

“STRIVE NO MATTER WHAT”

Assessing the Vulnerabilities of Female Massage
Workers in Phnom Penh, Cambodia

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FOREWORD

This paper is part of a series of research projects which explore the vulnerability and potential resilience of sexually exploited people that are often over-looked including men, women, boys, girls and transgender people. Love 146 believes that people can be exploited irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, ability/disability or sexuality.

The sex industry is evolving all the time and yet those seeking to address it may still be working on assumptions that are outdated and unhelpful. In recent years the massage industry has flourished in Southeast Asia and beyond. In scoping where to do the research we found more than thirty massage parlors in just one street in Phnom Penh. Although some research has been done with entertainment workers in KTV bars, including our own research, 'Hard on the Heart' (Meeks et al. 2012), very little has been done with masseuse women. This may be partly because research concern outside HIV has tended to focus on girls under 18 years and most masseuses are older than that.

The research has provided an opportunity for our partner organizations' social workers to talk to masseuse women and hear their stories first hand. It has provided a needs assessment for them and widened their perspective on who they might reach out to. The diverse perspectives they heard about their work varied from negative to positive, which seems to be a much wider range than other research we have done.

Like most field research, it leaves us with more questions than answers. How can we protect those women who are most vulnerable? How can stigma be challenged? How can the NGO including the faith based communities be challenged to reach out to women who no longer fit the child rights 'cut off' of 18 years old? Should we be more open to working more with the sex workers unions on issues that we agree on, to improve conditions for women in the masseuse industry?

"Strive no matter what!" expresses the resilience of many of the Cambodian women masseuse that were interviewed.

Glenn Miles PhD
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of a series of studies on various sexually exploited groups in Cambodia whose lives and circumstances have hitherto received little attention, this paper focuses on female massage parlor workers in the lower-priced massage places in Phnom Penh. While a previous study by Love146 examined the vulnerabilities of KTV hostesses (Miles & Meeks, 2013), this report aims at filling a research gap regarding vulnerable groups and at the same time function as a first investigation that may serve as a baseline for further in-depth studies of the situation of masseurs in Phnom Penh.

Over the course of three weeks, a total of 98 interviews were conducted in the Phnom Penh area that generated the data used for this research. The questionnaire used for this purpose entails seven main areas which are demographics, entrance into the industry, finances, relationships, stigma and discrimination, personal sexual history, sexual experiences at work, sexual health, substance abuse, physical violence, work satisfaction, and existential wellbeing. Covering a broad range of themes, those that do not focus on sexual exploitation and/or abuse are only touched upon briefly and therefore serve as an entry point for future studies in this realm.

Despite the great variance in results we found in regards to the vulnerabilities of the masseuses, there were striking similarities pertaining to the demographic characteristics of our sample. The large majority of the respondents was between nineteen and thirty years old (76%). Except for one, all of them had migrated to the city in search of a job or as a result of strained (family) relationships. Interestingly, quite a few of them had done so within the past eleven months (30%). That financial burden and monetary obligations to their families were issues for the large majority of the women became clear throughout the interviews. Furthermore, 62% had only worked in the massage parlor for a year or less. Many of the women also mentioned that they worked this job because they did not have any other choices to choose from. This answer came up as a reply to various questions, some naming it for example in response to the question why they chose this job as opposed to another; others mentioned it as to why they do or do not like their job.

In terms of vulnerabilities as part of or as a result of their work, 48% of women interviewed stated that at least some of their clients require more than massages only, with sexual intercourse comparatively being the most frequently asked for service. Clients were found to be the number one group of perpetrators of physical violence, sexual violence as well as stigma and discrimination experienced as a result of their job. 20% of the respondents reported to have experienced physical violence and 52% experience stigma and discrimination. Sexual violence was asked about in more detail; 24% of the women had experienced unwanted sexual touching, 52% had experienced harassment, 23% had been attempted to be raped and 6% had actually been raped in the past twelve months.

Despite these rather high percentages of women who have experienced abuse, these numbers leave a large number of masseuses who have not experienced any of the above. A major concern of these women, as well as of those who actually had experienced sexual, physical or verbal abuse, was that the stigma and discrimination they experienced simply for working in this industry. A recurring comment was for people to stop looking down on them because of their jobs and to stop assuming that all masseuses would also work as sex workers.

Whereas over 70% the masseuses reported to have felt respected or valued during the past year as a result of their work, many of them also affirmatively answered to feeling ashamed, guilty, or reported to have low self-esteem. Almost 70% reported blaming themselves whereas less than 10% blamed others. However, there does seem to be a general sense of agency over their lives among these women as 82% do not see themselves to still be working in the massage parlor two years from now, with 35% having a clear vision of where they are headed, having a specific goal, i.e. a job, in mind. Further supporting this notion, most women (82%) felt that there are ways for them to overcome the greatest obstacles they are facing in their lives right now, mainly financial needs and challenges regarding relationships.

This study finds is that many women working in the massage parlor industry are indeed vulnerable to various threats, including but not limited to sexual exploitation and abuse. Dependency structures within the massage parlor as well as with their families of origin and/or their own families seem to play a key role in the life situations of these female massage parlor workers that can be positive as well as negative, and in some cases both.

The most important message of this research is that each of these women has her own story. There is great variety among these women's experiences: some see this job as truly fulfilling and invite other women to join this line of work while others see this very job as the major source for the difficulties they have in their lives at the moment. Even though there seem to be patterns in the particular needs of these women, generalizations of them should be refrained from or at least very carefully examined.

INTRODUCTION

The passage of the Law on Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation in 2008 established the prohibition of any type of prostitution in Cambodia and led to the closing of brothels throughout the country. Rather than abolishing the sex industry and sexual exploitation as intended, however, the law has fostered the converting of sexual service provision into illegal, and therefore less observable, channels. Today, it is an open secret that certain establishments continue to offer services that cross the legal boundaries, amongst them a large number of KTV bars, beer gardens and massage parlors in Phnom Penh. Despite the large presence of human rights organizations in Phnom Penh, the experiences of women working in the massage industry have largely remained unexplored to date. In order to identify and meet the needs of these masseuses appropriately and effectively, dialogues about their work and life situations need to be created and maintained. The study at hand aims to be one first step into this direction by providing an initial exploration of the reality of life as perceived by female masseurs in the lower-priced massage parlors – those charging under 4 USD per massage – in Phnom Penh.

As have previous studies in this series, this report uses a mixed quantitative-qualitative approach to assess the vulnerabilities and resilience of these women. Field research was conducted using semi-structured interviews in Khmer to explore the vulnerabilities regarding primarily sexual exploitation and/or sexual abuse as part of or as a result of their work and physical abuse, but also (family) relationships, financial dependencies, sexually transmitted diseases, and low self-worth.

Massage Parlors in this context have to be understood as a room, usually on the ground floor, taking the space of a shop-front. They are often sparsely furnished with several bamboo or wooden beds behind curtains, sometimes bamboo partitions. It has a simple sign out front saying “massage 10,000 Riel”.

“Strive, no matter what” is not only the title of this study, it is also a quote by several of the interviewees when asked how to best overcome the greatest obstacles they face in their lives right now. This short but poignant statement reflects a number of recurrent characteristics of the women that were interviewed: not all, but many of them have gone through quite challenging situations of varying intensity. Yet, most of these women showed a determination and sense of agency over their lives that displayed impressive strength and perseverance. This combined with the expressive wish of the women not to be stigmatized neither as unworthy of respect nor as victims that are trapped in their current life situations lead to the decision to use this phrase as title for the report at hand.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

In order to ensure that a common understanding of the most central terms related to trafficking and sexual exploitation is shared by the readers of this

report, their interpretations as understood by the authors are outlined in the following.

According to the United Nations, **trafficking** is defined quite broadly in the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* (UN, 2000, p.6) as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.”

This general definition leaves room for each of the signatory countries of the protocol to create their own more specific interpretations of trafficking. In Cambodia, the *Law on Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation* (UNIAP, 2008, p.10) regulates the definition and criminalization of trafficking in article 13 and defines it as “the act of selling, buying or exchanging a person shall mean to unlawfully deliver the control over a person to another, or to unlawfully receive the control over a person from another, in exchange for anything of value including any services and persons.”

Sexual exploitation falls into a sub-category of trafficking and means “any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.”(UN, 2003, p.1). **Sexual abuse**, in contrast, is more specific and according to the UN means “the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions” (2003, p.1)

Since not only the vulnerabilities to sexual exploitation but also more broadly to abuse in general are part of the report at hand, it is helpful to also foster a common understanding of **gender-based** or **sexual violence** as defined by the UN General Assembly’s *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women* (1993, p.1)

“Violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;
2. Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;
3. Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.”

Despite a common agreement on how the above mentioned terms are being defined among the signatory countries, the **criminalization** of each of them, as well as sex work in general, varies greatly among countries. In Cambodia, not only is trafficking and sexual exploitation prohibited by the *Law on Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation* (2008), but it even goes so far as to criminalize any form of prostitution. While being intended to counteract trafficking and sexual exploitation, this criminalization that lead to the abolition of brothels drives sex trade underground. It then becomes much harder to find out in which cases sex is offered as a service voluntarily, for economic reasons, and when someone has actually become a victim of sexual exploitation.

METHODOLOGY

Over the course of 3 weeks in July 2014 a total of 112 questionnaire-based interviews were conducted with women working in massage parlors throughout Phnom Penh, Cambodia. As a preliminary research project the aim of this study was to provide a basis for recommendations for action within the NGO community as well as further research with this group of people, who up to now have been the focus of very little research.

Questionnaires in Khmer that had been translated from an initial English version of the survey were used. The interviews were conducted and recorded by a Khmer interviewer. A non-Khmer speaking interviewer acted as a reference for the Khmer interviewer for should any questions arise and recorded relevant field notes.

PILOT INTERVIEWS

The pilot study showed that the questionnaires were too long, and many respondents or their managers were cutting the interviews short because during the course of the interview clients came in who needed to be attended to. It was suggested that to create a private atmosphere for the interviews it would be beneficial for respondents to sit in the tuk-tuk with the interviewers; however this was not viable as the women were not comfortable leaving the premises.

Following the first week of interviews, a major restructuring of the questionnaire was necessary in order to shorten it and include more relevant questions, the final outcome of which is the questionnaire displayed in **the appendix**. In addition to this, more in-depth training was conducted for the Khmer interviewers. Due to the extensive changes in the questionnaires, the first week of interviews was treated as a pilot week, and the data was not used in the analysis of results.

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The questionnaire used was adapted from and complemented previous related studies conducted with female KTV workers in Phnom Penh, and male massage workers in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap. Sections covered in the survey were similar to these prior studies: demographics, entrance into the industry,

finances, relationships, stigma and discrimination, personal sexual history, sexual experiences at work, sexual health, substance abuse, physical violence, work satisfaction, and existential well-being. The breadth of topics covered in the interviews was surveyed using a mixture of open-ended and multiple-choice questions, and interviewers were encouraged to note down any additional relevant quotes.

RESPONDENT RECRUITMENT

Interviews were conducted in 10,000 Riel (\$2.50), \$3 and several \$4 massage parlors in the Phnom Penh area, following mapping of roads and areas. The sampling method used was then convenience sampling: to be granted interviews the researchers would ask permission from a manager if they were in sight, as well as the masseurs themselves.

Respondents were informed about the purpose of the interview, and were told they had the right not to respond or end the interview at any point. In some cases an interview was conducted over several sittings because the respondent had to serve a client. Upon completion of the interview a \$2 phone card was offered to the respondent as a token of gratitude. When more than one woman in the same parlor was willing to participate, several interviews would be conducted in the same location.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The ethical guidelines outlined by Jewkes (2008) and Astbury (2012) were adhered to throughout this research. Prior to conducting the interviews informed consent was obtained from respondents, and right to withdraw or not answer was clearly stated. If a respondent expressed a desire for help of any kind they were given a Precious Women¹ business card with numbers to call if they wished to enquire about alternative employment, counselling, skills training, and more. This information was only offered if the women asked for it, seeing as the research was explained as not having an interventionist agenda. In addition, interviewers and researchers were sensitive to the safety of the respondents; if a manager was present their permission was obtained, and if managers asked the interview to be stopped or the respondent appeared to be in danger in any way then the interview would be brought to an end. No images were taken during the research and anonymity of the interviewees as well as confidentiality of the data was ensured.

LIMITATIONS

TRANSLATION/ LANGUAGE

Due to the inability of the researchers to speak Khmer, it was difficult to effectively play the role of monitoring the quality of data collected, for example when clarification or elaboration of an answer was necessary. Furthermore, many of the nuances of answers given in Khmer were lost since after the

¹ Precious Women is an NGO working with women who wish to exit the sex work industry by providing counseling, support, referral opportunities and vocational training.

translation of the answers into English was often simplified version of the initial answers given.

PRIVACY

A major limiting factor was that the women were all interviewed in their place of work, often in the presence of other people. Their managers were often present and frequently stated at the beginning of the interview that no sexual services were permitted to be sold at their massage parlor, potentially placing pressure on respondents to support this message within interviews. Interviewing the women in a private space proved difficult as the interviews were conducted during their working day, so the women were unable to leave the massage parlor. Where possible, chairs were pulled up away from other people and the interviewers were clear to ask people listening in to leave before sensitive questions were asked. Interviewers would lower their voices or change the order of questions to minimize the number of extra people listening in on interviews, generally being sensitive and responsive to the respondent's potential discomfort.

LITERATURE REVIEW

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN ASIA

Sexual exploitation through prostitution is rife worldwide, and is prevalent in Asia, affecting people of all genders and ages. According to a UN multi-country study published in 2013, sexual violence is pervasive throughout Asia and the Pacific to varying degrees. In Cambodia and Indonesia specifically, a larger proportion of men reported perpetrating sexual violence rather than physical violence towards their intimate partners (Fulu, 2013, p. 30). Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, and Indonesia also stood out for having the highest levels of gang rape and non-partner rape (Fulu, 2013, p. 41). Throughout all countries in the study, the most common reason given for rape was sexual entitlement of the men who perpetrated the rape (Fulu, 2013, p. 44).

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION IN CAMBODIA

Cambodia has been a prime focus of anti-trafficking efforts due to the high prevalence of trafficking and sexual exploitation in Cambodia. However, exact numbers of trafficked people in Cambodia have not been, and arguably cannot be, established (Brammer & Smith-Brake, 2013, p. 14). As early as 2001, Cambodia was officially declared a "source, destination and transit" country for trafficked people, particularly highlighting the high levels of sex trafficking and exploitation of children (Department of State, 2001, p. 35). A recent study by Chab Dai, a coalition of faith-based anti-trafficking NGO's in Cambodia, shows that the nature of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking has evolved over the past decade, in part due to the anti-trafficking efforts of the Cambodian government and NGOs. As a result of these efforts, commercial sexual exploitation has shifted from establishment-based brothel settings to entertainment-based settings, including KTV, beer gardens, and massage parlors (Brammer & Smith-Brake, 2013, p. 14). Since it is illegal to solicit sex in Cambodia, sexual services are not

officially provided by such establishments. However, a number of studies have shown the existence of sex work in such establishments (Phlong, Weissen, Holden, & Liu, 2012, p. 8; Miles & Meeks, 2013; Davis & Miles, 2012). One such study, researching the life experiences and HIV risks of young entertainment workers in Cambodia, estimated that roughly 35,000 women are employed in such establishments in Phnom Penh alone (Phlong et al., 2012, p.15). This study focuses its interviews on women working in KTVs and beer gardens, with only four participants being from massage parlors and therefore recommended further research be conducted to assess the vulnerability of massage parlor women to sexual exploitation.

Trafficking in Cambodia has shifted in recent years in order to allude anti-trafficking efforts, whilst still preserving the virginity trade, through shifting from brothel-based exploitation to entertainment-based exploitation (Brown, 2007, p. 8): one third of female entertainment worker participants of the study conducted by Phlong et al. (2012) lost their virginity through it being sold, one third experienced rape as a first sexual experience, and the remaining third stated that their first sexual experience had been consensual (p. 10). According to Brammer and Smith-Brake (2013), the increasing numbers of non-brothel-based sex work correlates with higher instances of reported gang rape, or “bauk” (p. 14).

Anti-trafficking work in Cambodia is directly influenced by international and local media focus, as well as by the interests of NGO donors, causing the primary focus of anti-trafficking efforts to be on brothel-based sexual exploitation of women and sexual exploitation of children. As a result, attention is diverted away from the complicated and less sensationalized reality of Cambodia’s sexual exploitation within the entertainment industry. Research has been found to be the number one influencing factor in driving the anti-trafficking movement, (Brammer & Smith-Brake, 2013, p. 69) therefore this research study aims to provide an initial surveillance of whether massage parlor women are in fact vulnerable to sexual and other forms of exploitation (as recommended by Chab Dai (Brammer & Smith-Brake, 2013, p. 76).

FACTORS OF VULNERABILITY

When exploring the vulnerabilities of women working in the massage industry, it is important to make a distinction between women who do *not* offer any sexual services to clients and women who engage in sex work for either a limited time period or indefinitely. A number of common factors have been identified that may push women in Cambodia into a context in which sexual exploitation is more likely to occur (Brammer & Smith-Brake, 2013, p. 30). Debt, poverty, illness, lack of employment opportunities, little access to education, and family obligations/breakdown in familial structures were all cited as heightening the likelihood of a woman’s entry into sex work.

POVERTY AND DEBT

Identifying poverty as a vulnerability factor can be misleading as it cannot be assumed that being poor will invariably lead to sexual exploitation within the massage industry. However, poverty is a driving force behind many of the

vulnerability factors experienced by masseuses, including, but not limited to, illness, educational attainment, and migration. In many cases poverty and debt comes hand-in-hand, with families falling deeper into poverty because of the large sums of money that they owe. A study entitled ‘The Ties That Bind’ by Brown (2007), investigating the migration and trafficking of women and girls in Cambodia for sexual exploitation, found that 40% of Khmer women and girls credited their entry into commercial sex work to levels of debt incurred by their families (p. 9).

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Phlong et al.’s (2012) study that focused on young entertainment workers in Cambodia found that many of the participants who described their families as ‘poor’ attributed their inability to leave sex work to their lack of skills and training, as well as to low levels of education. (pg. 27) None of the female entertainment workers interviewed had graduated high school, reducing their ability to find work outside of the sex trade (Phlong et al., 2012, p. 27).

CROSS-COUNTRY AND NATIONAL MIGRATION

Chab Dai’s “Journey of Change” research on stakeholders’ opinions on the influences on counter-trafficking in Cambodia identifies ethnicity as “another, more unique, vulnerability factor” (Brammer & Smith-Brake, 2013, p. 32). Ethnic Vietnamese make up the largest minority group in Cambodia, approximately two million people. The study, ‘At What Price, Honour?’, conducted by Reimer (2006) researching the trafficking of Vietnamese girls in Phnom Penh for sexual exploitation, recognizes that their position as a marginalized minority makes them especially vulnerable to exploitation due to factors such as statelessness, low economic status, and lack of formal education and jobs (p. 43). Chab Dai acknowledges the way that movement and vulnerability are related, with the risk of exploitation increasing when a woman’s normal social networks of protection are no longer accessible. They do however, acknowledge that “migration does not necessarily lead to exploitation” (Brammer & Smith-Brake, 2013, p. 32).

Factors relating to migration within a country often form the basis of counter-trafficking campaigns, as people are made vulnerable to sexual exploitation as a result of migration to a new city (Brown, 2007, p. 33). Migration research in Cambodia has previously focused on internal and external trafficking of people in Cambodia for sexual and labor exploitation (Maltoni, 2007, p. 3). However, in recent years it has become clear that a significant internal migration pull-factor is the garment industry. Providing over 250,000 primarily Phnom Penh-based jobs particularly for young women, this industry is the most effective rural to urban pull-factor in the country (Maltoni, 2007, p. 3). This has led to further research regarding the vulnerability of these garment workers to exploitation, including sexual exploitation, both within and outside of the factories (Webber et al., 2010, p. 165). Phlong et al.’s (2012) study of entertainment workers found that a significant number of them initially moved to Phnom Penh in order to work in the garment industry but later moved to entertainment work because it was better paid (p. 24). Whether similar trends exist for massage parlor workers in Phnom Penh is a point of interest for this study.

