16 years old when they started as prostitutes.

TABLE 26
RESPONDENTS' AGE AT THE TIME
SHE JOINED THE PROFESSION

<u>Age</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
11-16	35	17.5
17-22	78	39.0
23-28	58	29.0
29-34	22	11.0
35-40	6	3.0
More	1	.5
TOTAL	200	100.0

We also asked the respondents the length of time they had been in the profession. Our findings show that nine percent of the prostitutes had been practicing for more than 18 years. As shown in Table 27, it is not surprising to find that as the age of prostitutes increases, the length of stay in the district becomes longer. This indicates that most prostitutes who entered the "Ghaleah" were young.

Previous occupation of the respondents is an important factor in our analysis, since not only does it give us information about their status, but it can also be used as a criterion for comparing what their desire is for the future. As Table 28

TABLE 27
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE AND LENGTH OF TIME IN THE PROFESSION

Age	Less Than 2 Years		2-5 Years		6-9 Years		10-13 Years		14-17 Years		More Than 18 Years		Total	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
15-19	12	6.0	7	3.0									19	9.5
20-24	13	6.5	35	17.5	12	6.0							60	30.0
25-29	2	1.0	28	14.0	11	5.5	2	1.0			1	.5	44	22.0
30-34	2	1.0	13	6.5	12	6.0	10	5.0	2	1.0	1	.5	40	20.0
35-39			2	1.0	1	.5	8	4.0	2	1.0	5	2.5	18	9.0
40-44					1	.5	2	1.0	3	1.5	6	3.0	12	6.0
45-49									1	.5	1	.5	2	1.5
50-54							1	.5			4	2.0	5	2.5
TOTAL	29	14.5	85	42.5	37	18.5	23	11.5	8	4.0	18	9.0	200	100.0

illustrates, 21.5 percent of the prostitutes were previously housewives, and 10 percent were students. The remainder were unskilled workers; 20 percent maids, 6 percent farmers, 4 percent factory workers, and 38 percent unemployed. This occupational distribution indicates that almost all prostitutes had a low occupational status. With this occupational background and educational status, it would be hard for this group to find a good job and independent position in society.

TABLE 28
PREVIOUS OCCUPATION OF RESPONDENT

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Housewife	43	21.5
Clerk	1	.5
Factory worker	8	4.5
Farmer	12	6.0
Maid	40	20.0
Student	20	10.0
Unemployed	76	38.0
TOTAL	200	100.0

The prostitutes were also asked about what type of occupation they would desire to practice. Their aspirations for a future occupation are documented in Table 29. As this table shows, most desire a better position than they previously held. Most of them desired an occupation which is acceptable in society (laborer, dressmaker, or government employee, etc.).

Furthermore, some of them desired a special job which implied a service capacity; for example, six percent wanted teaching jobs and eight percent wanted to be a nurse. Also, 13 percent of them wished they had any kind of job in order to escape prostitution.

TABLE 29
MOST DESIRABLE OCCUPATION

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Housewife	35	17.5
Government Employee	6	3.0
Dressmaker	32	16.0
Teacher	12	6.0
Nurse	16	8.0
Student	4	2.0
Actress	2	1.0
Laborer	17	8.5
None other	26	13.0
Do not know	55	27.0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	200	100.0

Age of First Sexual Experience

The study also examined the age at which the respondents had their first sexual experience. As Table 30 shows, five percent of the prostitutes had their first sexual experience before they were nine years old, and 16 percent between nine

and eleven years. Looking at the total sample we see that 94 percent of the prostitutes had their first sexual experience before they were 20 years old. Only ten percent of the respondents had not had any sexual experience before they became prostitutes. In the Iranian society, where the chastity of a girl is important, she should be a virgin before marriage. If she has a premarital sexual experience, she will most likely be rejected by her family and society, and find the only solution to be prostitution. In short, sexual intercourse before marriage in Iran, particularly in rural areas, is another factor that causes a drift into prostitution.

