

**Male Sex Work in China: Understanding the  
HIV Risk Environments of Shenzhen's Migrant  
Money Boys**

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## **Declaration of authorship**

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**Paul Bouanchaud**

## Abstract

This study contributes to our understanding of the social organisation and lived experience of men in China's sex industry. It employs a social epidemiological model to analyse the multiple levels of influence on HIV (and other non-HIV) risks to which this highly marginalised group are exposed. It highlights the complex interrelations between different factors influencing the lives of male and transgender sex workers (MSW) in China. It is the first mixed methods study of its kind in the Chinese MSW context.

The thesis analyses data collected during five months of fieldwork in Shenzhen, China. Working through a community-based MSW organisation, a participatory approach was taken to study design and data collection. Community advisory boards were organised and used to develop and test study instruments. A structured survey was undertaken with MSW (n=251), with a sub-sample purposely selected for semi-structured interviews (n=21). Key informant interviews were conducted with representatives from local and international organisations (n=5). Multiple linear and binary logistic regressions were used for quantitative data analyses, while qualitative data were coded thematically. Both data types are given equal weight throughout the analysis.

The thesis demonstrates how China's recent macro-level social and economic changes, characterised here through the microcosm of life in the city of Shenzhen, interact with the lived experiences of the men in the study, driving their rural-urban migration and contributing to their entry into sex work. The phrase "laugh at poverty, not at prostitution" was used by many of the respondents to explain their decision to sell sex, but this apparently simple idiom belies a more complex reality in which economic factors intersect with social networks, sexual orientation and an escalation in the provision of sexual services. Sex work careers are represented as providing both opportunities (for escaping poverty, expressing sexual identity, and accessing cosmopolitan lifestyles), as well as risks. Risk, understood as a socially constructed phenomenon, refers not only to HIV transmission, but also violence from clients, control by *mami* (pimps), and entrapment and arrest by the police. Multiple risks and opportunities arise through a range of social and professional interactions between the

different actors involved in the industry, necessitating their dynamic management by the MSW.

Sex work, HIV and homosexuality alongside migrant identities are highly stigmatised in China, and the active management of these intersecting identities, in part through their sexual practices, allows the MSW in this study to continue in their work without 'losing face'. The MSW have complex sexual networks of male and female, paid and paying, and non-commercial partners. In exploring their partner concurrency, this complexity is examined, through the lenses of stigma and identity.

Local, emic understandings of 'safe sex' indicate that while levels of HIV fear are substantial among the MSW, and condom use is commonly discussed, safety and hygiene are frequently conflated, and both are associated with HIV-avoidance. Hygiene, through showering and general cleanliness, is considered an important part of 'safe sex' for this group, but also emerges as a metaphor employed to counter the perceived dirtiness of selling sex for some of the MSW.

The findings highlight the complexities involved in selling sex for these men. They must actively negotiate their work, risks and identities, while also being subject to unequal power relations and forces largely beyond their control. This thesis aims to present a nuanced account of these dynamic processes.

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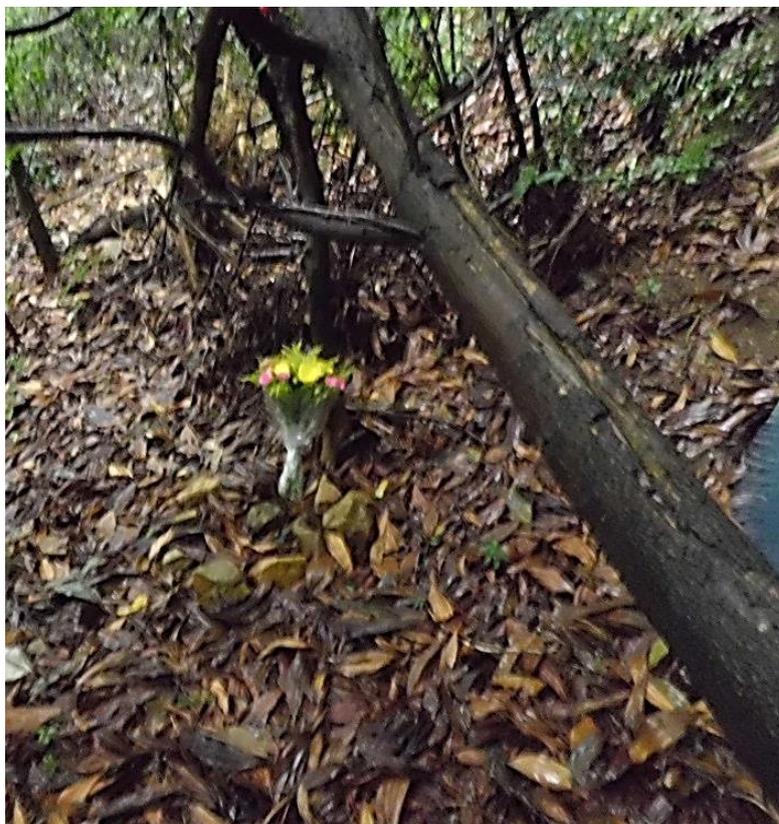
## Glossary

1069	Penetrative sex (1-0 representing active and passive intercourse; 69 representing oral sex)
419	'For one night' (one night stand)
Anquan xingxingwei	Safe sex
Anquantao	Condoms
Bu qinjin	Not intimate
Bupingheng	Imbalance
Dagongzai	A worker (often a factory worker)
Daitao	To wear condoms
Diulian	To lose face
Guanxi	Social capital or networks
Hongbao	Red packet (traditionally used to gift money)
Hukou	Household registration document
Jiejie	Sister
K-fen	Ketamine
Kuaican	'Fast food' (a quick sexual service)
Kuaxingbie	Transgender
Laojia	Hometown
Laopo	Wife (sometimes used for regular non-commercial partners without marriage)
Mai B	MSW
Mami	Pimp
MB	Money Boy (MSW)
Nanpengyou	Boyfriend
Nvpengyou	Girlfriend
Quanzi	Circle
Shouke	Regular client
Shuangxinglian	Bisexual
Suzhi	Quality or cultivation (of a person)
Tequ	Special (economic) region
Tongxinglian	Homosexual
Tongzhi	'Comrade' (colloquialism for 'gay person')
Tu	Rural, uncultured
Weisheng	Hygiene
Xiaodi	'Little brother' (MSW)
Xiaojie	'Little sister' (FSW)
Xinli	In one's heart; psychologically
Xuebing	'Ice skating' (taking methamphetamine)
Ya	'Duck' (MSW selling to women)
Yixingnan	Heterosexual
Zai	Boy
Zhinan	'Straight man'
Zhuang-B	Transgender sex worker

## Acronyms and abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
PRC	People's Republic of China
MSW	Male and Transgender Sex Workers
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
WHO	World Health Organisation
IDU	Intravenous Drug User
FSW	Female Sex Worker
MSM	Men who have Sex with Men
ART	Anti-retroviral Treatment
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
CSW	Commercial Sex Worker
STI	Sexually Transmitted Disease
CAB	Community Advisory Board
SAR	Special Administrative Region
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
IDI	In-Depth Interview
RMB	Renminbi (Chinese currency)
RDS	Respondent-Driven Sampling
CDC	Centre for Disease Control

# 1 Introduction



It was the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, a day traditionally associated with paying respects to ancestors and tending to graves in China. The head of the organisation with whom I was doing my fieldwork arrived in the office with a bunch of flowers, and invited me to accompany him and a friend to visit an area of parkland on the edge of Shenzhen where the ashes of a male sex worker, Xiaolong [not his real name], had been scattered the year before. Xiaolong had died from AIDS at the age of 27. Before he became ill, he had been quite famous in the local sex industry, appearing on the cover of a Hong Kong gay magazine. Having been diagnosed with HIV, Xiaolong had refused to take antiretroviral medication, fearing that his fellow sex workers would discover that he was infected. Once he developed AIDS, his friends abandoned him, and though hospitalised with cerebral tuberculosis, the doctors refused to treat him as he was HIV positive. He died soon afterwards. His parents visited him in hospital, but after his cremation, could

not take his ashes home to their native Xinjiang province as they were worried the ashes would bring bad luck. Visiting the site where his ashes had been scattered by the community-based organisation workers, an unmarked patch of ground under a nondescript tree on a rainy day in October, brought home to me the human cost of China's HIV epidemic. But even further, it highlighted how people are dying because of fear and stigma, from a disease that is both preventable and treatable; from what Paul Farmer calls the "biological reflections of social fault lines" (Farmer 2001:5).

This vignette highlights the intersection of a number of important themes elaborated in this thesis. The HIV epidemic in China remains by and large limited to certain key 'at risk' populations. It remains a highly stigmatised condition, and those who become infected face discrimination not only from their peers and families, but also from medical providers. This research aims to "focus on both the discursive and material dimensions" (Hyde 2007:3) of HIV. Male sex work in China sits at the confluence of multiple, often contradictory, social and cultural influences. The desire to join China's rapidly modernising, increasingly consumerist society may drive those with limited social or economic capital to migrate from rural areas and enter the sex industry. Meanwhile families back home expect the fulfilment of traditional filial duties including marriage and childbearing, and frequently reject homosexual practices. These tensions between tradition and modernity are only part of the story, however, as it is within this context that the sex industry functions, sustaining or limiting different types of risks for the men involved. HIV transmission is considered a major risk for the industry, but one that must be negotiated alongside a host of other factors.

This thesis explores the lives of Shenzhen's Male and Transgender Sex Workers (MSW). It does so by examining the multiple sources of risk and influence on their decisions to enter and operate in the sex industry, and the threats, issues and questions that they experience in their daily lives. While HIV risk was the starting point for the study, through the course of discussions with different actors involved in the male sex industry, including the MSW themselves, and staff in a community based organisation with whom I worked to complete the research, it became apparent that HIV was just one element in a constellation of issues that affect the daily lives and behaviours of these men. I will argue through the course of this thesis that safer sex practices cannot be understood without taking multiple levels of context into account. In the social epidemiological and

demographic literature, there is an increasing acknowledgement that ‘social drivers’ play an important role in influencing HIV risk, through complex interactions between social or cultural norms and processes, institutional arrangements, and a range of biological, social, behavioural and psychological factors (Auerbach *et al.* 2011). I present the study participants as conscious agents who dynamically negotiate different parts of their lives both in and outside of Shenzhen’s sex industry, but within the context of social, cultural and institutional structures and constraints in which they are situated. To do this, I draw on structuration theory (Giddens 1986) to understand the ways in which the MSW’s practices are both constituted by, and constitute, the wider social contexts in which they find themselves. In this chapter, I develop a picture of some of that context, before describing the theoretical framework I will use to understand the complex lived realities of Shenzhen’s male sex workers. Finally I present the research questions and outline of the rest of the thesis.

## 1.1 HIV in China

By the end of 2011<sup>1</sup>, UNAIDS estimates that there were 780 000 people living with HIV in China (although see Footnote 3 below), including 48 000 who were infected in that year, 81.6% of which were infected sexually (UNAIDS 2012). Comparing this with WHO data for 2012, this would indicate that China has the world’s 10<sup>th</sup> largest population of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) (WHO 2013). There has been an average 30% annual increase in new HIV infections in the country since 1990 (Grusky *et al.* 2002, Y Hong 2009, Y Hong *et al.* 2009b). The Chinese Ministry of Health and UNAIDS estimate that approximately 43% of those infected are unaware of their HIV status (Ministry of Health *et al.* 2012). In the context of China’s large population, the total represents a low national prevalence rate of 0.06% (*ibid.*), although in 2009 the Chinese government announced that HIV had become the leading cause of infectious disease mortality in the country (AVERT 2012). As in other low prevalence countries, China’s HIV epidemic has remained relatively focussed in certain key ‘at risk’ populations. This risk group pattern of China’s HIV epidemic has been described by a number of authors (*cf.* S Jie *et al.* 2004, Guomei 2005, Qian *et al.* 2005, Lau *et al.* 2009b, Merli *et al.* 2009). The key groups officially identified to be at risk of HIV are Intravenous Drug Users (IDU), Female Sex Workers (FSW) and their clients, and Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) (Ministry of

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<sup>1</sup> While more recent estimates have been published by UNAIDS, they are based on the 2011 estimates for China, due to a lack of new official data. As 2011 is the most reasonably reliable recent year estimate for number of PLHIV, I have retained it here (UNAIDS 2013a:A9).

Health *et al.* 2012, UNAIDS 2012), of which MSM are now considered to be experiencing the fastest growing HIV epidemic (L Zhang *et al.* 2013b). A recently published study among MSM in Shenzhen using data from 2009 found an HIV prevalence of 6.9% in this group (D-Y Zhang *et al.* 2014). Male sex workers, the focus of this study, remain absent from official government and UNAIDS discourse around HIV risk in China, rendering them an invisible group to policy makers and service providers. While many male sex workers are MSM, this is not always the case, and the HIV transmission risks that they face are different to both non-sex working MSM and to female sex workers.

### 1.1.1 History of the epidemic

The first AIDS death in China was identified in 1985 in an Argentinian man travelling from the United States (J Meng 2013). In this initial phase of the epidemic the disease was limited to ‘imported’ cases (Jeffreys *et al.* 2009a:152), leading to its association with foreigners in the public imagination (Ma *et al.* 2013), rather than being seen as a risk for Chinese people. China’s epidemic is usually identified as having three subsequent phases. In the 1980’s, the early years of the epidemic in the People’s Republic of China (PRC), HIV was largely limited to intravenous drug users in the south-west, with low rates of transmission. A considerable proportion of those infected being non-Chinese citizens, or members of non-Han<sup>2</sup> ethnic minority groups. The infection spread, following drug trafficking routes, with some evidence of additional spread into commercial sex networks. Blood plasma donors<sup>3</sup> in China’s central provinces were another group with very high rates of infection (Z Wu *et al.* 2001, Qian *et al.* 2005, Jing 2006, Shao 2006, L Wang 2007). With time, further groups have been found to be increasingly vulnerable to

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<sup>2</sup> The Chinese government officially recognises 55 non-Han ethnic minority nationalities in the PRC (Poston *et al.* 1987). Members of these groups are frequently subject to marginalisation, and in relation to the HIV epidemic, some groups in Yunnan Province were identified early on as being particularly culpable for the disease’s spread – often blamed on their ‘native’ sexual practices (Hyde 2007).

<sup>3</sup> Pierre Haski’s (2005) exposé of the blood donor scandal in China suggests that there were at least 300 000 (but possibly as many as 2 million) people infected with HIV in China’s central provinces of Henan, Anhui, Hubei and Hunan during the 1990s. Poor rural farmers were paid to donate blood, from which different blood products were removed, before their blood was re-infused to them, with the aim of increasing the potential number of blood donations each person could make. The process involved incredibly unhygienic practices, including pooling multiple people’s donations together before processing and re-infusing the blood, and the use of unclean needles and equipment. Haski suggests that local officials not only knew about the practices, but were involved in the business, and as such covered-up the scandal as it emerged. Journalists and activists have been arrested and prevented from reporting on the scandal. Although frequently noted in the non-Chinese literature (cf. Grusky *et al.* 2002), the scandal remains relatively unknown within China, and largely officially ignored. The number of people infected with HIV (as well as hepatitis B and C) remains incalculable due to official local, provincial and central government silence. As a result, official estimates of the overall number of PLHIV in China seem likely to be artificially low.

infection, including migrants (X Li *et al.* 2004b, Y Hong *et al.* 2006, Z Hu *et al.* 2006, Zhou *et al.* 2007), MSM (Lau *et al.* 2008, Guo *et al.* 2009, B Zhang *et al.* 2009); female sex workers (Lau *et al.* 2002, H Yang *et al.* 2005, JD Tucker *et al.* 2006); and male commercial sex workers (Mi *et al.* 2007, FY Wong *et al.* 2008, Q Hong *et al.* 2009a, Xi *et al.* 2009, W Cheng *et al.* 2010, Chow *et al.* 2012). The geographic spread of the epidemic has now expanded to all of China's provinces (CJ Smith 2005, Z Meng *et al.* 2012).

### 1.1.2 **Government response to the epidemic**

The official earlier response was characterised by denial about the scale and significance of the HIV epidemic, alongside official efforts at local and provincial levels to cover up some of its more embarrassing elements (such as the blood plasma scandal of the 1990's) (Yan *et al.* 2000, Haski *et al.* 2005). This was accompanied by the introduction of administrative and legal regulations (Knutsen 2012), including the requirement for foreigners to be tested for HIV, mandatory testing for 'high risk' groups, and requirements for people to report known or suspected PLHIV to the authorities (J Meng 2013). These measures, though, were unsurprisingly largely ineffectual in preventing the spread of the disease (Z Wu *et al.* 2007). Acknowledging this failure in approach, by the mid-1990s the government began to seek guidance from other countries in managing the HIV epidemic, and subsequently initiated trial interventions promoting condom use among (female) sex workers, and needle exchange programmes in Yunnan province, although it has been argued that the government response remained too limited for too long to have any substantial impact on the epidemic (Y Huang 2006, Jing 2006). In 2003, the "Four Free, One Care" policy was developed, with implementation beginning the following year. This policy provided for free Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) for rural and poor urban residents, free Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) for HIV, free ART for pregnant women for Prevention of Mother-To-Child Transmission (PMTCT), and free schooling for AIDS orphans, alongside economic assistance for PLHIV and their families (Balzano *et al.* 2005, Z Wu *et al.* 2007, J Meng 2013). Subsequent changes to legislation have legalised HIV prevention interventions and removed compulsory quarantine and treatment for PLHIV, alongside the adoption of a 'comprehensive HIV/AIDS response mechanism' (J Meng 2013:7) aiming to increase the levels of multisectoral cooperation in prevention and treatment.

In 1995, the Chinese government set up an HIV sentinel surveillance system, which by 2010 had been expanded to 1888 sites, and targets eight groups (including MSM and FSW, but not MSW) (W Lin *et al.* 2012b). Nevertheless, despite the shifts in central government policy towards a more inclusive, less punitive approach to managing HIV infection, there remain critical problems. These include the continued suppression and punishment of sex workers, drug users, and AIDS activists in the country (Jing 2006), alongside local-level resistance to central government policy implementation, and continuing discrimination against PLHIV from medical workers, and the public more broadly (C Lin *et al.* 2012a). The government also places tight controls on the work of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in China, resulting in an official civil society that is tightly controlled by the authorities. This is particularly the case for organisations working on ‘sensitive topics’, such as HIV and sex work (Human Rights Watch 2005). Because of this many work in legal grey areas without official registration (Chua *et al.* 2013). As Meng comments, such practices can “contribute to rights abuses and create barriers to effective HIV prevention” (2013:8). Finally, there is evidence of collection of personally-identifying data in the surveillance system, alongside problems of under-resourcing (W Lin *et al.* 2012b) bringing into question the quality of official Chinese data on the HIV epidemic.

### 1.1.3 Risk groups

The Chinese government’s response to the HIV epidemic can in some respects be seen as being a pragmatic approach to the control of a disease whose principal pathways of transmission place particular groups at increased risk of infection. This risk group approach however has a number of negative consequences, both for those identified as being part of a ‘risk group’, and more broadly for the control of the epidemic. First, the othering of people in ‘risk groups’ and those infected by HIV, the process by which a group are identified as being separate or different from the mainstream (JL Johnson *et al.* 2004a), reproduces systems of domination and inequality (Fine 1994), further marginalising them. From a public health perspective this can be significant as it can make people less likely to seek testing and health services, for fear of being identified as a member of a specific group. Furthermore, an exclusive focus on risk groups in the Chinese case means that groups not officially identified by the state’s discourse around the HIV epidemic are largely ignored in official data and interventions. Male sex workers fall into this category in China.

This thesis argues that while MSW might be considered to sit at the intersections of several of the officially identified risk groups (migrants, MSM), and might be exposed to some of the same risks as their female sex working counterparts, this group have certain characteristics and are exposed to particular environments that make them differently vulnerable to HIV. This thesis focusses on this marginalised and neglected group, and presents findings demonstrating the social ecology of HIV risk peculiar to them, using the risk environment concept introduced by Barnett and Whiteside (1999, 2006:85-7). The terminology of risk environments shifts the discussion of risks away from blaming individuals or a specific group for the spread of disease, towards a more comprehensive view. As the authors note: “sexual intercourse... is not intrinsically a ‘risky’(in the popular sense) behaviour... however, when a deadly disease appears *and* the social and economic environment is such ... then that environment may be described as a *risk environment* and the act of sexual intercourse becomes a *risk behaviour*. The riskiness of the behaviour is *a characteristic of the environment rather than of the individuals or the particular practices.*” (Barnett *et al.* 2006:85-6, emphasis in original). The next sections describe the literature exploring the context for this study of MSW in China.

## 1.2 The reform period and the sexual revolution

Any contemporary work on China must acknowledge the extraordinary social and economic changes that have taken place during the post-1978 reform and opening up period. A rising middle class has become more open to modernising influences (Jeffreys 2006), while the mass media and the internet disseminate information about a more consumer-driven lifestyle (Hye-Jin *et al.* 2004), and propagate what has been recently termed the “Chinese Dream” (Xinhua 2013b), a discourse that has developed in recent years both in the media and among the Chinese public to encompass individualistic desires to become wealthy, consumer-citizens.

A key element of the reform period has been the unprecedented level of human migration, with 2012 estimates putting the total number of migrants into China’s cities from the rural hinterland at over 260 million people to date (UN-HABITAT 2014). Migration in China is of particular interest, not only because of its massive scale, but also because under the *hukou* household registration system, access to government services in cities, such as education and healthcare, is limited to only those who are registered to live in urban

areas.<sup>4</sup> Given the lack of potential access to services, migrants, who are typically male, commonly migrate without their wife or children (if they have them). This has been associated with increased use of commercial sex workers (Xiao *et al.* 2006) (also facilitated by migrants' increased access to disposable incomes), poorer knowledge about safe sex (Rongyao *et al.* 2000), and a greater propensity to engage in behaviours associated with unsafe sex (X Yang 2006).

During the post-1949 Communist era, the official socialist discourse brought sexuality under its influence, with state control over marriage and childbearing. Pre-marital and extramarital practices, including adultery and homosexual practices were designated as 'abnormal' and shameful (Dikötter 1995:181, Jeffreys 2006). Since 1978, China's large-scale shifts towards a more market-oriented economy have been accompanied by significantly liberalised attitudes towards sex and sexuality. As Braverman comments: "When China opened its doors to international markets in the early 1980s, it inadvertently let in another modern phenomenon – the West's sexual culture" (Braverman 2002).

Overlapping with urbanisation and migration trends in particular in urban areas, people's sexual practices have undergone what some authors have termed a revolution (Dutton 1998, Suiming 2006). McMillan (2006) describes a discourse of opening-up, a term: "used to signal approval of a range of reform-era changes ... the market has 'opened-up' to enterprise, the Communist Party has 'opened-up' to capitalists and, as if by descriptive reflex, attitudes have 'opened-up' to sex" (ibid.:1). Young Chinese city-dwellers have increasingly relaxed attitudes to pre-marital sex, and a greater openness towards homosexual and other 'minority sexual practices' (K Zhang *et al.* 1999, Y Hong *et al.* 2006). Indeed, people in China's cities are "bombarded with a global popular culture and consumer economy that places sex at the center of just about everything" (Farquhar 2002:247). With increasing access to disposable incomes for some, and increasing demand for incomes from others, the commoditisation of sex has also become increasingly prevalent (Dikötter 1995, Jeffreys 2003).

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<sup>4</sup> The Chinese government has begun, however, to take steps to reduce the marginalisation experienced by migrants in cities. For example, the Beijing local government recently released a plan to increased access to education services (Yuli 2010), although access to free health care, and the associated benefits of STI testing and treatment remains limited (S Hu *et al.* 2008).

### 1.3 Masculinities in reform-era China

Perhaps as a part of the reform era itself, and the sexual revolution that has been associated with it, but also as an antecedent to the Mao-led communist era that went before, discourse around Chinese masculinities has become more fluid in recent years. Song (2004) argues that pre-modern Chinese gender afforded people more choices than the typically Western binary male/female. In turn, the author argues that masculinities tended to be founded on power rather than sex (Song 2004; 2010). Nevertheless, the hybrid, and multifaceted nature of masculinity in contemporary China compels us to move away from a monolithic conceptualisation of a stable Chinese masculinity (ibid.). Song's (2010) excellent analysis of Chinese masculinities touches on the 'crisis in masculinity' in post-Mao China, in which the economic, and concomitant social, reforms have destabilised both the Confucianist (cf. Louie 2002) and Maoist paradigms of masculinity.<sup>5</sup> This 'crisis' therefore is perhaps better characterised as a diversification in discourses around Chinese masculinities.

The increasing globalisation of discourses has presented contemporary Chinese men with an image of masculinity from outside, characterised by the 'American GI'. Meanwhile, alternative discourses highlighting and celebrating the family-focussed, sensitive nature of Chinese men also circulate (Luo *et al.* 2006 in Song 2010), as do those linking men to anti-Westernism, nationalism and patriotism. The reform period has also brought consumerism to play a role in the construction of Chinese masculinities, something explored in more detail later in this thesis. As Baranovich comments: "for the first time in Chinese history, men became a commodity for female consumption" (Baranovich 2003:14 in Song 2010). This comment may here also be extended to include the commoditisation of men for other men. Finally though, the role of wealth in constructions of masculinity cannot be ignored, and in the contemporary Chinese context, masculinity, power and money are all intimately and inextricably linked (Farrer, 2002; Song 2010). Thus, the foregoing discussion of the Chinese Dream is not only a dream of wealth and modernity, but also of masculinity and power. The ways in which the multiple constructions of masculinity manifest in China are complex, often tied to consumerism, and further complicated here by competing sexualities and gender identities.

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<sup>5</sup> Song (2010) identifies the former as centring on the 'gentry-class', scholar type; the latter focussing on class struggle, characterised by asexual selflessness.

## 1.4 Sexualities and (trans)genderism in China

Same sex sexual practices, while never explicitly illegal in China, were under the post-1949 system frequently classified euphemistically as a form of hooliganism, punishable by imprisonment or forced labour under the Chinese legal system (Yinhe 2006). In 1997, however, the charge of hooliganism was removed from the statute, seen by many as a *de facto* decriminalisation of homosexual acts (McMillan 2006), and in 2001 homosexuality was also removed from the Chinese Classification of Mental Disorders (Mountford 2010). Despite these policy-level shifts, at the local level there remain serious barriers for MSM, and there are no laws explicitly defending the rights of sexual minorities or protecting them from discrimination (Jeffreys 2006). There are controls on Chinese civil society organisations and the media which combine to position homosexuality as abnormal, and thus prevent information dissemination and support for those identifying as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBT) (Mountford 2010). Furthermore, minority sexualities in China remain highly stigmatised. The traditional filial duty to reproduce and continue the family line, alongside draconian governmental controls on family size (Deutsch 2006) together mean that the majority of MSM are expected to marry or to be married to women (BC Zhang *et al.* 2005), challenging essentialist notions of sexual identity (H Li *et al.* 2010a).

I consider sexuality to be discursively produced and culturally and historically contingent (Foucault 1978, Sullivan 2003), “regulated by social practices and institutions that constantly legitimate, redefine, and maintain specific social regimes” (G Hawkes *et al.* 2005:19). This approach enables interrogation of some of the nuances of sexual (and gender) identity that are emerging in contemporary China. Rofel’s (1999) discussion of the emergence of gay identities in Beijing in the 1990’s links this process closely with cosmopolitan, ‘transnational networks’ of men and women, which have led to a form of reinterpretation, positioning Chinese homosexual identities as neither global nor local. This ‘glocalisation’ theme is carried forward in Loretta Wing Wah Ho’s (2009) work exploring gay and lesbian subcultures in Beijing. She, like McMillan (2006) applies the ‘opening up’ metaphor (ubiquitous in discussions of China’s modernisation), to lesbian and gay subcultural development in contemporary Beijing. She sees this process as being informed on the one hand by global gay identities and interactions with transnational flows, and on the other by increasing levels of gay and lesbian activism in China and the

role of the internet in disseminating information. Thus, non-normative sexual identities in China are multifaceted and are influenced by both local and global discourses (P Liu *et al.* 2010). Nevertheless, significant changes have occurred in the acceptance and openness afforded to minority sexual identities, at least in China's cities.<sup>6</sup> The increasingly liberal views on sexuality then deserve some attention, as different sexual identities are not only likely to be of specific relevance to work on the male sex industry, but given the apparent interconnections between sexual liberalisation and discourses around China's modernisation, perhaps understanding different representations of sexuality might add to understandings of wider social processes in contemporary China.

In the academy, as in Chinese society more broadly, there has been increasing interest and localisation of debates around minority sexualities. Chiang (2014) comments that recent work has begun to challenge China Studies' heteronormative biases, while also shifting the focus away from the previous Western-centric focus of Queer Studies. Nevertheless, recent work exploring these issues in China has, Chiang comments, tended to focus on sexuality at the expense of gender, rendering transgender subjectivities less visible (*ibid.*).

Despite a relatively long history of scholarly interest into gender variance, it is only in the last thirty years that it has become an area of pronounced focus (Stryker 2006), and in the Chinese context, transgender subjectivities remain largely absent from the literature. A recent volume by Howard Chiang (2012) being one of the few extant examples of scholarship on the subject. Pi Jun's (2010) very personal discussion of being a Female-to-Male (FTM) transsexual in China highlights some of the huge challenges that transgender individuals face in the country, subject to official institutional discrimination as well as public opprobrium. Furthermore, globally (Operario *et al.* 2008, Baral *et al.* 2013b), and specifically in the Asia-Pacific region, transgender people have been identified as being particularly vulnerable to HIV infection (UNDP 2012). Finally, Judith Butler's conceptualisations exploring the cultural performativity of gender through drag, in her seminal work *Gender Trouble* (Butler 1990), inform my understanding of the ways in which (trans)gender subject positions are formed and performed in the context of this study.

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<sup>6</sup> Jeffreys however, taking a Foucauldian analytical position, notes that the increasing discourse around sex and sexuality in China is not necessarily indicative of greater liberalisation, but rather may be representation of "an extension rather than curtailment of the CCP's [Chinese Communist Party's] disciplinary power" (Jeffreys 2006:4).

## 1.5 Sex work in China

Under the early communist regime of the 1950's, commercial sex work was largely eradicated in China, in part through direct government policies of closing brothels and 're-educating' Commercial Sex Workers (CSW), and in part due to shifts in social norms (Cohen *et al.* 1996). This was accompanied by significant declines in reported levels of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) in the country (Jeffreys 2003). However, with the economic liberalisations of the last 30 years, China has seen huge rises in the number of CSW's (ibid.). Estimates for 2001 put China's sex worker population at over 10 million, a 400-fold increase from 1985 (JD Tucker *et al.* 2006). It seems likely that the numbers will have increased in the intervening period. Concurrently, there has been an increase in the levels of STIs in the general population. While STI rates are not definitively connected with levels of sex work, they can be considered a proxy for levels of unprotected sex with multiple partners (commercial or otherwise).

In this study, I am defining male sex work as consensual sexual services being exchanged for money between adults, by people born male (therefore here including male and male-to-female (MTF) transgender sex workers). I use the terms 'sex work' and 'sex workers' throughout the thesis (except in direct quotations from study participants where other terminology has been used), as a conscious engagement with the literature around sex work - alternative terminology, such as 'prostitution' and 'prostitutes' carry negative connotations, laden with stigma (Vanwesenbeeck 2001, Bimbi 2007). This is particularly the case with Chinese terminology, in which many of the terms for 'prostitute' are pejorative and female-gendered, while the term for prostitution (*maiyin*) also carries negative connotations (being composed of the characters for 'sale' and 'licentiousness, vulgarity or pornography'). The term for male sex work in Chinese (*nanxingxingongzuo*), as in English relates to the gender of the actor, and the act of 'work'. Meanwhile, terms for male sex worker, especially as used by those in the male sex work industry tend to be colloquial, and include *MB* [money boy], *yazi* [duck], and *xiaodi* [little brother].<sup>7</sup>

There are some high quality studies of female sex workers in the Chinese context. Particularly of note are Tiantian Zheng's (2009) ethnographic studies of the female sex

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<sup>7</sup> I use the colloquial terms in quotations throughout the thesis, but 'sex worker' or 'MSW' in my discussions in order to maintain continuity.

industry in Dalian, and Elaine Jeffreys' (2003) analysis of the country's female sex industry, but relatively little has been written about the phenomenon of male sex work. The majority of extant work consists of quantitative studies exploring individual-level practices around HIV; the next section reviews this literature.

## 1.6 Male sex work

Davies and Feldman, writing almost 20 years ago, discuss the multiple marginality of male sex work both to academia and to health intervention efforts in the UK (1997:30). Since then much has changed, not least in the increasing interest paid to male sex workers by researchers exploring both sexual health issues and the power dynamics present in the commercial sexual encounter that challenge the assumption that selling sex is necessarily a "simple rehearsal of gender inequality" (Davies *et al.* 1990:104). The global literature on male sex work is too expansive to review fully here, (for a more in depth discussion, see Bimbi (2007) and Scott *et al.* (2005) for an overview; see Scott (2003) for an examination of historical trends in discourse around MSW). I will focus on key themes that have emerged and areas of particular pertinence to this study.

The ways that male sex work has been portrayed in both popular and academic literature has changed significantly over time. Male sex workers have gone from being presented as pathological, perverted, psychologically abnormal, or as victims of predatory older men, to more recent depictions of them as a sub-population of concern to public health (Scott 2003). This broadly parallels trends in the female sex work literature (Vanwesenbeeck 2001). Scott (2005) argues that men selling sex remain problematized through discourses around public health and HIV, frequently presented as disease-spreading, decontextualized, lacking in agency and often only representative of limited sections of the MSW community (*ibid.*:245-6).

The current study builds on the work of many before it in aiming to present male sex workers in a more nuanced way. Earlier pathologising approaches to men who sell sex have been challenged increasingly in the literature (West *et al.* 1992, Aggleton 1998, M Smith *et al.* 2008, M Smith *et al.* 2011). Browne and Minichiello (1995) highlight the complexity and contingency of the paid male sexual context by conceptualising the process as a social encounter, involving negotiation and dynamic interaction between sex worker and client. Padilla and colleagues (2008; 2010) explored the role that stigma and

social inequalities and social ecological factors play in the risks to which MSW are exposed in the Dominican Republic. A study in London explored the structure of the male sex industry from a feminist perspective (Gaffney *et al.* 2001), while a Kenyan study investigated the complex interplay of stigma, familial pressure, cultural factors and same sex desires in the male sex working encounter (Okal *et al.* 2009). Nevertheless, there remains a global paucity of research that explicitly aims to understand the phenomenon of male sex work and HIV risk from a perspective that takes account of a range of contextual, cultural, interpersonal and individual factors.

### 1.6.1 Male sex work in China

The Chinese government continues to ignore MSW as an at risk group for HIV; reference to sex workers, common in official HIV management and policy documents, appears to assume that this category is exclusively female (cf. State Council Aids Working Committee Office UN Theme group on AIDS in China 2007, Ministry of Health *et al.* 2012). Meanwhile, many MSW are also MSM, through their commercial and/or their non-commercial sexual partners. MSM have, since 2004, been recognised as being at increased risk of infection with HIV by the Chinese government (State Council Aids Working Committee Office UN Theme group on AIDS in China 2007).

Increasing amounts of literature on MSW in China has been published in recent years, and despite this recent proliferation, the majority of studies have focussed on quantitative, epidemiological approaches to HIV transmission between male sex workers and their clients. There has been a preoccupation with HIV knowledge and behaviours at an individual level, and little regard for contextual factors, macro-level conditions, or the participants' subjective experiences that might frame those behaviours (cf. Cai *et al.* 2007, N He *et al.* 2007, Mi *et al.* 2007, Cai *et al.* 2008, FY Wong *et al.* 2008, Lau *et al.* 2009a, H Liu *et al.* 2009b, W Cheng *et al.* 2010, B Chen *et al.* 2011, Xu *et al.* 2011, Chow *et al.* 2012, Shusen Liu *et al.* 2012a, Shusen Liu *et al.* 2012c, Zhao *et al.* 2012). For example, Lau and colleagues' (2009a) study focussed on MSW serving clients from Hong Kong in Shenzhen, and found that 29% of their sample had had unprotected sex with their clients in the previous month, found low perceived levels of psychosocial support for the MSW, and alcohol and drug use rates of 89% and 26% respectively. However, the study, like

many others, did not give the MSW a voice or consider how different structural conditions might impact on the participants' HIV risks.

Qualitative approaches have been rarely used in China, with notable exceptions in the work of Travis Kong at the University of Hong Kong (2005; 2008; 2010; 2012), and Lisa Rofel (2010) at University of California Santa Cruz. These studies explore the lived experiences of MSW in China and how different social, economic and political influences impact on their lives. However, several key gaps remain in the literature, including significant gaps in our knowledge around the interactions between different levels of influence on the lives of MSW, and how these might interact to produce, or mitigate the risk of HIV in this group. Quantitative studies have tended to use a narrow, epidemiological lens, which arguably has rendered invisible the complexity and dynamism of HIV risk management and negotiation in the context of male sex work in China. Furthermore, in focussing their work on a marginalised population such as male sex workers, epidemiological studies have neglected to give the emic perspectives of the very people they are targeting. As Phillippe Bourgois comments in discussing the risks of failing to privilege emic viewpoints and consider the various power relations at play in research: "Otherwise detailed accounts of the misery of daily life risk merely contributing to an exotic voyeurism or a pornography of violence that ... demeans the socially vulnerable." (1999:2166). No study to date has brought together both strands of research, in which both HIV risks and the emic perspectives of MSW in China are conceptualised as being intrinsically interrelated. This study does this through a mixed methods design, and a broad conceptualisation of multiple interconnected factors affecting the lives of Shenzhen's male sex workers.

The next section outlines how, in situating this thesis within the fields and conceptual frameworks of anthropological demography and social epidemiology, I render some of the daily practices and experiences of the MSW in this study visible. We may therefore begin to understand their complex lived realities and how they interact with HIV risk.

### **1.7 Situating the thesis' theoretical approach**

In order to situate this thesis, I will first comment on demography as a discipline, with particular focus on the ways in which anthropological approaches have the potential to add greater depth and subtlety to analyses of demographic questions. I will then discuss

social epidemiological approaches to the study of HIV, with their associated shift towards a more dynamic conceptualisation of the environments in which the infection may spread. Finally, and building on these discussions, I present my framing of the HIV risk environments of Shenzhen's male sex workers, utilising structuration theory as a key element for understanding the social ecology of HIV risk and other threats that they face.

I use theory to contribute to my interpretation and understanding of the empirical findings. The employment of the social ecological perspective informed the study design, in that it provided an overarching system to understand how HIV risk is created, or avoided. However, it only constitutes a theoretical position in so much as it posits that the transmission of HIV occurs in a broader context than a purely individual-level decision-making process. A social epidemiological approach, applied to an anthropological demographic study positions this thesis in disciplinary interstices, permitting me to draw on a range of useful frameworks and positions.

The strength of much formal demography lies in being able to quantify processes and understand phenomena such as migration, or self-reported behaviours at a population level. Thus macro-level, cross-cultural generalisations are frequently the product of demographic studies of this type. It is within this framework that much of the previous work on HIV among China's male sex working communities, both male and female (cf. Yanpeng Ding *et al.* 2005, N He *et al.* 2007, Lau *et al.* 2007, N He *et al.* 2007b, FY Wong *et al.* 2008, Xu *et al.* 2008, H Liu *et al.* 2009b, Xi *et al.* 2009, W Cheng *et al.* 2010, Shusen Liu *et al.* 2012c, Zhao *et al.* 2012), has been done, in what Phillipe Bourgois has termed the *pax quantitatus* of public health research (1999:2156). Such work is useful for public health officials and policy makers who aim to measure whether a group's level of knowledge about the routes of transmission of HIV has changed through time, or if their reported condom use levels have increased. Nevertheless, these assessments rely on the measures being used being accurate predictors of actual levels of knowledge or behaviours. As Bauer (2014) comments, much research into population health has tended towards simplified, unitary analyses, without consideration for the potential role of intersectional causes and correlates of illness. Furthermore, much population health research frequently fails to take into account the theoretical positions on which it is based (Krieger 1994, Forbes *et al.* 2001, Krieger 2001, Dunn 2012:24), and has a tendency to

ignore the structural forces that influence health outcomes, neglecting the context of people's lived experience (Farmer 1999, Raphael *et al.* 2002, Bauer 2014).

An area in which demography has traditionally been weaker has been in explicitly outlining the emic perspectives of its subjects. Caldwell and Hill's critiques of demography's traditional avoidance of local knowledge and micro-level data (Caldwell 1982) highlighted the importance of taking a "more holistic view" (Caldwell *et al.* 1988:2), an approach becoming increasingly prevalent in the literature, when more complex relationships between social-anthropological and demographic factors are being studied (cf.: Bernardi *et al.* 2007, Coast *et al.* 2007).

Extant research applying anthropological perspectives to demographic questions in China has tended to focus on fertility, and specifically the interactions between government policy and fertility practices (Bongaarts *et al.* 1985, Greenhalgh 1994, Greenhalgh *et al.* 1995, Murphy 2003), although a growing body of work is emerging exploring the HIV epidemic from an anthropological perspective. One early work exploring the nascent shifts in sexual mores early on in China's HIV epidemic was Vincent Gil's (1991) qualitative study of premarital sexuality in three Chinese cities. More recent key works include Sandra Teresa Hyde's (2007) ethnography exploring the complex cultural and political discourses around the AIDS epidemic in Yunnan Province, Tiantian Zhang's (2009) ethnographic studies of female prostitution in Dalian, Shaohua Liu's (2011) work among a minority ethnic community in Sichuan Province and Yeon Jung Yu's (2013) work among FSW in Hainan. Elaine Jeffreys' (2003) work, while not empirical, deserves mention as it explores public discourse around sex work in contemporary China. It takes a governmentalist approach to the analysis of its regulation in the PRC, critically evaluating the space and usually unacknowledged room for flexibility in the role of the police and authorities in the sex industry at a local level. Ethnographic or indeed qualitative accounts of male sex work in China are rare. Travis Kong's (2010) recent book devoted one chapter to the topic, building on some of his previous work (Kong 2005; 2008; 2009). Kong situates male sex workers within China's changing social, economic and sexual landscapes, presenting them by turns as both subalterns and members of a modern and cosmopolitan group. This nuanced view forms the basis for some of the work presented in this thesis, in which I extend the argument that MSW are both multiply-stigmatised and constrained by their circumstances, but also active decision-making, cognisant agents.

### 1.7.1 Social ecological approaches to HIV

The emergence of HIV coincided with a shift in public health thinking during the 1980's. Moving from a purely biomedical position towards one in which social and environmental factors were increasingly acknowledged as having an impact on health (Aston *et al.* 1988). This represented a paradigm shift towards more social ecological approaches to the understanding of epidemiology and health. In HIV research specifically: "it had become clear that a far more complex set of social, structural and cultural factors mediate the structure of risk... and that the dynamics of individual psychology cannot be expected to fully explain, let alone produce, changes in sexual conduct without taking these broader issues into account" (Parker 2001: 165). Despite the rhetoric, however, Rhodes (2002) argues that many of the behavioural and harm reduction interventions that have been applied to HIV remain individual-focussed, positioning behavioural decision making within 'rational decision-making' and 'reasoned action' frameworks. These frameworks depend on either rational actor models of behaviour and theories of reasoned action (Fishbein *et al.* 1975, Ajzen *et al.* 1977) in which practices are seen as the product of an individual's attitudes; or, health belief models (Becker 1974, Janz *et al.* 1984), where a person's subjective beliefs relating to the likely health outcomes are considered to be the determinants of their behaviours (Champion *et al.* 2008).

The implication is that apparently risk-averse individuals who happen to engage in risky behaviours are seen as irrational or somehow flawed. This individuation of responsibility misses the often contradictory and relativist aspects of decision making and masks the power dynamics involved in the negotiations involved in risk avoidance (Friedman *et al.* 1998, Rhodes 2002). It further ignores the context-dependency present in much behavioural decision making (Kippax *et al.* 2013). In situating HIV risk at a purely individual level (Lupton 1993), these approaches fail to take account of how concepts such as 'risk' are embedded within "socially constructed discourses of risk and morality" (Rhodes 2002:86). As Boholm notes: "rational choice theory presupposes that people make decisions in an idealized, isolated context where every new piece of information will be undisturbed by associations with contradictory knowledge. But people do not exist in a social and cultural vacuum. Decisions about risk and management of risk are socially embedded, shaped by culturally based notions about the state of the world, what the world consists of and how it works" (Boholm 2003:161). Specifically, in the case of Chinese MSWs' condom use to avoid HIV transmission, these individualist models place the locus

of responsibility with the sex worker; they presume knowledge of condom use as a means of avoiding HIV; they decontextualize the process of selling sex and using condoms from their wider social circumstances; they make the assumption that MSWs have the power and skill to negotiate condom use; and, on a theoretical level they remove emphasis from structural factors that create the conditions for the transmission of HIV. Such contextual factors are usually beyond the direct control of any given individual, particularly as members of a marginalised group. The stigma experienced by such marginalised groups must, according to Parker and Aggleton (2003) be understood as being structurally-driven, rather than purely individual-level, in parallel with the foregoing discussion of HIV risk avoidance. Stigma therefore can be understood as both a consequence, and a contributor to the power relations present in a given context (*ibid.*). This more comprehensive turn in the theorisation of HIV stigma necessitates a strongly contextualised understanding of the experience of the multiple forms of stigma experienced in the male sex work context in Shenzhen, something this thesis aims to achieve.

This thesis is firmly grounded in the empirical findings from my fieldwork. I apply theories to different elements of those findings in order to gain a deeper understanding of their meaning and implications. From its outset, this study employed a risk environment framework (Barnett *et al.* 1999, Rhodes 2002, Barnett *et al.* 2006) as a heuristic to conceptualise the multiple levels of influence on HIV transmission risk. This framework is premised on social epidemiological conceptualisations of HIV, in which multiple social, structural and individual factors are included in the analysis of HIV vulnerability and transmission (Poundstone *et al.* 2004), and of which a social ecological perspective can be seen as a corollary (Stokols 1992, Stokols *et al.* 1996, Poundstone *et al.* 2004, Latkin *et al.* 2005). I employ the perspectives and concepts of a social ecological understanding of HIV risk throughout this thesis, permitting not only an analysis of the wider social, cultural, political and economic contexts of the HIV risks of Shenzhen's male sex workers, but also because they allow me to use the study of HIV within those contexts as a lens through which to understand other processes and phenomena in the male sex workers' lives. As Paul Farmer (2001) comments: "critical perspectives on emerging infections must ask how large-scale social forces come to have their effects on unequally positioned individuals in increasingly interconnected populations" (*ibid.*:5). This multi-level approach to understanding the drivers, enablers and conditions of HIV

spread informs my analysis of the lived experiences (Seckinelgin *et al.* 2010) of Shenzhen's male sex workers.

As such, taking a social ecological approach, encompassing macro-, meso- and micro-level environmental factors thought to play a role in HIV transmission or prevention, gives a more holistic approach from which to understand HIV risk (cf. Stokols *et al.* 1996, Somlai *et al.* 2001, Barnett *et al.* 2006, Baral *et al.* 2013a). This approach is arguably more appropriate for understanding the complex lived realities of MSW in China, and fits with the move towards a social epidemiological conceptualisation of public health (O'Campo *et al.* 2011). Environmental and broad contextual factors are considered to be intricately linked with the individual behavioural and biological factors that previous models relied more exclusively upon. At the micro-level individual factors including gender and sexual orientation, levels of HIV knowledge, condom use, etc. are explored to explain how HIV risk perceptions and behaviours are produced (Rhodes 2002). At the meso-level, social norms and values, the nature of social networks, peer group influence, and the immediate social settings of HIV risk are all considered, while at the macro-level, broader socioeconomic, legal, and policy-level factors, and the role that gender, sexuality and migration-based inequalities play in society are considered. In the past, the links between migration and HIV risk in particular have typically received less attention than other factors (Hirsch 2014). This permits a comprehensive understanding of the generation and negotiation of HIV transmission risk, while being explicit about the multiple levels of influence on that risk. In other words, this framework is an attempt to synthesise the macro-, meso- and micro-level factors that impact on an individual's risk of being infected. It gives primacy to neither structural influences nor individual agency, and indeed relies on a formulation of action that does not dichotomise the two, but sees them as a duality, allowing us to conceptualise the process of risk generation and/or mitigation as being a product of the dynamic interaction of these different areas of influence.