VULNERABILITY TO ABUSE

When it comes to abuse of sex workers, the Cambodian Prostitutes Union (CPU) and Cambodian Women's Development Association (CWDA) (2002) found that 72% of respondents in their survey have experienced human rights violations by the police (p. 2). Furthermore, police attitudes have been found to frame their view of sex workers as "vulnerable and easy targets for abuse..." (Derks, 1997, p. 5) leading to many sex workers feeling threatened by police violence. Furthermore, the illegal status of sex establishments has been found to exacerbate women's vulnerability to police violence, "often [meaning] that they exist in a corrupt and symbiotic relationship with local authorities." (Brown, 2007, p. 12) This issue represents a vulnerability to exploitation, including sexual exploitation, experienced by sex workers in their day-to-day lives. Phlong et al.'s (2012) study found that as well as having experienced domestic violence as girls, female entertainment workers were commonly faced with violence and harassment in their day-to-day work, often from clients. Many of these women viewed sexual harassment as part of their job, and would not even report instances of rape to the authorities as it is assumed that no legal help will be offered to them (p. 27 & 28).

CULTURE

Asian cultural factors are frequently cited as key factors behind sexual exploitation, including filial piety, low status of women and children, and the association of virginity with "purity" that cannot be retrieved once lost (Chung, 2013, Asian Cultural Factors Contributing to Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation section, para. 1). Since this is both a sensitive, as well as extensive topic, Cambodian culture and values and in how far they relate to sexual exploitation are examined in more detail in the following section.

CAMBODIAN CULTURE

The cultural makeup of Cambodia intermixes fragments of the country's historical backdrop with its more recent market-driven conditions and the striving towards democratic ideals for equality between men and women championed by Western NGOs and development agencies. This has created a double standard for Khmer femininity, which renders it increasingly difficult to outline what is and what is not considered to be cultural taboo for women. Women can easily be caught in a complex interplay of traditional gender roles and modern ideals.

The present conditions of sexual exploitation in Cambodia extend an invitation to consider the possible role that various aspects of Khmer culture may have played in creating the current situation.

SILENT ENDURANCE

Historically, the Khmer people have faced many challenging repercussions since the Pol Pot/Khmer Rouge era. According to Hoefinger (2013) and Walsh (2007), the UNTAC period between 1991 and 1993 was a major catalyzing factor for the expansion of the Asian sex industry. As American troops, later followed by Western mass tourism, sought their "R&R" (Rest and Recreation) from Khmer

and Thai women, the government made no efforts to consciously inhibit the scaling prostitution. Today, female entertainment workers are forced to restrain emotions that are not conducive to entertainment, even in the face of substantive sexual harassment (Brown, 2007, p. 32).

Many young women have chosen not to disclose their experiences of rape or other forms of sexual exploitation, due to the expectation of a common reaction by their immediate families to blame them for not having made a sufficient effort to preserve their sexual purity (Brown, 2007, p. 30). The traditional expectations for respect of elders coupled with a culture of shame, especially in regards to a family's public image, makes it especially difficult to disclose instances of interfamilial sexual abuse (Hoefinger, 2013, p. 90).

The traditional practice of Theravada Buddhism, known for shaping Cambodian national identity, has been undermined over time. After the Khmer Rouge and the prohibition of all religious practice ended, Buddhism was restored as the national religion. However, the religion's moral authority and leadership in the community may have broken down with the surmounting corruption of governing authorities (Walsh, 2007, p. 15). Still, Buddhist practitioners make up the religious majority in Cambodia, and as such, many see one's current life circumstances as cumulative product of 'karma' in return for the deeds done in one's previous life, including rape experiences and instances of domestic violence (Walsh, 2007, p. 15).

Historical evidence underscores the culture of silence in the face of sexual violence. For instance, in Kasumi's (2008) report on survivors of the Khmer Rouge, "quite a number of eyewitnesses and victims broke thirty years of silence for the first time" (p. 10). This underscores the traditional proverb, "If a skirt is torn, do not tear it more" (Hoefinger, 2013, p. 91) that expresses how dwelling on or talking about negative experiences is often viewed as just making a situation worse instead of being healing. Kasumi's report also demonstrates the weight such local attitudes bear on a woman's voice.

WESTERN UNDERCURRENTS

In the post-war reconstruction of Cambodia, society has been rebuilt on a foundation of capitalist and democratic principles borrowed from the West. Coupled with the mass of Western tourists, Western funds have made Cambodia now home to the most NGOs in the world, harboring the influence of countless Western development agencies that have contributed to a cultural transformation for the Khmer people (Lilja, 2009, p. 138). New images of possible female identities that run counter to Khmer tradition have spread throughout Cambodia. On the one hand, Western notions of relative equality and popular political participation have sought to legitimize the voices of women and opened up new political possibilities for them (Lilja, 2009, p. 139). And yet, the objectification of women has further contributed to the demand for sexual exploitation wherein the notion of female subordination to men is fortified (Lilja, 2009, p. 139). Thus, this ambivalent representation of women has polarized the ideal female identity, characterizing them with some elements chiming harmoniously and others striking dissonance with traditional Khmer culture.

Long-standing convention, illustrated in the eminent Khmer literature such as the *Chbap Srei* and *Chbap Proh* (both signifying a customary code for women and men respectively) (Walsh, 2007, p. 10) has depicted Cambodian women as the mentally inferior sex (Lilja, 2009, p. 141). Not only have men been responsible for reproducing these discriminating discourses, but women have also played their part in perpetuating gender stereotypes by spreading destructive 'truths' about themselves and their inadequacies across generations (Lilja, 2009, p. 141).

FAMILY BREAKDOWN AND SUBSTITUTION

There are studies that show breakdown in family relationships, specifically pertaining to sexual and domestic abuse, as one of the main reasons for initial entry into the sex trade. Many women and girls flee their households due to extreme patterns of abuse, subsequently entering semi-parental relationships with their managers, further propagating their exploitation (Brown, 2007, p. 8). In fact it is argued that "in some cases, a woman's relationship to her household can be indicative of her social vulnerability" (Derks, 1997, p. 9). A study of Cambodian women trafficked into Thailand found persistent social characteristics such as divorce and other symptoms of family dysfunction in the sample group (Derks, 1997, p. 34). The International Organization for Migration reiterate how this effect is further compounded especially if there is the presence of dependents for whom the woman is financially responsible (Derks, 1997, p. 38). Phlong et al.'s (2012) research with entertainment workers found that many "reported experiencing lack of emotional or financial support from parents [and] physical abuse... for others, the loss of one or both parents made life difficult... For all the [female entertainment workers]... the desire to be free of their family problems was a key reason for leaving home" (p. 27).

At the same time, Hoefinger's study of 'professional girlfriends' (2011) finds that women who migrated from the province to Cambodia's urban centers were inclined to develop tight-knit homosocial ties with their female coworkers - a kinship system that provided an immediate alternative to the missing familial network that may have once supported them in their hometowns. The experience of strangers being brought together resonates with the atypical kinship networks that were formed shortly after the Pol Pot era in the 1980s and early 1990s (Walsh, 2007, p. 12). The high casualties of young men in conflict resulted in a demographic imbalance where two thirds of the population was female - many of whom were widows and left to raise children on their own (Walsh, 2007, p. 11; Hoefinger, 2013, p. 85). To lighten the financial and emotional burdens during this time, many single mother households combined, and the practice of polygamy became more acceptable as a solution to the sheer loneliness that many of these women faced (Walsh, 2007, p. ; Hoefinger, 2013, p.). Such networks foster social cohesion through the sharing of material resources, childcare responsibilities, and informal sex education (Hoefinger, 2011, p. 254). One's workplace can especially provide a sense of belonging and mutual understanding, as well as a platform where the expression of emotional, spiritual and physical pain can be shared in light of being stigmatized by society for the 'loose' culture with which their work is affiliated (Hoefinger, 2011, p. 252).

GENDER BIAS

Brown's (2007) report suggests that practices related to sexual exploitation were "found to rely and exploit gender-based norms that blame and stigmatize women and girls for involvement in the commercial sexual exploitation industry, regardless of the patterns of force and violence that have led to their presence there" (Brown, 2007, p. 10). While cultural determinism is not a viable explanation for the reasons why women are sexually exploited, gender discrimination is a common reason why women voluntarily migrate into the sex industry. As Hoefinger (2011) was able to discern during her in-depth ethnographic study with bar girls in Cambodia, "women have to deal with pervasive gendered double standards, with strict moral and social codes, with the burden of maintaining family honor via their chaste sexuality, as well as filial financial obligations..." (p. 248). Cultural norms tend to stigmatize women for 'immoral' sexual behavior, as well as blaming them for ending up in this type of work in the first place. This is coupled with a bias towards men that excuses their sexually promiscuous behavior (Brown, 2007, p. 9). A more detailed investigation of Cambodian culture and how it impacts the susceptibility of women to sexual exploitation is given in the following.

DUTIFUL DAUGHTERS

In Cambodian society, daughters, rather than sons, have traditionally been responsible for looking after both their immediate and extended family. They are held accountable to their children, ageing parents and siblings, in return for the debt they owe their parents for raising them (as cited in Sandy, 2009). This cultural precedent has supported patterns of exploitation between parents and their children, by condoning an often irreversible duty of the child towards the parents, known as 'khun' (Brown, 2007, p. 32). Consequently, female labor migration to Cambodia's urban centers in pursuit of sex work can be seen as a justifiable means of self-sacrifice to send sufficient funds home to their families, who often reside in their native province (Sandy, 2009).

CONSENT VS. COERCION

With the rise of concerns in the Western world regarding the topics of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation, light has been shed on the grey areas that exist both practically and academically within this realm. The issue of consent versus coercion is one such topic that has garnered much debate. There are two ends of the spectrum to this discussion—one end is comprised of those referred to as abolitionists while the other is referred to loosely as those who recognize sex work (Davidson, 2002, p. 84). Abolitionists do not support the commodification of sex as sex workers do, but rather see it as the result of victimization and coercion. In contrast, those in favor of the sex worker position believe that sex workers have a choice as individuals working within an institution made up of freely chosen "careers" (Kotiswaran, 2008, p. 581).

In 2000, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime served as a milestone for international collaborative efforts to stop organized transnational crime. The product of the convention—the Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons—was signed by 117 states

and ratified by sixty-two (as cited in Lansink, 2004, p. 10). Included within the Protocol is the United Nation’s Trafficking Protocol cited in the definitions section of this report. The 2004 International Law Association Conference Interim Report on Trafficking in Women sheds light on the debate between different feminist groups and NGOs that took place at the Palermo convention regarding the terms of the Trafficking Protocol. The two opposing parties cited in the Report include the International Human Rights Network (abolitionists) and the Human Rights Caucus (sex worker advocates) (Lansink, 2004, p. 10).

The International Human Rights Network proposed that the Trafficking Protocol include both forced and consensual prostitution, while the Human Rights Caucus argued for the Protocol to exclude voluntary migrant sex work. From the debate surrounding the definition of the Trafficking Protocol stemmed two feminist ideologies regarding trafficking. Simm’s (Lanskin, 2004, p. 10) description of these two camps is cited in the Report. As a result of the disagreements between the two groups, some of the terms laid out in the Trafficking Protocol were intentionally left undefined by international law (Lansink, 2004, p. 9). These terms include “exploitation of the prostitution of others” and “other forms of sexual exploitation”. The Human Rights Caucus proposed that by leaving these terms undefined, individual governments would be given the freedom to decide on the criminalization of non-coerced adult sex work. This proposal was accepted, leaving much freedom with individual governments to define coercion and the subsequent criminalization of it.

The study “Examining life experiences and HIV risks of young entertainment workers in four Cambodian cities” bases its recommendations on the Continuum Volition model. Developed by Save the Children, the model was intended to be used for identifying appropriate interventions for different types of transactional sex (Phlong et al., 2012, p. 41). The distinctions made between consensual, economically driven, and coerced sex indicate that the debate over coerced versus consensual sex must expand its borders—especially in the context of developing nations—to include economic factors. Additionally, one’s position on the model must not be assumed to be fixed, and movement between the three sectors should be examined.

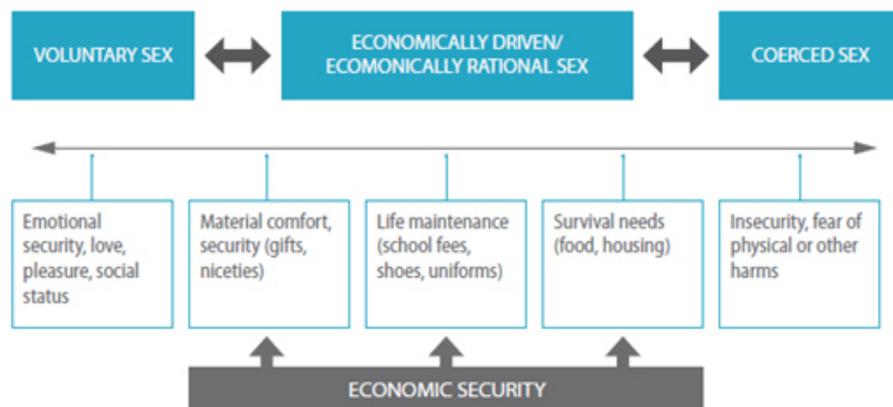


IMAGE 1

The Continuum Volition Source: MoEYS (2012)

Sandy's "Sex Work in Cambodia: Beyond the Voluntary/Forced Dichotomy" (2006) brings to life the area of the sex industry in Cambodia that falls into the economically driven sex work. By forming relationships with female brothel sex workers and conducting in-depth interviews with them, Sandy pulled apart the idea that coerced versus voluntary entry into sex work is as black and white as is often assumed. She writes, "...the dominant model for understanding sex work internationally, the free/forced dichotomy, may not necessarily reflect the reality of sex workers' lives from developing nations" (Sandy, 2006, p. 4). Sandy cites the manifesto of the sex worker coalition Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, which asks that sex workers not be victimized by models like the free/force dichotomy. "...we systematically find ourselves to be targets of moralizing impulses of dominant social groups... As powerless abused victims with no resources, we are seen as objects of pity..." (Sandy, 2006, p.4). Even in developing nations there is an increasing demand from those who identify themselves as autonomous sex workers for more recognition as such.

In the effort to distinguish between sex workers in Cambodia that are forced into their position and those who freely choose it, a study was conducted by Steinfatt in 2003. His nationwide census of female sex workers working in direct and indirect sectors of the industry produced an estimated 19,000 workers (as cited in Sandy, 2006, p. 456). Steinfatt's study concluded that around 20.2% of those women were trafficked, supported by other studies that estimate that between 72.9-81% of Cambodia's sex workers voluntarily choose their work (as cited in Sandy, 2006, p. 456).

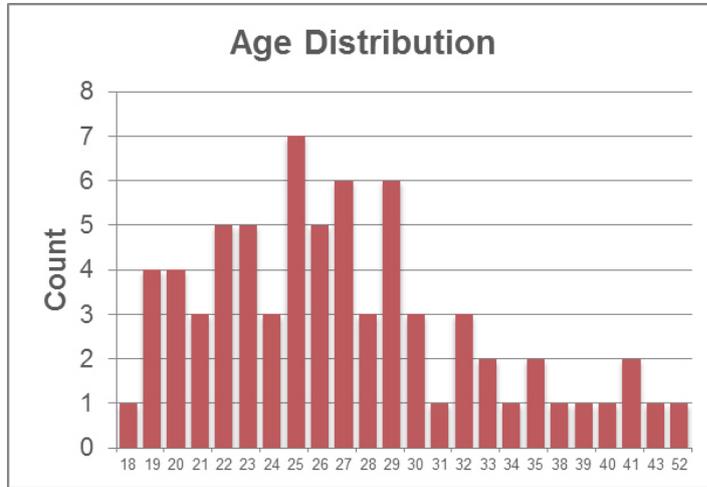
In a case study presented in her report, Sandy seeks to personify the type of sex worker whose choice of work demands respect from those who might label her as a victim of coercion. Linda's story—typical of many women in the sex industry—starts with the birth of a child from an ex-husband. She had to provide for her child and mother, yet had no skill training and very little education. Due to these circumstances, every job she sought turned her away. Finally, Linda chose to enter brothel-based sex work. The irony of her situation is revealed, however, in the last sentence of her statement: "I had nothing else to choose from" (Sandy, 2006, p. 463). In light of this case study, the question raised by feminist activist MacKinnon (1993) is applicable: "If prostitution is a free choice, why are women with the fewest choices the ones most often found doing it?" (as cited in Lansink, 2004, p. 11).

Another of Sandy's interviewees, Zoë, admits that she is aware of the economic constraints that greatly limit her choices. However, Zoë does realize that by choosing to engage in sex work she can provide an education for her siblings and livelihood for her parents (Sandy, 2006, p. 458). Despite the limitations of her life situation, Zoë's desire to provide a better life for her family fuels her choice of taking a job that is less than ideal. The risk and vulnerability factors that sex workers face attract the attention of abolitionist movements. However, Sandy's concluding recommendations to "view the choices made by some women through the dual lens of structural constraints...and women's individual autonomy in sex work, however limited it may be" (2006, p. 466) holds much weight in the coercion versus consent debate.

RESULTS

DEMOGRAPHICS

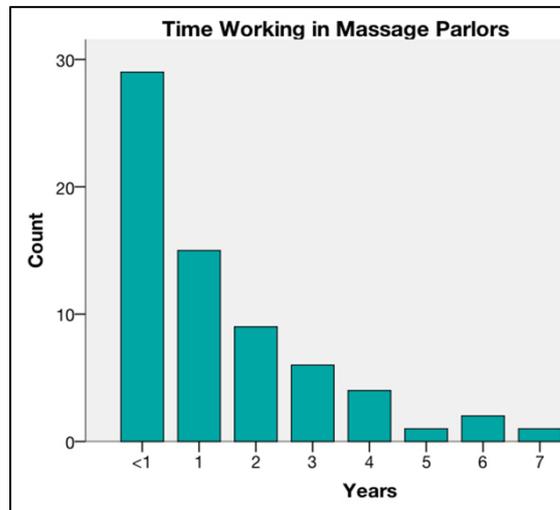
AGE



GRAPH 1

The age range of respondents was 18-52 (as displayed in graph 1) with a mean age of 27. A little over three-quarters of respondents (76%) were between the ages of nineteen and thirty.

TIME IN MESSAGE PARLOR



GRAPH 2

The greatest number of women (nine or 13%) began working in the massage industry at the age of twenty-five, while the next most common entry age was eighteen (seven women or 10%). Entry ages of nineteen, twenty-one, and twenty-nine had five respondents (7%) each. The amount of time that women in this sample [n=71] had spent working in massage parlors was calculated and is displayed in graph 2. Twenty-nine (41%) women had worked in the massage parlor industry for less than a year. As the lengths of time working in the massage industry increase, the number of respondents decreases.

MIGRATION

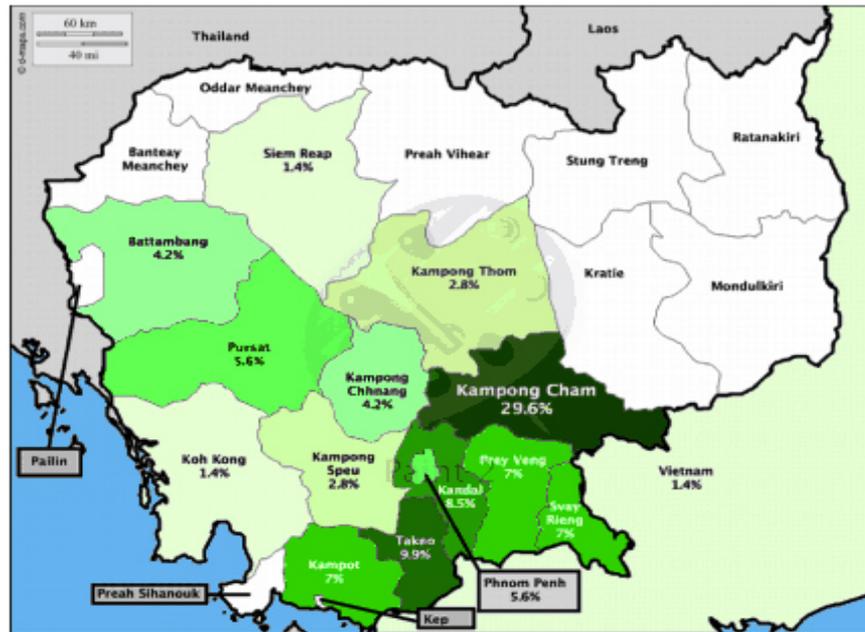
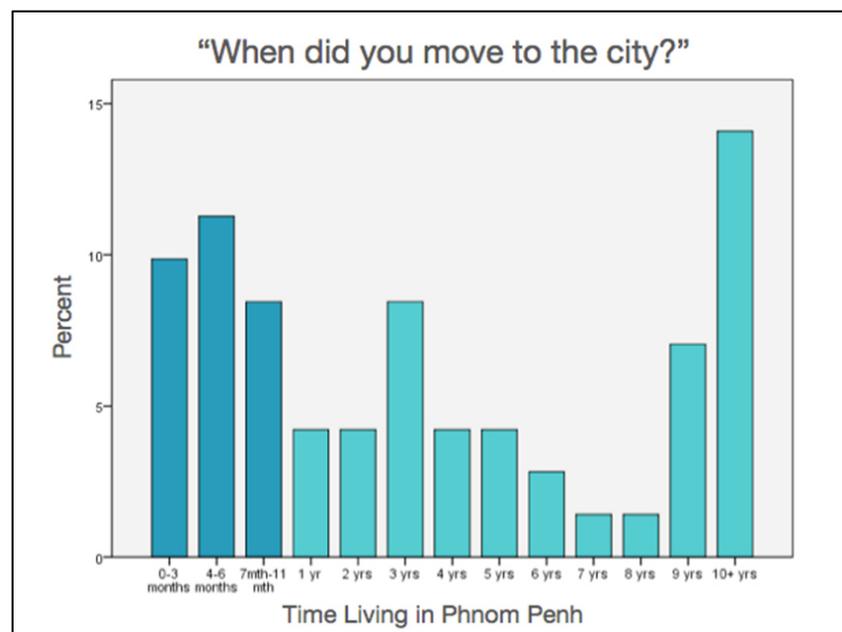


IMAGE 2

A majority of respondents (93%) were not from Phnom Penh, with only four (6%) stating they were from the city (refer to map). Many women (21 or 30%) came from the province of Kampong Cham, followed by Takeo being home to seven respondents (10%). Although several Vietnamese women were encountered within the massage parlors, only one was successfully interviewed. Language barrier was a significant limiting factor in interacting with Vietnamese masseurs, but many also displayed hesitancy of interacting with the researchers or participate in the interview.



