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Hidden in Plain Sight: A Baseline Study of Sexually-Exploited Male Masseurs in Metro Manila

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HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

An Baseline Study on the Sexual Exploitation
of Male Masseurs in Metro Manila

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LOVE146
END CHILD TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION

Hidden in Plain Sight:

A Baseline Study of Sexually-Exploited
Male Masseurs in Metro Manila

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Executive Summary

This study is third in a series of studies that explores the little-known lives and experiences, vulnerabilities and resiliencies of sexually exploited young men in Southeast Asia. It is a part of a small, collaborative movement among interested organizations who have both recognized and acted upon the neglect of boys and men in discussions of sexual abuse and exploitation. The studies have utilized both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, merging careful fieldwork and extensive, one-on-one structured interviews to provide a better understanding of the lives of young men and boys within the sex trade industry and an information resource for service providers.

Over the past few years, the sexual exploitation of women and girls in Southeast Asia has continued to be the subject of much research and has remained a central concern among NGOs and Anti-Trafficking in Persons organizations. Meanwhile, the sexual exploitation and violence against men and boys has been a pressing reality that has been little acknowledged, much less understood. Furthermore, of the studies that have been conducted, the prime focus has primarily remained on sexual health, rather than addressing young men as whole persons with emotions and deeper vulnerabilities. In addition to this, social and cultural norms often assume that men and boys in the sex-industry are inherently strong and/or invulnerable to sexual exploitation; however, research in this area continues to show these assumptions to be false.

In order to provide a holistic baseline of information of the young men in this industry, structured interviews were conducted with 50 male masseurs from numerous massage services in various vicinities within the Metro-Manila area known to be key to the industry including Timog Ave (QC), Malate (Manila), Diliman (QC), and Recto (Manila) areas. Vulnerabilities of these young men were assessed, particularly focusing on a number of areas including financial security, sexual health and history, experiences of violence, spiritual development and spirituality, and future plans.

This study drew male respondents from three major outlets of massage within the Metro-Manila area: massage establishments with only male masseurs (male-only establishments), massage establishments with both males and females (mixed-gender establishments), and independent (or freelance) masseurs. Nearly all, or 95 percent, of respondents indicated providing sexual services and 70% indicated meeting clients for sex within the past week. Analysis of data revealed a strong contrast between masseurs coming from the various outlets of the massage industry, and similarly divergent levels and types of vulnerability for each respective group. While masseurs coming from mixed-gender establishments had lower frequencies of meeting clients for sex, they also had the highest rates of violence from their clients. Masseurs from all outlets of massage indicate low awareness (and practice) of sexual health. Respondents from Mixed-gender establishments demonstrated significant risk in this area with 40% of respondents indicating that they had never used a condom and nearly two-thirds indicating that they had never had any sexual health services.

In addition to the quantitative assessment, this study also provides a qualitative assessment of the broader male-to-male sex industry within the Metro-Manila area, including escort services and both direct and indirect male sex work. This information serves to provide a useful background and context for the quantitative data gathered from respondents in this study.

Literature Review

A Gender-Exclusive Approach to the Global Sex-trade

Sexually exploited males are visible around the world. They advertise as escorts, masseurs, models, or openly as sex workers. They are found hanging out on street corners, train stations, and public parks the world over. Thousands of male sex workers are available in online directories, searchable by physical attributes, services provided, and price; however, despite their global presence, males in the sex industry are often ignored by social services, administrative bodies, mass media, and social research (Dennis, 2008:11-12). In a 2008 review of 166 scholarly articles on the global sex industry, 84% exclusively discussed female sex workers and made no mention of males (2008:13). This is sometimes attributed to a western worldview, held by those funding such research, which views young men as resilient and able to take care of themselves, while young women are seen as vulnerable and in need of rescue (Miles & Blanch, 2010).

A similar neglect is found in the media within discussions of human trafficking. The traditional narrative describes--often in explicit detail--occasions in which men enslave and sexually abuse "women" and "girls" (Jones, 2010: 1144). The discussion is usually framed as good versus evil in a story about misogyny and the sexual exploitation of women, while ignoring the significant number of male victims of forced labor and sex trafficking. An article in the Utah Law Review suggests, "to some extent, men and boys have become the victims of this media-driven, socially-constructed conception of maleness" (2010: 1145).

Part of this conception of males may stem from a significant portion of scholarship on the global sex trade which has been led by feminist theorists, who take a strong gender-centric approach to this issue (Graham, 2006). Noted feminist Andrea Dworkin (1992) encapsulates the gender-exclusive view of prostitution in a speech entitled "Prostitution and Male Supremacy". She says,

Prostitution: what is it? It is the use of a woman's body for sex by a man, he pays money, he does what he wants. The minute you move away from what it really is, you move away from prostitution into the world of ideas.

Within this framework, prostitution is exclusively understood as a male's abuse of a female. Throughout this, and narratives of its kind, males and females seem to be dichotomized as predator and prey. While this may be true in a number of cases, this kind of discussion is unhelpful and may lead to a greater neglect of males who also suffer from abuse and exploitation.

Another consideration within present research is the terminology used to discuss males and females in prostitution. The term "prostitute" was preferred in 66% of the studies dealing with women and only 25% of the studies pertaining to men. On the other hand, "sex worker" was the term of choice for 75% of the studies dealing with men in the sex industry (Dennis, 2008: 19). In the cited study, it is believed that the term "prostitute" implies coercion and degradation, whereas "sex worker" implies more of an active choice of participation. This seems to imply that women are forced to participate in sexual exchanges, whereas males are not. Female sex work is thought of as degrading and dangerous, whereas male sex work is not (2008: 19). Does this preclude, then, that females in the sex trade are in need of action and activism, whereas their male counterparts are not?

Little has been written about the lives of men used in gay male pornography and its impact on prostituted males. In fact, contrasted to similar discourse on heterosexual pornography, gay male pornography is often viewed as harm-free and even a source of gay male liberation and identity formation (Kendall & Funk, 2003). Christopher Kendall argues that gay male pornography and its implications for men who have sex with men (MSM) is just as harmful as heterosexual pornography and its effects on women. Kendall cites a 1985 study that exposes the emotional vulnerability of young men in this industry and discusses the strong, adverse, and sometimes fatal effects that such depictions have on the actors' self-identities. The result is that feminine, soft, or "bottom" men are degraded as "queer" and "faggots" and are dehumanized in the same ways as a woman who is degraded as "bitch", "cunt", or "whore" (2003: 95).

Male Sexual Abuse

Recent studies have indicated the need for further research into the connection between male sexual abuse and the male sex industry. A 2005 Canadian study of male sex workers reports that 70% of the male sex workers studied had a history of sexual abuse prior to entering the industry. Additionally, over 75% had been physically violated and witnessed aggression during childhood (McIntyre, 2005).

While the sexual abuse of girls has been given much attention in research, studies concerning boys and male sexual abuse are limited. Holmes and Slap (1998: 1855). claim, "The sexual abuse of boys is common, underreported, under recognized, and under treated". Research in North America indicates that the sexual abuse of boys is less likely to be reported due to fear of punishment, loss of independence, and homosexual labeling (1998, p. 1860). Depending upon what group is studied, prevalence of male childhood sexual abuse in North America ranges from 4%-16% (1998: 1856). A 2005 study of Health Management Organization (HMO) members in San Diego, California found that 16% of males had been sexually abused before the age of 18 (Dube et al., 2005: 434).

A number of studies document negative effects of sexual abuse on male psychological development. David Lisak, in a content analysis of 26 male survivors of sexual abuse, reports that victims experienced common feelings of worthlessness, emptiness, and inferiority that tended to worsen with time to become deeply ingrained negative identities (Lisak, 1994: 544). A 2005 literature review on the psychological consequences of male sexual abuse reports disrupted development of gender identity, self-esteem, and self-concept as common effects of male sexual abuse (Valente, 2005, p. 10). Males are reported to cope with the trauma of sexual abuse through denial, self-hypnosis, dissociation, and self-mutilation (2005, p. 11).

Understanding of Sexual Abuse in Asia and the Philippines

In Asian societies, issues of male sexual abuse have also been given little attention. Boys are assumed to be capable of protecting themselves and the existence of male sexual abuse and even male-to-male sexuality is often ignored or denied. This traditional narrative seems to preclude that males are not at risk of abuse or exploitation (Frederick, 2010: 6). Thus, societies are less vigilant, cases of abuse are less likely to be reported, and boys may be placed at greater risk of abuse and/or exploitation. These prevalent conceptions of male invulnerability further complicate the issue of male exploitation and abuse because they reinforce the idea that males are "stronger" and thus more psychologically resilient, able to readily protect themselves, and more easily recover from trauma than adolescent girls (2010:15).

Within the Philippines, the sexual abuse of boys is a reality that is similarly left unspoken. As in other parts of Southeast Asia, boys are often presumed and even insisted to be "tough" and able to protect themselves. If a young male "allows" himself to be prey to others, it is common that he will be blamed for not living up to his

masculine expectations (Watkins and Bentovim, 1992; Grubman-Black, 1990). Additionally, within the conservative context of the Philippines, sex and sexuality (particularly same-sex sexuality) is seldom discussed and little understood. Grubman-Black notes, “The very thought or image of a man ‘having sex’ with a boy produces such extreme reactions that many people find it easier and less painful to ignore or deny it.” Within this context, it is common for boys to perceive their abuse as a sign of their homosexuality. This feeling is especially heightened if the boy failed to resist his attacker or if he experienced sexual arousal from the experience (Watkins & Bentovim, 1992). Because of this stigma and the resulting fears of discrimination, boys are less likely to report instances of sexual abuse.

Masculinity and Sexual Identity in the Philippines

While same-sex orientation and homosexual practice are nothing new in the Philippines or Asia, concepts of sexuality and discussions of sexual identity are fairly recent and come largely out of western thought and scholarship (Tarr, 1996: 27). Thus, as in many Asian societies, concepts of sexuality remain obscure (Hernandez & Imperial, 2006: 27) and may differ greatly from common western and international definitions. While, there is no term for “sexuality” in any of the Philippine languages, local languages often describe one’s sexual orientation in terms of masculinity and femininity. Within this concept, being heterosexual is often understood in terms of one’s gender characteristics such as their overall masculine appearance, reproductive capacity, physical strength, and even manner of dressing (2006: 27). Thus, to be a real man in the Philippine context is also to be a “heterosexual man”. Thus, it may come as no surprise that, the most commonly used word for “heterosexual” in the Tagalog language is *tunay na lalake* which literally translates “real man”. The concepts are one in the same.

Hernandez and Imperial state that the concept of masculinity or being a man within the Philippines rests heavily upon one’s physical characteristics and one’s ability to demonstrate characteristics that are opposite that of women. A man must “not be feminine, not be a homosexual, not be effeminate, not have sexual or overly intimate relations with other men, or not be impotent with women” (2006: 31). Beyond being *tunay na lalake* or a real man, there is also a strong societal pressure to become *ganap na lalake* or an “actualized man”. This is one who has the ability to fulfill the responsibilities expected of him by society, make a family of his own, and provide for them. Failure to do this often brings reproach and disparagement from his peers (Social Development Research Center, 2000).

On the other hand, the common Tagalog term for “homosexual” is *bakla*, which is a somewhat ambiguous term encompassing homosexuality, hermaphroditism, cross-dressing, and effeminacy (Manalansan, xi). This essentially categorizes individuals as members of a third gender, one that is neither fully male nor fully female. J. Neil C. Garcia describes this pervasive image in his book, *Philippine Gay Culture*:

“It’s plain to see that all gays are pathetically fascinated with becoming real women, and with having real men as lovers and life time partners. Of course, they’ll never be women, and they’ll never find men who love them for who they are--which is to say, without some kind of monetary exchange” (Garcia, 1996: 1)

While this may be the pervasive cultural image of gay men or *bakla*, it is important to point out that being *bakla* is *not* synonymous with transgenderism and the *bakla* label may be applied to any gay and/or effeminate man. While people who are *bakla* are culturally understood to be a biological man with the *lo’ob* (inner-self) of a woman, they may not always dress, act, or even think of themselves as women. However, within the common cultural understanding of same-sex sexualities in the Philippines, a *bakla* is understood to partner with a “real man” (read: *straight man*) for romantic relationships and sex, often (but not always)

providing the man with some form of compensation, either in cash or in kind (Tan, 2001: 246). These relationships are thought to be one-way. The *bakla* is expected to love, pay, and often support the man without reciprocation from his partner. If the “real man” loves the *bakla* in return, he is believed to jeopardize his masculinity, and risks becoming *bakla* himself. Thus it is important for the man to remain distanced and for the relationship to remain purely transactional. Tan notes that the usage of alcohol is often common among men who are paid to have sex with *bakla* as a means of distancing himself from the relationship and legitimizing the encounter as purely transactional (2001: 246).

Masculinity in the Philippines is more than just having a male identity (being *tunay na lalake*), but also about fulfilling the roles of a man in society (being *ganap na lalake*) which means being tough, macho, not showing emotion, having libido, and making a family of one’s own. Because of this, it is acceptable for a “real man” to have a relationship with a *bakla*, without jeopardizing his identity as a “real” or straight man-- as long as he is still able to fulfill some of his socially-expected *male* roles within his relationship with the *bakla*. Thus, even though the pairing consists of two biological men, they are *culturally* understood to be man and woman.

This is often a socially precarious situation for “real men” in terms of identity. Culturally, it is vital that men remain *tunay na lalake* (identifying as, and carrying on the roles of real men) in the midst of these relationships. If a man fails to do so, it is believed that he risks becoming *bakla* himself, and will no longer be desirable as a man (Tan, 2001: 247).