The social ecological model represents a pragmatic approach to synthesising the various levels of influence theorised to affect the transmission of HIV. It also allows us to include factors that may be considered tangential to more typical conceptualisations of HIV transmission, but that nevertheless contribute to the lived experience of selling sex in China. This model rests on a foundation drawing on the work of several social theorists. The empirical data were collected based on a design outlined in the next chapter that

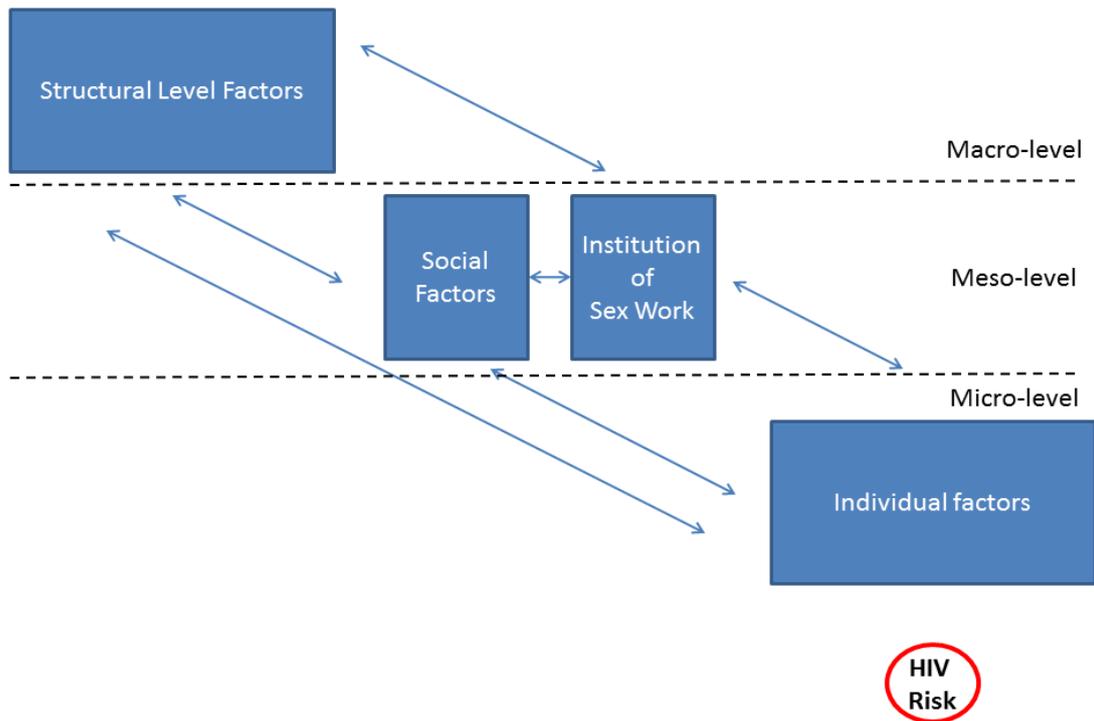
explicitly aimed to explore the social ecology of HIV risk. In analyses, I continue with this framework, and build on the work of Rhodes *et al.* (2012), by drawing on a number of theories in order to understand the empirical data collected in this study. I use the theory of structuration (Giddens 1986) in different parts of the thesis to develop an understanding of the social processes at work within the risk environment. These processes amplify or diminish HIV transmission risks, in terms of the actions of the MSW in the study, conceptualising them as being framed by the social conditions in which they occur: “crucial to the idea of structuration is the theorem of the duality of structure ... The constitution of agents and structures are not two independently given sets of phenomena, a dualism, but represent a duality” (Giddens 1986:25). Giddens also critiques functionalist and structuralist social theories that deny agent’s conscious reasoning; he stresses: “the rationalization of action as chronically involved in the structuration of social practices” (ibid.:26). It is through this duality of agents and structure we are able to better-conceptualise the interactions between the various elements in the risk environment, and how they constitute, and are constituted by, the actions of the agents involved. I conceive of the social ecological framework for HIV transmission as mapping closely on to Giddens’ conceptualisation of social behaviour, as outlined in his theory of structuration. While Bourdieu offers an alternative theorisation of social action through his concept of the habitus (Bourdieu 1977b; a), my reading of him suggests that his emphasis remains too focussed on the subconscious and to some extent deterministic mechanisms for action. Conversely here I wish to highlight the degree of agency, informed and in part constituted by, social structure, demonstrated by the MSW in this study.

Following what Ortner (1997) terms a ‘subaltern theory of practice’, I aim to go beyond merely understanding the ways in which agents both constitute and are shaped by the surrounding social structures, through examining the ways in which this subaltern group of MSW also challenge, resist and disrupt the relations of power in which they are located. She comments that: “the challenge is to picture indissoluble formations of structurally embedded agency and intention-filled structures, to recognize the ways in which the subject is part of larger social and cultural webs, and in which social and cultural ‘systems’ are predicated upon human desires and projects” (ibid.:12). By concentrating on these complex interrelated systems of influence, in part also by thinking about areas of contradiction arising in the exercise and resistance of power among the

MSW and the state and other non-state actors, I aim to demonstrate the significance, if at times boundedness, of this group's agency (Kipnis 2008).

Coterminous with this broader understanding of the creation of HIV risk, I adopt an intersectional (Crenshaw 1991) understanding of the vulnerabilities and marginalisation of the male sex workers in this study, both in terms of their HIV risk, and their broader exposure to risks and stigma in Chinese society. This approach interlaces with structuration theory in Winker and Degeler's multi-level conceptualisation of intersectionality, consisting of: "a system of interactions between inequality-creating social structures ... symbolic representations and identity constructions that are context-specific, topic-orientated and inextricably linked to social praxis" (Winker *et al.* 2011:54). In this thesis, I present the participants as not only male sex workers, a highly stigmatised profession, but also migrants, frequently from rural areas, many of whom also self-identify as homosexual, bisexual or transgender. In addition, the majority are MSM. All of these factors intersect to position them negatively in relation to mainstream society. In utilising intersectionality as a conceptual tool here, I am also highlighting the need to avoid essentialising male sex workers as a homogeneous group. While it is arguable that they are all vulnerable to legal sanctions through their work, and all are subject to marginalisation from the mainstream to some extent, their diversity remains central, and this thesis explores how their various identities and experiences contribute to differing vulnerabilities both to HIV and other threats. This recognises the different positions and engagements within structures that these different actors have.

Modifying Poundstone and colleague's (2004) framework for the social epidemiology of HIV, I show how the different levels of influence might be arranged hierarchically to understand the dynamic relationship between macro-level down to individual-level factors in the production of HIV risk among MSW in this study, highlighting the multiple influences present in the social ecology of disease.



**Figure 1-1 Simple heuristic showing the interrelations between different levels of HIV risk**

Figure 1-1 shows how I understand the dynamic relations between different levels of the HIV risk environment in this study. Each level interacts with all others, and in line with my understanding of social practice informed by structuration theory, I present each level as being both influenced and influencing other levels, but with the larger influence exerted by social structures down the hierarchy to micro-level factors. This heuristic shows how I understand HIV risk to be influenced by multiple factors at different levels of abstraction from the immediate behaviours of the MSW, and a key aim of this thesis is to provide evidence of what the key factors are at each level in the specific context of Shenzhen’s male sex industry. In the final chapter, I draw together all of the key elements found in the four empirical chapters of this thesis, to populate this diagram, highlighting how the HIV risk environments of Shenzhen’s MSW community specifically might be conceptualised. The following section outlines how this aim is operationalised in terms of the research questions for this thesis.

## 1.8 Research questions

The overarching research question for this thesis is: What are the HIV risk environments of male sex workers in China? Within this broad question are subsidiary questions which form the basis for each of my empirical chapters, namely: What are the experiences of

MSW in the context of contemporary Chinese society? How is sex work organised and experienced by the MSW? What are the interactions between different types of relationships that MSW have and their attitudes, behaviours and subjective experiences? And how do MSW understand and negotiate their HIV risk? Taken together, these four questions aim to address the bigger issue of the production of HIV risk and its management in the Shenzhen male sex work context.

## 1.9 Outline of the thesis

I employ a continuous literature review process throughout the thesis, framing the findings within relevant areas of previous research in each empirical chapter and in the introduction and conclusion chapters. I draw primarily on demographic, anthropological, and social epidemiological literatures on HIV, sex work, and China, alongside other work that touches on key themes emerging through the thesis around, for example, identity, risk, migration and stigma.

In Chapter 2, I outline the methodological approaches that I have taken in this study, with a discussion of both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques and analyses. I discuss Shenzhen as a location for fieldwork, the inclusion criteria I used for the study participants, and the role of the MSW Community-Based Organisation (CBO) in the study. I also discuss my position as an outsider-researcher, and the challenges and opportunities that this presented in the Chinese context. Some of the methodological limitations of the research are addressed, alongside a discussion of the role that gatekeepers have played in this project, and ethical considerations.

In the following four chapters, I present the substantive empirical findings of the thesis. These chapters are based on my fieldwork in China towards the end of 2011. I develop a synthesis of the HIV risk environment and social ecological frameworks (Rhodes 2002, Bourgois *et al.* 2004, Rhodes *et al.* 2005a, Rhodes *et al.* 2005b, Barnett *et al.* 2006). This approach aims to conceptualise HIV risk as being hierarchically affected by multiple levels of influence, from macro-level structural issues to micro-level risk behaviours. Echoing this conceptualisation of HIV risk, the four empirical chapters broadly follow a hierarchical pattern from consideration of the effects of macro-level impacts on the lived experience of the MSW through meso-level social network influences and the effects of male sex work as a social system, to more proximate factors such as sexual partners and

condom use. This ‘funnelling-down’ structure aims to highlight the dynamic nature of these factors as they are experienced, resisted or employed by the study participants. I aim to demonstrate not only that HIV risk is constructed within a complex and multi-levelled environment in which HIV is far from the only concern for these men, but also that the study participants are reflexive agents throughout.

Chapter 3 explores the social contexts of the MSW in the study through the lens of China’s recent and ongoing massive social and economic changes. It positions the study participants’ migration histories within a wider discussion of Shenzhen as a locus of modernity and cosmopolitanism, with desires to be a part of the ‘Chinese Dream’ driving many of the participants’ movements from their hometowns. I also examine the role of China’s *hukou* residence permit system as a source of marginalisation for these migrants in Shenzhen. In this, and the following chapters, I draw on intersectionality (Crenshaw 1991) as a theory to understand how stigma and marginalisation can be compounded through the multiple subject positions in which these MSW find themselves.

The male sex industry in Shenzhen is the focus of Chapter 4, in which I examine MSW’s reasons and motivations for entering sex work, alongside the ways that they do so. This chapter’s discussion of the experiences of male sex workers in selling sex, in relation to other actors and institutions in the industry is framed within a broader discussion of risk. Risk in this case is presented as being socially constructed, and actively negotiated by the MSW in their daily lives; the police, *mami* [pimps], and clients all presenting different challenges and opportunities for the MSW.

Chapter 5 examines the complex sexual networks of Shenzhen’s male sex workers, using theories of identity and stigma to develop an understanding of the ways in which the MSW manage and negotiate different partnerships with male and female paying, paid and non-commercial partners, both male and female. Partner concurrency is analysed in order to gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of their sexual networks and identity management, while the emic perspectives of the MSW are presented to give voice to the meaning that they attach to their partnership types.

Chapter 6 is the final empirical chapter, and presents data on the sexual practices of the MSW in the study. I develop a concept of ‘local germ theory’ to explain how hygiene is

understood to be interconnected to condom use by the study participants. Condom use, central to public health discourse around HIV prevention, is analysed, while drawing on the everyday experiences of the MSW to understand how it is viewed in different contexts and with different partners.

In the final chapter I pull together the study's findings to draw an overall picture of the HIV risk environments of Shenzhen's male sex workers, aiming to show how this framework can be applied to empirical findings through the use of various theoretical approaches, including intersectionality, structuration and identity theories and through taking an interpretivist approach to the emic perspectives of the study participants. This chapter also highlights the key contributions that this thesis makes, alongside its limitations, and directions for future research.

## 2 Methodology

*Due to the stigmatized and marginalized nature of sex work, researchers are faced with ethical challenges such as the formation of research questions, confidentiality, informed consent, minimized risks and harm, diversity of the sex industry, research methodologies, representative sample, and reliability of the data. (Dewey et al. 2013:36)*

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the study's methodology, which combines in-depth interviews with male sex workers and key informants, with a survey of male sex workers, and observational data in the form of field notes, all collected between August and December 2011 in China. The above quote, from a book discussing ethical research among sex workers, highlights many of the key issues that I had to consider in designing and implementing this study, including ensuring that the voices of the participants were heard, both directly in the data, and through community advisory boards (CABs), which informed survey instrument design and the ethical considerations of the research.

A central element to the development and implementation of this project was that the methodological approaches used were intrinsically linked to the theoretical and epistemological positions that I took as a researcher. Taking a social ecological conceptualisation of HIV (Poundstone *et al.* 2004, Latkin *et al.* 2005, Baral *et al.* 2013a), where contextual factors at a number of levels, alongside individual characteristics are theorised to play a role in the epidemiology of the disease, meant that a broad range of factors could be explored, from multiple angles, using different methods.

#### 2.1.1 Chapter outline

I employed a mixed methods approach to both explore in detail an under-researched field, through the inclusion of the direct voices of those participating in the research, and to gain a quantitative understanding of behaviours and experiences that were reasoned, *a priori*, to be of significance to this group.

This chapter outlines the practical approaches that I adopted to carry out this fieldwork. I discuss the use of mixed methods in a community participatory research design, outlining the rationale for their use in this context, and the data collection and subsequent analytical approaches that I took in using them. I then proceed to a discussion of the dissemination of key research findings back to the MSW community. There follows a consideration of the role of language in this research, the measures that I have taken to ensure the reliability and validity of my findings, the ethical considerations that were central to this project, and my positionality as a researcher.

## **2.2 Setting up and doing research in China**

This section describes the practical challenges faced in undertaking research in China, and the circuitous path that I had to take in order to be able to set up and carry out this research project.

From the inception of this research, I was conscious of the potential difficulties of undertaking social research in China. As a one party state, with high levels of government control over many aspects of daily life, both real and perceived, China presents a number of challenges for researchers. This is the case both for Chinese nationals and foreign researchers, and as such, multiple strategies were applied to try to mitigate the threats to the success of the research.

In order to undertake research in China, particularly on sensitive topics such as sex work or HIV, it is necessary to find academic partners who can act as local fixers or agents for the project to help deal with bureaucratic or legal issues with the authorities, in addition to providing local expert knowledge and perspectives.

After spending six months attempting to develop academic contacts in Beijing during my language training in the city, it became clear that while academics whom I contacted were enthusiastic about the proposed research and its aims, they were not able to commit to assisting with actually carrying out the research, and instead would suggest other academic contacts, who would then do the same. Searching for reasons for this reluctance, it transpired that the central government had issued a statement several months earlier advising against academic cooperation with foreign researchers

studying ‘sensitive topics’ (B Li 2011). While the details of the statement were not made publicly available, they were clearly known among the academics contacted, for whom the risk of losing funding sources was clearly a disincentive to their involvement with a foreign PhD student. Indeed, even researchers who had previously been involved in similar work in the country were now becoming very reluctant to continue their own research interests in the field. In a meeting with one professor<sup>1</sup> in Beijing with a research track record on MSM and sex work, he informed me that he was having to move into a different area of research because of pressure from his government funding sources and university authorities.

Initially, I had planned to undertake the research in Beijing, China’s capital, where very little research on this topic exists, and where there was anecdotal evidence of a large male sex worker population, working in very hidden conditions (Yi 2011). However, given the challenges in finding academic support in the city, and the perception that the capital has much greater levels of control and observation by the authorities, in discussion with my supervisors in London I decided to move to Hong Kong<sup>2</sup>, so that I could begin the process of setting up the fieldwork in neighbouring Shenzhen. I was offered a position as a visiting scholar at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) by an academic contact there with an interest in the research. This legitimised my position as a researcher, and facilitated access to contacts on the mainland. The CUHK academic put me in touch with the Hong Kong-based community based organisation (CBO)<sup>3</sup> that would then go on to host and support the research across the border in Shenzhen. The role of gatekeepers is explored below, but briefly in acting as a gatekeeper to the CBO, it is arguable that the academic contact enhanced the CBO’s trust in me (cf. Emmel *et al.* 2007), and not only made possible, but also accelerated the process of setting up and involving the CBO in the research. The CBO was central to the implementation of the research, with its staff working as assistants in the data collection, and the CBO head working with me, both

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<sup>1</sup> A note on anonymity: due to the sensitive nature of this research, all participants and contacts have been anonymised in order to protect their identities. This includes all research participants and other contacts in the research, unless they have explicitly said that they prefer to have their real name used.

<sup>2</sup> Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR), though technically a part of China, exists under the One Country, Two Systems framework meaning that it has separate legal, governance and academic structures from the mainland.

<sup>3</sup> I am using the term Community-Based Organisation (CBO) throughout this thesis, rather than non-governmental organisation (NGO) or charity to reflect the position of the specific organisation with which I worked in relation to the authorities.

to assist in data collection, and as a translator. I agreed to pay the CBO a monthly fee of approximately 12 000 RMB (~£1200) for the duration of the research, in return for which they allowed me to use a desk in their offices, and provided research assistants (who were already either volunteers or part-time employed by the CBO as outreach workers). The CBO head, who was enthusiastic about the project, also worked as my translator and research assistant and key informant. The CBO's normal work continued during the research, doing outreach in the MSW community, providing rapid HIV testing, and legal advice and support to the MSW community.

## **2.3 Study population and field site**

The following section describes the inclusion criteria for study participants, and the location of the fieldwork, setting the scene for later discussions.

### **2.3.1 Inclusion criteria**

Participants were eligible for recruitment into the study if they were born male (including male-to-female transgender), had sold sex in Shenzhen in the three months prior to recruitment, had not already taken part in this research, and were aged 18 or over. Before being given information about the project and their consent to participate was sought, the potential recruits were screened to ensure that they fit with these criteria by one of the research assistants. This was done through informal questioning by the research assistants, attempting to minimise the chance of someone not currently engaged in sex work in Shenzhen being part of the sample.

### **2.3.2 The field site**

Shenzhen (Figure 2.1) is a new city, developed as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in 1978, before which it was a collection of fishing villages. It is the product of the Chinese economic reform agenda, with a huge migrant population and rapidly growing economy. It is located in the Pearl River Delta in Guangdong Province, with excellent transport links to Hong Kong through a connected subway system, effectively making it part of the same conurbation. As such, there are high levels of cross-border movement, both of goods, and people – many visiting Shenzhen from Hong Kong for its vibrant entertainment industry, including its sex industry. These factors make it an excellent site for research into male sex work, as not only is its 'entertainment' (read sex) industry famous throughout China, but as a direct product

of the post-Mao reform era, it embodies modernity and development in the popular Chinese imagination, issues that will be explored in more detail in Chapter 3.

Shenzhen's population was estimated to be approximately 10.35 million in 2010, with a 10 year growth rate of 47.8%. Just over half (54.2%) of the population are male, meaning that there are approximately 900 000 more males than females in the city. Reflecting the fact that the city is a major destination for migrants seeking work, the vast majority of its population are of working age, with 88.4% of the population aged between 16 and 65 years. The city's annual growth rate is 3.98% which is significantly higher than both the national and provincial population growth rates (0.57% and 1.90% respectively). Approximately 77% of the city's population is not registered in the city (i.e. they do not have a local *hukou* residence document). (Shenzhen Statistics Bureau 2010). In addition, Shenzhen's Gini coefficient (0.49) is substantially higher than the Chinese average (0.32) (UN-HABITAT 2008), indicating high levels of intra-city inequality.

There are no official estimates of the population size of MSW in Shenzhen. At a national level, estimates of the percentage of MSM who sell sex have been put at between 4.9% and 24% (Kong 2008), the wide range demonstrating the difficulties in measuring such a hidden population, within an also-marginalised and largely unmeasured group such as MSM. Furthermore, since many MSW self-identify as heterosexual, it seems possible that they would have been invisible to previous studies focused exclusively on MSM. The only estimates for the population size of MSW in Shenzhen available were those developed through discussions with the CBO during the ethnographic mapping exercise in this study (discussed below), giving an estimated range of 850 to 1000 MSW working actively at the time of fieldwork.



Figure 2-1 Location of Shenzhen, in Guangdong Province, China

## 2.4 Mixed methods

The social ecological model employed in this research encompasses both individual-level variables and broader environmental issues that all interact to put MSW at risk of HIV infection. The choice of using a mixed methods approach aimed to parallel this structure, through collecting information at a number of different levels (from structural to immediate micro-level factors) and covering different aspects of the phenomena in question; rejecting a methodological individualist position which would deny the role of structures and agents interacting with one another.

There are multiple definitions of mixed methods in the literature (Tashakkori *et al.* 2003) (R Johnson *et al.* 2007), but for the purposes of this research, the term is being used to describe the combination of qualitative interview and quantitative survey data, alongside other observational data from a fieldwork diary including notes of casual day-to-day discussions with CBO staff and volunteers. This combination of data types occurred both in the field, and later in the analysis and presentation of findings.

### 2.4.1 Rationale for mixed methods

There is a long history of debate regarding the supposed superiority of either qualitative or quantitative methods in social research (Gage 1989, Tashakkori *et al.* 2003), with proponents of either side locating their arguments in terms of their epistemological positions; positivists viewing constructivists as unscientific and overly subjective, constructivists seeing those using quantitative methods as failing to acknowledge the complexities of social realities and trying to impose their own constructs on those being studied. Both positions are also inherently political, with relative positions of power of the researcher and researched coming under scrutiny from both sides. This polarisation of epistemological positions is in my opinion, a distraction from the main purposes of most social science research, namely, to attempt to develop a better understanding of whichever social phenomena are being studied. That said, it is also my epistemological position that social realities exist neither purely subjectively nor objectively, but (cf.: Bourdieu 1977b, Giddens 1986) that social actions take place within a subjective experience of a partially structured external set of rules or structures. As such, applying either purely objectivist or subjectivist approaches to the study of social phenomena inevitably means that elements will be missed or misrepresented – it is important that the approaches taken in research match ontologically with the things being researched (Bourdieu 1990). As Wacquant comments, Bourdieu sees the relations between actors and systems as being of primary interest in social research, and is “[a]gainst all forms of methodological monism that purport to assert the ontological priority of structure *or* agent” (Wacquant 1992:15).

As a piece of research explicitly concerning the illicit behaviours of a marginalised group, taking a critical stance with regards to the relative power positions of the participants is an essential part of this endeavour. A purely positivist position in relation to the field in this case would arguably be contributing to the marginalisation of the group being studied, denying them a voice in the research, and imposing external measurement criteria on them, reproducing the very power dynamics that this research aims in part to expose. At the same time, in taking a purely relativist position in relation to the knowledge generated by this research, it would not be possible to develop a set of quantifiable variables and data, which allow the distributions of

different behaviours, health practices and risk exposures to be mapped in this under-researched group.

A pragmatic stance with regards to the acquisition and analysis of data has become increasingly common in social research (Maxcy 2003, R Johnson *et al.* 2004b, Bryman 2006; 2008, Feilzer 2010), combining both qualitative and quantitative research instruments and methodologies. This approach is arguably particularly well-suited to an anthropological-demographic study, and proponents of this approach argue that by combining qualitative and quantitative research, we are able to explore questions with as many suitable research tools as necessary, giving a more nuanced and complete picture of the phenomenon in question (*ibid.*).

Of central concern here was the communication between qualitative and quantitative aspects of the research. Just as in the risk environment paradigm all of the factors interconnect to affect HIV risk, here qualitative and quantitative phases of data collection and analysis interweave with one another. While these data may differ in form and in method of analysis, they are linked and related to the same phenomena, and to give primacy one over the other would be to risk losing or obfuscating valuable information. In-depth interviews (IDIs) informed the survey questionnaire and sampling development. The survey was accompanied by qualitative data collection using open ended questions with answers noted verbatim. The sample for the following IDI phase was then drawn from the survey sample, used both for qualitative and quantitative data collection. Finally, the question frames for the final in-depth MSW and key informant interviews were informed by preliminary analysis of the survey findings, aiming to highlight areas of agreement or dissonance (R Johnson *et al.* 2004b, Creswell *et al.* 2007).

This research was designed to integrate both qualitative and quantitative methods to reflect the social ecological risk environment theoretical position, and to make an attempt to capture the social phenomena in question, aiming to develop a more nuanced view of the lived realities of the participants of the research than has been the case in previous Chinese studies, which have focussed either on quantitative survey data, or on qualitative methods. As such, this project not only attempted to employ an iterative process of instrument development, using both qualitative and quantitative

methods to inform the production of both qualitative and quantitative questions and themes, but then collected both data types concurrently. I present the results thematically, integrating both types of data in later chapters. Figure 2-2 below shows how this process of methodological iteration worked through time during data collection and initial analyses.

## 2.5 **Timeline of the research**

Figure 2-2 below is a graphical representation of the timing and location of the fieldwork, with multiple strands and overlapping of set-up and data collection.

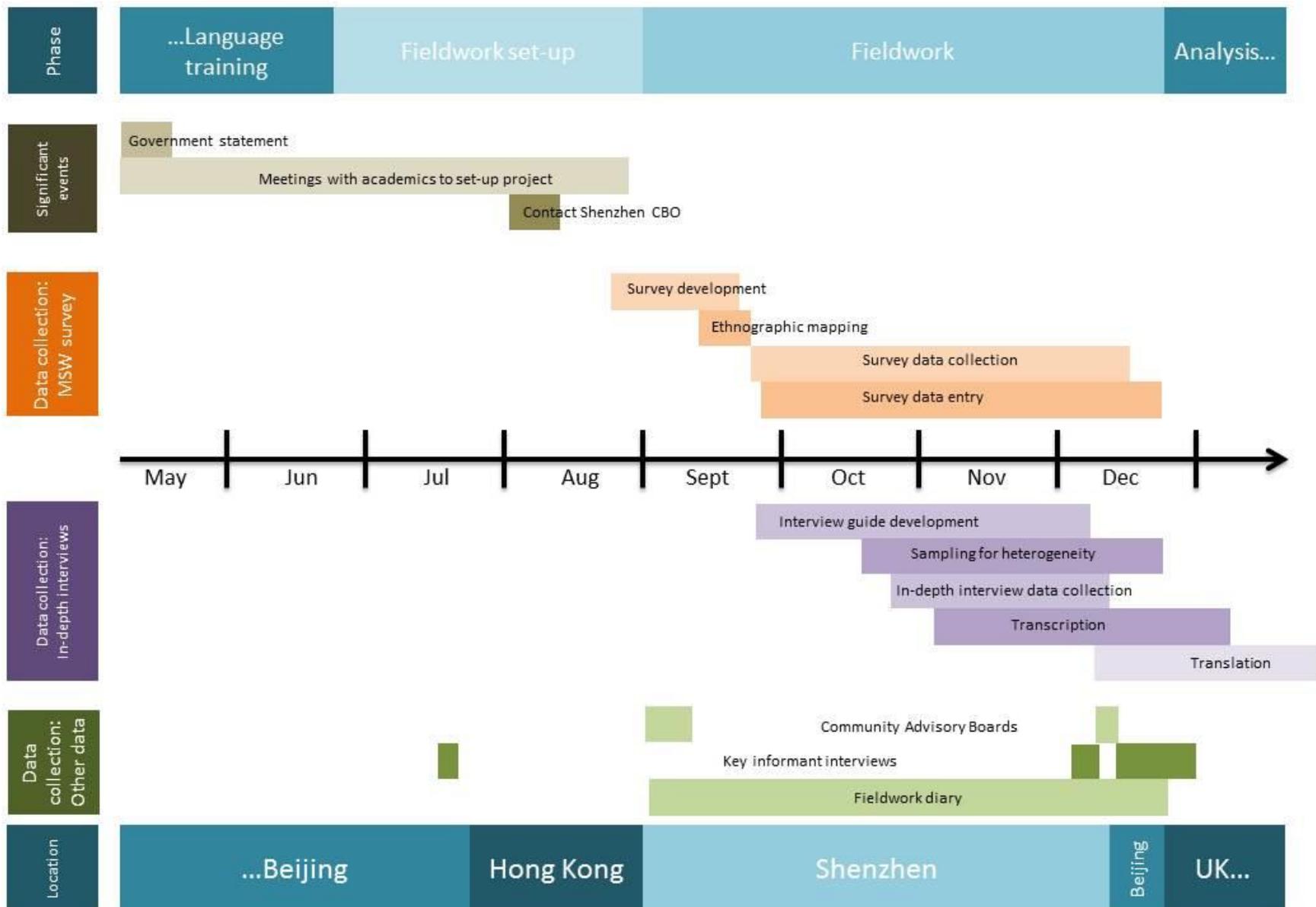


Figure 2-2 Timeline of research set-up, and process

### 2.5.1 Operationalisation of mixed methods

There was a significant amount of temporal overlap between the different methods employed in this research (fig 2.2). This was an integral part of the research design, allowing there to be communication between the various strands of data collection.

First, the survey was developed. I had designed a survey using a combination of established questions from a range of sources and developed original questions where suitable questions or scales could not be found in other surveys. These questions were then discussed with the CBO and during the first Community Advisory Board (CAB) meeting at the end of August 2011, with changes being made to some of the wording or questions following those discussions (see Appendix A for the question sources).

The survey data collection then started, and once the sample size had reached 100, I conducted some preliminary analyses on the distribution of male sex worker characteristics (including age, self-identified sexual orientation and gender identity, places of work, etc. and the verbatim responses to open-ended questions included in the survey), the aim being to find patterns that could be explored in the in-depth qualitative interviews. Some examples of these patterns include the theme of hygiene which arose when asking about the meaning of safe sex for the participants (Chapter 6), and the frequently described issue of family and friends conflating or equating sex work with homosexuality (Chapter 5). These emergent themes, alongside the multiple classifications of MSW by venue type were integrated into the in-depth interview guide to be explored in greater detail. The sub-sample for the in-depth interviews was taken from the survey sample (Section 2.7). Once all survey data had been collected, preliminary findings (based on a descriptive analysis) were presented to the second CAB in the first week of December 2011, and discussed by the 16 participants present. The qualitative notes from this meeting contributed to the validation of the survey results. Finally, the results of both the survey and interviews with MSW informed the second set of key informant interview guides. Observational qualitative field notes were taken throughout the research process. Every day during the fieldwork period, I ensured that I found time, usually just before going to bed, to note down the events of the day, any observations or thoughts I had had

about the fieldwork, the respondents, my relationships with the research assistants, etc. These data are not explicitly presented in the empirical chapters, but served as aide memoires during my data analysis process.

### **2.5.2 Mixed methods analysis**

While the quantitative and qualitative data sets were analysed using different methodologies (see sections 2.6 and 2.7 below), these analyses were undertaken concurrently, to help me to maintain a connection between the themes and findings. As such, the findings of the research, as presented in the following chapters of this thesis, are presented thematically, using a combination of the different data types to provide a more nuanced understanding of the topics in question. No single methodology is given priority in the thesis, with the complementarity of the different approaches being seen as central to the approach taken.

### **2.5.3 Research assistants**

The head of the CBO acted as my main assistant for in-depth interviews and also helped with translation and interpreting when needed, along with completing some surveys with participants. In addition, the CBO provided three of its volunteers to assist with survey completion. I trained all of the assistants in the importance of informed consent, anonymity of respondents, and in how to assist the study respondents in completing the survey questionnaire. In addition, I also trained the head of the CBO in interview techniques, by highlighting the importance of open questioning, and reflexivity. I was present and participated in all in-depth interviews, both prompting my assistant with questions in English, occasionally interjecting with probes in Chinese, and taking notes. I was also present, although not directly involved, during all survey completion by the other research assistants, observing the data collection process, and towards the end of the fieldwork assisting respondents in survey completion.

## 2.6 Qualitative data

In this research project, qualitative data relates to data collected through the recording, transcription and translation of in-depth interviews with MSW, field notes in the form of my first person narratives, describing my observations in the field, and recorded and transcribed English language interviews with key informants. The survey also contained some qualitative elements in the form of open-ended questions, for which the interviewers wrote down the participants' verbatim responses. These components will be described in turn in the following section.

### 2.6.1 Qualitative sample selection

There were several discrete samples for the qualitative elements in this research. The first was for the CABs, and this consisted of a range of MSW from different locations and positions in Shenzhen's sex industry, who had already been in contact with the CBO, and whom the CBO invited to take part. Inevitably as these MSW were already known to the CBO, there were biases inherent in the sampling for the CABs, along with a degree of self-selection, as only those MSW who were contacted, and who were interested in the research attended. Furthermore, as this part of the study happened before data collection had started, it was not possible to map the characteristics of the CAB against those of the wider MSW community at the time, an unavoidable limitation pre-data collection.

Second, the sample of MSW for the in-depth interviews was selected purposively for heterogeneity, following Gaskell and Bauer (2000), who advocate a sampling approach that aims to maximise the variety of representations in a given sample. I aimed to sample across different age groups, self-identified sexual orientations and gender identities, places of origin and reported types of work place. Table 2-1 shows the distribution of selected characteristics in the final interview sample.

**Table 2-1 Characteristics of the in-depth interview sample**

	<b>Range</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<b>Age</b>	21-45	25.8
<b>Number of clients in previous 7 days</b>	0-20	3.6
<b>Number of years in Shenzhen</b>	0-16	3.25
<b>School leaving age</b>	13-23	18.1
		<b>Number</b>
<b>Self-identified sexual identity<sup>11</sup></b>	Homosexual	8
	Bisexual	7
	Heterosexual	6
<b>Self-identified gender identity</b>	Male	19
	Trans	2
<b>Place of work<sup>12</sup></b>	Street	1
	Clubhouse	8
	Freelance	0
	Massage centre	5
	Sauna	1
	Bar	8
	Internet	3
	Other	1
<b>Province of origin</b>	Guangdong	1
	Guangxi	2
	Heilongjiang	2
	Henan	2
	Hunan	5
	Jiangsu	1
	Jiangxi	2
	Jilin	1
	Liaoning	1
	Shandong	3
	Sichuan	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>21</b>

Finally, given the sensitive nature of the topic, it was relatively difficult to find potential key informants for interviews. I wanted to speak to both CBO workers and representatives from other organisations involved in HIV prevention in China. Given the understandable reluctance of Chinese academics to be involved in the project, I decided not to target them for interviews. The key informant interview sample consisted of the heads of two MSW organisations: one from a Beijing-based organisation, and the other

<sup>12</sup> Five of the MSW identified more than one current place of work, so the total number of venues here is greater than 21.

was the head of the CBO with whom I undertook fieldwork. This interview took place after we had completed data collection, and aimed to both gain his views as a key informant, and to debrief him on the research process), a representative from UNAIDS China, a representative from the WHO in Beijing, and the head of an HIV information organisation in Beijing. I also had informal conversations with LGBT rights activists in Beijing, and academic contacts in Hong Kong before commencing fieldwork, which gave me some broad contextual understandings of the situation in China regarding the legal and social status of MSW and the wider LGBT community.

### 2.6.2 Community Advisory Boards

A key element in this research was the involvement of representatives of the MSW community (and the MSW CBO) throughout the research process: in the reviewing and piloting the survey instruments, commenting on the research aims; and then at the end of the period of fieldwork, commenting on some of the preliminary findings from the survey. By involving representatives of the MSW community in this way, I wanted to achieve a degree of community participation in the study (Macaulay *et al.* 1999, Mullings *et al.* 2001). Such community participatory approaches to research have been used elsewhere, for example among female sex workers (FSW) in the Philippines (Ang *et al.* 2012) and among MSM in India (Lorway *et al.* 2014), but not to my knowledge in China (although one study reports using community participation in a condom promotion intervention among MSM in Chengdu, Sichuan Province (MY Gao *et al.* 2007)). Before starting the main data collection of the fieldwork, I asked the CBO to contact a number of MSW to see if they would be willing to volunteer to attend a meeting to discuss the proposed research. As discussed briefly above, this sample was selected from previous outreach contacts of the CBO, aiming for a range of backgrounds and work types. All participants (n=10) gave their informed verbal consent to take part, and were compensated with 200 RMB (~£20) for their time (approximately 3 hours). This level of compensation was discussed with the CBO head in advance, and was considered an appropriate level of compensation for time without being an incentive to take part. This first CAB also acted as a pilot group for the survey, in which each question was discussed and then answered (individually on paper), in order to ensure that each survey item was comprehensible and appropriate. The first draft of the survey was piloted and discussed

with the community advisory board (CAB) before formal data collection had started. While efforts were made to ensure that the members of the CAB came from a range of venues and sex work types, there is inevitable bias in their selection, as all had previously been in contact with the community organisation. As such, it is also likely that some of their comments on survey questions may not have been representative of the wider MSW community. The CAB was not used in selecting the survey sample, however. The quantitative sample selection is discussed in more detail in section 2.7 below.

The CAB/ pilot group consisted of two separate sessions, the first with only two members, and the second with eight<sup>13</sup>. These sessions were run on consecutive days, and were audio-recorded and transcribed. The CAB recommended that a question asking respondent's hometown be dropped as this was considered too personal and threatening to confidentiality. This was replaced with a question asking for home province – a much lower-resolution of geographical data. The CAB members additionally asked that a question on income be changed from an estimate of monthly income in RMB to a set of broad categories, as they felt that it would be too intrusive, and the participants would be unlikely to answer accurately with the original wording. Additionally, the layout and some of the question order of the survey were changed as a result of the pilot, in which it became clear that greater clarity and logic was needed in the presentation of questions. In particular a set of questions relating to the three most recent commercial, and three most recent non-commercial sexual partners of the respondents was considered to be too repetitive, and so following this feedback, I developed a matrix for these questions which facilitated their answering in interview (Q53). The final survey instrument is in Appendix B.

At the end of the survey data collection, a final CAB meeting was arranged to coincide with World AIDS Day on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2011. All in-depth interview participants, alongside any MSW who had been in contact with the CBO in the previous two weeks, and all members of the first CAB were invited to attend. In total 16 MSW attended the

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<sup>13</sup> Originally all 10 MSW were due to attend the first meeting. However, stormy weather during the typhoon season meant that only two arrived at the CBO offices on the day of the meeting, and so a further meeting was arranged for the following day that the remaining eight MSW attended.

meeting. Many of the earlier in-depth interviewees and members of the first CAB had moved away from Shenzhen by this time. This meeting was used as an opportunity to discuss some of the early research findings and to use some of those findings as a discussion point about HIV. Food and soft drinks were provided. All participants gave their consent to take part, but the CBO head requested that the meeting not be audio-recorded. He felt that recording would not be appropriate given the partially social nature of the event. I presented the preliminary findings from the survey, and took notes from the resulting discussion.

### 2.6.3 Semi-structured interviews

Having developed a preliminary in-depth interview guide during the PhD major review process before leaving for China, this was then used as a framework that was edited and added to through multiple iterations, both through informal discussions with informants before leaving Beijing, and later in Hong Kong and Shenzhen. Further changes were made following the CAB meetings before the start of the fieldwork, and then following preliminary analysis of the verbatim responses to ‘free answer’ questions in the survey. This iterative process continued throughout the research period, with themes emerging from one qualitative interview then being explored in more detail in the next, and so on.

The interview phase started once a sample size of 150 had been achieved for the survey data collection (the target sample size for the survey was 250 MSW<sup>14</sup>). There were several reasons for delaying the semi-structured interviews until this point. First, the qualitative elements of the survey (free answer questions asking about feelings towards this type of work, safe sex, experiences with the authorities, etc.) were designed in part to inform the interview guide. As such, I waited until saturation had been achieved in the free answer data before starting in-depth interviews. Second, the individuals for the in-depth interview sample were selected from the survey sample. This meant that it was necessary to have started to get a picture of what ‘shape’ the survey sample was taking before finding a sub-sample from it. Finally, I decided to do both in-depth interviews and

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<sup>14</sup> This sample size represented a balance between achieving a statistically robust sample on the one hand, as determined by desired confidence intervals and levels, estimated effect sizes, and on the other, the feasibility of the study.

survey data collection concurrently rather than sequentially as the interviewees were selected from the survey sample. Given the high levels of mobility of this group, I was keen to invite respondents for interview as soon after they had completed their surveys as possible.

A copy of the interview guide is given in Appendix B. Broadly, the topics covered included the participant's career path, their migration history, the economics of their sex work, their interpersonal relationships with others (MSW, *mami* [pimps], non-MSW friends and family), their awareness of and feelings about sexual health, experiences with the authorities, their plans for the future and experiences of stigma.

Stigma was explored exclusively in the qualitative data collection, rather than in the quantitative survey. Despite there being a large number of previous studies examining HIV stigma quantitatively (Mahajan, *et al.* 2008; Earnshaw *et al.* 2009; Nyblade 2006), I was keen to understand this phenomenon from a more comprehensive perspective, going beyond HIV stigma to understand how stigma towards sex workers, MSM, migrants, as well as PLHIV all interconnected. Existing HIV scales (eg. the Berger Stigma Scale (Berger *et al.* 2001)), while useful for understanding this unidimensional aspect of stigma, cannot adequately map the multiple types and sources of stigma theorised to affect this group, and furthermore have been criticised elsewhere for a lack of validity, particularly outside of the European/ American context (Mahajan, *et al.* 2008).

I was present during all interviews, but left the majority of the questioning to my research assistant/ translator, who had been trained in interviewing, and with whom the interview guide had been developed. This allowed me to observe the interviews, take notes, probe when necessary, and redirect the interviews if they went off track, without disturbing the flow or rapport between the assistant and participant. The assistant was fluent in Cantonese, Mandarin and English, which was also advantageous in a few cases when the participant's first language was Cantonese, and further clarification was needed.

All of the interviews took place in a private space. The majority in a small room in the CBO offices that was normally used for voluntary counselling and testing (VCT), and when this was not available, they took place in one of the larger offices used by the CBO. On one occasion, we were invited by a participant to interview him in the hotel bedroom he was staying in while in Shenzhen. It seems likely that there were both advantages and disadvantages to basing the interviews in the CBO offices. On the one hand it meant that there was a private, easily accessible (to the MSW) space for interviews. The offices were also well-known to many members of the MSW community who would go there to meet, get free condoms and VCT, etc. It also meant that when we were not interviewing, my assistant could continue with his normal duties. The interviews ranged in length from around 40 minutes to just under 2 hours, the time difference being accounted for largely in differences in the verbosity of respondents. Inevitably, the mood and tiredness of the interviewees also had an effect. For example, interviews that were done towards the end of a very busy day of survey data collection, or following a night of outreach work for the CBO (which I also attended), tended to be shorter. Given the financial and time constraints of the research, it was not possible to recruit more research assistants or work with the CBO for a longer period, so some days of fieldwork were busier than perhaps ideally would have been the case.

#### **2.6.4 Key informant interviews**

Table 2-2 shows the characteristics and location of the key informant interviews. All interviewees gave their consent to be interviewed, and all but one were recorded and transcribed. The one key informant who refused to be recorded worked for a government-run NGO. While she was happy to talk to me, she wanted to remain anonymous and unrecorded, and so I took notes of our conversation. Working for what is effectively a government-linked organisation in Beijing meant perhaps that she was cautious of being linked to research into a sensitive topic such as male sex work. None of the key informants whom I approached to be interviewed refused.

**Table 2-2 Key informant interviews**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Interviewer</b>	<b>Recorded?</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Before main fieldwork	Paul + Beijing translator	Audio	Beijing MSW CBO
Before main fieldwork	Paul	Notes	Government-run HIV NGO
Last week of fieldwork	Paul	Audio	Shenzhen MSW CBO
Week after main fieldwork	Paul	Audio	WHO China
Two weeks after main fieldwork	Paul	Audio	UNAIDS China

### 2.6.5 Data management

All interview recordings that were in Chinese were password protected and sent electronically to be transcribed by one of two transcribers whom I had recruited. They were both medical students, contacted through a mutual friend who had used them in previous anthropological work in China. They were comfortable working with material on a sensitive topic, and agreed to maintain confidentiality (the confidentiality agreement for transcribers and translators may be found in Appendix D). In order to test transcriber accuracy, I arranged for one interview, chosen at random, to be transcribed by both transcribers. Besides occasional differences in the transcription of non-verbal sounds and minor discrepancies, both matched in terms of content. The transcriptions were then translated, either by me, or by a professionally trained bilingual translator in Hong Kong. The central concern in the translation process was to maintain the tone and meaning of the interviews. The implications of translating language for the research are discussed in more detail below.

All of the interview recordings, transcripts and translations were stored on an encrypted hard-drive, and a password-protected computer away from the field site. All electronic records of in-depth interviews were coded using a unique identifier assigned during the survey. No names were taken at any point, except for the key informants who gave their express permission to have their names and organisations used.

### 2.6.6 Data analysis

The qualitative data was coded thematically in the Nvivo (QSR International 2012) software package. I coded for emergent themes in the participants' narratives. While certain themes were necessarily present in the interview data, since the interview guide specifically covered certain topics, the interrelations between themes and participants' interpretations of them were something of particular interest in the analysis.

## 2.7 Quantitative data

The purpose of the quantitative data collection was to provide a set of standardised socio-demographic, behavioural and attitudinal data for statistical analysis. Quantitative data allows traits and patterns to be observed and modelled across the group being studied. It also allows the various traits and characteristics expressed by the survey participants to be compared, and using both univariate and multivariate techniques, it is then possible to calculate how different results correlate or covary.

### 2.7.1 Quantitative sample selection

While the difficulties of sampling hard-to-reach populations have been documented extensively elsewhere (cf. Faugier *et al.* 1997, Muhib *et al.* 2001), briefly, there are two central problems that must be considered when sampling from groups such as MSW. First, these populations are not accessible through the usual probability sampling approaches as their population sizes are too small in number to be visible, and so no sampling frame usually exists for these individuals. In addition, even if their numbers were large enough to appear in such a sample, they would likely not be numerous enough to draw any significant conclusions. Second, their behaviours are illegal and stigmatised, and as such they are likely to be concealed as much as possible from the authorities, meaning that they are unlikely to be represented in more general social surveys. Therefore, alternative sampling approaches are frequently employed to target these hard to reach groups, including time-venue sampling (Muhib *et al.* 2001) and Respondent-Driven Sampling (RDS) (Heckathorn 1997; 2002). These approaches are theorised, in the right circumstances, to produce an approximately statistically independent sample from populations of unknown size. I initially considered RDS a possible approach to take for this project, as it has been used in China among groups of MSM in the past (N He *et al.*

2007, Cai *et al.* 2009, H Liu *et al.* 2009b), although the reliability of RDS estimators (because of previously unacknowledged large design effects) is increasingly bringing the approach into question (Salganik 2006, Goel *et al.* 2010, Merli *et al.* 2014). Furthermore, the sample sizes required for a robust sample using RDS are very large (and frequently not achieved), leading to potential biases in the sample.

After consulting with the CBO, several further reasons emerged as to why this method may be inappropriate in the specific case of the Shenzhen MSW population. There were concerns that the MSW population in the city was too fragmented, both by sex work venue type and within venue types. Since RDS relies on referral through networks of participants this would have led to a biased sample, and effectively meant that this was not an appropriate choice for this particular setting. In addition, the labour-intensiveness of RDS, likely requiring at least one full-time employed and highly numerate assistant to manage the process during sampling meant that it would have been difficult in the circumstances of this research to implement effectively. With this in mind, I developed an alternative sampling approach.

A sampling frame was developed through discussions with the CBO, the CAB and ethnographic mapping. This frame consisted of a list of MSW venues in the city, classified by venue type, as described by the CBO and CAB members, and with an estimated number of MSW working in each venue. The approximate number of MSW working in each venue was based on discussions with the CBO staff, who had visited these venues for outreach work. I accompanied the CBO workers during outreach work to venues, and went on site visits with the head of the CBO in the first weeks of the fieldwork to estimate MSW numbers. These estimates were then used to inform the sampling process, with the objective of having a final sample whose distribution resembled as closely as possible the MSW population. The research assistants then contacted either MSW individually or through different venues, to inform them that we were undertaking a study and to ask whether they might be willing and available to take part. A condensed (and anonymised) version of the sampling frame is shown in Table 2-3, with individual venues aggregated into venue type. The CBO were unable to give an

estimate for the number of MSW in saunas<sup>15</sup> in the city as they rarely used them as venues for outreach. They explained that this was because their organisation targeted MSW and their clients, while the majority of the patrons in the sauna were engaging in casual, non-commercial sex. On one occasion, the CBO head and I attended a sauna to attempt to estimate the number of MSW, but it proved impossible to differentiate between commercial and non-commercial encounters.

**Table 2-3 Categorisation of venues and estimated number of MSW in each type**

Venue type	Estimated number of MSW	% from each venue	Estimated through CBO discussion (CD) or ethnographic mapping (EM)
Bars	195	24.8%	EM
Massage Centres	210	26.7%	CD/EM
Saunas	-	-	-
Clubhouses [brothels]	341	43.4%	CD/EM
Street	10	1.3%	CD
Other	30	3.8%	CD

The composition of survey respondents was monitored throughout the research, and it became clear that the sample had insufficient numbers of bar-based MSW. At this stage, one major MSW bar in the city was identified from which we had had no survey respondents, and so I along with the research assistants from the CBO arranged to hire a private room in the bar for the evening, where we would be able to undertake the surveys with the MSW. This proved successful in boosting the sample, and we were able to recruit an additional 12 participants from the MSW working in the venue.

This sampling approach is non-random, and likely to be subject to a number of biases, both because it relied on the knowledge of the CBO and CAB members, and estimated numbers of workers in each venue. Given the underground nature, and as I discuss in Chapter 4, the complexity of the male sex industry, alternative sampling methods would either have been impossible (due to the lack of a sampling frame), or would also have involved biases. As such, I do not generalise beyond the sample of MSW who participated in this study.

<sup>15</sup> Here the category ‘saunas’ refers to bathhouses attended by men with the purpose of finding male sexual partners.

### **2.7.2 The survey**

The survey was designed to investigate quantifiable social and demographic variables, alongside measures of sexual behaviours, and HIV knowledge, attitudes and beliefs, on a scale large enough to permit statistical analysis.

Before arriving in the field, the first version of the survey instrument was translated into Chinese by a bilingual MSM contact, aiming to retain maximum meaning, and using language that was appropriate for the group to be surveyed. The translation was then checked by an English-speaking HIV researcher in Beijing, academic contacts in Hong Kong, and the English-speaking member of CBO staff.

### **2.7.3 Survey process**

Following the CAB survey pilot, and subsequent alterations to the survey items, I started sampling using the approach described above. Approximately 20 of the surveys were self-administered by the respondents at the beginning of the data collection process, but it quickly became clear that this was leading to issues of miscomprehension of some questions, and a potential lack of consistency in responses. Unfortunately this was not identified as a problem during the pilot phase as each survey question was discussed in turn by the group, rather than being completed individually. All subsequent surveys were administered by either the researcher, or the research assistants. The majority (88%) of surveys were completed in the CBO offices, where two private spaces were available. There were occasions when in order to access particular venue-based MSW, it was necessary to go to the venues directly to carry out the survey. This always took place in private rooms within the venues to ensure the confidentiality of the responses. The venues were busy places, with people going in and out of different rooms all the time, so the anonymity of the respondents was not compromised.

Different interview modes have been found to result in differential levels of social desirability bias, particularly when collecting data of a sensitive nature during social research. Alternative possible interview modes include: computer-assisted self-interviewing (CASI), audio computer-assisted self-interviewing (ACASI), informal confidential voting interviews (ICVI) and polling booth surveys (PBS), alongside the

face-to-face approach that I employed in this study. I will explore each of these approaches in turn before explaining the motivation for employing the face-to-face interview style for this study.