TABLE 30
AGE AT FIRST SEXUAL EXPERIENCE

<u>Respondents' Age</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Before 9	10	5.5
9-11	30	16.6
12-14	45	25.0
15-17	40	22.2
18-19	44	24.5
20 or More	11	6.2
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	200	100.0

Financial Situation of Respondent

Working Hours - Table 31 demonstrates the working hours of prostitutes in "Ghaleah". Prostitutes' working hours ranged

TABLE 31
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE AND WORKING HOURS A DAY

Age	NUMBER OF HOURS														Total	
	4-5		6-7		8-9		10-11		12-13		14-15		16-18			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
15-19	1	5.3	3	15.8	3	15.8	5	26.3	4	21.0	2	10.5	1	5.3	19	100
20-24	2	3.3	3	5.0	18	30.0	15	25.0	10	16.7	8	13.3	4	6.7	60	100
25-29	3	6.8	5	11.3	14	31.8	10	22.7	6	13.6	4	9.3	2	4.5	44	100
30-34	3	7.5	9	20.4	12	27.3	10	25.0	5	11.3	1	2.5			40	100
35-39	3	16.7	5	2.8	6	33.3	4	22.2							18	100
40-44	4	33.3	6	50.0	2	16.7									12	100
45-49	1	50.0	1	50.0											2	100
50-54	5	100.0													5	100
TOTAL	22		32		55		44		25		15		7		200	100
PERCENT	11.0		16.0		27.5		22		12.5		7.5		3.5		100	

from 4 to 18 hours a day. The largest number of prostitutes worked 8 to 9 hours a day (27 percent). Their work usually starts at 3 p.m. and continues to early morning. The most concentrated work hours are between 9 and 10 p.m. and Thursday night and Friday night constitute the busiest days. As Table 31 shows, the younger prostitutes are working more (16-18 hours per day) than older ones.

Number of Clients - Table 32 is an indicator that shows the degree of activity of the prostitutes according to age. Again, younger prostitutes receive more clients than the older ones. It can readily be seen that those who belong to the 20-24 year-old group receive more clients than the other age groups. The prostitutes who were 40-49 years old had only 1-3 clients a day, whereas 11.6 percent of those who belong to the 20-24 age group had 16-18 clients a day. Comparing the figures in Tables 30 and 31, one can conclude that there is a relationship between the volume of work and the number of customers a prostitute receives. On the average, a prostitute receives one client per hour.

Income - Table 33 illustrates the prostitutes' reported monthly income. The younger prostitutes earn a higher income. As the table shows, 26.3 percent of the prostitutes who are 15-19 years old are able to earn more than \$1800 per month, the maximum rate. The income of 83 percent of those who were 40-44 years old is around \$200 per month. In general, the income distribution for prostitutes is as follows: 25 percent of the respondents between 20-29 years were able to earn up to \$600;

TABLE 32
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE AND NUMBER OF CLIENTS A DAY

[illegible]

TABLE 33
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE AND INCOME PER MONTH

Age	INCOME														Total	
	Less Than \$200		\$201-600		\$601-1000		\$1001-1400		\$1401-1800		More Than \$1800		No Response			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
15-19	1	5.3	1	5.3	3	15.8	3	15.8	3	15.8	5	26.2	3	15.8	19	100
20-24	9	15.0	11	18.4	6	10.0	9	15.0	10	16.7	11	18.4	4	6.3	60	100
25-29	12	27.4	13	29.5	11	25.5	4	9.1	2	4.5			2	4.5	44	100
30-34	11	27.5	13	32.5	8	20.0	3	7.5	2	5.0			3	7.5	40	100
35-39	6	33.3	7	38.9	1	5.6	2	11.1	1	5.6			1	5.6	18	100
40-44	10	83.4	1	3.3									1	8.3	12	100
45-49			2	100.0											2	100
50-54	3	60.0	1	20.0									1	20.0	5	100
Total	52		49										15		200	
Percent	26		24.5										7.5		100.0	

1

another 45 percent of them in the same age category were able to earn \$1000 to \$1800; 18.5 percent of the total population in the 30-39 year group could make up to \$600; and only 4 percent of the 30-39 year old group had an income of \$1000 to \$1800 per month.

Expenditures - Although the income of the respondents is quite high, their expenditures are also high. Most of them cannot save any money because they have to share their incomes with the supervisors of "Ghaleah" and the pimps. Approximately 50 percent of their income is spent on rent and commissions. Their main expenditures are rent, food, clothing, medical treatments, cigarettes and beer. Respondents were asked to explain the two heaviest expenditure items. The result is summarized in Table 34.