The Demand for Male Sex Work in the Philippines

Male sex work in the Philippines takes a variety of forms including dance instruction, massage therapy, bar-based sex work, freelance prostitution and child sexual exploitation (Tan, 2001: 244-245). While the demand for male sex work is a reality, measuring the scope of the industry is difficult in that no official size estimate statistics on male sex workers exist (WHO, 2001: 26). In addition to this, academic work on the male sex industry in the Philippines has been sparse, and comes largely from non-Filipino researchers. Tan writes that much of the research available has tended toward sensationalism, while paradoxically minimizing the anti-gay stigma/discrimination that is commonly felt in the Philippines. He notes that most available descriptions distort the real picture of male sex work, which has had serious implications in the creation of adequate interventions and public policies for the people in this industry (2001: 241).

The prevailing *bakla* ideology (described above) is said to shape the demand for male sex workers in the Philippines. Since gay men (or *bakla*) are culturally understood to be biologically males with the inner-being (*lo’ob*) of a woman, male sex workers must satisfy the demand for “real” or “straight” men who are able to make *bakla* feel that they are truly women within this context (Hernandez, 2002). These arrangements between *bakla* and “real men” are said to have a long history in the Philippines. In a series of qualitative interviews with older gay men in the Philippines, Michael Tan describes the existence of numerous male brothels within Manila ghettos as early as the 1960’s. These brothels were called “*casas*”, named with the same Spanish name that was used for female brothels in existence at the same time. He describes these venues as “Spartan”. Clients are said to have been provided with a wooden cot, a cheap hand towel and cooking lard for lubricant. While these venues lasted for some time, Tan notes that most of them were replaced by massage parlors, which had become popular by the 1970’s (Tan, 2001: 248).

In addition to brothel-based male sex work, Tan describes commonly occurring transactional relationships within low-income areas between young males and financially-stable *bakla parloristas* (one who owns a dress shop or hair salon). These parloristas were commonly known to take on young males as boyfriends. Within

this arrangement the young males were expected to provide the *bakla* with sex and the appearance of a relationship in exchange for money or other economic benefits (Tan, 2001: 248).

Similarly, it is important to note that males in the sex industry are seldom perceived to be vulnerable within these relationships. Because males are perceived to have a strong *libido* which needs to be satisfied, “soft” sex work with *bakla* is often acceptable, as long as the young male does not become *bakla* (or effeminate) himself (Tan, 2001: 246). In fact, because females are believed to have a virginity, which needs to be protected, *bakla* are often seen as a sexual outlet for a young, unmarried males’ libido. Tan describes a phrase which is commonly used, *may mga prostitute, at may mga substitute* (there are prostitutes, and then there are substitutes).

Tan notes a frequent remark from male sex workers in the Philippines that goes, “*Trabaho lang yan*” (It’s just work). While this statement seems rather self-explanatory, Tan notes that it is often a rather complex admission which often comes with feelings of great resentment. The statement is often followed-up by “*wala akong mapasukan*” meaning “I could not get any other job”. Tan writes that the resentment, which is commonly seen among male sex workers, is often “interfaced with guilt including strong notions that having sex with another man is *kasalanan* or sin” (Tan, 2001: 244-245). While this prevailing ideology may be a key concept within male-to-male sexuality and sex work within the Philippines, it is also important to note that the demand for male sex work is much broader than those who self-identify as *bakla*, but also said to come from a diversity of other groups including married men, women, and foreign tourists (2001: 244-245).

Sexual Health Concerns in the Philippines

The Philippines shares many of the same risk factors as its surrounding SE Asian neighbors, including widespread high-risk sexual behaviors, high transmission rates of STIs (sexually-transmitted infections), low knowledge of HIV/AIDS and low-condom usage (HRW, 2004). Because the Philippines is a largely Catholic nation, birth control is considered unacceptable for many and the usage of condoms for HIV prevention and family planning is limited. Catholic clergy and other influential conservative groups make sexual health a difficult subject to be discussed in classrooms as teachers often face opposition from both parents and religious communities (UNESCO, 2012: 5). In 2006, only 1.6% of Filipinos were reported to use condoms as a means of contraception (2012: 5).

A 2012 UNESCO study cites that reported HIV cases within the country had quadrupled within three years, going from 342 cases in 2007 to 1,591 cases in 2010 (UNESCO, 2012: 4). Of particular concern for the present study, the number of males infected with HIV/AIDS in the Philippines has significantly increased over the past 20 years. While global statistics of males with HIV/AIDS have dropped slightly over the past decade and holds presently at slightly less than 50% (UNAIDS, 10: 2010), the Philippines has seen a dramatic increase among males. In 1990, only 40% of total reported HIV cases were said to be males; by the year 2011, 93% of the total cases reported for that year were males. Compounding these increased risks, sexual health statistics indicate that Filipino males are not only more likely to pay for sex than their female counterparts, they are also much more likely to engage in sex work themselves (IHBSS, 2009).

Key populations at higher risk of HIV exposure include sex workers and their clients, men who have sex with men, and injected drug users (UNESCO, 2012: 5). Various studies indicate significantly high sexual health concerns among Filipino males in the sex industry compared with their female counterparts. A 2012 UNESCO report cites that only 30% of male sex workers in the Philippines report using a condom with their most recent client, versus the reported 65% among female sex workers (2012: 5). In addition, it may be significant to note that, condoms have been historically used as evidence to arrest and prosecute sex workers in the

Philippines--a practice which can greatly discourage their usage among people groups who may need them the most (HRW, 2004).

Methodology

In December 2012 and January 2013, structured interviews were conducted with young men from numerous male massage services in various vicinities within the Metro-Manila area known to be key to the industry including Malate and Recto, Manila and two sites Quezon City.

Survey interviews

A total of 51 survey interviews were completed. Survey interviews were primarily conducted by two local Filipinos and one expatriate. On two occasions, additional interviewers were utilized to be able to conduct interviews with larger numbers of respondents simultaneously. All interviewers were provided with careful research and ethical training using UNIAP ethical guidelines to ensure that respondents were provided with respect and that culturally appropriate language was used before, during, and after the interview process.

In order to maintain the privacy of the young men interviewed, all interview sessions were conducted as private dialogues between researcher and respondent. As a precaution, all interviews were held in public venues (i.e. restaurants, coffee shops) within close range of other members of the research team to ensure safety and accountability.

All survey interviews were conducted in the Tagalog language without the assistance of a translator. Interviewers sought to establish rapport with respondents prior to the survey, providing each respondent with information concerning the following: the research and its purpose; assurance of anonymity and confidentiality; information regarding the personal and sensitive nature of the interview questions; and their right to choose not to answer any question, stop the survey, and/or withdraw from the study at any time. Two potential respondents declined participation in the study. No respondents chose to stop the survey or withdraw from the study; however, a few (eight respondents) chose not to respond to at least one or more question.

Research Instrument

The survey for this study was adapted for the Philippine cultural context from a similar survey developed by Jasmir Thakur of the Samabhavana Society in Mumbai, India and Glenn Miles of Love146. The survey was a combination of multiple choice and open-ended questions covering areas including the following: demographics; relationships; personal and family finances; issues of prejudice, stigma and discrimination; migration; sexual identity and personal sexual history; sexual health; substance abuse; sexual violence and abuse; income generation; dignity and future planning. In addition to these areas, this study also administered an assessment of spiritual Well-being with each of the respondents, using *The Spiritual Well-being Scale* developed by R. F. Paloutzian and C.W. Ellison (1982). This is a Likert-type scale which measures the subjective quality of a person's life via two sub-scales. The first of these scales is the Religious Well-being Scale (RWB) which aims to examine the religious quality of the respondent's life and his relationships with God, and the second subscale is the Existential Well-being scale (EWB) examining the respondent's relationship with himself, his community, and his surroundings. The combined results form the respondent's spiritual Well-being. We believed that one of the key values in implementing this scale was that the scale is

fundamentally asset-based and invites the respondent and the researcher to go beyond their awareness of vulnerabilities and negative aspects of the respondent's experiences and view the positive, uncovering potential resiliencies (Green, 2006).

Massage Establishments & Respondent Recruitment

Respondents were drawn from four districts in the Metro-Manila area that are known for massage services, including two key entertainment districts and one business district. Several days of field observation were conducted in each of the districts prior to beginning interviews. Field researchers employed purposeful and "snowball" sampling methods (Scheyvens & Storey, 2003; Nichols, 1991) to identify male respondents working within the following types of massage establishments:

- Massage establishments featuring only male masseurs (Male Massage Establishments);
- Massage establishments that included both male and female masseurs advertising to the general public (Mixed-gender Massage Establishments);
- Independent or Freelance male masseurs.

The locations of initial massage establishments were identified through various LGBT-oriented blogs and websites, along with in-person enquiries at massage establishments in the four areas where the research was conducted.

Data Preparation and Analysis

Descriptive analyses of the survey results were undertaken using SPSS 21.0 (SPSS Inc). Thematic analysis was used to explore the responses to open-ended questions included in the survey, with key features of this data coded and sorted in a systematic manner to reflect patterns in the data and inform themes and sub-themes relevant to the questions used in the survey (Boyatzis, 1998).

Ethical Considerations

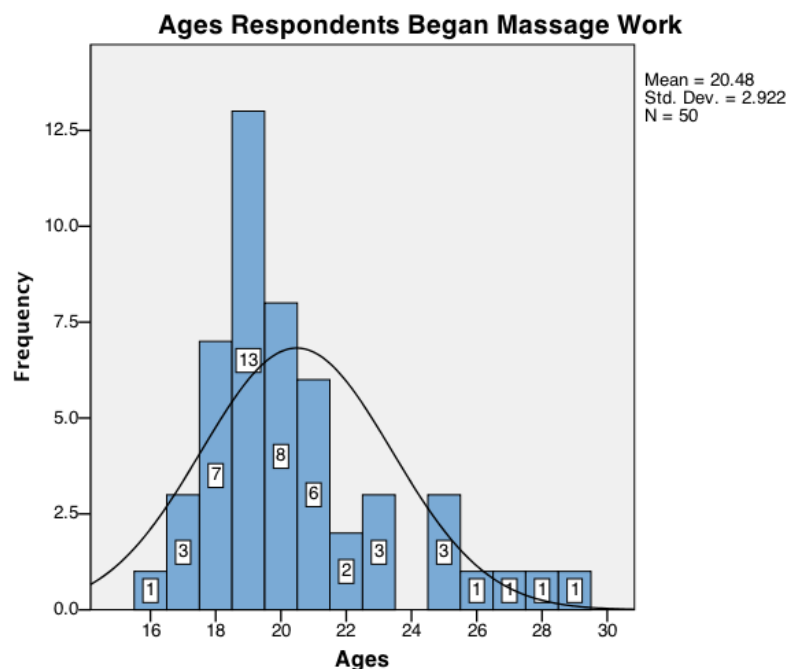
Ethical guidelines were adhered to throughout the research process (Ennew, et al., 2009; UNIAP, 2008). The respondents were informed about the purpose of the survey before their consent to participate was sought. The respondents were informed prior to engaging in the survey that they could choose not to answer any question and could choose to stop the survey at any time. Interviewers visited the locations in pairs to ensure safety and accountability. Care was taken to ensure that others did not overhear the interviews. All surveys were kept confidential. Respondents were informed that their individual responses would not be given to their employers. No visitors were allowed during the interview process and no images were taken during the process.

Results

Demographics

While the data collection team attempted to gather a sampling of respondents that was representative of the male massage industry in the Metro-Manila area, field researchers were limited to interviewing only those respondents who were readily visible, self-identified as “masseurs”, and those who were willing and/or allowed to be interviewed. Therefore, it should be noted that the voices in this study are only representative of this group, and this group alone. Anecdotal conversations with various groups and organizations that work within various high-risk communities in Metro-Manila revealed the existence of groups of young boys who are known to provide massage and other sexual services to adults. While field researchers made attempts to follow these leads, key informants were unable to provide contact with these groups within the time frame available.

Ages of Respondents: The respondents’ ages ranged from 18 to 37 years old, with a median age of 24 years and a range of 19 years. Over two-thirds of this group (69%) falls within the United Nations definition of youth (15-24 years old). It should be noted that there is some difficulty in gathering accurate data on the ages of the boys and young men working in potentially exploitive fields such as these. Within the past few decades there has been increased vigilance and harsher legislation for child abuse and endangerment which can drive younger masseurs to go underground or to lie about their ages. A similar study conducted in Mumbai, India of 77 male street-masseurs found that 9% of the young men surveyed were aged 10-12 years old and 55% were aged 13-15 years old (Miles & Thakur, 2013).



While no one in this study admitted to being under the age of 18 at the time of the interview, the ages at which the respondents reported starting their work as masseurs ranged 13 years, the youngest entering the industry at 16 and the oldest entering at 29. Sixty-eight per cent of respondents started working as a masseur between the ages of 18 and 21.

Education: Respondents were asked of the highest level of education that they had completed. Three respondents cited that they had not yet completed their primary education (elementary school). The majority of respondents (52%) had completed at least some high school and more than one-third (39%) had completed at least some postsecondary education (college or technical school). Additionally, only one cited formal massage training and nearly all had learned the profession informally from family, workmates or upon employment at a given massage establishment.

Migration: The large majority of respondents (79.5%) had migrated to the Metro-Manila area, predominantly coming from provincial areas. Of those who had immigrated to Metro Manila, 89% stated that the purpose of their migration was for work or to earn money. In addition to this, most respondents had only recently immigrated to the area. More than three-fourths stated that they had migrated to Manila within the past 10 years. Slightly more than half (51.4%) stated that they had migrated to Metro-Manila within the past five years and nearly one-third (30%) stated they had migrated within the past two years.