CASI (cf. Cleland, *et al.* 2004) and ICVI (Gregson *et al.* 2002, 2004) both require adequate levels of respondent literacy to be feasible, as the former involves the respondent reading and then responding to survey questions themselves, while the latter requires that the respondent write answers to particularly sensitive questions themselves. While Gregson and colleagues (2004) found that 91% of respondents were sufficiently literate to be able to use the ICVI approach in his Zimbabwe study, the potentially low literacy levels of the respondents in my study was the key reason for using face-to-face interviews, so neither CASI nor ICVI were considered to be suitable for the study population here. Furthermore, Gregson *et al.* (2004) found that the differences in reported behaviours between face-to-face and ICVI-collected data were less significant in subsequent rounds of their survey, and with less commonly-reported behaviours broadly.

PBS (Lowndes, *et al.* 2012) was initially developed as a data collection method to reduce social desirability bias among FSW in India. This approach involves participants placing tokens into 'yes' or 'no' boxes in response to questions asked by the interviewer. The tokens are anonymous, and the interviewer cannot see which box the tokens are placed into. While this approach has been shown to elicit greater reporting of socially undesirable behaviours (*ibid.*), there are also several important disadvantages. First, the only type of data collectable here are binary yes/ no responses to questions. Second, all tokens are pooled, and so cannot be linked to an individual (or that individual's other responses), meaning furthermore that there is no way to check the internal validity of any of the responses. As such, this approach was not considered suitable for this study.

Finally, ACASI is an approach that has been found to result in significantly higher levels of reporting of socially undesirable behaviours in the US (Ghanem *et al.* 2005). However, a recent meta-analysis found that the results globally were mixed, with a particular lack of evidence of the relative increased efficacy of this approach in low- and middle-income

countries (Phillips, *et al.* 2010). For example, among lower-literacy sub-populations in India (compared with their computer-literate, college-educated counterparts), ACASI was not found to yield significantly higher levels of reporting of higher risk behaviours when compared with face-to-face interviews (Potdar & Keonig 2005). Nevertheless, ACASI has been used in China to collect sensitive data in previous studies. One study compared CAPI with ACASI data collection among market traders in an Eastern Chinese city. It found that there were few differences between the two, and further commented that in populations with low levels of computer literacy, such as those in the study, are unlikely to consider computer-assisted approaches to be more confidential (and therefore reduce social desirability bias) in this case (L. Li, *et al.* 2007). Therefore, given the suspected low levels of literacy, the mixed evidence around alternative interview modes in the non-Western context, and my intention to be able to link survey responses to one another for each respondent, I elected to employ face-to-face interviews for survey data collection. Inevitably, social desirability bias will have had an effect on the survey findings, particularly around more sensitive behaviours – something I explore in more detail in section 2.10 below.

Each survey took on average 40 minutes to complete, although if I was assisting (rather than the research assistants) the time needed was closer to an hour, due to my slower speed in reading out the questions in Chinese and noting down (particularly verbatim responses). All participants gave their verbal consent to take part (see section 2.12 below), and were offered 100 RMB (~£10) compensation for their time. This figure was agreed in advance in discussions with the CBO and CAB, and represented a sum sufficient to pay for transport to the CBO offices and a meal in a cheap restaurant in Shenzhen but not so much as to be an incentive to participate.

I entered each day's survey data into a spreadsheet that evening, which permitted descriptive analysis throughout the fieldwork period, contributing to the other phases, as well as allowing monitoring of the data quality. All data were stored securely on a password-protected hard-drive away from the field site, and no personally identifying

data was collected from participants. All quantitative data was analysed using SPSS (IBM Corp. 2012) and Stata (StataCorp. 2011).

## 2.8 Dissemination of research findings

As part of the participatory nature of this research, I offered to present findings back to the CBO and members of the MSW community who had been involved in the project. In addition to presenting some preliminary findings to the second CAB, which formed part of the validation process for the research, I also produced a poster to be displayed in the CBO with information about routes of HIV transmission and findings from the survey. This has been used as an educational tool in the CBO, and several copies of the poster were put on display in the organisation's offices. In addition, other areas highlighted in the survey or interviews, particularly relating to attitudes towards HIV, and testing, were discussed with the CBO so that they could be targeted in outreach sessions. I have also fed back descriptive findings, and will produce a summary report of the whole project for the organisation.

## 2.9 Language

China has a huge number of regional dialects and languages, but Mandarin Chinese (Putonghua) is the *lingua franca* across most of the country, and particularly in Shenzhen, where the large numbers of migrants from different areas of the country need to have a common language to be able to communicate with one another. Shenzhen is located in Guangdong province, where outside of Shenzhen the most widely spoken local language is Cantonese, but it is not necessary to be able to speak Cantonese in this city.

Before starting fieldwork in the two years prior to departing for fieldwork, I had studied Mandarin in the UK, and then had spent nine months intensively studying the language at Tsinghua University in Beijing. As such, while communication was definitely feasible in Mandarin, my level was not sufficient to be able to undertake the research without the help of an interpreter for at least some parts of conversations, discussions and interviews, particularly when interviewees spoke strongly accented Mandarin.

The head of the CBO in Shenzhen was a Hong Kong native and therefore fluent in English and Cantonese and, in addition, spoke fluent Mandarin. As such, he acted as an interpreter throughout the research, clarifying or explaining meanings, and being the main communicator during in-depth interviews, as well as acting as an intermediary between me and the research assistants if clarifications were needed.

Confronting the role that language plays in research is unavoidable whenever translation occurs between one language and another. This is both the case in terms of my understandings of the phenomena being studied at the time of the research, and then later when analysing the textual data. The differences between the Mandarin and English languages are considerable, and literal translation is frequently inappropriate, but in both *in situ* interpretation, and subsequent translation of texts, I placed primacy on retaining the meaning of what was said. In the empirical chapters, I present translated quotations from the interviews, along with some key idioms or terms in Mandarin, followed by their English meanings in square brackets. Nevertheless, it is inevitable that some of the linguistic nuances have been lost in the process of translation here.

Translation occurs at multiple stages in the research process though, extending beyond the purely linguistic. As Freeman (2009) comments: “to conduct an interview is to ask for an account of experience and its meanings, but it is also to construct and translate that experience in terms defined at least in part by the researcher. ...The basis of research ‘findings’, then, is an artefact, a transcript or translation, not an original interaction” (ibid.:430). Though Hammersley (2010) argues that transcription data from interviews are not ‘made up’ (ibid.:10), nevertheless the process of transcription and translation in research raises important questions around the production of knowledge, and the parts played by the interviewers and respondents. These are things that I have kept in mind throughout the process of research and analysis.

## 2.10 Limitations

This study used a non-random sample of male sex workers, based on the CBO’s knowledge of the MSW community in the city. This was supplemented through CAB

discussions and conversations with individual sex workers and CBO workers and volunteers. However, there remains a real possibility that a sub-population of MSW in Shenzhen were not represented in this project. Indeed, it is arguably somewhat tautological to ask MSW contacted by the CBO if they are aware of any other groups of MSW that the CBO is not aware of. While there were a couple of occasions where new bars were mentioned by informants, overall the conclusions were that the CBO staff were very familiar with this circle of male sex workers. The circle was large, and quite heterogeneous in terms of types of work locations and demographic characteristics; if there were other types of MSW in the city, we were not aware of them. However, even employing an alternative sampling strategy (such as RDS) would arguably not have found such a group either, given that those individuals were isolated from the MSW network with which this research and CBO had contact. There were also thought to be some MSW in the city who were reluctant to take part in the study, such as freelance workers (also termed 'escorts'). Attempts were made to contact these men through their advertised phone numbers on websites, but were largely unsuccessful. One day spent calling 26 MSW resulted in just three willing to take part in the survey. It seemed that these men generally were more removed from the wider MSW community, tended to live in a geographically broader area than the other men, and were less enthusiastic to have contact with the CBO. However, since they generally refused to take part, it is not possible to provide more detailed information about them.

It also seems probable that MSW at the highest end of the income spectrum might have been less likely to take part in the study. For all the MSW respondents, time spent taking part in the study was an opportunity cost for time not spent earning money through sex work, or time not spent resting or having fun. While the level of compensation offered to the participants never approached the amount of money they could earn selling sex for all but the lowest-earning of respondents, it nevertheless represented enough money for transport and a cheap meal. For those MSW at the highest end of the income scale, I speculate that the compensation offered was insufficient. Discussions with the CBO and other MSW suggested though that the higher end of the market represented a very small fraction of the total population of MSW, suggesting that even if this group had been

represented in the sample, they would have been few in number. Bearing all of these things in mind, the type of sample this study achieved means that any findings can really only be said to be representative of the male sex workers accessed at that particular time, meaning that they cannot be generalised to wider populations of MSW. What it is hoped, however, is that despite these limitations, the findings will contribute a piece to the mosaic of research examining male sex work in China.

Due to the sensitive nature of the research, it is also arguable that many of the respondents may have felt that they could not fully disclose their behaviours. This inevitably led to some biases in the data. Particularly in questions regarding condom use and sexual behaviours more generally, it seems likely (as has been the case elsewhere (Fenton *et al.* 2001, Stuart *et al.* 2009)) that there may be a tendency to overestimate levels of condom use, in line with social desirability bias. Even though the CBO was known to many of the respondents, who knew that they would not be judged for their work, or sexual orientation or gender identities by the interviewers, there exist substantial societal pressures regarding sex work and same sex sexual activity in China that arguably continue to exert their effect, even within the relative safety of the CBO. As discussed in section 2.7 above, while alternative data collection modes are available, and sometimes considered to reduce levels of social desirability bias, in the context of this study, the face-to-face interview was considered on balance to be the most appropriate. In using MSW CBO volunteers as research assistants, I also hope to have reduced the social distance between interviewers and respondents as much as possible, and thus potentially also limited some response biases for more sensitive questions.

The nature of male sex work, often involving gatekeepers (bar owners, *mami* [pimps], etc.) also meant that it is possible that some of those invited to take part were not allowed to do so by those gatekeepers, although no evidence of this was found during the study. Similarly no evidence was found of MSW being compelled to take part in this study by gatekeepers. A further challenge to the research involved the construction of survey questions, and the demands that some questions placed on the conceptual skills of some of the respondents. Through discussions with the research assistants as the survey phase

progressed, and through observing and personally carrying out the survey interviews with respondents, it became clear that the construction of some survey questions made it difficult for some respondents to answer them. For example, one question (Q56) asked about their likelihood of using condoms in a range of hypothetical situations on a scale of 1 to 5. The main problem here seemed to be the concept of various degrees of likelihood, superimposed on different situations. Similar issues with Likert-type scales have been noted elsewhere, in particular in US studies among East and South-East Asian communities, noting potential problems with scales allowing a ‘middle way’ or ‘no preference’ option (C Chen *et al.* 1995, Si *et al.* 1998, Yick *et al.* 2005). Equally, reducing the number of scale categories has been found to make those scales more comprehensible (Khuon *et al.* 1987, Mollica *et al.* 1992). Nevertheless, the issue of remained, and it was felt by the research assistants that even with simplified scales, (and on other questions using Likert type scaling), that some respondents simply were not able to answer comfortably. As such, it seems likely that the data obtained from these questions may be of limited value, and were excluded from analyses. This has potential implications for survey item design, particularly when investigating questions of self-efficacy in this group, and suggests that alternative means of interrogating this issue might be preferable.

### **2.11 Validity and Reliability**

A major advantage of doing mixed methods research is its capacity to approach similar topics from several directions within one piece of research (Jick 1979). In this research, the findings from the survey can be cross-checked against those from the in-depth interviews, and vice versa. This process of triangulation aims to highlight areas of contradiction as well as agreement (N. Denzin *et al.* 2005, N. Denzin 2012), which may be the product of different methodologies presenting different pictures of the phenomena in question, or might indicate areas of the research in which participants presented differing images of themselves or their behaviours; areas of tension which raise methodological as well as substantive points for discussion.

In addition to being able to triangulate findings from the different methodological approaches taken in this research, I used the second CAB to present some of the preliminary findings from the survey back to representatives of the MSW community in Shenzhen, and took notes of their reactions to the findings. In discussion with the second CAB, none of the findings were considered improbable. The major area of disagreement regarded the levels of condom use that were recorded in the survey, with some of the group members suggesting that the study participants may have overestimated their levels of consistent use. This finding is in line with the literature regarding social desirability bias around reporting condom use (Catania *et al.* 1990, Agnew *et al.* 1998), and highlights the importance of discussing findings with community members, as well as the difficulties of measuring sensitive behaviours.

I also had daily discussions with the CBO staff about the research and the MSW environment in Shenzhen. This provided substantial background knowledge about the field and permitted questions to be asked about specific areas, as well as giving me a sense of the levels of reliability of the responses being given by participants.

## 2.12 Ethics

As with any social research, the ethical considerations of this project were a priority for me. In addition to completing LSE's research ethics procedures, the main concerns for me in this project were the protection of the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, and the security of the data collected. These ethical concerns may be conceptualised as being on two, not necessarily mutually exclusive, levels. The first is at the very important practical level of working with vulnerable people, potentially vulnerable organisations, and collecting data about practices that are both illegal and highly socially stigmatised. The second concerns the representations of the people being studied, potential threats to their fair representation, and ways to mitigate such threats. These will be addressed in turn. As Guillemin and Gillam (2004) comment:

One way of explaining the problem [of involving human subjects in research] is that it involves a violation of the Kantian maxim that people should never be used merely as a means to someone else's end ... This tension can be resolved, however, if the subjects of the

research take up the goals of the research as their own; they are then not being used as mere means or tools by the researchers. In other words, in making the research their own project jointly with the researchers, they become *participants* in the research rather than *subjects*. In practice, the standard way in which this is seen to be achieved is to obtain free and informed consent from participants rather than simply conscripting them. (ibid.: 271, my emphasis)

The legal situation of people engaging in sex work in China is complex, and official sanctions against sex workers may be, and frequently are, used against them. Given that I was working with this group, alongside a CBO whose cross-border work in Shenzhen was also very low-key in terms of the Chinese authorities' awareness, any attempt on the my part to seek official ethical approval from the local authorities in Shenzhen could have drawn unwanted and potentially dangerous attention to the participants and to the work of the CBO. As such, alternative routes of clearance had to be sought. Therefore, on a very practical level, the only recourse to gaining approval for the research that was available in the locality, that would not lead to the participants being put at an unacceptable risk, which would in itself have been unethical, was to get the community's own approval for the research.

On a more theoretical level, and particularly when working with marginalised groups, who are subject to strong institutional and social power imbalances, I felt that there was an ethical imperative to avoid contributing to those power imbalances in the research process (Dewey *et al.* 2013). Research ultimately presents a representation, or multiple representations of its participants, and when those participants are members of a relatively disenfranchised group, there is an obligation to ensure that those representations are as fair<sup>16</sup> as possible. As a researcher, I thus had a responsibility to both represent the respondents as fairly and accurately as possible, and be able to acknowledge areas where this process might have been compromised. As such, the

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<sup>16</sup> The extent to which any social science research can claim to present a fair picture of those it is purporting to represent is arguably very limited, and certainly difficult to demonstrate. People's own self-conceptualisations are not static, and change both in time and space, while their conceptualisations of groups to which they may to varying degrees belong are also likely to be dynamic, and likely to differ between different group members. As such, when we talk about the characteristics of a group, it is with the proviso that it is at best only a snapshot of the group from one particular angle; that a different researcher on the same day, or indeed the same researcher on a different day, is likely to find different things

community were consulted both before and after the research process, and their comments integrated into the design of the research instruments, and used as evidence in this thesis. As Strauss (2001) comments: “All research involving human subjects, particularly clinical and behavioural studies, could benefit by having CABs or equivalents to provide advice about informed consent protocols, subject enrolment, research design, and implementation” (ibid.:1942).

In addition, the CBO, whose allegiance was unambiguously towards the MSW community, played a central role in the implementation of the research and whose daily comments were recorded in the field notes. Furthermore, through triangulating the data, I hope to have mitigated, as much as possible, the threats to the validity of the representations presented here.

Finally, in the context of research into HIV in China, many previous studies have included blood tests as a part of their data collection (cf. Ruan *et al.* 2008, Xu *et al.* 2011). This was never a part of this study, as I focus on the socially constructed aspects of HIV risk, and their representations among the participants. There are also important ethical dimensions to the decision not to collect biometric data<sup>17</sup>. In discussions with the CBO workers, and in one interview, there was a suggestion that previous studies undertaken in Shenzhen which had involved blood sample collection for HIV testing alongside survey data collection had involved a degree of coercion of participants. As such this study aimed to distance itself as much as possible from any previous studies in the area. As one of the interviewees describes below, a previous study in which blood samples had been collected had had some unintended consequences:

- R: Do you know what is [name of other NGO in Shenzhen]<sup>18</sup>? They sometimes would approach us and offer check-ups. They would call us and invite us to check-ups. [They pay] 50 RMB [£5].
- I: Have you been paid for a blood test lately?
- R: No. Not recently.
- I: When was the last time you did something like that?

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<sup>17</sup> All study participants were, however offered a free HIV rapid test by the CBO, separate from the study.

<sup>18</sup> The NGO mentioned here is a government-run organisation in Shenzhen, whose work involves HIV prevention primarily among MSM

R: Last year.  
I: Why did you stop?  
R: Now they don't pay us anymore.  
I: Why is that?  
R: I don't know.  
I: And if there is money you would?  
R: They take a lot of blood. It's not just a drop.  
I: Why did they pay you for these check-ups?  
R: They take our blood. ...For sale. They wouldn't just throw it away.  
That is a lot of blood.

(Male, 22, Jiangxi Province)

A lack of communication about the purposes of the study by the other MSM NGO appears questionable. By paying for previous blood samples, the organisation has set a precedent, meaning that this MSW was unwilling to give them blood again without payment. This could pose problems in the future if HIV testing is being promoted to this group, as it may be difficult to increase HIV testing uptake without compensation. As such, for the purposes of this study, and in view of the ethical implications of gathering of more direct biological evidence of HIV levels in the study population, self-reported condom use is used as the main indicator for HIV risk behaviours in later chapters.

### 2.12.1 Practical measures

First, I underwent the LSE ethical approval process, and the research was designed and carried out in line with the ESRC framework for research ethics (ESRC 2010), and all participants gave their informed consent to take part in the research.

These are, of course important starting points for any research, and in line with the ESRC guidelines, verbal consent was obtained from all respondents before they participated. The decision to obtain verbal (rather than written) consent from participants was reached in discussion with the CBO staff and the CAB, and was based on two factors. First, some of the men working as MSW had low levels of literacy, so there would be no way to ensure their comprehension of information if it were solely in written form, and second, there was a risk that the participants would perceive signing a form as a threat to their anonymity. It was also felt that the ethical arguments for giving them a written document, potentially containing information that could be incriminating (i.e. details of “a study of

male sex workers”) were far outweighed by the arguments against this. Thus, all MSW who were invited to participate were given a brief information sheet (Appendix E), and then the research assistants verbally explained the research more fully to each potential participant. This involved explaining the nature of the research, the role of the researcher and assistants, and the broad question areas. They were also told that all information would be anonymous (no names or personally-identifying information was collected), all data collected would be kept securely by the researcher, and that they could stop at any time or not answer any questions they were not comfortable with. A copy of the information provided orally is given in appendix F. The ‘WHO Informed consent form template’ (WHO 2010) was used as a guide. In addition, before the in-depth and key informant interviews, all participants were asked if they consented to having the interview recorded. Rather than seeing informed consent as being an end point in the ethical process of ensuring that subjects become participants, and as an extension to Guillemin and Gillam (2004) above, informed consent was viewed here as a necessary but insufficient element in the process.

Second, in the absence of institutional support in mainland China<sup>19</sup>, following advice from the CBO and supporting academics in Hong Kong, and given the relatively covert nature of the research, I decided to undertake a process of approval by representatives of the male sex worker community to be studied, before starting the data collection, as discussed in Section 2.6

**Table 2-4 Total number of potential respondents given information about the research, and number recruited to the study**

	<b>Number invited</b>	<b>Number consented</b>	<b>Percent refused</b>	<b>Permission to record?</b>
<b>Pilot study (CAB 1)</b>	12	10	17%	Yes
<b>Survey</b>	277	251	9.4%	n/a
<b>In-depth interviews</b>	23	21	8.3%	Yes
<b>Key informant interviews</b>	5	5	0%	Yes (for 4 out of 5)

<sup>19</sup> Ironically, in the case of this research, if the researcher had sought ethical clearance from the Chinese authorities, this would have likely endangered the participants, the CBO and the researcher, which would have also been unethical.

### 2.12.2 Gatekeepers

It is important to acknowledge the role of gatekeepers in social research. They can act at a number of different levels to control access to knowledge, resources or participants, and in so doing, exert power over the research process (RM Lee *et al.* 1990).

In this research project, the role that gatekeepers played was significant in a number of ways. For example, the mainland Chinese academics controlled access to their social or academic resources while I was setting up the research, because of government restrictions, while the researchers in Hong Kong granted that same access, both factors resulting in the final project. Next, the CBO also acted as a gatekeeper, in assisting, but inevitably also to some extent, controlling my access to the MSW in the field. While the role of the CBO in the fieldwork process has been discussed elsewhere, its specific position as a gatekeeper to the participants needs to be explored further. The CBO acted as my initial route of access to knowledge in the field. The members of the first CAB were drawn from the contacts that the CBO already had in the MSW community, as were some of the participants in later phases of the research. Additionally, the research assistants (from the CBO) acted as gatekeepers to less tangible forms of knowledge, either through acting as translators, or through the process of completing surveys with respondents. There is no suggestion of any conscious (or indeed unconscious) desire to present barriers to this knowledge flow, but a certain degree of filtering is perhaps impossible to avoid in any research where language, institutional and personal agendas are not completely coterminous with those of the researcher. Through maintaining a constant presence in the CBO, and during all parts of the data collection, I hopefully mitigated, or was at least aware of some of this filtering. In addition, I had frequent discussions with the CBO staff about the MSW they were able to contact, and strategies for accessing other groups of MSW to try to limit the effects of the CBO's networks on the sample. I also attempted to develop good working relationships with all of the CBO workers. We spent time eating together regularly, and chatted about our lives outside of work, and I certainly felt that I had strong bonds to them by the end of my fieldwork, meaning that they were comfortable with my presence and the research.

The CBO's role as gatekeeper may also though have had some positive effects. As Emmel, Hughes *et al.* (2007) comment, gatekeepers representing marginalised or hard-to-reach groups or individuals tend to be in reciprocal relationships with those they represent; relationships built on trust and developed over time. As such, if a gatekeeper trusts the researcher, then to some extent, this can act as a testament to the trustworthiness of the researcher in the eyes of the marginalised group.

Finally, the venue managers and clubhouse *mami* presented, perhaps, the greatest challenge in terms of acting as gatekeepers to the potential research participants' involvement. In two cases, the venue owners /managers also controlled access to their workers. Both demanded payment of a 'tip' for using a room in his venue to undertake some surveys, which I paid in order to maintain good relations between the CBO and their establishments. It also seems likely that in some venues, managers may have had some control over which MSW were allowed to have a break and participate in the research. It is difficult to say what effect this had on the sampling, as it is unclear whether it would be particularly favoured or disliked workers who would be given breaks to take part in the survey, and it is impossible to know which of these options, or indeed some other effect, was happening here. It is possible however that this could have been a source of bias in the sample.

### **2.13 My Position as researcher**

Any social research that involves communicating with respondents involves a process of knowledge creation and negotiation between the researcher and the researched. This process sits at the heart of this research, with the explicit engagement of members of the community, either directly, or through the CBO being involved in shaping the project and then giving feedback on some of the preliminary results. Furthermore, the importance of objectivity in social research is a contested area, in which it has been argued that the researcher's very subjectivity is the route through which disparate social phenomena may be rendered comprehensible (England 1994). As such, it is important that I acknowledge my subjective position in relation to this research (Chiseri-Strater 1996).

China has held a fascination for me for as long as I can remember, in particular its recent, often turbulent history has been the source of much of my curiosity in the country and its people. In recent years the orientalising discourse (Said 1979) around China in the West has grown enormously, meaning that there are representations of ‘China’ (often portrayed as some homogeneous entity), which inevitably fall short of the realities experienced by the country’s people. To say that this research intends to present a more *accurate* picture would certainly be an exaggeration, and the setting up of media portrayals as being false is also overly reductionist, but perhaps the aim of presenting a *different* picture of ‘China’ is more achievable. One in which people who many would rather keep hidden provide the central focus, and through which some of the complexities of modern Chinese society, social relations and public health can be highlighted.

I perceive HIV not only as a serious public (and individual) health threat, but also as a lens through which multiple complex, often hidden social phenomena and practices can be better understood. Having studied HIV from both medical and anthropological perspectives, I conceived of this research project as a way to better understand a marginalised and largely invisible part of China’s rapidly changing social and sexual climate.

As a foreigner, and particularly as a white European, my position in relation to the participants, and to some extent the CBO, was one of an unequal power dynamic. The assumed relative wealth differentials between researcher and researched also inevitably played a part in skewing the power dynamics, and this was something that had to be continuously kept in mind during the research, although the fact that I did not have any of the markers usually associated with wealth among this community (iPhones, etc.), challenged the assumption of wealth differentials to some extent. Nevertheless, it was necessary to constantly highlight the expertise of the participants and CBO staff, something which happened regularly through my constant questioning.

On the other hand, there were undoubted advantages to being a foreign researcher in this context. It is possible that some of the participants were more open with a non-Chinese

researcher, as there was no suspicion that their information would be given to the authorities. In addition, many of the participants were very curious about life in Europe, and indeed why a foreigner would want to talk to them about their lives. This made developing rapport with participants significantly easier, as they always felt that they could ask me questions, as well as being asked questions themselves. My role as a social scientist in this group was at the observer end of the participant-observation spectrum, but the reflexivity in researcher-respondent relations in terms of their reciprocal questioning (Walby 2010) of me, and constant inquisitiveness certainly made interview encounters more dynamic and balanced than I had anticipated. Research among stigmatised groups though comes loaded with meanings, and as Menen (2011) writes: “I am also asked, sometimes with sniggers, if I have slept with the women I have interviewed. It is not an innocuous question. It is loaded. Your critics assume you have chosen the beat precisely for the purpose, and even girlfriends ask you quietly in the golden moments of silence if you have strayed... but how could I explain to anyone that I was on a dangerous beat, that I was covering the HIV, that it was a serious job. If you are covering a war, you don’t go on a shooting spree!” (ibid.:10). My experiences in witnessing but never having been a part of the community (or market) that I was studying arguably place me in outsider position in relation to my subjects. But by giving the participants voice in my research, I hope that my externality serves to give me space in the analysis of the data, rather than distance from those being researched.

This chapter has outlined the methodological approaches that I adopted in this research, alongside analytical strategies, and wider considerations of the strength of the findings, the ethical considerations and some of the limitations of these approaches. The following chapter is the first presenting empirical findings from the fieldwork, and considers the broad social shifts China is undergoing and how they relate to the lived experiences of the participants in the study.

### 3 Reform, inequalities and migration



Getting the train to Shenzhen from Beijing

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the first subsidiary research question: “What are the experiences of MSW in the context of contemporary Chinese society?” In this chapter, I situate the study participants within the broader setting of China’s current social and economic conditions. I outline the dynamic relations between the male sex workers and their contexts, exploring the macro-level factors highlighted in the risk environment framework specifically in relation to how they interact with the lived experiences of the study participants. Those factors include demographic change such as urbanisation and migration trends, relevant areas of policy (for example the *hukou* household registration system), and broad societal shifts and cultural conditions. This chapter also serves to provide context for subsequent chapters.

One phenomenon that is common to all of the sex workers in this study is migration. China is currently undergoing a process of migration on a globally unprecedented

scale, with an estimated 262 million people being classed as migrants (UN-HABITAT 2014), an increase from 229.8 million people in 2009 (ILO 2014). This includes at least 150 million ‘floating migrants’ (Chan 2010) – rural-urban migrants without a local *hukou* household registration document. Every survey respondent said that they had moved at least once, from their hometown to Shenzhen, but frequently they had lived in multiple locations before arriving in the city. As such, this chapter will explore the male sex workers’ backgrounds and migration histories through the lens of China’s recent social, economic and cultural shifts. The aim of this chapter then is to understand how the study participants experience migration and how their background characteristics and histories led them to Shenzhen, within a wider discussion of macro-level conditions in China as a whole, and in the field site in particular.

In China, migration is a problematic process, with government *hukou* residency registration policy acting to exclude and marginalise many people who have migrated. This is the case for almost all internal migrants in China, but particularly so for rural-urban migrants, who make up the majority of the country’s migrant population and this study’s sample. This marginalisation is intensified through the stigma that many people with rural origins experience in urban China. Thus, the process of migration is conceptualised here not only as a phenomenon leading to inequalities, but also as a result of massive rural-urban and interprovincial inequalities in the country.

The migration trajectories of the MSW in the study are connected to their career paths as sex workers, but despite both phenomena being experienced by all of the participants, there is huge variety in their characteristics and the timing of sex work in relation to migration pathways. In some cases, a desire to enter the sex industry was the reason for migration; for others the process of migration introduced the men to sex work; others did not consider the two to be related at all. The sexual and gender identities of the participants also sometimes played a role in driving migration and subsequent entry into sex work. I will explore this, alongside other motivators for selling sex in more detail in the next two chapters.

This chapter focusses on the migration-centred aspects of the experiences of the MSW. In doing this, I aim to explore migration and entry into sex work in detail as separate but interconnected processes.

This chapter describes the “Chinese Dream”, set within the context of the socioeconomic shifts taking place in the country, and embodied in the city of Shenzhen. The *hukou* household registration system is an example of macro-level government policy the impacts of which are experienced locally by the MSW in the study, and this system is considered in order to develop an understanding of how the policy serves to marginalise this migratory group. Next, I present findings and a discussion of the sharp inequalities found in this study (in part a product of the *hukou* system) alongside data on the social and economic backgrounds of the study participants. Finally, as all of the participants reported migrating to Shenzhen, their migration trajectories are presented and analysed. The aim is to both understand their routes through China, data that have not been collected previously in this group and some of the drivers of their migration.

### 3.1.1 Market reforms and the ‘Chinese dream’

I seek to understand the migration trajectories and motivations for the study participants through contextualising those processes in a discussion of China’s rapidly changing social and economic situation during the reform era. I will focus specifically on a few key areas of relevance, including how China’s reforms intersect with migration, and the development of the city of Shenzhen.

China’s reforms, shifting to a ‘socialist market economy’ (Jeffreys *et al.* 2009b:2), are an important macro-level consideration for the following reasons: first, the MSW in this study are an active part of the market, literally embodying the exchange of services for money; second, the presence of such a market in Communist China is a relatively recent, and increasingly significant phenomenon (Fenby 2008); and third, China’s development into a market economy and the opportunities as well as pressures that this has created are a frequent part of the MSW’s discourse around their migration, and their work and non-work lives.

In describing the shifts taking place in Chinese society in the 1990s, Anagnost (2008) identifies the growth of the middle class and the rise in consumerism:

Citizen-subjects were no longer defined as equal members of a collective political body but by the degree of their individual

progress towards middle class status. Aspirations to this status extended beyond the bounds of the rising middle class to mobilise even rural migrants whose only resource for entering the market economy was their labour power.” (ibid.:499).

This allowed these migrants to “recreate themselves as consumer citizens” (ibid.:499), echoing Schein’s (2001) discussion of the performativity of urban (and urbane) consumer citizens in China, in contrast to those remaining in the rural hinterlands. This development and performance of consumer citizenship resonates strongly with the representations that many of the study participants gave of their motivations for migrating, and as we will see in the next chapter, some of their reasons for entering the sex industry. Furthermore, other authors have linked consumerism and the embrace of urban lifestyles as being key constituents of contemporary Chinese masculinities, underscoring perhaps the importance of these factors for men in modern China (Song 2010).

Likewise, as Ngai (2003) comments: “Consumption is now the moving spirit of millennial capitalism and has become a ‘hallmark of modernity.’ It not only indexes wealth, health, and vitality, but it also constitutes a privileged site for the ‘fabrication of self and society, of culture and identity’” (Comaroff *et al.* 2000:294, in Ngai, 2003:470), which is not only relevant to migration, but also the participants’ constructions of their MSW identities (Chapter 5). Increasing levels of media, political and popular discourse<sup>20</sup> around the ‘Chinese Dream’ have accompanied this consumer revolution (China Daily 2013). While precise definitions of what this constitutes remain difficult to isolate, for individuals the overwhelming aim appears to become a member of the middle class (*zhongchan jiecheng*) (G Song *et al.* 2010), with access to associated material and symbolic capital (H Wang 2010, Jinghua Shibao 2013, Xinhua 2013a). As Song & Lee comment: “[for] the middle class, consumption marks status discursively and defines the identity of this social group” (G Song *et al.* 2010:161). The ‘dream’ though is problematic in a number of respects according to Pan and Du, who comment that it represents a form of urban elitism and colonialism, offering an often only illusory vision of modernity (Pan *et al.* 2011).

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<sup>20</sup> In reality, the distinction between political and media discourse in China is rather blurred, given state control over the media, and the role that the media (for example, the People’s Daily and the Global Times – two large national newspapers) play as government mouthpieces.

The consumerist ideal is central to the motivations of many of the rural men in this study for their migrating and ultimately entering the sex industry. Being at a structural disadvantage compared with their well-educated, well-connected and more cosmopolitan urban counterparts means that the options available to many of the men desiring to become consumer citizens (cf.: Hooper 2005) are limited. Many of the interviewees described their move to Shenzhen initially as being in search of factory work, but the realities of this low-paid and low status employment meant that they decided to move into the more economically lucrative sex industry. For others though, migration to Shenzhen was with the express aim of joining its well-known sex industry, hoping to benefit economically. Selling sex opens up the potential to acquire consumer goods, and the perceived empowerment and higher status associated with them. As one interviewee commented:

R: Well, if you're getting along ok, in a month, usually if you're accompanying clients [and making them] happy, if your clients are happy, then in a month you should get a mobile phone, at least a mobile phone, like an iPhone for example ... you could get a car in half a year ... and then if you're still getting along well, you might get an apartment, if you're in this place.

(Male, 22, Sichuan Province)

In this example, the MSW is describing how working as a sex worker offers the promise of access to consumer and high status goods bought by clients. The potential to acquire expensive mobile phones, cars and apartments in a short period of time, propelling entrants to the sex industry from positions of relative poverty to the dream of greater wealth, has to be seen within the context of China's rapidly changing social and economic environment in the reform era. This mirrors findings among female sex workers in the Pearl Delta Region (encompassing Shenzhen). As Ding and colleagues comment:

With their resources of sexual capital, [female sex workers] may be able to make economic, cultural or social advances that are difficult or impossible for working-class women in factories or service industries ... They live in apartments in the city centres, thereby enjoying symbolic urban membership, whereas [factory workers] stay in crowded factory dorms in suburban areas ... They maintain urban lifestyle and wear fashionable clothes and make-up, and their relations and networks, new ideas on love and sex, and greater involvement with new technologies such as cell phones and the internet are all sources of satisfaction.

Here too, the ability to access economic resources, and to be seen to be doing so, is considered a key element of the female sex workers' aspirations.

### 3.1.2 Shenzhen as a destination

Shenzhen is a particularly interesting site in which to carry out research investigating migration, sex work, and their interaction in the context of China's economic reforms. This is because of its significant place in those reforms, and its position in the popular Chinese imagination. As Morley (2007) states: "acting somewhat as an idealized environment for China's transformation and national development Shenzhen explicitly speaks the values in abstract and pragmatic terms of China's modernization" (ibid.:10); Shenzhen sits at the intersection of China and Western, cosmopolitan affluence (Schein 2001). Until the beginning of the economic reforms, what is now Shenzhen was a collection of small villages on the border with the then British colony of Hong Kong (Ng 2003). It was targeted by Deng Xiaoping to be the first 'Special Economic Zone' (SEZ), acting as a test-bed for the (economically) more liberal policies that have gone on to define China's reforms, as part of its city-centred urbanisation programme of development (Ren 2013:28-30). The result of these reforms in the city is that it is now one of the most (economically) developed places in China (Cartier 2002). Its population has grown to over 10 million since its 'opening up'. In addition, in Shenzhen (along with several other 'first tier' cities), the *hukou* system has been somewhat simplified. It now only differentiates between local and non-local *hukou*, however as Chan (2009) notes, the fundamental exclusionary aspects of the system remain in force.

Shenzhen's reputation for a socially liberal atmosphere, relative to the rest of China, acted as a draw for the men in the study:

- R: I have always felt that Shenzhen is more realistic... it's probably more convenient for people like us. This *quanzi*<sup>21</sup> [circle] of people is quite large, and then it was also said that the economy here is certainly a bit better to make money, I used to think this
- I: ...When you say this circle, do you mean *tongzhi* [gay] people or *kuaxingbie* [transgender]?

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<sup>21</sup> The idea of the *quanzi* [circle] is explored in more detail in Chapter 4, alongside the role that the internet plays in introducing people to it.

- R: *Kuaxingbie* [transgender] people  
I: Now, how did you know this? Before you had come to Shenzhen, how did you know that it was a bit more open?  
R: At that time, it was just through the internet, on the internet I could understand this

(Transgender, 22, Jiangsu Province)

This transgender self-identified sex worker talks about how she perceived Shenzhen to be both socially and economically liberal before arriving. Self-identifying as transgender in more traditional, rural areas presents difficulties for many, and so moving to the city, away from traditional familial controls, and towards a more accepting, cosmopolitan culture may be the only way to be open about one's non-normative identities. The coalescence of perceived social acceptance and financial opportunity in Shenzhen therefore makes migration to this city a deliberate choice for this transgender participant.

- I: Why did you come to Shenzhen after school?  
R: Shenzhen, it's called *tequ* [a special region] ... And it's coastal, and it's near Hong Kong and Macau, and mainly because there are more hi-tech products, I came here to learn about technology... I never thought I'd come here to become a money boy... I had to make a living.

(Male, 22, Sichuan Province)

The perceived modernity of Shenzhen as a destination is also reflected by this interviewee, who associated the city with hi-tech industry and its proximity to Hong Kong and Macau.<sup>22</sup> This view of Shenzhen as a site of modernity acted as a factor drawing him to Shenzhen from rural Sichuan.

- R: Anyway, all over the country, there's this feeling that you can earn money in Shenzhen, they all rush over here.

(Male, 24, Henan Province)

Here, another interviewee is describing the economic pull of Shenzhen. Part of the city's allure is the perception that it is modern, consumerist and liberal relative to many other parts of China and Shenzhen holds a unique place in the popular imagination in China. Another interviewee commented:

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<sup>22</sup> Both Hong Kong and Macau are 'Special Administrative Regions' (SAR) of China, under the policy of 'One Country, Two Systems'. While technically a part of China, they both have separate legal, fiscal and governance systems, and occupy an almost mythical place in the imaginations of many mainland Chinese migrants in search of material wealth.

R: I have a lot of friends who aren't escorts... They know about my job. But they won't reject me; they just treat me like normal friends. But I guess I can only find this kind of friends in Shenzhen. That's what I think.

(Male, 27, Shandong Province)

The perceived socially liberal attitudes of the city here are manifested through this interviewee's experience with being able to be open about his work with his Shenzhen friends. This underscores a sharp difference between rural areas and the city, where feeling able to divulge one's sexuality or work in the sex industry to friends becomes more of a possibility.

### 3.1.3 Hukou

The social and economic changes that China has undergone during the reform period have had massive effects on the spatial distribution of its population (B Li *et al.* 2006), with huge numbers of people moving from rural to urban areas in the country (K Zhang *et al.* 2003). The levels of urbanisation have risen from 17.9% in 1978 (at the dawn of the reforms), to 49.95% in 2010 (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2011), with an estimated annual growth rate of the urban population of 2.6%, versus a decline of -1.0% p.a. for rural areas (UNDESA 2010). This mass migration can be seen as both a reaction to (Y Chiang *et al.* 2013), and a contributor towards (HX Zhang 1999) the changes that China's economy and society have been undergoing. Discussion of rural-urban migration in the Chinese context demands an understanding of the *hukou* household registration system.

The *hukou dengji tiaoli* (household registration regulation - the *hukou* system, henceforth), is a key aspect of the creation and maintenance of China's spatial inequalities (T Cheng *et al.* 1994), and has been described as "a lasting and powerful form of institutional exclusion" (F-L Wang *et al.* 2011:112). Since 1958, every Chinese citizen is issued with a *hukou* document, detailing their *hukou* location, and whether they are agricultural (rural) or non-agricultural (urban) (Fan 2008). The classification is passed on from parents to children<sup>23</sup>. Unlike registration systems elsewhere, however, the *hukou* goes much further than simply providing population information, extending to act as an institution of social control (Chan *et al.* 1999). It

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<sup>23</sup> Through reforms to the *hukou* system, it has become possible to convert one's classification to become a resident in a new location. However, this process is considerably more difficult in China's larger cities, often only possible for those with considerable levels of wealth (Fan 2008).

was used during the (pre-reform) Mao era as a form of internal passport, restricting population movements in the country, in which there was an explicit favouring of urban areas in terms of industrialisation and welfare provision. Since the advent of the post-Mao reforms the internal passport system has since been relaxed, and restrictions on movement reduced (B Li 2006, Bao *et al.* 2011), but the *hukou* document continues to determine the rights of access to services, including healthcare, schooling and other social services (Chan 2010, Gong *et al.* 2012), excluding those holding a document registered elsewhere. As Lu (2006) comments, rural-urban migrants experience “institutionalized exclusion” (ibid.:26) in China’s cities. China’s large-scale process of urbanisation has been described as ‘incomplete’ (Chan 2010) given that the majority of migrants are considered a ‘floating’ or temporary population, with few rights to access urban welfare services and other benefits (Hudson 2008). Furthermore, Wu’s (2009) findings suggest that Chinese urban formal labour markets largely exclude rural migrants through the *hukou* system, meaning that their earning potential and employment types in cities remain limited (C Chen *et al.* 1988).

Table 3-1 below shows the place of registration of the respondents’ *hukou* document, and shows that the majority (87%) of *hukou* are registered for the respondent’s place of birth. This means that they would have to return home to be able to access free healthcare and other services, regardless of how long they had lived elsewhere. Indeed, residence status, rural-urban migration and health intersect in a number of key ways in China. In a 2006 study, it was found that only 28% of the urban population was covered by the Basic Health Insurance Scheme (S Hu *et al.* 2008), principally because it does not cover migrants or informal sector workers (Gong *et al.* 2012).

**Table 3-1 Current hukou status and current location of hukou registration for the survey sample (n=251)**

Current <i>hukou</i> Status	Location of current <i>hukou</i>				Total
	Place of birth	Shenzhen	Other	Missing	
Rural	154	3	10	5	172
Urban	55	2	17	2	76
Missing	3	0	0	0	3
Total	212	5	27	7	251

Over two thirds of respondents reported having a rural *hukou*, mirroring levels of rural residency reported by other MSW studies in China (Chow *et al.* 2012), meaning that

they would be denied access to most government services in urban areas. Of the 76 respondents who hold an urban *hukou* document, only five reported that this was a Shenzhen-registered document. Those with urban *hukou* would have access to higher quality government services than their rural peers, but would have to nevertheless return to their place of *hukou* registration to take advantage of that access.

While general social and health services remain inaccessible to the majority of the MSW in the sample due to their non-local status, the Shenzhen local authorities have, in light of the very high levels of in-migration to the city, made HIV service access more flexible. As such, proof of residency of two or more years, as an alternative to a Shenzhen *hukou* document is considered sufficient to gain access to free HIV services:

I: Ok and then if I need treatment [for HIV] I then go to the CDC [centre for disease control]?

R: If you need treatment eventually you need go to the hospital, the AIDS hospital which is a department in [hospital name] ... [it] Is connect[ed] and the hospital is there. But before going to the hospital you need to fill some documentation in any CDC office.

I: So then I go to the CDC, get my documents and then go to [Hospital name]... and get treatment.

R: To make for registration and then get testing and treatment. And the documentation requirement is you need to bring your identity card, you need to bring your confirmation report, you also need a proof of residence in Shenzhen.

I: So like a *hukou* or Shenzhen...?

R: ... or whatever can prove your residency in Shenzhen [for] at least two years.

I: Otherwise I have to go to my hometown?

R: Yes.

(Key informant interview – Shenzhen CBO worker)

While the Shenzhen health authorities have taken the unusual step of opening access to free HIV testing and treatment to those without a local *hukou* document, the process for getting access to these free services is nevertheless complex, and unlikely to be obvious to a first-time service user. In addition, the requirement of proving residence in Shenzhen is likely to exclude many of the MSW in the sample given that they have high rates of mobility (see Section 3.3 below), and even when staying in Shenzhen, are unlikely to have formally documented accommodation. To access such

services, the alternative is to return to the place of *hukou* registration, something of particular concern for the many of the MSW in the study, as very few have discussed their sex work with friends or family back home:

- R: I'm saying it's certainly that you shouldn't tell them, if you told them, they would feel that they had really lost face, that their child was doing this thing. If your own relatives were doing this thing, you would look down on them, traditional values mean looking down. To give you a very simple analogy, it's like parents all not liking their daughters being mistresses, isn't it? You can say that no parents like their daughters to be mistresses, isn't it?  
(Male, 24, Henan Province)

- R: We are a traditional people. We don't talk about [sex work] or tell our families... If I say it, it would be horrible. My family wouldn't understand or forgive this.  
(Male, 45, Heilongjiang Province)

Both of these interviewees describe the problems associated with families finding out about stigmatised work and identities. As such, they emphasise the need to keep their work hidden from their families, making a return home difficult. Stigma and identity are explored in more detail in Chapter 5, but nevertheless these excerpts highlight a tension between the MSW's work, their more traditional family backgrounds, and the *hukou* system's effects in terms of limiting access to health services away from the respondents' hometowns.

## 3.2 The social context

Whether for reasons of economic gain or a desire for new experiences, China's economic and social changes provide the backdrop for the participants' migration trajectories. Within the context of the large scale migration to Shenzhen (and other cities previously) seen here, it is important to understand some of the factors associated with the MSW's migration.

### 3.2.1 Inequalities

Income inequalities in China have risen substantially since the onset of the economic reforms (YD Wei 1999, Bian 2002). The rural-urban income divide is particularly prominent, with the average gap in absolute incomes between rural and urban areas of the country growing from 200 RMB in 1978 to over 7000 RMB in 2007 (representing

an income per capita ratio of 3.3) (Sutherland *et al.* 2011), with evidence of it widening over time (Sicular *et al.* 2007). The implications of these large disparities are numerous, but for the purposes of this section, I will focus on the interconnections between place of origin and family situation, and the effects that they have in limiting access to economic and social capital for the study participants.

Within provinces, rural incomes are markedly lower than urban incomes (University of Michigan *et al.* 2013),<sup>24</sup> identified as a key driver of both rural-urban intra-provincial, and inter-provincial, migration (Sicular *et al.* 2007, Knight *et al.* 2010:511). These income differentials parallel significant differentials in levels of education and health status between urban and rural areas (Hussain *et al.* 2006, Treiman 2012).

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<sup>24</sup> Data from China National Bureau of Statistics, demographic and economic data at provincial level for 2011.

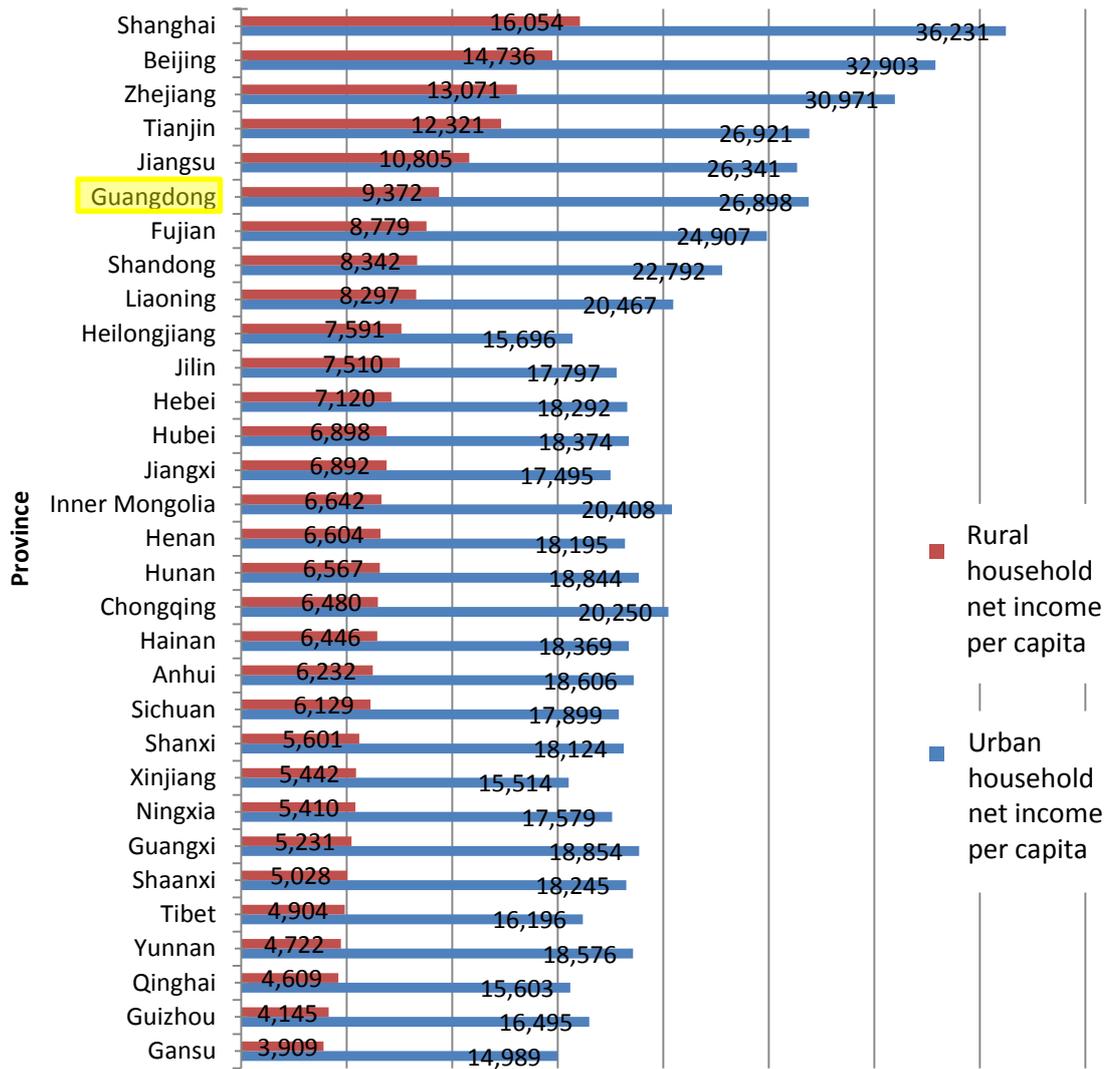


Figure 3-1 Rural-urban household income levels (RMB) by province, data from 2011 China Statistical Yearbook (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2011), Guangdong province, the fieldsite - highlighted.