GRAPH 3

A large proportion of women (twenty-one respondents or 30%) had only lived in Phnom Penh for less than a year, i.e. eleven months or less (reference graph 3).

REASONS FOR MIGRATING TO PHNOM PENH

Respondents who had migrated to Phnom Penh primarily had moved in order to earn money (forty-nine respondents or 69%). Of these respondents, three (4%) specified that they were supporting their families or that their families were poor. Relationship issues were also significant reasons for moving to Phnom Penh, as six women (9%) cited divorce/broken heart as their primary reason for migrating and two respondents (3%) said they moved because of family breakdown. Furthermore, two women (3%) answered that they came to Phnom Penh because they ran away from home, which may further imply that family breakdown played a role in their migration. One woman's quote highlights this effectively,

"Every girl is forced to work here because they don't have a choice, are poor, hurt, and come from broken families."

These two primary reasons for migrating to Phnom Penh (economic reasons and breakdown of family relationships) overlap with why these women chose massage work over other types of work.

ENTRY FACTORS

REASONS FOR CHOOSING MASSAGE INDUSTRY WORK

When asked why the respondents entered the massage industry as opposed to other work, economic benefits (good money, family poverty, free accommodation/food, paying off debt) were cited by a total of 20 respondents (28%). Many respondents echoed the following quote,

"The work is not hard and it's easy to earn money."

A significant number of women cited the benefits of the work as their primary reason for entering the massage industry. Eleven women (16%) said it was "easy work," very few, that is five (7%), said either that it was a good place to work or a good job, and two women (3%) said that they chose this work because of the freedom massage parlor work offered. For example, one woman stated,

"This place is easy and I have a lot of free time."

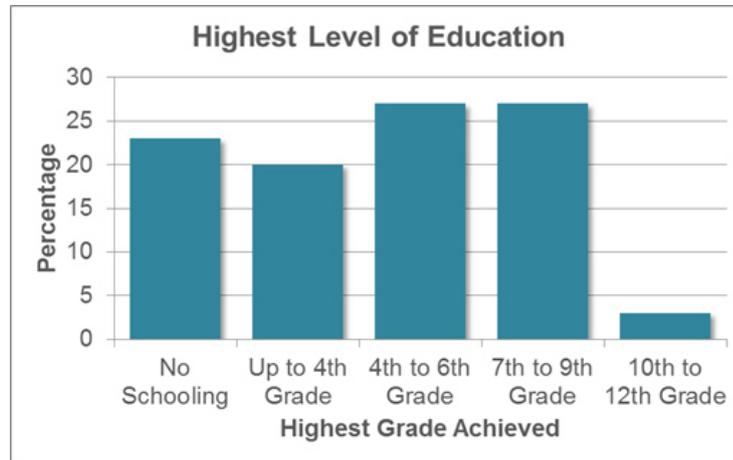
In contrast, seventeen respondents (24%) entered this line of work for negative reasons. Specifically, twelve respondents (17%) stated that they entered this work due to lack of choice while one woman stated that she entered because she was unaware of what the job entailed. Four women (6%) cited physical limitations such as illness or disability as the primary reasons for entering this work as opposed to another job, as exemplified by this quote from a respondent who was severely visually impaired:

"I went out of my home to work and earn money to fix my eyes because my parents don't have the money to help me." (Case Study Three)

Divorce/breakup was the reason for choosing massage work of three respondents (4%).

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

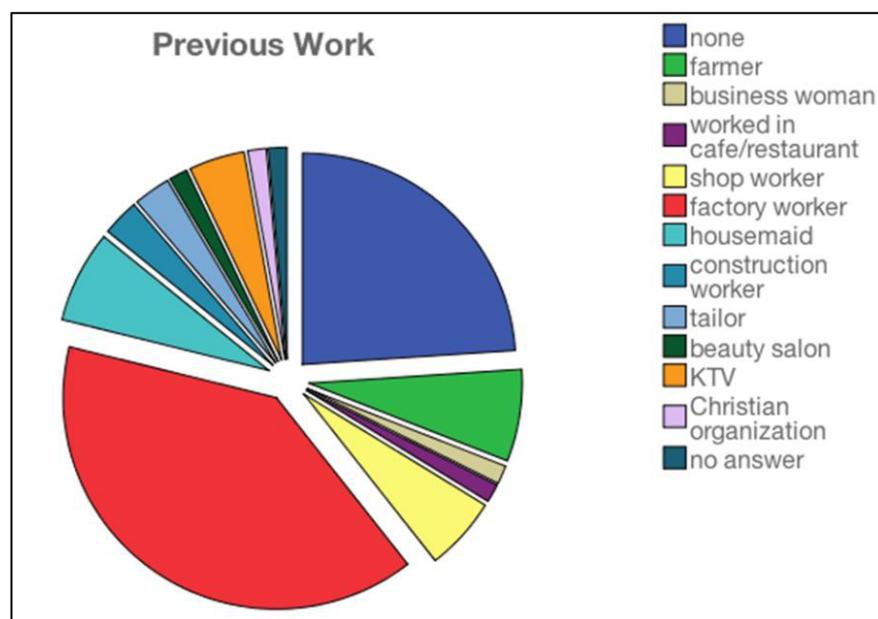
With respects to educational attainment, the overwhelming majority of respondents had not achieved past 9th grade (97%), and seventeen respondents (24%) had no schooling at all (see graph 4).



GRAPH 4

PREVIOUS WORK

Seventeen respondents (24%) had never worked prior to entering the massage industry, possibly due to relatively young ages of respondents or because so many were new to the city. The remaining respondents had previously worked a large variety of jobs immediately prior to entering the massage industry, with a major part of the sample (39%) having worked in a garment factory directly prior to their massage parlor job. Over half of respondents (51%) had at some point worked in the garment industry, which appears to be a major pull-factor for young Cambodian women to move to the capital. The two primary reasons given for leaving the garment industry [n=36], as noted in graph 5 were the need for greater income (nine respondents or 13%) and becoming too sick to work in the factories (eight respondents or 11%).



GRAPH 5

HOW THEY CAME TO BE IN THIS WORK

The greatest number of women, twenty-five (35 %) came to work in the massage parlors because of a friend. This is followed closely by women finding the job themselves (twenty-three respondents or 32%), which may be linked to the large number of respondents who had newly migrated to Phnom Penh from the provinces, thus losing family networks and ties. Other routes into massage work that respondents cited were through an extended relative (eight respondents, 11%), through recruitment (five respondents, 7%), through neighbors (three respondents, 4%), through siblings (three respondents, 4%). Four respondents (6%) gave no response.

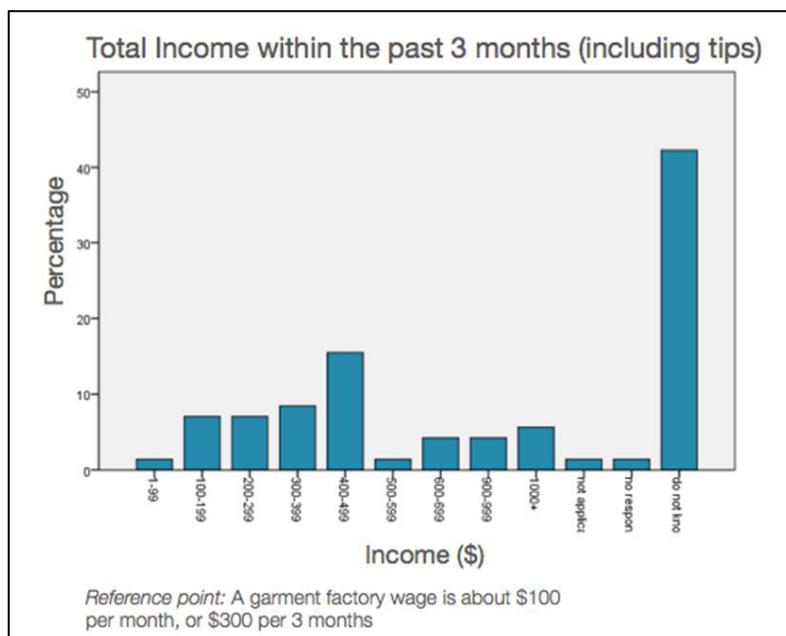
When asked if they had siblings also working in the massage industry, nine women (13%) answered affirmatively, leaving sixty-two women (87%) with no siblings working in the industry.

INCOME & FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

INCOME

The majority of respondents (fifty-eight respondents or 82%) stated that they do not receive all of the money they earn, instead receiving a portion of their earnings. The most common amount received was 30% of the price of the massage, as stated by thirty-eight women (54%). The standard price of a massage in the massage parlors targeted was \$2.50; therefore these respondents would receive \$0.75 per massage.

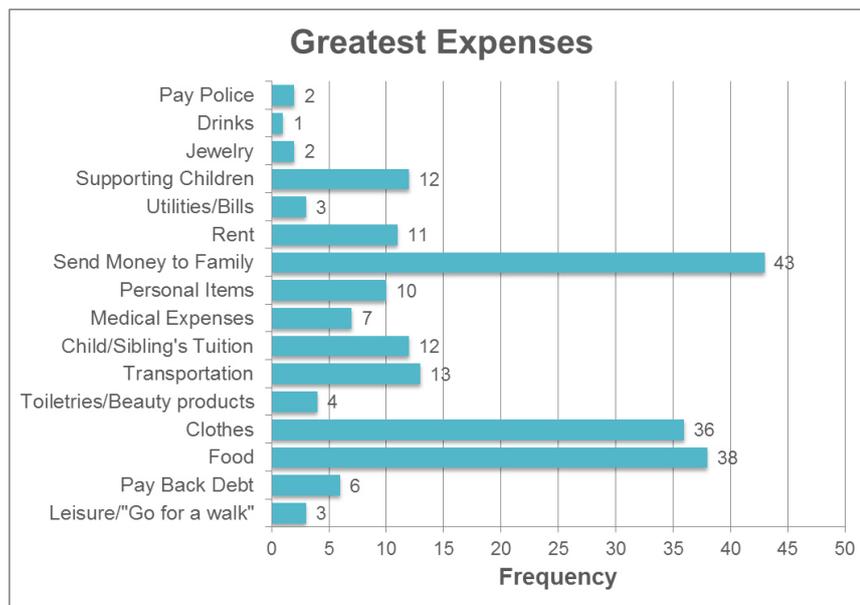
The income earned by respondents within one week, including tips, ranged from \$2-\$300. However, twenty women (28%) responded that they did not know what they had earned. In some cases, respondents were very unsure of their weekly earnings and only produced an answer when probed by the interviewer. Furthermore, some women told interviewers that they were not paid weekly, or that their earnings varied greatly week to week.



GRAPH 6

Respondents were also asked how much their income was in the past three months, including tips. As graph 6 shows, between \$400-\$499 in three months was the most frequently cited category of income (eleven respondents or 16%), followed by \$300-\$399 (six respondents or 9%). These incomes are higher than the average garment factory worker’s salary, which typically would be up to \$300 earnings in three months. Again, thirty respondents (42%) said that they did not know their income over the past three months.

EXPENSES AND FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS



GRAPH 7

When respondents were asked about their five greatest expenses, only eleven women (16%) cited paying for rent as an expense. This was unsurprising, considering that most respondents (sixty-three or 89%) lived within the massage parlors. Some parlors even covered the costs of meals, leaving some women with on the cost of purchasing “snacks” as their major expense. The most often mentioned area of expense was sending money back to families, listed forty-three times by respondents (61%).

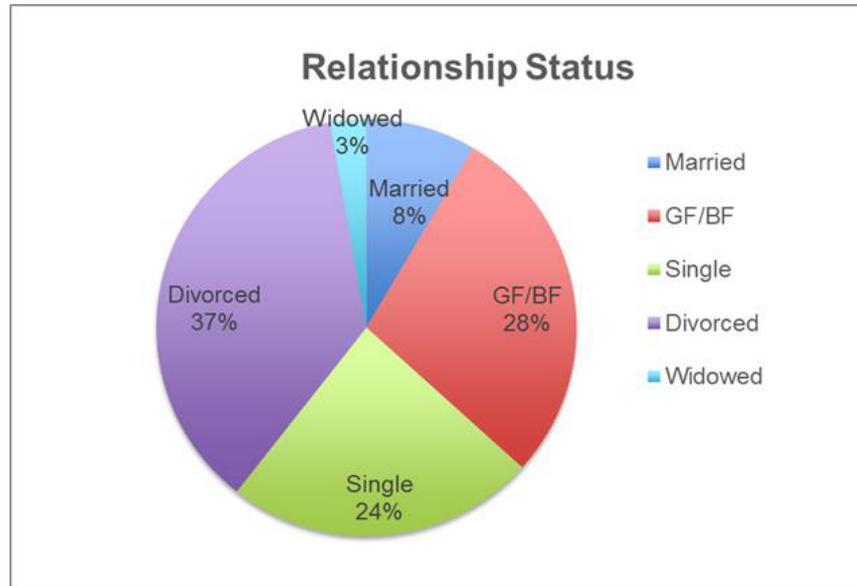
Most respondents (fifty-eight or 80%) had financial obligations to their families, sending money back to them and supporting parents and/or children. In addition to this, thirty-nine respondents (48%) stated that their families owed some amount of debt, which ranged from \$1-\$500 to over \$5500.

RELATIONSHIPS

RELATIONSHIP STATUS

When asked about their relationship status (see graph 8), respondents were given the prompts of “married”, “has boyfriend”, and “single”, yet twenty-six women (37%) specifically responded that they were divorced. This is significant when considering the relatively young ages represented by the sample. Of the twenty-six respondents (37%) in relationships, seven (10%) had been in their relationships for eleven months or less. Nine (13%) had been in the relationship

for one to two years and ten respondents (14%) had been in their relationships for five years or more.



GRAPH 8

Many women raised concerns regarding how their work would affect their relationship with their significant other, including fear of being abandoned or unloved.

"I'm afraid that my boyfriend will find out and stop loving me. I have been hurt before by my husband, so I don't want to get hurt by my boyfriend."

Nine (9%) respondents indicated that problems with their significant others were some of the biggest obstacles they were currently facing [n=98]. When asked if their partner was aware of their work in the massage parlor nine women (13%) said that their partner did not know while twenty-one (30%) stated that their partner was aware (the remaining 57% of respondents do not have partners).

FAMILY/HOMETOWN AWARENESS

Unlike the many of women who said that their partner was aware of their work in the massage parlor, a majority of women answered that their families and hometowns were unaware of their work in the massage industry. Forty-three (61%) respondents said that at least some of their family members were not aware of their work. Similarly, forty-nine (69%) women responded that people in their hometown were also unaware of their work. One respondent added,

"I have no value if they [people in my hometown] know I work here."

The top three given reasons for not telling their families about their work included "did not tell them/does not want them to know" (sixteen respondents or 23%), "afraid of their reaction" (seven respondents or 10%), and "does not want to worry or disappoint them" (seven respondents or 10%). Several women

elaborated about their family situation and the repercussions they anticipated if they were honest about their job.

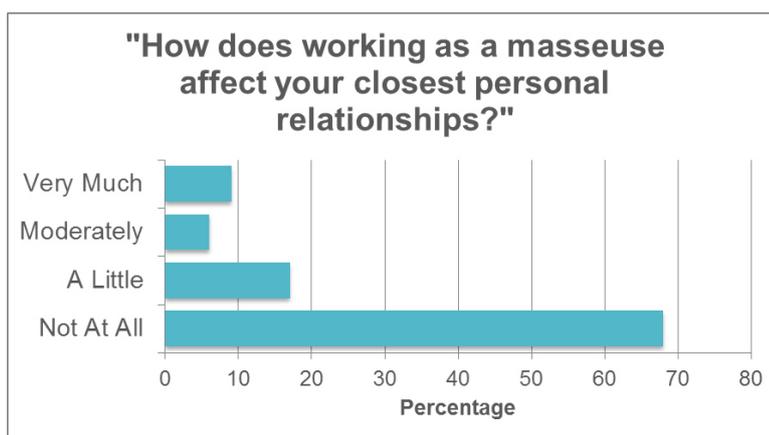
"I'm afraid to tell them [my family] because they will blame me."

Another woman responded that she feared physical violence from her family and that "no one in my family can help to support me."

Some respondents gave more specific reasons as to why their hometowns were not aware of their work. Four (6%) feared being looked down on. Four (6%) said they were too ashamed to tell anyone and two women (3%) did not want to negatively impact her family's reputation.

WORK AFFECTING RELATIONSHIPS

When asked if their line of work affected their closest personal relationships, forty-nine respondents (69%) - about the same number that had not told their families or hometowns about their work - said that their work did not affect these relationships at all, as seen in graph 9. Twelve (17%) women responded that their closest personal relationships with affected "a little" by their work, six (9%) said their relationships were affected "very much", and four (6%) responded "moderately".



GRAPH 9

Respondents were next asked to elaborate more specifically about how their relationships were affected. The most common response, given by twelve (17%) women, was that they were looked down on by those they were close to and that their reputation was compromised. Three (4%) women answered that they were harassed by their closest friends and family, while two (3%) said they knew their friends and family did not respect their work, which affected those relationships. One respondent said that their family and friends thought she was a sex worker.

VULNERABILITIES - PRIVATE

FIRST SEXUAL EXPERIENCE

Respondents were asked about their first sexual experience for two reasons, the first being that it was important to know if this experience had taken place within the massage parlor context. Secondly, whether or not many respondents

had experienced rape (a possible vulnerability factor for sex work) was also important to know. When asked at what age they had their first sexual experience, the ages given ranged from fifteen to twenty-six, the most stated answer being age eighteen (sixteen respondents or 23%). Ages close to eighteen were also common. The majority of women had their first sexual experience with their husband (forty respondents or 56%) and eight (11%) with their boyfriend. Only four respondents (6%) had their first sexual experience with a client and five (7%) with a stranger.

Forty-five respondents (64%) have had their first sexual experience in their house (54%), their relatives' home (1%), the partner's (6%) or a friend's house (3%). Fourteen respondents (20%) state to have had it in a hotel or guesthouse, two (3%) at their workplace and two (3%) at school.

Out of the sixty-four women who were willing to share this information with the interviewers, fifty-eight (82% of total sample) reported their first sexual experience to have been wanted and consensual, whereas six women (9%) said their first experience was unwanted and forced. Despite the relatively low number of respondents who said that they had forced first sexual experiences, their cases are individually significant. Some of these cases represent extreme cases of abuse, such as the following:

"I've had sex 7 times with a 50-year-old man since I was eighteen years old. I was hurt and bled."

VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ABUSE

In order to gain an understanding of how women in this sample viewed topics like violence or sexual abuse, the respondents were asked how they would define rape. Sixty-three women (64%) [n=98] gave similar definitions of rape much like this response,

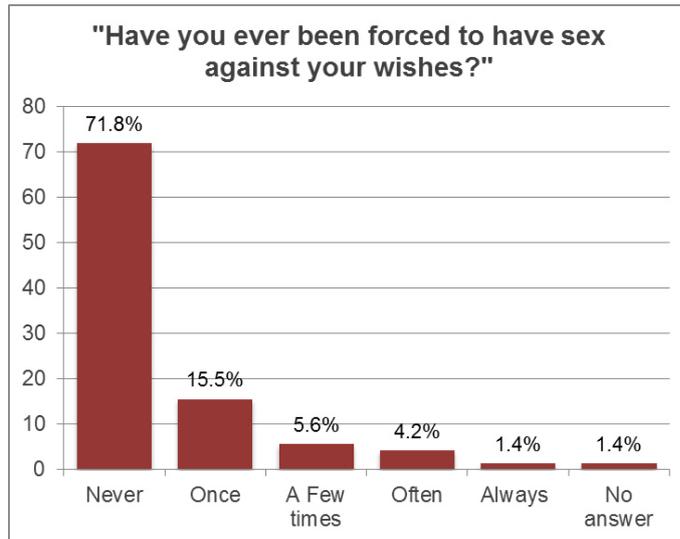
"Rape to me means forcing someone to have sex".

The remaining twenty-one respondents (21%) stated that they did not know how to define rape. After defining 'rape', respondents were asked to explain what they thought 'consensual sex' to be. Almost half (forty-seven respondents or 48%) of respondents [n=98] described consensual sex as a situation of mutual affection between both parties. Another 45% (forty-four respondents) of respondents described consensual sex as an agreement between all parties or a willingness to have intercourse with someone. Three out of these respondents included the possibility of consensual sex in the context of a commercial transaction involving an agreement between them and their clients. Only nine women (9%) did not know how or did not want to define consensual sex.

It was a priority to learn about the prevalence of rape in the lives of the respondents. To ease into the topic, respondents were asked whether they were aware of other women being forced to have sex against their wishes. Just above 30% (twenty-two respondents) of the sample stated they were aware, while eight women (11%) mentioned having seen forced sex on TV or in the news.

Next, respondents were asked whether they themselves had ever been forced to have sex against their wishes. The results varied, as graph 10 shows: over 70%

of women said they had never been raped, leaving over a quarter (nineteen respondents or 27%) that had been raped at least once in their lives.

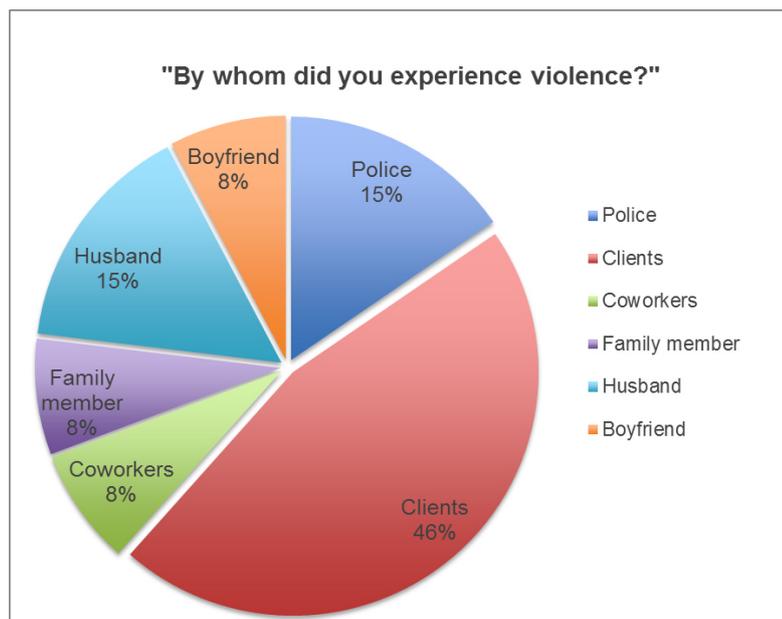


GRAPH 10

In addition to sharing about sexual violence, respondents were asked if they experience physical abuse or violence in their private lives. Ten respondents (14%) reported experiencing physical violence by an intimate partner or husband in the past 12 months.

"My husband is jealous and beats me every day"

"My current husband beats me every day because he is jealous. We've been together for a long time."



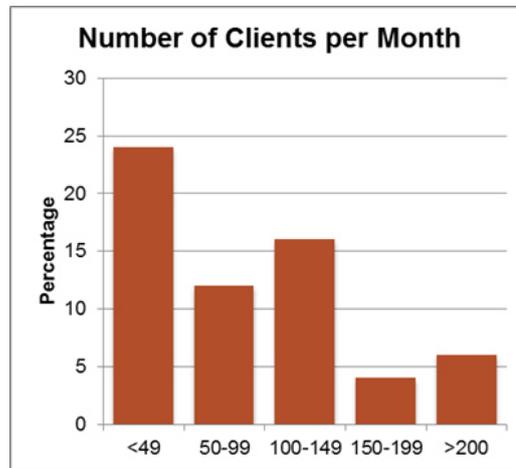
GRAPH 11

VULNERABILITIES EXPERIENCED AT WORK

In addition to the vulnerabilities they face in their personal lives, respondents were asked about vulnerabilities that they potentially faced within or because of their work in the massage parlors.

CLIENTELE

In terms of clientele, twenty-four respondents (34%) were found to have less than fifty clients per month (see graph 12). Out of these respondents, eight had about thirty clients per month and six respondents had forty clients per month [n=71]. Ten respondents (14%) had 150 or more clients, with one woman having three hundred clients. The age range of clients was found to be between sixteen and eighty-seven years of age. Respondents who admitted to having sex with clients were asked if they ever had sex with foreign clients. Twenty women (28%) answered that they did have sex with foreign clients, with the majority of these being Chinese and 'barang' (Caucasian foreigners).



GRAPH 12

SERVICES REQUIRED BY CLIENTS – MESSAGE ONLY

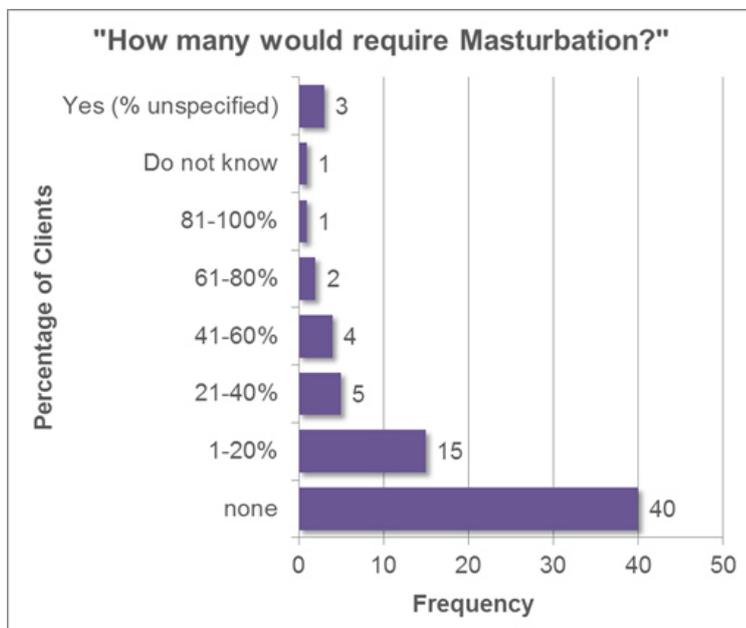
Respondents were asked a series of questions about the services that their clients required, including massage, masturbation, oral sex, and sexual intercourse. These questions and the answers given indicate the number of clients who asked for extra services, but it does not imply that these demands by customers were necessarily catered to. From the frequencies they gave compared with the number of clients they had per month, percentages were calculated. Graph 13 displays how many clients required massage only, with fifteen women (21%) indicating that all of their clients require further services beyond just massage. On the other hand, twenty-three women (32%) said that 81-100% of their clients do not require any further services.



GRAPH 13

SERVICES REQUIRED BY CLIENTS – MASTURBATION

When asked how many of their clients required masturbation, the majority (forty respondents or 56%) answered that none did (refer to graph 14 below). Fifteen women (21%) said that 1–20% of their customers asked for this service, followed by five (7%) who said that 21-40% required masturbation. One woman responded that she did not know how many required masturbation and three women said that although they did in fact have clients who required masturbation, they didn't know the number.



GRAPH 14

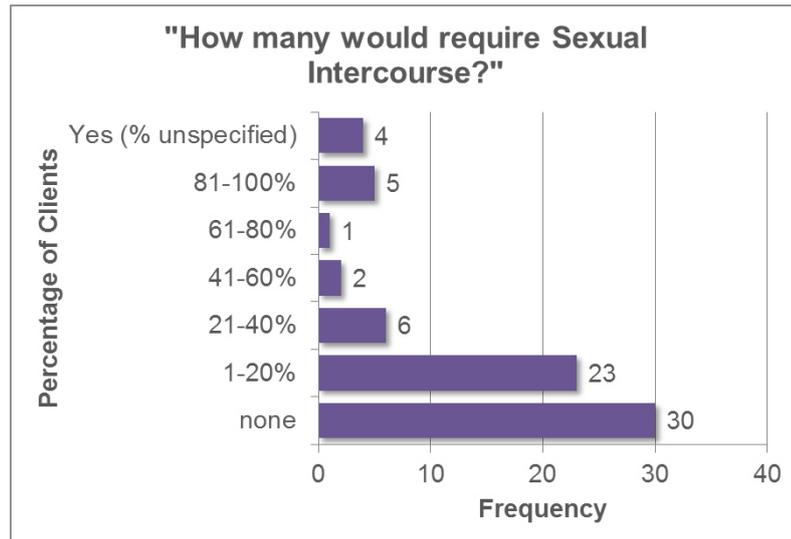
SERVICES REQUIRED BY CLIENTS – ORAL SEX

When asked about both giving and receiving oral sex, many respondents expressed amusement or aversion. Confusion between what it means to give versus receive oral sex may have been present, thus the answers given for receiving and giving oral sex were combined. The vast majority (fifty-eight

respondents or 82%) said that none of their customers asked for this service, leaving the remaining respondents covering a largely even spread of categories.

SERVICES REQUIRED BY CLIENTS – SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

Less than half of the respondents said that none of their clients required sexual intercourse (thirty women or 42%) (see graph 15). Those who said that 1-20% of customers were asking for sex amounted to twenty-three women (32%). Four respondents (6%) said that ‘yes’, their clients did require sexual intercourse, but did not provide numbers.



GRAPH 15

LOCATION OF SEX SERVICES

When asked about the location of their sexual encounters, thirty women (42%) said that they would meet clients in guesthouses, three women cited the massage parlor as the location for sexual services, and two women said both. Occasionally, masseuses were encountered who told researchers that they would be fired if they had sex within the massage parlor, therefore, these numbers may be seen as very conservative estimates of the actual situation.

AWARENESS OF SEX WORK WITHIN THE MESSAGE PARLOR

During the qualitative data analysis, it became clear that several women mentioned that they were unaware prior to entering massage parlor work that they could be required to provide sexual services. This is exemplified in the following quotes:

“People brought me here, just told me I work only to do massage. But it was not what they said; it is massage with sex in the working place. I normally have sex with clients at the guest house, not at my working place, but I do not like it.”

“Before I came to work here, I did not know that I would be required to do sexual services; now I know.”

Without prompting, fourteen respondents (15%) [n=98] gave quotes similar to these, suggesting that women are vulnerable to working in a massage parlor industry without being aware that they may become involved in sex work at some point or another.

PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

Respondents were asked whether they had experienced physical violence in the past twelve months because of their line of work. Fourteen respondents (20%) claimed to have experienced physical violence as a result of their work. Of these women [n=71], six (9%) said that they were subject to physical violence 'often', with four women (6%) identifying their experiences as occurring only once. Another four women said they experienced physical violence 'a few times'.

Six of the fourteen respondents who had experienced physical violence said that clients perpetrated the violence, followed by husbands (two respondents), and police (two respondents). Co-workers, family members, and boyfriends were each cited as perpetrators of violence by one woman each. Violence perpetrated by clients was also described by some respondents:

"The clients who come here to do massage, some of them are soldiers or policemen with guns, they talk rudely to me and threaten me and they don't want to pay me."

"When customers ask for sex I negotiate a price with them of \$20, but when we have sex and they don't give me money, I ask for it but then they point a gun at me"

SEXUAL ABUSE

The women were asked whether they had experienced different forms of sexual abuse in the past three months, including unwanted sexual touching, sexual harassment (both verbal and emotional), attempted rape and actual rape. Fifty-three women (75%) said that they had never experienced unwanted sexual touching and seventeen respondents (23%) confirmed that this had happened to them one or more times. Only one woman did not answer the question. One example of this kind of experience is exemplified in the following quote:

"Some clients tried to touch and sexually harass me but I fought them off. Clients became angry and never came back to the parlor."

The majority of women (thirty-seven respondents or 52%) said that they had at some point in the past three months been harassed either verbally or emotionally, with the frequency of these experiences ranging from once to fifty times. However the most common answer to this question was simply 'yes', with fourteen women (20%) confirming that they had experienced harassment but did not specify how often this had happened. One woman described this as follows:

"Clients that are soldiers look down on me and try to harass me. When I did not allow him to, he said to me, 'You are a cheap girl and a prostitute.'"

In regards to attempted rape, sixteen respondents (23%) said that they had experienced this at work. Five women (7%) said that this had happened once to them, with more women answering only 'yes'. One woman said that six times in the past three months

"[...] clients want to rape me, but I managed to escape."

Another respondent said that she had almost been raped twenty times. Encouragingly, however, the majority (fifty-four respondents or 76%) said that they had not experienced attempted rape in the past three months. Actual rape in the past three months was cited by four respondents (6%). One extreme case was shared by a respondent, shedding light on the perhaps rare but important plight of some masseuses:

"Many police officers wanted to rape me and 20 of them forcefully raped me."

When we asked the women who sexually harassed them, clients was the most common response (cited 36 times), followed by police (cited 5 times), co-workers (cited twice), and finally one woman saying it was her by her friends. One respondent also said that 'everyone' sexually harassed her. Only three women gave no response.

STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION

To gain a more holistic understanding of massage parlor workers, respondents were asked whether they faced stigma and discrimination due to their work. There was a roughly even split, with thirty-seven women (52%) replying that they had experienced stigma or discrimination as a direct result of their work and thirty-four respondents (48%) saying they had not. When asked from whom they experienced this stigma or discrimination, twenty-one women (30%) identified their clients as the top perpetrators. Fourteen (20%) said friends, nine (13%) identified their neighbors, five (7%) identified police, and two (3%) said family were top perpetrators of stigma. Only one woman said her co-workers stigmatized or discriminated against her and one woman gave no response. Several respondents shared more in-depth responses:

"If my boyfriend knew that I work here he would not love me anymore because this job is not good. If my family knew about me work, they would hate me and kick me out of the house. Even though now I'm doing bad work, I will try to build a new life with a good reputation."

HEALTH

SEXUAL HEALTH

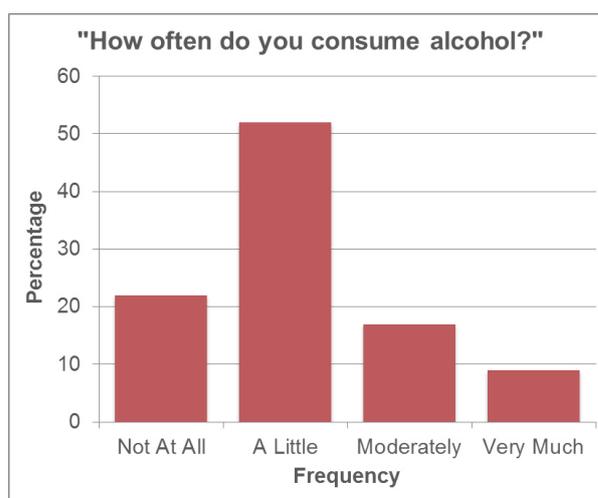
Due to the more usual high emphasis placed on sexual health and HIV prevention by the government and NGO community, sexual health was not extensively covered in this survey so that a more holistic survey could be given. However, the respondents were asked a few basic questions regarding their sexual health. Eight women (11%) received sexual health education from an NGO while another eight had received education in their hometowns, did they did not specify from whom. Seven respondents (10%) had received sexual health

education within the massage parlor. Even though thirty women (42%) had never received sexual health education, a majority of respondents knew how HIV was transmitted and/or prevented. Fifty-seven respondents (80%) indicated knowledge that HIV is transmitted through sexual intercourse. However, more women (sixty-four or 90%) were aware that HIV is prevented by using a condom during sexual intercourse.

Respondents were asked if they had any rashes, lumps, or ulcerations in their anus/mouth/genital area, which may be symptoms of HIV. Seventeen respondents (24%) answered that they had had experienced some or all of those symptoms within the past six months. Additionally, fifteen women (21%) had experienced urethral discharge, pain upon passing urine, and/or pain in their genital area within the past six months.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Respondents were asked about their alcohol consumption and illegal drug use. A majority of women (fifty-five or 78%) consumed alcohol, ranging from thirty-seven (52%) who drank “a little” to six (9%) who drank “very much”, leaving twelve respondents (16.9%) who drank “moderately”. Out of those who drank alcohol, eleven (16%) consumed alcohol either “sometimes” (eight respondents or 11%) or “often” (three respondents or 4%) during sex with clients.



GRAPH 16

Three respondents (4%) admitted to using illegal drugs. One did not know the name of the type she used and the other two acknowledged that they used ‘ice’ or crystal methamphetamines. Two of these women said that they “sometimes” use drugs with clients. One respondent elaborated:

“I use drugs because they [clients] want me to use drugs before having sex. If I don’t, they wouldn’t give me money, but if I do then they give me more money...so I use drugs.”

Notably, despite the low number of women who admitted to using drugs, ten (10%) respondents specifically discouraged any women potentially entering the massage industry from using drugs [n=98]. One respondent said:

“Clean up your act. Don’t be foolish. Don’t do drugs,”

WORK SATISFACTION

JOB AFFINITY

In light of the various challenges and benefits related to working in the massage industry, it was important to assess work satisfaction of the interviewees [n=98]. When asked whether or not they like their current job, forty respondents (41%) answered affirmatively, while forty-nine women (50%) did not like their job. Of the remaining nine women, five (5%) liked their job "sometimes," expressing ambivalent feelings toward their line of work, and four (4%) did not provide an answer.

When asked to elaborate on their affinity to their job (n=40), eleven respondents (28%) stated that they liked their job because of its overall easiness or lack of physical strain. Eleven (28%) also cited the higher pay in comparison to alternative jobs. Four women (10%) were satisfied with their job due to the freedom or independence it offered them. However, six women (15%) made additional implications that this job was their only option, expressing statements such as "I had no choice". This is exemplified in one respondent's statement:

"It is hard to find work and I had no choice—that is why I chose this job. I can earn some money to support my family."

The forty-nine respondents who expressed dislike towards massage work were also asked to give reasons why. In their responses, one in five women (20%) underscored prejudice and discrimination yet again as the primary reason for disliking their job. One woman's response captured this group's feelings:

"People think we are not good girls."

Twenty percent of respondents (10 women) who did not like their jobs indicated an absence of alternatives in choosing their work. Still others were dissatisfied with their work due to problems with clients (three respondents or 6%), threats to physical health (three respondents), and embarrassment from family knowing about their work (three respondents). Two women expressed that massage work damages their hopes for a future. One explained that her displeasure with the work came from having to force herself to do something she was afraid of.

Of the five women who expressed ambivalent feelings towards their job, three of them indicated that stigma from clients, neighbors, and co-workers contributed to job dissatisfaction.

JOB RECOMMENDATION

There is a stark difference in the way the group of respondents felt about their own job and how they felt about recommending the job to others. After having been asked whether or not they would recommend their job to a sister or friend, a vast majority of eighty-eight respondents (90%) said they would not. This is striking due to the fact that, as previously mentioned, 41% of respondents said they liked their job. The most cited reasons for not referring a friend to this line of work were: thinking it is not a good job (nineteen respondents or 22%), not wanting others to undergo adverse experiences (eighteen or 20%), and being afraid of others knowing where they work (seventeen respondents or 19%). One woman stated,

"I only want to be wrong alone."