Social Relationships

Who they live with: Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their social and familial relationships. Over half (54%) cited that they lived with immediate family members. For a significant number of this group, “immediate family” referred to a wife/live-in partner and/or kids. This greatly differed from a similar study conducted with male masseurs in Siem Reap (Miles and Davis, 2012) in which only 37% of respondents lived with immediate family members, and very few were married or had live-in partners. In addition to this, 17.6% of respondents cited that they lived with workmates. The predominant number of respondents living with workmates came from male-only massage establishments, where masseurs would often live at the massage establishment itself. Anecdotal conversation revealed that this was commonly due to the fact that many respondents from male establishments still lived in (or had families in) distant provincial areas, making a daily commute very difficult.

Family’s Knowledge of Profession: One-third (33%) of respondents cited that their families were unaware of their profession as masseurs. Among the 54% presently living with immediate family members, 33% kept this work a secret as well. When asked why they chose not to disclose their professions, 70% gave reasons pertaining to shame, and 30% mention fears of family repercussions such as family members getting angry or saying bad things about them. In our previous study conducted in Mumbai, 61% of respondents stated that no one knew of their work as masseurs (Miles and Thakur, 2011).

It is significant to note that a large majority of families (67%) *were* aware that the young men were working as masseurs. Additionally, 27.5% of respondents cite that their families were not only aware of their work, but were also instrumental in bringing the respondent into the massage industry in the first place.

Entrance into the Industry

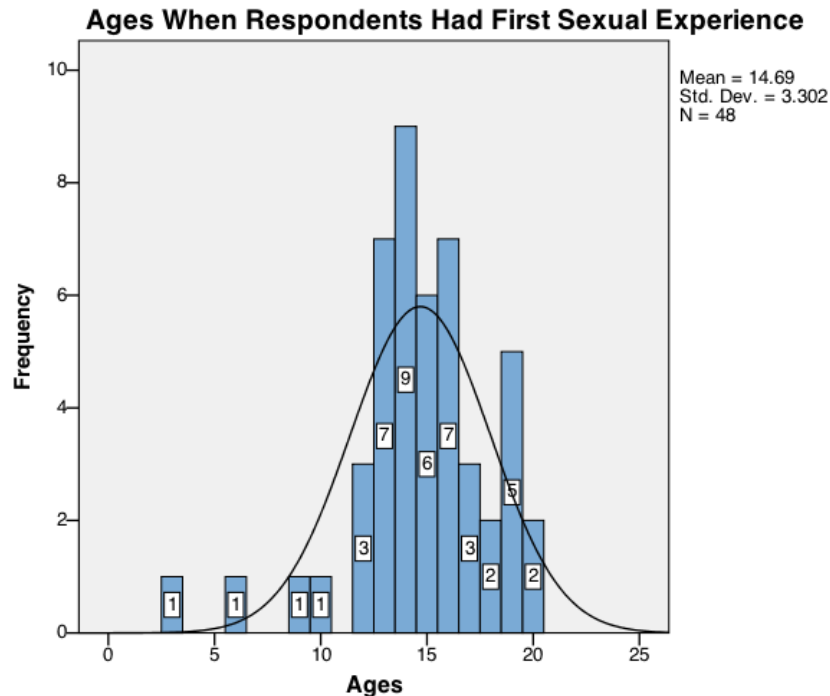
Method of entry: Individual stories of how respondents entered the massage industry revealed a few significant patterns. Nearly 75% of masseurs interviewed had entered the massage industry through someone they personally knew. Thirty-four per cent of respondents cited that a friend brought them into the industry, and 40% were recruited by a family member. It is notable that masseurs' families seem to be much more involved in the recruitment process in the Philippine context than what was found in previous studies conducted in Cambodia (Miles and Blanch, 2011; Miles and Davis, 2012). In this study, 8% of masseurs in Phnom Penh and 24% of masseurs in Siem Reap cited recruitment into the massage industry through a family member. Twenty-seven and one half percent of respondents in Metro-Manila were recruited into the massage industry through a family member. Qualitative probing during interview sessions revealed that recruitment in these situations often came through a brother or sister who already worked in the industry. In a few cases, siblings were found to work alongside one another in the same establishment; and, one young man was employed by his sister who served as the manager in one mixed-gender establishment.

In addition to those recruited by their families, about 6% transitioned into massage from direct sex work and nearly 9% came into the massage industry through "recruiters" in the province. Although the numbers are few, it is notable that three masseurs cited recruitment through provincial recruiters. Circumstances such as these greatly resemble methods through which human trafficking often takes place in many Philippine provinces. While interviewers attempted to gain more information about how these recruiters operated and the circumstances of their recruitment, little additional information was elicited apart from the fact that the recruiters operate within the provinces and that they offer job opportunities for work in the Metro-Manila area.

Purpose for entry: Respondents were asked their reasons for becoming a masseur instead of another job. This was a qualitative response question. Respondents were given no prompts or answer choices and were free to answer however they wished. Their responses were then analyzed qualitatively and arranged into themes. Nearly half of the respondents (45.5%) indicated that they came into the industry because they perceived it to be an easy source of income, while 33% indicated that they chose the field because they had no other options. In addition to this, 9% indicated that an immediate need for work brought them to the industry and another 9% indicated that they chose massage because it gave them a sense of autonomy.

Personal Sexual History

First Sexual Experience: Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their personal sexual experiences. The ages at which respondents had their first sexual experiences had a range of 17 years with a mean age of 14.5 years. Nearly 15% of the masseurs interviewed were 12 years old or younger when they had their first sexual experience, the youngest of these were 3 and 6 years old.



First Sexual Partner: Slightly more than 75.5% stated that their first sexual encounter was with a female and 24.5% stated that this was with a male. Respondents were asked about their relationships with these first sexual partners. For those whose first sexual partners were female, the majority of respondents (58%) stated that this person was a friend (or girlfriend), slightly more than one-fourth stated that this person was a neighbor, and 15% or 10 people stated that this female was a stranger. Among the 12 respondents whose first sexual partner was a male, the responses were a bit more varied. The majority of the respondents whose first sexual partner was a male (32% or 4 people) stated this person was a neighbor. Two or 16% cited he was a friend, two cited that he was a stranger; two cited that he was a client, and two cited that their first sexual experience was with a male teacher. It may be significant to note that out of the 12 male-to-male sexual experiences, two of these first experiences (16%) were with a teacher. It has been indicated in anecdotal conversation that sexual favors are, at times, known to be exchanged between teachers and students in the Philippines---especially as a means of improving one's grades. It is important to emphasize that these conversations *were* anecdotal and have no objective basis in this present research, beyond stating the need for more qualitative research on the sexual experiences of schoolboys in the Philippines.

Forced/Coerced Sex: Respondents were also asked if their first sexual experience was forced/coerced or if it was consensual. Responses to this question were a bit surprising and may be in need of further research and discussion. Nearly all of the 49 respondents answering this question (92%) stated that their first sexual experience was consensual. This is significantly higher than the rates reported in previous studies. In Mumbai, 75% state that their first experience was consenting, and in Phnom Penh, only 69% state that their first sexual experience was consensual. In this study, only four respondents stated that their first sexual experience was forced or coerced. Of the four, three cited that this experience of coercion happened in the province, two stated that they were coerced by females and two cited that it was by males and all four stated that this experience happened between the ages of 13-17. It may of importance to note that there was some significant ambiguity noted in the respondents' understandings of force/coercion versus consent in sex. For instance, two respondents in this study report having their first sexual experiences at the ages of 3 and 6

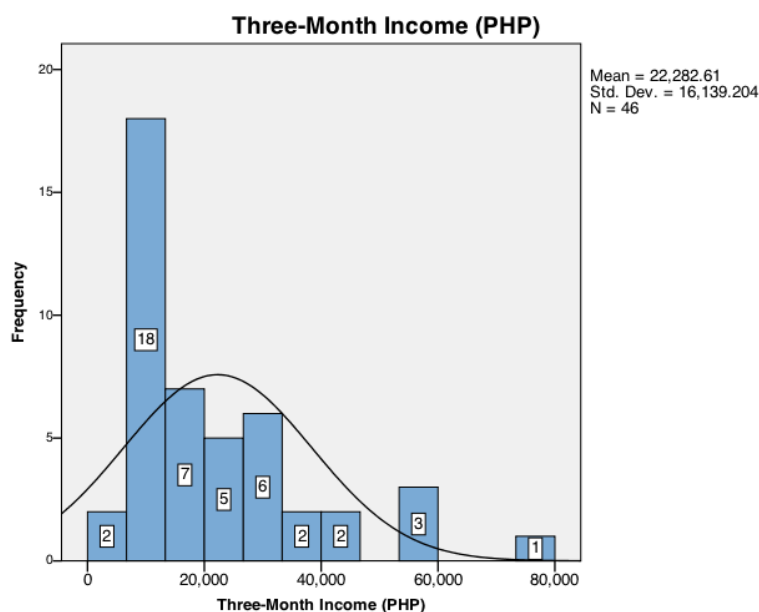
years old, and both respondents understood these experiences to be “consensual” experiences. More discussion on these concepts and further analysis is provided in the next section of this report.

Sexual Identity: In regards to sexual identity, 80% of the respondents identified as “heterosexual” or men who prefer having sex with women, 18% identified as bi-sexual or men enjoying sex with both genders, and only 2% identified as “homosexual” or men preferring to have sex with other men. This is quite different from the findings in previous studies. In Phnom Penh, only 58% of respondents identified as heterosexual [homosexual=16%; bisexual=21%] and in Siem Reap, only 47% of respondents identified as heterosexual [homosexual= 40%; bisexual= 11%]. Similarly, only 45% of the respondents in the Mumbai study reported that they preferred to have sex with the opposite gender. More discussion on this, including cultural conceptions of gender and sexuality in the Philippines, is provided in the next section of this report.

Finances

Respondents were asked about their income and spending practices. While respondents’ incomes varied greatly, depending on the type of establishment in which they worked*¹ (male-only, mixed-gender, or freelance establishments), spending practices seemed to show some clear themes.

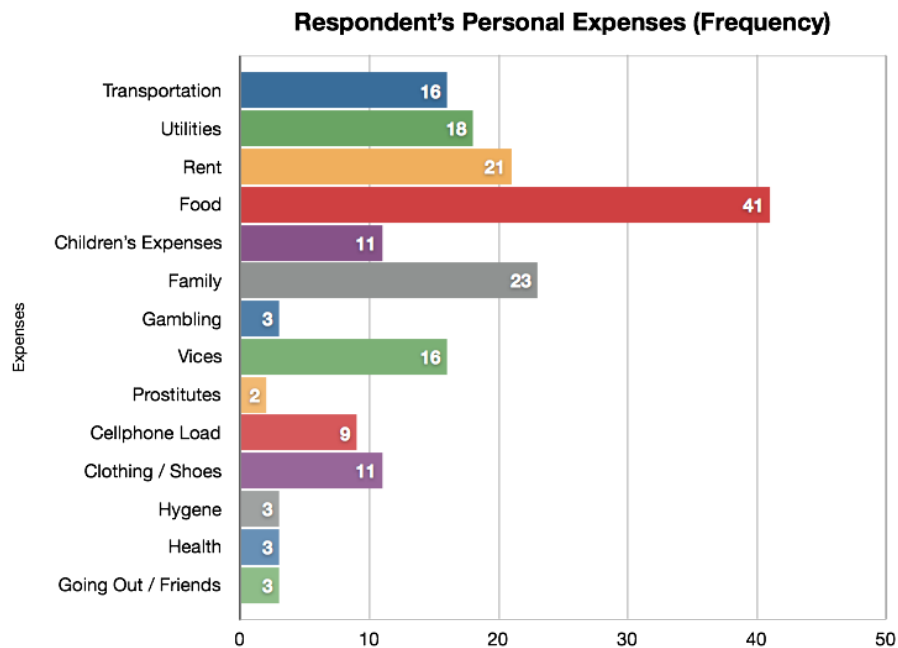
Income: Within the past three months respondents earnings ranged from 5,000php to 75,000php (\$125 USD to \$1,875 USD) with a mean income of 22,283php (about \$550 USD) for three months or 7,427php monthly. This average is slightly offset by several respondents who had significantly higher incomes than others. In particular, three people report earning of 50,000 to 60,000php for the past three months and one reports earnings of 75,000php during the same span of time. In fact, if we were to remove the top four highest earners, the average income becomes 18,476php (\$462 USD), nearly 4,000php less than the average when they are included. While some of these numbers are large, it is also important to cite that 50% of all respondents reported earnings of 15,000php (\$375 USD) or less over the past three months or 5,000php (\$125 USD) for one month.



¹ Aggregated data for these different forms of employment and detailed analysis included in the following section of this report.

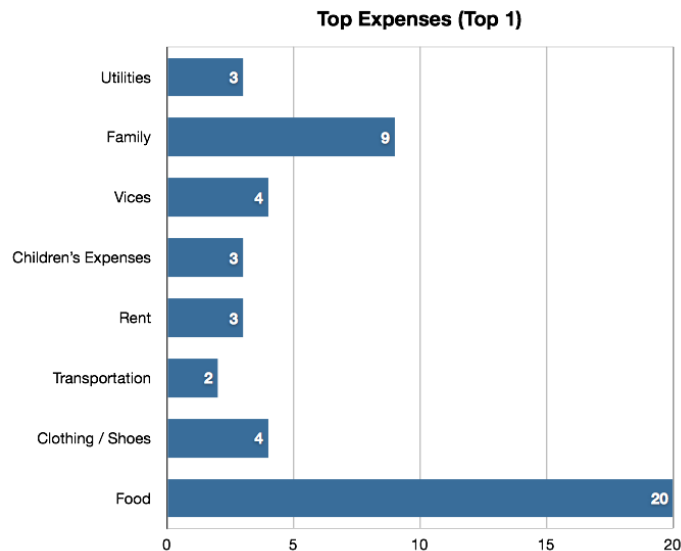
When these numbers are compared across the various types of massage, the highest earners were, first, those respondents working as freelance masseurs, and second, those respondents working in male establishments, while those working in mixed-gender massage establishments earned significantly less. Comparing age with income, there is a notable number of young respondents at the low-end of the income scale. Respondents aged 18-23 earn a mean income of 18,416php for three months (or 6,138 php a month), which is about 16% less than the mean for all respondents. At the same time, all of the highest earners or those earning greater than 55,000php for three months, were 26 years or older.