Beyond the rural-urban dichotomy, China also has substantial levels of social and economic inequality within its rural and urban areas (Sutherland *et al.* 2011, Xin Meng *et al.* 2013, Knight 2014), and in particular, between migrants and local residents in urban areas (Y Lu *et al.* 2013, Knight 2014).

Inequalities in access to economic opportunities may be viewed as a driver of the desire to be a part of the emergent middle class for many in contemporary China (Bian *et al.* 2005). These substantial inequalities exist both between and within urban and rural areas, and can be seen to be structurally perpetuated by the Chinese state. In

her discussion of China during the post-Mao era, Anagnost (2008) describes how Chinese government interventions alongside the market-oriented reforms have been co-producers of the wide disparities seen in China today, rather than working to counteract one another. As Solinger (2006) notes: “Ironically, it is precisely the fundamentally altered agenda put forward by the ruling party after 1978 that, over a couple of decades, has succeeded in producing a poverty-stricken mass among the urban populace” (ibid.:177).

As a proxy indicator of their family’s socioeconomic status, respondents were asked about their mother and father’s current occupation, which was noted verbatim during the survey, and then recoded into categorical variables. Table 3-2 shows a cross-tabulation of the respondents’ parents’ job type. It shows that there is a high correlation (0.734, 5% sig.) between mother and father’s occupation category, and that the majority of MSW’s parents worked either as farmers or workers, representing lower-status occupations.

**Table 3-2 Cross-tabulation of mother’s and father’s occupation category**

Mother's Occupation	Father's Occupation						Total
	Farmer	Worker	Own business	Professional	None	Retired/Dead	
Farmer	43.2%	5.5%	0.9%	1.4%	0.5%	0.0%	51.4%
Worker	1.4%	12.3%	1.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.9%	16.8%
Own business	0.0%	2.3%	6.8%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	10.5%
Professional	0.0%	0.9%	0.5%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%
None	0.9%	3.2%	2.7%	2.3%	1.8%	0.0%	10.9%
Retired/Dead	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	45.5%	24.1%	12.3%	11.4%	2.7%	4.1%	100.0%

correlation 0.7336, n=220, p<0.05

Almost half of the MSW come from families where both parents are farmers, generally considered to be an economically deprived group in China (Fang *et al.* 2011), with limited access to financial resources compared with their peers working outside of the agricultural sector. The perceived inequalities between those from rural and urban areas however, extend beyond the purely economic. They are also

perceived to be reflected in a person's levels of sophistication (or *suzhi*<sup>25</sup>), perhaps better defined here as cultural capital (Jacka 2009).

Examples of how rural migrants are viewed in cities were also found in the research, with the rural-urban dichotomy being perceived to map on to levels of sophistication, worldliness, or development:

R: My friend last month was saying to me, when I originally started as a little brother I was very familiar with the type of person, they were that type, they were very *tu*<sup>26</sup> [derogatory word for poor rural] that type ... It's like when I started doing this, they thought I was very *tu*. It's like before when I just arrived, I was very *tu*, very *sha* [stupid], that kind of person. It's not like now, and I'm not saying [I was like that] so much, but I think now is much better compared to before, my heart is much broader than before. Before when I originally came to Shenzhen, I went to Hong Kong, I had never thought of this previously. Now you see I came to Shenzhen, went to HK, went to Malaysia, I'm saying that if I wasn't being an MB, I'm saying I wouldn't be able to go to HK in this lifetime, I couldn't have gone to Malaysia, I couldn't have been independent of Heilongjiang

I: Oh, you've widened your field of vision

R: Yes, my vision is broader ... you see that if I am at home, my home is in the countryside, at home for a lifetime, I could want to go to Hong Kong? But I couldn't – what would I do in Hong Kong? ... What would I have done if I came to Shenzhen? Shenzhen is such a hugely consumerist city, what would I do?

(Male, 25, Heilongjiang Province)

Here the respondent is describing both his widening of outlook since moving to the city, along with reference to his own, and other sex workers' identities as *tu*. He contrasts this with how his life has changed since arriving in Shenzhen, being able to visit Hong Kong, a place synonymous with modernity and sophistication for many mainland Chinese, and somewhere he would never have considered visiting had he stayed "at home for a lifetime". Thus, through migration (and subsequent entry into sex work), this respondent has been able to foster a more cosmopolitan, worldly identity. I will discuss this process further in subsequent chapters.

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<sup>25</sup> The term *suzhi* has been used in much literature regarding class and inequalities in China, and has variously been defined as sophistication, cultural capital or development (Anagnost 2004, Kipnis 2006, Jacka 2009).

<sup>26</sup> *Tu*, (or *turen* - 土人) is a pejorative term used to describe unsophisticated people of rural origin; it is conflated with peasants, and is made up of the written Chinese characters for soil and person.

This idea, however, of moving to Shenzhen to sell sex and take part in more consumerist society then leading to better levels of worldliness and cultivation, or *suzhi* was not universally acknowledged by the interviewees. One commented:

R: ... I think that really the *suzhi* of this little brother circle is still relatively low ... yes, it's their attitude towards people, towards stuff... because once they have been doing this work for a long time, they think that the relationships between people is all just about self-interest. ...[this is] also to do with their self-cultivation, their quality

I: But people's self-cultivation – what is it related to?

R: With their experience, huh, life experiences of things, huh ... but there are, now I have even heard of university students doing it [sex work]!

(Male, 23, Hunan Province)

Here the interviewee is describing how time spent selling sex leads to people becoming selfish and developing an attitude towards others and ‘stuff’ (i.e. goods), that he associates with low levels of *suzhi*. In this case, self-interested consumerism is considered to represent lower levels of cultivation. The interviewee went on to express surprise that even university students were involved in the sex industry. Levels of *suzhi* or cultivation are perceived as being strongly connected to levels of education, explaining perhaps this interviewee’s incredulity that such well-educated and therefore sophisticated men would sell sex.

### 3.2.2 Education

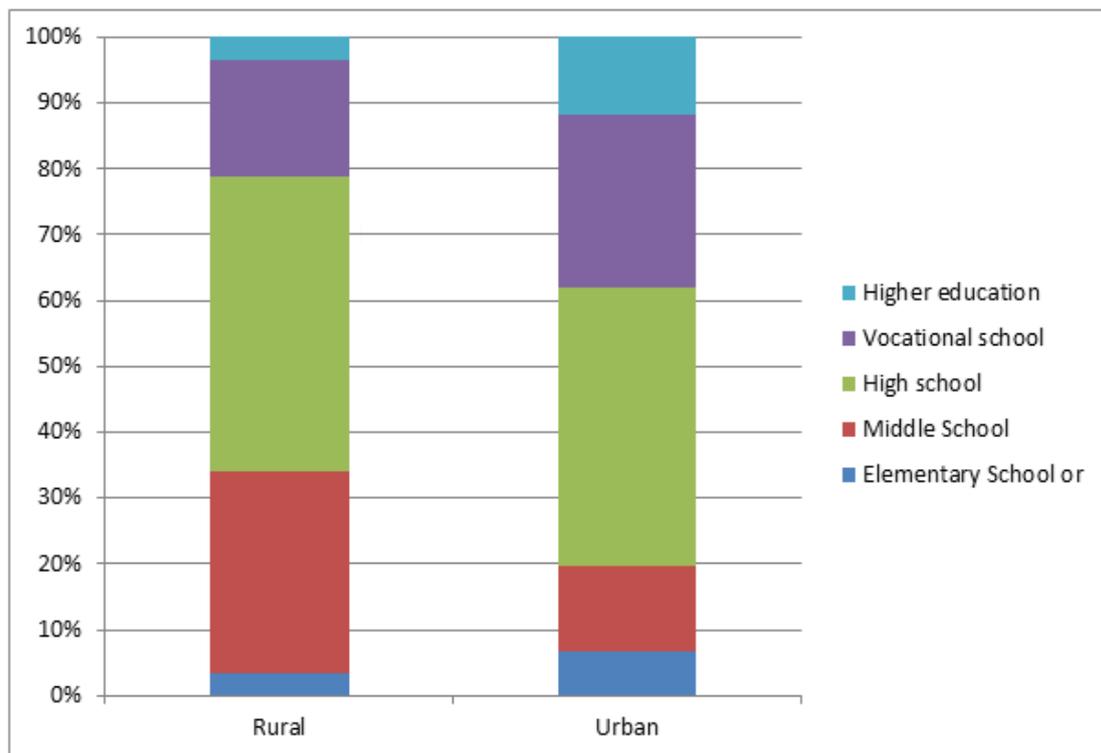
The majority of respondents had completed at least high or vocational school education (70.9%) (Table 3-3). The mean age at formal schooling completion in the sample was 17.6 years (standard deviation  $\pm$  2.55 years), with a range of 7 to 25 years old. The standard school starting age is 6 years in China, making the average number of years in education for this sample 11.6, comparable to data collected in the 2008 China General Social Survey<sup>27</sup> (CGSS) (Yanjie *et al.* 2008) in which the average number of years in education was 11.7 (n = 756; SD  $\pm$  3.386) for male respondents born between 1975 - 1990.

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<sup>27</sup> CGSS data accessed through <http://www.cssod.org/cgss/login.php>, data collected and administered by Renmin University, Beijing and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology [accessed 10/12/12]

**Table 3-3 Level of completed education in survey sample (n=251)**

Highest education level achieved	Total	Percent
Elementary School or below	11	4.4
Middle School	62	24.7
High school	112	44.6
Vocational school	50	19.9
Higher education	15	6.0
Missing	1	0.4
Total	251	100



**Figure 3-2 Completed education level by rural or urban hukou**

When the education data are analysed separately by rural or urban residence (Figure 3-2), some clear differences emerge. A substantially larger proportion of urban-registered MSW have achieved at least a high school level of education compared with their rural peers. There is also evidence from the literature that the quality of schooling varies between urban and rural areas of China (B Li *et al.* 2004a), with rural areas tending to offer poorer education services. Using the alternative measure of age at formal schooling completion, a one-sided t-test shows that the urban-registered MSW have spent significantly longer in education, leaving school at mean age 18.1

years, versus 17.4 years for their rural counterparts (t-value -1.934; 240 d.f.; p-value 0.027). An interviewee discusses his relatively low level of formal education:

- I: You didn't say, you finished school at primary level do you feel that with other, because lots of little brothers have graduated from primary school, some junior high school and some even high school...
- R: High school. But they still do this huh. I don't see the [difference in education] levels, yeah. But education ability, because I've been outside [of education] for a fairly long time, it can also be considered a learning experience. Although I know characters [i.e. Chinese script], I can't write, I don't know how to write. But when I read a book, there are only a few words I don't know. But I can't manage to write, because I don't always have pen and paper. I can't write. [...] Also, I feel that now if you have no educational qualifications, in the outside world, it's bad to find [work], but I feel like it's ok... I feel that because I one day haven't put pen to paper, I can't do anything, can't write characters [...] In fact, people are always learning, every day we are learning... Everyone is learning. Although I only graduated from primary school, but still everyday you're studying, working outside huh, working instead of studying.

(Male, 25, Heilongjiang Province)

The interviewee is describing his difficulties with literacy. He only completed primary education, and so has problems with reading and writing. He comments that this can make it difficult to find work now. He goes on to say however that work in itself is a form of study – every day he is learning through his work. In a society in which education is not only strongly culturally valued (C Chen *et al.* 1988:352-4), but also provides a means to escape poverty (Glauben *et al.* 2012), representing daily life and work as a form of study allows him to identify himself in a more positive light, in which he becomes educated through his work.

### 3.2.3 Marital status

A further rural-urban component of these more distal aspects of the risk environment are the filial norms and expectations commonly held in Chinese society. An examination of the marital status of the men in the study allows us to see another aspect of their motivations for migrating, but also some of the ways that these traditional filial duties exert pressure on young men to conform to the expectations of society. In interviews, those who were not already married almost universally said

that they planned to (or would be forced to) in the future. Thirty years old was frequently given as the age by which this was expected to happen.

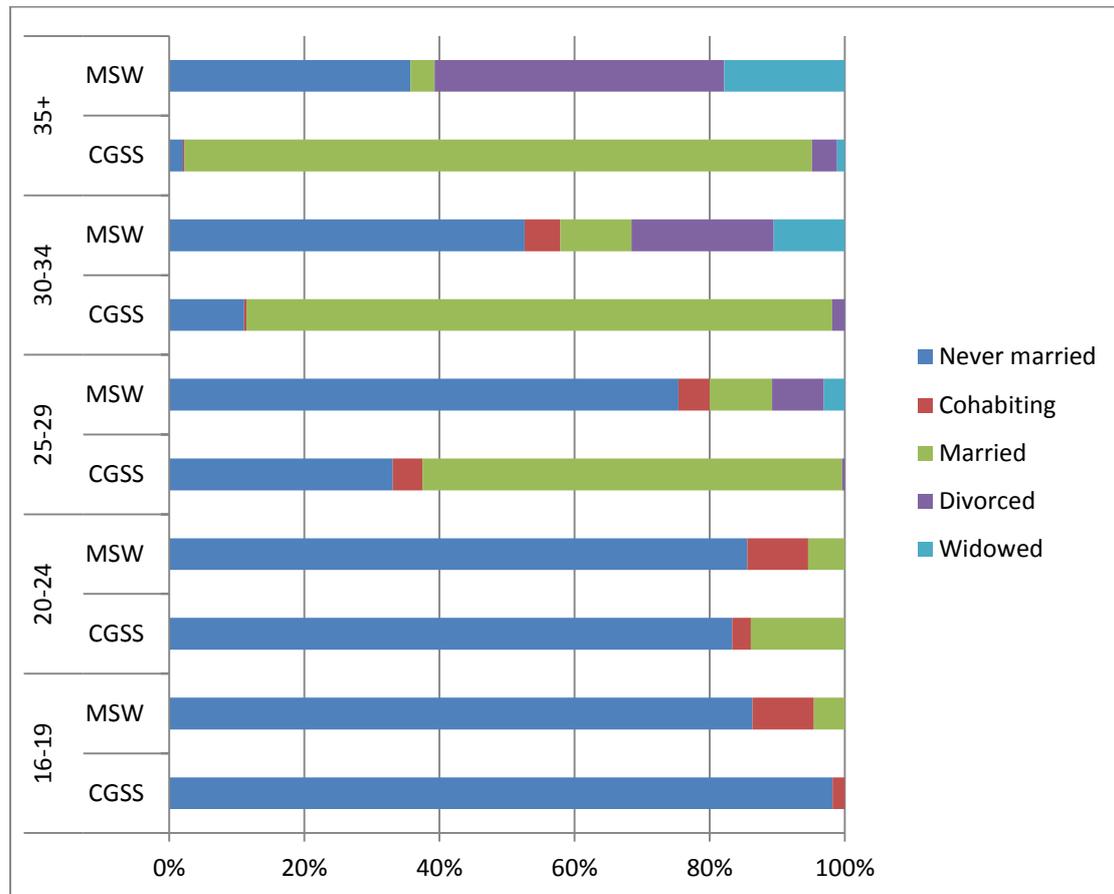


Figure 3-3 Marital status by age: MSW and general population (CGSS)

Comparing the study sample with the general population of men, by age in Figure 3-3 above, we can see that for all but the youngest age group, the MSW are more likely to report they are never-married, with the difference between the sample and the CGSS data increasing with age. Over age 35, over 95% of the general population are married, widowed or divorced. This compares to around 65% for the MSW.

These differentials highlight that pressure from families on their sons to marry and have a child remains very strong. Indeed while the rates of marriage among the MSW are substantially lower than the general population, nevertheless across all ages, around 8% were currently married. A further 8.4% across all ages, and over 42% in the oldest age group were divorced.

The filial duty to marry and have children was frequently framed within the context of China's restrictive anti-natalist policies,<sup>28</sup> the result of which is to place enormous pressure on (usually only) children to continue the family line through marriage and childbearing.

- I: Don't your family worry about when you're getting married?  
R: Maybe. In the villages people tend to get married early. Some of my classmates got married. I guess my family deserve something from me. I have this [homosexual] tendency but, if I can find a woman and we connect, I guess I can accept it. Also maintaining health is important. When I am healthy, and have a financial foundation, I can consider getting married and quitting... There is a responsibility on the man. We don't marry for marriage's sake. We marry to improve our families.

(Male, 21, Hunan Province)

The filial duty of men to continue the family line through marriage and childbearing produces substantial amounts of pressure and anxiety among the MSW. This is perhaps particularly the case for those MSW who self-identify as homosexual, the majority of whom have not discussed their sexuality or work with their families (Chapter 5). The following section draws together several strands of evidence around the motivations for migrating, and patterns of migration exposed in the study. It highlights emergent themes in the findings around sex workers' migration pathways, and the motivations for these.

### 3.3 Migration

Migration remains the least well-defined of the three major demographic processes. As Barclay (1958) commented: "...a migrant is a person who travels. This is the only unambiguous element in the entire subject" (ibid.:243); while Lee (1966) states that migration can be defined as "a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence." (ibid.:49). For the purposes of this thesis, here I am taking migration to mean any change of residence beyond the respondent's original hometown. There are both

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<sup>28</sup> China's 'one child policy', as it is commonly known, in fact relates to a complex set of locally-varying fertility policies, first introduced in 1980 with subsequent modifications, to formalise previous, largely successful attempts to reduce fertility (Greenhalgh *et al.* 1987). In essence, the policy states that urban residents of Han ethnicity are only permitted one child (with exceptions for parents in 'dangerous occupations', those who are themselves both only children, and for those whose first child has a disability. For rural residents, and those of 'minority ethnicity', the policy permits a second, or even third child in certain less restrictive circumstances, although this varies provincially, and often locally (WX Zhu 2003, Baochang *et al.* 2007). See Baochang *et al.* (2007) for a comprehensive review of the provincial variation in rules.

practical and substantive reasons for adopting this definition. First, respondents were asked during the survey data collection to name their province of origin, followed by all subsequent locations of residence with dates. While this raises a potential question of comparability between respondents, given that each may have defined 'living in a place' differently, it at least means that the findings have validity in terms of the respondent's emic perspective of their migration. Secondly, in a substantive sense, considering moves away from the hometown in the Chinese context is significant due to the *hukou* residence permit system which limits access to social, health and welfare services. The phenomenon of migration warrants attention here for several key reasons. First, given its universality among the study participants, it can be seen as being intimately connected with sex work in Shenzhen. Secondly, the relationship between migration and HIV has been posited by multiple authors, either because it can place migrants in higher risk environments (Poundstone *et al.* 2004), or because those who migrate are theorised to have less risk-averse characteristics (Brockerhof *et al.* 1999), or because the process of migration itself might cause the geographic spread of the disease (Merli *et al.* 2009). Thirdly, as a process that is clearly associated with China's reform period, and being heavily influenced by the *hukou* system, we might expect certain patterns to emerge in the migration histories of the study participants which illuminate aspects of their experiences as MSW in the migrant-built city of Shenzhen.

There have been a range of approaches used to theorise migration. Boyle, Halfacree and Robinson (1998) describe a tradition in the field to take either a determinist (cf. Ravenstein 1885, ES Lee 1966) or humanist approach (cf. Pooley *et al.* 1991 in Boyle, 1998:71). However I, like Boyle and colleagues (1998), take the position that there is space that can be explored between these unnecessarily dichotomised positions, through "stressing the actions of contextualised individuals" (ibid.:81), reflecting a trend in the conceptualisation of migration that aims to account for its complexities (White *et al.* 1995), situating migration trajectories through an acknowledgment of the "complex interplay between biographical actors and the institutional arrangements by which societies structure life courses" (Wingens *et al.* 2011:4). Indeed, anthropological demographic approaches to the study of migration provide a useful and more comprehensive position from which to understand this phenomenon (Homewood *et al.* 2004). Anarfi (1998) comments that most purely

demographic studies have tended to focus on the act of migration, rather than the context in which it happens, something he says, that a more anthropological stance is better able to do. Other anthropological demographers have undertaken studies of the intersections between migration, HIV and sex work in a number of settings, in order to develop a more nuanced understanding of the processes involved (e.g. Brummelhuis 1997, Larvie 1997, Orubuloye *et al.* 1997). As such, this thesis uses this logic as a basis for understanding the interplay of individual decision making and more macro-level societal factors in the migratory decision-making process, an approach advocated by numerous migration scholars (Massey *et al.* 1993, Goss *et al.* 1995, Halfacree 1995).

### 3.3.1 Reasons for migrating

The reasons given by the interviewees for migrating away from their hometowns can be categorised in a number of ways, but largely revolved around either concepts of financial gain, or the desire for adventure and new experiences. Migration sometimes paralleled an entry into the sex industry, the process of which will be explored in the next chapter, but these two processes were not necessarily simultaneous. In fact many of the MSW described moving to Shenzhen originally in search of work in the factories that give the region its now rather hackneyed title of ‘workshop of the world’ (The Economist 2002), to become *dagongzai* [young, contracted workers]. One interviewee describes his migration trajectory:

- I: So when you left Henan [hometown], you went straight to Dalian?  
R: Yes. To get temporary work to earn money, isn't it. Because in the countryside, we don't have much income, there is no source of money apart from cultivating land. No work, eh. ...As soon as I had finished school in my hometown, I went to work in Dalian.  
I: Oh. So after school, you went to Dalian to work. At that time of going to Dalian, how old were you?  
R: 16 years old  
I: ...At the very beginning in Dalian, what kind of work did you do?  
R: Eh, I worked as a waiter ... I also worked in a bank. Oh. I also worked as a KTV [karaoke] attendant. I went to Dalian, Yangzhou, Tianjin. When I was done with being in Yangzhou, a guy told me that Shenzhen hereabouts you can make more money, isn't it.

(Male, 24, Henan Province)

This migration history shows how he moved from a rural farming area on to several other cities in China before arriving in Shenzhen. His economic opportunities were

limited in his hometown in Henan Province, and so he sought work in several different low status service industry jobs as he moved around the country, finally moving to Shenzhen. Shenzhen's reputation as a wealthy city motivated his migration there to earn more money.

### 3.3.2 Migration patterns

This section will examine the sex workers' migration trajectories, beginning with their place of origin, *laojia*, a term that can mean one's family home, native place or province of origin. The respondent's verbatim response to this question was noted, and later recoded to provincial-level.

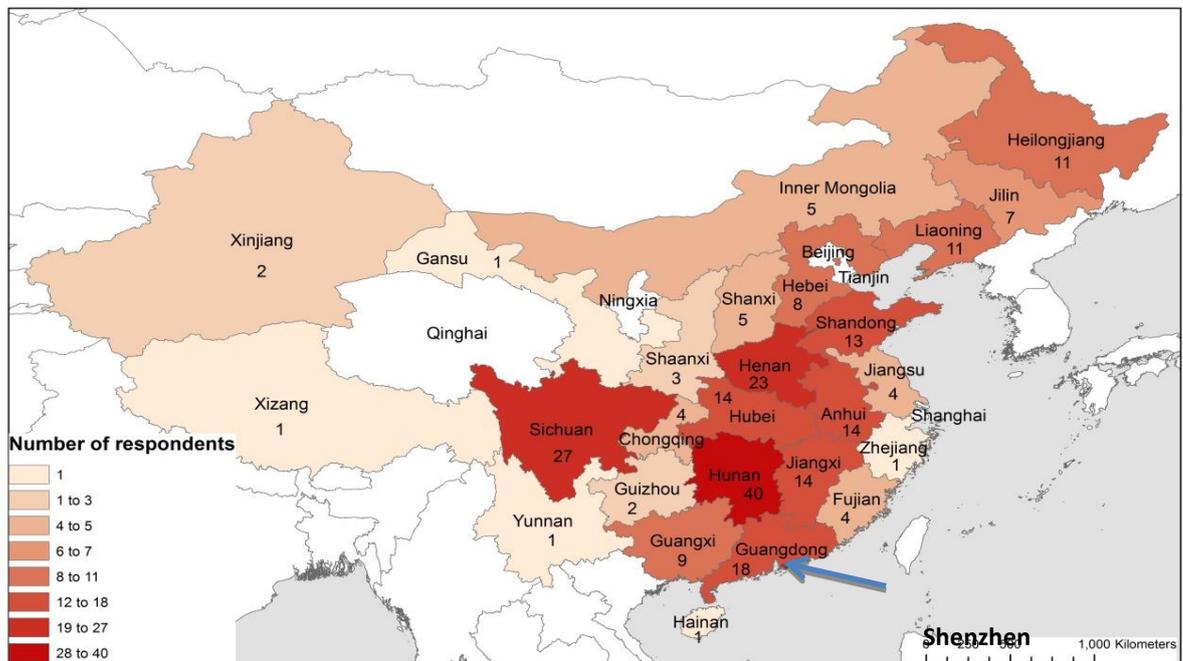


Figure 3-4 Province of origin for respondents in the survey sample (n=251), the blue arrow indicates the study location

There is considerable variation in the province of origin of the sex workers in the sample, with the largest numbers originating from China's central region (with Hunan, Henan, Hubei, Jiangxi and Anhui provinces together accounting for 42% of the sample) and Sichuan province (Figure 3-4). Wong and colleagues (2007), in a 2003 study of 87 migrant workers in Shenzhen, found that they came predominantly from Hunan, Hubei, Jiangxi and Sichuan, reflecting the distribution found in the current study.

Seven percent identified Guangdong province as their place of origin, the same province as the field site. No respondents identified Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Ningxia or Qinghai as their home province. It is rather difficult to explain the reasons for these findings with the data available, but I tentatively propose that because Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin are wealthy, highly developed cities, those born in those cities might not need to migrate elsewhere to find work. Similarly, given my previous discussion of consumerism and modernity acting as drivers for migration, perhaps those born in these large, cosmopolitan cities feel less desire to move to Shenzhen in search of the Chinese Dream.

The small numbers of MSW originating from the underdeveloped and relatively poor north-western provinces may be ascribed to these provinces' relatively small populations or their relatively limited infrastructure and connectedness with coastal regions. Meanwhile those provinces which are well-represented in the sample are those which tend to have high rates of out-migration when compared to other Chinese provinces (Shen 2012; 2013), particularly to Guangdong province (Chan 2011), and which have relatively large, poor or rural populations (Fielding 2011). The findings here suggest therefore that to some extent, the patterns in province of origin follow those suggested among rural-urban migrants more broadly for in-migrants to Shenzhen.

**Table 3-4 Province of origin of MSW survey sample (n=251), by rural or urban registration**

**Hukou status**

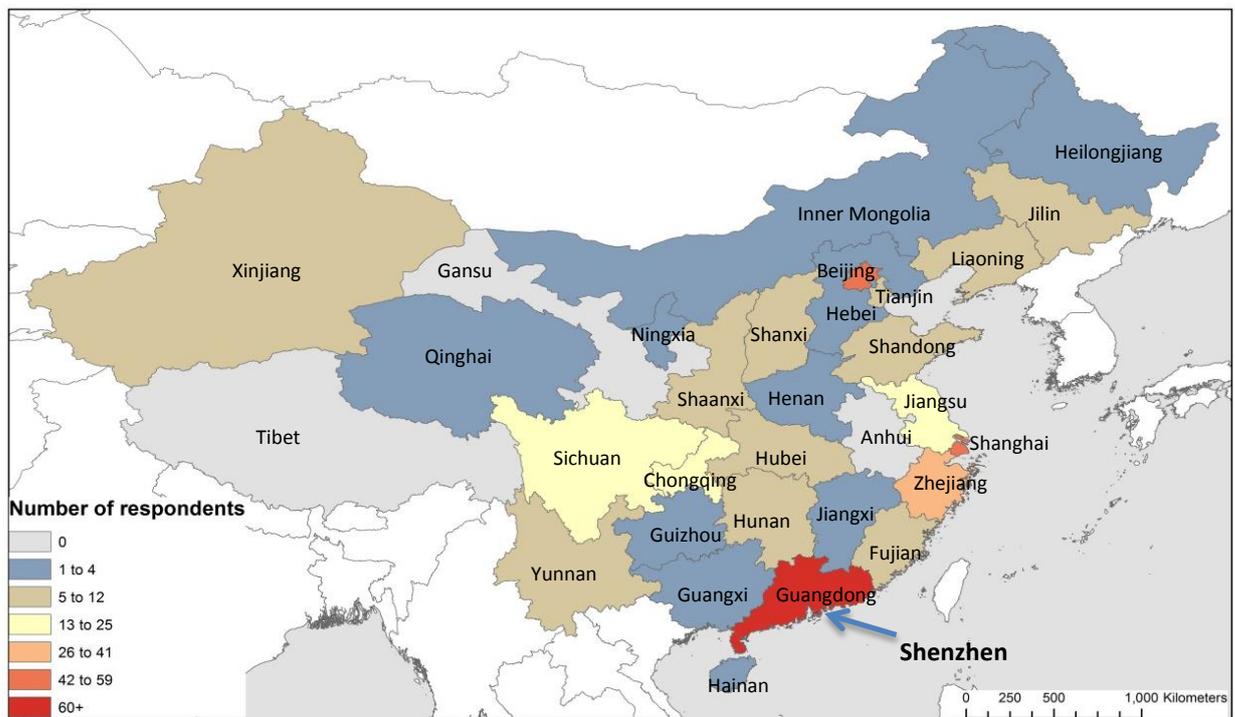
<b>Province of origin</b>	Rural	Urban	Total	% Rural
Anhui	10	4	14	71
Chongqing	2	2	4	50
Fujian	4	0	4	100
Gansu	1	0	1	100
Guangdong	13	5	18	72
Guangxi	7	2	9	78
Guizhou	2	0	2	100
Hainan	0	1	1	0
Hebei	4	4	8	50
Heilongjiang	6	7	13	46
Henan	18	5	23	78
Hubei	9	5	14	64
Hunan	32	8	40	80
Inner Mongolia	3	2	5	60
Jiangsu	3	0	3	100
Jiangxi	10	4	14	71
Jilin	3	4	7	43
Liaoning	4	7	11	36
Shaanxi	2	1	3	67
Shandong	9	4	13	69
Shanxi	5	0	5	100
Sichuan	19	6	25	76
Tibet	0	1	1	0
Xinjiang	0	2	2	0
Yunnan	1	0	1	100
Zhejiang	1	0	1	100
Missing			9	
<b>Total</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>67</b>

Two thirds of the sample report coming from rural areas, and a general pattern of higher rates of urban registration being reported by MSW from the north-eastern provinces (Heilongjiang, Jilin and Liaoning), than the central provinces, together constituting the majority of the sample.



migration history (with dates) along with their province of origin, which were listed in chronological order.<sup>29</sup>

The respondents have high levels of mobility, particularly internally in China, although a few respondents also described migration to non-Chinese mainland locations, including Hong Kong, Macau and Singapore. There are high densities of movement through the cities of Shanghai, Beijing and Chongqing, and Guangdong province, all areas identified as migration destinations in the literature (Liang *et al.* 2004, Fan 2005). Figure 3-6 below shows the most commonly mentioned sites of previous residence between the hometown and Shenzhen by the MSW.



**Figure 3-6 map showing the density of migration routes through China between the hometown and the Shenzhen field site.**

We can see from this figure that Guangdong province, Shanghai, Beijing and Zhejiang are the most frequently visited areas of the country by the men in the sample. When considered alongside the data in Figure 3-1 above on average incomes in different areas of China, we can see that these four provinces also have the highest urban income levels, suggesting the participants’ migration decisions might be being driven by earning potential in different cities.

<sup>29</sup> The data were uploaded into ArcGIS ArcMap programme version 9.3.1 (ESRI 2009), using the Tracking Analyst module. The data were, as with the above Figures 3-4, 3-5, and 3-6, plotted using free GIS shapefiles downloaded from the Global Administrative Areas Database (<http://www.gadm.org/>).

The following discussion with one interviewee highlights this:

- I: Would you go to other cities to work?  
 R: Yeah, if there is a chance.  
 I: Have you thought about a destination?  
 R: Yeah... Hong Kong would be better. And Beijing.  
 I: ...Why Hong Kong and Beijing?  
 R: Because they are prosperous.

(Male, 21, Guangdong Province)

Future migration plans for this interviewee, then, are premised on the potential to make more money in other cities. Hong Kong and Beijing are, like Shenzhen, widely perceived to be wealthy, developed cities. On the other hand, Tibet, Ningxia and Anhui, all towards the bottom of the income scale (Figure 3.1), were not listed by any of the MSW as provinces they had lived or worked in since leaving their place of birth. There were also relatively high rates of intra-provincial mobility reported for Guangdong Province; many of the respondents having first spent time in Guangzhou or other cities in the province before arriving in Shenzhen.<sup>30</sup>

In regression analysis, the likelihood of having migrated through each of the four most common locations (Beijing, Shanghai, Zhejiang and Guangdong) is estimated in separate models (Table 3-5), with region of origin being used as an independent variable.

**Table 3-5 Regression analysis of likelihood of migrating through Beijing, Shanghai, Zhejiang and Guangdong Provinces**

Likelihood of having migrated through:	Region of Origin						Number of times migrated	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>
	East	North	North-East	North-West	South-Central	South-West		
Beijing	1.57	<b>9.23 ***</b>	<b>3.95 ***</b>	<b>6.89 **</b>	-	1.01	<b>1.48 ***</b>	0.193
Shanghai	<b>4.67 ***</b>	1.15	2.33	1.94	-	1.17	<b>1.65 ***</b>	0.194
Zhejiang	1.20	0.92	<b>0.14 *</b>	0.89	-	1.91	<b>1.54 ***</b>	0.161
Guangdong	<b>0.43 **</b>	0.54	0.52	0.95	-	0.52	<b>1.21 ***</b>	0.046

note: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1; N=245

While controlling for the total number of times the respondent has migrated, this analysis shows that there are clear regional trends in the migratory pathways of the

<sup>30</sup> Cities in Guangdong province were coded separately in the migration questions of the survey. Where non-Guangdong cities were listed, these were recoded to their province.

survey respondents en route to Shenzhen. For example, MSW originating from provinces in the north, north-west and north-eastern regions of China are approximately 9, 4 and 7 times more likely to have lived in Beijing than those from the south-central (reference category) region respectively. Those MSW from eastern China are 4.7 times more likely (1% significance) to have migrated through Shanghai on their way to Shenzhen than those in the reference category. Findings for Zhejiang were not significant at the 5% level, while for Guangdong province, MSW from the eastern region were significantly less likely to have lived elsewhere in Guangdong province before moving to Shenzhen than those from the south-central reference category.

The proximity of the place of origin to each of the most common destinations for migration before moving to Shenzhen is a factor in the choice of destination. These findings build on the work of Fielding (2011) who described the differential levels of migration to different areas of China for using national-level data, and suggest that geographic proximity and large city size appear to play an important role in the choice of intermediate migration destination between hometown and Shenzhen for this group. This supports other findings among interprovincial migrants in China more broadly, for whom the gravity model has been suggested to carry explanatory weight in migratory decision making (Poston *et al.* 1997, S Li 2004, Bao *et al.* 2007).

Since everyone surveyed has migrated at least once, there is no counterfactual available (i.e. 'has never migrated') for an analysis of the covariates of migration. However, a survey question asked how many other cities they had worked in since leaving their hometown, which provides an indicator of the degree of migration experienced by each respondent.

The mean and median values given in the survey were 2.70 and 2 respectively. Thirty-three respondents said that they had not worked anywhere between their hometown and Shenzhen, while 10 (out of 251) said that they had worked in over six different cities. In multivariate linear regression analysis with a range of socioeconomic indicators, when controlling for age and being never-married (vs. married/cohabiting), having parents with mixed occupations (vs. both being farmers) was found to predict an increase in the number of places the MSW had lived. These findings suggest that

the degree of migration is in part at least related to MSW's family background. These data on degree of previous migration are used later in Chapter 6, in analyses of sexual behaviours. The results may be found in Appendix G.

### 3.4 Conclusion

Given the universality of migration in this population, it provided a coherent theme through which to examine some of the other demographic and socioeconomic characteristics in this group of male sex workers. By taking an approach to migration that encompasses both contextual macro-level, and more immediate factors, I have attempted to outline how the participants' backgrounds, framed by China's contemporary situation, might intersect with one another to drive their migration choices. In particular, the chapter looked at the *hukou* system, which given that it was contrived in order to control migration from rural to urban areas, and as a consequence of its role in limiting service access, has contributed to the huge rural-urban disparities in wealth in China. It is somewhat ironic then that those very disparities have been one of the key drivers of rural-urban migration in recent years. This situation provides a clear example of how processes at different levels interact to fuel migration.

The socioeconomic conditions experienced by many of the participants are one factor that can be linked to their migration, but this chapter also outlined the role that ideational desires to participate in a more cosmopolitan version of Chinese society, either through consumption, or as a means of sexual expression, played in some of the MSW's decisions to move to Shenzhen. Contemporary Chinese discourses around masculinities highlight the importance of wealth and consumer goods, and thus the empowerment that might derive from them. As such, the migration and desire for wealth among poorer, rural and relatively disempowered men should come as no surprise: the socioeconomic backgrounds of the study respondents do appear to play a role in their decisions to migrate. The majority come from poorer, rural conditions, and as such have limited access to forms of capital that might permit them to access cosmopolitan, modern aspects of Chinese society that they desire. Migration is proffered by some as a means to this end. Nevertheless, for those from rural areas, this can contribute to their marginalisation, as they may be perceived as being unsophisticated *turen* in the city. Meanwhile, many of the migrants discussed non-

financial traditional pressures from family, to marry and have children, in contrast to their more cosmopolitan, modern lives in Shenzhen. The city also presents opportunities for openness about gender and sexuality that some participants desire, also acting as a motivator for their migration.

The migration histories of the MSW in the study - from their hometowns, through China, to their final location at the time of fieldwork, Shenzhen - show that this is a highly mobile group. Many of the MSW had travelled through, and lived in, multiple locations on their route. I presented tentative evidence that geographical proximity to some of the most common intermediate locations was related to their likelihood of being chosen as stopping off points. These findings are novel in the Chinese MSW context, and they contribute to our understanding of the ways that this mobile population are moving through the country and selecting locales.

In addition to being migrants, necessarily all of the study participants also identify as sex workers. The dual processes of migration and sex work are closely intertwined, with mobility around China being a common element in the work of these men. Entry into the sex industry though is also often described as a consequence of their migration. The following chapter therefore goes on to explore the male sex industry in Shenzhen, beginning with a discussion of the participants' entry into sex work.



“Sex work is work” Hong Kong, 2011 (Huffington Post *et al.* 2011)<sup>31</sup>

## 4 Entering ‘the circle’: motivations and negotiations in Shenzhen’s male sex industry

### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I build on previous empirical findings presented on migration and the socioeconomic backgrounds of the study participants by moving the analysis on to Shenzhen’s male sex industry specifically. I consider the ways in which MSW in the study conceptualise their work, and navigate the different risks they encounter, and power relations in which they find themselves. They are not represented here as passive subjects, to whom sex work happens, but as agents who make decisions to work in an industry, decisions set within their wider social or economic contexts.

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<sup>31</sup> This photograph, published in the Huffington Post, shows male and transgender sex workers marching for Hong Kong Pride in 2011. The group was organised by the MSW CBO’s Hong Kong office. I was invited to attend and march with the group, and took it as an opportunity to develop my relationship with the Hong Kong-based CBO staff, and was able to speak with some Hong Kong-based MSW about their work. I can be seen, unclearly towards the centre of the shot.

Giddens, building on the work of Goffman comments: “All social interaction is *situated* interaction – situated in space and time... the regular or routine features of social encounters, in time as well as space, represent the institutionalized features of social systems ... [but] the routinized character of most social activity is something that has to be ‘worked at’ continually by those who sustain it in their day-to-day conduct.” (Giddens 1986:86, emphasis in original). I take this view of social interaction within constituted social institutions to consider the ways in which Shenzhen’s male sex workers’ social relations with each other, other actors in the industry, and the institutions with which they have contact through their work, all interact with one another. I present the social institution of male sex work as one in which the actors involved both constitute and are constituted by the social structures and relational dynamics in which they are situated. This interaction between the MSW and the institution of sex work is overlaid with a discussion of risk, here presented as a socially constructed phenomenon. In employing a social ecological conceptualisation of HIV risk throughout this thesis, I present the MSW as socially embedded actors, and while HIV risk specifically is not the focus of this chapter, I present the participants as negotiating a range of other risks generated through their work selling sex in Shenzhen.

In this chapter I address the second subsidiary research question: How is sex work organised and experienced by the MSW? I use empirical data to develop a detailed picture of the male sex industry in Shenzhen. The organisation of male prostitution is an under-researched topic globally (M Smith *et al.* 2011, M Smith *et al.* 2013), with few studies explicitly outlining men’s trajectories into this industry (examples include Leary’s work among street-based MSW in Australia (2007); Lorway’s (2009) work in India; and Kaye (2007) in the USA), the dynamics of this form of work for the men involved or how those involved in the sex industry negotiate their positions within it. In the Chinese context specifically, there have been even fewer studies of this type, although notable examples include Kong’s (2010; 2012) ethnographic work among MSW in Hong Kong and mainland China, in which he identifies both economic and cultural factors (consumerism and cosmopolitan desires) as being key drivers in the process of entry into sex work.

Male sex work is a stigmatised and risky occupation in Shenzhen, as elsewhere. Despite this, men enter into and remain in the sex industry. In order to understand this process, I will first explore how and why men become sex workers. The types of male sex work performed in Shenzhen can vary between different sex workers, different venues, and through time for the same sex worker. Differing work types are important in presenting different opportunities as well as risks for the men, but given the fluidity in type of work, I reject the venue type-based hierarchical classification of MSW commonly found in the literature (discussed in Scott 2005a:188-9). In discussing risks here I will focus on those risks mediated by the actors involved in the male sex industry, including dangerous clients, the role of *mami* [pimps] and the police, and the ways in which the MSW manage and negotiate these potential threats. “Involvement with sex work is fundamentally about involvement with people, and such involvement entails relational dynamics” (Leary *et al.* 2007:78), these social relations are therefore the lens through which I develop an understanding of the risks and opportunities that Shenzhen’s MSW face and negotiate, as well as the dynamics of working in this industry. I focus on the risks associated with stigma and discrimination, disclosure of work, the ways in which the MSW manage their identities, and HIV in the subsequent empirical chapters.

In the following vignette, I summarise the history of one of the interviewees:

Ajun [not his real name] is a 24 year old straight self-identified man from Henan province. He left home at the age of 16 as there was no work in his village. He moved first to Dalian, a city over 1000km to the north-east, where he found work in a karaoke bar, earning around £150 per month.

After three months, he started to look for other work online, and discovered that he could make more money by selling sex in a clubhouse being advertised in the city. The clubhouse *mami* [pimp] had sex with him on his first day to “try him out”, before introducing him to his first male client the same evening. As well as working for the *mami*, he also found clients on the internet. Some clients in Dalian persuaded him to take drugs (ketamine and methamphetamine) with them. He says that “it made it a bit easier” to sell sex to men.

Later that year, he moved to Tianjin, and then on to a city near Shanghai, selling sex in each place, finding clients either online or in saunas. He then heard from other sex workers that he could

make more money working in Shenzhen, and so in August 2008 he moved to the city. He was 20 years old, and had been selling sex for around three years. He spent the first year in Shenzhen working in a number of different bars earning around 5000rmb [£550] per month, before he was introduced by a friend to a clubhouse. The following year, he found work selling sex in a massage centre through a friend who was friends with the *mami* there, but business was bad, and so he became more reliant on clients who he met online. In May 2010, he was arrested and imprisoned for six months for drugs offences, having become addicted.

At the time of the interview, he had six regular clients, all from Hong Kong, providing around 80% of his income. He described feeling “not happy and not good” about having sex with men, but very happy about the money it provides. He had a girlfriend who thinks that he works as a waiter in a restaurant.

The world of male sex work is highly complex, with Xiaolong’s story highlighting just some of the interconnecting themes that play a part in daily lives. His is not only a story of working in a profession in order to access material wealth in the context of straitened circumstances, but also one of frequent movement between cities and places of work, changes in the types of clients he serves, drug use, and contact with the police. This brief vignette suggests that working as a sex worker is a risky business, in the sense that he is potentially exposed to the risk of arrest, violence from clients (and drug use) and HIV, and despite using drugs to cope with having sex with men, and later being incarcerated, he continues to sell sex. The following section explores the ways in which MSW talk about their trajectories into the sex industry, first by exploring the language used by MSW to describe the institution of male sex work.

## 4.2 ‘The Circle’

The term *tongzhi quan* [gay circle] has been identified in previous work among MSM in China (e.g. JX Liu *et al.* 2006, Chapman *et al.* 2009, Feng *et al.* 2010, H Li *et al.* 2010b). Analysing the phrase’s constituent parts, *tongzhi* means comrade(s), and is a term used widely in China among gay-identified men. It is an example of a term being appropriated by the gay community, which had previously been used as a general term of address for everyone during the pre-reform communist era. It has been identified as an appealing term as it lacks the criminal or medical connotations of *tongxinglian* [homosexual], and the connotations of *gay* [a direct appropriation of the

English word] as a foreign-influenced term (Choi *et al.* 2006). My findings suggest that the term *quanzi* [circle] is used beyond the *tongzhi* community to reference MSW as well. Membership of such a circle arguably involves defining oneself in both inclusive (alongside other MSW) and exclusory terms. Wei (2007) discusses the use of the term *quanli ren* (people in the circle) noting that it relates to activities rather than fixed personality traits, which might here be seen as a strategy used by people ‘inside the circle’ to maintain some degree of distance from the stigma associated with a non-normative sexual, gender and sex working identities.

R: Then I entered this *quanzi* [circle] for ten years after that.

I: 10 years in the gay *quanzi*? Or the money boy *quanzi*?

R: It was just the gay *quanzi* at first... it was [my boyfriend] who brought me into the MB [money boy] *quanzi*. I was working in the hotel when he brought me into it.

(Male, 21, Hunan Province)

In dividing his experience into two different circles, both temporally and descriptively, the informant hints that his gay and MSW identities are not coterminous. The idea of entering or being brought into a circle implies that processes are important in developing these identities. Another discusses what his friends’ responses were to him becoming a sex worker:

R: Not much, because we are all *tongzhi* [gay], it’s just a job. If you told a normal person then he definitely wouldn’t accept it. You can only tell friends in the *quanzi*.

(Male, 38, Hunan Province)

Again here, the interviewee uses the circle terminology to represent the MSM or MSW communities. As Choi *et al.* (2006) comment: “being in ‘the circle’ [has] the connotation of being in a secretive and closed circle” (*ibid.*:5). Perhaps in the case of Shenzhen’s MSW, this affords them some protection from the stigma of others in being involved in a marginalised industry.

#### 4.2.1 Why men enter the sex industry

Earlier work on the drivers for men entering sex work concentrates on the role of childhood abuse or emotional trauma or pathological processes, largely limited to European or American contexts (Cates 1989, West 1992, Savin-Williams 1994, Leary *et al.* 2007). Such claims have more recently been challenged, and replaced with more

nuanced understandings (Davies *et al.* 1997, Bimbi 2007, M Smith *et al.* 2013), with a shift towards a more rational decision-making position in framing men's entry into this work (Uy *et al.* 2004, M Smith *et al.* 2013). These more recent studies, in moving away from earlier pathological conceptualisations have presented motivations in which men either sell sex for economic survival or in which they sell sex as an exploration of their socio-sexual identity (e.g. J Browne *et al.* 1995, Marino *et al.* 2004, Kong 2005, Scott *et al.* 2005, Collins 2007). For the former position, a Shanghai study suggested there is evidence that migrant MSW's arrival in their destination is less well planned than non-sex working migrants, with only 22.2% of them having offers of employment before arriving, versus 64% of non-sex workers (N He *et al.* 2007). This implies that this group may have experienced greater levels of economic hardship on arrival, perhaps pressuring them to find alternative sources of income. Furthermore, MSW report less contact with their families than other migrants in several studies, implying less potential for economic and emotional support (N He *et al.* 2007, N He *et al.* 2007b) (factors that have been linked elsewhere to higher-risk sexual behaviours (Pronyk *et al.* 2008)). For the latter position, an ethnographic study in Hong Kong paints a different picture. The men sampled saw their bodies as a means to make money, and described having made conscious and rational choices to enter this type of work (Kong 2005). The men saw their work, in addition to offering them financial rewards, as a pleasurable, flexible, self-esteem-enhancing job, all of which might be unavailable in other jobs requiring as few qualifications. However, they also commented that the income is unstable, the work is emotionally and physically draining, it can threaten the worker's non-paid affective relationships and can be socially stigmatising (*ibid.*). While Kong (2010) suggests that entering the sex trade was a matter of personal choice for the men that he studied, it is arguable that he failed to fully acknowledge the structural factors that worked to make this a more compelling employment option than might have otherwise been the case. While these studies have explored the motivations expressed by MSW for entering into the sex industry in China (Kong 2010; 2012), in being able to quantitatively map the distribution of different motivations I develop a more comprehensive understanding of the relative distributions of factors involved in entry into sex work. Such an understanding is useful if the motivating factors are related to the types of sex work, and the risks, that these men are exposed to through their work; one Indian study

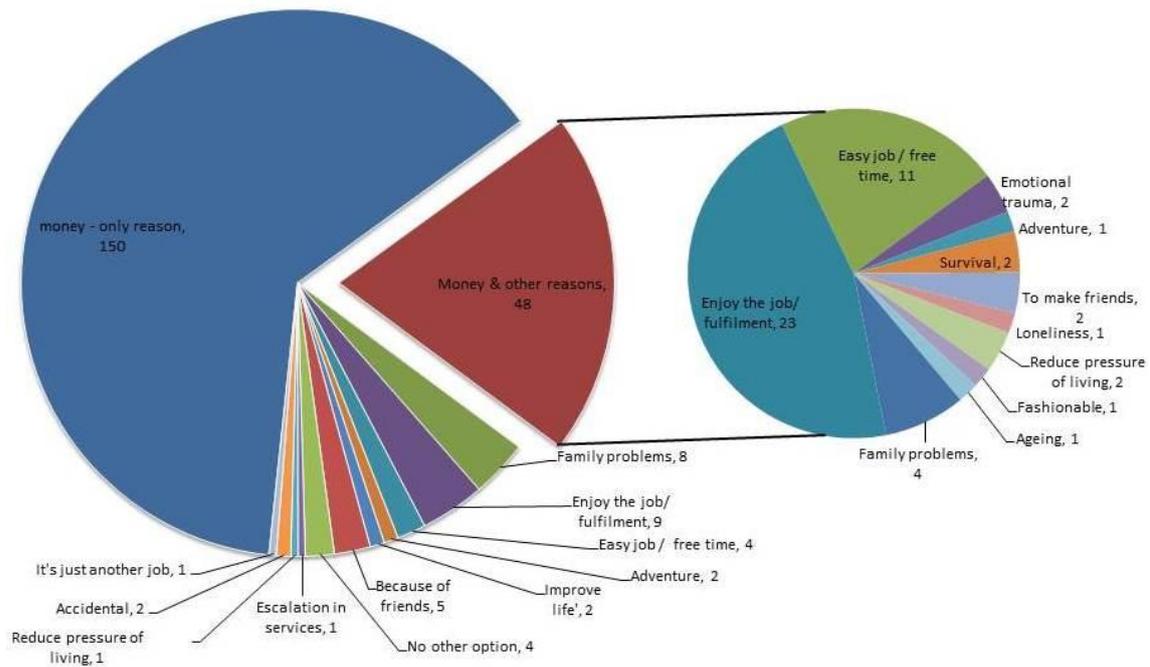
among FSW found that motivations for entering the sex industry were significantly associated with differential levels of HIV risk exposure (Saggurti *et al.* 2011).