TABLE 34
RESPONDENTS' MAIN EXPENDITURES

<u>Items of Expenditure</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Commission to Supervisor and Pimp	70	35.0
Rent and Medical	50	25.0
Food, Drink and Cigarettes	30	15.0
Support Family, Pay Debts	40	20.0
Clothing and Cosmetics	10	5.0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	200	100.0

The respondents were also asked if they were able to save any money. 55 percent of them reported that they were not able to save money at all and that they were, in fact, in debt. From the remaining 45 percent who were not in debt, just 11 percent could save some money. These figures are reflected in Tables 35 and 36.

TABLE 35
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS'
NECESSITY TO BORROW

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Do not borrow	90	45.0
Borrow	110	55.0
TOTAL	200	100.0

TABLE 36
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS
BY ABILITY TO SAVE

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Have saved	10	11.0
Have not saved	80	89.0
TOTAL	90	100.0

Satisfaction with Prostitution

Table 37 illustrates the respondents' satisfaction with their work by age. In general, 82 percent were dissatisfied with their work and only 13 percent were satisfied. As the figures show, those who felt satisfied were under 34 years old.

TABLE 37
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENT BY AGE AND SATISFACTION WITH HER WORK

Age	Satisfaction		Dissatisfaction		No Response		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
15-19	5	26.3	13	68.4	1	5.3	19	100
20-24	15	25.0	40	67.0	5	8.0	60	100
25-29	3	6.8	40	90.0	1	2.3	44	100
30-34	3	7.5	35	87.5	2	5.0	40	100
35-39	--	--	18	100.0	--	--	18	100
40-44	--	--	11	91.6	1	8.4	12	100
45-49	--	--	2	100.0	--	--	2	100
50-54	--	--	5	100.0	--	--	5	100
TOTAL	26		164		10		200	
PERCENT	13.0		82.0		5.0		100	

Some of the younger prostitutes reported that they felt satisfied by their work because they could make more money, have a better life than before, and the supervisors, pimps, and clients gave more attention to them. In contrast there was nobody older than 34 years who was satisfied with her work. One of them indicated:

I am fifty years old, I have spent more than 25 years in my profession. When I was young and beautiful I could make a lot of money. My supervisor needed me, because I made enough money for her, my pimp was worried if he lost me. I had a lot of clients. But now I am old and awful. Nobody cares for me, my supervisor does not pay attention to me. She wants her rent, her commission, but I do not have enough money even for food and clothing. Every day I am looking for clients. If I find one he is the poorest one. My clients are not satisfied after having sexual intercourse with me, because I am old, sic, awful....

Respondents' Evaluation of Their Lives

The prostitutes were also asked to evaluate their life after becoming prostitutes. As Table 38 illustrates, 86 percent evaluated their situation as being worse than before, but they had to remain in the profession because they had to survive. Only 3.5 percent reported that they had a better situation now than before.

TABLE 38

RESPONDENTS' EVALUATION OF THEIR LIVES AFTER HAVING BEEN IN THE PROFESSION

<u>Respondents' Evaluation</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Better than before	7	3.5
Same as before	20	10.0
Worse than before	173	86.5
TOTAL	200	100.0

A majority of the respondents claimed that they felt like prisoners and suffered from a lack of freedom. Those whose situation was better than before reported that they will not leave their profession because of the need for money, shelter and security. One of the prostitutes explained that:

I will not leave my job at all. I have money, I have shelter. I get used to contact with men. I can meet a lot of people here. I can communicate with them. I had none of these chances before, so I enjoy my profession.

Again, economic factors appear to be important in their profession.

The prostitutes were also asked about the circumstances under which they would leave their profession. 53 percent of them reported that if they would be able to pay all of their debts they would leave, and 30 percent said they would leave if they were able to find some place to live outside "Ghaleah". Furthermore, 15 percent indicated that they would leave if they could find any other job. In fact, 15 percent were willing to stay in the profession until their children grow up, and 5 percent said they would leave after having saved enough money. Table 39 illustrates the main cause that forces prostitutes to stay in their present situation. Prostitutes tend to have debts because their supervisor puts them in this situation in order to prevent them from leaving the profession. Thus, prostitutes actually feel they are in prison. For some of them, their children's future was important, since in spite of their bad situation, they work to support their children. In general, most of the prostitutes (98 percent) wanted to leave and one of them explained that:

TABLE 39
CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH RESPONDENT WOULD LEAVE

<u>Circumstances</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
To pay all of my debts	86	53.0
Find a place to live	60	30.0
Find a job	30	15.0
After my children grow up	10	5.0
Having saved enough money	10	5.0
Will not leave	4	2.0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	200	100.0

I do not want anything but to survive. I am ready to have the hardest job with lowest wages. I can live in the dirtiest place. I can work all day and night. But who can forget my past situation and even employ me as a maid.