Spending: Researchers also took into consideration the various destinations of the incomes earned. To do this, interviewers asked respondents to list their “Top 5” expenses. They were given no answer choices and could answer this question however they chose. The responses were then analyzed qualitatively and grouped into themes. It is important to note that, because respondents were given no pre-existing expense categories, these lists are understood to be a list of perceived expenses, or rather, those expenses which were most forefront in their minds at the time that the interview was completed.



Among the responses, the expense mentioned with the greatest frequency was food (listed by 80% of respondents), followed by family expenses (listed by 45% of respondents). Family expenses refer to the masseur's financial obligations to his family, which includes sending a certain percentage of his income to his family on a regular basis, paying for a sibling's schooling, and/or providing food for family members living at home. Following this was rent (listed by 41% of respondents), followed by utilities which includes water and electricity costs, and lastly “vices” was the fifth most frequently listed expense (listed by 31% of respondents). “Vices” is a broad term that is used within the Philippine context to refer to drugs, alcohol, gambling, and/or prostitutes. It is important to point out that three respondents specifically mentioned “gambling” as one of their top 5 expenses, and two mentioned “prostitutes”. If these two categories are included within the “vices” category, it is interesting to note that this category becomes equal with the “rent” category. Some of the lesser mentioned categories included things like shoes/clothing, health, hygiene and expenses for children (food, clothing, tuition).

A separate analysis was then done, looking only at the first item on each of the respondents list of “top 5” expenses. This was done in order to provide a more focused understanding of what respondents perceived to be their greatest financial burdens.



Nearly 40% of respondents listed “food” as their number one expense. Following this, “Family Expenses” was listed by 17% of the respondents, following a similar pattern as the top 5 expenses. Next to this, “vices” and “clothing/shoes” were each listed by 8% of the respondents, followed by “utilities”, “rent”, and “children’s expenses”, listed by 6% of the respondents. Lastly, transportation was listed as the number one greatest perceived expense by 4%, or two people.

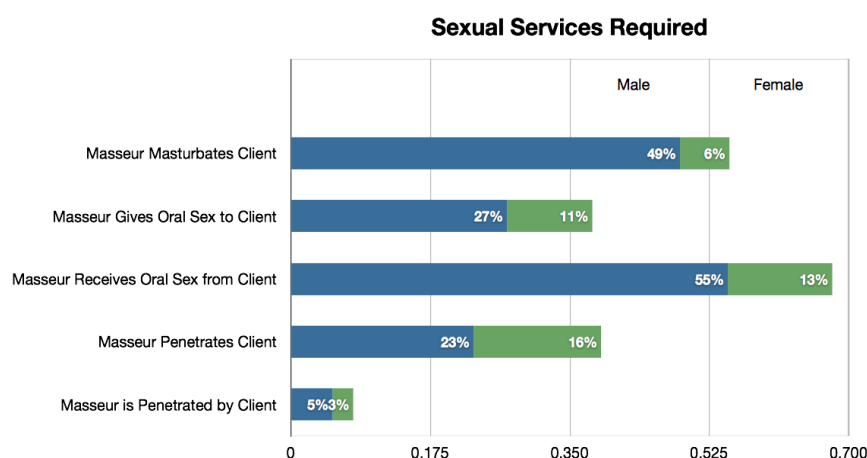
Looking at both lists, it is notable that respondents strongly perceive food to be their greatest expense, following by the expense of sending money to their families. This expense is highlighted by the fact that 86% of respondents indicated migration to the Metro-Manila area without their nuclear families, and nearly 90% of those migrating indicated doing so for the purpose of finding work and/or earning money.

Sexual Experiences with Clients

The number of clients that respondents reported seeing for massage services ranged from one to 15 clients per day, with an average of three to four (3.34) clients per day. Eight respondents declined to answer questions regarding sexual services.

Frequency: Of the 42 respondents who chose to answer, nearly all (95%) indicate providing sexual services to their clients. More than two-thirds (70%) of the respondents indicated that they had sex with clients within the past week. On average, respondents indicated meeting with 3 to 4 clients for sex within the past week, the maximum being twenty clients met for sex and the minimum having met with no clients for sex. Within the past day, frequencies of having sex with clients ranged from zero to three clients, with an average of one client met for sex within the past one day. Regarding the genders of the clients, respondents indicated that their clients for whom they provided sexual services were predominantly male; however, numerous respondents indicated that females would, on occasion, require sexual services as well.

Types of Sexual Experiences: Respondents were then asked about what kinds of sexual services they were usually required to perform with their clients, both male and female. For each gender, respondents were asked to estimate out of every 10 clients for whom they provide a massage, how many would also require various specific sexual services which were specified during interviews. These questions were asked in order to better understand the nature and frequency of sexual experiences between masseur and client to better assess their vulnerabilities in terms of violence, identity formation, and sexual health. With the highest frequency, respondents admitted that they had been required to receive oral sex (fallacio) from slightly more than half of their male clients (55%) and 13% of their female clients. On the other hand, active oral sex was far less frequently required by clients. Respondents cited that slightly more than one-fourth of their male respondents (27%) required them to perform oral sex (fallacio) and 11% of female customers required masseurs to provide oral sex (cunnilingus). Respondents admitted that they had been required to provide masturbation (hand jobs) for slightly less than half (49%) of their male clients and only 6% of their female clients. In terms of penetrative sexual intercourse, respondents indicated that they were required to penetrate 23% of their male clients and 18% of their female clients. Significant, but less frequently, masseurs cited that they were penetrated by 5% of their male clients and 3% of their female clients (anal penetration by sexual devices or other objects).



Respondents were also asked about experiences of having group sex in which one masseur would be asked to have sex with multiple clients at the same time. More than one-third or 34% of respondents cite instances of having experiences such as this within the past three months. Of the 41 people responding to this question, nine people (22%) indicate that this had happened one to three times within the past three months, two people (4.6%) indicate this had happened four to six times and three people (7.3%) had done this 10 or more times within the past three months.

Experiences of Violence

A series of questions was asked regarding masseurs' experiences of violence. Previous research conducted in Mumbai, India (Miles and Thakur, 2013) found significantly high instances of violence among males in the massage industry. In particular, the study reports that nearly 100% of masseurs interviewed in Mumbai had faced violence by police, 47% by gangs, 42% by clients, and nearly 100% had faced violence by members of the community (Miles & Thakur, 2013). Previous research in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap have also revealed numerous instances in which masseurs had been forced to have sex against their wishes, sometimes involving various forms of physical violence as well. In the present study, survey questions covered experiences of forced or coerced sex, awareness of other males in the industry who are forced to have sex against their

wishes, experiences of violence from clients, police, community, co-workers and from the management under whom they are working.

Forms of Violence:

Forced/coerced Sex: More than one third of masseurs in this study, or 38% of respondents, indicated instances in which they had been forced or coerced to have sex against their wishes. Of this group, 44% or eight people stated that this has happened “sometimes” (1-5 times), 33% of this group or 6 people indicated being forced to have sex “occasionally” (6-10 times) and one stated that this happened “very often” (11-15 times). In addition to this, about one-third or 33% state that they are aware of other males in the massage industry who have been forced to have sex against their wishes.

Qualitative discussions with respondents revealed that instances of forced sex can take a variety of forms, including physical force and/or violence, or coercion in which masseurs are bribed, verbally abused or otherwise pressured into providing sexual services. Discussions during interviews revealed that most masseurs do not desire sexual encounters with clients; however, they do so because they need the money. In one of the more violent instances of forced sex, one freelance masseur described an instance in which he was held at gunpoint and forced to provide oral sex--in which case he was also not paid. Others describe verbal violence upon declining to have sex with a client. Other discussions revealed instances in which clients will threaten to “make up” complaints to the management about the masseurs performance when they decline to provide sexual services. On one occasion, an interview was interrupted because of one such dispute in which a client was making a scene about one masseur’s performance. It was later explained by the respondent to the interviewer that the dispute was caused when the masseur did not comply with the sexual demands of the client.

Other forms of Violence: Six respondents, or 12% of those interviewed, indicate facing violence from the police. Nearly all of these respondents (five out of the six) who had experienced violence from police were working as freelance masseurs. Most shared instances about being chased away from the streets during their work. One younger freelance respondent described one experience of arrest and incarceration because of the sexual services that he provides along with his work as a masseur. The respondent, who was quite young at the time, reported great emotional trauma by his arrest and time spent in prison.

Numerous others, or 22% of respondents, describe instances of violence from other masseurs in the industry and, to a much lesser extent, from the management under which they worked. Reports of violence from other masseurs in the industry were highest among freelance masseurs and lesser among those working in male-only and mixed-gender establishments. Discussions during interviews indicated that there is a significant amount of competition among freelance masseurs for getting a client. Whereas masseurs working in massage establishments are often chosen by the client, freelance masseurs often rely on marketing themselves to clients on the street.

Sexual Health

Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their sexual health, sexual health education, and sexual health practices.

Sexual Health Education: Regarding sexual health education, more than two-thirds of the respondents (or 68.6%) state that they have had sexual health education for their work as a masseur. These rates fluctuate significantly among the various types of massage employment. Male-only establishments had the highest rate of sexual health education with 74% of masseurs receiving some form of sexual health education for their

work as masseurs. Next, two-thirds, or 66% of masseurs in mixed-gender massage establishments cited receiving some form of sexual health education. Lastly, freelance masseurs indicated the lowest rate of sexual health education, with 61% reporting some form of sexual health education for their work as a masseur.

Respondents were then asked about the modes through which HIV/AIDS is transmitted person-to-person. No answer choices were given and respondents were encouraged to answer with whatever answer they believed to be true. Only slightly more than half of respondents in this study answered that “sex” was a means of transmitting HIV/AIDS person-to-person. In addition to this, five respondents or 12.8% answered that HIV/AIDS was transmitted through “blood”, another five or 12.8% answered that HIV/AIDS was transmitted through “Saliva”, two stated that it was transmitted through wounds, and another two stated that it was transmitted solely through anal sex. Lastly, four people (8%) stated that they did not know the means through which HIV/AIDS was transmitted person-to-person. These rates of correct HIV/AIDS transmission knowledge are significantly lower than those found in previous studies among male masseurs in Cambodia, where an average of 95% of 95 male masseurs interviewed were able to correctly identify “sex” as the primary means through which HIV/AIDS (98% in Siem Reap, 91.1% in Phnom Penh).

Sexual Health Services: In addition, interviewers asked a series of questions pertaining to the respondents access to sexual health services, such as condoms and health screenings for HIV/AIDs and other sexually transmitted infections. Only 57.1% state that they had received such services and 42.9% stated that they had not. Once again, masseurs coming from male-only establishments had the highest rates of having sexual health services, with nearly 70% stating that they had received such services. Fifty-eight percent of freelance or independent masseurs cited that they had received sexual health services for their work. And lastly, mixed-gender establishments had the lowest rates of sexual health services, with only 35% of the respondents coming from these establishments stating that they had received such services.

Respondents were then asked about their personal condom usage. When asked if they had ever before used a condom, 80% cited that they had and 20% or 10 people stated that they hadn’t. Of those who cited never before using a condom, 70% of this group also cited providing sexual services to their clients, many on a regular basis. In addition, 30% or three people who cited never using a condom, also cited having anal sex with 20-50% of their male clients. Sixty percent of those who had never used a condom came from mixed-gender establishments, 30% from male-only establishments, and only 10% were freelance masseurs.

Substance Abuse

Respondents in this study indicated higher levels of illegal drug usage than what was found in previous studies conducted in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, Cambodia.

Frequency: Forty-two percent of respondents or 21 people indicated illegal drug usage within the past three months. Respondents citing drug usage were then asked what types of drugs they had used within the past 3 months. The most commonly cited drug was Crack-Cocaine (Shabu), followed by Marijuana, and then traditional Cocaine.

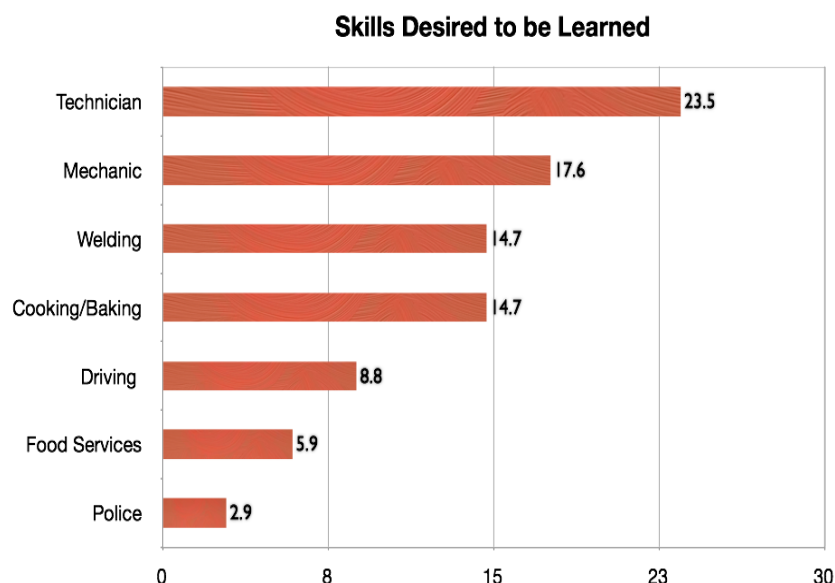
Substance Abuse and Sex: Respondents were then asked their frequency of mixing drugs and alcohol with sex. This is a significant question as drug and alcohol usage during sex could lead to impaired judgment and higher likelihood of vulnerability to clients as well as higher-risk sexual activity. Nearly one-third or 31% of respondents admitted to using alcohol during sex with clients. 10 people or 21.3% indicated that they do this “sometimes”, 4 people or 8.5% indicated doing this “occasionally” and one stated that he always uses alcohol during sex with his clients. Only 4 people, or 8.7% of respondents indicated drug usage during sexual

intercourse with their clients. Two stated that they do this sometimes, one stated doing this occasionally, and one stated that he always uses drugs during sexual intercourse with his clients. Additionally, respondents were asked about their usage of performance enhancing drugs such as Viagra®. Nearly 11% indicated using Viagra and several other indicated using other various herbal compounds which are available over-the-counter.