In this study, financial explanations were by far the most common reasons given for entering sex work.<sup>32</sup> As Vanwesenbeeck (2013) comments: “where there is money, there is commercial sex” (ibid.:13). Indeed, four survey respondents used the idiom “*xiao pin bu xiao chang*”<sup>33</sup> [laugh at poverty, not at prostitution] when asked why they do this work – an example of the way they view their work in relation to the alternative option – poverty. However, the data suggest that money is not the sole driver of entry into sex work. Indeed, when money is discussed, it is often in connection with other affective or practical motivations. Verbatim responses to the survey regarding motivations for entering sex work were recorded. Of the 237 respondents who answered, 84 per cent said that financial reasons motivated their work, of which around one quarter mentioned additional non-financial reasons. Of the remaining 16% of responses, 15 gave unambiguous, positive and non-financially related reasons, such as enjoyment, adventure or because “the job is easy”. Meanwhile, there was some ambiguity in relation to how to categorise the remainder, with 6 alluding to familial financial problems, coded as ‘family problems’ or having ‘no other option’ (Figure 4-1). These results suggest that financial gain appears to be the biggest single explanation given by these men for pursuing a career as a sex worker. Desire for an increased income may be due to a range of factors, and often also coincides with other reasons for doing this work.

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<sup>32</sup> The question asked: “what would you say is your main reason for doing this work?”, with responses noted verbatim by the interviewer.

<sup>33</sup> This is a Chinese idiom: 笑貧不笑娼, meaning that it is better to get ahead in the world despite one’s scruples than to suffer poverty. Its literal meaning here is to despise/ laugh at poverty, not prostitution.



**Figure 4-1 Percentage distribution of reasons for entering sex work, using survey data. Large pie chart representing single reason given, the smaller one showing financial and other motivations (n=251)**

The semi-structured interviews explored this issue in more detail. Financial hardship and desiring a larger disposable income emerged as two different, but not necessarily mutually exclusive, aspects of this theme. Structural factors can be seen to be playing a role in either case, either through limitations in opportunities and familial poverty in the former, or through desires to partake in China’s consumerist culture in the latter. These echo the migration findings from Chapter 3, and highlight the mutuality between many of these men’s motivations for both migrating and beginning work in the sex industry, in the context of China’s modernisation and continued inequalities.

Financial reasons were found to be a key motivator for beginning sex work among the in-depth interviewees; none of the interviewees discussed this topic without reference to financial gain in some way:

- I: Have you ever had a relationship with clients? Dating?
- R: No. Never. Never thought about it.
- I: Oh, why?
- R: I am just here for the money.

(Male, 23, Henan Province)

Money is a key driver of entry and continuation in this work. It was discussed in the interviews both in terms of personal reasons for entering sex work, and as a stimulus for others:

- R: I brought many of my colleagues back in the massage place into the business.  
I: Why did they join you?  
R: Because of the high salary.  
I: And why did you introduce them?  
R: They were my foot masseur friends. People that I get along with.  
(Male, 22, Jiangxi Province)

This quote also highlights the importance of friend networks in introducing people to the business, here the interviewee being the connection between the sex industry and his social contacts. Some of the interviewees gave a more nuanced explanation for the role of money in their career choice, here in the context of financial difficulties:

- I: How did you end up being a *xiaodi* [little brother]?  
R: Because my family needed money... I really needed money, then I searched the Internet. This one seemed to be easy money... So I came here directly.  
(Male, 22, Shandong Province)

- R: [Many MSWs] need to feed their families... Quite a few of us are married and have kids. Since the kids need to go to school, so the expenses in the family rely on them. Normal jobs in Shenzhen cannot [allow me to] afford those things.  
(Male, 27, Shandong Province)

- I: So why did you get this job?  
R: It's quick cash... Because of family.  
I: Were there problems in Dalian?  
R: Yeah ... Pretty serious money problems.  
(Male, 23, Liaoning Province)

The interviewees describe how being in financial difficulties, and having responsibilities to support family members through their work acted as major drivers for selling sex. The filial expectations on children in China include providing monetary support to parents, particularly for more traditional, rural families (Silverstein *et al.* 2006). Another interviewee comments:

- R: I grew up in the farms. If I have more income I can help my family out. Also as I grow old I would need money for more things.

Having savings is good... After all people in the business usually don't have a qualification or specialty, and we can't find work elsewhere, that's why we are doing this. If I have some savings, I have a basis for the future. I don't earn money for big spending. Everyone is different.

(Male, 21, Hunan Province)

Filial duties, alongside a desire for greater personal opportunities can intersect with sex work in the Chinese context, and how the money gained though selling sex provides a route out of poverty or inequalities of opportunity. Despite increasing potential earnings though, sex work remains stigmatised:

I: So how you do see this job? How do you feel the public see this job as a *xiaodi* [little brother]?

R: How should I put this, this society *xiao pin bu xiao chang* [laughs at poverty not at prostitution]... it's a job that makes money after all like everybody else, it doesn't matter if you are selling or doing heavy lifting, it's all for making money. Like me I'm quite calm, looking at this job... I don't look down on this occupation.

I: Do friends know what do you do?

R: No, of course not. We don't normally say this, this occupation except from myself and people who work in the same field I won't tell anyone. It feels uncomfortable. They [friends] don't understand. It's like normally people from the 70s or 80s, they would think it's normal between men and women. They don't understand, they feel men and men [being together] is more for perverted guys... So they will say, how should I put this, like it feels this industry is kind of not mainstream... it's more detached from human nature, more detached.

(Male, 22, Hunan Province)

The dialogue above highlights one of the key tensions in working selling sex; this interviewee frames prostitution as considered preferable to poverty, but at the same time he recognises that his work is highly stigmatised and not something he could talk about to people outside of the industry. This stigma comes both from the nature of the work, and because male sex work is frequently associated with homosexuality, a theme I explore in detail in the next chapter. It is unclear from this interview the degree to which he has internalised the stigma associated with this industry, although his mention of the discomfort of talking about his work to friends hints at least at an awareness of outsiders' views.

However, the desire to make more money is not always framed in terms of avoiding poverty. Some of the respondents also discussed their desires to own expensive goods, or have greater disposable incomes.

I: And so you on average, generally in a month how much do you earn?

R: On average 10 000 *kuai* [RMB – equivalent to around £1000] roughly a month, on average doing about 10 000 *kuai* or so. But still is or isn't good, spending a lot, every month having to spend a few thousand *kuai*... ..In a month you need to have 2 or 3000 for food money, if you count it together, then I spend 3 or 4 thousand a month

I: ...what kind of money do you need?

R: Internet café, bars, like we go to saunas, belong to them to have fun, shopping, you buy some clothes, so I'm saying that every month you need a good few thousand *kuai*, if you earn a lot, you also spend a lot, if you go to work and earn 2000 *kuai* or maybe you earn 2500, also deposit 2000, and then spend 500. Before, when I still went to work, in a month I would spend 300 *kuai*.

(Male, 25, Heilongjiang Province)

While his work brings in substantially larger amounts of money than he could otherwise earn, he also now spends much more money than before. This ability to enter a more consumerist, cosmopolitan world through sex work raises interesting questions about the role that modern consumerism might play in motivating people towards work selling sex, and again highlights an area of cross-over with the processes involved in rural-urban migration, and the choice of Shenzhen as a target for finding work.

#### 4.2.2 Killing two birds with one stone?

Echoing the survey data, the financial rewards of selling sex were by no means the only reasons for doing so:

I: So why did you want to join this [work]?

R: It's probably because I had this inclination, that's probably it ...Yeah, it's probably because I have, since being little, had feelings towards men... But it happened in 2008. I was formally inside this circle. Before when I had never entered into this circle, I was together with friends, when I was sleeping at night, at that time it was like that.

I: If you could choose again, would you be a *xiaodi* [little brother] again?

R: Yeah. I would do it again... One is that you can make money, two is that originally I liked men, there are times when you can play

with ones who you like, and then afterwards they give you money. You can also play with ones who you like, for example, I really like him, he buys sex from me, *aiya!* [exclamation] [...] *yi ju liang de* [I can kill two birds with one stone].

(Male, 25, Heilongjiang Province)

The interviewee discussed ‘formally’ entering the circle. This implies that he saw starting to sell sex as a transition from a previous state, and raises questions about how the MSW see themselves in their role as *xiaodi*. Sex worker identity is examined in more detail in the next chapter. The interviewee also frames his work as fulfilling two of his desires. This highlights an intersection between being able to make a good living and being able to have sex with people he likes, also noted by Kong (2010) as being one of the key benefits of selling sex discussed by some of his interviewees. This double benefit, described by the respondent as ‘killing two birds with one stone’ appeared several times in the interviews:

R: I didn’t plan to do this [work]. I am just having a temporary pursuit of that kind of night life. I want excitement and experience, and also some money to spend.

(Male, 22, Sichuan Province)

A picture emerges here of MSW being able to combine making a living with sexual enjoyment. This could be interpreted as an employment of tactics in which they are able to benefit in multiple ways from their work. However, other interviewees ascribed their reasons for selling sex to less positive experiences:

R: I had doubts about it. I wanted to try [selling sex] because there was more money in it. After all it is reality and this job is good money. I was worried about what my family, friends and colleagues would think. I had my doubts and I considered a lot of things. But then I thought, that *BFu* [boyfriend] was out of my life. I found him sleeping with someone that time when I went to his place on a day off, so I asked for a break-up. The guy on the bed was an *MB* [money boy], and I thought, if he could buy sex, why couldn’t I sell?

I: So if you hadn’t broken up, would you become an *MB*?

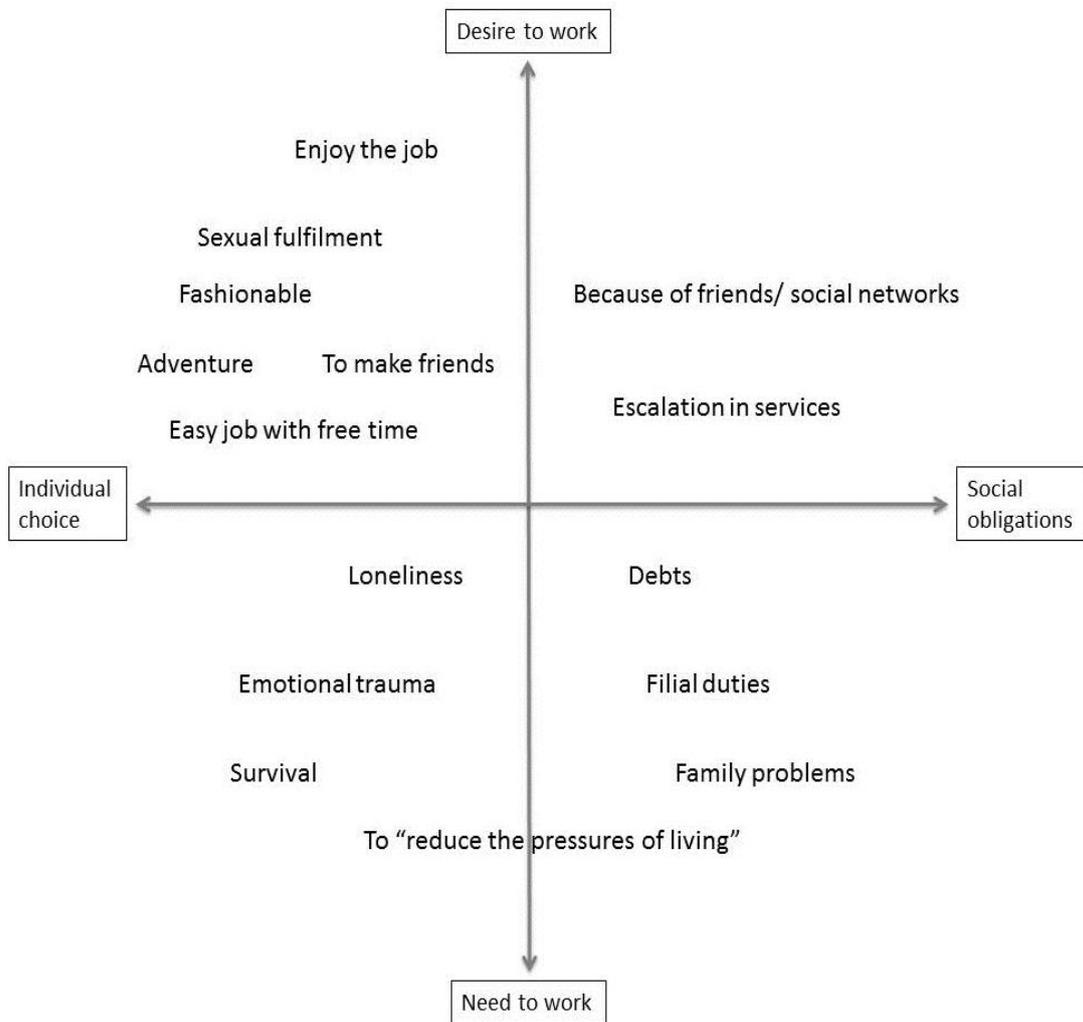
R: No. Definitely no... I didn’t know there was such a *quanzi* [circle]. And I wouldn’t have gone online to look for info if I hadn’t broken up ...when I broke up with him, I felt down... So I went online, and met this owner of the club... Then he gave me this concept: Since there isn’t real love in this *quanzi* [circle] anyway, why not become a money boy, earn some money, meet some friends, meet some men. And it also increased my income... How can I put this,

I want to show that if he [my ex-boyfriend] can have someone, so can I. He can have many, so can I. He pays for them; people pay me... That's what I thought. ... I just want him to know I am doing this. I didn't lead him to think it means that our relationship is salvageable... I just wanted him to know I can have many men without him in my life... I can get more by losing him, that's what I want to show him.

(Male, 21, Hunan Province)

The respondent discusses several motivations for entering the MSW circle. The opportunity to earn a higher income was a key driver for him to do this work, but he goes on to describe that had it not been for breaking up with his boyfriend, he would never have started to do this work. Emotional trauma resulting from the breakup of a relationship was in his case, a driver of his entry into the MB circle, alongside the economic benefits of the work. When probed about the mechanisms through which the relationship breakup had its effect, the respondent mentions being able to have sex without emotional attachment through this work, and hints at exacting revenge on his ex-boyfriend. He highlights how being paid for sex sits in contrast to his ex-boyfriend paying for sex and frames this as a source of empowerment. It also introduces a theme that I will explore in the next section around the role that the internet plays in providing information about the circle. These analyses led to my developing a framework to categorise the different emergent themes (Figure 4-2).

Representations of reasons for entry into sex work



**Figure 4-2 Framework of reasons for entering the sex industry**

I suggest that the different motivators for sex work can be conceptualised along two dimensions. The first is between a need and desire to work, and the second between choosing sex work for individual or personal reasons versus social obligations that necessitate sex work. These categories are clearly not mutually exclusive; indeed some of the participants’ representations of their work draw on several different areas. Nevertheless, this framework helps in understanding how different influences might be reflected in the ways that the MSW talk about their work.

Financial gain frequently intersects with other motivators, and it is clear that some of the men in the sample derived more enjoyment from their work than others, often outlined in terms of the degree of agency they expressed in choosing and continuing with this work. It seems likely that someone who answers: “it is fun, I can go to many

places and know many other MB's" or "for money, for sex, fulfilling my psychological excitement" is likely to enjoy more control over their work than someone who is in debt and needs money for their survival or for their family. We might therefore expect MSWs who present their motivations for sex work in terms of obligations and needs to be less able to exert agency over their circumstances than those for whom sex work is seen as an opportunity to explore sexual identity, for example. What is clear, though, is that no single motivating factor applies to all of the participants, and it seems likely that 'laughing at poverty, not prostitution' illuminates just one viewpoint. Sex work can be seen as a creative response to the circumstances in which these men find themselves, either those of financial difficulties, a desire to have access to consumer goods, for sexual fulfilment, or for other affective reasons.

#### 4.2.3 Trajectories into the circle

I next turn to analysing the processes and mechanisms through which such involvement in selling sex occurs. As Smith and colleagues (2013) comment: "One cannot enter sex work until one knows about (a) the possibility of doing so and (b) the means of entry" (ibid.:4). There is also evidence that the type of sex work engaged in by the men depends to some extent on how they are introduced to the industry, with implications for the types of risks that they subsequently face.

While some of the men in the sample had started selling sex before arriving in Shenzhen, others had moved to the city, and then begun to work in the sex industry. Nevertheless, for both groups, one major emergent theme was the role played by social networks in introducing them to sex work. Friends, former colleagues (for example from non-sex selling massage parlours), and other social contacts frequently appear to have played a significant role in both making these men aware of this circle, and then helping them to find work in the industry.

Social networks and *guanxi* [social capital] are central in both traditional Chinese society (Fei *et al.* 1992) and in the contemporary context (Jin *et al.* 2006) of a communist central state<sup>34</sup>, in which social favours are an essential part of accessing

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<sup>34</sup> *Guanxi* is similar to the concept of *blat* in the Soviet Union, in which social networks were used to gain access to limited resources in the centralised economy. While China's system of *guanxi* is not totally coterminous with *blat*, they nevertheless are both identified as being informal systems of deal-

advantages in an otherwise centrally-controlled system. It is therefore unsurprising that such networks play some part in providing access to a potentially lucrative, but illegal industry.

I: How did you switch from working in factories to being a masseur?

R: I left the factory for a few months and, one of my cousins is a masseuse, so she brought me into the business

I: Your first job was in a regular massage house?

R: Yeah.

I: You were saying, how do you know about the ‘special’ massage services [i.e. sex services]? You mentioned you were doing the regular massage services.

R: Well when you work there, you come across clients like that. And you hear about those kinds of services.

(Male, 27, Hunan Province)

Massage acts as a gateway into the sex industry for many of the men in the study, and those working in massage parlours, even when not offering sex services, are often aware of, or connected to other venues that do:

I: Why did you come to Shenzhen?

R: I don’t know... a *laoxiang* [someone from my hometown] brought me here... He is here doing massage, he’s experienced.

I: Oh, he is a masseur?

R: Yeah.

I: So he brought you there to start as a waiter in a sauna?

R: Yeah.

(Male, 22, Jiangxi Province)

The importance of social networks in finding work in the sex industry is highlighted here, (as elsewhere (Leary *et al.* 2007)) as being central to the MSW’s experiences. This was not, however, the sole process by which these men started to work selling sex. Several men describe indirectly entering the circle, or a gradual increase in the number and range of services that they provided in their work (often originally in massage parlours or working as waiters in bars), which I have termed here an ‘escalation in services’.

I: How did you get this job at [name of clubhouse]?

R: A friend made an introduction ... At the time I was thinking since I quit already and was ready for a new job, and there weren’t any good ones and he introduced me to come and work here. Because

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making, in access to goods, services and favours, based on mutual reciprocity through social networks (Ledeneva 2008).

he was working in the same restaurant as me, and I was working there too, we were both waiters, and we go out and have fun together and had a good time, I considered him that sort of friend.

I: ... Oh, what did he say when he introduce you to work for [name of clubhouse]? What did he say you would have to do?

R: It was a little vague in the beginning. Afterwards I just, how should I put it, thought might as well give it a try, it was almost September, and it had been more than half a year. And I can't make much money somewhere else anyway, so I came as a gamble. I treat it like gambling anyway

I: Oh, did you know you would have to give massages?

R: I knew the job was to give massages.

I: Did you know if you were going to serve male or female customers?

R: I knew, ah.

I: And what else were you told?

R: Nothing, I didn't know about the specific service details... This I learnt after I was in contact [started working].

(Male, 22, Hunan Province)

Here we can see that the trajectory into selling sex started with an introduction from a member of the MSW's social network. His initial employment was as a masseur, with no information given about the specific sexual services that would also be required until he had started working there. Being initiated to the circle by contacts then appears as a common theme in introducing the prospective MSW to this otherwise hidden work.

I: So [your friends] introduced you to the male escort business, as a masseur, or did you work with MBs immediately?

R: As a masseur.

I: What kind of service did you provide? Did you serve males or females?

R: Both. I did leg massages.

I: ...Was it massages only?

R: ...Yes, but I did come across clients who wanted more. A few of them. I worked for two months and I met two, who wanted *nanhaizi anmo* [massages from boys]. The clients just asked for it... they talked to the manager.

(Male, 27, Hunan Province)

Again, an escalation in services occurred for this informant, who began by only doing leg massages for clients, before gradually broadening the types of services he was willing to provide. There is no suggestion of these MSW being compelled to start selling sex in addition to providing massage, but rather the implication that with time they were exposed to different situations or demands from clients and managers

which meant that they began to sell sexual services. This hints at a process of socialisation, in which providing sex services becomes normalised for some of these men through time, and gradual exposure to situations in which it is demanded by clients.

In addition to social networks and *guanxixue*, the role that the internet played in introducing men to selling sex featured in several of their narratives:

- I: How did you land this job?  
R: On the Internet. I wanted a job, so I looked it up in the Internet. Then I saw this *gongguan* [public relations] job and I was curious. I asked about it and it seemed easy. Short working hours. Nightshifts though. And the salary seems high, so I wanted to try.  
I: So you found the ad online. What was the job description?  
R: They just wrote accompanying clients for drinks and dice games. Sometimes there will also be other duties.  
I: Does that mean sex services?  
R: Yes, this refers to sexual services... They wrote it there.  
(Male, 21, Guangdong Province)

The high salary and flexible hours of the “public relations” job that this interviewee describes made it an appealing choice for him when he was searching online for work. Overall, most men introduced to the sex industry by friends or through an escalation in the services they provide start work in venues such as bars, saunas, clubhouses and massage centres. From the interview sample, non-venue based (primarily freelance and street or park-based) work tends to be entered into later in the sex work career once a man has greater experience.

A major theme that has emerged is the role that the internet and social networks play in introducing these men to selling sex, neither of which has been explored in depth in previous research. The importance of social networks in the male sex industry however extends beyond simply introducing men to the work. These networks are also important for friendships in the circle, providing support amongst people who cannot talk to those outside the circle about their work. Sex work is not a risk-free profession however, with the types and extent of the institutional risks that the MSW are exposed to varying by the type of sex work they engage in.

### 4.3 Organisation of male sex work

In this chapter, I have already highlighted the significant role that financial gain has in motivating these men to sell sex. The risk of having insufficient income is therefore a significant factor, although not the only one. Male sex workers are continuously engaged in a process of risk management, and this process is inseparable from their social worlds, and specifically the sex industry of which they are a part. Their motivations for selling sex, alongside their place of work, type of clients and levels of experience all contribute to their understanding of, exposure to, and ability to cope with, a range of risks in their work. This section explores the dynamic nature of sex work in terms of risks and opportunities, embedding these risks within the social context of the industry. In considering the organisation of the male sex industry, many previous studies have focussed on venues, or places of work, as being the key categories by which male sex workers might be classified.

The types of venues in which the men look for clients, and/ or provide sexual services seem likely to be significant, as different environments have differential levels of exposure to different categories of risk. The venue type also has some bearing on the types of clients that the MSW are likely to be serving. Furthermore, some sex work environments are managed by *mami* [pimps], while in others, MSW work alone or alongside other sex workers. However, as Scott (2003:188-96) comments, sex worker ‘typologies’ (i.e. street-based, kept boy, etc.), have in the past usually been classified according to workplace, which has then mapped onto normalising scales of sexuality and cultural constructs of masculinity. I seek here to challenge this normalising position, by taking a more nuanced perspective on the experiences of the MSW. To do this, I will consider the places where they work only as a broad rubric for understanding the risks to which they are exposed, which fundamentally I understand as being mediated or created by other actors and institutions. By shifting the focus from *places* to the relations between *people*, I argue that concepts of risk (of arrest, of violence, robbery, drugs use, etc. but also the risk of not having enough clients or income), can be much better understood. Those risks can then be seen as the product of social interactions and structural-level effects (for example, the stigmatised status of sex workers), and therefore potentially negotiable, subject to the relations and skills that the MSW have in the sex industry. The following section outlines the findings

around place of work, highlighting the complexity found in the MSW community in Shenzhen, which is then followed by a more nuanced representation of the sex industry as being made up not only of places, but also social relations, and how these elements intersect with a range of risks that the MSW face.

#### 4.4 Work places

The results show that the MSW in Shenzhen frequently report working in multiple venues, both through time and at any one time, with high levels of mobility between venues of the same general type, and different types. This challenges us to take a more dynamic view of their work, and implicitly moves our view of the sex industry away from a reductionist position in which MSW are characterised solely by the (single) venue in which they currently work, as previous studies among MSW in China have tended to do (e.g. Lau *et al.* 2009a, Cai *et al.* 2007; 2009, Shusen Liu *et al.* 2012b). Furthermore, by acknowledging that MSW occupy multiple locations in the sex industry, we begin to see that the structure of the industry and the experiences of the MSW in it are more amorphous than other, usually quantitative work might suggest. On the one hand, working in multiple venues can be seen as a tactic for increasing earning potential, through contact with a wider group of clients. On the other though, it may be increasing the range of risks to which the MSW are exposed, as different places of sex work carry different levels of exposure to the police, difficult clients, or *mami*.

Through time, there is evidence that the MSW's opportunities to make money may decrease. This is what Escoffier (2007), building on the work of Cressey (1932), has termed the 'retrogressive dynamic', meaning that the longer a man works in the sex industry, the less he will be paid, and the lower the status of his work venue (Escoffier 2007:174). There is evidence for this process also occurring in Shenzhen, although the findings here suggest a more complex relationship between time in the industry and worker 'value', with high rates of mobility and employment in multiple venues, alongside the development of skills<sup>35</sup> being key ways that MSW can actively negate this process of depreciation.

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<sup>35</sup> Skills were discussed in several in-depth interviews as being important in retaining earning potential as a sex worker, principally as they encourage clients to return. Such skills included being able to provide professional massages alongside sex services, as well as less tangible skills that would develop

Previous studies of male sex workers in Shenzhen have identified the following venues or typologies of male sex work: Saunas, bars and public parks (H Liu *et al.* 2009b); bars, brothels (clubhouses in this thesis), saunas and ‘other’ (Lau *et al.* 2009a); bars, brothels and massage parlours (Shusen Liu *et al.* 2012b; 2012c); bars, brothels, ‘recreational centres’, parks, saunas (Zhao *et al.* 2012). Through discussions with the CBO, and ethnographic mapping, it became evident that previous studies had failed to consider private escorts either working through the internet or with regular clients, meaning that the MSW working in those venues have been under-sampled, or entirely missed out from previous research. Understanding the different characteristics of the full range of Shenzhen’s sex work environments allows a more comprehensive view of the risks to which different MSW are exposed, as well as the range of ways in which they negotiate those risks. I wish to emphasise that the characteristics of different venues are not necessarily intrinsic to those places, but rather are the product of the social relations between the actors involved. Equally, MSW working in different places are not categorisable simply by their place of work, given that there is evidence that they work in multiple venues both over time and simultaneously. The risks associated with sex work for these men similarly are the product of interactions between place and the other actors involved, alongside the individual behaviours of the MSW.

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with increased time working in the sex industry. These might include being particularly sensitive and attentive to clients’ sexual desires, ensuring that returning clients’ needs were anticipated, etc.

**Table 4-1 Characteristics of different MSW venues**

Type	Place of work/ client recruitment	Estimated number of sites in Shenzhen	Number of MSW per site	Presence of a <i>Mami</i> [pimp]	Crossover with other venue types?	Type of clients	Visibility of work	Level of exposure to the police
Venue-based	Clubhouses [brothels]	42	3 to 100	Yes	Some clubhouses provide MSW to bars. Some clubhouses also work solely as 'virtual clubhouses', online	Both MSM and female clients. Majority are male. May be regulars or one-offs	Low	Medium
	Saunas	3	unknown	No	Freelance MSW may also use saunas as places to find clients	MSM	Medium - not obvious who is selling sex in saunas, but saunas are nevertheless relatively visible, public spaces	Medium
	Bars	5	35 to 70	Yes	See clubhouses, above	Majority are male, but female clients are not unusual.	High	High
	Massage Parlours	4	40 to 70	Yes	Some of the MSW working in massage parlours also work freelance	Both MSM and female clients. Some massage parlours cater exclusively to male clients.	Medium	Medium
Non-venue based	Internet	n/a	over 50	Yes (for online clubhouses), no otherwise	May be websites for clubhouses, or private, freelance escorts advertising their services	Any, depending on each sex worker/ clubhouse's site	Low - can protect identity using photoshopped photos, etc.	Low
	Private Escort	n/a	unknown	No		Anecdotally mostly gay men	Very low - tend to work for a small number of regular clients	Very Low
	Street/ Park	2	4 to 15	No	Many trans and male sex workers in parks also advertise online	Mostly heterosexual male clients in parks (for trans sex workers); Gay/Bi-identified men (for MSW)	Very high	Very high

Survey respondents were able to answer with more than one venue type, as discussions with the MSW CBO before starting data collection suggested that many of the men in the city worked in multiple areas of the sex industry simultaneously (Table 4-2). While around three fifths listed only one type, there was nevertheless a sizable minority working in multiple venues. None of the participants reported working in more than three venues at the time of interview. This finding suggests that previous research has tended to oversimplify the structure of the industry.

**Table 4-2 Distribution of respondents by venue type and number (n=251)**

		Number	Percent
Single venue	Street	5	2.0
	Clubhouse	55	21.9
	Saunas	4	1.6
	Bars	33	13.2
	Massage parlour	25	10.0
	Internet	19	7.6
	Private escort	1	0.4
	Other	12	4.8
<b>Total for single venue</b>		<b>154</b>	<b>61.4</b>
Double venue	Street, bars	1	0.4
	Street, internet	2	0.8
	Bars, internet	4	1.56
	Other, internet	1	0.4
	Clubhouse, saunas	4	1.6
	Clubhouse, bars	6	2.3
	Clubhouse, internet	26	10.4
	Clubhouse, other	1	0.4
	Private escort, internet	4	1.6
	Massage parlour, street	1	0.4
	Massage parlour, saunas	5	2.0
	Massage parlour, bars	1	0.4
	Massage parlour, internet	4	1.6
	Saunas, bars	1	0.4
	Saunas, internet	1	0.4
Clubhouse, massage parlour	4	1.6	
<b>Total for double venue</b>		<b>66</b>	<b>26.3</b>
Triple venue	Street, clubhouse, internet	1	0.4
	Massage parlour, clubhouse, private escort,	5	2.0
	Clubhouse, private escort, saunas	2	0.8
	Internet, clubhouse, private escort,	3	1.2
	Saunas, clubhouse, massage parlour,	2	0.8
	Bars, clubhouse, massage parlour	1	0.4
	Clubhouse, massage parlour, internet	3	1.2
	Private escort, massage parlour, internet	1	0.4
	Private escort, bars, internet	1	0.4
	Clubhouse, bars, internet	6	2.4
	Clubhouse, bars, other	1	0.4
	Clubhouse, saunas, bars	3	1.2
	Clubhouse, saunas, internet	2	0.8
<b>Total for triple venue</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>12.4</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>251</b>	<b>100</b>

A complex picture emerges of the types of venues in which the MSW are currently employed. The most common places of work are clubhouses, with significant numbers also in other venues such as massage centres and saunas, while many of the MSW say that they work via the internet. There is significant variety in both the places of work, and possible workplace combinations, showing a highly diversified landscape of work places and types.

#### 4.5 People in the industry

The empirical findings suggest that a more comprehensive conceptualisation of Shenzhen’s male sex industry is required, involving interactions between actors, institutions *and* places. The risks to which the MSW are exposed are the product of those interactions (Bloor *et al.* 1993), and their social networks and capital can all play a part in mediating those risks. The key actors that emerged as playing a role in the industry were: other sex workers (their role in introducing others to the work discussed previously); *mami* [pimps]; clients; and the police. These key actors will be examined in turn.

Exploring how contact with different people might shape the MSW’s experiences and feelings of safety, the participants were asked how safe they feel selling sex (Figure 4-3).

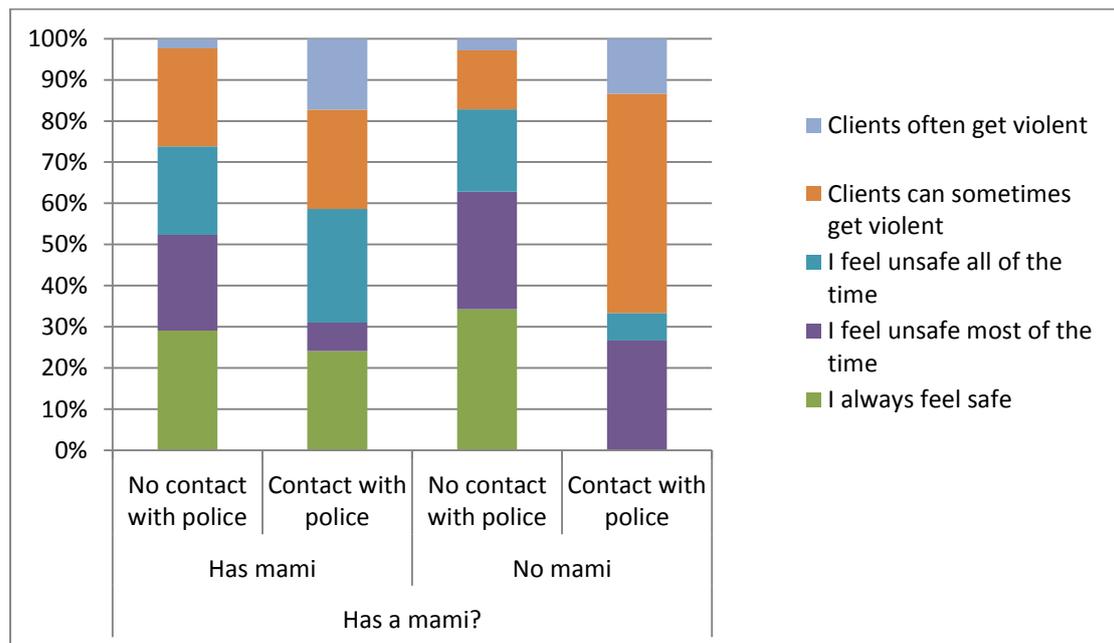


Figure 4-3 Feelings of safety, categorised by contact with police and presence of *mami*.

The findings suggest that the picture is complex, with the biggest difference in feelings of safety being between MSW who have had no contact with the police in the previous 12 months and who work in a venue with a *mami* [pimp], and those who have had contact with the police and who do not have a *mami*. In particular, no one in the latter group said that they feel safe all of the time. On the basis of quantitative data alone it is difficult to understand what some of the processes here might be and these findings hint that the role of *mami* and other actors such as the police appear playing a substantial role in the participants' representations of their feelings of safety, and thus their experiences working selling sex.

#### 4.5.1 Mami

The roles of *mami*<sup>36</sup> [pimps] in Shenzhen's male sex industry are complex. They are represented by many of the interviewees as a useful, sometimes essential part of their work, finding clients and advertising their services. Their centrality to the industry though places them in a position of power in relation to their 'boys'; they act as gatekeepers and frequently make demands of the MSW in order to ensure a good supply of clients.

Only those MSW working in certain organised venues reported having a *mami*. In these venues, the *mami* work to find clients and promote their MSW, and often handle the exchange of money. The MSW may also be provided with accommodation (in the form of dorms or shared living space) as part of their work. Describing the benefits of working in a venue with a "good" *mami*, one MSW said:

R: Some [clubhouses] are stricter, with actual enforcement on rules and punctuality. Some are less strict... shops with stricter management usually have more clients... Better management means better service, and that means good business.

(Male, 27, Hunan Province)

Here the interviewee is directly linking the level of venue management with the impression that this gives to clients, who are then more likely to return, which benefits the workers. Thus the *mami*'s role is seen in quite disciplinary terms by this

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<sup>36</sup> The term *mami*, a transliteration of 'mummy', refers to the men who manage sex worker's clients, venues and work. The use of this gendered, and maternal word implies a caring and protective role, in which the 'boys' are looked after by the *mami*, something absent from the connotations of the word 'pimp', which is perhaps the closest functional equivalent in English.

interviewee. Another describes what he would like to get from a well-managed clubhouse:

- R: I want it to be like a family, I want him to take care of us like a parent. To care about our wellbeing, our accommodation, our catering, that would be best. We are all people, we are working together, that's why he's called the *mami*. We help him to earn money and he should be nice to us, and more forgiving.  
(Male, 38, Hunan Province)

The desire for a parent figure, here directly suggested by the informant in highlighting the terminology used to refer to pimps in the circle, implies a caring role, one that the MSW feel they deserve since they are bringing in the money to the clubhouse. Others discuss *mami* in a different role, as teachers:

- R: There's training... near arrival everyone has training. It's to teach you how to do massage... there is also [training] in how to serve clients, but they don't teach these things to you very patiently, you have to be able to [do it] by yourself.  
(Male, 38, Jilin Province)

The notion of *mami* offering training to the MSW they manage also extends to giving information about the clients:

- R: Some bosses are nice, they would tell you what the clients like, what you should pay attention to, or how to get more tips from the clients  
(Male, 27, Shandong Province)

The interviewee is ascribing positive attributes to *mami*, who aim to improve the service that their clients are receiving from their workers. Of course, ensuring a good reputation among the clients also has direct benefits for the *mami*'s income, although this was not explicitly mentioned by any of the MSW.

Nevertheless there were multiple examples in the interviews where the respondents described problems with these relationships. In many cases, the *mami* act as gatekeepers, controlling access to clients. This puts them in a position of power relative to the sex workers:

- R: If you keep a good relationship with the *mami*, like giving him money, buying him food and gifts, he would promote you – it

- happens everywhere.
- I: What do *xiaodi* [little brothers] do to maintain a good relationship with the management?
- R: Lots. Food, gifts, *hongbao*<sup>37</sup> [money], sex, all kinds. It happens everywhere, no management is clean. This is how it works here. You don't understand it here, but this is how China works.  
(Male, 38, Hunan Province)

This position of power relative to the sex workers, in terms of finding clients and managing the clubhouses, means that *mami* are able to extract benefits from their workers, in addition to the proportion of pay that they receive.

- R: The *mami* all probably want to have fun with them, they want to play with every *zai* [boy]
- I: If the *xiaodi* [little brother] refuses, would the *mami* be unhappy and refuse to help the boy?
- R: ...There would be consequences. But if you want to stay long here, you have to learn the rules. If you want to stay long here, you can't reject him. If you do, he won't refer clients to you.  
(Male, 23, Henan Province)

- I: So, apart from *hongbao* are there other ways to get along with him [the *mami*]?
- R: Sleeping with him... 90% of us have slept with him.
- I: How many times have you slept with him?
- R: Once... After that we had more newcomers, so he only slept with newcomers... when our *mami* started, he didn't use condoms... but now he uses them too.  
(Male, 22, Shandong Province)

Respondents discuss how being able to work in the *mami*'s clubhouse, and being referred clients requires playing by their rules. While there is no discussion of forced sex, there is clearly an implicit expectation that MSW should have sex with their *mami* if they want to succeed. In the second quote, the interviewee comments that the *mami* previously had not used condoms. The power differentials between the MSW and *mami* suggest that they may be unable to negotiate condom use effectively in these circumstances, and that in joining a clubhouse under the management of a *mami*, the MSW have to relinquish some control in order to be provided with clients.

- R: You have to make a living. If you don't do 0 [receptive anal sex], the proprietor won't refer clients to you... I wouldn't say they

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<sup>37</sup> *Hongbao* [lit. red packets] – traditionally, money is put in red envelopes or packets when given as a gift or tip.

enjoy it. It's all about the money... Every money boy is in it for the money. We don't really like our clients. I think it's all faked.  
(Male, 22, Jiangxi Province)

The above quote highlights the *mami*'s power in gatekeeping the clients. This MSW describes having to provide particular services in order to ensure that the *mami* refers customers to him, regardless of his feelings about the work.

There is evidence that some *mami* limit the freedoms of the MSWs' movements:

R: Then the clients all go home, there was no business, there wasn't anything, they wouldn't let you out, to go out you had to request leave, monitoring, 24 hour monitoring, monitoring when you slept, they monitored everything, so those of us engaging in prostitution there called it the women's prison; it resembled a prison.  
(Male, 25, Heilongjiang Province)

Given that they act as the referrers for clients, and hence play a central role in determining the MSW's incomes, it appears that *mami* have considerable leverage to demand gifts and sex, and control the lives of the men working for them. The power dynamics between *mami* and their 'boys' also on occasion challenged me as a researcher:

I found it difficult to deal with something today in the [organisation name] office. The youngest looking MB (I think he's maybe 18?), who I recognise from doing the surveys, maybe in the massage centre? The *mami* is obviously very keen on him, constantly touching him and trying to kiss him. The young guy really doesn't look happy about it and keeps trying to avoid his creeping hands. I felt really uncomfortable seeing this. Should I intervene? I don't feel I could – it would be seen as completely inappropriate, and none of my business, but it feels like the *mami* is really abusing his position. Weird that I want to stop this when I am very aware that clients can be much worse than this.  
(Field notes, 12 October 2011).

As an observer, I found witnessing the relative powerlessness of the MSW in relation to the *mami* particularly difficult. In retrospect I am unsure if it was the blatant (ab)use of his power as the gatekeeper for the MSW, who had to keep him on-side, or the fact that he felt so comfortable in his position to do this in front of me and others, knowing that he would not be challenged.

There was one example of MSW referring to a reversal of the power dynamic with a *mami*:

- R: The *mami* were [also] bad to the *xiaodi* [little brothers], so the *xiaodi* didn't feel comfortable in their hearts, they went to report them [to the police]. ...it is also with the clients, there are times when the clients are displeased, the clients are in a bad mood and complain, so they call the police to report it.  
(Male, 21, Jiangxi Province)

Although this was the only case that I encountered of its type, it emphasises the need for *mami* to maintain good relations with both employees and clients. There is some irony in the sex workers reporting their *mami* to the authorities for organising prostitution, and though rare, this example shows how the MSW might subvert the system in their own favour on occasion by using the authorities as a weapon against their management.

#### 4.5.2 Clients

Here I explore clients' roles in relation to their position as buyers in the sex industry. As one interviewee comments:

- When there is a need, there needs to be a supply. This is how the market works isn't it?  
(Male, 21, Hunan Province).

Research on the female sex industry places significant focus on the gendered power differentials intrinsic to sex work between FSW and male clients. Differing schools of feminist theory position sex work along a continuum from being a manifestation of male hegemonic power serving to dominate women to a form of empowerment for the women involved in being able to derive financial gain from, and take control of their sexuality (Jaggar 1991, Overall 1992, Zatz 1997, Sloan *et al.* 2000, Vanwesenbeeck 2001). Such gendered power differentials are perhaps less relevant in sex work between two men (K Browne *et al.* 2010), but nevertheless the MSW are subject to uneven power relations with clients for other reasons (Y Hong *et al.* 2008a). Additionally, for the transgender self-identifying sex workers, we might expect their relations with male clients to be influenced by gendered dynamics to some extent, a theme I will explore in the next chapter. While MSW have been characterised previously as being psychopathological, violent or dangerous to their clients (Bimbi

2007), I suggest that from the perspectives of the MSW in Shenzhen, it is frequently the clients who are seen as a threat, either because of the vulnerability of MSW going alone to out-calls, or because of the relations between clients and *mami*. Here focusing on the risks that clients (or people posing as clients) may present, the MSW discussed a number of particular problems:

R: They told me I just had to leave my money and I could go. They searched my wallet and only found 100 [£10]... When we do out-calls we only carry 100.

(Male, 23, Henan Province)

Robbery emerged as a common threat in the narratives, and in this case, the interviewee also describes one technique for limiting the risk that this can pose, by only carrying small amounts of cash when going to meet clients. Another discussed the robbery of a male sex worker friend:

R: He was only carrying some tens [a few pounds], and an old phone. The guy robbed him but didn't get anything, so he tied [friend's name] up and muffled and blindfolded him with duct tape. Then they bound him and locked him up in the bathroom. He then made a call to the club, called another boy over and robbed 2000 from that club... After they robbed the other boy they took [friend's name] out and beat him senseless. His mouth was all messed up; his eyes were swollen; his face was cut; bruises were everywhere.

(Male, 22, Jiangxi Province)

The friend of this interviewee had taken the usual precaution of not carrying anything valuable when he met with a client, but this failed to protect him from violent crime. MSW are seen as an easy target for robberies, (as they confirm), they are unlikely to report such incidences to the police for fear of their own work being discovered. Despite working in a clubhouse with a *mami*, both of the MSW described in the extract above were victims of this violent robbery: attending out-calls with new clients means that the MSW are vulnerable to such crimes. Continuing the story, the interviewee said: “[my friend] was going to call the police, but the pimp at [clubhouse name] compensated him so he wouldn't call them”. The *mami*'s role in this case being to dissuade the victim of a robbery from drawing the attention of the authorities to himself, and by extension, his place of work. This example highlights the tensions between the various risks and actors involved in the sex industry, with the sex worker in this case being both a victim of robbery, and subject to the control of the *mami*,

whose aim was to avoid the gaze of the authorities. “Legal sanctions make it far less likely that sex workers who have been subject to violence will go to the police, either because they believe that the police will not take their complaints seriously, or because they may be arrested themselves. The consequence of this illegality is a charter for the promotion of violence against sex workers and for substandard conditions and workplaces” (Ross *et al.* 2012:107). Discussing whether he would go to the police if he were robbed, one interviewee said:

R: For me, if my life is not endangered, I wouldn't call the police... if they beat me up and injure me, I would call the police, definitely.

I: Why don't you call the police for your monetary loss?

R: I am scared the police might question me about my job. Like why am I with that guy, questions like that... I wouldn't know how to answer questions like that.

(Male, 22, Jiangxi Province)

This man sees going to the police as a last resort – something he would only do if his life were endangered – the fear of them discovering his work acting to prevent him from accessing the protection of the police. Another interviewee describes his experience of drugging and robbery:

R: I lost 2000 [~£200] in [area of Shenzhen] once. It was like this. He hired me for a stay over, and after that we went to a karaoke bar. There were many of his friends there. When we were almost done with the songs, he put drugs in my drink. Then he left me in the room. They all left. They spent 2600 in the karaoke bar... I had to pay the bills and, I didn't have any money... And that was 2am.

I: How about calling the police?

R: The police, I did call the police. I said I went there to see an online friend and he drugged me. But the cops wouldn't accept the case.

(Male, 22, Jiangxi Province)

This case highlights the marginal position that the MSW can find themselves in. Being the victim of a client, he was unable get help from the authorities, doubly victimising him. The role that clients can play in encouraging MSW to use drugs also emerged:

R: Before, there were people, there were clients who wanted me to *liubing* [ice skate, i.e. take methamphetamine] with them but I refused them all. I said that I had never taken it, then I went to Xiamen and came across him [the client], then the *mami* said that he was an *bing* [ice] user, and asked me was I willing or not to

serve him? I started by refusing, then I talked to the *mami*, that day the *mami* brought that client to come, to see me, then I said to the *mami* that if he wasn't an *bing* user, then I would be willing to service him, because I said that he was the type that I liked. Then the *mami* probably just told him, said, then after we were apart for a few days I went to a bar to drink alcohol, he asked for me to go drink with him, to accompany him to drink, after drinking, I went back with him, at the same time that I went back with him he took some *bing* along to have fun with, I said that I don't do it, he insisted on taking it, I could see he definitely wanted to have fun, and so then I also took some.

(Male, 23, Hunan Province)

Here the role of the *mami* is aligned to the clients' interests in encouraging drug use. Both *mami* and clients are in a relative position of power in relation to the MSW. The *mami*'s and client's financial position, and the fact that they are paying the MSW for a service means that they are more able to persuade them to undertake behaviours that they might not otherwise engage in. He describes being persuaded to 'ice skate' with a client whom he liked when drunk. Feelings of intimacy or attraction towards clients are explored in Chapter 6 in relation to condom use, but this excerpt indicates that other risky behaviours might also be associated with liking particular clients. Drug use is not only a risk in terms of the men's health and capacity to negotiate with their clients, but is also illegal (Qian *et al.* 2006), thus creating further risks of arrest.