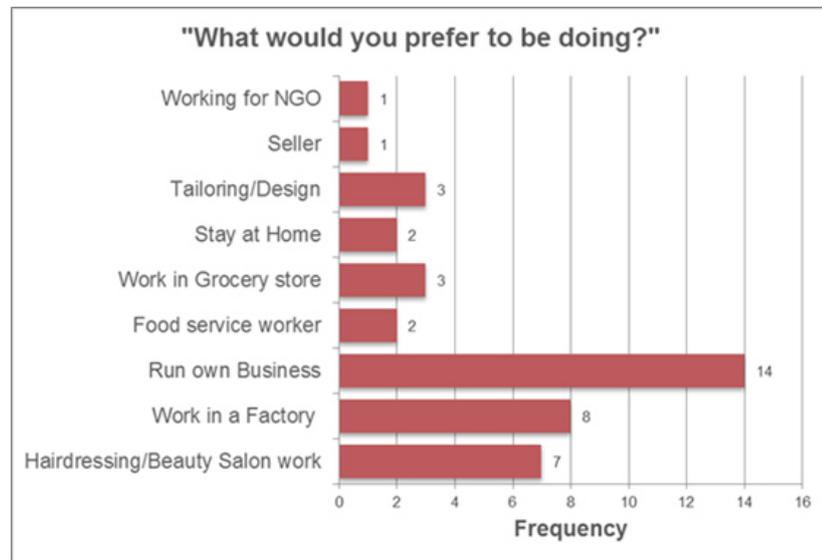
Likewise, another respondent indicated,

"I chose the wrong job already, so I do not want anyone to imitate me."

Interestingly, while most respondents would not recommend this job, about 35% of them were themselves referred to the job by a friend or sibling. However, the research does not reveal whether or not these friends or siblings themselves worked in the massage industry at the time of referral.

The remaining eleven respondents (10%) who said they would recommend this job to a sister or friend gave reasons that did not necessarily portray their job in a positive light. Six women would recommend the job if they felt their friend or sister had no other options or were too poor. Two respondents said they would recommend the job because it was "easy" or "good". Surprisingly, one of these respondents stated this even despite experiencing sexual and physical violence at work as well as providing sexual services.

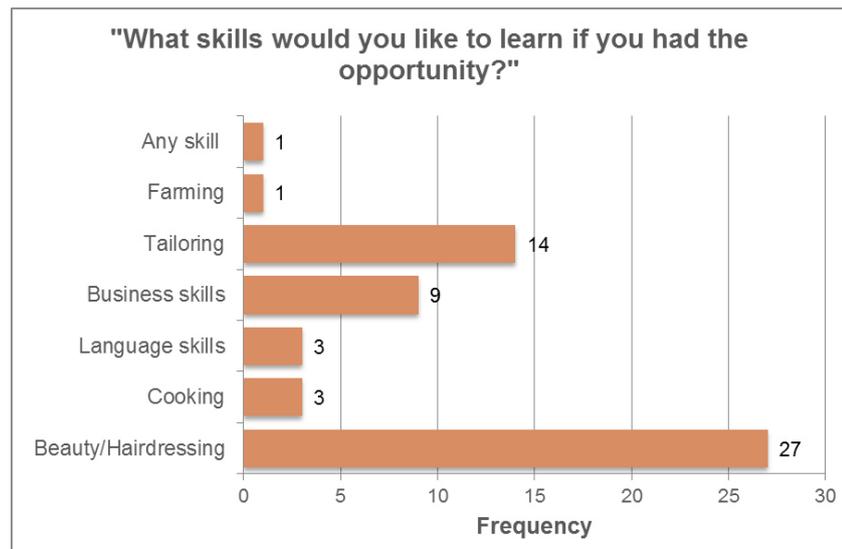
ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS



GRAPH 17

All the respondents who did not like their job [n=49] were asked what job they would prefer to have. Running a business was the most popular response (fourteen respondents), followed by factory work (eight respondents) and beauty salon work (seven respondents).

When asked about what skills they would like to learn if they had the opportunity, the results demonstrate an overlap with the alternative employment preferences. The largest proportion of respondents [n=71] desired to learn beauty/hairdressing skills (twenty-seven respondents or 38%). The second largest group (fourteen respondents or 19%) wanted to learn tailoring skills, and the third largest proportion desired business skills (nine respondents or 13%). Other skills desired by the respondents are displayed in graph 18.



GRAPH 18

Honing in on the development of language skills, the women [n=71] were asked if learning a foreign language would assist their income generation. An overwhelming majority (sixty-five respondents or 92%) agreed that learning a foreign language would bolster their income, with fifty-four of these women (83%) specifying English as one of the languages, if not the only language, that would improve their income. Additional languages listed as desirable to learn include Chinese, Korean, Thai, French, and/or Khmer. Only six women (9%) did not see the benefit of language skills.

EXISTENTIAL WELL-BEING

In an effort to gain a more holistic understanding of the real life experiences of female massage workers in Cambodia's capital, the researchers asked a series of questions that gave respondents [n=98] an opportunity to reflect on their personal values, self-perception, and hopes for the future.

RESPECT

First, the researchers asked respondents to depict how others would show the respondents respect. The largest proportion of women (forty-five respondents or 46%) indicated that being spoken to politely or kindly was a key element in being shown respect. Of these respondents, some went further to suggest that even being spoken to at all would be indicative of respect. Six women specifically suggested that being respected meant not being spoken of badly. One respondent explained respect as follows:

"People encourage me, admire me, and do not discriminate against me".

Apart from verbal components of respect, seventeen women (17%) chose to emphasize acts of respect, such as giving good advice, while eleven others (11%) felt it was imperative for love and value to be expressed in order to show respect. One respondent suggested that being shown respect was largely dependent on her personal ability to earn it from others. She claimed,

"It depends on us, if we can make people value and respect us or not".

SENSE OF VALUE/CONFIDENCE

To gain a deeper knowledge of the sample's control over their self-worth, respondents [n=98] were asked to illustrate ways that they could increase their sense of value or confidence. The results were twofold, presenting factors that could be separated according to an intrinsic-extrinsic distinction. Intrinsic factors encompassed anything belonging inherently to the respondent's sense of self, upon which she herself exerted control to increase her confidence. These mainly included components of self-perception or feelings. One respondent made an exemplary statement:

"I give myself worth and value. I don't care what other people think."

Results demonstrated that a third of respondents (thirty-two women or 33%) indicated that they had direct control over their sense of value or confidence. Most of these respondents (eighteen) believed that being self-confident and loving themselves could increase their value, while some others would engage in 'good behavior' (ten respondents). Eight women (8%) emphasized working hard or striving more in life would increase their sense of value.

In contrast, forty-one women (42%) posited external factors as fundamental to increase self-worth. External factors were implied to be beyond the respondent's control, such as increasing financial status or changing to a different job. For instance,

"I can't increase my sense of value unless I stop working in this job".

This quote points to a sense of value or confidence that is contingent upon extrinsic matters. Of these women, nineteen (46%) implicated money in increasing their sense of value, which complements the finding that 43% of women felt that a lack of money was their greatest current obstacle. Moreover, thirteen respondents (13%) specified leaving the massage parlor and changing their job as a way to find greater worth. Two women similarly felt that a change in their environment was crucial to increasing their value, but preferred further study or receiving an education rather than alternative employment. Twelve women did not know how to increase their sense of value or self-confidence and five chose not to provide a response.

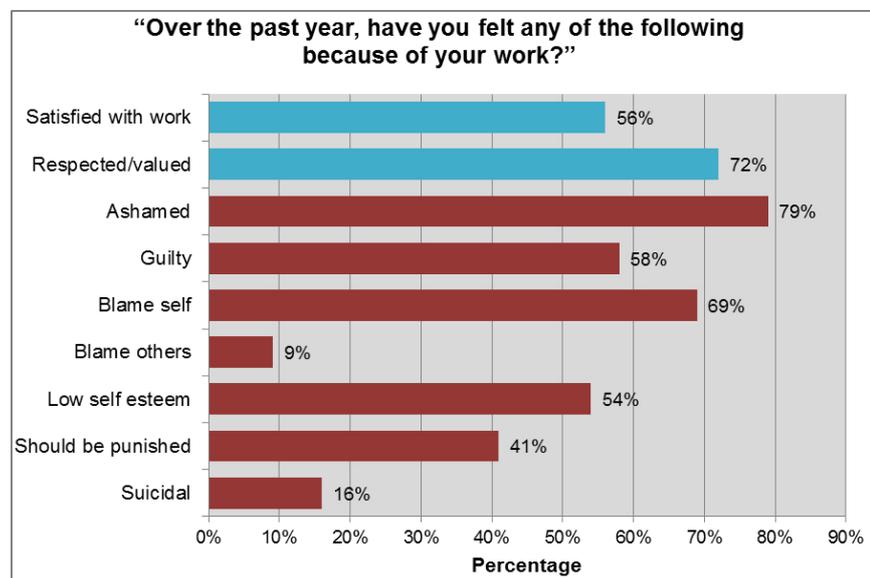
EMOTIONAL SUSCEPTIBILITIES

To assess their emotional wellbeing in relation to their line of work, respondents were asked to affirm or negate a series of statements that probed for nine specific feelings that they may have had in the past twelve months. Two of the nine feelings were positive, while the remaining seven implied negative emotional states. It is important to note that each of these feelings were probed for by the interviewers, rather than suggested by the respondents themselves.

Out of seventy-one respondents, shame was found to be the emotion experienced by the largest proportion of the respondents over the previous twelve months, being shared by fifty-six women (79%). Interestingly, however, feeling respected and valued was the second most experienced emotional state (fifty-one respondents or 72%). For this reason, one woman's response stood out among others in relation to feeling valued:

“Working here, no value. I do not know why I chase it, but I need money to support my children.”

Blaming others was not found to be a significant part of the group's overall attitude in life, as only six respondents (9%) felt this way. In contrast, blaming the self was a significantly shared feeling among forty-nine (69%) respondents. Guilt was another significantly expressed feeling, shared by forty-one participants (58%), as was low self-esteem, experienced by thirty-eight women (54%). Moreover, twenty-nine respondents (41%) had felt that they deserved to be punished, although a majority of women (forty respondents or 56%) felt satisfied with their work. The last component of this series of statements led to finding a significant number of women (eleven respondents or 16%) who expressed that they had felt suicidal sometime in the last twelve months. Overall, these results delineate both the emotional vulnerabilities and resiliencies of female massage workers.



GRAPH 19

It is important to note that although this series of emotive statements were meant to be affirmed or denied in reference to their work in the massage parlor, subsequent quotes from the interviewees suggest that some of their affirmed feelings may have been triggered by events unrelated to or outside their line of work. In relation to suicidal thoughts, for instance, three women expressed that they had contemplated suicide due to a devastating breakdown in their marital or intimate partner relationship.

FUTURE GOALS

After asking the respondents to reflect on their past, the researchers felt it was important to explore how these women looked ahead toward their future [n=98]. The respondents were asked "Where do you see yourself in two years' time?" Although the vast majority of respondents (eighty or 82%) did not envision themselves in the massage industry, only thirty-two (35%) of them had a specific alternative job industry in mind. Eighteen women desired to work in a beauty/hair salon. Other alternative jobs included the restaurant industry (four

respondents), the tailoring business (five respondents), factory work (one respondent), and other miscellaneous but specific work (six respondents). Twenty-five women hoped to run an unspecified business and six simply desired a new job. Some responses were not directly associated with work, as four women could see themselves getting married, twelve wished to return to their hometown, and two wanted to go abroad. Eight respondents did not have a vision of where they would be in two years' time. One respondent said:

"Since working here, I feel like I don't have a future,"

Another said,

"I never think about my future plan because I do not have money."

One woman planned to still be working in massage and two women wanted to run their own massage parlors (see Case Study Two).

OBSTACLES AND WAYS TO OVERCOME THEM

When asked what their biggest obstacles in life were, seventy-five women [n=98] cited having a large variety of obstacles. Only six women said they faced no obstacles in life, or had already overcome those they had previously experienced. Seventeen women chose not to respond, such as one respondent:

"I do not want to say, because it is hurtful."

The most common obstacle, cited by forty-two respondents (43%) was lack of money or being poor, followed by the pressures of supporting children and family (thirteen respondents, 13%). For a number of women, these obstacles were heavily linked, as shown in the following quote from a respondent,

"I do not have money to support my children."

Nine women emphasized strained family relationships, mainly with parents, while four more women suggesting divorce was a major obstacle in their lives. Quotes from respondents highlight how strained family relationships and financial problems are linked, for example,

"My mother is sick; my dad is an alcoholic man. It is hard to earn money to support my family. I have a big problem because my dad likes to drink alcohol."

Four women talked about their romantic relationships as being problematic. Illness was also a common obstacle, with six respondents describing family illness as a concern, exemplified in the following quote,

"No money, my child and mom are sick, I feel worried."

An additional four women admitted to personal illness, including blindness, heart disease and one case of HIV. Six women felt that problems within the workplace and wanting to leave their job were their biggest obstacle in life, one woman stating,

"I feel wrong working here."

Respondents were also asked what they felt would most help them to overcome these obstacles. Encouragingly, of the seventy-five women who told interviewers that they had obstacles, 81% (sixty-one respondents) felt that there were ways to overcome these problems. Only one woman explicitly said there was nothing she could do to overcome her obstacles and seven women 'did not know' how to overcome these problems. The remaining women chose not to answer.

For those who did say that they felt there was a way to overcome their biggest obstacles in life, financial solutions such as earning or saving more money was the most common response, given by thirty-three women (34%). One respondent stated,

"Money can pull me out from this place."

For twelve women, enduring their current situations, or 'striving' more in life, was the key to overcoming their problems. A quote that exemplifies this and came up time and time again in the data was:

"I will endure."

Eight women felt that increasing their self-confidence, or helping themselves would contribute to overcoming their obstacles.

"Some problems I can solve. I have to try to overcome them, but no one can help me."

Five respondents suggested that changing their current job or leaving the massage parlor was the key to overcoming their main problems in life, such as one respondent who has been quoted to have stated the following:

"I have to stop working here someday to overcome these obstacles."

FAITH

In addition to asking what their obstacles were and how they felt these obstacles could be overcome, respondents were asked the question, "What role does faith have to play, if any, in overcoming your obstacles?" Since 'faith' was intentionally not specifically in reference to religious faith, more than simply religious faith came up in the results: faith in one's self, faith in the law, and religious faith were the three main aspects of faith which respondents [n=98] brought up. Seventy-three women (74%) chose to answer this question, of which fifty-eight referred to believing in something other than themselves, such as a spiritual being, or religious figures, including God, Jesus/Christianity, Buddhism, Spirits, Angels, and Ancestors. Thirty-five out of the seventy-three respondents who answered this question said that the role faith played in overcoming their problems was that they prayed; again, there was a range of entities that respondents prayed to. The top three recurring themes of what respondents prayed for were 'help', 'health', and 'protection' for themselves and their families. Three respondents specifically stated that they did not pray because prayer did not help them to overcome their obstacles, such as one woman who said,

"I never pray, I just try to help myself; working hard."

Three women cited faith in the law as something that had failed to help them to overcome obstacles, as exemplified by this quote,

"I used to have faith in the laws but they did not help me."

Another way faith was said to play a role in overcoming obstacles was faith in oneself. This was split between fatalistic beliefs of the need to endure obstacles, versus a self-empowered notion of agency. On the fatalistic side some women echoed the following quote,

"I have to endure,"

On the other hand, some women simply stated

"I believe in myself."

"I can overcome whatever happens."

Within this category of a self-empowered faith in oneself, many women also stated the need to work hard and earn money in order to overcome their problems, stressing the importance of this as opposed to religious faith, for example,

"I try to solve my problems with money, and I believe that I can do it with my salary."

ADVICE FROM THE RESPONDENTS

Rather than only drawing conclusions or assuming which lessons are best to learn from the data collected from this sample, women were asked directly what their advice would be to women thinking about entering the massage industry as well as to the NGO community and/or the government.

ADVICE TO WOMEN ENTERING THE MASSAGE PARLOR INDUSTRY

The respondents' [n=98] advice to girls or women considering entering the massage work can be grouped into four overall themes. The most frequent message (from twenty-one respondents) had a very simple and clear message that is represented in the following quote by one respondent:

"Do not come to work here, people around us do not value us. Please find another job instead."

The reasons given as to why women should not enter this line of work varied between these twenty-one responses with the most important theme being that all of these women advised all girls and women to stay away from this type of work.

The second theme, mentioned by twelve respondents, revolves around how to conduct oneself within the massage work. Most of the advice given in this category includes making sure to protect oneself from HIV as well as to protect oneself when having sex with clients.

"I want them to know how to protect themselves from HIV when they have sex with clients."

"Girls should not drink alcohol and know how to protect themselves if they go out with customers."

The third category of advice pertains to general life advice. More specifically, it included four areas of advice:

1. Valuing themselves and their work (fifteen respondents):

“Every work is valuable, it depends on us. So we are the ones who make ourselves valuable, we help ourselves.”

2. To stop trusting men (eight respondents):

“I have to endure no matter what. Get up and stop trusting men from now on. Although men hurt you, you have to get up.”

3. To strive for good education and specific skills (six respondents):

“If I would give advice, I would advise that they should learn specific skills. As long as we have our own skill no one can look down on us.”

4. And finally, to stay away from drugs (ten respondents):

“I want to share my idea to every girl and boy, go away from drugs”.

In addition to these different clusters of advice, a few women mentioned that they did not feel entitled or able to give advice to other women, such as the respondent who said:

“I do not want to give them advice. I'd rather they decide by themselves.”

MESSAGE TO NGO COMMUNITY AND/OR ROYAL CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT

The messages that the respondents in this sample [n=98] would like to send to the NGO community and the government can broadly be grouped into two different realms. The first key message, which was reflected in about 25% of the respondents' answers, is an expression of appreciation that an NGO (Love146 in this case) is interested in their situation:

“I want to say thank you very much for asking and knowing about my situation. It makes me happy that someone cares about me.”

Secondly, there were numerous requests made towards the NGO community and government for support in the following areas: health related issues and sexual education, alternative employment and skills training, as well as help for their respective family situations. Finally, a recurring message was an appeal to end discrimination and stigma against them:

“No girl wants this job. Don't look down on us.”

CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY ONE

A few months ago, Chantrea (25) moved to Phnom Penh to find work. She comes from a broken family and suffers from her parents' divorce, as well as her own. In her hometown, not only did she leave her broken family behind but also two of her three children, who stayed with her ex-husband after they had gotten a divorce. Only her two-year old daughter Sothea could come to stay with her at Chantrea's sister's place in the city. Chantrea found a job in a garment factory but the pay was very low and after her daughter got sick, she did not earn enough to pay for the medical expenses. In addition, her sister threw her and her daughter out of the house following continuing differences between the two women.

This is when Chantrea's cousin introduced her to massage work. Having only completed a few years of school and with no other education, Chantrea felt she had no choice other than to start working in a massage parlor. Not only did this line of work promise to be more lucrative but it also allowed her daughter to stay with her and the three other massage workers at the parlor. Thus, Sothea was even cared for while Chantrea was working.

Soon enough, however, Sothea fell sick again and Chantrea realized that her salary would not be sufficient to cover the medicine and doctor's visits necessary for her daughter to recover. At this point, despite her inner reluctance and shame, she agreed to have sex with some of her clients of the massage parlor. The massage parlor's manager feels sorry for her and her little girl and lends her some money so that Chantrea would not have to sleep with customers. Still however, this does not cover their medical expenses and moreover, leads Chantrea to debt accumulation.

Chantrea has been working in the massage parlor for only 20 days. She has not been forced to have sex, nor has she been harassed or abused by clients or others. However, given her financial strains, she has already met six customers for sex. "I am afraid of getting infections when I sleep with customers", the young woman says. She feels ashamed and guilty.

"I won't increase my sense of value unless I stop working in this job."

Chantrea explains that the greatest obstacle she faces in her life right now is that she has no money to raise her children. In order to overcome this obstacle, she states she has to stop working in the massage parlor one day. She would like to learn how to read and write, and one day, she would like to work as a cook.

CASE STUDY TWO

Socheat, 43 years old, moved to Phnom Penh nine years ago, after divorcing her abusive husband. He had been the first person she had sex with, though she says that he was a client back then rather than her husband. This initial experience was consensual and Socheat says that he tried to take good care of her through this early stage of their relationship, however over time he became abusive and she experienced regular domestic violence. Socheat told us that he would hit her with a broom, beat her up, and flaunt other women he was with in front of her. These are some of her own words showing just how bad the situation became,

"My husband beat me up and made me suffer. I wanted to kill myself."

After finally leaving him, Socheat came to Phnom Penh to earn money to pay off her \$2000 debt and to support her children, which she does still even now when they are fully grown and married. Before doing her present job, she had worked as a fish seller, as a construction worker, and she worked in three other massage parlors. Socheat says that she enjoys working in her current place of employment, which does not allow employees to offer sexual services to any clients, unlike the three previous massage parlors that she worked in. In her own words, she says that despite sexual harassment that she sometimes experiences from clients, she enjoys her current job

"because it is easy to earn money and makes me feel independent."

Socheat's family knows about her work and is supportive as long as it remains legal. Though she is out of touch with people from her hometown since moving to Phnom Penh she has built up a great community of friends in her new life here, and has no qualms about telling them about her work,

"people like me, I have a lot of friends."