Alternative Employment

Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their likelihood to take alternative employment earning 6,500php per month. This number was calculated to be the average monthly income for an unskilled worker in the Metro-Manila area and is approximately 1,000php less than the mean income earned by the masseurs in this study. Slightly more than half of respondents cited that they would definitely be interested in taking an alternative job if it were made available to them, 22.4% cited that they might be interested and nearly one-fourth, or 24.5%, stated that they would not be interested in such an offer. The number of male masseurs in the Philippines who would “definitely” take an alternative career is slightly higher than those in previous studies. In Phnom Penh only 37.8% would “definitely” take an alternative career, while 47% state the same in both Siem Reap and Mumbai, India. .

Skills Desired: Interviewers then asked what other job skills that respondents would like to learn. This was an open-ended question and respondents could answer however they chose. Responses were then analyzed qualitatively and grouped into themes. The largest number of respondents, nearly one-fourth, indicated a desire to become an electronics technician. Following this, 17.6% indicated that they would like to become an auto mechanic. Cooking/baking skills, as well as welding skills were desired by 14.7% of respondents or 5 people. Some of the lesser-mentioned skills included driving (mentioned by 8.8% of respondents), food services (mentioned by 5.9% of respondents), and one respondent mentioned a desire to become a police officer.



Second Language: Respondents were asked if it would help them to learn a second language and, if so, which one would be most helpful to learn. All but three respondents, or 93.8%, stated that learning a second language would help them. In regards to what language it would most benefit them to learn, 60% stated that

they would most like to learn English. In addition to this, 20% stated that they would like to learn Japanese and 10% stated that they would like to learn Korean. In addition, Chinese, Polish, Arabic, and Spanish languages were mentioned by one respondent each.

Spirituality

Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their spirituality and spiritual Well-being. The spirituality section covered questions pertaining to personal prayer and/or worship and attendance of religious activities.

Religious Affiliation: All respondents in the present study indicated that they had some kind of faith. Within the sampling (n=51) 42 identified as Roman Catholic, five as coming from various protestant denominations, three identified as members of Iglesia ni Kristo, an indigenous, Filipino religious institution, and one identified as a Muslim.

Personal and Corporate Worship: Respondents were asked about their individual communication with God. Out of 51 interviews, 26 cited having communication with God on a daily basis. When asked about their frequency of visiting a church, mosque or temple, responses varied greatly. One indicated attending a place of worship daily, 18 stated attendance on a weekly basis, 17 cited attendance on a monthly basis, 11 cited 'occasional' attendance and two indicated that they had no attendance at all.

Significantly, of those who attended corporate worship, (N=48) 41 indicated that they in some way feel "refreshed, lightened, restored, forgiven" like their problems were solved when they attended church. Four indicated being unaffected. Two respondents indicated a difficulty in attending church due to shame issues. Notably, both of these respondents were among the highest earners of the entire group. The highest earner of the two also displayed the highest and most consistent issues with shame and stigmatization, particularly due to the fact that neither his family nor his housemates knew about his career as a masseur. He cites that his reason for this secrecy is a fear of shame and stigmatization. This particular respondent also indicated the highest frequency of providing sexual services for his clients.

Spiritual Well-being

The Spiritual Well-being Scale (SWBS) is a Likert-type scale which measures the subjective quality of a person's life. This measure was translated into Tagalog and adapted for use in a Philippine cultural context from an instrument originally developed by Dr. Craig W. Ellison and Dr. Raymond F. Paloutzian. The assessment is a twenty-item scale which is comprised of two sub-scales: the Religious Well-being Scale (RWBS) and the Existential Well-being Scale (EWBS). The RWBS examines the religious quality of the respondent's life and his relationship with God (whoever he or she may perceive God to be). The EWBS examines the respondent's existential Well-being; namely, his relationship to himself, his community, and his surroundings. The combined results of these two sub-scales were taken to represent the respondent's overall spiritual Well-being. These scales have been used for more than twenty years and validated across numerous religions.

Overall, respondents scored relatively high in terms of their perceived spiritual, existential, and religious Well-being. Of the three scales, respondents scored highest in terms of their religious Well-being, with over half (or 57%) of respondents receiving a high score (between 50-60 points) and 69% of respondents (34 people) scoring as moderate (21-49 points). In terms of their perceived spiritual Well-being, 31% of respondents (15 people) scored high (50-60 total points). The lowest scores were received on the Existential

Well-being Scale with 27% of respondents (or 13 people) receiving a high score, and 73% (or 36 people) receiving a moderate score. None of the respondents scored low on any of the scales.

Affiliation: Over three-fourths, or 78% strongly agreed that God loves and cares for them. Over half, or 53% indicate that they have a personally meaningful relationship with God, and 34% moderately agreed with this assertion. Over two-thirds, or 67% strongly agree that God is concerned about their problems. Nearly three-fourths, or 71% stated that their personal relationship with God combats their sense of loneliness and is their primary sense of fulfillment, finding their relationship with God to anchor their sense of Well-being.

Alienation: Well over one-half, or 56% stated finding some measure of satisfaction in their private prayer life, and 40% strongly agree. Nearly two-thirds, or 64% believed that their profession did not compromise their sense of self. They had an adequate sense of who they are, where they came from, and where they were going. 80% affirmed their awareness that God is interested in their situation, and 81% claimed to find strength in and support from God. In tandem with these figures, 65% indicated satisfaction in their relationship with God.

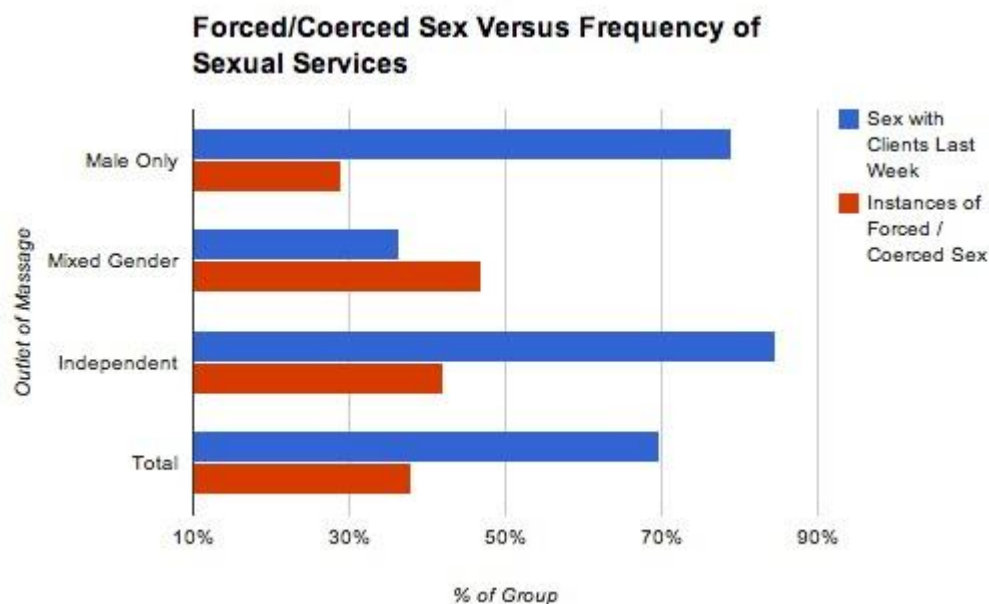
Dissatisfaction with Life: Nearly one in four, or 24% stated having some measure of unsettlement about their future. One in three, or 34% stated that they do not enjoy life, and 23% felt that life, in some measure, was full of conflict and unhappiness. Despite this, 47% believed that there was some real purpose in their lives, whereas 28% find life to be relatively meaningless.

Discussion

Comparison of Various Outlets of Male Massage

Sexual Experiences with Clients: While nearly all respondents (95%) indicated providing some form of sexual services for their clients, there is a notable difference in the frequencies of sexual experiences with clients when we compare masseurs coming from various outlets of the male massage industry. Respondents from Mixed-gender establishments had significantly lower rates of meeting clients for sex compared with independent masseurs and those coming from male-only establishments. Nearly two thirds of independent masseurs and half of those from male-only establishments report meeting clients for sex within the past day; however, no one from mixed-gender establishments admitted to meeting clients for sex within the same period of time. Following a similar pattern, a little more than one third of respondents from mixed-gender establishments reported meeting clients for sex within the past week; however, during the same period of time, 85% of independent masseurs and 79% of male-only masseurs report meeting clients for sex and some with very high frequency.

Contrary to this pattern, it is notable that while respondents coming from mixed-gender establishments were less likely to meet their customer for sex, they were also significantly *more* likely to report instances of being forced to have sex against their wishes. Nearly half of respondents from mixed-gender establishments (47%) report instances of being forced or coerced to have sex with a client against their wishes compared to the 29% in male-only establishments who report the same. This is only slightly higher than independent masseurs, of whom, 42% report forced or coercive sex from their clients. The masseurs with the least frequent instances of forced sex were those coming from male-only establishments. The graph below demonstrates this difference:



FREQUENCY OF SEX WITH CLIENTS VERSUS SEXUAL VIOLENCE								
	Male Only		Mixed Gender		Independent		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Sex with Clients Yesterday	8	47%	0	0%	9	69%	17	41%
Sex with Clients Last Week	15	79%	4	36%	11	85%	30	70%
Instances of Forced / Coerced Sex	5	29%	1	9%	8	62%	14	34%

Some of this discrepancy when comparing frequency of sexual services and instances of forced/coerced sex may be due to the fact that in some places sex is heavily implied, while in others sex seems to be completely off the table and assumed not to happen. That is, it is possible that males working in male-only establishments are more tolerant (or expectant) of violence or coercion among clients (since sex work is understood to be a part of their work). Similarly, it is possible that males working in mixed-gender establishments are less likely to expect violence and/or sexually aggressive behavior, seeing as sex work is assumed to be “off the table”.

Among independent masseurs and those working in male-only establishments, sexual service is heavily implied. In many male-only establishments, masseurs are often sexualized and presented to clients, usually shirtless, on a stage or behind a glass showcase. Similarly, independent masseurs advertise massage verbally, but non-verbal language along with the context of being approached on the street usually implies more than just simply massage. In contrast, sex is often assumed not to happen in mixed-gender establishments. In many cases, sexual services are even directly stated to be disallowed. During fieldwork, researchers noted a number of mixed-gender massage establishments with signs reading “clean massage only.” Another establishment displayed a similar message at the bottom of its “menu” for massage services adding, “God is watching you.” While it may be true that these establishments forbid sex work “officially”, the reality is that sex and sexual services *do* take place in mixed-gender establishments, sometimes with high frequency.

One notable trend indicated by a number of respondents from mixed-gender massage establishments (both in Manila and Siem Reap) is that, since sexual services are forbidden at the establishment, anything beyond simple sexual services (e.g. masturbation) would need to take place outside of the massage establishment. Qualitative discussion data along with field observations seem to indicate however that sex work is often done both formally and informally within mixed-gender establishments. Informal sex work seems to happen through clients and masseurs exchanging contact information at the time of the massage, and then arranging to meet at a later time for sex. This may be done with or without the knowledge of management. Formally, this kind of work can be done through “home and hotel” massage services which is advertised with fixed massage rates, particularly within business/tourism areas. With this type of service, massage appointments are made through the massage establishment for masseurs to travel to meet their customers outside of the establishment. While “home and hotel service” does not necessarily imply sex work in every case, it is a more straightforward outlet for sex work for establishments that “officially” forbid sexual services on their premises.

Anecdotal conversations with female sex workers in one data gathering site revealed that there are certain hotels which are connected with groups of male masseurs who solely provide “home and hotel services”. While this particular outlet of the male massage industry was not included in the present sampling, field research prior to conducting this study revealed a high number of independent male-massage services that were advertised online, some independently and others through online organizations offering full online directories of male masseurs and male escort services in the Metro-Manila area. Unlike services advertised within massage establishments, sex work is more heavily implied through most of these internet-based

services. Further research is still needed to better understand the lives and stories of the young men behind these photos and phone numbers.

Verbal / Physical Violence: Experiences of verbal or physical violence within the past three months varied greatly between different outlets of the massage industry. Respondents coming from mixed-gender establishments reported the highest rates of violence from their clients and no violence from police or community members. This corresponds with their data of forced/coerced sex and surrounding qualitative data which indicate instances of sexual advances as well as verbal and physical violence when sexual advances are refused. Respondents from male-only establishments report few instances of verbal or physical violence --the highest rates of violence are reported to come from their fellow co-workers with 18% of respondents indicating violence within the past three months. Although the number of participants who are independent are small, nearly half of masseurs who work independently report experiences of violence from police and one-third report violence from co-workers. This largely seems to be due to independent masseurs having a much stronger association with sex work than respondents coming from other venues of massage. Some recall instances of arrest and detainment for sex work. One younger respondent disclosed great fear and trauma from a one-year imprisonment for selling sex.

