Author’s response to reviews

Title: Factors influencing women’s sex work in a Lebanese sample Results of a case-control study

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Reviewer 2:
The abstract has important grammatical mistakes and the results are not clear. The manuscript is not suitable for publication. An English native speaker should review it extensively. The abstract and the whole article were edited for English language. The results were rephrased for better clarity and easier understanding. We hope it is up to your expectations now.

Background: Why is it interesting to explore and understand factors associated with SW in Lebanon?
We added more sentences to the background of the abstract as follows:
Many constituents contribute to the rise of sex work in Lebanon such as the socio-economic situation in the country (poverty, increased unemployment rates, and religious divisions), as well as the political and social instability. Several emotional and psychological factors such as depression, stress, anxiety, low self-esteem, emotional abuse, may force some people to rely on trading sex as a coping strategy for persevering. Therefore, it was deemed interesting to explore and understand factors that are correlated with sex work in Lebanon where no study, to our knowledge, has been written on this critical point.

Associated with what of SW? Entry? The abstract has major grammatical issues and it uses colloquial words like going into SW. Does this mean entry? Pathways? Corrected: The objective of the study was to assess factors (such as trauma, child abuse, partner abuse, depression, anxiety, and stress) associated with women joining sex work among a sample of the Lebanese population.

Results: "The results of linear regression, taking being a sex worker vs not being one as the dependent variable, and the sociodemographic characteristics, child (psychological, neglect,
physical and verbal) and partner (physical and non-physical) abuse, as well as depression, anxiety, and stress as independent variables, showed that higher anxiety (aOR=1.08) and higher physical abuse by a partner (aOR=1.02) is significantly associated with higher odds of being a sex worker. This is a very long paragraph that is hard to read. The results of linear regression analysis? What does that mean? Of an analysis? Which sociodemographic characteristics? Does partner abuse mean inter partner violence or domestic violence? Is this ever or recent?

Yes partner abuse means inter partner violence/abuse. We used the nomenclature you suggested throughout the paper. This was in the last 12 months prior to the enrollment in the study. The information was added to the methods section, partner abuse scale paragraph.

The results as they are written are not clear and the statistical analyses conducted are not properly described. Does it mean that after adjusting for socio-demographics, child (means when they were kids? So lifetime?), and IPV.

Yes, child abuse means at any time during their childhood (so practically lifetime).

Anxiety and violence from a partner were independently associated with have a story of SW? How is it that only the aOR of anxiety and abuse by a partner are included in this section?

We conducted forward logistic regressions so SPSS will add the variables one after one and will kick out the weak ones. Therefore, not all variables will remain in the final model.

The footnote under Table 2 indicates the variables entered in the model:

Variables entered in the final model: education level, socioeconomic status, stress, anxiety, depression, psychological child abuse, physical child abuse, sexual child abuse, partner physical abuse, partner nonphysical abuse, alcohol use and substance use.

If you are including more than one variable ARE should be used not IS. When alcohol was assessed does it mean a bivariate analysis was conducted?

Yes, we conducted a bivariate analysis first; the results are already included in the first paragraph of the results section:

Also, a significantly higher proportion of sex workers was illegal substance users (36.7 % vs. 11.7%) and alcohol users (53.3% vs. 26.7%) compared to non-sex workers.

How was this performed? Using the Chi-square test.

What does it mean multivariable analysis were similar? Which is the third model?

In the third model, we took being a sex worker vs not as the dependent variable. Independent variables were sociodemographic characteristics, child abuse (psychological, neglect, physical and verbal), inter partner (physical and non-physical) violence/abuse, depression, anxiety and stress.

In the fourth model, we added alcohol use (yes/no) as an independent variable in addition to all independent variables mentioned in the third model. The results of the logistic regression in model 4 were similar to the results of model 3.

We hope the results are clearer now.

Thank you so much for your comments.