Her main obstacles in life and negative feelings of low self-esteem, self-blame, blaming others, and feeling suicidal, are not associated with her work but instead because of her ex-husband and their divorce. Through all of this she says,

"I will never want to have a husband again. It is enough."

Her job provided her the independence, financial stability and community that she needed and wanted, and Socheat says she would love to be able to open up more massage places in the future. Her advice to women thinking of entering the massage industry reflects her strong sense of self and her pro-active attitude to life:

"Love yourself, and be a useful person."

CASE STUDY THREE

Theary is a twenty-eight year old woman from the province of Kampong Chhnang. In 2014 her hometown friend, Champei, brought Theary to work in a massage parlor in Phnom Penh. Although both girls work long hours in the parlor, they differ from many other masseuses and live outside of the parlor together. Theary suffers from blindness, but coming from a family of seven children, is expected to help provide for her family. With only two years of primary school education and her physical limitation, Theary's work options are limited. She attributes liking her job to the fact that she is blind, but says she would not recommend the job to a friend.

When she was twenty-two years old, Theary was raped by her boyfriend. She is currently single, although very close with Champei. Neither of the girls has told their families or hometown about their work, afraid of being looked down on or forced to stop their work. Despite this fear of discrimination from their families, both women send money home to their families monthly. Theary estimates that her weekly salary is between \$7 and \$10. On top of sending money home, she cites paying for rent, clothing, and food as her top expenses. In addition, Theary

says that she would like to save up money to fix her eyes because her parents cannot help her.

Theary and Champei both engage in sex work. Being blind stops Theary from going with clients to a guest house to have sex.

"I always have sex with clients in the massage parlor. I never go to a guest house because I am afraid they will hurt me."

Champey, on the other hand, visits guest houses and has experienced physical violence from her customers. She elaborates:

"When clients are violent to me, they force me to do something that I don't want to do. Sometimes they hit me and threaten me."

In addition, she mentions that she has had guns pulled on her before when she does not wish to comply with clients' wishes.

Theary says that out of her estimated one hundred clients per month, all of them want to have sex with her. In addition, twenty out of a hundred ask for masturbation and twenty more ask for oral sex. She services foreign clients from China, India, France, Africa, and Vietnam. Champei is also asked for a variety of sexual services from her clients. Unlike Theary, however, she has also been required by some clients to use drugs while having sex with them.

Both girls are aware of the stigma and discrimination they face from clients, neighbors, and friends because of their work. Nonetheless, they continue in this work because they do not know of any other options for them. Theary specifically references her blindness as her greatest obstacle when considering her future. She says she would prefer to learn tailoring skills, and wishes to her grandparents' spirits to help her overcome her obstacle. Mostly, though, Theary says that despite her limitations, she must "strive to work hard".

DISCUSSION

VULNERABILITY

As stated in the methodology section, the report at hand is not a prevalence study, and data collected should not be viewed as representative statistical data but rather an investigative qualitative study providing information on the lives of the women interviewed. Results found here cannot be generalized and are only applicable to the specific cases encountered in this study.

FACTORS WHICH INCREASE LIKELIHOOD OF ENTERING MASSAGE INDUSTRY

Most women (80%) who participated in this research were depended on by their families to send money back and 48% families owed some sort of debt, creating cycles of poverty and debt which make it necessary for women to work and send money home, as exemplified in this respondent's words,

"My family is poor and I have no choice for work."

This is linked to the cultural factor of filial duty as daughters towards both immediate and extended family, as well as responsibility as a mother to provide for their own children.

Filial duty also increases likelihood of moving from rural provinces to urban centers in search for jobs, which may contribute to why so many respondents had migrated to Phnom Penh. Massage parlor work was not the job which many women migrated to Phnom Penh to get. Instead many respondents had initially moved to Phnom Penh in order to work in the garment industry, which is the single greatest rural to urban pull factors for internal migration in Cambodia, providing 250,000 primarily Phnom Penh based jobs mainly for young women (Maltoni, 2007). Working in garment factories seems to increase the likelihood of entering the massage industry, since over half of respondents used to work in the garment industry. Push factors that contribute to why respondents left factory work include low pay and the exploitative and physically demanding nature of factory work. Pull factors as to why they may choose to subsequently enter massage parlor work include that the massage parlors provide childcare, better pay, more freedom, easier work, and generally better working conditions, according respondents of this study. For example one respondent said,

"I prefer this job over factory work because I can bring my children here."

Very few women in this study had completed their high school education and 24% had no education at all, therefore job prospects are extremely limited for almost all respondents. Massage parlor work and the garment industry both are examples of jobs which require little to no education or skill at entry level (but become skilled), and therefore are some of the few available options to earn money for many respondents. Added to this is the fact that the respondents are such a wide range of ages, some of those who were older expressed a feeling that they were limited in their job opportunities because they were too old to learn new skills, as exemplified by this quote from a respondent,

"Because I'm old I don't know any work but this."

Job opportunities are further limited by illness or disability, which is also a reason given by respondents for choosing massage work over other forms of employment which may be more physically demanding. Illness is also a reason why women may lose jobs, for example this was the second most common reason given by respondents for leaving their garment industry job, and thereafter enter the massage industry.

Family breakdown, heartbreak and divorce cropped up as key reasons for migrating to Phnom Penh in need of work and money. Some respondents referred to these as reasons why they chose massage work over other forms of employment, potentially because of the community and familial structure which massage parlors can offer women through living and working together with co-workers and managers.

ENTRANCE TO SEX WORK, AND VULNERABILITY TO SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

From this preliminary study, poverty seems to increase the likelihood that once within the massage industry, women will offer sexual services to clients, for example,

“I decided to sleep with customers when I really did not have any money.”

For many women like this, offering clients sexual services was a short-term financial solution. It was not directly exploitative in so far as the transactions that occurred were mutually agreed upon and followed through. However, massage parlor workers who did offer sexual services are vulnerable to sexual exploitation by managers who would profit from their sexual services. For example, in some establishments women could offer sexual services if they then paid the manager. This quote from a respondent highlights the practicalities of such a transaction:

“When we go out with customers we must pay our boss \$2.50 per hour.”

Some women in this study that offered sexual services to customers were sexually exploited in terms of not being paid or not being paid enough for providing sexual services. This not only happened to many respondents in this study, it also seemed to be a well-known risk of offering sexual services within this line of work, as exemplified by the following quote,

“I know that in massage jobs you need to go out with customers. Sometimes one girl goes out with five customers who make her hurt and don’t give her money.”

Some respondents also shared that managers financially exploited them in their day-to-day massage work in terms of salaries being withheld, as exemplified by the following respondent’s quote,

“I didn’t get salary for seven months because my boss didn’t have money.”

Due to their physical limitations, women affected by illness or disability may be more vulnerable to sexual exploitation by managers and clients, as referred to in Case Study Three.

VULNERABILITY TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE, PHYSICAL VIOLENCE, HARASSMENT, ETC. BECAUSE OF WORK

Irrespective of whether they offer sexual services to clients or not, many women in this study experienced sexual violence, physical violence, and harassment. 23% of respondents chose to tell us that they had experienced attempted rape in the past three months and 6% had experienced actual rape in the past three months. Due to the nature of questions surrounding such extreme sexual violence, these numbers are likely to be conservative. However, this data implies that massage parlor workers are at risk of rape. Women with disabilities in this industry may be particularly vulnerable, for example one blind respondent was

asked whether she had ever been forced to have sex against her will, and she replied that she had,

"Because I'm too young and afraid, I tried to beat them up but I couldn't."

Stigma and discrimination associated with massage parlor work due to its presumed association with sex work makes women more vulnerable to sexual violence and physical violence. For example, clients often assume that massage workers offer sexual services and so rape or sexually harass women who decline to service them. This is exemplified by one respondent emphasized that the massage parlor which she worked at never offered sexual services however she said she experienced the following:

"Sometimes the customers look down on me, then try to get advantage over me."

Those who do offer sexual services are vulnerable to sexual violence and physical abuse as well, as exemplified by the following quote from a respondent,

"When clients are violent to me, they force me to do something that I don't want to do. Sometimes they hit and threaten me."

Massage parlor women seem to be at high risk of physical violence from clients and police (who often are clients), experiencing verbal threats, physical bodily violence, and even use of weapons, including guns, by clients and police. Vulnerability to police violence in particular seems to be a problem, possibly due to the illegality of sex work, so massage parlor workers who offer sexual services - and even those who do not - are at risk of sexual abuse by policemen who do not respect or recognize the rights of these women. For example one respondent exemplified this in the following statement,

"A lot of police tried to rape me but only 20 had sex with me."

THE QUESTION OF CHOICE

The questionnaire on which the report at hand is based does not include an explicit question about the voluntarism of the work some of the female masseurs do. However, responses given throughout the interview by several interviewees point to interesting insights into this topic.

The issue of voluntarism, on the one hand, entails the women's own choice to working at a massage place in the first place. One of the questions that was asked in order to learn more about the entry factors that lead young women into working in the massage industry, was why the respondents chose this job as opposed to another job. This being an open question, no probing for answers was done. Nevertheless, 17% of the respondents gave the same answer, stating that they have not had a choice other than to accept this job. Since they did not, however, further specify in which way they have felt pressured to enter the massage industry (be it for financial pressures, the involvement of another person who forced them, or others), this remains open for further investigation. What becomes clear from this statement, however, is that there does seem to be substantial amount of of pressure on many of the respondents involved in

entering this type of job, and this number might be even higher when explicitly asked for it.

One must not, however, conclude from this that many of the women work in the massage industry as a result from trafficking, or even just recruiting: as the result section of this report clearly states, when asked how they came into this type of work, most respondents answered to have been referred this job by a friend or that they have found it by themselves. Very few report to have been recruited and even for these few cases, no clearly reported evidence of trafficking or force was found to have been used to recruit these women.

What these findings suggest is that the majority of women did indeed enter into the massage work on voluntary terms in so far that they were not coerced by another person. The questions about the women's financial situation, however, point to the fact that economic or social structures may lead to pressures that make them accept a job that they would otherwise not agree to doing. As shown in the graph displaying the respondents' major areas of expense, sending money to their families is the major financial obligation that many of the women face, as mentioned by 80% of our sample. Additionally, 48% of the women reported that their families owe some kind of debt.

Furthermore, family relationships that traditionally provided security in social and financial terms as described above, are reported to be strained or broken for many of the respondents. This is exemplified by the high rate of divorce among the women interviewed: 26% of the sample at hand is divorced and over 10% reported to have come to the city because of family issues or family breakdown when asked why they have moved to Phnom Penh.

On the other hand, the question of choice also entails whether or not the women working in the massage industry offer sexual services do so voluntarily or not. Without having been asked for it, 14 out of 98 women mentioned that they had not been aware to be required to do sex work as part of their job at the massage parlor prior to their entry into this line of work. One of the respondents explains:

"People brought me here, they just told me I would do massages only. But what they said wasn't true, it is actually massage work as well as sex work. I usually have sex with clients at a guest house, not at my working place, but I do not like it."

According to the UN definition (cited in the "Terms and Definitions" section of this report), sex work is defined as sexual exploitation if a person is lured into it, which would clearly apply in the cases that report to be required to do sex work without their knowledge that this would be requested of them. There are, however, also a number of cases in which the women were not required or even requested to offer sexual services but chose to do so for various reasons. The relatively easy access to clients that are willing to pay for sex, as well as seeing their peers, who do sex work earning considerably more than a normal masseuse, as well as poverty and financial burden, are all structural factors facilitating a decision towards entering the sex industry. As shown above, many of the women entered sex work due to financial burdens and a lack of other job options which very much in line with Sandy's (2006) description of Linda's story.

When relating the findings of this study to the Continuum Volition model (MoYES, 2012), most of the cases encountered here would fall into the category of “economically driven sex” which lies in between voluntary and coerced sex. Examining these cases in more detail, however, reveals that the women choosing to offer sexual services to their clients do so because they do not see another way of making financial ends meet. This calls into question whether economically driven sex can indeed be seen as less coercive than what the model calls “coerced sex”; if pressures, caused by socio-economic structures in these women’s lives, lead to existential fear of not being able to provide for themselves and/or their children, does this fundamentally differ from fear of physical harm?

In general, deciding whether or not and if so how many women are being forced to enter the massage industry or sex work, very much depends on how choice and consent are defined, whether it takes into account structural factors pressuring these women into choices they would have otherwise made differently. Also, an important limitation to this study which needs to be kept in mind is that since the interviews were conducted within or in very close proximity to the massage parlor where the respondent works, some of the women might not have felt confident enough to open up about being forced to do sex work to the interviewers.

What can be concluded from the data gathered for the purpose of this report is that each of the women interviewed has her own personal story and factors contributing to her current situation and each of them has a different stance on the work she does and her life as a whole. It is therefore crucial, not only from the authors perspective but also as mentioned from the women themselves, that women working in the massage industry are not being grouped into one homogenous group that needs a one-fits-all solution.

FORMS OF DEPENDENCY

When veering into the massage industry, many women experience a shift in their dependencies that take on various facets that are unique to each person. These dependencies include but are not limited to relational, financial, emotional, and physical dimensions.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MASSEUR WOMEN

At first glance, passersby can gain a glimpse into the lives of massage workers, who could often be seen from the storefront playing cards for hours during the day or painting each other’s nails while waiting for customers. Not only did many of the interviewees and their co-workers seem to enjoy passing time in this way, but the dynamic interactions between many of the massage parlor women depicted a structure of kinship similar to the tight-knit homosocial ties discussed in Hoefinger's study of Professional Girlfriends (2011). Migrating to the city of Phnom Penh from their home province was seen to be correlated to a rift in the familial networks of respondents - either in terms of their migration pulling them away from their family ties or preexisting family issues pushing them away to the city. The relationships built between massage parlor women could provide a supplementary source of belonging and understanding to those who live apart from their families. This could be a factor that explains why despite many feeling much shame over the past year (79% or 56 women), approximately an equal

amount (72% or 51 women) also felt respected and valued during the same period of time.

Not only does the lack of connection to family, a primary social network, draw women to depend more readily on their fellow co-workers for a sense of community and belonging, but it also leads to greater vulnerability that would require further unraveling. As aforementioned, whilst "increased movement and vulnerability often go hand in hand...risks of exploitation can be considerably compounded when social networks are no longer present" (Brammer, 2013, p.32). The portion of these women who flee to the urban centers in search of a job in the massage industry may subsequently be entering into semi-parental relationships with their managers and older female co-workers. Coupled with the presence of dependent relatives for whom a woman is financially responsible for (Derks, 1997), such circumstances could only compound her risk of being exploited.

DEPENDENCY ON THE MESSAGE ESTABLISHMENT

Regarding the extent to which female massage workers depend on their massage establishment, results clearly demonstrated a significant reliance upon the establishment for housing accommodations, proven by the 89 % who live inside the massage parlor. When asked to list up to five of their greatest expenses, rent was only stated 5% (11 out of 203 mentioned items of expense) of the time. Living in the massage parlor consequently provides a significant cut in living costs, allowing more of the women's earnings to be sent back to their families.

Despite the fact that accommodations provided in the massage parlor could help in setting aside more money for familial needs, their total earnings do not appear to be sufficient so as to offer the flexibility of entering an alternative job industry with better working conditions. The fact that more than 40% of respondents did not know their own incomes in the three months prior to their interviews may suggest the transience of their wages. The standard wage was found to be thirty-percent of \$2.50 USD (equivalent to \$0.75 USD, excluding tips), which for many, must be partially allotted to the family on a regular basis. Their lack of knowledge regarding their income could also be due to an immediate need to spend what they have earned on basic necessities, which may depicts how these women can become increasingly dependent on their job at the massage parlor. However, should they desire alternative employment with better working conditions and higher salaries; it would seem very difficult to relocate themselves into another industry. Moreover, despite almost half of respondents being indebted as mentioned prior, 'paying back debt' only made up 3% of all mentioned items of expense. Such circumstances require further investigation as to how likely it is for women to be pulled into the massage industry due to debt incurrences, but are trapped in dependency due to the largely insufficient wages provided them. Financial instability coupled with the preexisting entry factors previously mentioned, namely the lack of skills or education required for this work, further compound one's ability to transition to another job.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES

As has already been discussed, traditional obligations to the family still exert a great influence among many of the massage workers. Many women depend on their job to meet the multi-layered financial needs of their families while their families are equivalently depending on them. However, economic sustenance is not the only dynamic at play between women and their families. The effects of negative family relationships on daughters, mothers and wives are equally important to acknowledge. Stemming from the discussion of entry factors into the massage industry, many of the respondents left their hometowns to work in any job that would allow them to escape from personal conflicts at home. Thus, justification underlying their dependency on their job could involve the interplay between the entry factors of filial duty and escape from conflicts in the family or intimate partner relationships.

In conclusion, the mechanisms that bind female massage workers into a state of dependency may only heighten their vulnerability to exploitation. Psychologist M. Scott Peck describes dependency as a structure that "works to trap and constrict rather than to liberate" (Peck, 1978, p.105). It would be interesting to draw links between the health of a massage worker's relationship to her family of origin and how equipped she is to gain independence from her household. Whether her household is a source of confidence or self-worth for a woman, who is seeking to make her own sustainable living in an independent manner, could possibly be what separates those who become enraptured in a cycle of dependency on their massage establishment, and those who enter a process of liberation from such cycles. This would require further research in the form of an in-depth qualitative study.

IDENTITY

The emotional susceptibilities of the female respondents point to both short-term and long-term effects of working in the massage industry in Phnom Penh. For many, the stigma, prejudice and discrimination attached to their line of work pose a threat to the believed identity of these women and are damaging to their sense of value. Still, some displayed no sign that these challenges wounded their self-confidence. This section seeks to unravel the preliminary information gathered from the respondents in order to gain a deeper, personal and holistic understanding of the existential condition of these women.

SOURCES OF SELF-WORTH

After asking for ways to improve self-confidence or sense of value, there was found to be an imbalance in the dichotomy between intrinsic and extrinsic factors, as results demonstrated a stronger external locus of control over self-confidence among the group as a whole. By contrast, it is still striking in the extent to which women believed in personal agency as a means to changing their sense of value, rather than believing that factors beyond their control were paramount to deciding their worth. Emphasis on self-empowerment was also evident in women's suggestions for advice to other girls considering work in the massage industry as many of the respondents insisted the importance of learning to value oneself and improve one's own life. One respondent's words captured this attitude:

"Every work is valuable, it depends on us. So we are the ones who make ourselves valuable, we help ourselves."

THREATS TO IDENTITY

Both negative and positive extrinsic factors yield significant influence on one's self-perception. On one hand, discrimination and prejudice have at best cultivated a superficial worth, exemplified in one respondent's a provocative statement,

"People say that only our faces are beautiful and that our personalities and characters are not clean or beautiful."

The verbal, physical and emotional mistreatment of others took a heavy toll on the self-esteem of numerous respondents.

"No one gives us value"

This was a common statement that shows the difficulties of increasing confidence when it is primarily based on the perceptions of others. Hence, when probed for a series of nine different emotional states in relation to their work, more than half of respondents all shared a similar sense of shame, guilt, self-blame and low self-esteem in the twelve months prior to the interview (n=98). For this reason, it is not surprising that roughly 90% (88 women) would not recommend their job to a sister or friend.

The proportion of those who felt they should be punished (41% or forty women) as well as a disquieting number who felt suicidal in the year prior (16% or sixteen women) help to underscore the existence of a shattered identity among many of these women. One woman's statement, "I wish I would not have been born into this life", is a stark reminder of how a broken image of the self is not something that can be easily dispelled. It is important to note, however, that the data collected does not provide enough evidence that these emotional conditions were caused primarily by sexual exploitation related to their work.

Numerous women expressed statements about themselves and their line of work that often presented confounding contradictions, which are perhaps indications of a lack of insight into their lived realities. The discussed results in the above sections go on to prove that there is no singular way of processing experiences of exploitation, violation and abuse. As was shown in the information gathered, each woman was unique in the way she reacted to her life's circumstances.

"I do not want people to discriminate against us whatever work we have"

"Please do not discriminate against massage girls because we are not all bad"

"No girl wants this job. Don't look down on us."

After analyzing the data, it was clear that a major aspect in the lives of massage parlor workers is the discrimination and stigma that they face. While this may be expected when considering the perceptions of massage parlor women that exist, the roots and perpetuation of this discrimination should be examined.