EXPERIENCES OF VIOLENCE WITHIN THE PAST THREE MONTHS								
	Male Only		Mixed Gender		Independent		Total	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Violence from Police	1	4%	0	0%	5	42%	6	12%
Violence from Community	2	9%	0	0%	0	0%	2	4%
Violence from Coworkers	4	18%	3	20%	4	33%	11	22%
Violence from Clients	3	13%	4	27%	2	17%	9	18%
Forced/Coerced Sex with Clients	6	29%	7	47%	5	42%	18	38%

Substance Abuse: In terms of general drug usage and drug/alcohol usage during sex with clients, independent masseurs and respondents from male-only establishments seem to be very similar. 40% of respondents from male-only establishments and 46% of independent masseurs indicate being under the influence of alcohol when meeting clients for sex and nearly half in both categories report illegal drug usage.

	Male Only		Mixed Gender		Independent		Total	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Illegal drug use	10	45%	5	33%	6	46%	21	42%
Use of drugs during sex with clients	2	11%	0	0%	2	15%	4	9%
Use of alcohol during sex with clients	8	40%	1	7%	6	46%	15	32%
Use of viagra during sex with clients	2	11%	0	0%	3	23%	5	11%

Sexual Health: In all categories, respondents coming from mixed-gender establishments indicated significantly higher vulnerability in terms of sexual health. 40% of respondents from mixed-gender establishments report never having used a condom, nearly two-thirds (64%) indicate that they have never received sexual health services for their work, and one-third (33%) indicate that they have never received any sexual health education. These rates are significantly lower than those found among independent masseurs and respondents coming from male-only establishments, as it is shown in the figure below. Once again, this is likely due to the fact that masseurs in mixed-gender establishments are presumed to not provide sexual services. It is possible that, due to this front, little attention is given to the reality that sexual services *do* take place, and thus no provision is made for adequate sexual health services for the masseur.

	Male Only	Mixed Gender	Independent	Total
Never Used Condom	14%	40%	8%	20%
No Sexual Health Services	30%	64%	42%	43%
No Sexual Health Education	26%	33%	38%	31%
Identifies "Sex" as Mode of HIV Transmission	65%	54%	33%	54%
<i>Provide Sexual Services</i>	<i>94%</i>	<i>92%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>95%</i>
<i>Had Sex with Clients Last Week</i>	<i>79%</i>	<i>36%</i>	<i>85%</i>	<i>70%</i>

While respondents from male-only establishments reported higher frequencies of sex with clients, respondents from this group also seemed to demonstrate an overall higher knowledge of sexual health and better access to sexual health services than males in other outlets of the massage industry. One possible explanation for the high rates of sexual health education and services in male-only establishments is that these businesses are known to cater to gay male/MSM groups which are groups that have been considered "high risk" for HIV and STIs and are thus frequently targeted in sexual health initiatives and advocacy campaigns. Nonetheless, given the high frequency of sex, it is notable that 14% of respondents from male-only establishments state that they have never used a condom, one-in-four have never had sexual health education for their work, and nearly one-in-three have never received any sexual health services. It should also be noted that while the sexual health awareness and testing among respondents from male-only establishments may be higher than others in Metro-Manila, these numbers are still markedly lower than numbers found among masseurs and entertainment workers in their neighboring Southeast Asian countries.

The figures reported above seem consistent with UN figures on sexual health in the Philippines. A 2012 UNESCO study, reports that only 7% of male sex workers surveyed in sentinel surveillance had received an HIV test within the past 12 months and knew the result (UNESCO, 2012). Among national data collected from males and females from high-risk groups in high-risk areas, only 31% of those who had been paid for sex reported having used a condom. Additionally, only 63% of students surveyed in the Philippines had a basic knowledge of HIV/AIDS and many of this group demonstrated strong misconceptions about HIV, including a third of the group who believed that one could tell if someone is HIV positive from their physical appearance alone (UNESCO, 2012). It is reported that much of the strong lack of knowledge and appropriate sexual health services in the Philippines is due to the strong Catholic influence and from within the Philippine government, which has historically made the support and availability of appropriate education and services difficult (UNHCR, 2004). To their credit, the Philippine government passed a significant piece of legislation in early 2013, known as the "RH Bill" which allows the government to officially support sexual education and health services nationwide.

Services Provided: Respondents working independently reported the highest frequencies of higher-risk sexual behaviors (insertive and receptive anal sex) as well as the highest rates of drug and alcohol usage during sex with their clients, all of which are known to be among the highest risk behaviors of transmission of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infection (Koblin, 2006). In addition, those masseurs working independently indicate lower access to sexual health services and education, in comparison to males working in mixed-gender and male-only massage establishments. These statistical figures, combined with the lack of sexual health education, lack of sexual health services, and low condom usage may indicate cause for serious concern and the need for careful, immediate advocacy toward men working in this particular line of work.

AGGREGATED DATA OF SEXUAL SERVICES PROVIDED				
	Male Only	Mixed Gender	Independent	Total
Masturbation	68%	35%	40%	49%
Gives Oral Sex	28%	5%	48%	27%
Recieves Oral Sex	71%	23%	67%	55%
Sex as Top	26%	2%	41%	23%
Sex as Bottom	5%	0%	11%	5%

Additionally, comparative figures in this study are very similar to data found in previous research in Siem Reap, Cambodia. The Siem Reap study drew a sampling from masseurs working in both mixed-gender establishments and male-only establishments. It found that male masseurs working in mixed-gender massage establishments report higher instances of violence, lower incomes, younger ages, less education, and were 22% more likely to report instances of being forced to have sex against their wishes in comparison with those masseurs working in male-only establishments. This may be a significant trend which deserves further exploration in future research.

Force Versus Coercion

Responses in this study seemed to indicate a significant level of confusion among respondents regarding the difference between forced/coerced sex and consensual sex. Two variables in this study focused on the subject of coercive and consensual sex. The first variable asked about force or coercion at the time of the respondent's first sexual experience and the second dealt with experiences of forced or coerced sex during the respondent's work as a masseur. Looking at the first variable, respondents indicated low levels of force/coercion at the time of their first sexual experiences; however, other factors such as their ages at the time of their first sexual experiences, their first sexual partners, along with qualitative discussions surrounding the experiences, seem to contradict consent and may signal the need for further discussion of coercion and consent among people working in this field. Looking at the ages at which respondents indicated having their first sexual experiences, it is significant to note that the two youngest respondents were aged 3 and 6 years old at their first sexual encounter and *both* indicated that these experiences were *consensual*. At the time of data collection, the interviews were briefly paused to verify that the respondents understood the question. In both cases, respondents indicated that they did understand, and that they genuinely believed these experiences, at the ages of 3 and 6, were consensual. While we do not discount that these experiences happened, they do raise some questions about what constitutes "consensual sex" in the minds of the respondents and may go to further highlight the need for more research on sexual abuse and sexual development of male children in the Philippines.

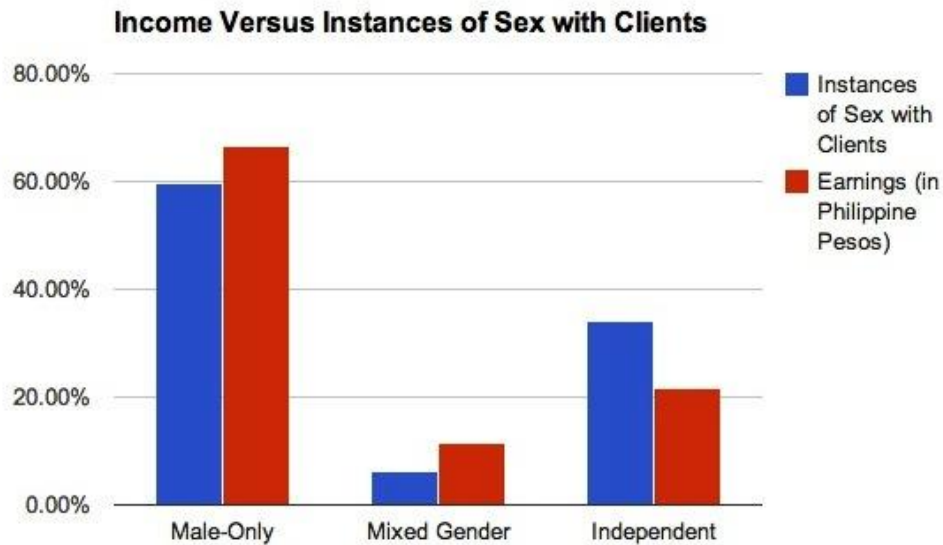
It is possible that some of the confusion between force/coercion and consent stems from the fact that oftentimes respondents would agree to have sex because they would receive money or some other form of benefit in exchange for their compliance in sex. This is particularly relevant when we take into account that, at least two of these first sexual experiences (both labeled as consensual) were had with *teachers*--people in positions of authority over the respondents. These two respondents indicate being 12 and 13 years old at the time of this experience. Similar instances such as these were also found in previous studies conducted in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap among males and transgender males in the sex industry (Miles & Blanch, 2011; Miles & Davis, 2012; Miles, Davis, & Lippman, 2013). Numerous respondents throughout these studies report consenting to sex at very young ages and state that they did so because they owed it to someone or because they would get something in return. While, by international definition, these may not be considered consensual sex acts, respondents in these studies commonly had labeled these experiences to be consensual in nature.

This ambiguity between coercion and consent stands as a limitation to the present study and should inform the development of future studies as well. In studies to come, it may be more useful to ask respondents to describe their first sexual experiences qualitatively, in addition to only stating whether it was coerced or consensual. This could be done by asking, “How did this first experience make you feel?” or “when you think about your feelings at the time of this experience, what words come to mind?”

With regard to instances of forced sex during their work as masseurs, respondents indicated moderately-high levels of forced/coerced sex from clients during their work as masseurs, the highest-reported levels of which come from those respondents working in mixed-gender massage establishments. On the other hand, while respondents from mixed-gender establishments reported higher frequency of forced or coercive sex, the narratives and surrounding qualitative data from independent masseurs indicated significantly higher levels of violence, including physical violence and the use of threats. Although more than one-third of respondents indicated instances of being forced to have sex against their wishes, only 12% or 6 people agreed to share details about the circumstances surrounding their experiences. Among those who agreed to share their experiences, their narratives revealed clear instances of both direct force and coercion. In two of these narratives, respondents indicated that they gave in to the demands of clients because they needed the money. Other narratives included instances of physical or verbal violence. Within one of these narratives, an independent masseur was held at gunpoint and forced to provide oral sex to a client while the respondent's girlfriend watched, after which, the respondent was not paid for the act. Other narratives included instances of clients who become verbally violent when masseurs refuse to provide them with penetrative sex.

Income, Modes of Payment, and Likelihood to Meet Clients for Sex

The two most common reasons that respondents cite for entering the massage industry were that they perceived that they had no other options for employment and that the massage industry was believed to be a source of ‘easy’ income. Looking at the respondent's incomes, it is apparent that some are able to make a significant amount of money through massage. However, it is also important to point out that income within the massage industry is greatly dependent upon receiving tips to supplement a meager hourly wage, if an hourly wage exists at all. Half of the respondents interviewed indicate that tips are their only form of income, and that they receive no additional wages for their services. Given that tips are so heavily relied upon for subsistence, it is possible sex work may be an obligatory facet of working within this context. This seems to be supported by the fact that those groups with the highest earnings (independent masseurs and those from male-only establishments) were also four times more likely to meet clients for sex than those coming from mixed-gender establishments.



Earnings Versus Instances of Sex with Clients Over the Past Week							
	Male-Only		Mixed Gender		Independent		All Respondents
	Instances of Sex / Pesos Earned	% of Total	Instances of Sex / Pesos Earned	% of Total	Instances of Sex / Pesos Earned	% of Total	Total:
Instances of Sex with Clients	87	59.59%	9	6.16%	50	34.25%	146
Earnings (in Philippine Pesos)	139,370	66.66%	24,300	11.62%	45,400	21.72%	PhP 209,070.00
% of group solely dependent upon tips for income	84.21%		23.08%		--		24

Looking at the charts above, there is a clear correlation between money earned and instances of meeting clients for sex. Each of these groups indicates varying dependencies upon tips for their subsistence. Perhaps the strongest of these dependencies are seen among freelance or street-based masseurs who do not necessarily receive “tips” but negotiate prices with each potential client. Next to this group are those respondents coming from male-only massage establishments in which all but three people report that they receive no salary and that tips are their sole form of income. In contrast to these groups are the respondents coming from mixed-gender massage establishment, where over three-fourths, or 76%, receive some form of salary for their work.