The MSW employ strategies though to avoid these situations. Because of the risks involved in going to meet with new clients, who could rob or drug the MSW, and because of the frequent involvement of *mami* in recruiting new clients, interviewees described cultivating a few *shouke* [regular clients]. These are people who the MSW know, and can trust, providing not only a more stable source of income, but also security from the risks of anonymous out-calls. One MSW talks about his longest duration of contact with a client, whom he has been working for since he started out as a sex worker two years prior to the interview:

- R: [Regulars] can buy some things to give to me, buy some lifestyle things  
I: ...So, what are your feelings towards this [regular] client then?  
R: After getting to know each other, I felt very intimate with him, he seems like a family member, I'm not saying that this was just a relationship for profit, it is more like a friendship. The relationship is more like with a lover. So whenever you need help uh, he can

occasionally give his help, if you have any things worrying you in your heart, you can call him to chat about it, he's that kind of friend, he has become such a friend, he's not just a friend for profit.

(Male, 21, Jiangxi Province)

He is explicit in describing his intimate feelings towards his oldest client. He likens him to a member of his family, and expresses a degree of dependence on this client, in terms fulfilling not only his financial, but also his emotional needs. This blurring of boundaries between clients and friends has been identified elsewhere as being characteristic of relationships with regular clients, and suggests that such relationships are more secure for MSW. Feelings of desire or intimacy towards regular clients have been identified elsewhere to pose risks in terms of exposure to HIV however, as more intimate relationships are frequently associated with reduced rates of condom use (Misovich *et al.* 1997, Kerrigan *et al.* 2003, Theodore *et al.* 2004, Murray *et al.* 2007), something discussed in more detail in the following two chapters.

#### 4.5.3 Female clients

Clients may present both risks and opportunities for the MSW, and may be classified as regular *shouke* or simply one-off contacts. Further to these typologies though is the finding that the clients' gender also affects the way they are discussed by the participants in this study. Female clients, while substantially less numerous than their male counterparts (discussed further in the following chapter), nevertheless present the MSW with alternative challenges. Anecdotally from discussions with the CBO staff and MSW working in bars, alongside observations recorded in my fieldnotes, it seems that the majority of female clients visiting more public sex venues in Shenzhen were middle-aged visitors to the city from Hong Kong. This cross-border trade has been identified previously in the city for male clients of MSW (see Lau *et al.* 2009a), and can be understood to be in part a result of geographical proximity and economic inequalities between Hong Kong and the mainland, alongside in this case the desires of sexually and economically independent Hong Kong women.

From my fieldnotes, I comment that these female clients would:

“...sit in groups of 5 to 10, evidently all friends (or colleagues) in Shenzhen for a good time... one group were particularly boisterous – heckling the young guys as they walked past, in a way that I haven't seen from male clients before. They had 6 *xiaodi* at their table drinking with

them and playing dice. [I'm] not sure if they are here just for entertainment in the bar or for sex afterwards as well.”

(Fieldnotes, 07/09/2011)

While it was not clear to me in the bar if these women were intending to pay for sex as well as entertainment services, during the MSW interviews, several discussed having female clients. While most of the discussion about female clients centred on their relatively lower levels of demand for condom use, which I address specifically in section 6.6, one interviewee also talked about female regular clients:

I: So how many of them [your regulars] are men, how many of them are women?

R: Two women, three men.

I: Do you like the three guys more or the two ladies more?

R: Of course the ladies

I: If the clients want to have a relationship with you?

R: I don't mind.

I: Why is that?

R: Because if we have a relationship she would pay my expenses. But it has to be a female.

I: So you are OK with female clients but not men?

R: Yes.

(Male, 23, Liaoning Province)

The interviewee considers regular clients to be acceptable, as they can provide greater levels of financial security, but would only accept this kind of regular relationship with a female client. This implies that the decreased social distance present in a regular client relationship, and perhaps increased levels of intimacy, are only acceptable to this MSW if the relationship is with a woman. Male sex workers having female clients has been reported elsewhere, with several previous studies in the Caribbean exploring sex tourism (Cf. Taylor 2006; Pruitt 1995; Herold 2001), although elsewhere globally there is a dearth of data on the female commercial partners of MSW. It remains unclear from the literature what specific risks or opportunities female clients might present to MSW, although the gendered power differentials usually posited between FSW and their male clients appear to remain pertinent, as I discuss further in chapter 6.

#### 4.5.4 Police

Sex work in China is illegal, and as such, constant vigilance is required to avoid the police.

I: What are your worries at work?

R: The police. They are performing sweeps now because it's illegal here. Sometimes when I get to the room [to sell sex], I would feel scared about police checks or how would I be prosecuted. It's very shameful, saying it [i.e. if it is made public].

(Male, 38, Hunan Province)

The police are a constant source of concern for MSW in Shenzhen. In the survey, 44 (18%) of the respondents said that they had had experienced problems with the police in the previous 12 months. Furthermore, clients may be violent or force sex workers to use drugs, while the role that *mami* [pimps] play in the industry may act to either mitigate or increase the levels of risk to which the MSW are exposed.

Arrest for drug dealing carries heavier penalties than prostitution (Qian *et al.* 2006, Office of Hu Jintao 2007). This was identified by the Shenzhen key informants as being a motivating factor in police entrapment of MSW in for drugs-related offences, of which there had been several cases in the previous year:

R: They [the police] arrange some client to buying drugs and or buying sex and we have three cases at least that police arrange some people to pretend as a customer of sex worker and then request a product of white drugs and then arrest them not because selling sex but because of selling drugs.

(Key informant interview – Shenzhen CBO Worker)

Police entrapment also occurs purely for making arrests for sex work, as another key informant in Beijing describes:

R: ...for male sex workers they are not so easy to be found [by the police]. They may find their clients via the internet. Therefore, it is difficult for the police to find them. So sometimes the police may *diaoyu*<sup>38</sup> [go fishing] by pretending to be a client. In this case, they [male sex workers] may also be harassed by the police.

(Key informant interview - Beijing NGO)

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<sup>38</sup> 'Going fishing' or 'fishing up' is a colloquial term for entrapment by the police.

The use of entrapment by the Chinese authorities in drug control has been identified as infringing on civil liberties and potentially standing in conflict with the rule of law (X Zhu 2006), although it is unreported in the MSW literature to date. Furthermore, while both key informants working for MSW organisations identified entrapment as a significant threat to male sex workers, in discussions with MSW during outreach sessions by the Shenzhen CBO that I witnessed, very few of the men were aware that this could be a problem. Indeed, as one interviewee describes below, having police as a part of his social network meant that they could actually be protective for him:

- I: Ah, do you often do drugs?  
R: If *k-fen* [ketamine] counts as drugs then I would say quite a bit.  
I: Are you worried you might be asked to do a urine test?  
R: Just once. But it doesn't matter. Because when I am in the bar, if I do *k-fen*, I am usually with my police friends. I feel safe going with them, even if the police got me it would be fine. Because they [my friends] are police too, they are more carefree... So I don't have to worry about consequences. I feel pretty easy.  
(Male, 27, Shandong Province)

Having the right social networks can insulate him from the risk of arrest – using drugs with his police officer friends means that he does not feel at risk. This case is unique in the sample, however, as most of the MSW expressed concern about the risks of being caught by the authorities. In the dialogue below, one interviewee discusses his fear of the police, and how he had previously fled a clubhouse as he was scared the police would come to arrest him:

- R: Actually, I think I was entered onto a blacklist, you know, they in that district were all being monitored, so I was just going in and out [of the clubhouse], so they must have known. But they didn't come and arrest us, they didn't find me  
I: Mm, because there was monitoring, CCTV, it's possible that the police knew about you being together with them [the other clubhouse members]?  
R: Yes, my identity was exposed  
I: But were you worried or not about them knowing what you were called?  
R: Yes I was worried, I was worried they knew  
I: [...] Who could have known your name? Did the *mami* also know your name?  
R: Mm, the *mami* knew  
I: Did the *mami* know your identity card number?  
R: He knew, he recorded everything  
I: You're scared the police got hold of it? Oh, you were saying that

- the police subsequently caught this clubhouse?
- R: Yes. It was also on the TV news
- I: Do you know how many people were caught by the police?
- R: There were 10 ah
- I: 10, did they all go to jail? Do you know or know?
- R: There was just the *mami* with the management, then for example you were tested [positive] for HIV, he would be reported to the local disease control centre [CDC]... Then certainly your family could find out.

(Male, 23, Shandong Province)

As Dutton (1998) comments: “one is never quite sure whether one is ‘caught within the net’ of police attention” (ibid.:79): there is a fear of police investigation; secret files being opened on suspicious persons. There have been reports of hospitals having to report information about patients with STIs to the police, and of those working in hotels being monitored by the authorities. The above dialogue shows that this is a concern for MSW too, as is the risk of public shame:

- R: It’s that I’m very scared. Coming to this place, who isn’t ah! Scared of getting arrested by the police, after you get arrested, they notify your family, because in your family, your privacy is then exposed... Yeah, notifying your family, yeah, [saying] what their child is doing out there, outside selling sex, or that they’re gay, after that you really wouldn’t have *lian* [face] to be able to stay at home, you would really *diulian* [lose face/ be disgraced] with your family ... after you’ve been arrested, then you don’t know the provisions of the national law, but you can be sure they will notify your family, you imagine that they will mention it to your friends, and notify your family, they must mention it to your relatives at home [...] Notifying family, going to bring your family, really, It’s very scary.

(Male, 25, Heilongjiang Province)

This demonstrates an intersection between fear of police and arrest, and stigmatisation from friends and family, which is explored specifically in the next chapter. However, this quote demonstrates that the risks to which these MSW are exposed are part of a complex web of interactions. The importance of guarding anonymity from the authorities, and the dangers of being exposed publicly, either on television or to one’s family or friends meaning that fear of the police extends beyond purely being scared of arrest. For MSW working in visible locations (such as in parks or on the streets), the result can be that MSW are forced to make: “[q]uick decisions [which] may also make it harder to screen out potentially violent clients. In some cases, sex workers

will not carry condoms that may provide evidence of their occupation, and some report that police may take their condoms during raids on premises” (Ross *et al.* 2012:107). One transgender self-identifying sex worker’s narrative about her work in a park exemplifies this problem:

- I: But have you encountered [the police] in the park?  
R: Yes ... lots, huh, lots [...] I encountered the police, I was caught once, stopped for an hour ... He charged me to assist in the investigation.  
I: At that time were you transgender, ready to go to the park to sell?  
R: Actually I was already inside the park, he chased me out, he chased me out once, the first time he didn’t catch me, just drove me out, then the second time huh, he came from that gate to drive me out, then I just swapped to another gate and came back in ... Then I came across him, he was there waiting for me, then he arrested me.  
I: And in your experience, how many times have you encountered the police in the park?  
R: I’ve been arrested twice, if it’s encountering them it’s been lots of times, because every time they come we all run away [...] Yes, when we see their car we run.  
I: Do you think that the police have a big effect on your work?  
R: Yes ... if for example you have clients, it’s better to already negotiate, when you want to go and do the negotiations, if the client can see that there are people coming, this can really screw your business up.

(Transgender, 32, Guangxi Province)

She describes not only having to run away from the police, but that the exposure of her work environment makes negotiation with clients more difficult, as they could be interrupted by the police at any time. Another continues:

- I: Are the *jiejie* [sisters] worried about police in the park?  
R: Very worried ... I’m also very worried  
I: Have you come across them yourself?  
R: Yes, but I ran away, there are often patrols, or they catch you, but I am very fearful, 99% of my fear is of this.  
I: Oh, so you’ve experienced the police chasing you to catch you, yeah, but they’ve never caught you, has this happened a lot?  
R: Every day you can have patrols, but at those times I avoid it  
I: Are the patrols by the park management people?  
R: The park management also have guards... they cannot arrest you directly, but they can control, when you see them you have to hide a bit, but there are times when they dress as police, or the police [actually] come to catch you, I have heard there are people reporting, a few days after the people came and arrested, at that time you had to run the fastest, had to run away.

- I: ...before the Universiade, at the time of the Universiade, or afterwards, were there any sisters arrested by police?
- R: Yes. [They got] Five days of detention, it's sometimes said, if there is evidence when you're arrested, arrest evidence is if we are with a client having fun, or if there is a condom on your dick, we will be detained for 5 days.

(Transgender, 22, Jiangsu Province)

The fear of arrest, and contact with the police, happen at the intersection of place and actors. For the transgender identifying workers, there seem to be particular risks associated with their work being subject to police (or guard) controls in parks. This suggests that this group may be especially vulnerable, compared to their non-transgender sex working peers. Given that many of the respondents report multiple places of work, their risk of police contact seems likely to vary depending on where they are finding clients at a particular time. The visibility of sex workers who find clients on the street or in parks can make them easier targets for arrest, while those discussing working in clubhouses with *mami* appear to be less concerned about the police in those venues:

- I: So apart from AIDS and STDs, what kind of things at work do you worry about?
- R: Nothing.
- I: How about the police?
- R: The proprietor takes care of that... we don't care about that. He would notify us, before the cops show up... He would notify us in advance, so we could leave the place.
- I: Does the proprietor know before the cops come?
- R: They do.

(Male, 45, Heilongjiang Province)

Compared to sex workers in very public areas, those in clubhouses with the help of *mami* have a degree of protection from the police. Nevertheless, the degree of attention paid by the authorities to the sex industry shows some change through time. Both central and local governments organise periodic crackdowns on 'vice', termed *saohuangdafei*<sup>39</sup>, particularly in the time leading up to, or around major national or local events. Such crackdowns happened around the Beijing Olympics in 2008 (UNDP 2011). In the time immediately preceding my fieldwork one such crackdown

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<sup>39</sup> Literally translated, *saohuangdafei* means "sweep away the yellow, strike illegality"; yellow in China being the colour associated with vice, pornography and sexually illicit activities. Such police crackdowns have been associated with hampering of civil society's efforts to prevent HIV among sex workers in China previously (Kaufman 2011).

was announced in Beijing, whereby the local authorities announced a ‘100 day crackdown on vice’ (Key informant interview – Beijing NGO), and during August 2011, a similar 100 day crackdown was underway in Shenzhen, to coincide with the Shenzhen Universiade sporting event, in which it was reported that over 80,000 ‘high risk’ people had been driven from the city (Xinhua 2011). With increased perceived and actual police surveillance during the crackdown period, many MSW felt at risk of arrest, and so left the city entirely:

I: So why did you leave [at the time of the Universiade]?

R: I had to ... There was one time the police did a census on non-locals... They just barged into houses... They checked our *hukou* residence permits.

(Male, 45, Heilongjiang Province)

This case, along with others found during the interviews shows how the interaction of macro-level factors, such as the *hukou* system, large scale sporting events and police crackdowns, can interact to have a direct impact on the lives of MSW, making them fearful of arrest and increasing their levels of mobility.

Awareness of the crackdown within the sex industry also led to some bar managers taking measures against some of their employees whom they perceived to be high risk:

R: During the Universiade, every drug user who worked in bars was laid off for a month. That’s because if the cops caught a couple [of drug users] in your bar, you got to shut it down.

(Male, 23, Henan Province)

This example demonstrates both the risks that those involved in the sex industry in Shenzhen felt during the Universiade, and also the impact that it had on the livelihoods of some MSW. While the illegality of drug use (and indeed prostitution) are well known in the MSW industry, during times of increased vigilance by the authorities, there is a re-evaluation of the relative risks of different practices, and the threat of a whole business being closed down is sufficient to remove some MSW from the establishment. Ironically in this case it seems that the MSW bar managers are acting as agents of the authorities in removing drug-using employees from their places of work in an attempt at self-protection.

Despite crackdowns and entrapment of MSW in Shenzhen, one MSW discusses the involvement of the authorities in the sex industry:

R: Well, you know the society right now is pretty *luan* [chaotic]. So, if it's a big club, there has to be some major figures backing it up. Otherwise it would not have become big. All the nightlife scenes would involve drugs and sex services... That's a no brainer. I daresay that each club would have one boss from the police force.

I: So they are connected?

R: Definitely. We have seen cops having fun in the clubs.

(Male, 22, Sichuan Province)

The authorities and sex industry are interrelated, and different places of sex work (through their management) intersect with the authorities and the sex workers in mediating the risks in for those MSW. It seems feasible that sex work clubs would need to have some kind of 'sponsorship' from a person in a position of authority, given their relative visibility. As such, those MSW working in clubs might be relatively protected from risk of arrest, particularly when compared to their street-working peers.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

This chapter presents the male sex industry in Shenzhen as a social system, composed both of different groups and types of actors and institutions and a range of risks and opportunities that those different actors mediate. The study participants entered the sex industry for a range of different reasons, but building on the findings from the first empirical chapter, we can see that for some, selling sex offered the potential for a more affluent and cosmopolitan way of life. For others, specifically those coming from more straitened circumstances, or for whom obligations to family were significant, sex work offered a relatively quick source of money. Others still present their work as an opportunity to explore and experience their sexuality, again emphasising Shenzhen's position as a site of modernity in the imaginations of many.

The role that other sex workers played in introducing the participants to this work, taken alongside the findings later in the chapter which discuss the role of various actors in the sex industry, highlights the centrality of people and social networks to the lives of the MSW. Those actors can both mitigate and be the source of a range of

risks for the MSW, and it is only through negotiation and awareness of the different threats and opportunities that they are able to manage their work successfully.

Previous work among MSW, particularly in China, has tended to focus on the role of venues in the organisation of the sex industry. The findings presented here instead suggest that the interactions between actors, within the structure of the sex industry, rather than places *per se* are critical in mitigating or creating risks for the MSW. Different venues may be associated with particular actors to a greater or lesser extent, but the dynamic nature of the MSW's work, with multiple venues and frequent changes suggests that a venue-based conceptualisation is too static in this context. Given the fluidity of places of work amongst the MSW sampled here, and the heterogeneity in their characteristics, we are forced to move away from generalisations about male sex work(ers), often reified as a single phenomenon, or "reduced to 'whores'" (Pheterson, 1986 in Vanwesenbeeck 2001:246). We must also consider how they negotiate their social and sexual relationships inside and outside of their work. This is the focus of the next chapter.

## 5 Complex sexual networks, stigma and identity

“It’s like a rat crossing the street”

(Male, 23, Shandong Province)

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I set out to describe and understand the types of sexual partnerships that male sex workers in Shenzhen have in order to gain insight into their lived experiences, and the contexts in which their sexual practices (and thus also their sexual health risks) take place. To understand sexual partnerships we need to go beyond mapping relationships and also consider the processes involved in their negotiation. I present the sexual relationships of the study participants as being negotiated within their wider social contexts. The MSW in the study employ multiple strategies to manage their different relationships and sexual partners. I use the concepts of identity and stigma to analyse these strategies. I will argue that stigma plays a part in shaping how they represent their sexual partnerships (both in and beyond the study context), and how they manage their identities. These partnerships include commercial and non-commercial, with men and women, moderated by the multiple, often-stigmatised identities which they constantly manage in their day-to-day lives, including their gender and sexual orientation, migrant, and sex worker identities. Disparities between self-identified sexual orientation and self-reported sexual practices are examined as one way to understand these sometimes conflicting categorisations. To understand these processes, it is necessary to explore the participants’ own representations of their sexual and gender identities, relationships, and the behaviours that are associated with them. In so doing, in this chapter I address the research question: “What are the interactions between different types of relationships that MSW have and their attitudes, behaviours and subjective experiences?”

There is a paucity of literature examining non-commercial sexual partnerships among MSW in general (Bimbi 2007), but particularly in China, and this chapter aims to contribute to filling this gap by presenting data on their key characteristics and on

levels and types of concurrency for the MSW – also novel in the Chinese context. I aim to develop a more detailed understanding of the factors in the HIV risk environment around sexual networks and partnerships, viewed through the lens of the participants' own experiences. To do this, I draw on theories of identity and stigma to conceptualise how MSW dynamically manage their partnerships, primarily drawing from the work of Goffman (1963) and Butler (1988; 1990) to further develop an understanding of the processes involved in partnership negotiation for this stigmatised and marginal group.

This chapter begins with a critique of the terminology of 'vectors for disease' that is implicit in much work on HIV among marginalised groups. With those critiques in mind, the role that sexual partnerships play in HIV transmission remains important, and the chapter continues with an exploration of the complex sexual networks of which the study participants are a part. The complexity of those networks requires the MSW to undertake the active negotiation of their multiple, stigmatised identities, with performativity playing a role in that process. Finally, one consequence (and integral part) of the sexual network complexity is that many of the study participants are engaged in concurrent sexual relationships with both commercial and non-commercial partners. I argue that maintaining these concurrent partnerships is integral to their management of multiple identities. I take the analytical position that it is necessary to shift away from essentialist notions of single, or stable identities, to a conceptualisation that is more fluid, in which actors negotiate their different subject positions through performativity and active identity management. This management is not only necessitated by the different positions they inhabit, but is also related to the differential levels of stigma associated with different identity categories. Stigma, conceptualised as a structural concern is therefore negotiated through the agency of the participants.

## 5.2 ***Vectors for disease***

The study of sexual partnerships is important for understanding HIV risk among male sex workers because sexual transmission routes are considered the most important loci of disease transmission for this group in China. One of the key problems with focussing on MSM or people who sell sex, and specifically male sex workers, in understanding HIV transmission, is that there has been a tendency in academic study

of China to identify these groups as *vectors* for disease, who are liable to spread ‘their’ infections to the wider, and implicitly ‘innocent’, heterosexual population (cf. Choi *et al.* 2004, Q He *et al.* 2006, Xing *et al.* 2008).

I reject this othering discourse for a number of reasons. Firstly, it has the effect of placing blame on those groups identified as ‘bridges’ (cf. Yun *et al.* 2011), reducing them to epidemiological targets for intervention without necessarily considering their experiences, and thus contributing to their stigmatised positions. Secondly, this in turn can leave those in the rest of the (‘non-disease vector’) population with the impression that they are not at risk themselves. The blaming culture in much of the extant research is not always explicit, but nevertheless positions these ‘high risk’ populations as a source of contagion, and thus as a threat to their unsuspecting partners (Bimbi 2007). Thirdly, by focussing blame on MSW, the risks that they themselves are exposed to from clients or partners, become obscured, further marginalising them. Similar issues have been raised elsewhere with respect to female sex workers (FSW) (Pirkle *et al.* 2007), also frequently categorised as disease-spreading and dangerous (Gil *et al.* 1996, Hesketh *et al.* 2005). As such, focussing on individual vectors is problematic because of the subject position in which it places the MSW, and also because it ignores the role of interpersonal networks in which sex and the potential for HIV transmission must necessarily take place. Sexual networks therefore are the focus of the next section.

### 5.3 Sexual networks

The male sex workers in this study are frequently involved in complex networks of sexual partnerships, identified in MSW populations elsewhere, for example in the USA (Fujimoto *et al.* 2013) and India (Lorway *et al.* 2011). Not only are these men selling sex to paying customers, but they also frequently have non-commercial regular and short-term partners. Some also purchase sex from other sex workers. This is reflected in their sexual partnership histories, with some men selling sex to both men and women, others exclusively to one or the other, while in their non-commercial sex lives, they may be having sex exclusively with men or women.

First, it is important to describe what these complex sexual networks look like. From an HIV epidemiological perspective, mapping the MSW’s sexual partnerships permits

us to begin to understand more about the more proximate sexual health risks to which they and their partners might be being exposed.

- I: You say you have male and female clients, and I heard you already say today when we were chatting, you said you have *nanpengyou* [boyfriends] and *nvpengyou* [girlfriends], and you have a *laopo*<sup>40</sup> [wife]. Your *laopo*, is she a client?
- R: No
- I: Is your *nvpengyou* a client?
- R: My *laopo*, that's my *nvpengyou*, ah, but we're not married
- I: Oh, so is your *nvpengyou* a client?
- R: Eh? No
- I: Is your *nanpengyou* a client?
- R: Yes
- I: Oh, and you still have a few female clients?
- R: Correct
- I: And do they give you money every time, or once a month give you money for sex?
- R: Eh, it's not certain, every time, or almost every time they pay, but sometimes more sometimes less, sometimes I am pleasantly surprised
- I: Oh, so you have such good relationships with so many people, so how do you deal with the time side of things? None of them know that you have other people right?
- R: Oh, there are some that know, some that don't. There are those that give a lot of money whom I don't want to let know, those that pay less, I let them know.
- I: Your *laopo* [wife], she knows what you do?
- R: Eh, doesn't know, doesn't know... She just knows that I do massage, doesn't know I do work accompanying men.
- (Male, 24, Henan Province)

The interviewee discusses having a long term non-commercial female partner, alongside regular and shorter-term male and female clients. He also describes having a boyfriend, who is paying him for sex. This level of sexual network complexity and partner concurrency is by no means unusual, and many relationship permutations are described by participants. This interviewee also hints at the difficulties faced by MSW in managing multiple relationships, with different levels of disclosure being maintained with each partner. In order to protect and maintain an identity that conforms to the heteronormative construction of masculinity, it is unsurprising perhaps that he would not want his *laopo* to know that he is selling sex to men. In addition to this, he manages his sex work identity among his more highly-paying

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<sup>40</sup> 'Wife' is used colloquially by many of the interviewees to refer to their main, or most intimate partner. It can be used with female or male partners in this context.

clients, giving them the impression of exclusivity, through selective disclosure of his sex worker identity, and the existence of other clients. This underlines the reduced status of the sex worker identity, relative to a boyfriend identity in particular social situations. The findings support the argument that self-identified sexual orientation and/or gender identity are not fixed characteristics (Butler 1990, Abes *et al.* 2007, Purdie-Vaughns *et al.* 2008), but change both in the self-representations and performativity of the sex workers, according to context and over time.

The ways in which sexual identity is represented through the language used by the study participants highlights some of the ways in which they align themselves with different identity categories. The terminology used in the survey for self-identified sexual orientation was *tongxinglian* [homosexual], *shuangxinglian* [bisexual] and *yixinglian* [heterosexual]. While these terms are somewhat clinical in Mandarin, I use them following discussions with the MSW CBO and the community advisory board, in which it was felt that these would be the most universally recognised terms for the study participants. They are not, however, the only terms available to describe sexual orientation, and in interviews, the respondents described themselves and peers using a range of terminology. *Tongzhi* [lit. ‘comrade’, but colloquially ‘gay’] was very commonly used, and has been identified by authors as the appropriation of a Mao-era term (Kong 2010), with connotations of equality, respect and resistance (AD Wong 2005). Others used the English term ‘gay’, a nod perhaps to a cosmopolitan, global gay identity, where English loan words can act as markers of sophistication. Meanwhile, those identifying as heterosexual frequently use the colloquial term *zhinan* [直男 – literally: straight/ upright man], presenting an interesting example of the direct translation and appropriation of an English term. Terms for transgender (in this study, all of the transgender sex workers were male-to-female (MTF) transgender) also showed some variety. The survey employed the term *kuaxingbie* [lit. spanning genders], and this was also used by many of the transgender sex workers, while one transgender sex worker referred to herself as *zhuang-B* [装B – *zhuang* meaning to dress up, adorn, but also to pretend, and *B* here meaning ‘boy’, as in MB – money boy]. This identity category intertwines gender identity as someone who dresses up or pretends (to be female), with a (normally masculine) suffix associated with the role of male sex work, raising interesting questions about how sexual and

work identities might combine. The ways that people represent their sexual orientation and gender identities are important in gaining an understanding of what those identities mean for them, providing insight into their self-conceptualisations. In understanding sexual and gender identities as both socially constructed and constructing performances<sup>41</sup> (Butler 1988:522), we can therefore begin to think about how those categories are acted by the MSW in different situations, and through what means they might negotiate their various subject positions, as husbands, sex workers, or transgender bar performers. The following section will explore conceptualisations of stigma and multiple identities, aiming to provide an analytical frame for the subsequent empirical findings.

#### 5.4 Identity and stigma

The active management of different sexual partnerships and the identities associated with them by the MSW in the study calls for an analysis that is able to incorporate a dynamic and context-influenced understanding of their self-representations. In highlighting the discursive nature of identity practice, Butler (1990) writes: “The question of *agency* is reformulated as a question of how signification and resignification work... indeed, to understand identity as a *practice*, as a signifying practice, is to understand culturally intelligible subjects as the resulting effects of a rule-bound discourse...” (ibid.:144-5, emphasis in original). Thus, the sex workers are presented as practicing their identities, which in turn are understood to be multiple and changeable, within the wider social structures and systems, and constructions of masculinities to which they are connected. I use the term “identity” to understand the range of social and cultural positions that the MSW employ in different circumstances in their lives: “People tell others who they are... they tell themselves who they are and then try to act as though they are who they say they are” (Holland *et al.* 2007). Their different circumstances are produced both in physical space, for example in their place of sex work versus their family home, and also in their social space, depending on their sexual partner, or the friends or family they are communicating with.

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<sup>41</sup> Judith Butler (1988) comments: “the feminist claim that the personal is political suggests, in part, that subjective experience is not only structured by existing political arrangements, but effects and structures those arrangements in turn” (ibid.:522), underscoring the duality present in social action, and performativity.

The empirical findings regarding identity and self-reported behaviours suggest that the social production of multiple identity categories is key in the context of male sex work. “Societies construct multiple categorization schemes to classify people and that individuals therefore acquire multiple social identities” (Thoits *et al.* 1997:107). The authors comment that “there are at least two ways that multiple identities might combine: through modifying one another or through merging with one another” (ibid.:128). Their call for greater levels of research into such combinations, reflecting the “complexities of social reality and social experience” (ibid.:129), is in part addressed in this chapter. The data presented here show that there are instances where the multiple identities held by the respondents may apparently contradict one another, a process also discussed elsewhere among a group of lesbian-self identifying women in the UK (Valentine 1993) and in a Swedish study of young men, in which contradictory identities were found to be actively balanced by the participants (Åkerström *et al.* 2011). How the MSW here are able to cognitively manage their sometimes conflicting identities (as MSW, migrants, sexual- or gender-non-normative, etc.), is an important part of their lived experience, but those identities must first be understood in terms of their stigmatised positions, which necessitate their management in the first place.

The stigmatisation of different identity categories is the product of the social and cultural contexts in which they are negotiated, meaning that we have to incorporate an analysis of the stigmatised positions of the different identities presented: “stigma is always a reaction to a social history that influences when and where it appears and the forms it takes” (Maluwa *et al.* 2002:5); it is neither ‘natural’, nor can it be understood outside of the social and structural context in which it occurs (ibid.). Goffman (1963) identified the ‘stigmatised individual’ as being a person possessing an undesirable difference, but further comments that: “it should be seen that a language of relationships, not attributes, is really needed” (ibid.:13) when understanding the ways in which stigma occurs and is perpetuated. As such, he is suggesting that stigmatisation occurs in social space, through the behaviours and attitudes of those around the stigmatised individual, rather than being a characteristic of the person; stigma is not an inherent quality within a person, but rather it is generated through the social relations and conditions in which that person is located. Stigma can reinforce social inequalities and power disparities, further marginalising those it affects

(Maluwa *et al.* 2002) and occurs when there is a deviation from normative values (Pescosolido *et al.* 2008:432). One respondent's description of how his family would see his work highlights the conflation of multiple stigmatised positions:

- I: If you tell your family you are a money boy, what are they worried about?
- R: To them, homosexuality is just like AIDS. My family would think homosexuality means AIDS and they would be worried that I have the virus. And basically I would be dead to them. They would feel particularly disappointed or desperate.
- I2: Do you think AIDS and homosexuality are the same in most people's mind?
- R: Yeah. Many would agree the two go hand in hand.
- I2: Why is that?
- R: Because *tongxing* [homosexuality] it is a dirty thing. One of our movie star says, homosexuality is a crime, it's dirty, very dirty.
- (Male, 22, Jiangxi Province)

In identifying himself as a money boy, he makes a parallel self-identification as homosexual. This would mean that his family would assume that he has AIDS. HIV is a highly stigmatised condition in China, and he comments that both HIV and homosexual identities are coterminous for many people in China. HIV is the focus of the next chapter, but serves here to highlight the range of differently stigmatised subject positions that the MSW may occupy, either in their own representations, or those of others.

Not only are the participants selling sex, but many also self-identify in non-normative sexual or gender categories. Further, their positions as migrants are stigmatised in urban areas (Chapter 3); indeed key to contemporary Chinese constructions of masculinity are urbanity and wealth (Song 2010), placing these men in relatively disempowered subject positions. Superimposed onto this range of potentially stigmatised identities for some of the participants, are their positions as fathers, husbands, boyfriends and filial sons, taken as a whole, these are all identities which can conflict or counter one another. Chinese social attitudes remain in many ways based on Confucian, filial ideals of marriage (between men and women), and subsequent childbearing, despite contemporary economic and social shifts. This is particularly true of rural areas (Fuligni *et al.* 2004, W Zhang *et al.* 2006), from which many of the MSW originate. A clear opposition therefore emerges between the more

traditional Chinese social values on the one hand, and sex work and homosexual practices on the other. In a discussion of filial piety, Yue (1999) comments that it has significant psychological effects on character formation, resulting in "...cognitive conservatism in Chinese social behaviours" (ibid.:215). This tension was both experienced and negotiated by MSW through their daily practices: through the ways they discuss their work and the stigma they both experienced and expressed during interviews, and through their choice of sexual partners and discussions of their future.

#### 5.4.1 **Complex sexual networks**

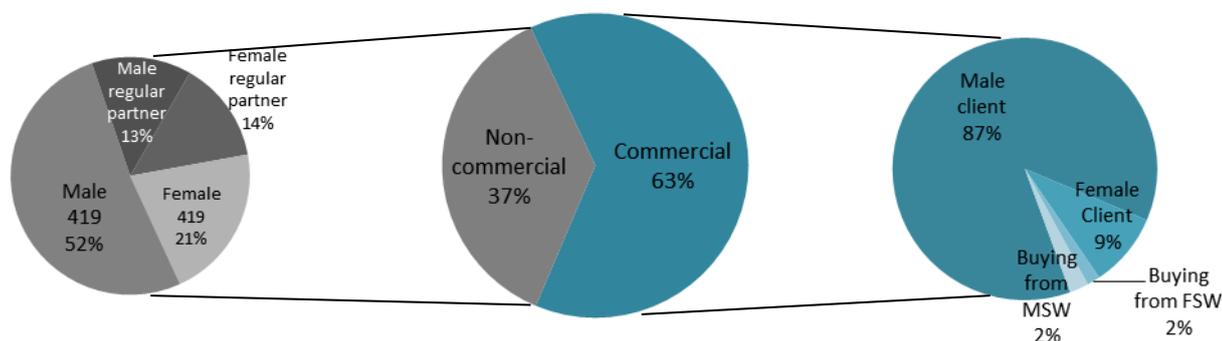
Mindful of the multiple identities and stigmatised positions of the survey respondents, this next section presents analyses of the survey data on their three most recent commercial and three most recent non-commercial partners in the past 12 months. Given the numbers of different sexual partners among this group, collecting detailed data on every partner in the previous month, for example, was not feasible. Data on three partners is useful as it permits a more detailed analysis of partner concurrency while limiting respondent fatigue and maximising recall. For each of the six partners, data were collected on the date of first and most recent sexual contact, the sex of the partner, the nature of the relationship. For commercial partners, this included whether sex was being bought or sold; for non-commercial partners this included whether or not the respondent considered himself to be in a relationship with that person, or if it was a *419*<sup>42</sup> [one night stand].<sup>43</sup> The respondents were also asked about the estimated age of the partner.

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<sup>42</sup> 419 is a term used in the MSW circle meaning a one night stand. It is said in English (to sound like 'for one night').

<sup>43</sup> Data was also collected on how many occasions they had had sex, and whether or not a condom was ever used (options: 'always', 'most of the time', 'sometimes', 'almost never', 'never' and 'do not know'), explored further in Chapter 6.

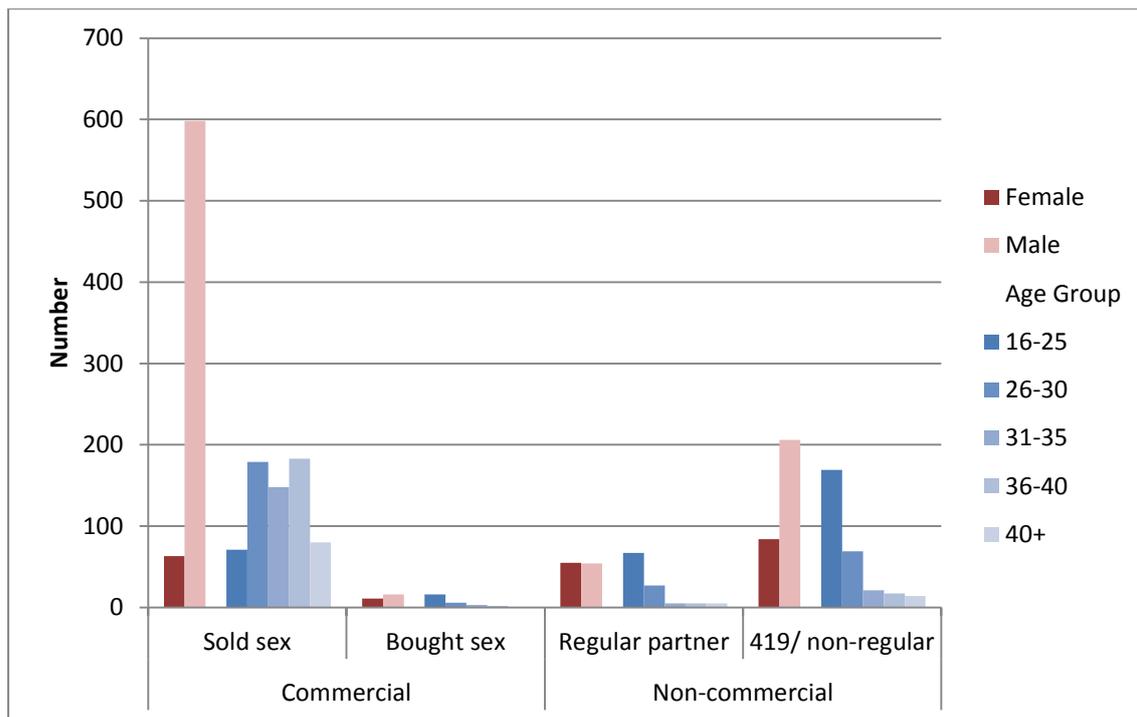
Respondents' up to three most recent commercial and non-commercial (previous 12 months) sexual partners by



**Figure 5-1: Percentage distribution of respondents' (n=251) most recent sexual partners by type and sex, grey colours represent non-commercial partners, green represent commercial partners.**

This snapshot shows that the majority of partnerships reported in the study were commercial, outnumbering non-commercial partnerships by almost two to one<sup>44</sup>. Just over half of non-commercial partnerships in the study (by count, not proportion of time) are 419s or non-regular partnerships with other men, while around one fifth were 419s with female partners (Figure 5-1). The remainder are roughly evenly split between regular partnerships with men and women. In total, data were collected on 1087 partners from 251 respondents. Figure 5-2 shows background characteristics for the different sexual partner types. Data on 688 commercial sex partners were collected, of which 96.1% involved the respondent selling sex (rather than purchasing sex from someone). Men made up the majority of the customers of the respondents, although there was nevertheless a considerable minority (10%) of customers who were female. In the four percent of cases in which the respondent said that they had been the customer in a commercial encounter, sex was bought from both male (59%) and female (41%) sex workers.

<sup>44</sup> The relative distributions of commercial and non-commercial relationships are unlikely to be representative of the proportion commercial and non-commercial sexual partnerships that the respondents actually have. The relatively large proportion of non-commercial partnerships here (accounting for over a third of all those recorded) is a product of the survey questions, asking explicitly about 3 each of non-commercial and commercial partners. Indeed, given the question form in the survey, the fact that substantially fewer than 50% of the relationships in the sample were non-commercial is a sign that non-commercial relationships are likely to be significantly rarer amongst this group. These data are likely missing due to the 12 month period specified in the question, with any previous relationships being excluded.



**Figure 5-2 histogram of three most recent commercial and non-commercial partner numbers, by partner gender and age group**

For all partnership types except regular non-commercial, the majority of partners are male, while females outnumber males for the regular non-commercial partnerships. The age distribution of sexual partners also varies by partnership type, with partners in younger age groups being more common for all categories except where the MSW sold sex; the age distribution suggesting that MSW tend to buy sex from, and have non-commercial partnerships with, people closer to them in age than the partners to whom they sell sex. The age differentials between MSW and their clients may be reflective of unbalanced power differentials between partners, building on the discussion in the previous chapter, and also found elsewhere, for example between FSW and their partners in Kenya (Luke 2005). These data on non-commercial partners demonstrate that not only do MSW have substantial numbers of sexual partners outside of their work, but that many of them are regular partners.

**Table 5-1 distribution of partner types by MSW self-identified sexual orientation and gender identity.**

		Partnership type					Total	
		MSW	Partner	Commercial		Non-commercial		
				Sold sex	Bought sex	Regular partner	419	
MSW's self-identified sexual orientation	Homosexual	Male	281	12	33	126	<b>452</b>	
		Female	3	1	4	3	<b>11</b>	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>463</b>	
	Bisexual	Male	228	3	18	72	<b>321</b>	
		Female	20	4	15	25	<b>64</b>	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>365</b>	
	Heterosexual	Male	146	1	3	5	<b>155</b>	
		Female	40	6	36	56	<b>138</b>	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>253</b>	
	<b>Total*</b>			<b>658</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>1081</b>
	Self-identified gender	Transgender	Male	62	0	3	6	<b>71</b>
			Female	1	0	1	2	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>63</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>75</b>	
Male		Male	571	16	51	200	<b>838</b>	
		Female	27	11	54	82	<b>174</b>	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>1012</b>	
<b>Total</b>			<b>661</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>1087</b>	

\* - data missing for 3 respondents

The vast majority of partners of those self-identifying as homosexual are male, although some still report having sex with women, both for money, and non-commercially (Table 5-1), constituting 2.7% of partnerships. Of the non-commercial relationships for which there are data (44 respondents did not report non-commercial partners in the previous 12 months), 78% were reported to be *419s*. Data for MSW self-identifying as bisexual and heterosexual show that the majority of commercial sex involved the respondents selling to other men, although both of these groups also have significant numbers of female clients, constituting 8.8% and 27.4% of partners, respectively. Low rates of purchasing sex were reported across both groups. The majority of non-commercial relationships were not relationship-based, although larger proportions were classified as being with regular partners than for the homosexual MSW. Heterosexual MSW reported the largest proportion of their non-commercial relationships to be with regular partners (39% versus 25.4% for bisexual and 22.3% for homosexual MSW, respectively).

When classified by self-reported gender identity, the most striking difference is the very low rates of non-commercial sex among transgender sex workers, when compared to the non-transgender-identifying group. While the size of this sub-group is small (n=10), this difference suggests that MSW who identify as transgender may be involved in different sexual partnering patterns than their non-transgender peers.

Approximately 20% of heterosexual-identifying MSW report only having had male sexual partners (for their most recent six partners), while around 3% of those self-identifying as homosexual report only having had female sexual partners, with a spectrum in between. What emerges is a varied picture of multiple commercial and non-commercial partnerships. For commercial partners, it is less surprising that heterosexual self-identified MSW might sell sex to other men, given that the majority of customers are male, and other studies have also identified substantial numbers of heterosexual self-identified MSW with male clients (FY Wong *et al.* 2008, Shusen Liu *et al.* 2012a, Zhao *et al.* 2012). More challenging, though, to ideas of sexual partners reflecting self-identified sexual orientation are the cases in which they also report having male non-commercial partners. Similarly for the homosexual self-identified MSW, there were reports of female non-commercial partners. Given that non-commercial partners are by definition not paying the respondents for sex, the assumption might be that the respondents are able to exercise a greater degree of choice over who those partners are. This suggests that there are some cases in which the MSW are choosing non-commercial partners whose gender challenges the normative expectations of their self-identified sexual orientation.

The apparent disconnect between the self-identified sexual orientation of some of the respondents and the reported gender of their sexual partners forms the starting point for discussions of how sexual and gender identity is represented by the respondents, as I will explore further in the following section. This raises a question about the ways in which self-identified sexual orientation and self-reported sexual behaviours might appear to contradict one another. These men, though, are not only having to negotiate their identity with respect to their sexual orientation, they are also negotiating their 'sex worker' identity. Furthermore regarding the data collected here, further identity negotiations occur in the interview setting, adding another layer of complexity to the

performativity of identities. Inevitably, sexual identity and sex worker identity have some areas of intersection. But this is not always the case. There are, of course, multiple other identities that these MSW must negotiate, but to take a simplified example here, a heterosexual-identifying man who sells sex to other men is likely to have to negotiate his dual identities according to whether he is with his girlfriend or a paying male client. Intertwined with these multiple identity strategies are questions of stigma. The different potential identities (sex worker, homosexual, heterosexual, migrant, etc.) are stigmatised to differing degrees depending again on context, with the identity of 'sex worker' being stigmatised in wider society, but less so within the sex industry, for example. As Kong (2010) comments: "[a] matrix of identities gives rise to a matrix of oppression: in terms of gender, men over women; in terms of sexuality, heterosexuals over homosexuals, bisexuals or transgendered; in terms of class position..." (ibid.:28). This matrix of identities and positions then prompts us to think about the ways in which they might be managed in relation to the different levels and forms of stigma to which they are subject.

Previous research in China has established stigma against homosexuality (JX Liu *et al.* 2006, Neilands *et al.* 2008, Chapman *et al.* 2009, H Liu *et al.* 2009a, Feng *et al.* 2010), sex work (Pirkle *et al.* 2007, Y Hong *et al.* 2008a, Y Hong *et al.* 2010), rural-urban migrants (N He *et al.* 2007, J-W Wang *et al.*), male sex workers (Kong 2009), transgender people (Jun 2010, Mountford 2010) and people with HIV (Lieber *et al.* 2006, Clark 2007, L Li *et al.* 2007, Y Hong *et al.* 2008b, J Tucker *et al.* , L Li *et al.* 2013). These stigmatised characteristics can be better understood if we consider that the positionality of the study participants places them in contravention of multiple normative value systems simultaneously. All of the participants in the study are migrants, and a majority of them are rural-urban migrants. As Kong (2010) comments with regard to the MSW in his study, being a rural-urban migrant, in addition to working as a sex worker and undertaking homosexual practices (as is the case for almost all of the men in this study), means that these men are "subjects of triple discrimination" (ibid.:180), in a situation in which "...the hegemonic ideal of citizenship ... tends to construct rural migrants as 'backward', 'low class' and of 'low quality'; to define sex work as 'immoral', 'dirty' and diseased; and to proscribe same-sex sexual activities as 'immoral', 'perverted' and 'sick'" (ibid.: 191).

Being perceived to be homosexual, or to undertake homosexual practices sits in contrast to heteronormative Chinese values of masculinity, such as marriage (between a man and a woman) (W Wei 2010), while selling sex challenges homosexual normative values around cosmopolitan gay identities that place love and money into separate spheres (Kong 2010, Rofel 2010). For non-sex working gay Chinese men, “the primary exclusion of money boys signifies a rejection of the rural” (Rofel 1999:467), so an additional part of the Chinese ‘gay’ identity is urbanity, also challenging the positions of many of the MSW who originate in rural areas. These multiple identity categories – gay, rural, sex worker - all of which may apply in different contexts to the study participants - have areas of intersection (for example when MSW self-identify as homosexual, or indeed consciously perform a homosexual identity for their clients), but there are also substantial tensions between these categories.

An intersectional understanding (Crenshaw 1991, CB Lu 2013) with regards to the position of these men in China highlights the multiple forms of stigma and subalternity that they experience (Dutton 1998; 1999), but also how the men themselves manage and cope with their stigmatised positions. Intersectional invisibility is experienced by those with more than one subordinate identity (Purdie-Vaughns *et al.* 2008), who do not fit the ‘prototypical’ characteristics of their respective subordinate groups and are generally unrecognised as members of their groups. “Such individuals tend to be marginal members within marginalised groups. This status relegates them to a position of acute social invisibility” (ibid.:5). The authors posit that the advantages of such an invisible identity are that the more active forms of discrimination are likely to be aimed against the more visible, prototypical members of the marginalised group. However, I challenge this view and suggest that the most marginalised within these marginalised groups, those rendered intersectionally invisible, need to also be conceived of as being subject to the discrimination of the prototypical members of the marginalised groups. This means that not only are the intersectional members invisible, but superimposed onto their invisibility is a further layer of subjugation from other more prototypical group members, thus transgender-identifying sex workers are stigmatised by non-transgender men (a phenomenon not unknown by any means in the Gay Liberation movement, for example, from which transgender individuals have frequently been

excluded (Matte *et al.* 2004)), and those with HIV are stigmatised by those not infected. This intersectional approach to multiple identities highlights how differently stigmatised positions can interact to necessitate the active management of identities. This can enable the MSW to reduce their exposure to stigma, or indeed potentially can result in them being exposed to other sources of risk.

#### 5.4.2 Managing relations

Given the centrality of relationality and social networks in the male sex industry (Chapter 4), but also Chinese society more broadly (through, for example, *guanxi* networks), presenting or performing different identities in different social contexts can either establish, maintain or destroy relations that are central to those networks. One key way to manage stigmatised identities therefore is through the selective disclosure of those identities to different social contacts.

Survey respondents were asked whether they had disclosed their work to friends and family, along with their reasons for (not) doing so. In total, just four out of 251 (1.6%) said they had disclosed only to their family, while 43 said they had told friends, while a further seven said they had disclosed to both friends and family, with no particular pattern emerging by age or self-identified sexual orientation. While this is a rather crude measure, it nevertheless highlights how difficult disclosure of their stigmatised work can be for these men. The following quotations (recorded verbatim during survey data collection) show the range of responses that MSW received following disclosure: “[it was] not accepted at first, but this society is so materialistic and this work earns so much money, they eventually accepted it” (Male, 29, Jiangxi Province – told family); “they do not support me” (Male, 18, Hunan Province – told friends and family); “My friends are MB’s, so I told them” (Male, 26, Anhui Province – told friends); “They could not believe it. Eventually they stopped contacting me” (Transgender, 25, province missing – told friends); “at first, they couldn’t accept it, finally they reminded me to be safe” (Male, 22, Henan Province– told friends). Both positive and negative responses were found for those who had disclosed, but the majority of respondents expressed particular concern about discussing their work with their families.