Respondents' Relationships

The respondents were asked if there were some other person whom they liked. Nearly half of them reported that they did not like anybody. The remaining 20 percent answered that they liked their children and worked and attempted to support them. 27 percent mentioned that the best person in their life was their boyfriend who, in most cases, was their pimp. Most of the prostitutes were in love with their pimps, because pimps are the only persons who protect them from others, especially threatening clients:

I love my pimp, although I know he does not like me. He enjoys beating me. I should give him one third of my income. I know that he has three other

prostitutes whom he protests. He has sexual intercourse with me freely, but I love him, because he is the only one who protects me.

Table 40 shows the persons best liked by the respondents.

TABLE 40
PERSONS BEST LIKED BY RESPONDENTS

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Nobody	96	48.0
Boyfriend	54	27.0
Children	40	20.0
Parents	10	5.0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	200	100.0

Recreation

The respondents were asked about their recreation. About 70 percent answered that they do not have any spare time to spend as leisure time. The remaining reported their recreation as follows: 13 percent go to movies, 5 percent gamble, 8 percent just sleep, and 4 percent travel. It is obvious that these amusements are quite passive and not creative. None of the prostitutes mentioned sports, reading or drawing as their amusement. These figures are shown in Table 41.

Respondents' Future Plans

The respondents were also asked to explain their future plans. As Table 42 shows, 25 percent answered that they want to leave the profession at the first opportunity, 17 percent were

TABLE 41
USE OF LEISURE TIME

<u>Item</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Nothing	140	70.0
Sleeping	16	8.0
Movies	26	13.0
Gambling	10	5.0
Travel	8	4.0
TOTAL	200	100.0

Waiting to find a job and then leave; 15 percent have decided to return to their family, while they were not sure whether they would be accepted; 13.5 percent hoped to marry. One of them explained that:

If a man marries me, I will promise to be a faithful wife for him and never go back to the profession.

TABLE 42
RESPONDENTS' FUTURE PLANS

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Leave profession	50	25.0
Find another job	34	17.0
Wait for a husband	30	15.0
Support children	23	11.5
Save money	16	8.0
Do not know	20	10.0
TOTAL	200	100.0

It is clear that most of the prostitutes plan to leave the profession at some time in the future.

Respondents' Advice

Our final question was, "What is your advice to others?" Most of the prostitutes started crying and answered, "How can we advise others?" "Who will accept our advice?" "We are a miserable group that nobody accepts as human beings, the people escape from us as a contagious disease." In fact, 20 percent did not comment on this question, but 35 percent recommended, "Please do not join the profession, it does not have any pleasure, you cannot make a lot of money. Even if you make some, you have to spend all of it in the way of the profession. 27 percent recommended "to get married as soon as possible, have background information about your husband, and after getting married, try to save your marriage and do not break it down." 18 percent said, "Be careful about the persons around yourself, especially males, who might deceive you, because after they deflower you, there is no way, except to join the profession."

In short, most of the respondents are aware of their position in the society as a rejected group. They recommend to all, especially young girls to be careful of deception. Table 43 relates the figures concerning respondents' advice to others.

TABLE 43
RESPONDENTS' ADVICE TO OTHERS

<u>Advice</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
No comment	40	20.0
Do not join profession	70	35.0
Get married	54	27.0
Do not be deceived	36	18.0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	200	100.0

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter contains the summary and conclusions of this study. It begins with a summary overview including the central conclusion. The next section includes a discussion of several findings and it ends with a general summary of the major findings of the study.