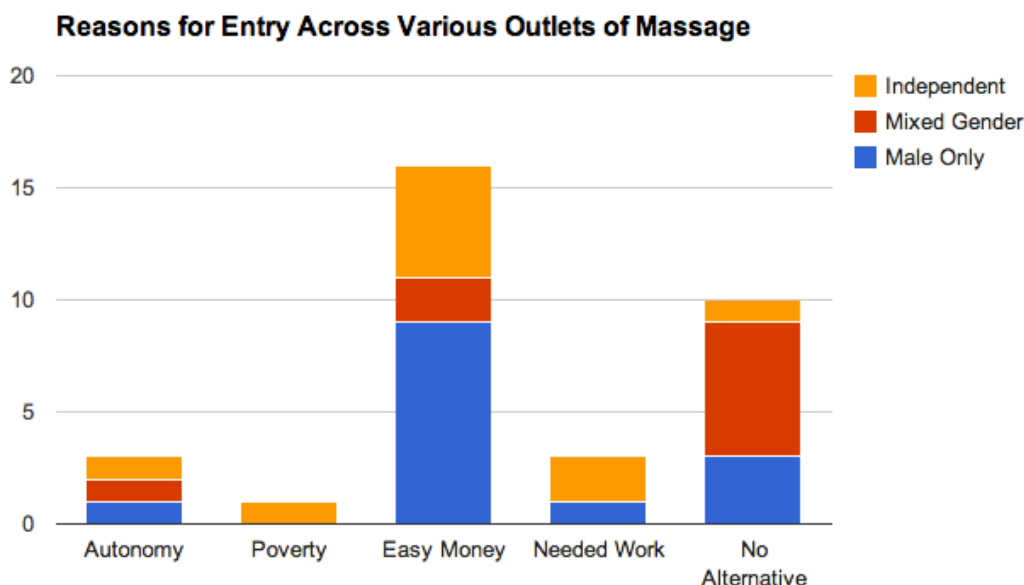
While masseurs from mixed-gender establishments are more likely to receive some form of income, it may be significant to point out that this group is also among the lowest earners of all masseurs interviewed. One respondent from this group expressed that he did not want to lie to interviewers about providing “extra services”, but he provides these services out of financial necessity.

Migration and Recruitment

The majority of respondents interviewed had immigrated from surrounding Philippine provinces, with only 10% reporting to have grown up in the Metro Manila area. The majority of respondents in this study (79.5%) reported to have migrated in search of work. Additionally, nearly half of those interviewed reported that they had entered the massage industry because they perceived it to be a source of “easy money” or they perceived

that work in this field could somehow produce greater earnings than other jobs that were available to them. While it is true that some respondents reported significant earnings, half of all respondents reported earnings of less than 5000PHP a month (~125USD) on average, which is about 1000PHP below the average wage of an unskilled worker in Metro Manila. For those coming from mixed-gender establishments, 64% reported earnings less than 4000PHP (~100USD) a month on average, which is about 2000PHP below that of an average unskilled worker in Metro Manila. While there seems to be a common perception of “easy money”, it is notable that the earnings of most are not greater than what could be earned by anyone else in any other career.

The second most common reason for entering the massage industry, stated by 30%, was that respondents perceived that they had no other work alternatives available to them. The majority of those answering in this way (60%) were from Mixed-gender establishments, 30% were from male-only establishments and 10% were working as independent masseurs. It may be of significance to note that two of the respondents indicating the highest levels of family debt stated that they entered the massage industry because they perceived having “no alternative”. Similarly, 75% of those in this category also indicated actively sending money back home in support of their families.

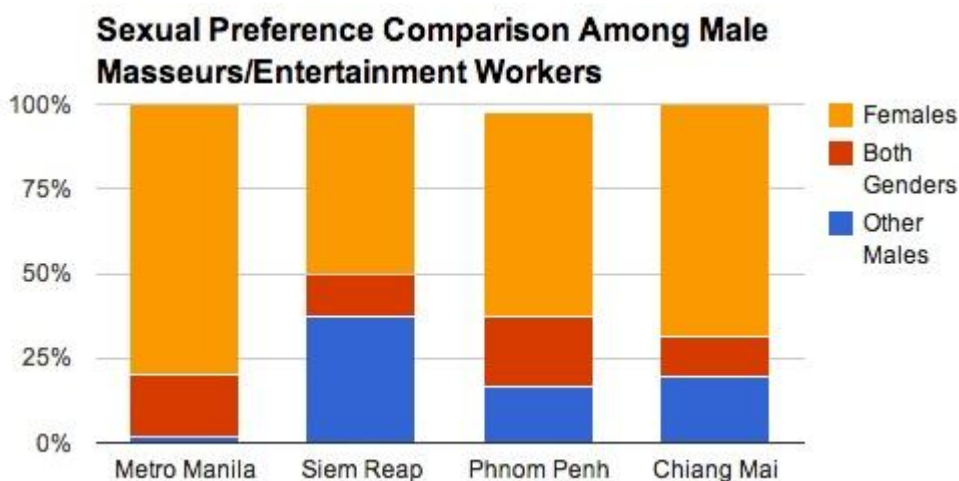


The Philippines is a predominantly Roman Catholic nation in which sex in general is considered taboo and is not readily talked about within family circles, let alone sex between males (see literature review for further discussion on masculinity and sexual identity within the Philippines). While it is difficult to fully assess the complexities of self-concept and social identity in a largely quantitative, baseline study, there are a few notable themes in this study that seem to give some insights into how shame and stigma affect young males in the Philippine sex industry. Nearly one in four respondents indicated that working in the massage industry negatively affects their intimate, personal relationships. Of this group, over half stated that these problems come in the form of family troubles, and another one-third stated that shame and stigma associated with their work caused the greatest effect on their intimate, personal relationships.

Still, three fourths of respondents interviewed indicated that their work had no effect on their intimate, personal relationships. Among this group, a very common response to this question was, “*trabaho lang yan*” (it’s just work). This is the exact phrase which Michael Tan notes to be a commonly heard expression among Filipino males in the sex industry, when reflecting on their work. While this statement seems rather self-

explanatory, Tan notes that it is a rather complex admission that often comes with feelings of great resentment and similarly, this statement is often followed-up by “*wala akong mapasukan*” meaning “I could not get any other job” (Tan, 244). Within this study, 40% of respondents in this study state that they entered the industry because they could not find an alternative career.

It is also notable that only one respondent in this study identified as a “man who likes to have sex with other men” and 18% identified as a “man who likes to have sex with both genders”. These numbers are significantly lower than what was found in similar studies in Thailand and Cambodia. In Cambodia, 38% of respondents in Siem Reap (18 people) and 45% of respondents in Phnom Penh (7 people) indicated that they preferred other males for sex. In Chiang Mai, Thailand, 20% of male entertainment workers (10 people) stated that they preferred sex with other males.



This phenomenon of having nearly no respondents identifying at a “male who like to have sex with other males” (MSM) could be attributed to the way in which gender and sexuality is understood within the Philippines context. Within this understanding, being a “real” man requires that one is attracted to women, does not act feminine, or has sexual or overly intimate relations with other men (Hernandez and Imperial, 27). In addition to this, Tan describes the abiding cultural assumption that if MSM are not careful they will become *bakla* themselves (256), a denotation which is culturally understood to be a kind of androgynous mix of male and female--someone who essentially has the body of a man, but the spirit of a woman (Garcia, 1). Under these assumptions, it is possible that masculine, male sex workers resent the label “*bakla*” because of its feminine connotations and are thus more likely to identify as “heterosexual” in that being heterosexual is culturally (and linguistically) synonymous with being a “real man”.

Additionally, Tan writes that resentment commonly seen among male sex workers is often “interfaced with guilt, including strong notions that having sex with another man is *kasalanan* or sin” (Tan, 244). However, in an analysis of responses to questions on religious affiliation, it is notable that a strong majority of respondents in this study used positive adjectives in describing their feelings after attending church. Only two respondents indicated having a difficulty in attending church and both indicate that this difficulty is due to feelings of shame. It is notable that both respondents who indicate shame were among the highest earners of all masseurs interviewed. Beyond this, the *highest* earner among these two also displayed the highest and most consistent issues with shame and stigmatization of all respondents in the study, and similarly had the most frequent instances of meeting clients for sex. More qualitative research on social stigmas and their

effects on men who have sex with men in the Philippines would be useful to more fully understand males working within this context.

Spiritual Well-being

We chose to explore the spiritual Well-being of the respondents because of the numerous studies that indicate spiritual Well-being as playing a core role in developing resiliencies among vulnerable people groups (Davis, Hill, 2012; Smith, 2011; Kass, 2007). Given the strong influence of Catholicism and Christianity on the Philippine context, the Spiritual Well-being Scale (SWBS) was introduced to understand what role, if any, perceptions of God were playing in the existential realities of males in sexually exploitive careers in the Philippines. An understanding of the respondents' sense of their Well-being was further desirable because it facilitated a mutual exploration of their assets, inviting both the respondents and researchers to go beyond an awareness of the negative elements of the respondents' experiences to view, perhaps with new eyes, the positive (Green, 2006).

We hypothesized that the respondents' greatest vulnerabilities and resiliencies as regards Well-being would lie within the social capital² they possessed within their respective communities. Given our assumptions about the expectations of highly religious societies in the Judeo-Christian tradition,³ we hypothesized finding a low sense of Well-being coupled with a high sense of shame and guilt among respondents. We further hypothesized that feelings of connection with God would be, at best, limited. Specifically and pointedly, we were concerned about their place within their families and in the church, two institutions posited to be central within Filipino life.

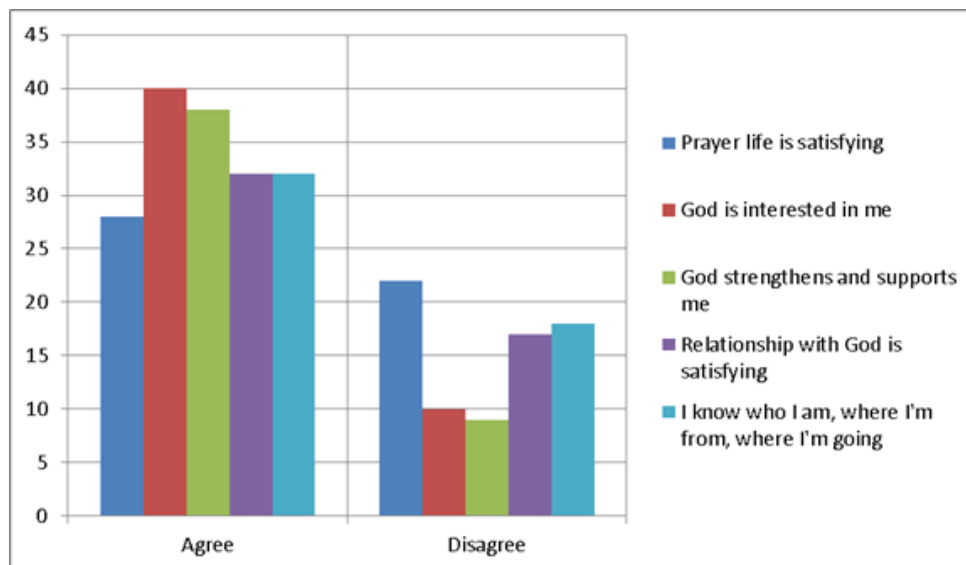


Figure 1: Alienation

² Social capital refers to those networks of relationships among people in a given society (STATS) which allow individuals to function effectively within that society.

³ In a survey of 53 countries, the Philippines ranks 3rd in church attendance where church attendance is defined as "the percentage of adults surveyed who claimed that they attend Church services one or more times per week". Globally it ranks as the nation with the 2nd highest number of Catholics (73,605,000) and the 13th highest number of Protestants (8,785,747).

Affiliation: Of those professing religious affiliation (n=45), the majority, or 82% of respondents indicated affiliation with Catholicism, 9% with other various Christian denominations, 6% indicated Indigenous, and other religious traditions, and 2% (or one person) indicated affiliation with Islam. These findings among male masseurs almost exactly mirrored the general religious landscape of the Philippines. Outside of the family, the church remains, it seems, the most pervasive institution in Filipino society.

Regarding affiliation as a construct of spiritual Well-being, that is, affiliation as it refers to a person's belief that they are loved and cared for by God and that they experience a positive relationship with God, 54% state that they strongly feel that they receive strength and support from God. An almost equivalent percentage (52%) strongly believe that God is interested in them personally. Forty percent of the respondents strongly feel that they have a satisfying prayer life.

Social Capital in the Church: Every respondent in this study received moderate to high scores on this scale, meaning this population has a relatively good sense of spiritual Well-being. All respondents indicated not only having "a faith" but also that it played an important role in their sense of self. Notably, although they felt that their faith played a significant role in allaying their sense of guilt, it did not have the same effect on their sense of shame. As such, the church was not acknowledged amongst these respondents as a place of nurturing community.

Church attendance however, and the regular practice of personal prayer seemed to be consistent with the respondents respective religious traditions. While researchers in this study anticipated finding instances of guilt and shame associated with attendance in their respective places of worship, this assumption proved to be true of only a minority. The majority of respondents indicated worship to be, in some sense, healing. They used descriptions such as lightened, free, feeling forgiven, etc., to describe their feelings after leaving their respective places of worship, and seemed to indicate these feelings to be their primary impetus for the pursuit of worship.

Given the societal (religious) stigma and discrimination associated with the overt expression of the sexuality explored here, one wonders at the high sense of spiritual Well-being possessed by the respondents. Perhaps the priority that meaning-making takes when one has to grapple with "differentness" may be presumed to have some effect, and may be a more plausible explanation for the high levels of spiritual awareness indicated by this group, as is often ascribed to people within LGBT Communities (McNeill, 1988; Williams, 2011).