Some typical reasons for non-disclosure to family were: “old people reject homosexuality” (Male, 35, Jiangxi Province – told friends); “I have a rural family who cannot accept this work” (Male, 19, Guangxi Province); “they want me to get married so I cannot tell them” (Male, 20, Hubei Province); “they would kill me, they don’t accept [this work]” (Male, 45, Shanxi Province); “they would lose face” (Male, 23, Liaoning Province); “they cannot accept this work. I also don’t feel that I completely accept this work” (Male, 23, Hubei Province); “this is disgraceful, I cannot tell them” (Male, 25, Hunan Province). These brief quotes give some insight into some of the stigma associated with male sex work. Fear of loss of face, the disgrace associated with selling sex, and ‘rural’ values (based on traditional beliefs around the social obligations of children) all preventing disclosure. Furthermore, the stigma expressed here is not only reflective of the perceived views of social contacts and wider society, but also suggests that some of the MSW themselves have stigmatising views of their work.

- R: This job is *jianbudeguang*<sup>45</sup> [shady]... And it’s not safe... And then there is your reputation... We are just like hookers ... And then there is a moral standard in the society.
- I: What do you mean?
- R: It’s like, if you can do honest work, you shouldn’t be doing this. Most people would only consider sex after they get married. People would say that our line of work is degenerate.  
(Male, 22, Sichuan Province)

- R: I feel like this job is *yousun zunyan* [undignified/demeaning]. It [my dignity] is all gone. And people would look down on you. This line of work is looked down upon by this country in general. Everyone seems disgusted by homosexuality. The pressure is high from life, work, family... I am in favour of [homosexuality]. Many people reject that, you know?  
(Male, 23, Henan Province)

These quotes highlight how the interviewees consider their work to be viewed by other people, with discussion of reputation, degeneracy and dignity, and highlight links between sex work, sexuality, familial pressure and stigma. The first highlights how selling sex transgresses moral standards, indicating a degree of internalisation and shame in his perceptions of the stigmatised nature of his sex work identity. The

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<sup>45</sup> Lit. Cannot see the light

second interviewee makes a discursive jump from discussion of China's view of sex work to the stigma associated with homosexuality. As Jeffreys comments: "...homosexual identification is negotiated within conceptions of 'face' and 'status' that continue to invoke both the family and the nation as forces that are constitutive of one's social being" (2007:170). Discussions therefore of the perceived stigma that the MSW face, though their self-identified or externally-posed homosexuality, must consider the interactions between their identities and the wider contexts of family and nation in which they are sited (see LH Yang *et al.* (2008) for a discussion of similar processes in relation to HIV stigma).

The conflation of different identities emerged as a common theme throughout conversations with the MSW:

R: There's a saying, how to put it, *zhuang-B* [dressing up boys] are more shameful than *mai-B* [selling boys], obviously it's *tongxinglian* [homosexuals] who also want to be *zhuang-B* isn't it, so it's very shameful.

(Male, 24, Henan Province)

This transgender self-identifying sex worker expresses a hierarchy of identity categories, with 'transgender' being presented as more shameful than 'sex worker'. In so doing, the interviewee is highlighting an important differentiation between (trans)gender identity and other (also stigmatised) sexual and sex working identities. These intersectional identities emerged throughout the interviews. One interviewee put it very bluntly:

R: ...*Maiyin* [prostitutes] are the same as *tongxinglian* [homosexuals]. They're all within the *quan* [circle]. Both of these pressures are big.

(Male, 38, Hunan Province)

He equates sex worker and homosexual identities as being equivalent here. He employs the 'circle' metaphor to encompass both, highlighting the shared pressures associated with both identities. As Lorway (2009) and colleagues note, in their study of MSW in India: "in this milieu, textured by interwoven intimate and material economies, sexual-gender difference and sex work become inexorably intertwined in emerging sexual subjectivities" (ibid.:155). Thus in their work, as here, for those in the 'circle', the boundaries between different identities or subjectivities are blurred

and permeable. Whether this permeability is visible to those outside the circle though is questionable. Society's view of the different subject positions of sex worker and homosexual was explored, and it becomes apparent that these two identities are not perceived in the same way by those outside of the circle:

- I: So did you know you were gay before doing this job?  
R: I didn't sense it. [Now] I wouldn't tell people.  
I: So in the questionnaire, would you have said gay, straight or bisexual?  
R: I would say gay. I don't feel scared with telling your organisation.  
I: So how do you think society sees your job?  
R: They despise us. They despise us. I don't mean *MB* [money boys], I mean *tongxinglian* [homosexuals]... people don't have contact with this kind of people, this line of work... so when people mention homosexuality they feel disgusted. That's what I think. I think it's not accepted in China.  
I: How about being a *ya* [duck – MSW who sells only to women]? Would there be less pressure?  
R: Being a *ya* would be less pressured. Being a *ya* is very ordinary... being an *MB* is pretty difficult... like being a *ya*, serving ladies, they don't feel pressured, because they are not homosexual.  
(Male, 22, Jiangxi Province)

Different identity categories, here either being a sex worker, or being homosexual, carry different levels of stigma for the MSW. When asked about people's view of his work, his concern was more towards the same-sex practices that his work entails. Society's view of homosexuality being perceived to be substantially worse than its view of prostitution, going further to suggest that selling sex only to female clients would involve less stigma. This implies that the identity of 'sex worker', when engaging in non-homosexual practices is relatively unstigmatised, compared to sex workers selling sex to other men. Another interviewee comments:

- R: Because it's man on man services, so even if you're not gay, other people can incorrectly think you are. Originally in China, it wasn't open, so if they knew you were gay, that would be bad... you could lose face, your family would also lose face, your family wouldn't be able to accept it. It's not like those women who work as *xiaojie* [FSW].  
I: You mean it's better to do prostitution than to be gay?  
R: Yes, it's more open [accepted]... Men liking men, this feels very abnormal.  
(Male, 21, Jiangxi Province)

The interviewee suggests that losing face would result from people finding out that he sells sex, as they conflate MSW and homosexual identities, the latter being the more problematic and stigmatised.

- I: We have asked everyone, why not tell [others what you do]. There are some people who say they are worried that their family and friends would not understand. Now, the second reason is, I am scared that they will know that I'm having sex with gay people, this gives us a feeling that they feel that selling sex and having gay sex are connected. Do you have this feeling too?
- R: No, I don't, I don't ... For example, other people tell me that they are selling sex, they are selling sex to women, the seller is a man
- I: Oh, you can say that you are selling sex, but your meaning is that you can't say you're selling sex to men?
- R: I couldn't tell my family that I'm selling sex to men. Selling to women, for example, I have a friend, an internet friend, he asked: do you work in a bar? Yes, we only serve female clients. It's not possible to tell him that I serve male clients ... You can't say that you serve men... Yes, unlike with female [clients], it feels like being gay is unacceptable
- I: So serving men means there is pressure?
- R: Yes, there are people that feel that. For example, friends would feel nauseated if they knew that you served male clients, that kind of thing.

(Male, 24, Henan Province)

In the dialogue above, not only does the interviewee describe how being perceived to be gay is very stigmatised, saying that friends would feel 'nauseated', but he also indicates one strategy for managing that stigma. Namely that he tells friends that he only serves women. In this case, being a MSW who has heterosexual commercial sex is considered more acceptable, and so he is able to present himself in those terms to his peers. Another respondent says:

- R: There is not emotional connection between the client and the *MB*. Most of the interaction is *xuwei* [coy or false]. One moment you are spooning and sweet talking, the next you are putting clothes back on and going on separate ways. It was only a transaction. So I think if you can accept men then, there is a possibility. If you are truly a *zhinan* [straight man], I doubt you would do it for any amount of money.

(Male, 21, Hunan Province)

The idea of being 'truly a *zhinan*' is an interesting one, as it raises questions not only around the ways that MSW conceive of their own and others' identities and the ways

in which they are presented, but also hints at there being an authentic identity category, and by inference he is suggesting that it is not possible to be a 'truly straight' MSW. This interviewee also touches on the performance he feels is required with clients, consciously discussing the contrast between sweet talking to them, and the transactional nature of the encounter. Another discusses how his self-identity changed through his work:

- R: It's only after doing this, and I see myself as people from this circle, and try hard to learn something about this.
- I: So you used to be heterosexual?
- R: uh huh
- I: [and you] became bisexual after doing this job?
- R: Right.
- I: But you said you are not excited while you have sex with guys? Not aroused?
- R: No
- I: ...And have you ever liked any guys?
- R: No. Hmm, they feel more like brothers.

(Male, 22, Hunan Province)

This example shows how self-identifying as bisexual for this participant reflects his behaviours perhaps more than his feelings. He frames his work and subsequent identity change as being a process of learning. Nevertheless, he does not enjoy having sex with men, seeing them more like brothers. This raises questions of his performativity both with his clients, and with me (and the research assistant) in the interview setting – to what extent does his representation of his identity to us match with how he feels about himself? This interviewee also implies that sexual identity is not only context specific, but changeable through time. This highlights at the very least the importance of seeing identity as a malleable and fluid construct.

Taking a more pluralistic and dynamic approach to understanding identity then permits us to conceptualise the negotiation of different identities, in different contexts and at different times:

- I: But you feel that you can like women?
- R: Yes, then on the psychological side I like some women, then why haven't I ever bought sex from them? ...at that time, I didn't get into the *quanzi* [circle], psychologically inside I liked women, I just mean I liked women, but after getting into this circle, I liked men, then I thought that buying sex from women wasn't too interesting.

(Transgender, 22, Jiangsu Province)

This interviewee describes how through entering into the MSW circle, her desires have changed, where previously she had liked women, now she has lost interest in them. This phenomenon appeared in another dialogue:

- I: Have you ever heard of it, there are these friends who have done it [had sex] with a lot of men, that before they had been interested in women, [but] now they are not interested?  
R: Yes. I am also like this. Yes, before, when I was a student I only had girlfriends  
I: And now you feel that now you don't like women?  
R: Yes.

(Male, 21, Jiangxi Province)

Both of these interviewees indicate that one's sexual identity and expressed sexual preferences can be plastic, with regular sexual contact with other men seen to potentially change how one feels about having sex with women, and thus how one's identity might change. This highlights an interesting phenomenon in which sex as work can then change the worker's sexual identity outside of work, suggesting that these multiple intersecting subjectivities can influence one another over time. On the other hand, one sex worker who only sells sex to men comments:

- R: ...I am heterosexual.  
I: But you just said you enjoy sex with men, even the first time doing it, you were very comfortable. Do you agree?  
R: The first time ... Yeah.  
I: So do you think you'll be happy in the coming future having sex with men?  
R: It's fine.

(Male, 21, Guangdong Province)

This interviewee's heterosexual identity does not appear to be challenged by his apparent enjoyment of sex with his male clients, raising the possibility that self-identified sexual orientation in this case is unconnected with sexual practices. Thus the fluidity in identities suggested previously, in this case might be manifested as fluidity in the meanings of a heterosexual identity for this man. Given the relatively privileged position of heterosexual (versus other sexual or transgender) identity, it is perhaps unsurprising that many of the MSW presented themselves as such. Furthermore, some expressed concern that their work threatened their heterosexual

identity, by changing their desires, an implicit acknowledgement perhaps of the fluidity of these categories:

- R: ... if you do this work for a long time by chance, then you cannot get married, or you don't have any feelings when doing it with girls, so you're scared afterwards to get married, what can you do about being forced to get married at home? If you happen to find a girlfriend, you can't do it, what's the use in getting married, I'm worried that afterwards I won't be able to marry, how will I account for this with my family? Everyone thinks about this, when they return home, there is pressure in the family for forced marriages and to find a girl, you cannot do it with her, it's tragic.  
(Male, 21, Jiangxi Province)

This MSW considers sex work to be a risk to his sexual identity, as he worries that it will have a permanent effect of making him not want to have sex with women. There is also evidence here of parallels between his fears of being unable to marry a woman, and concern about his family's opinion of him. His filial duty to marry and reproduce would be unattainable, through working for too long selling sex. Several other interviewees discussed ways to protect their heterosexual identities:

- R: If I make enough money then maybe I would [go to a female prostitute], doing this work, we have some kind of psychological *bupingheng* [imbalance].  
I: Oh, Imbalance?  
R: Right.  
I: You need to go rent one to balance it out.  
R: They all buy sex  
I: ... So the escorts go to rent *xiaojie* [FSW]?  
R: You have to buy because you sell.  
(Male, 22, Shandong Province)

Here the interviewee evokes the idea of disequilibrium bought about through his work. Selling sex too much means that he then needs to go to a female sex worker to buy sex. In going to visit a female sex worker, he might be reinforcing his identity as someone who has sex with women and challenging the conflation of 'MSW' and 'homosexual' as identities.

What emerges from the multiple identities that the participants manage is a picture of active negotiation. Many of the interviewees suggest that in the eyes of the outside world, as well as in their own experience, being a 'sex worker' is much more than

about simply selling sex. Tied to this identity, with its associated stigma, is the additional notion that to be a male sex worker also means being a homosexual. Homosexuality is perhaps even more stigmatised than sex work, thus further necessitating selective disclosure of either sexual orientation, or sex work identity (presumed to be coterminous). The result appears to be an approximate equivalence between MSW and homosexuality, in terms of the respondents' views of how other people categorise and stigmatise their identities. This can be seen to present a challenge for those sex workers who identify as heterosexual and bisexual. For those self-identifying as homosexual, though, the stigma against male sex workers from the wider homosexual community also means that they must manage their identities, by concealing their work to non-sex working peers. Therefore, for all of the respondents, the stigma of either sex work, or sex work and its conflation with homosexuality means that different social and sexual contacts have to be carefully negotiated. Butler (1990:24) provides useful insight into this process, as she suggests that identity is performatively constituted. Here, such performativity can be taken to mean sexual practices of the MSW in different situations, or with different partners. The following section discusses sexual partner concurrency, here presented as a practice undertaken by MSW to negotiate their multiple identities.

## **5.5 Negotiating multiple partners**

Partner concurrency, in which an individual has multiple, overlapping partnerships, can be seen as both an outcome and facilitator of identity management for many of the MSW. The interviews suggest that the heterosexual self-identified sex workers have sexual partnerships with female sex workers and non-commercial partners as a way to reinforce their identity as straight men. Because the sex worker identity is highly stigmatised by the wider homosexual community, many of the homosexual identifying sex workers feel they need to conceal their work from those outside of the industry. The result is that non-commercial partnerships occur alongside commercial partnerships, and act to support different elements of the participants' multiple identities. The partner concurrency data suggest that partner choice and type is the product of a dynamic process of identity management for many MSW. Not only do MSW have multiple partner types, but these partnerships may cross over with one another temporally. Concurrency data provide insight into the lived experience of the MSW and can be seen as an outcome of their identity management, juggling different

sexual partnership types simultaneously. Partner concurrency is also important from an HIV perspective, as it has been connected with elevated risk of transmission through sexual networks (Morris *et al.* 1997, Mah *et al.* 2008, Epstein 2010, Mah *et al.* 2010, Mah *et al.* 2011). The following section details what partner concurrency means in this context and will argue that the sexual networks of MSW, both in terms of their partner types, and degree of concurrency appears to vary in part according to their self-identified sexual orientation and gender identity. These, alongside other characteristics such as education level and age seem to play a role in the types of partnerships in which they are involved. One interviewee highlighted how his HIV infection, alongside intersecting networks of sexual partners, was of central concern to him:

The effect [of HIV] has been very big, for example, I have deliberately alienated my previous friends, I think about my relationships with current friends... I have very few friends now...Being worried about other people knowing is one aspect, for example, now I go to [work on] the station street, it's all of us in this gang [by the] station, I'm most scared of them knowing, because if they know they will estrange me. Because their greatest fear, how do I say this after all, because those clients they can come and find me today, tomorrow can find them, or the day after could find another one.

(Transgender, 32, Guangxi Province)

Because his commercial sexual networks intersect with those of his fellow sex workers, if they were to discover that he has HIV, they would ostracise him. HIV is highly stigmatised, but in this case, his fears of stigma are combined with the knowledge that his clients are the same as the clients of his peers. This example shows how HIV can spread through a group of people, here not because they are having sex with each other, but rather because they are sharing clients. Interestingly, it is the clients, rather than sex workers who are viewed in this case as the *vectors* for HIV transmission, touching on the discussion of the discourse around blame earlier in this chapter. Taken as a whole, we see that discussions of sexual networks can interface directly with concerns around HIV transmission risk for this group, again highlighting the role that the duality of structure-agency can play in understanding HIV risk.

Moving the discussion on to how partner concurrency is manifested among the study participants, first the term concurrency needs some clarification in the context of male

sex work. Given that these men have very large numbers of sexual partners, the usual considerations of what concurrency means in the general population do not apply here in the same way. The UNAIDS concurrency report (UNAIDS 2009) makes recommendations for the measurement of partner concurrency in general population studies in high HIV prevalence areas. These include taking a point prevalence estimate for the levels of concurrency in the six months prior to study date for any partner concurrency, estimating cumulative prevalence of partner concurrency in the previous year, and estimating the proportion of partnerships that were concurrent in the previous year (ibid.). These recommendations, while useful as a starting point, are not entirely suitable for populations such as male sex workers, in which the likelihood of multiple partners (and concurrency) is very high given their work, and for whom there are likely different types of partnerships occurring both sequentially and concurrently, between whom sexual behaviours (and same sex practices) may differ. For example, it would not be feasible to ask MSW to list all of the start and end dates of every sexual partnership they have had in the previous six months or year because of the likelihood that recall would not be possible in a group with so many partners. The study participants were asked to count the number of commercial and non-commercial sexual partners they had had over several time periods in order to map out the levels of partnerships (Table 5-2).

**Table 5-2 Number of partners reported in survey, by partner type and time period**

	Mean	S.d.	Median
Number of paying partners last 7 days	3.2	4.1	2
Number of paying partners last 30 days	14.2	18.9	10
Number of times paid for sex in last 12 months	3.5	8.2	0
Number of non-commercial partners in last 30 days	3.3	7.2	1
Number of non-commercial partners in last 12 months	21.7	78.9	5

MSW report high numbers of commercial and non-commercial partners. The number of commercial partners exceeds non-commercial, but both numbers would likely be too high for effective recall over the 12 month period recommended by UNAIDS. Furthermore, it is arguable that the type of partnership (i.e. commercial, or non-commercial) might be important in determining the significance of concurrency on HIV transmission. Such differentiation is not mentioned by UNAIDS. Fears expressed

in the literature regarding MSW as potential ‘bridges’ for HIV infection into the wider (usually, heterosexual) population, possibly through their non-commercial female partners remain prevalent in the Chinese discourse, and while potentially problematic for the representations of MSW as *vectors*, this issue is still worthy of investigation from the perspective of understanding risks to both MSW and their partners, along with the ways they use sexual networks in relation to their multiple identities. As such, a more nuanced analysis of the sexual partner concurrency situation among the MSW in Shenzhen is presented here.

Several different measures of partner concurrency were developed in order to measure both the presence and magnitude of concurrency among the respondents. The survey questionnaire (Appendix B) included questions relating to the three most recent commercial and three most recent non-commercial sexual partners of the respondents (question 53). Data collected included the start and end dates of the partnership, some basic demographic data about the partner, and whether a condom was used or not. From the start and end date data, it is possible to calculate the duration of each partnership, and whether there was any crossover with any of the other five partners.

### 6.1.1 Types of concurrency

Figure 5.3 below shows a stylised version of the partnership data for four hypothetical respondents in the sample, to demonstrate how the concurrency measures are constructed.

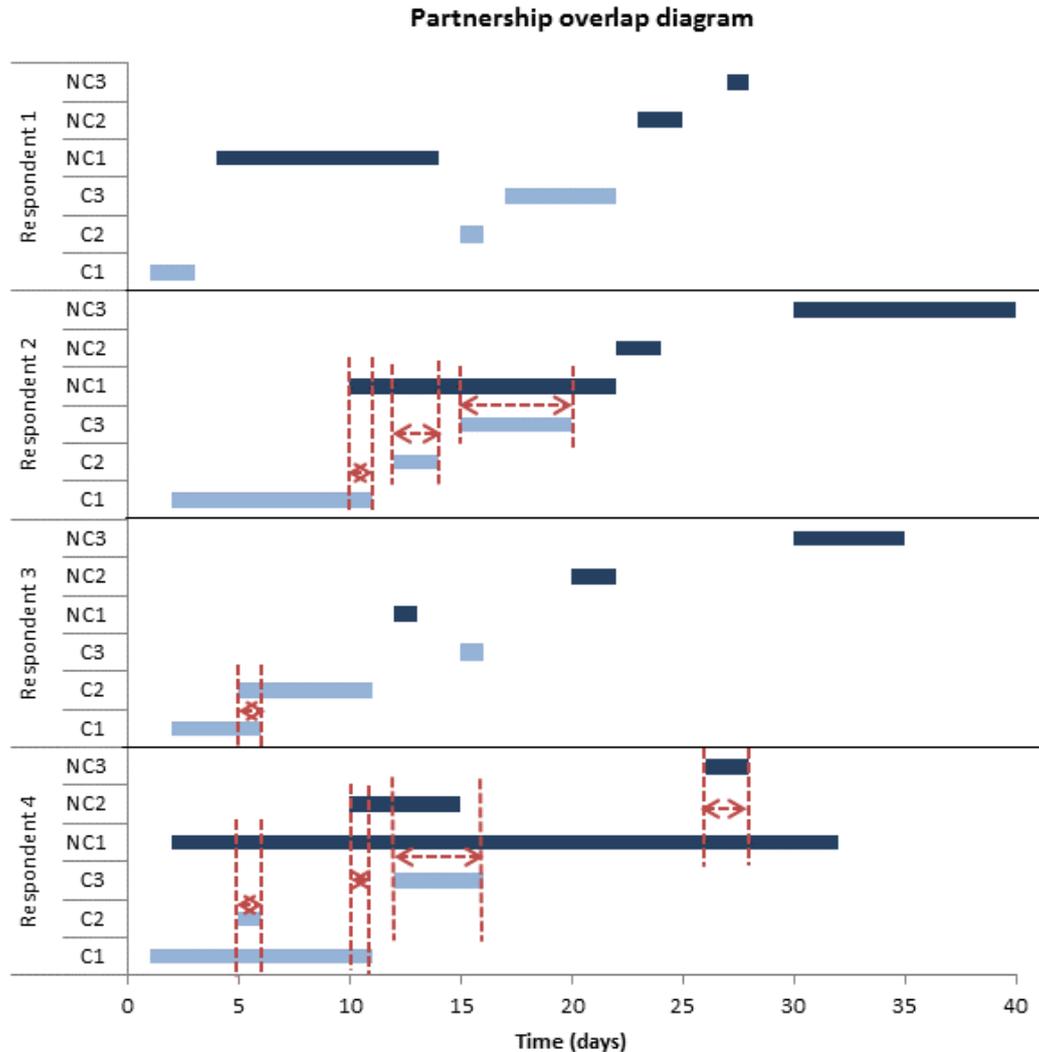


Figure 5-3 Stylised concurrency diagram. Dark blue bars representing non-commercial partners 1 to 3 (NC1-3), light blue representing commercial partners 1 to 3 (C1-3).

The four respondents shown above exemplify four different types of partnership. The light and dark blue bars represent non-commercial and commercial partnerships respectively, with time (days) on the x-axis. The period of overlap is highlighted by the red lines and arrows. Respondent 1 shows a six-relationship history in which there was no concurrency, with six discrete, non-overlapping partners. Respondent 2 has no overlap between commercial partners, nor does he have any between non-commercial partners. However, there is overlap between all three commercial partners and the

most recent non-commercial partner – this type of concurrency will be referred to as cross-group concurrency here. Respondent 3 shows concurrency only between two commercial partners and no others, and will be referred to as within-group concurrency here. Note that while in the case above, this within-group concurrency is only occurring with commercial partners, it is also possible to have within-group concurrency for just non-commercial partners. Finally respondent 4 shows a more complex picture in which there is both cross-group and within-group concurrency occurring.

These cross-overs (concurrency) are measured both within group (i.e. for non-commercial partners and commercial partners separately), and then as a general measure (covering all six partnerships).

**Table 5-3 Frequency of MSW reporting concurrent partnerships (n=251)**

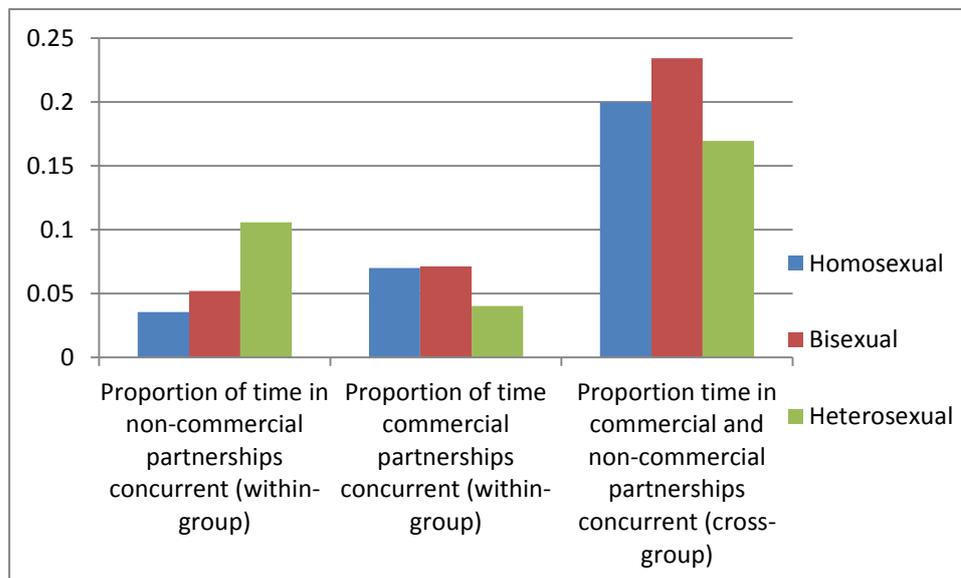
Concurrency type	Frequency	Percentage of sample	
None	122	48.6	
Any concurrency	129	51.4	
Total	251	100.0	
Cross-group	115	45.8	
Within-group	Commercial partners	41	16.3
	Non-commercial partners	11	4.4

Nb. The sum of cross- and within-group concurrency is greater than the total for ‘any concurrency’ as these categories are not mutually exclusive.

More than half (51.4%) of the MSW in the sample have had some history of concurrency for their previous six partnerships. When considering the types of partnerships involved, fewer than 5% of MSW had had concurrency among their non-commercial partners, while just over 16% had had concurrency among their commercial partners. A much larger proportion, 45%, had had concurrency among commercial and non-commercial partners. This may have been for a number of reasons. First, given that the MSW were asked about their three most recent commercial and three most recent non-commercial partners in the survey, the cross-group category for concurrency involves a larger potential pool of relationships that could cross over one another. Even taking this into account, though, the cross-group category still accounts for a larger proportion of the concurrent partnerships than we might expect if partnership type did not have any effect on concurrency. As such, other explanations are required to attempt to understand these results. Furthermore,

epidemiologically it might be argued that concurrency across relationship group types might be of particular interest among MSW given their potential to spread HIV outside of the typical risk groups for infection, for example, to wives or other non-commercial partners.

A set of variables was created for the proportion of total relationship time spent in a concurrent partnership for commercial, non-commercial, and all partners. Details on the creation of these variables can be found in Appendix H.



**Figure 5-4 Proportion of total relationship time spent in concurrent partnerships by partnership type and self-identified sexual orientation**

MSW self-identifying as heterosexual have more than twice the proportion of relationship time in concurrent non-commercial partnerships but only around half the proportion of their commercial partnership time spent concurrently than their bisexual or homosexual self-identifying peers (Figure 5-4). A more mixed picture emerges for the cross-group concurrency measure, for which those self-identifying as bisexual report the highest proportion of time in commercial and non-commercial partnerships concurrently.

All of the concurrency measures are positively correlated with one another (Table 5-4), but the commercial and cross-group measures are both more closely matched with each other and with the overall measure of concurrency than the non-commercial

measures. This implies that those sex workers undertaking concurrent behaviours with their commercial partners are also frequently having concurrent relationships between their commercial and their non-commercial partners. This could have implications for their risk of transmitting infections to their non-commercial partners.

**Table 5-4 Correlation matrix for different concurrency types, n=251**

		Overall concurrency ratio	Cross-group	Within group		
				Commercial	Non- commercial	
Overall concurrency ratio	r	1				
	Sig.	-				
Cross-group	r	0.9276	1			
	Sig.	(<0.001)	-			
Within group	Commercial	r	0.5798	0.3544	1	
		Sig.	(<0.001)	(<0.001)	-	
	Non- commercial	r	0.5023	0.169	0.1089	1
		Sig.	(<0.001)	(0.122)	(0.339)	-

On the other hand, the within group non-commercial concurrency ratio is not significantly correlated with the cross-group nor the within-group commercial concurrency ratios, meaning that the people who are in multiple concurrent non-commercial partnerships are not necessarily more likely to also be in cross-group or within-group commercial concurrent partnerships. Furthermore, there is an uneven distribution of cross-group concurrency in the MSW sample, with broad findings that: older ages appear to have lower rates of cross-group concurrency; rates appear to decrease with increasing levels of education; MSW identifying as bisexual have higher rates than other men, and those identifying as transgender have lower rates of concurrency than their non-transgender peers. Further data for the concurrency measures are provided in Appendix I.

## 5.6 Conclusion

I began this chapter with a description of the types of sexual partnerships reported by study participants. A tension emerged in the data between self-identified sexual orientation and reported types of sexual partners, challenging the normative view of sexual orientation as static or deterministic in partner selection. These partnerships were set within a broader discussion of stigma and identity, presenting evidence that the participants are engaging in a process of active negotiation of multiple,

intersecting stigmatised identities. The ways in which the MSW actively manage these identities through their sexual networks were then explored, with an analysis of partner concurrency presented as evidence of that process of identity negotiation. These data were framed within a broader discussion of sex work and sexual orientation and gender identity. These identities are in turn negotiated within a broader context of stigma, problematized as not only an individually-experienced, but also socially and structurally constituted (Hatzenbuehler *et al.* 2013); as Jeffrey Weeks (2003) comments: “sexual identities ... are like relay points for a number of interconnected differences, conflicts and opportunities” (ibid.:123-4), something borne out in the data reported in this chapter.

I present the MSWs’ social worlds as sites of constant negotiation and management of multiple identities. There are some spaces in which they can confidently expect not to ‘bump into’ someone they know from another world, meaning that they can expect to remain anonymous (Goffman 1963). Shenzhen acts as one of those spaces. “By residing in a region with a mobile population, he can limit the amount of continuous experience others have of him. By residing in a region cut off from one he ordinarily frequents he can introduce a disconnectedness in his biography...” (ibid.:122). The intersections between identity, stigma and place suggested here build on the discussion in previous chapters about the role Shenzhen as a site plays in both representing modernity and cosmopolitanism, and as a place for sex work which offers anonymity for the MSW. Nevertheless, even in Shenzhen, the MSW continue to occupy stigmatised positions. The ways in which they are able to negotiate their identities, in part through the types of sexual relationships that they have, but also importantly in the ways in which they manage those identities - concealing partners from one another, or revealing certain aspects of their work, partnerships and lives - shows how these intersecting elements combine in a dynamic way in the lived experience of Shenzhen’s MSW. Sexual partner choice and negotiation is of course about more than just identity. In the case of these men, their commercial sexual partners provide their income. For non-commercial partners, there are expectations for many of the men to be or get married, fulfilling obligations to their families. However, in framing their partnerships through a discussion of stigma and identity, I have illuminated other aspects of their decision making, and reject notions of disingenuousness on the part of the MSW in describing their own identities. Muessig

(2011) comments that “...the actual distribution of sexual identity among money boys is unknown, this sexual ambiguity prevents the ‘placement’ of these men within a standard social or sexual categorisation” (ibid.:143). The findings presented in this chapter challenge the very idea that sexual identity could be so fixed, and rather than ambiguity, with its connotations of vagueness, I would suggest that the sexual (and other) identities presented by the MSW are much more complex – they are the products of dynamic processes of negotiation, and rather than being ambiguous are actually quite clear, but changeable and context dependent.

Consideration of the interactions between sex worker identity, sexual orientation and gender identity and sexual partnerships opens the discursive space for analysis by moving away from an essentialist notion of a single, stable identity, to a more dynamic conceptualisation in which these actors can hold different identities in different contexts. Such negotiation is both necessitated and moderated by the varying levels of stigma associated with different identities. Partner concurrency, presented here, in part, as an outcome of this process of negotiation, also moves the discussion towards consideration of HIV transmission risk specifically, which is the next chapter’s central theme.

## 6 *Anquan xingxingwei* [safe sex]: local safer sex practices among Shenzhen's MSW



A wall-mounted condom vending machine in Shenzhen.

### 6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I address the final subsidiary research question ‘how do MSW understand and negotiate their HIV risk?’ by exploring the multiple meanings of *anquan xingxingwei* [safe sex] for the MSW in the study. In doing so, I make explicit some of the tensions and areas of agreement between emic and etic perspectives on HIV risk behaviours and safe sex practices. The previous chapter analysed the sex workers’ relationships and the ways in which they manage and negotiate their multiple partnerships in the context of the stigmatised positions in which they occur. Conceptualising HIV risk using the risk environment framework (Barnett *et al.* 1999, Rhodes 2002, Barnett *et al.* 2006) has driven the previous chapters’ discussions of

context at various levels of abstraction from the immediate behaviours of the MSW. Now focussing in on the micro-level of potential HIV transmission, in this chapter I turn to the more proximate risk behaviours, and the sex workers' understandings and representations of their own risks of HIV infection.

R: Clients, the majority of them don't want to *daitao* [wear condoms]. But *xiaodi* [little brothers] all like to *daitao*. But I have come across people who I haven't known whether they like to use them or not. For example, when I come across people I like who are girls, I don't use them. It's possible [then] that I wouldn't *daitao*... with men, I always use them.

I: [If] you always use them with men, then why not with women?

R: If you like or don't like something *xinli* [in your heart; psychologically], then it's totally different.

(Male, 24, Henan Province)

The interviewee is aware of the importance of condoms in sex, but describes differential condom use with men and women. This might reflect how he feels psychologically about having sex with men or women, hinting that the role of condoms extends beyond purely providing a physical barrier during sex, to take on broader psychologically protective meanings for some of these men who are providing sexual services to other men.

It is important to examine the HIV risk behaviours of Shenzhen's MSW for a number of reasons. First, these men are theorised to be at increased risk of HIV infection and transmission as well as high levels of partner concurrency and complex sexual networks (Chapter 5), and the majority are MSM (Baral *et al.* 2007, Morris *et al.* 2010, UNAIDS 2013b). This posited increased risk is supported by evidence from the MSW CBO with which I worked to collect data, whose own data suggest that HIV prevalence rates among MSW in Shenzhen are around 10% and growing (Shenzhen CBO Key Informant Interview). This compares unfavourably to infection rates of less than 0.1% prevalence in the general population, and 6.3% among MSM nationally (AVERT 2012, UNAIDS 2012), and suggests that this group are at a considerably elevated risk of infection. Second, in the MSW's own discourse, HIV emerges as a significant concern. This emic viewpoint moves us beyond calculations of transmission probabilities, towards a more socially constructed understanding of HIV risk. From this perspective, the stigma and thus fear of infection (or suspected

infection) produces what has been termed a ‘social contagion’ (D Rao *et al.* 2008), the consequences of which are complex, and link to safe sex practices which extend beyond consistent condom use. Tied to this are local understandings of germ theory. Evidence of a local germ theory emerges, which discursively links hygiene to condoms and disease avoidance, and is presented by the MSW both as a literal way to ensure safe sex, and I argue, as a way to cognitively manage the perceived dirtiness of their work. Mary Douglas' (1991) work exploring ritual cleanliness, purity and taboo provides an anthropological antecedent to my findings around the importance of hygiene in the work of MSW in this study. Douglas presents dirt as "matter out of place" (ibid.:41), or disorder, interpretable both literally, but more significantly here, as a metaphysical condition. Furthermore, Douglas provides us with a social-constructivist understanding of hygiene, which highlights the moral-boundedness of definitions of dirt, and its corollary in sexual practice – promiscuity (Douglas, 1991; Slavin *et al.* 2004). This raises questions as to how the MSW view their work, which I explore in more detail later in this chapter.

A further tension emerges in this chapter between the public health discourse and emic local representations. HIV has been termed a “disease of post-modernity” by Bancroft (2001:95), and it is through this lens that the apparent tension between the sex workers’ conceptualisations of “safe sex” and the wider public and public health discourse are confronted in this chapter. However, I do not present the sex workers’ and wider public health viewpoints as being mutually exclusive. Local understandings around HIV are informed by messages from public health services and campaigns and contact with NGO staff and the media, but these messages are then reinterpreted at the local level (Lorway *et al.* 2014), in a process akin to Boellstorf’s (2003; 2005) ‘dubbing’ of globalised sexual subjectivities in Indonesia. Chinese media discourse surrounding HIV is often far from scientific, both informed by, and informing the broader public discourse around the disease (Hood 2013a), the effects of which can add to the stigma of HIV in China, which in turn has been associated with poor mental health outcomes among MSW (Tao *et al.* 2010a).

The risk of HIV transmission in the context of male sex work in Shenzhen, grounded as it is within the wider social, economic and cultural context of the lives of the

MSW, is dependent on a number of factors. As Barnet and Whiteside (2006) comment, sex in and of itself is not necessarily risky; the sexual transmission of HIV can only occur in a situation in which one of the partners is infected with the virus. This highlights the role that HIV testing can play. Unless one knows the HIV status of one's partner (and oneself), it is difficult to assess the risks of HIV transmission in a given situation. Next, the use of condoms during sex is highly effective in preventing HIV transmission, and are recognised by many of the MSW as a tactic to prevent infection from HIV (and other STIs). The ways that some of the MSW in the study discuss the utility of condoms though, raises questions about their understandings of HIV risk and the possibilities for prevention. These local understandings then tie in with ideas of hygiene, and in the absence of HIV testing, with practices and beliefs around assessing the HIV risk that different partners might pose to them.

This chapter explores the multiple meanings of safe sex for the MSW in the study, examining the importance of condom use for these men, alongside hygiene and other factors that emerged from the data. It then examines the levels of HIV knowledge and perceived levels of risk of different practices for the MSW. Condom use is a key part of safer sex messaging, and so is measured here as a proxy for HIV risk. The factors that affect condom use in commercial and non-commercial settings are then analysed. *Anquan xingxingwei* [safe sex] holds a range of meanings for the participants, and these are explored in the next section.

## 6.2 Perspectives on the meaning of “safe sex”

*Anquan xingxingwei* [safe sex, a term commonly employed in discussions of sexual health in China] emerges as a frequent part of the MSW's discourse around their work and non-work sexual partnerships. Many described HIV as being the main danger of their work:

R: AIDS. That worries me the most. I am afraid my family would know... I'm afraid they would I know I am a prostitute... If we are doing *1069*<sup>46</sup>, even with condoms on, it's still haunting. You wouldn't know when or how you got infected.

(Male, 22, Jiangxi Province)

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<sup>46</sup> 1069 is a collective term for penetrative and oral sex, 1-0 representing active-passive penetrative sex; 69 representing oral sex.

This highlights not only a fear of AIDS, but also its intersection with the stigma of sex work, suggesting that HIV transmission is understood here as being both physically and socially significant.

*Anquan xingxingwei* though is not an unproblematic concept. This phrase is imbued with multiple meanings by the MSW in the study. By examining the contested space within this concept of “safe sex”, the data illuminate some of the behavioural and attitudinal motivators for different risk-avoiding practices found in the study. Whether a behaviour is considered dangerous or not depends on the individual perspective of the decision-maker; the context of the decision (for example, when selling sex, buying sex or having sex with a non-commercial partner), and who the partner is. The survey respondents were asked up to three meanings for the phrase *anquan xingxingwei* [safe sex] and their responses were noted down verbatim.

**Table 6-1** verbatim responses to survey question “How do you understand the words ‘safe sex’?”

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Number</b>
Condoms	170
Hygiene	40
"Be safe"	35
Avoid specific practices (kissing, oral sex, etc.)	22
Use lubricant	20
Avoid people with STIs	19
Avoid pregnancy	13
Avoid promiscuity	11
Health, safety, responsibility	11
Look at partner	11
Be self-aware and protect yourself	9
Avoid violence/ S&M	6
Protect each other	5
Sex should be consensual	4
Have sex with handsome men	3
Fear	3
Don't brush teeth before sex	3
Get tested	3
Don't take drugs	2
Brush teeth before sex	1
Know about diseases	1
Don't know	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>393</b>
Number of non-responses	13

Of the 238 respondents who answered this question, 71% said that 'safe sex' meant condoms for them. One interviewee commented:

- R: AIDS is rampant now everywhere, and then there are promotions on TV and from you [CBO] guys. People are scared and they would bring condoms. And the *xiaodi* [little brothers] wouldn't just casually have sex without a condom. It's just natural to wear condoms, just like how you put on more clothes in winter.  
(Male, 38, Hunan Province)

This is a typical example of discussions of safe sex among the respondents, emphasising both a consciousness of the presence and danger of HIV alongside the role of condoms in protecting against its transmission. Likening the AIDS epidemic's ubiquity to winter, saying that it is therefore natural to 'put more clothes on' emphasises how condom use has become the norm for this respondent. The awareness and use of condoms as a protective measure though may also be having unintended consequences, giving a sense of security:

- I: Do you think AIDS is serious among money boys?  
R: No. I think it's not serious. It's more serious in saunas and *419* [one night stands]. In prostitution we know the risk. We constantly meet clients; we know how to protect ourselves. For people who go out to have fun and do *419*, they just think they are clean but god knows what happened. For us, with the constant promotion and the free condom/lube provision, it's easy to protect ourselves.  
(Male, 38, Jilin Province)

In this discussion, the MSW draws a favourable comparison between MSW and people who go for *419*s. This is interesting given that so many of the MSW in the sample also had *419*s, and highlights a case perhaps of the interviewee associating with a MSW identity in the context of the research, drawing contrasts between himself and the wider MSM community. The interviewee is suggesting that MSW are safer as they are aware of how to protect themselves, again highlighting the importance of condoms in the MSW discourse around safe sex.

Being able to negotiate condom use with clients is an important part of ensuring safer sex practices. Many of the interviewees described having had clients who did not initially want to use condoms during sex, but that they were able to persuade them otherwise. One interviewee describes how following his first time selling sex (where a

condom was not used), he subsequently found himself more able to insist on condom use with his second client, who also did not want to use them:

- I: You were saying you didn't use a condom with the first client because you didn't have them?
- R: Right.
- I: Have you encountered clients who don't want to use condoms after that?
- R: One.
- I: And did you use it eventually?
- R: We did.
- I: Why did he say yes finally?
- R: Because I told him it was about *anquan* [safety].
- I: Why was the first client allowed to not use condom?
- R: ...Because it was too late. I doubted I could buy one, and he said he wouldn't put it in [penetrative sex]
- I: So why did you make the second one use it?
- R: For safety... It prevents diseases.
- I: So later when he [the second client] asked to have sex without a condom you said no?
- R: Yeah.
- I: Did you have condoms?
- R: Yes... He brought it.
- I: He brought it but he didn't wish to use it?
- R: Yeah.
- I: Oh, when you asked him to use a condom, was he okay with it?
- R: He was alright with it.

(Male, 21, Guangdong Province)

Such negotiations are important not only to ensure safety, as the MSW comments, but also to retain the client. Ensuring condom use in the above case is a negotiation, with the MSW having to persuade the client using a discourse of safety.

- R: Earning more money is nothing if we lose our lives. You can't take money with you after death. So it's always safety first for me. There should be a bottom line.
- I: Ah, and what do you need to do to make sex safe?
- R: Well people in the circle know this. Safety measures before sex, they know that.
- I: What kind of safety measures?
- R: First of all, *anquantao* [condoms]. This is the first point, and then it is usually some degree of *ziji weisheng xiguan* [one's own personal hygiene practices]. Then we need to observe our clients. You're two naked people facing each other, we need to see if there are any kinds of anomaly. Look at certain body parts. If there are any differences, if they have this, then I would definitely reject the client.

(Male, 21, Hunan Province)

The dialogue above shows an intersection between several safe sex practices used by the interviewee. Condom use is considered the first part of ensuring safety, but then personal hygiene and examining the body of the client for abnormalities are also highlighted as important. The prominence of hygiene in discussions of safe sex was evident in the verbatim survey responses, where ‘hygiene’ (or washing, showering, avoiding body odour, etc.), was mentioned by 17% of the MSW. Other practical measures, such as avoiding particular behaviours (for example, kissing), visually checking partners for STIs and avoiding pregnancy were all also mentioned by multiple respondents. A substantial minority of respondents gave responses that were not clearly associated with specific behaviours, such as “be safe”, *jiangkang*, *anquan*, *ziren* [health, safety, responsibility], or protect each other (15%, 5% and 2%, respectively). Hygiene and feelings of intimacy emerge as partially intersecting narratives around the safety of sex with different partners, and measures that can be taken to reduce risk. Meanwhile, the more abstract responses to a question on the definition of safe sex, such as “be safe”, imply perhaps either difficulties in articulating a complex subject during a survey interview, or poor levels of knowledge of practical measures to increase the safety of sexual practices. Each of the themes is explored below, beginning by drawing on hygiene as both a practice, and a metaphor for increasing safety.

### 6.2.1 Meanings of safe sex

While condoms are understood by the majority to prevent HIV and pregnancy, an important theme that emerged from analysis was around the mechanisms through which condoms were associated with “safe sex”. Hygiene was considered by many of the MSW to be a major concern, and condoms were one important way to ensure good hygiene. The concept of hygiene, though, extends beyond condom use. Like Simić and Rhodes’ (2009) study among Serbian FSW, I found hygiene to be a common framework used to conceptualise risk avoidance among the participants. Evidence of a local germ theory emerged, which ties HIV prevention to hygiene through condom use, and this conceptual frame linked hygiene to “safe sex”. One of the most common explanations for the importance of hygiene in the MSW’s narratives involved the understanding that disease is caused by bacteria, and that washing removes bacteria:

- R: First, *weisheng* [hygiene] is the most important, if you happen to get infected with something, get infected with some disease, it is very *mafan* [troublesome].
- I: Oh, so hygiene prevents infection?
- R: Yeah, I am worried about other bacteria, that they would get into my body.

(Male, 21, Guangdong Province)

This use of a local germ theory to explain the importance of washing was not only linked to the body, but also to clothing:

- R: You can't talk about STI's in a group of people. It's like before, at work in the bar, do you know how we washed out underwear? It was all washed together, all put in the washing machine and washed! It wasn't all of my underwear being washed together in the machine, your underwear, my underwear, their underwear, socks, clothes, socks, underwear, all put together in the washing machine, mixed mixed mixed!
- I: Oh, didn't this sterilise them?
- R: They were sterilised, but it was only supermarket-bought sterilising liquid, ah, but even then you can't sterilise them ah, seems like socks, underwear, trousers, that kind of thing, at that time didn't know, didn't think about it very much, at that time, small huh, probably.
- I: You couldn't? Underwear, underwear, you shouldn't wash these together? You can, ah?
- R: Yours and mine you can't. So you're saying that if you have an STI, how can you put two people's things in together to wash, you can't ah
- I: This isn't hygienic?
- R: Mmm. At that time I didn't think that much about STIs, for example a person's STIs, it's very easy to infect [others], even if you sterilise the underwear, it can't disappear ah, everything is mixed together inside the machine, at that time I didn't think about this.

(Male, 24, Henan Province)

The dialogue touches on two key themes. First is the suggestion that it is not possible to discuss STIs in a group of people. This echoes other studies which have suggested that fears of the social contagion of HIV make sexual health a difficult topic to talk about with peers (e.g. Steinberg 2011). The interviewee then goes on to express concern around the risks of contracting infections from his co-sex workers' clothing, highlighting the importance of cleanliness and specific hygiene practices for ensuring safety for this informant.

- R: If you are not hygienic you catch diseases.  
 I: Define unhygienic for me.  
 R: Bearing diseases.  
 I: Diseases. Do you mean hygiene of the clients or the venue? Can you be more specific on what is unhygienic?  
 R: Body odour... Or you shower only once a few days.  
 (Male, 27, Hunan Province)

Here, body odour is linked with a lack of cleanliness and hence disease. This highlights the ways in which dirtiness, in its literal sense, also appears to be being applied to conceptions of safe sex. The idea that such physical evidence of poor hygiene is thought to map on to sexual risk, and is thus detectable by the MSW, indicates that this is one of the tactics that they employ to manage the risk of disease transmission with their sexual partners.

One interviewee explained the mechanisms for the link between hygiene and safe sex:

- R: [They are] definitely related. If you are not clean there would be lots of bacteria.  
 I: Bacteria?  
 R: Yeah, and if the clients have it, then it would be infectious. We do shower before and after work ... And then we would brush our teeth and wash our face... It's cleaner.  
 (Male, 38, Jilin Province)

The interviewee discusses how maintaining his personal hygiene is one of the ways that he avoids contracting STIs. The discourse around bacteria and cleanliness shows a local conceptualisation of disease spread and germ theory. This not only allows for protective hygiene measures to be taken, but also fits with understandings of germs and dirt. He goes on to say:

- R: I feel dirty.  
 I: Why do you feel that way?  
 R: I don't like the clients.  
 I: We also ask if you tell others about your job. Do you?  
 R: I don't. It's shameful. That's it.  
 (Male, 38, Jilin Province)

Extending the previous discussion, hygiene then also emerges as a metaphor to counter the dirtiness of sex work, in addition to its use as a practical measure in "safe sex" for these men. This interviewee not only talked about the importance of hygiene

in a literal sense for the removal of bacteria, and hence the avoidance of infection, but also in a more metaphorical sense, saying that he feels dirty because he does not like his clients.