Summary

This thesis reports on a study of 200 legalized prostitutes in Tehran, the major city of Iran. In the following, we will present a summary of the major findings:

1. The study found the prostitutes to be quite young; the median age was reported as 25 years. The young age of the prostitutes indicates the desired youthfulness of the members of the profession. We find generally that the older women leave the district or work at other tasks within the district.
2. Most of the prostitutes were illiterate and only 29 percent of the respondents had any education at all.
3. The prostitutes were recent migrants to the city. We found that 90 percent of the respondents were migrants to Tehran; in fact, 80 percent of the respondents came from rural areas or small cities of Iran.
4. The respondents social background indicated that most came from the lowest social strata in the Iranian society. For example, 62 percent of their fathers and 85 percent of their mothers were illiterate. Similarly, about half of the prostitutes were daughters of peasants and unskilled workers, and 12 percent of the fathers were unemployed. In addition, more than half of the respondents came from families with as many as six members.

In response to our question about their own class identification, more than 50 percent reported that they came from a poor or very poor family background. Furthermore, sixteen percent reported poverty in itself to have been the major cause for joining the profession.

5. Family disorganization was found to be a common background variable for most of the respondents. Death of either parent, divorce or poverty were the major causes for the breakdown of the respondents' families. About a third of the respondents indicated that a breakdown of their family had caused them to join the profession.
6. We found that most prostitutes (65 percent) had previously been married. As expected, the occupational and educational background of the husband was not very different from the respondent's parents. Around 65 percent of the prostitutes indicated that their husband's socio-economic status had been poor or very poor. None of the prostitutes were currently married.
7. The prostitutes were found to have been introduced to sexual activities at an early age. Only 6 percent of the sample reported that they had their sexual experience after they were twenty years old. Hence, it is not surprising to find that the prostitutes had joined the profession at an early age. The aggregate data shows that they had entered the profession before they were 22 years old. We also found that most of the prostitutes had been in the profession for about six years.
8. The nature of the work that the respondents perform indicates an unrewarding and hard job. On the average, the prostitutes work nine hours a day and receive about one client per hour. Their average income per day is \$15.00, which is considerably higher income than they, as unskilled women in the Iranian society, could get anywhere else. However, a big part of their income is spent on the intermediaries in the district: a commission to the supervisor and the pimp, expenditures for rent, medical care, clothes and cosmetics. It is not surprising to find that 55 percent of the respondents reported they were in debt. This circumstance led many respondents to report that they were forced to remain in the profession, because they needed money and a shelter.

9. More than 80 percent of the prostitutes indicated that they did not like the job they were doing. In fact, 85 percent saw their present situation as worse than before they entered the profession. A majority of the prostitutes (98 percent) wanted to leave their job if they only were able to pay their debts, get another job, or after their children had grown up. Most of the prostitutes advised other young girls not to join the profession.

Conclusions

The problem of prostitution, much like other social problems, can be analyzed from a social stratification perspective. In the present analysis there has been an attempt to explore those social background variables which give rise to prostitution, such as illiteracy, poverty, broken family and other socio-psychological factors. We have shown that prostitution is, by and large, a combination of these conditions which increase the likelihood of causing an individual to drift into prostitution. More specifically, the problem of class in Iran and the resulting unequal income distribution allows a small minority of wealthy individuals better life chances than the rest of the population. On the other hand, within the lower classes, there is more crime and delinquency, lower education, more school drop-outs, a higher rate of divorce and separation, more health problems, a shorter life span, and the like.²⁶

These consequences provide the patterns of values and behavior for the prostitutes as a comprehensive way of life within Iran. Both objective conditions, such as satisfaction or

²⁶John P. Clark, "Socio-Economic Class and Area as Correlates of Illegal Behavior Among Juveniles," American Sociological Review, (27, December, 1962), pp. 826-834.

dissatisfaction with the profession, relationship with parents and others in past and present times, influence the behavior and values of the prostitute in the system of stratification.

Obviously a prostitutes' position in this system is determined by the amount of money and available power resources she has. The lack of resources for prostitutes typically leads to a continuous restraint upon social mobility. As has been discussed earlier, lower income, lower education, lower occupational status, and a high rate of disorganization of the family were some of the major factors that were common among the licensed prostitutes in Tehran.

Poverty is the result of the unequal distribution of national income in which the majority of the population does not have a chance for upward mobility. However, this does not mean that we are saying that poverty solely produces prostitution. Instead it suggests that a combination of both poverty and discrimination on the basis of sex influence the likelihood of choosing such an occupation. Opportunities for upward mobility are much greater for men in the lower class than for the women.