When directly asked whether they faced stigma and discrimination because of their work, a little over half of respondents (52%) answered affirmatively. Throughout the interviews, fear of discrimination was communicated by many respondents. Some of the women who had never told the people in their hometowns about their work expressed their concern that knowledge of their work would cause the people in their hometowns to look down on them and/or their family. Twenty percent of the sample cited discrimination against them as the reason why they dislike their job. With a little over sixty percent of respondents admitting that their clients request sexual intercourse, it may not be surprising that these women face the daily discrimination that is often directed towards sex workers. The most frequent perpetrators of this stigma are the clients, the people that massage parlor women interact with most in a day. *Chhap srei*, the code of conduct that often dictates the expected behavior from women in Cambodian society, is exemplified in the treatment of massage parlor women through the expectations from their clients. Women are often expected to submit willfully to the desires and will of men, a standard that is seen in the massage industry. Yet it is the massage workers who carry the burden of stigma for it.

There is a Cambodian proverb that says, “If one fish in the basket is smelly, the whole basket is smelly.” This proverb reflects the stigma faced by women working in the massage industry. Our sample reveals that while many women are vulnerable to exploitation, dissatisfied with their jobs, and engage in sex work, there are also women working within the massage parlor industry who do not fall into these categories. Some of the women interviewed, such as in Case Study Two, found massage parlors to work where they are safer from being sexually exploited. One respondent said that she would advise girls to take on massage work like hers because she only does massage. Another woman also made a distinction between her establishment and other massage parlors when she said,

“Some shops involve sex and drugs...if possible get rid of these shops.”

Several parlors visited had the beds set up all together in the main room, making it impossible for clients to request any services other than massage. While these cases were the minority, they shed light on the fact that not all women working in the massage industry are subject to engaging in sex work. For some, the job simply entails massage.

However, for many women encountered, work in the massage parlors includes more than just their work—they find a new social support system, livelihood, and a new opportunity to provide for themselves and their families. Fairly enough, these women often ask that they not be discriminated against because of their occupation, even if it is a stigmatized one. One respondent expressed her frustration about this issue in her advice to girls entering the industry, saying,

“I want to tell them that if they work here, I want them to be good massage girls and not to do anything bad and bring a bad reputation on others who have the same work.”

For the women who do not engage in sex work, discrimination against them is based on a false assumption that massage work always involves sex work. No stigma or discrimination is ever justified, so even those who do engage in sex

work should not be subject to it. Greater understanding about the circumstances which lead women to engage in sex work—such as the pressure to financially provide for the families and economic desperation—needs to be understood. A quote from one respondent serves as a constant reminder that even these women are undeserving of stigma:

“No girl wants this job. Do not look down on us.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

TO ACADEMICS: FURTHER RESEARCH

Though this research provides insight into the lives of a number of massage parlor women throughout Phnom Penh, it merely serves as an initial investigative study, thus, further research on a larger scale is recommended. It is recommended that thorough prevalence studies of massage parlors in Phnom Penh are conducted to investigate how many of these provide sexual services. Research investigating the managers themselves is also recommended as it may prove instrumental in forming strategies to help women within massage parlors and would provide insight into the structure of these establishments.

In addition, further investigation into the cycles of dependency fostered within massage parlors is recommended to better equip NGOs and other organizations that want to work with these women. Further research into the trajectory of the lives of these women is recommended, as many respondents alluded to their present employment being temporary, whilst planning to move on within two years. Whether or not this happens would give a tangible indication of the degree of self-empowerment and agency which these women actually possess. Additionally, further research into the backgrounds of women working in the massage industry is recommended to see if there are links with KTV work, as some women implied that they entered massage work when they were unable to do KTV work anymore.

Though this research did not set out to exclusively interview massage parlor women of Khmer ethnic origins, all but one Vietnamese woman, fell into this category. A number of Vietnamese women were encountered during the course of research, but language barriers kept them from being thoroughly interviewed, therefore in further research with this group Vietnamese-language speaking interviewers would be recommended. There may be other ethnic minority women working within the massage industry, including Cham women, with specific vulnerability factors and life experiences that may be significant enough to elicit further research.

In addition to the ninety-eight interviews collected from massage parlor women, two transgender women were interviewed. However, their experience of massage work and their vulnerability factors were felt to be so different to that of transgender female massage parlor workers that these cases were not included in the results. Instead, targeted research with other transgender massage parlor workers in Phnom Penh is recommended.

Because a significant number of respondents in this study (51%) had previously worked in the garment factory industry, targeted research about this group is recommended. It is recommended that further research is conducted of the vulnerabilities faced by garment factory workers within the factories, as well as the vulnerabilities faced by women upon leaving the factories.

TO THE NGO COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT

Working with massage parlor women highlighted their current invisibility to the NGO community, not only in terms of a lack of research, but also in terms of relationships being built with this group of people. Phnom Penh is saturated with NGOs many of which focus on vulnerable women, however there is no group which specifically works with massage parlor workers. Building relationships with these women would help to build a clearer picture of their vulnerabilities and needs.

NGOs that do wish to work with this group of women, especially those who want to exit the massage industry, should consider the development of skills training and job creation for unskilled labor. Part of the cycle of dependency created by massage parlors which may prevent some women from feeling able to leave their jobs, is that massage parlors often provide accommodation and food for employees, as well as close communities of co-workers and managers which act as familial networks. These must all be carefully considered in efforts to work with women who want to leave the massage industry, for example that could be in the form of providing basic life-skills training, or in providing a similar structure of shared accommodation. Additionally, it should be noted that for many of these women leaving the massage parlors or any paid employment is not an option because they work to provide for their parents, children and themselves, and may have debts to pay off, therefore immediate employment or a way for them to earn whilst being trained in new skills would provide them with the option of leaving.

Working with women within massage parlors, and not just those who leave, is a key recommendation concluded from the variety of vulnerabilities and experiences found in this study. Working with managers may prove key to reducing the vulnerabilities of women to physical violence, sexual harassment, unwanted sexual touching, and rape within the workplace, as some managers already imposed open-door policies, and expressed the desire to protect their employees from these things. With managers who were willing to work with NGOs, creative strategies to protect women could be beneficial, for example creating posters to put on the walls of the massage parlors stating numbers women can call if they experience violence or sexual abuse, or even installing cameras to prevent abuse of employees, as was policy in one establishment that we visited. Vulnerability to dependency upon the massage parlors could be addressed by NGOs exploring the option of alternative accommodation for working massage parlor women. To prevent women from entering the massage industry and being exposed to so many vulnerability factors in the first place, results from this research would strongly suggest that NGOs and government campaigns focus time and resources on rural, provincial education and job creation, especially for women and girls.

Campaigns not only to promote the rights of women to choose what they do with their bodies, but also to end stigma, discrimination, and stereotypes of all massage parlor women being sex workers is recommended as it could prove instrumental in reducing the expectations of clients and wider society that these women must provide sexual services, thereby greatly increasing their vulnerability to unwanted sexual touching, harassment and violence from clients. Police training and accountability systems may also be implemented as the abuse of sex workers by them has been a well-documented phenomenon in Cambodia. Furthermore, campaigns to end these stereotypes would hopefully let these women live with less day-to-day discrimination in light of reduced stigma against them from being automatically labelled a sex worker, and for those that do provide sexual services to clients, campaigns which end stereotypes of them being labelled as “bad” women would hopefully also allow them to live free from such constant stigma. Stigma and discrimination faced by this group of women is perpetuated by labels attributed to them even by the NGO community, but can be ended with further research and through building relationships with individuals.

COLLABORATION BETWEEN NGOS AND THE SEX WORKERS’ UNION

Collaboration between NGOs and the sex workers’ union is recommended in future work with massage parlor workers. Though such a collaboration may seem controversial and possibly unprecedented, it is vital in considering this recommendation to highlight the many goals and values held in common, including the belief that people should not be discriminated against for doing sex work, that no one should experience sexual violence, harassment or rape, that sex should be consensual, and that people who offer sexual services should not be at risk of physical violence. Massage parlor women’s vulnerability to such abuses could be aided by promoting the rights of women. Furthermore, extensive sexual education campaigns would aid this purpose which go beyond HIV awareness, and instead deal with issues of male sexual entitlement, what consent and rape actually mean in real-world contexts, the illegality of unwanted sexual contact, and sexual harassment. These are only a few of a numerous creative campaigns which could reach a further audience, and potentially be more inclusive and effective if created through a collaboration of NGOs and sex workers’ union groups, both of which hold the rights and protection of vulnerabilities of these women to be far more important than differences which they may have in other areas.

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APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE USED FOR THE
INTERVIEWS IN KHMER AND ENGLISH

កំរងសំណួរសំរាប់ស្ត្រីធ្វើការងារម៉ាស្សាជុំក្នុងទីក្រុងភ្នំពេញ

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FEMALE MASSEUR WORKERS IN PHNOM PENH

ការណែនាំខ្លួន: ខ្ញុំឈ្មោះ.....។ ខ្ញុំធ្វើការនៅអង្គការមួយ ដែលព្យាយាមស្វែងយល់អំពីស្ត្រីវ័យក្មេង ដែលធ្វើការនៅ ហាងម៉ាស្សា។ គោលដៅនៃការសំភាសន៍ស្ត្រីទាំងនេះ គឺដើម្បីស្វែងយល់ថែមទៀតអំពីបទពិសោធន៍ និងការងាររបស់ពួកគេនៅ កន្លែងម៉ាស្សា។

INTRODUCTION — “My name is _____. I am working for an organization that is trying to understand the situation of young women who work in the massage industry. We are interviewing women so that we can learn more about what their experience is, in their work here.

ការរក្សាការសំងាត់ និងការព្រមព្រៀង: ខ្ញុំនឹងសួរសំណួរមួយចំនួនដែលទាក់ទងនឹងជីវិតអ្នកផ្ទាល់ ដែលសំនួរខ្លះ អាចមានការពិបាកឆ្លើយ។ យើងនឹងមិនសរសេរឈ្មោះរបស់អ្នកនៅលើក្រដាសនេះទេ ហើយក៏មិនយកឈ្មោះរបស់អ្នកទៅប្រើ សំរាប់ព័ត៌មានអ្វីផ្សេងទៀតដែរ។ ខ្ញុំមិនធ្វើការផ្នែកពង្រឹងច្បាប់ទេ អ្វីៗដែលអ្នកប្រាប់ខ្ញុំ និង មិនធ្វើឲ្យប៉ះពាល់ ឬ ខូចខាត មានបញ្ហាអ្វីដល់រូបអ្នក និងប្រធានរបស់អ្នកទេ។ អ្នកមិនចាំបាច់ឆ្លើយសំណួរណាមួយ ដែលអ្នកមិនចង់ឆ្លើយនោះទេ ក៏ប៉ុន្តែ ចំលើយដ៏ស្មោះត្រង់របស់អ្នកនឹងជួយឲ្យយើងស្វែងយល់បន្ថែមទៀតអំពីបទពិសោធន៍ របស់ស្ត្រីធ្វើការនៅហាងម៉ាស្សា ដើម្បីយើងអាចជួយពួកគេបានតាមរបៀបណាមួយ។ យើងពិតជាអរគុណខ្លាំងណាស់ ដែលអ្នកអាចជួយឆ្លើយសំណួរទាំងនេះ។ យើងចង់បញ្ជាក់ដែរថា ប្រសិនបើអ្នកមានអារម្មណ៍មិនស្រួលត្រង់ចំនុចណាមួយ អ្នកអាចរំលងសំណួរ ឬ បញ្ចប់ការសំភាសន៍ បាន។ ការសំភាសន៍នេះមានរយៈពេល ប្រហែល ៤៥នាទី។ តើអ្នកចង់ចូលរួមឬទេ?

CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONSENT — I am going to ask you some personal questions that you may find difficult to answer. Your name will never be written on this form, nor will your name ever be used in connection with any of the information that you tell me. I am not working in a legal capacity and nothing you tell me will be used to prosecute you or your employer. No matter what you tell me, your answers to these questions will not make me upset, nor will they change the way that I treat you or think about you. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer; but your honest answer to these questions will help us better understand what women like you experience, so that we can help to make things better in the future. We would greatly appreciate your help by responding to this questionnaire. Just remember, if you feel uncomfortable at any point, you can skip a question or stop the interview. The interview will take about 45 minutes to complete. Would you be willing to participate?

ចង់/Yes មិនចង់/No

ផ្លូវលេខ/Street #: _____

ផ្ទះលេខ/House #: _____

ឈ្មោះអ្នកសំភាស/Interviewer Name: _____

កាលបរិច្ឆេទសំភាសន៍/Date of Interview: _____

A. ព័ត៌មានប្រជាសាស្ត្រ / DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE	
1. តើអ្នកអាយុប៉ុន្មាន ?/What is your age?	2. # 1. ឆ្នាំសត្វ/Year of the _____ 2. មិនដឹង/Don't know 3. មិនឆ្លើយ/Refused to respond
2. តើអ្នកមានស្រុកកំណើតនៅឯណា ? (តើអ្នកសញ្ជាតិអ្វី?) Where were you born? (What is your ethnicity?)	ខេត្ត និងប្រទេស Province and Country
3. តើអ្នកមករស់នៅក្នុងទីក្រុងនៅពេលណា ?/When did you move to the city?	ឆ្នាំ/Year _____
4. តើអ្នករស់នៅទីណាសព្វថ្ងៃ ?/Where are you living now?	1. នៅក្នុងហាងម៉ាស្សា Inside the massage place 2. នៅក្រៅហាងម៉ាស្សា Outside the massage place
5. តើអ្នករៀនបានថ្នាក់ទីប៉ុន្មានខ្ពស់បំផុត ?/What is your highest level of education?	1. មិនបានរៀន/No schooling 2. រៀនបានថ្នាក់ទី ៤/up to 4 th Grade 3. ថ្នាក់ទី ៤-៦/4 th to 6 th Grade 4. ថ្នាក់ទី ៧-៩/7 th to 9 th Grade 5. ថ្នាក់ទី ១០-១២/10 th to 12 th Grade 6. ថ្នាក់វិជ្ជាជីវៈ:/Vocational College មុខវិជ្ជាអ្វី (Which course? _____) 7. ថ្នាក់សញ្ញាប័ត្រ (កម្មវិធីអ្វី?) Diploma (which program?) _____ 8. សញ្ញាប័ត្រមហាវិទ្យាល័យ ឬ ខ្ពស់ជាងនេះ (មុខវិជ្ជាអ្វី?) University degree or higher (which program?) _____
6. តើអ្នកមានបងប្អូនប៉ុន្មាននាក់ ?/How many siblings do you have?	
7. តើអ្នកមានបងប្អូន ឬ សាច់ញាតិធ្វើការងារប្រភេទនេះឬទេ (ការងារម៉ាស្សា) ? Do you have a sibling or other relative who is working in this type of work (massage industry)?	1. មាន/Yes 2. អត់មាន/No

B. ការធ្វើចំណាកស្រុក/ការចូលធ្វើការងារម៉ាស្សា / MIGRATION / ENTRANCE INTO THE INDUSTRY	
1. ហេតុអ្វីបានជាអ្នកមកទីក្រុងភ្នំពេញ ?/Why did you come to Phnom Penh?	
2. តើអ្នកមានការងារផ្សេងដែរឬទេ ? ប្រសិនបើមាន តើជាការងារអ្វី ? Do you have any other work? If so, what is it?	

3. តើអ្នកបានមកធ្វើការងារប្រភេទនេះដោយរបៀបណា (ការងារម៉ាស្សា)? How did you come to be in this type of work (massage work)?	
4. ហេតុអ្វីបានជាអ្នកជ្រើសរើសការងារនេះ និងមិនជ្រើសរើសការងារផ្សេង? Why did you come into this type of work as opposed to another job?	
5. បើពីមុនធ្លាប់ធ្វើការ តើអ្នកធ្វើការអ្វីដែរ? If you have worked before, what was your previous job?	
5. a. តើអ្នកធ្លាប់ធ្វើការងាររោងចក្រទេពីមុនមក? Have you previously worked in the garment industry?	1. ធ្លាប់/Yes 2. អត់ធ្លាប់/No
5. b. ប្រសិនបើធ្លាប់ ហេតុអ្វីបានជាអ្នកឈប់ធ្វើការរោងចក្រ? If so, why did you leave?	

C. ចំណូល, ចំណាយ និងកាតព្វកិច្ចផ្នែកហិរញ្ញវត្ថុ / INCOME, EXPENSES, & FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS	
1. តើអ្នកទទួលបានប្រាក់ចំណូលតាមរបៀបណា? How are you paid?	1. ប្រាក់ខែ/Wage 2. លុយដីប/Tips 3. ប្រាក់ខែ និងលុយដីប/Wage and Tips 4. ផ្សេងទៀត (ចរចាតម្លៃ -ល-) Other (negotiate prices, etc)
2. តើអ្នកទទួលបានលុយទាំងអស់ដែលអ្នករកបានឬទេ? Do you receive all of the money that you earn?	
3. a. សប្តាហ៍មុន អ្នករកប្រាក់ចំណូលបានប៉ុន្មាន បូកទាំងលុយដីបផងដែរ? How much was your income in the past week, including tips?	
3. b. តើអ្នកមានប្រាក់ចំណូលប៉ុន្មានរយៈពេល ៣ខែនេះ បូកទាំងលុយដីបផងដែរ? How much was your total income in the past 3 months, including tips?	
4. តើអ្នកចំណាយទៅលើ ៥ ចំណុចធំៗអ្វីខ្លះ? What are your 5 greatest areas of expense?	
5. ប្រសិនបើអ្នកសន្សំលុយ តើអ្នកសន្សំទុកកន្លែងណា If you save money, where do you save your money? (អាចជ្រើសរើសចម្លើយច្រើន/Multiple answers)	1. ទុកជាមួយអ្នកធ្វើការជាមួយ Keep it with Peers 2. ទុកជាមួយសមាជិកគ្រួសារ Keep it with family members 3. ទុកក្នុងធនាគារ/Keep it in bank 4. របៀបផ្សេង/Any other 5. អត់សន្សំ/Don't save
6. a. តើអ្នកត្រូវផ្គត់ផ្គង់ថវិកាអ្វីខ្លះដល់គ្រួសាររបស់អ្នក? ប្រសិនបើមាន។ What financial obligations do you have to your family? (If any, what is it?)	
6. b. ប្រសិនបើគ្រួសាររបស់អ្នកជំពាក់បំណុលគេ តើនៅសល់ចំនួនប៉ុន្មានទៀតដែលត្រូវសង? If your family owes any debts, what is the amount of the debt needed to be paid back?	

D. ទំនាក់ទំនង / RELATIONSHIPS	
1. a. តើបច្ចុប្បន្ននេះអ្នកមានទំនាក់ទំនងស្នេហាឬទេ ? Are you currently in a committed relationship?	1. រៀបការហើយ/Married 2. មិត្តស្រី/មិត្តប្រុស/GF/BF 3. នៅលីវ/Single 4. ផ្សេងទៀត (សូមបញ្ជាក់) Other (please specify) _____
1. b. តើអ្នកមានទំនាក់ទំនងជាមួយគ្នាយូរប៉ុន្មាន? How long have you been together?	
1. c. តើដៃគូរបស់អ្នកដឹងអំពីការងារដែលអ្នកធ្វើឬទេ ? Is your partner aware of your work here?	a. ដឹង/Yes b. អត់ដឹង/No
1. d. ប្រសិនបើមិនដឹង ហេតុអ្វី ? If not, why is he/she not aware?	
2. a. តើគ្រួសាររបស់អ្នកដឹងអំពីការងារដែលអ្នកធ្វើឬទេ ? Is your family aware of your work here?	a. ដឹង/Yes b. អត់ដឹង/No
2. b. ប្រសិនបើមិនដឹង ហេតុអ្វី ? If not, why are they not aware?	
3. a. តើមនុស្សនៅក្នុងតំបន់របស់អ្នកដឹងអំពីការងារដែលអ្នកធ្វើឬទេ ? Are the people in your hometown aware of your work here?	a. ដឹង/Yes b. អត់ដឹង/No
3. b. ប្រសិនបើមិនដឹង ហេតុអ្វី ? If not, why are they not aware?	