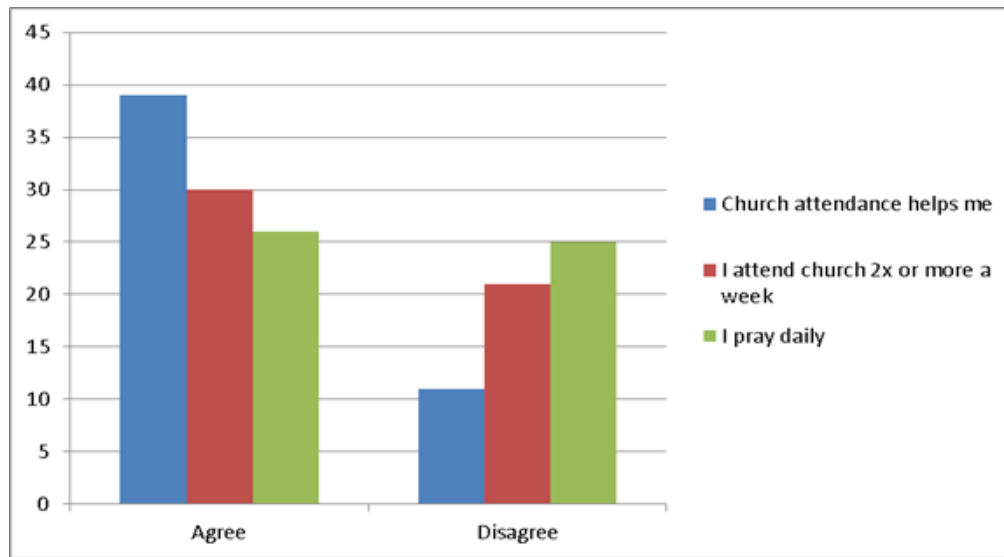


Figure 2: Religious Coping Strategies

Social Capital in their Families: For a majority of the respondents, either their families or their housemates were aware of their involvement in the sex industry and where it did not negatively affect intimacy, the respondents felt valued as husbands, fathers, brothers, relatives who supported the nuclear and extended family financially as expected even though such support cost both the individual respondents and their families their presence. The fact that so large a number of these respondents indicated an active functioning in heterosexual marriages may explain this unique situation. By and large, the MSM in this survey does not feel alienated from his family, despite admission of an awareness of complications it posed to intimacy with their wives and lovers.

Dissatisfaction with life: With regard to their perceptions of their present life situations, 42% strongly affirm that they are enjoying themselves and generally do not experience their lives as full of conflict or unhappiness. Thirty-two percent strongly disagree. The locus of their dissatisfaction however is the financial uncertainty of their situation.

Of those that responded to questions exploring their orientation to the future (n=45), 80% feel strongly that their lives have purpose, and that purpose is tied to providing for their dependents. As such, it appears, the respondents may circumvent the stigma of their work by rationalizing the fact of its role in helping them fulfill what they perceive to be their financial obligations to their dependents. As indicated earlier, between 80-98% of the respondents functioned in most of the socially prescribed roles of heterosexual males, while simultaneously functioning within the MSM sub-culture, and that with admittedly manageable dissonance between the two identities.

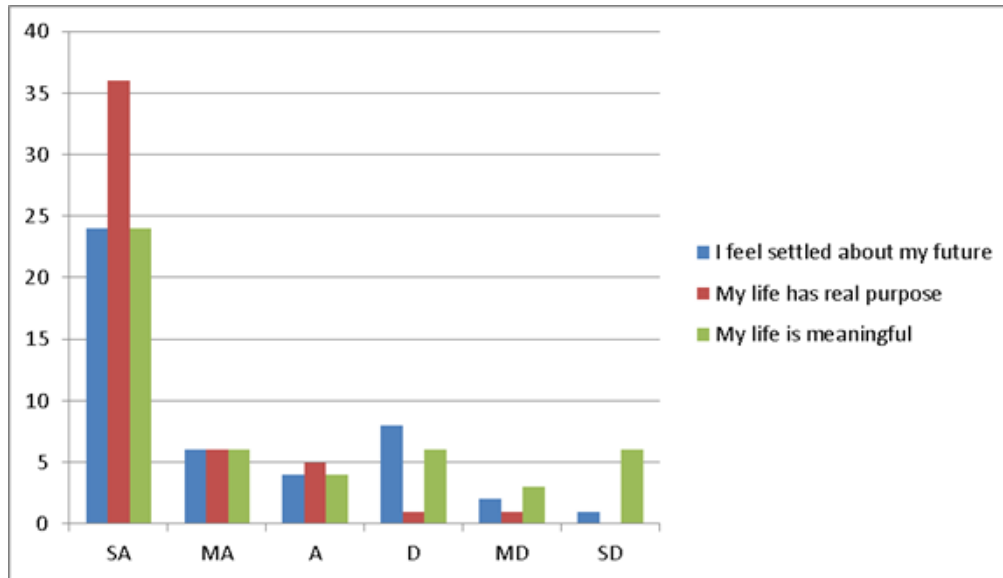


Figure 4: Dissatisfaction with life (future orientation)*⁴

Conclusions: No respondents scored low on the SWBS overall. During data collection and initial analysis, we felt that these high self-evaluations could have been due to the euphemistic nature of Philippine culture and that respondents might have been simply responding with idealistic, religiously-pleasing answers, rather than answers which they felt to be true. In further analysis, we compared the final spiritual Well-being results of male masseurs in Manila, with published SWBS results of other people groups from varying cultures, faiths, socio-economic groups, and educational levels. While there were a few apparent similarities within some isolated cases, only one group had near statistically identical results - a study amongst sexually-abused outpatients. Male masseurs in Metro-Manila were found to be within one percentage point, on all scales and subscales, including standards of deviation of this group.

Male Masseurs in Metro Manila (N=51)

RWB - Mean: 46.54; SD: 12.28
 EWB - Mean: 40.62; SD: 11.85
 SWB - Mean: 87.17; SD: 23.41

Sexually-Abused Outpatients (N=50)

RWB - Mean: 46.46; SD: 11.48
 EWB - Mean: 39.26; SD: 10.5
 SWB - Mean: 85.82; SD: 19.61

Perhaps these similarities reiterate the importance of recognizing the existential genderlessness of vulnerability extant in persons who live under sexually exploitive circumstances despite the distinctly different manifestation of said vulnerabilities (Valente, 2005; Dube, et. al., 2005).

⁴ SA= "Strongly Agree"; MA="Moderately Agree"; A="Agree"; D="Disagree"; MD="Moderately Disagree"; SD="Strongly Disagree".

General Recommendations

This study reiterates the common perception that massage establishments often serve as a venue and networking hub for sex work in the Metro Manila area. As such, initiatives for interventions and prevention in the sex industry need to target massage establishments. There should be an acknowledgment that sex work can and often *does* take place among employees, whether inside or outside of the establishment, and there is a need for provision of appropriate information for both the personal safety and sexual health of employees. This seems to be particularly true for masseurs working within mixed-gender massage establishments, where sexual services are not assumed to take place.

There is a need for both government and non-government organizations to take on and train youth/young adults coming from challenging social backgrounds, and to lobby socially responsible businesses to provide such youth with viable alternatives to sex work. In addition to this, it may be helpful to more actively advertise (and perhaps subsidize) existing vocational training programs (such as TESDA) and Alternative Learning programs (such as the Alternative Learning System, or ALS). A broader promotion of these existing programs could potentially help migrating provincial workers who may not be aware of what educational opportunities might exist for them. In addition to this, free or low-cost vocational and life skills training programs provided by NGOs or local churches would be greatly beneficial for young men working in this industry. Respondents indicated having a diverse range of vocational interests. While it would be ideal for NGOs to provide specific training for alternative careers, it is also important to allow these young men a level of choice in their own future work.

There is a strong need for the Philippine Government to be more realistic about the sexual practices of their citizens. Condoms, proper sexual health education, as well as information about available health clinics and sexual health services are needed for masseurs and sex workers. This is particularly true for males working within mixed-gender massage establishments, where sex work is assumed not to happen. Information regarding HIV and other STI testing and treatment needs to be made available for all at-risk groups, not only for those in gay-oriented establishments. Most of the respondents who had been provided with sexual health education and services in this study were from male-only establishments; however, freelance masseurs and those working in mixed-gender establishments indicated the lowest access to education and services, along with the highest level of misconceptions about the transmission of HIV/AIDS.

In addition to this, anecdotal information during data gathering seemed to indicate that many of the sexual health initiatives within Metro-Manila have been provided to the LGBT community. While continued advocacy to these groups is important, it should be noted that almost *no* respondents in this study (except for one) identified as homosexual. Thus, it is possible that a majority of these initiatives overlook the males in this industry in that they do not identify as members of the LGBT community.

It may be significant that two respondents in this study indicate that their first sexual experiences were with schoolteachers. While more information is needed on the prevalence of such instances anecdotal conversations seem to indicate an ability for young male students in some settings to “buy grades” with sexual favors. It is important that teachers receive education in child protection training in classrooms and that the strictest measures are applied to teachers who are found to be sexual abusers of children under their care. Robust child protection policies need to be implemented across all institutions under the Philippine Department of Education.

It is important that religious groups are able to serve the most vulnerable of their communities as Jesus did. Because faith institutions are present in every community, it is hoped that the findings of this research may serve as a rallying-cry for the development of a holistic framework for compassionate engagement with MSM groups. Churches should ensure that they are caring for sex workers in a compassionate, non-judgmental way. In addition to this, religious groups should ensure that they have created comprehensive Child Protection Policies (18 and under) and a vulnerable persons' policy (for those over 18) for those working and ministering under their responsibility and that every measure is taken to protect those who are vulnerable within their midst.

There is a need for the creation of strong educational resources for awareness and prevention of sexual abuse/exploitation, such as, the resources at www.good-touch-bad-touch-asia.org and the accompanying training developed by the Stairway Foundation and Love146. There is need for better advocacy and vigilance for children within their communities. It is important for parents and other adults to understand that boys are equally at risk of abuse as well as girls and that they are in need of protection. Additionally, there is a strong need for the development of safe and non-condemning places for children and young adults to discuss sex and sexuality. Youth clubs and churches should introduce education about sex, appropriate loving relationships, sexual abuse, and the dangers of pornography.

As the Department of Justice continues in its work with the PNP and DSWD to develop more comprehensive and progressive legislation on prostitution, efforts should be directed at criminalizing the purchase of sex, alongside the decriminalization of selling sex. It is important that these groups work together to ensure that the most vulnerable people in Philippine society are protected by the law, while the buyers and those exploiting others are prosecuted. In addition to this, it is important that all police officers and local government units receive adequate training and education, correcting any homophobic behavior and treating all prostitutes with dignity and respect -- both men and women alike.

It is important to understand that males in the sex industry are real people with real needs whose vulnerabilities are not limited to HIV/AIDS and sexual health. As such, our understanding of human vulnerability must move beyond simplistic gender dichotomies that frame males as resilient agents and females as vulnerable victims. Initiatives to create supportive communities in which secrecy is no longer necessary for the preservation of dignity

Recommendations for Future Research

While we believe this present baseline of data to be useful, we believe that it is ultimately insufficient. We see this initial study as a tool that merely describes the tip of an iceberg. Much more research in this area is needed to better understand the scope and breadth of male sexual exploitation in the Philippines. Further qualitative research would be useful to better understand the individual narratives and development of men in this industry. Research has found that many young men in the sex industry have had histories of childhood sexual abuse (McIntyre, 2005), yet very little is presently known about the childhoods and formative experiences of these young men. Beyond the small sampling of cases presented in this study, we understand that there are far more young males being used in the sex and pornographic industries that remain hidden. Much research is yet to be done.

Further investigation and research partnerships with the Philippine Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) would be useful to gain a better understanding of males in the sex industry, including their vulnerabilities, resiliency, and modes of entering into such work. While none of the respondents interviewed for this study stated to be under the age of 18 at the time of interview, several anecdotal

conversations with field partners and informants indicated the existence of networks of young children (males and females) that were available for massage / sexual services within Metro Manila.

Migration data indicates that several respondents entered the industry through “field recruiters” working within provincial areas, bringing young males to work as masseurs within Metro-Manila. More research is needed to understand the nature of these recruiters and what implications they might have on human trafficking issues. Additionally, research is needed to determine the extent that young males are trafficked outside of the country for sexual purposes and more research, particularly qualitative research, may also be needed to better understand the issues of supply and demand in this lucrative industry in the Philippines.

As previously mentioned, a number of cases within this study raise significant questions as to the experiences and sexual development of male children in the Philippines. Of particular interest were two respondents who indicate having their first sexual experiences at very young ages (3 and 6 years old) and another two of respondents who indicate having their first sexual experiences as children, with their schoolteachers. Research into the family backgrounds and childhood development of young males in the Philippines, including a national survey of school children to determine the prevalence of violence towards children (male and female) including sexual violence would be vital in developing an understanding of these groups. Data such as this could provide a strong foundation for future research on the exploitation of males and allow service providers to have a better and wider grasp of the incidences of male sexual abuse in the country. In addition to this, ethnographic research on the sexual experiences and sexual/social development of young males in the Philippines could be greatly useful.

Beyond sexual abuse, further ethnographic research on males in the Philippine sex industry would be helpful to better understand the various other outlets of male sex work and the sources of its demand in the Philippines. During data collection and other field research for this study, it became apparent that much of the male sex industry has moved into online directories and smart phone apps. Further research is needed to better understand the lives and vulnerabilities of the young males being advertised through these media.

Conclusion

This research seeks to provide a basis for understanding the vulnerability of young males working in sexually-exploitive careers in Metro-Manila to make them more visible and to start addressing their needs. While girls have long been viewed as victims, boys are victimized as well. For example, in the Philippines there are numerous studies on women and girls compared to a handful that even mention men or boys. Even when studies talk about the sexual exploitation of “children” they often really mean *girls*. In the current donor climate, it is more difficult to get funding for boys’ projects and research looking at the needs of males. It is vital that churches, NGOs and government groups adopt a holistic and balanced understanding of human vulnerability. Rather than approaching issues of human trafficking and sexual exploitation from a gender-based perspective, it may be more helpful to approach such subjects as a *human issue*, encompassing males, females and even the variety of identities in between. It is important that we understand males and females as human beings with hopes, desires, vulnerabilities and needs that require a thorough understanding in order to serve them appropriately, meeting their actual needs, rather than just their perceived needs. Without the development of such a balanced understanding, significant groups of vulnerable persons are at risk to remain as they are - hidden in plain sight.

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