As we mentioned earlier, a majority of the licensed prostitutes in Tehran came from the lower class. They do not enjoy their occupation and did not rationally select it. They are in the occupation, as we found, because they have few, if any, other alternatives. In a society like Iran, where there is no welfare system, an illiterate and unskilled woman who has lost her family as well as financial and emotional support, has a high likelihood of becoming a prostitute. In fact, she is often

faced with only two choices, struggling for a subsistence or being a prostitute. Unfortunately for many, the only real choice is to join the profession.

The above situation becomes worse for a migrant woman who is illiterate and unskilled, because, in addition, she has left her family in her place of origin. There are few opportunities for an independent income source for such a woman. If she cannot adapt herself to the new urban environment, which is completely different from her place of origin, she easily drifts into prostitution.

In order to alleviate the problem of prostitution in Tehran, some major changes could be suggested in the social structure of Iran. First, Iran needs to establish a welfare system in order to provide income for women who their support. Secondly, the government should create more job opportunities especially for the lower class. Thirdly, increased job opportunities require more emphasis on training and education. Therefore, there is a need for more facilities for people to be educated.

In sum, even if the above suggestions were implemented they would not be successful in ending prostitution as long as discrimination against women is a fundamental problem in Iranian society, especially among the lower classes. This is because within the lower class men have more educational and job opportunities than women. Therefore, elimination of sex discrimination is among the most important factors which are required in order to alleviate the problem of prostitution in Iran.

APPENDIX: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Age of respondent;
 _____Years, or Date of Birth_____
2. Respondents' Educational Status:
 _____Illiterate _____Literate _____Years of Education
3. Place of Birth
 _____Rural _____Urban Name of City_____
- Others_____
4. Could you name the last job you held before?_____
5. Was your Father alive before you joined the profession?
 _____Yes _____No
6. Was your Mother alive before you joined the profession?
 _____Yes _____No
7. How would you estimate your parents' marriage?
 _____Happy _____Average _____Unhappy _____Do not know
8. If they were unhappy what was the cause of their marital
 problem?_____
9. What was your relationship with your parents before joining
 the profession?
 _____Close _____Average _____Not Close
10. What is your relationship with your parents now?
 _____Close _____Average _____Not Close
11. Parents' Educational Status:

Father	_____Illiterate	_____Literate	_____Years of Education
Mother	_____Illiterate	_____Literate	_____Years of Education
12. What was your Father's occupation?_____
13. What was your Mother's occupation?_____

14. How many brothers and sisters were living in your home? _____
15. How many relatives were living in your home? _____
16. How would you estimate your parents socio-economic position? (Compared to others in Tehran)
- _____ Rich _____ Average _____ Poor _____ Very Poor _____ Other
17. Were you ever married before you joined your present profession?
- _____ Yes _____ No
18. If Yes, how did you marry? _____
19. What is your present marital status?
- _____ Married _____ Divorced _____ Widow
20. Husband's educational status:
- _____ Illiterate _____ Literate _____ Years of Education
21. What was your husband's occupation? _____
22. What was his socio-economic position?
- _____ Rich _____ Average _____ Poor _____ Very Poor _____ Other
23. Do you have any children? _____ Yes _____ No
- If yes, how many? _____
24. Why did you decide to join the profession? _____
- _____
25. How old were you at the first sexual experience? _____
26. How old were you when you first joined the profession? _____
27. How long have you been in the profession? _____
28. What is your desirable occupation? _____
29. How many hours do you work per day? _____
30. How many clients do you have per day? _____
31. How much money do you earn per month? _____
32. On what is this money spent? _____

33. Do you owe any money? _____
34. Do you like your present occupation? _____
35. In general, how would you evaluate your life now, since you have been in this profession?
- _____ Better than before
- _____ Same as before
- _____ Worse than before
36. Do you like your present occupation? _____ Yes _____ No
37. Do you plan to leave this profession? _____ Yes _____ No
38. If yes, under what circumstances would you leave? _____
- _____
39. If yes, what kind of job do you want? _____
40. Who is (are) the person(s) that you like best in your life?
- _____
41. How do you spend your leisure time? _____
42. What are your plans for the future? _____
43. Do you have any advice for the others? _____ Yes _____ No
44. If yes, what advice would you give to others? _____
- _____

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