E. បុរេនិច្ច័យ និងការរើសអើង / PREJUDICE, STIGMA & DISCRIMINATION	
1. តើអ្នកចាប់ផ្តើមធ្វើការងារជាអ្នកម៉ាស្សាទៅអាយុប៉ុន្មាន ? At what age did you first start working as a masseuse?	
2. a. តើការធ្វើការងារម៉ាស្សាប៉ះពាល់ដល់ទំនាក់ទំនងស្នេហារបស់អ្នកដោយរបៀបណា ? How does working as a masseuse affect your closest personal relationships?	1. អត់ទេ/Not at all 2. តិចតួចណាស់/Little 3. ខ្លះៗ/Moderate 4. ខ្លាំងណាស់/Very much
2. b. ប្រសិនបើប៉ះពាល់ សូមពន្យល់ តើវាប៉ះពាល់ដោយរបៀបណា ? If it does, please explain how it affects your relationships	
3. a. តើអ្នកគិតថា ស្ត្រីគួរចូលធ្វើការហាងម៉ាស្សានៅអាយុប៉ុន្មាន ? At what age do you think girls should start working in this line of work?	
3. b. ហេតុអ្វីបានជាអ្នកគិតដូច្នោះ ? Why do you think that?	
4. ជាទូទៅស្ត្រីចូលធ្វើការហាងម៉ាស្សានៅអាយុប៉ុន្មាន ? At what age do girls normally start working in this line of work?	
5. a. តើអ្នកនឹងណែនាំការងារនេះទៅបងប្អូនស្រី ឬមិត្តភក្តិអ្នកទេ ? Would you recommend this job to a sister or friend?	1. ធ្លាប់/Yes 2. អត់ធ្លាប់/No
5. b. ហេតុអ្វីបានជាអ្នកគិតដូច្នោះ ? Why do you think that?	
6. a. តើអ្នកធ្លាប់ទទួលការរើសអើង ដោយសារការងារដែលអ្នកធ្វើឬទេ ? Have you experienced stigma or discrimination because of working in this line of work?	1. ធ្លាប់/Yes 2. អត់ធ្លាប់/No
6. b. តើអ្នកទទួលការរើសអើងពីនរណា ? (ដៃគូ, គ្រួសារ, មិត្តភក្តិ, ប៉ូលីស, អតិថិជន ?)	

<p>សូមហៅចំឈើយ ប្រសិនបើពួកគេមិនផ្តល់ចំឈើយ</p> <p>From whom do you experience stigma or discrimination? (Partners, family, friends, police, clients?) read out only if no answer is given</p>	
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<p>F. អត្តសញ្ញាណភេទ និង ប្រវត្តិទំនាក់ទំនងផ្លូវភេទ SEXUAL IDENTITY & PERSONAL SEXUAL HISTORY</p>	
<p>ព្យាយាមស្វែងយល់អំពីស្ថានភាពស្ត្រីដែលធ្វើការងារម៉ាស្សា និងព្យាយាមស្វែងយល់អំពីអាកប្បកិរិយាផ្លូវភេទរបស់ពួកគេ។ To try and understand the situation of women in the massage industry, we are trying to find out about your sexual behaviour</p>	
<p>1. តើអ្នកមានបទពិសោធន៍ផ្នែកផ្លូវភេទលើកដំបូងនៅអាយុប៉ុន្មាន ? At what age did you have your first sexual experience?</p>	
<p>2. a. តើមនុស្សដែលអ្នកគេងជាមួយដំបូងមានអាយុប៉ុន្មាន ? What was the age of the person who first had sex with you?</p>	
<p>2. b. តើដៃគូរួមភេទរបស់អ្នកដំបូងមានភេទអ្វី ? What was the gender of your first sexual partner?</p>	<p>a. ប្រុស/Male b. ស្រី/Female</p>
<p>2. c. ដៃគូរបស់អ្នកគឺជា Were they...?</p>	<p>a. សាច់ញាតិ/Relative b. អ្នកជិតខាង/Neighbour c. មិត្តភក្តិ/Friend d. អតិថិជន/Client e. មនុស្សមិនស្គាល់/Stranger f. ប្តី / Husband</p>
<p>3. a. តើបទពិសោធន៍លើកទី ១ នេះកើតឡើងនៅកន្លែងណា (សណ្ឋាគារ, ផ្ទះសាច់ញាតិ, ផ្ទះគ្រួសារ, -ល-)? Where did this first experience take place (hotel, relative's house, family home, etc) ?</p>	
<p>3. b. តើបទពិសោធន៍ផ្នែកផ្លូវភេទរបស់អ្នកមានលក្ខណៈយ៉ាងម៉េចដែរ? What was the nature of your first sexual experience?</p>	<p>a. ត្រូវគេបង្ខំ/មិនចង់/ Forced/Unwanted b. យល់ព្រម/មានចិត្តចង់ Consensual/Desired</p>
<p>3. c. តើអ្នកមានពាក្យអ្វីដើម្បីពិពណ៌នាអំពីបទពិសោធន៍លើកដំបូងនេះ? Is there anything else you want to tell us about this experience?</p>	

៦. អតិថិជន, ភាពញឹកញាប់ និងប្រភេទនៃបទពិសោធន៍ផ្នែកផ្លូវភេទ CLIENTELE, FREQUENCY & TYPE OF SEXUAL EXPERIENCES	
1. តើមានអ្នកម៉ាស្សាភេទប្រុស ស្រី និងភេទទី ៣ ប៉ុន្មាននាក់ធ្វើការនៅទីនេះ ? How many male, female and ladyboy masseurs work here?	a. ភេទប្រុស/Males: _____ b. ភេទស្រី/Females: _____ c. ភេទទី ៣/Ladyboys: _____
2. a. តើមានអតិថិជនជាមធ្យមប៉ុន្មាននាក់ក្នុង ១ខែ ? About how many clients do you have on average in a month?	
2. b. តើក្នុង ១ខែ មានអតិថិជនភេទប្រុសប៉ុន្មាននាក់ ? About how many of these clients (in a month) are males?	
2. c. ក្នុងចំណោមអតិថិជនប្រុសទាំងអស់ តើប៉ុន្មាននាក់ត្រូវការឲ្យធ្វើ... ? (សូមអានឃ្លានៅខាងស្តាំឲ្យលឿន) Out of these clients, how many would require: (Read out whole sentences for each category)	a. ម៉ាស្សា/Massage only _____ b. លេងប្រដាប់ភេទ/Masturbation _____ c. អ្នកបៀមប្រដាប់ភេទភ្ញៀវ You to give oral sex _____ d. ភ្ញៀវបៀមប្រដាប់ភេទអ្នក You to receive oral sex _____ e. រួមភេទ/Sexual intercourse _____ f. ផ្សេងទៀត/Other _____
2. d. ប្រសិនបើភ្ញៀវត្រូវការឲ្យអ្នកមានកាយវិការផ្លូវភេទជាមួយ តើអ្នកត្រូវធ្វើនៅកន្លែងណា ? If you were required to perform any sexual acts with clients, where did this take place?	
3. តើអតិថិជនរបស់អ្នកមានចន្លោះអាយុប៉ុន្មាន ? What is the age range of your clients?	
4. បីខែកន្លងមកនេះ តើអ្នកត្រូវរួមភេទជាមួយភ្ញៀវម្នាក់ប៉ុន្មានដង ជាមួយអ្នកម៉ាស្សាម្នាក់ទៀត ? Within the past three months, how many times have you been required to have sex outside masturbation with a client and AT LEAST ONE OTHER MASSEUR?	
5. a. ក្នុងចំណោមអតិថិជនដែលអ្នកធ្លាប់បានរួមភេទជាមួយ តើមានប៉ុន្មានភាគរយជាជនបរទេស ? Of the clients with whom you have had sexual intercourse, what % of them are foreigners?	
5. b. តើពួកគេមកពីប្រទេសណា ? From what countries do they come?	
6. a. តើអ្នកធ្លាប់ត្រូវបានថតរូប/វីឌីអូសំរាប់រូបភាពអាសអាភាសឬទេ ? Have you been asked to take part in photos/film for pornography?	a. ធ្លាប់/Yes b. មិនធ្លាប់/No
6. b. ប្រសិនបើធ្លាប់ តើគេសុំឲ្យអ្នកធ្វើអ្វីសំរាប់រូបភាព/វីឌីអូអាសអាភាសនេះ ? If yes, what have you been asked to do for these films/photographs?	

H. សុខភាពផ្លូវភេទ / SEXUAL HEALTH	
1. តើអ្នកទទួលបានការអប់រំផ្នែកសុខភាពផ្លូវភេទនៅកន្លែងណា ? Where did you receive sexual health education (instruction) from?	
2. a. តើមេរោគអេដស៍/ជំងឺអេដស៍ឆ្លងពីមនុស្សម្នាក់ទៅមនុស្សម្នាក់ដោយរបៀបណា ? (សួរអំពី របៀបឆ្លង ហើយប្រសិនបើឆ្លើយថា ឆ្លងតាមការរួមភេទ សូមឈប់ត្រង់នោះ) How is HIV/AIDS passed from one person to another? (Ask modes of transmission; and if the first answer is "Sex" then stop there)	
2. b. តើអ្នកអាចការពារពីជំងឺអេដស៍ដោយរបៀបណា ? How can HIV/AIDS be prevented?	
3. a. តើ ៦ ខែកន្លងមកនេះ អ្នកមានកន្ទួលរមាស់ ជំពៅ ឬ ដុំពកនៅកន្លែងប្រដាប់ភេទ/រន្ធកូទ/មាត់ឬទេ ? In the past 6 months, have you had any rashes, ulcerations or lumps in your genital area / anus / mouth?	a. មាន/Yes b. មិនមាន/No
3. b. តើ ៦ ខែកន្លងមកនេះ អ្នកមានចេញទឹករងៃ ពិបាកបត់ដឹងតូច ឬ ឈឺនៅកន្លែងប្រដាប់ភេទឬទេ ? In the past 6 months, have you had any urethral discharge, difficulty passing urine, or pain in your genital area?	a. មាន/Yes b. មិនមាន/No

I. ការប្រើប្រាស់សារធាតុញៀន SUBSTANCE ABUSE	
1. a. តើអ្នកញាំស្រាញឹកញាប់ប៉ុណ្ណា ? How often do you drink alcohol?	a. អត់សោះ/Not at all b. បន្តិចបន្តួច/Little c. ល្មម/Moderately d. ច្រើន/Very much
1. b. តើអ្នកញាំស្រានៅពេលរួមភេទជាមួយភ្ញៀវញឹកញាប់ប៉ុណ្ណា ? How frequently do you use alcohol during sex with clients?	a. ម្តងម្កាល/Sometimes b. ញឹកញាប់/Often c. ញឹកញាប់ណាស់/Very often d. គ្រប់ពេល/Always
2. a. តើអ្នកប្រើប្រាស់គ្រឿងញៀនឬទេ ? Do you use drugs?	a. ប្រើ/Yes b. មិនប្រើ/No
2. b. ប្រសិនបើអ្នកប្រើ តើអ្នកបានចាប់ផ្តើមប្រើវានៅពេលណា ? If yes, when did you start using them?	
2. c. តើគ្រឿងញៀនអ្វីដែលអ្នកប្រើ រយៈពេល ១ខែមកនេះ ? Which drugs have you used in the past 1 month?	
2. d. តើអ្នកប្រើគ្រឿងញៀននៅពេលរួមភេទជាមួយភ្ញៀវញឹកញាប់ប៉ុណ្ណា ? How frequently do you use drugs during sex with clients?	a. ម្តងម្កាល/Sometimes b. ញឹកញាប់/Often c. ញឹកញាប់ណាស់/Very often d. គ្រប់ពេល/Always e. មិនធ្លាប់/Never

១. អំពើហិង្សា និងការរំលោភបំពានផ្លូវភេទ / VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ABUSE	
1. a. ចំពោះគំនិតរបស់អ្នក តើអ្វីទៅដែលហៅថា "ការចាប់រំលោភ" ? In your opinion, what is rape?	
1. b. ចំពោះគំនិតរបស់អ្នក តើអ្វីទៅដែលហៅថា "ការរួមភេទដោយព្រមព្រៀង" ? In your opinion, what is consensual sex?	
2. a. តើអ្នកដឹងថាមានស្ត្រីវ័យក្មេងផ្សេងទៀតត្រូវបានគេបង្ខំឲ្យរួមភេទឬទេ ? Are you aware of other young women being forced to have sex against their wishes?	a. ដឹង/Yes b. មិនដឹង/No
2. b. តើអ្នកធ្លាប់ត្រូវបានគេបង្ខំឲ្យរួមភេទឬទេ ? Have you ever been forced to have sex against your wishes?	a. មិនធ្លាប់/Never b. ម្តង/Once c. ពីរបីដង/A few times d. ញឹកញាប់/Often e. គ្រប់ពេល/Always
2. c. តើអ្នកចង់ចែកចាយបទពិសោធន៍នេះឬទេ ? (រំលងសំនួរនេះ ប្រសិនបើឆ្លើយ "មិនធ្លាប់") Are you willing to share about these experiences? <i>(discontinue this section if they answer NO)</i>	a. ចង់/Yes b. មិនចង់/No
3. a. រយៈពេល ៣ខែកន្លងមកនេះ តើអ្នកធ្លាប់ទទួលបានបទពិសោធន៍ចំនុចខាងក្រោមញឹកញាប់ ឬទេ ? (សូមអានសំនួរនីមួយៗសំរាប់ជំរើសនៅខាងស្តាំ) In the last 3 months, how often have you experienced any of the following: (read out full question for each option)	a. ការប៉ះពាល់ផ្នែកផ្លូវភេទ Unwanted sexual touching_____ b. ការបៀតបៀនផ្លូវភេទ (ពាក្យសម្តី និង អារម្មណ៍) Sexual harassment (verbal and emotional)_____ c. ការប៉ុនប៉ងរំលោភ Attempted rape_____ d. ការចាប់រំលោភ Rape_____ e. ផ្សេងទៀត Other, what? _____
3. b. ប្រសិនបើធ្លាប់ នរណាបៀតបៀនផ្លូវភេទរបស់អ្នក ? <i>(ប៉ូលីស? អតិថិជន? អ្នកម៉ាស្សាដូចគ្នា? ថៅកែ?) សូមអានជំរើសទាំងនេះ ប្រសិនបើ គ្មានចម្លើយ</i> If so, who sexually harassed you? <i>(Police? Clients? Co-workers? Managers?) read out if no answer is given</i>	
4. a. រយៈពេល ១២ខែកន្លងមក តើអ្នកធ្លាប់ទទួលបានអំពើហិង្សាលើរាងកាយ ដោយសារការងារ ដែលអ្នកធ្វើឬទេ ? In the last 12 months, have you experienced physical violence as a result of the work you do?	1. ធ្លាប់/Yes 2. មិនធ្លាប់/No
4. b. តើរឿងនេះកើតឡើងញឹកញាប់ឬទេ ? How often has this happened?	a. មិនធ្លាប់/Never b. ម្តង/Once c. ពីរបីដង/A few times d. ញឹកញាប់/Often e. គ្រប់ពេល/Always

<p>4. c. ប្រសិនបើអ្នកធ្លាប់ទទួលបានអំពើហិង្សា តើនរណាប្រព្រឹត្តមកលើអ្នក? (ប៉ូលីស? អតិថិជន? អ្នកម៉ាស្សាដូចគ្នា? ថៅកែ?) សូមអានជំរើសទាំងនេះ ប្រសិនបើ គ្មានចម្លើយ If so, who was violent to you? (Police? Clients? Co-workers? Managers?) read out if no answer is given</p>	
<p>5. រយៈពេល ១២ខែកន្លងមកនេះ តើអ្នកធ្លាប់ទទួលបានអំពើហិង្សាផ្នែករាងកាយពីដៃគូស្នេហា ដូចជា សង្សារ ឬ ប្តីឬទេ? In the last 12 months, have you experienced physical violence by an intimate partner, such as a boyfriend or husband?</p>	<p>1. ប្លាប/Yes 2. មិនប្លាប/No</p>
<p>6. តើមានអ្វីផ្សេងទៀតដែលអ្នកចង់ប្រាប់ពួកយើងអំពីបទពិសោធន៍នេះឬទេ? Is there anything else about these experiences that you would like to tell us?</p>	

<p>K. ការកម្រិតចំណូល INCOME GENERATION</p>	
<p>1. a. តើអ្នកចូលចិត្តការងារបច្ចុប្បន្នរបស់អ្នកឬទេ? Do you like your present job?</p>	<p>a. ចូលចិត្ត/Yes b. អត់ចូលចិត្ត/No</p>
<p>1. b. ប្រសិនបើចូលចិត្ត ហេតុអ្វី?/ប្រសិនបើមិនចូលចិត្ត ហេតុអ្វី? If yes, why do you like it? / If no, why DON'T you like it?</p>	
<p>1. c. ប្រសិនបើមិនចូលចិត្ត តើអ្នកចង់ធ្វើអ្វីផ្សេងវិញ? If no, what would you prefer to be doing?</p>	
<p>2. ប្រសិនបើអ្នកទទួលបានការងារផ្សេងដែលមានប្រាក់ខែ \$៨០ ក្នុង ១ខែ តើអ្នកនឹងធ្វើឬទេ? If you were offered an alternative job to your massage work, which paid 80 USD a month, would you take it?</p>	
<p>3. តើអ្នកចង់រៀនជំនាញអ្វី ប្រសិនបើអ្នកមានឱកាស? What skills you would like to learn if you had the opportunity?</p>	
<p>4. a. ប្រសិនបើអ្នករៀនភាសាបរទេស តើអ្នកគិតថា វានឹងជួយដល់ប្រាក់ចំណូលរបស់អ្នក ឬទេ? Would it help your income generation if you learned a foreign language?</p>	<p>a. ជួយ/Yes b. អត់ជួយ/No</p>
<p>4. b. តើចង់រៀនភាសាអ្វី? Which ones?</p>	

L. សុខុមាលភាពជីវិតរស់នៅ / EXISTENTIAL WELLBEING	
1. ពេលអ្នកណាម្នាក់គោរពយើង តើគេធ្វើដូចម្តេចចំពោះយើង ? If others were to show you respect, what would this look like? (probe for responses)	
2. តើអ្នកអាចធ្វើអ្វីបាន ដើម្បីជួយឲ្យខ្លួនឯងជាមនុស្សមានតំលៃ/ទំនុកចិត្តថែមទៀត ? (សូមសរសេរគ្រប់ពាក្យសម្តីទាំងអស់) What can you do to increase your sense of value/confidence? (write in all the details that are said)	
3. ក្នុងរយៈពេល ១២ខែកន្លងមកនេះ ដោយសារការងាររបស់អ្នក តើអ្នកធ្លាប់ទទួលអារម្មណ៍ដូចខាងក្រោមឬទេ ? In the past 12 months, have you felt any of the following because of your work? a. ខ្ញុំមានអារម្មណ៍ស្តាប់ចិត្តនឹងការងាររបស់ខ្ញុំ / I feel satisfied with my work. b. ខ្ញុំមានអារម្មណ៍អាម៉ាស់ / I feel ashamed. c. ខ្ញុំមានអារម្មណ៍ទទួលបានការគោរព/តម្លៃ / I feel respected/valued. d. ខ្ញុំមានអារម្មណ៍នៃទោសកំហុស / I feel guilty. e. ខ្ញុំបន្ទោសខ្លួនឯង / I blame myself. f. ខ្ញុំបន្ទោសអ្នកដទៃ / I blame others. g. ខ្ញុំឲ្យតម្លៃខ្លួនឯងទាប / I have low self-esteem. h. ខ្ញុំមានអារម្មណ៍ថា ខ្ញុំគួរតែទទួលទណ្ឌកម្ម / I feel I should be punished. i. ខ្ញុំមានអារម្មណ៍ចង់សំលាប់ខ្លួន / I feel suicidal.	a. មាន/Yes អត់/No b. មាន/Yes អត់/No c. មាន/Yes អត់/No d. មាន/Yes អត់/No e. មាន/Yes អត់/No f. មាន/Yes អត់/No g. មាន/Yes អត់/No h. មាន/Yes អត់/No i. មាន/Yes អត់/No
4. តើអ្នកមានគំរោងធ្វើអ្វីនៅរយៈពេលពីរឆ្នាំខាងមុខទៀត ? Where do you see yourself in two years time?	
5. a. តើអ្នកកំពុងជួបឧបសគ្គធំៗអ្វីខ្លះក្នុងជីវិតរបស់អ្នក ? What are the biggest obstacles you are facing in your life right now?	
5. b. តើអ្នកគិតថា មានអ្វីដែលនឹងជួយយកឈ្នះលើឧបសគ្គទាំងនេះ ? What would most help you in overcoming these obstacles?	
5. c. តើមានច្បាប់អ្វី (ប្រសិនបើមាន) ដែលអ្នកជឿថាឈ្នះលើការលំបាកទាំងអស់ចំពោះអ្នកទេ ? What role (if any) does faith have to play in overcoming these obstacles, for you?	
6. ប្រសិនបើអ្នកចង់ផ្តល់ ឬដំបូន្មានដល់ស្ត្រីធ្វើការនៅកន្លែងកំសាន្ត តើអ្នកចង់និយាយយ៉ាងដូចម្តេចខ្លះទៅរកពួកគេ ? If you could give any advice to girls thinking of entering the Massage Parlor industry, what would you say?	

<p>7. តើមានអ្វីចង់ផ្តាំទៅអង្គការឬ រដ្ឋាភិបាលទេ ? If you could give a message to NGOs or the government, what would it be?</p>	
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Quotes: សម្រង់