There is evidence that some of the MSW also rely on communication from other MSW to assess how clean or safe their customers are:

- I: Oh, so do they [other MSW in the massage centre] discuss about STIs much?
- R: Yes, they talk about it every day, every day...if they see a customer that feels like he could be not clean, he would tell us immediately, it could be bad for the next one [masseur] after all... It's just between masseuses, it's similar to you and I talking right now, for example I had an hour work today... And then I'll come to you and talk about how it felt in that job, also talk about what was the customer like ... And if it's good he'd say good, if it looks like that he [the customer] is sick, he will tell you, tell me what it's like.

(Male, 22, Hunan Province)

The role of hygiene intersects with MSW's understanding of sexual risk behaviours, and underlines how common this is as a discourse among these men, who discuss the cleanliness of clients amongst themselves. This quote also underlines the importance of the social networks of the MSW in information sharing about potentially unhygienic (and therefore from their perspective potentially HIV-infected) clients. The role that hygiene is perceived to play can be ascribed to two pathways. First, these informants know enough about disease transmission to apply the logic of cleanliness to the removal of bacteria. Second, there is an issue of 'feeling dirty' through their work, which they aim to counteract through physical washing. It raises questions not only about the efficacy of measures that these men are taking to avoid contagion, but also about the psychological effects that their work is having on them.

Another interviewee discusses tactics for ensuring safe sex:

- I: What do you think about *anquan xingxingwei* [safe sex]?
- R: First of all, I know about you, [if] you are an old customer of mine. And then I know about your physical condition. And then I know you, for example when I do it with you, I'll take care of the hygienic problems for you... To clean the hidden area properly when I give you a shower... And then, if I can do stuff like that. I feel comfortable to have [oral] sex with you not wearing a condom. And then the second one without a condom is like, if you

strictly insist to not wear a condom. And if you look considerably clean, and I washed you, and this I can choose to not wear a condom, it feels safe that way... Like those that feel unsafe, it's more like I think there's something wrong with you. [If he] looks dirty... I'll choose to wear a condom... And then you, if you are not clean down there I'll choose to wear a condom too. And the third if it's anal sex I will definitely wear a condom.

(Male, 22, Jiangxi Province)

Hygiene is discussed as a way to prevent disease transmission, and in the case of oral sex, it means that condoms are not necessarily required. An intersection in themes emerges here though between notions of hygiene, and the importance of familiarity with a client as ways to minimise risks to sexual health. Familiarity with clients might be seen to link to feelings of intimacy, emerging as a determinant of condom use for some of the interviewees:

R: Before when I did it [sex], I didn't like to wear condoms, when you encounter someone you like ... but I didn't do 0, when I was a 0 I always wore condoms, I didn't wear them for being the 1.

(Male, 25, Heilongjiang Province)

Here the interviewee is describing that feeling attracted to a sexual partner, or wanting to become more intimate with them, he would not use condoms as the insertive partner. The theme of intimacy occurs in another interview:

R: I think that there are, huh, using them [condoms] is more safe, but between friends if a *nvpengyou* [girlfriend] and *BF* [boyfriend] are together doing it, if there are times when you use condoms, then it would feel like it seems like that there is this type of, type of, do you not trust me ah, would feel like the relationship was not so intimate. If you use them it feels like the relationship isn't intimate, if you don't use them then it should feel like it's more intimate, there's more trust between you, that kind of thing.

(Male, 23, Hunan Province)

Here, condom use is explicitly described as a barrier to intimacy in relationships where love is involved. Intimacy is frequently documented in the literature as being a barrier to condom use in sexual relationships (Theodore *et al.* 2004, H Li *et al.* 2010b, Kong *et al.* 2012), and the evidence here appears to support this. On the other hand, a lack of intimacy with clients, or a desire to maintain affective distance from commercial partners can play out in avoiding intimacy. The need for hygiene and the potential riskiness of kissing are both representative of these boundaries. In beginning

to understand how 'safe sex' is seen by the participants, with particular reference to the importance of hygiene in their narratives, the discussion can then move on to how control over the risks of sex is exercised by the MSW.

The degree to which the respondents feel they have control over their safety is brought into question by some of their narratives. Luck was invoked by a number of the study participants as a way of conceptualising their work-related and HIV risks, and perhaps is best seen as a device employed to manage risks in a context in which the MSW do not have full control over their exposure to HIV.

I: Do you feel that working as a little brother it's easy to get STIs or not?

R: You have to take personal protection measures, huh. I think that I have bad luck...I still thought if I say, if afterwards I'm really with a *B-Fu* [boyfriend], look for a *B-Fu* and be together making love, even if the other had had a physical examination, I would still want to wear condoms with him.

(Male, 23, Hunan Province)

This interviewee acknowledges the importance of protective measures, before saying that he considers himself unlucky, having earlier in the interview described being infected by STIs on a number of occasions. One way of managing his bad luck though is through condom use. Even if his partner had been physically examined, he considers his luck to be bad enough to still warrant condom use. In discussing fears about HIV, another respondent comments:

R: ...It is the case that once you get it [HIV], you have it for your lifetime, for your whole life... everyone knows about it. Everyone's scared. But if by any chance it comes, then there's nothing you can do to prevent it. Anyway, I've been doing it [having sex] for 8 or 10 years and haven't got it.

(Male, 24, Henan Province)

This interviewee presents a view of HIV framed around chance, saying that it is unpreventable but that he has managed to avoid being infected so far.

R: Even if you wore a condom, when your partner has AIDS, there's still a chance he could infect you if you are unlucky.

I2: So if that's the case, what would you do?

R: I guess I will just *shunqi ziran* [let nature take its course].

(Male, 22, Jiangxi Province)

Letting nature take its course in this case again implies a degree of fatalism regarding infection. The interviewee suggests that condoms are not completely protective, and that luck plays a part in the risk of infection from a partner.

R: If we have it [HIV], you have to acknowledge your fate, you resent your own lot in life and there's nothing you can do, it's that God is punishing us.

(Male, 25, Heilongjiang Province)

The role of luck, God, or fate is used to explain why the interviewees either have caught STIs, or might become infected in the future. Fatalism has been associated elsewhere with increased HIV risk behaviours (McKirnan *et al.* 2001, Yi *et al.* 2010), and lower levels of life satisfaction (Kalichman *et al.* 1997, Nguyen *et al.* 2012), with implications for the adoption of safer sex practices. Such narratives are perhaps symbolic of a lack of perceived control over one's risks, or a lack of knowledge of ways to avoid infection.

### 6.3 Safe sex knowledge

While a majority of the study participants associate condom use with safe sex, there are nevertheless many practices and approaches that play a part in the ways that this group of MSW think about safe sex, and attempt to mitigate their perceived risks. These multiple meanings highlight differential levels of knowledge about safe sex and HIV transmission.

R: I am not sure about AIDS, it's too complicated and mysterious. That's why I get scared just by mentioning it. I get tested regularly but still, being gay means I am constantly exposed to this danger. It could happen even if you are straight. If you buy sex, *da feiji*<sup>47</sup> [masturbate] with others, go out, you can catch it right? Everyone can, unless may be a couple just stay at home or never fool around after marriage. All of us *tongzhi* [comrades] know we can catch it any day, so it's a really sensitive topic. No one is immune, if you have sex with man, whether you are kissing or sucking each other off, I suspect there is a chance of infection. So it just worries me every time.

(Male, 38, Hunan Province)

The interviewee highlights his acute fear of even discussing HIV, alongside his constant fear of infection. He also indicates a lack of knowledge about possible routes

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<sup>47</sup> *Da feiji* – lit. hitting the aeroplane, a slang term for masturbation.

of transmission. It seems likely that this interviewee's lack of knowledge of HIV is contributing to his feelings of fear of infection.

Each survey participant was scored on a standard set of DHS HIV attitudes and knowledge scales<sup>48</sup> (questions and discussion in Appendix J). Their summary scores are displayed in Figures 6-1 and 6-2. These scores are means of the sum scores of the respective sets of binary variables (1 = correct and 0 = incorrect answer) for knowledge and attitudes. Levels of HIV knowledge are important not only as they can have a direct bearing on an individual MSW's ability to protect himself from infection, but also because they have been shown to have an impact on stigma and attitudes towards PLHIV elsewhere (Meundi *et al.* 2008, Thanavanh *et al.* 2013). Higher scores on both scales represent better levels of knowledge (Figure 6-1) or more accepting attitudes towards HIV (Figure 6-2), respectively.

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<sup>48</sup> The HIV knowledge and attitudes scale was taken from the AIDS Indicators Survey module of the Demographic and Health Surveys, available from <http://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-aisq1-ais-questionnaires-and-manuals.cfm>

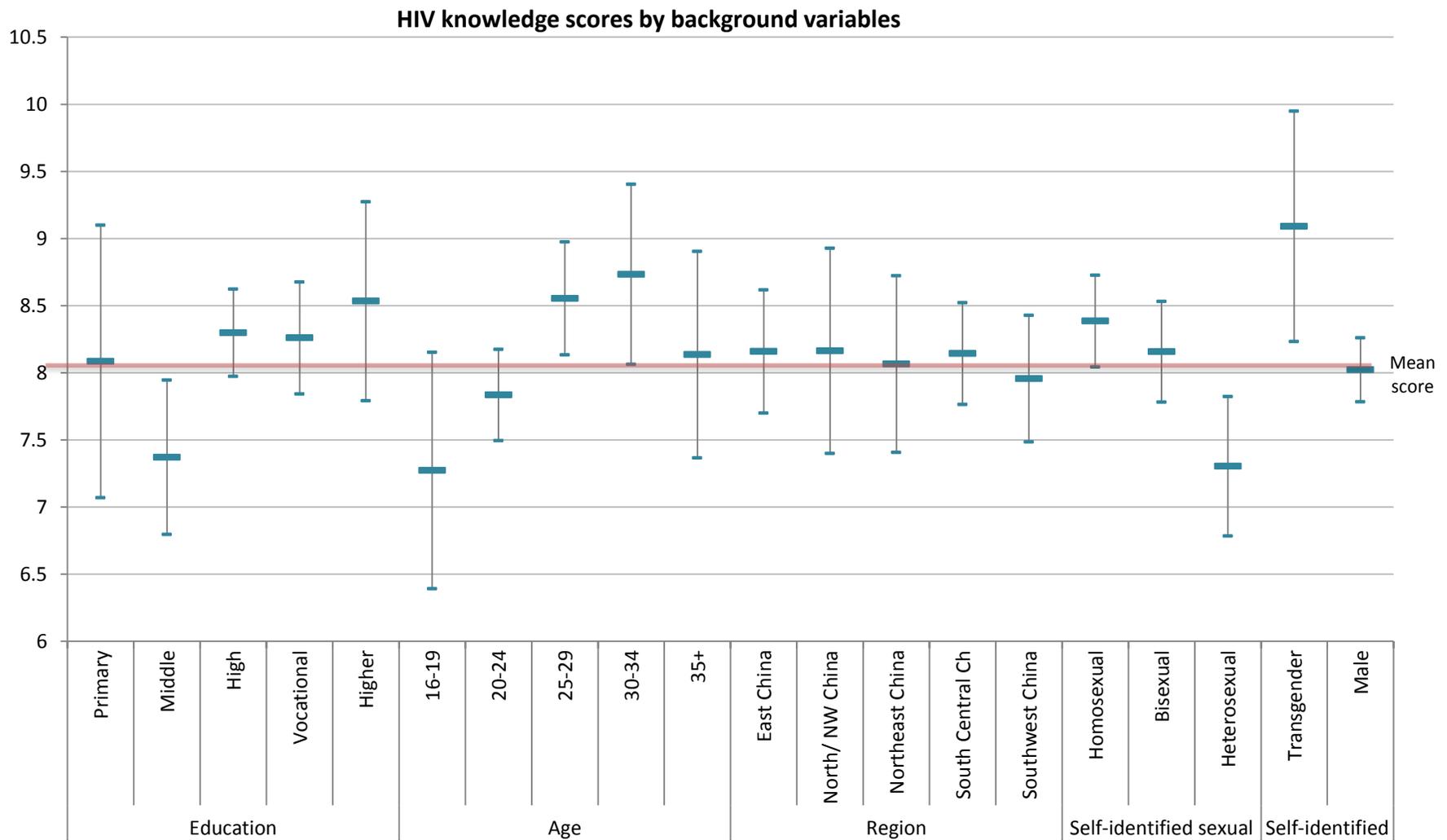


Figure 6-1 HIV knowledge scores by background characteristics, showing mean and range; overall mean shown by red line

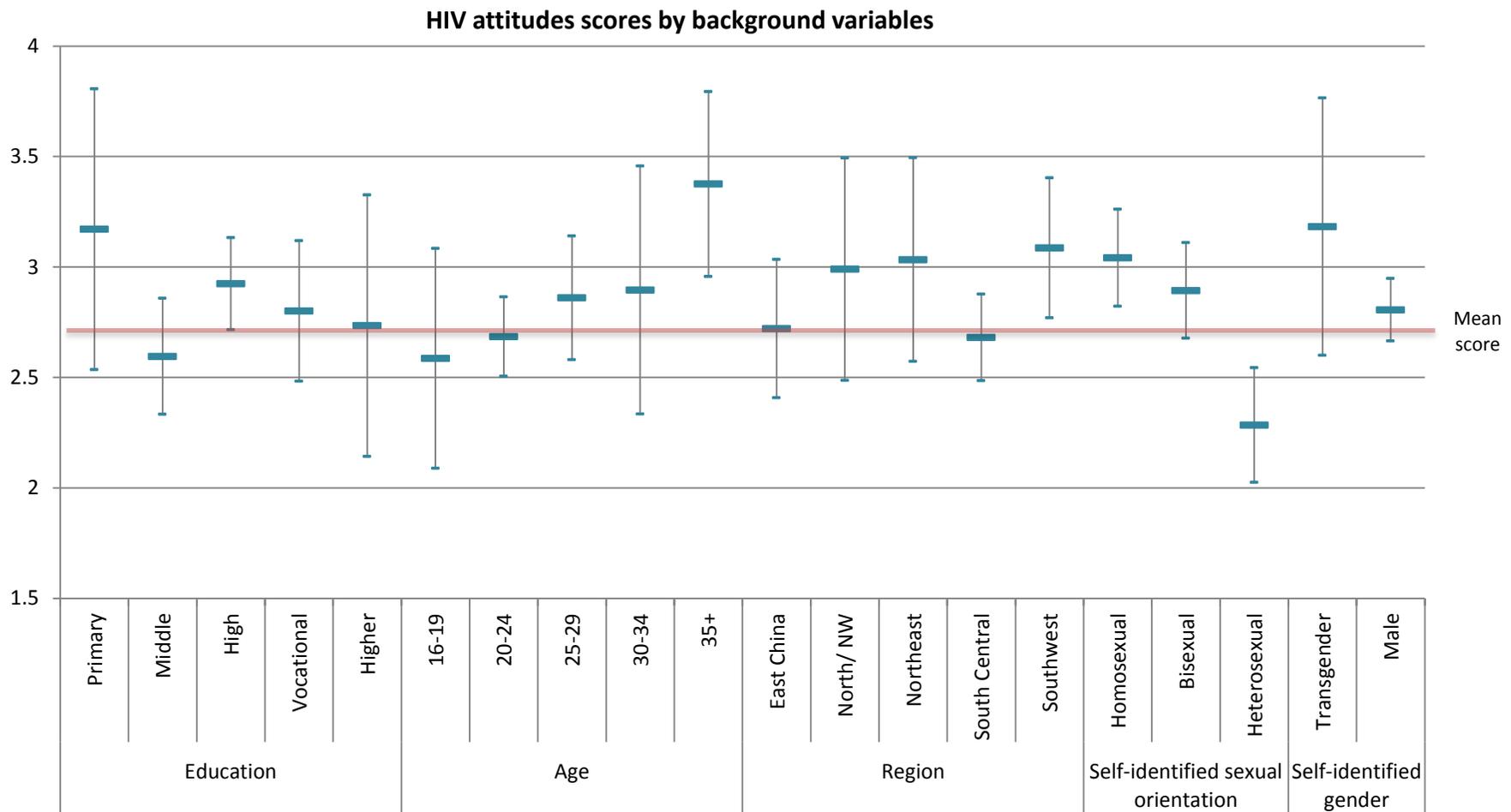


Figure 6-2 HIV attitudes scores by background characteristics, showing mean and range; overall mean shown by red line

There is considerable variance in levels of HIV knowledge and attitudes towards PLHIV. Mean HIV knowledge scores vary by background characteristics (Figure 6-1), with significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) lower scores than the mean being found for those educated to a middle school level, those self-identifying as heterosexual, and significantly higher scores for those aged 25-29 and those self-identifying as transgender. The other categories, including geographical variables were not found to be significantly different from the sample-average levels of knowledge. Attitude scores also show variation by demographic characteristics, with significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) lower scores found for those self-identifying as heterosexual, and significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) higher scores for those in the over 35 year age group.

The data suggest that for the heterosexual self-identifying MSW, there may be a relation between their HIV knowledge and attitudes, with poorer levels of knowledge being reflected in less positive attitudes towards PLHIV. In the in-depth interviews, attitudes towards PLHIV were frequently negative, particularly when asked about other MSW being diagnosed with HIV:

R: If we are not close to him [an MSW found to have HIV], I feel people would just discriminate against him, see him as an enemy, would look down on him, it's not like you will feel sorry for him.  
(Male, 22, Hunan Province)

Such openly negative attitudes towards PLHIV were not uncommon in the interviews, and indeed in the wider public discourse around HIV in China. The media are considered a major source of information on HIV in China (M Wu 2006, Z Wu *et al.* 2007:683-4, Hood 2013b; a), but usually such information is insufficient to challenge stigma (J Gao *et al.* 2013), or only selectively represented in media reports (Walsh-Childers *et al.* 1997, Hood 2013a). Given the role of the media in disseminating information about HIV to the public, inadequate coverage is associated with continued widespread public fear of HIV infection and stigmatisation of PLHIV.

R: Because of the Internet and TV, it sounds like death sentence. If you catch AIDS, then you can't get over it yourself. You can't face your family, co-workers, and you can't make friends. So you'd be alone. I hope someone invents some kind of cure for it someday.  
(Male, 38, Hunan Province)

The interviewee highlights how the media has played a role in his knowledge of HIV and emphasises the stigma of being infected with HIV, suggesting that this would lead to total social isolation. More positive attitudes were occasionally expressed by respondents:

I: These friends you know who have contracted HIV, do they work as little brothers? What feelings do you have between you all?

R: There's no effect, because you see, I'm their *jiejie* [older sister], I'm friends and so are they. But [when they're] together with me, there have never been any taboos, because we haven't *zuo ai* [made love]. So, if they drink water and then give it to me, I also drink it, we use everything together.

(Male, 25, Heilongjiang Province)

The interviewee describes being unconcerned by other sex working colleagues having HIV. He frames his lack of concern by saying that they have not had sex together, but also that they share glasses and use everything together, demonstrating that he is aware of the potential routes of transmission (and safe practices). The discussion continues:

I: If you knew that someone was infected with HIV in a clubhouse, you, or everyone, what would the attitude be?

R: There wouldn't be any particular attitude. I couldn't say that I'd leave, but I wouldn't be able to have sex with him, but the rest of it is all normal.

(Male, 25, Heilongjiang Province)

In both excerpts, the interviewee expressed considerable openness towards PLHIV following direct personal experience of a colleague becoming infected, and through being aware of routes of transmission and therefore ways to avoid infection. This highlights how good knowledge about HIV can be associated with less stigmatising attitudes. The above respondent discusses avoiding sex with someone with HIV which suggests that different practices are considered to have different levels of risk associated with them, something explored further below.

According to more biomedical approaches, HIV transmission risk is dependent on a number of factors including sexual practices (Fox *et al.* 2011), condom use (Lyles *et al.* 2007), the presence or absence of other STIs (LF Johnson *et al.* 2008), the stage of HIV infection of the infected partner (including viral load, CD4 cell count, etc.) and

the use and efficacy of antiretroviral treatment (Granich *et al.* 2009, Kalichman *et al.* 2010). It is beyond the scope of this study to investigate all of these factors, but to address the first regarding sexual practices, I was interested in the ways in which the participants understood the HIV risk associated with different practices, and how their relative risks might map on to other discourses that they engage in around safe sex.

As such, the respondents were asked to rate a set of practices on a scale from ‘totally safe = 10’ to ‘totally unsafe = 1’ (Table 6-2). The practices have been ranked according to their relative risk of HIV transmission, using data from a systematic review by Fox *et al.* (2011), with the safest practices at the top and increasing risk of HIV transmission progressing down the table.

Variable	Mean score (10=safe; 1=unsafe)	Std. Dev.	N
Hugging	9.65	1.11	249
Kissing	6.26	2.93	248
Masturbation	8.18	2.33	249
Oral sex with a condom	8.51	2.04	249
Vaginal sex with a condom	8.44	2.16	247
Insertive anal sex with a condom	8.06	2.28	248
Receptive anal sex with a condom	7.55	2.53	246
Oral sex without a condom	3.32	2.64	247
Vaginal sex without a condom	2.55	2.34	247
Insertive anal sex without a condom	2.21	2.07	247
Receptive anal sex without a condom	1.70	1.59	246
Oro-anal sex <sup>49</sup>	3.05	2.62	245

**Table 6-2 Mean scores of the perceived safety of sexual practices, ranked according to relative risk of HIV transmission**

Perceptions of the relative safety of different sexual practices largely mirrors the evidence presented by Fox and colleagues (2011). One exception though is for kissing, which was rated on average to be less safe than oral, vaginal and anal intercourse with a condom. This finding is echoed in the verbatim data from the survey, in which 22 of the respondents associated ‘safe sex’ with avoiding kissing. Kissing has previously been associated with intimacy (Warr *et al.* 1999, Brewis *et al.* 2000), and I also suggest with hygiene, which as I have discussed above are considered integral to safe sex for many of the MSW. The consistently higher

<sup>49</sup> No data available on relative risk from Fox *et al.* (2011)

perceived safety ratings of condom use indicates that on the whole these MSW are conscious of their protective effects.

A factor analysis was performed on these measures in order to better understand the possible structure underlying the results and to produce scores for the respondents in the study that could then be used in subsequent regression analysis. The results and models for the factor analysis can be found in Appendix K. Below is a summary of the results (Table 6-3).

**Table 6-3 Sexual practices factor analysis loadings<sup>50</sup>**

Variables	Factor loadings			Communalities
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	
Kissing	0.3764		0.4979	0.6083
Hugging			0.5366	0.7079
Masturbation		0.3351	0.4679	0.6681
Oral sex with a condom		0.6324	0.3436	0.4819
Oral sex without a condom	0.6253			0.5190
Vaginal sex with a condom		0.4878		0.7308
Vaginal sex without a condom	0.5876			0.6302
Insertive anal sex with a condom		0.7671		0.4012
Insertive anal sex without a condom	0.6741			0.5378
Receptive anal sex with a condom		0.6838		0.4986
Receptive anal sex without a condom	0.7789			0.3773
Oro-anal sex	0.5153			0.6161

Factor 1 is a summary of the scores for kissing, oro-anal sex and then all condom-less penetrative sexual practices. Given the inclusion of kissing and oro-anal sex, this factor is not just about potential HIV transmitting behaviours, but rather may be interpreted as being a measure of the degree of intimacy involved in the behaviour in question; respondents who score highly on Factor 1 are those who consider these more intimate practices to be relatively safe. Factor 2 meanwhile is only loaded-on by masturbation and practices involving condom use, and as such can be seen as a measure of understanding the role protective behaviours can have in making sexual behaviours less risky; respondents scoring highly on this factor consider condom use

<sup>50</sup> A three factor solution was found to give the best model fit, while balancing interpretability with parsimony and an adequate amount of the variance explained. The factor loadings are shown in Table 6-3 (excluding those with a value >0.3). Respondents' estimations of the safety of 12 different sexual practices can be summarised by three factors, onto which each of the 12 safety scores loads to a greater or lesser degree.

to be a relatively safe practice. Finally, only the first four practices contribute to the third factor, meaning that we may interpret this factor as being indicative of very low risk sexual behaviours. Those scoring highly on this factor are correctly identifying low risk practices as such. However, these data fail to differentiate between different contexts for these sexual practices. Whether a particular activity is considered to be relatively more risky than another seems likely to be influenced by whom the activity is with. Furthermore, the riskiness of a given activity is dependent on whether or not one partner is infected with HIV, for which testing is necessary (Zou *et al.* 2012:1718).

More than two thirds (68.5%) of respondents had been tested for HIV at some point in the past, with 30.3% and 1.2% saying that they had never, or did not know, respectively. While these results compare favourably with two Shanghai studies which found that 56.5% (N He *et al.* 2007) and 28.5% (ZJ Huang *et al.* 2012) of the MSW sampled had been tested for HIV in 2007 and 2009, respectively, and another study among MSW serving Hong Kong clients in Shenzhen which found that 57.8% had been tested (Lau *et al.* 2009a), nevertheless there are substantial numbers of MSW here who have not been tested for HIV. Levels of testing also vary considerably by self-identified sexual orientation (Figure 6-3).

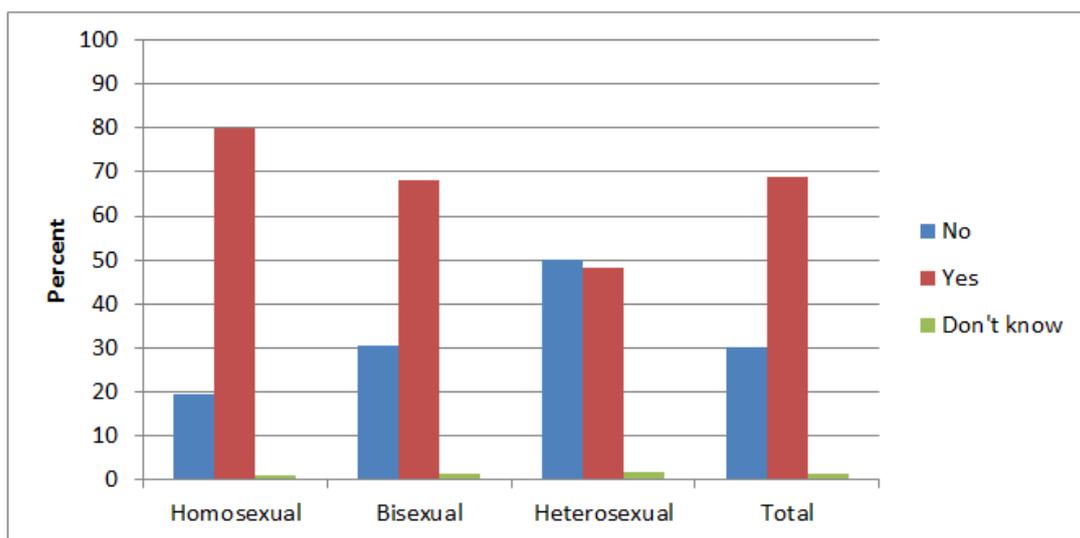


Figure 6-3 Percent reporting ever tested for HIV, by self-identified sexual orientation (n=250; 1 missing)

These results show that there are significant differences in the reported rates of HIV testing between these three groups ( $\chi^2 = 17.3$ ;  $p < 0.02$ ), those self-identifying as heterosexual are significantly less likely to have been tested than their homosexual and bisexual self-identifying peers. These differences may be attributed to differential levels of perceived risk, HIV knowledge or access to testing services for each group.<sup>51</sup> Given that almost one third of the respondents have not been tested for HIV, condom use must be considered an important means of managing HIV risk in the Chinese MSW context.

#### 6.4 Condom use with commercial partners

Condoms were identified by over 70% of the respondents as being associated with safe sex (Section 6.2), forming an important part of their practices, particularly when discussing sex with other men and with clients generally. As such, alongside the narratives around condom use, the following section investigates how reported condom use varies with commercial partners, in order to understand some of the immediate HIV risk (protective) behaviours that the MSW are engaging in.

The data suggest that the majority of commercial sex involves condom use for this group, although there was nevertheless discussion from some MSW about clients requesting not to use condoms:

- I: Would clients pay extra for sex without condoms?  
R: Yes. A lot... Like for a 500RMB [~£50] quickie he would pay 800 or 1000 [~£100]?  
I: Oh. Would escorts take the offer?  
R: I don't know about other people, but I never do... I know how dangerous my profession is. I know I am always on the verge of catching STDs. So I am always cautious.  
(Male, 27, Shandong Province)

This respondent highlights that clients might be willing to pay double in order to not use a condom. It seems possible that some MSW might be less able to negotiate condom use if their financial situation was particularly desperate, or if they were less conscious of the risks of STIs than the above example suggests. Differential rates of payment for non-condom use in commercial sex has been found in a number of other

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<sup>51</sup> All study participants were however offered free HIV rapid tests by the CBO, but test results did not form part of this study. MSW contacted to take part in the study who did not wish to do so were also offered free HIV testing.

studies, for example among MSW in Ecuador (Shah 2013) and among FSW in Calcutta (V Rao *et al.* 2003) highlighting a tension between the management of risk of infection and the potential for increased financial gain from clients in commercial sex encounters.

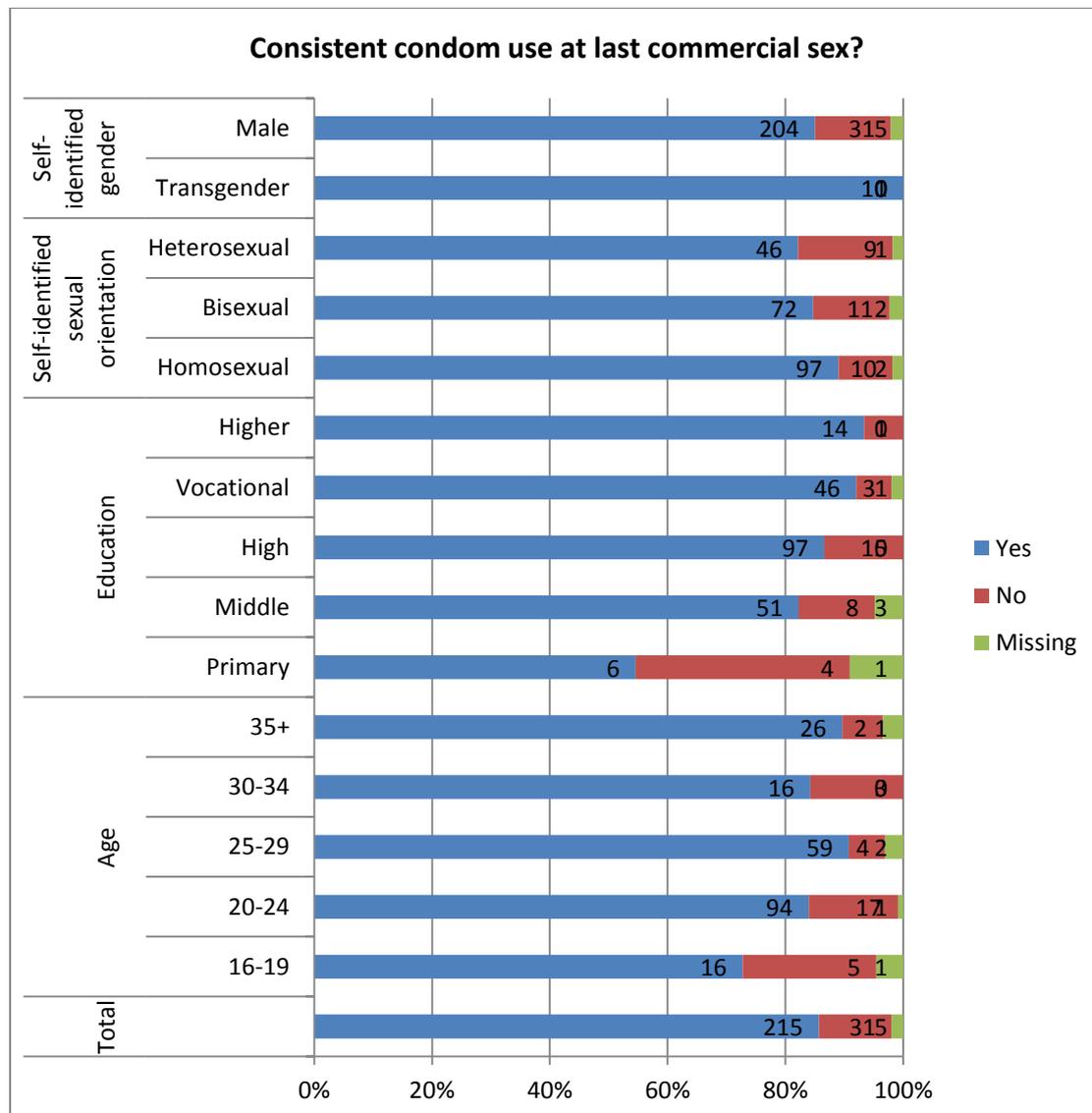


Figure 6-4 Self-reported consistent condom use in most recent commercial sex, disaggregated by respondents' sociodemographic characteristics. (Missing data: non-response n=3, don't know n=2).

Overall, 31 out of the 246 MSW with non-missing<sup>52</sup> data reported that they had not consistently used condoms with their most recent commercial partner. The youngest age group reported the greatest proportion of non-condom use, while those in the 25

<sup>52</sup> Five respondents have missing data for this variable, and as such are excluded from further analyses regarding condom use in commercial sex

to 29 and 35+ age groups reported the highest rates of commercial condom use. The distribution of condom use across education groups is also uneven, although there is a suggestion of a gradient, with lowest education levels being associated with lower rates of condom use. There is no particular pattern in condom use by region of origin (data not shown). Those MSW self-identifying as homosexual have the highest rates of condom use, while those self-identifying as bisexual and heterosexual reported condom use rates with most recent commercial partner at lower levels. These patterns mirror those found for HIV testing, suggesting that those least likely to be using condoms are also those who are least likely to know their HIV status. Finally, all of those self-identifying as transgender reported consistent condom use at most recent commercial sex. Globally, there is a paucity of data on MTF transgender sex workers. However this finding stands in contrast to one Brazilian study, which found condom use rates to be lower among transgendered sex workers than their male counterparts (although this was not the focus of the study) (Cortez *et al.* 2011), while a recent systematic review found high HIV rates among MTF transgender individuals globally, although the study did not differentiate between those who were or were not sex workers (Baral *et al.* 2013b). Bivariate analysis (using Fisher's exact test) show a significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) association between education level and reported condom use. None of the other socio-demographic variables showed significant results (see Appendix L). This finding suggests that while many of the socioeconomic background characteristic of the MSW have an effect in positioning them as migrants, who then work in the sex industry (Chapters 3 and 4), their effect on the immediate condom use measures of HIV risk taking are more limited. In conceptualising HIV risk from a social ecological perspective, these multiple levels of influence are all accommodated within the framework.

The data for condom use with most recent commercial partner were used alongside a range of socioeconomic and demographic control variables and other variables from the survey (using a process of forwards selection) in a binary logistic regression. The aim of the regression is to investigate what are the effects of different variables in the survey data set on the likelihood of reporting condom use in most recent commercial sex.

**Table 6-4 Binary logistic regression for commercial sex: condom use with most recent commercial sexual partner as dependant variable<sup>53</sup>**

		Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	[95% Conf.	Interval]
	Age‡	<b>2.23†</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>0.94</b>	<b>5.25</b>
Education level	Primary or below	<b>&lt;0.005**</b>	<b>&lt;0.005</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.13</b>
	Middle school	1.12	1.50	0.08	15.57
	High school	<b>1.16†</b>	<b>1.49</b>	<b>0.09</b>	<b>14.51</b>
	Vocational school	5.19	7.48	0.31	87.57
	University	Ref	-	-	-
Region	East	<b>4.63†</b>	<b>3.98</b>	<b>0.86</b>	<b>24.98</b>
	Northeast	2.53	2.57	0.35	18.48
	North/Northwest	2.42	2.60	0.29	19.87
	Southwest	1.88	1.69	0.32	10.96
	South Central	Ref	-	-	-
Self-identified sexual orientation	Homosexual	Ref	-	-	-
	Bisexual	0.51	0.41	0.10	2.51
	Heterosexual	0.46	0.47	0.06	3.46
Condom use with most recent non-commercial partner	No	Ref	-	-	-
	Yes	<b>5.58**</b>	<b>3.73</b>	<b>1.51</b>	<b>20.66</b>
Ever had an HIV test	No	Ref	-	-	-
	Yes	<b>4.16*</b>	<b>2.47</b>	<b>1.30</b>	<b>13.31</b>
Age at first intercourse‡		<b>0.82*</b>	<b>0.08</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0.99</b>
Non-venue based sex work	No	Ref	-	-	-
	Yes	<b>0.19*</b>	<b>0.13</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.72</b>
Sex work for ≥20 hrs. a week	No	Ref	-	-	-
	Yes	<b>13.29**</b>	<b>12.94</b>	<b>1.97</b>	<b>89.66</b>
How comfortable having sex with women‡		<b>2.87**</b>	<b>1.18</b>	<b>1.28</b>	<b>6.43</b>
Sex of most recent commercial partner	Female	Ref	-	-	-
	Male	<b>8.00**</b>	<b>6.49</b>	<b>1.63</b>	<b>39.19</b>
Sold sex in other cities	No	Ref	-	-	-
	Yes	<b>0.33†</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>0.10</b>	<b>1.15</b>
Sold sex for >1 year	No	Ref	-	-	-
	Yes	<b>7.31*</b>	<b>5.97</b>	<b>1.47</b>	<b>36.27</b>
Intercept		0.37	0.64	0.01	11.12

‡ = standardised variable with mean 0 and SD 1.

OR significance levels: \*\* = <1%; \* = <5%; † = <10%.

Pseudo R<sup>2</sup>=0.380

N=227

<sup>53</sup> The dependant variable in the above model was a binary measure of condom use with most recent commercial partner (1 = condom was used; 0 = condom was not used). While some of the socioeconomic variables (e.g.: region of origin, self-identified sexual orientation) did not have significant effects in the final model, they were retained to act as controls. The binary variable for self-identifying as transgender was not included in the model as the cell count was zero for non-condom use, meaning that its effects could not be estimated.

Age shows a weakly significant (<10% sig.) relationship to the likelihood of condom use, with each increased unit standard deviation from the mean age being associated with an increased odds of condom use of 2.23. The role of region of origin in the model shows virtually no predictive ability for commercial condom use although coming from China's East is associated with an increased odds of 4.63 compared with the reference category (<10% sig.). Self-reported sexual orientation similarly had no significant effect, although some MSW represented alternative viewpoints:

- I: We have heard some escorts saying, they don't use condoms much when they rent prostitutes, or when they have sex with people they love, clients included. Do you agree? Why do escorts have this mind set?
- R: I don't really know, maybe he is gay.
- I: Is there a difference? Being gay or not?
- R: Yeah... If he is gay and likes someone, he wouldn't mind doing it without a condom. But they would use it with someone they don't like.
- I: How about you? Are you gay?
- R: I am bi. I usually use them. Doing 1069<sup>54</sup>...
- (Male, 22, Guangxi Province)

It seems likely, therefore that other variables in the model are picking up the variance from self-reported sexual orientation. For example, the sex of most recent commercial partner, and level of comfort with having sex with women might be mediating between the effects of sexual orientation and consistent condom use in the multivariate analysis. In addition, in view of the findings on identity in the previous chapter, these results suggest that self-identified sexual orientation is probably too fluid and nuanced a characteristic to be adequately represented in a statistical model.

Those with primary education or less were significantly (<0.005) less likely to report condom use, controlling for other variables. That education level should play a part in predicting condom use has been suggested among FSW in China (Lau *et al.* 2007, Bharat *et al.* 2013) and elsewhere (Puradiredja *et al.* 2012, Bharat *et al.* 2013), and is expected given the importance literacy might have in accessing safer sex messages. However that those with primary education should have such a substantial difference

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<sup>54</sup> The numbers 一, 零, 六十九 [1,0,69] were commonly used by the MSW to denote receptive and insertive and oral sex, together meaning any penetrative sex.

in their predicted odds of condom use invites further analysis. Given that China's education system has since 1986 demanded compulsory schooling for nine years (Connelly *et al.* 2003), consisting of six years of primary and three years of middle school education, it seems likely that those who report only having achieved primary education or less belong to special group. There is evidence that particularly economically underdeveloped areas had difficulties in providing the statutory amount of education before 1990 (*ibid.*), and this variable may therefore represent a measure of social or economic deprivation in the MSW's place of origin.

There is a strongly significant association between reported condom use with the most recent non-commercial partner, and the dependant variable of condom use with most recent commercial partner here. Reporting having used a condom with the most recent non-commercial partner is associated with an increased odds of reporting commercial condom use of 5.58 at the 1% significance level. Explanations for this might include two potential processes. First, it could be argued that the type of people who use condoms with any partners use condoms with all their partners. In other words, they are more cautious and/ or knowledgeable about possible sexual health risks and ways to avoid them, and are likely to see condoms use as part and parcel of sex. On the other hand, given that these are self-reported rather than observed behaviours, it is also possible that the respondents who are more likely to report one of these more socially-approved of behaviours will report them for all partner types. This potential for social desirability bias is present in any research involving self-reported behaviours, particularly around sensitive topics.

Ever having had an HIV test is also positively associated with condom use with last commercial partner (OR 4.16, 5% significance level). This implies that being tested for HIV results in safer sex behaviours, but it seems likely that the relationship is more complex. First, the reasons for going to get tested for HIV might include: having greater awareness of sexual health and safe sex behaviours; being concerned about having been exposed to HIV (or another STI) and so seeking out testing; being in contact either with government or NGO-provided services; and/or feeling worried about HIV transmission. These are some of the same reasons for, or enablers of, condom use. Second, it is possible that some of those who have been tested previously

for HIV discovered that they were seropositive, and adjusted their behaviours, increasing condom use accordingly.

Age at first intercourse was found to be associated with condom use at the 5% level, with each standard deviation from the mean being associated with a decreased odds of condom use of 0.82. Thus, those who started having sex later were less likely to use condoms with their commercial partners. It is difficult to explain this relationship, but possible factors might be that those with an older age at first intercourse are likely to have started sex work later than their more sexually precocious counterparts, and this may mean that they have been exposed to different safe sex campaigns or are perhaps less receptive to such messaging.

Those MSW who reported non-venue based sex work in their (up to three) current places of work were substantially less likely to have reported using a condom at last commercial sex (OR 0.19, 5% sig.). Non-venue based work in this context includes finding clients on the streets or in parks, or working as a private escort (either advertised online, or with regular clients). The interrelations between venues (places), the people in them and the social networks between those people, as outlined in Chapter 4, therefore appear to be having a measurable effect on reported rates of commercial condom use. *Mami* were sometimes found to play a role in promoting condom use in their venues (Section 4.5.1). Furthermore, working in a non-venue based setting might be a response to financial difficulties (respondents reporting both bar work and private escorting, for example), which has been associated with decreased power to insist on condom use elsewhere (Haley *et al.* 2004). Otherwise it might be reflecting those MSW who report working in parks or on the streets, both sex work locations which have been associated with a reduced ability to negotiate condom use (Bloor *et al.* 1993). As one park-based transgender sex worker comments:

- I: So, in the park, or with clients looking for transgender [sex workers] you've found on the internet, have you ever experienced people who don't want to use condoms?
- R: Yes... They said not wearing condoms would be cool, they have asked not to use condoms, then you have to find a lot of ways to convince them...they say they're very clean, it's no problem, then they say they've already washed, very clean, then they ask whether

or not I have an illness

(Transgender, 22, Jiangsu Province)

MSW who report selling sex for over 20 hours per week were significantly less likely to report condom use (OR 13.3, 1% sig.) than those working fewer hours. Reasons for this might be that those who work fewer hours might have alternative sources of income, and so be less dependent on selling sex, and thus more able to negotiate condom use.

I: Are there people who say that I will pay you more not to use a condom?

R: Yes

I: At these times, what can you do?

R: Of course we are all able to insist on wearing them uh, if they really want to not use a condom then we can just refuse to do it

I: There must be times when that is quite hard to say?

R: Yes

(Male, 21, Jiangxi Province)

Here the informant highlights that while he is able to negotiate condom use, it is not always easy. It is unclear what the impacts of clients demanding non-condom use are on networks of MSW. It seems likely that knowing other MSW might be working without condoms could produce pressure to also sell sex without them.

Those who work fewer hours, even if they do not have alternative sources of income, might be able to do so because they are making sufficient money from a more limited amount of work. Furthermore, if the hours worked maps onto the number of clients per week, then these MSW are not only working longer hours and working for more clients, but would also be exposing themselves and their clients to greater risks of disease transmission due to their lower rates of condom use.

Reporting a higher score on a scale of comfort with having sex with female partners (in the survey, a 1 to 5 scale, here a mean-centred standardised measure), was associated with increased odds of condom use of 2.87 (1% significance). The equivalent variable for sex with male partners was excluded from the model as it was not significant. Given that the self-reported sexual orientation variable is included in the model as a control, the significance of the variable measuring relative comfort with female partners is difficult to explain, but means that regardless of self-identified

sexual orientation, those who report being happier having sex with women are more likely to have used condoms with their most recent commercial partner.

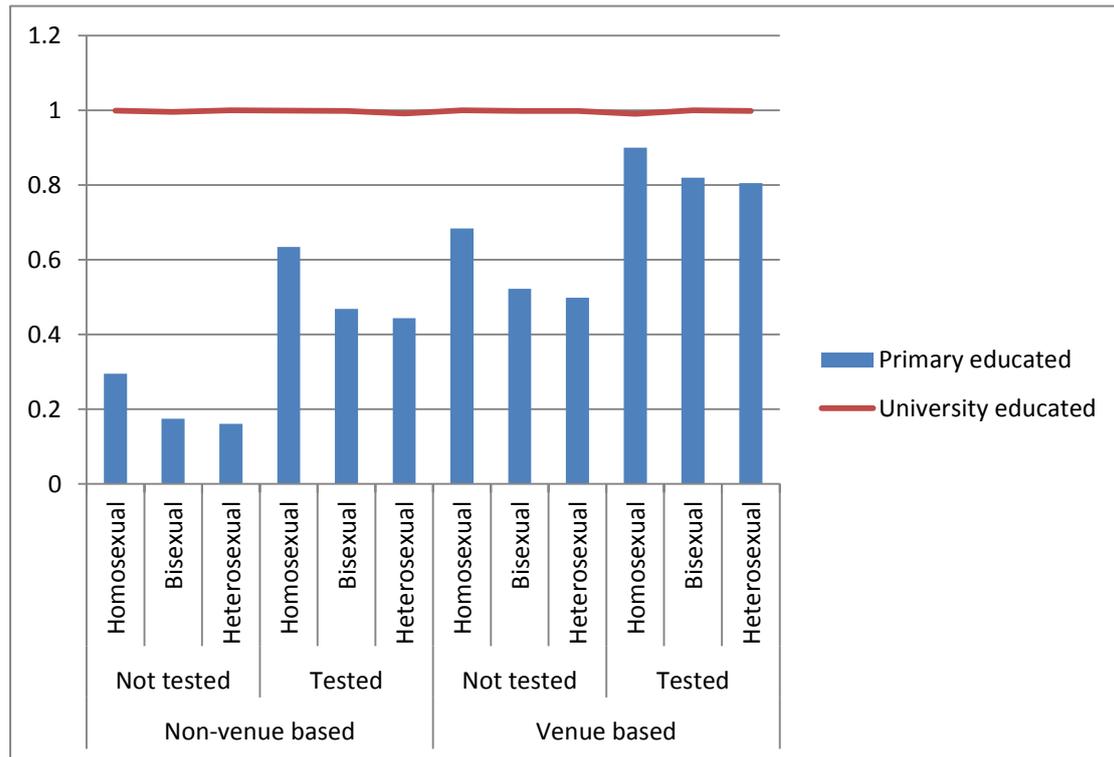
The gender identity of the most recent commercial partner is a strongly significant predictor of condom use, with those reporting the most recent partner to be male having an increased odds of condom use of 8.0 (1% sig.). This means that, when controlling for all the other variables, commercial sex with female partners is associated with a higher likelihood of unprotected sex. Seen within the context of the perceived greater stigma (and dirtiness) of sex between men, this finding makes sense, as condoms use is employed as a hygienic practice in sex with men. Understood in the context of sexual networks of male and female partners then, the *relative* differences in perceived risks between male and female partners become significant here. However as a consequence of this, female commercial partners may be being put at risk of HIV transmission because they (through their partners) are part of complex sexual networks, without necessarily being aware that they are exposed to such risks.

Reporting having ever sold sex in other locations is weakly associated with a decreased odds of condom use (0.33, 10% sig.) suggesting that working in multiple locations as a sex worker is potentially a risk factor for unsafe sex. The reasons for this are unclear, but it raises questions about the role of migration in sexual health or risk taking, given that those who report higher levels of mobility here also report lower condom use levels. A recent systematic review found (non-MSW) migrants to be at increased risk of HIV in China (L Zhang *et al.* 2013a), but to my knowledge, this is the first time the degree of migration in sex work has been modelled for HIV risk.

Finally, the model shows that reporting having sold sex for more than one year is associated with a 7.31 increase in odds of condom use compared to the reference category of sex work duration of less than one year, at the 5% level. This intuitively makes sense as we would expect longer-practicing MSW to have been exposed to greater levels of safe sex interventions, more condom promotion, and to have greater experience in negotiating condom use with their clients. On the other hand, those who had worked as sex workers for less than one year and then either quit or moved are

not present in the sample. Potentially these MSW are a group with a particular set of characteristics, which are not represented in these data.

While all of the variables in the model (Table 6-4) can be interpreted individually, their estimated effects are more intuitive when combined to present different scenarios using fitted probabilities.



**Figure 6-5 Fitted probabilities for consistent condom use in most recent commercial sex for primary and university educated MSW, by venue type, self-identified sexual orientation and HIV testing history.**

Figure 6-5 above shows the odds of reporting condom use at most recent commercial sex, comparing those with primary education and below, and completed university education. It shows that for those with primary education, there is a clear gradient in the likelihood of condom use between different self-identified sexual orientation categories, HIV testing and being venue or non-venue based. Those primary school educated MSW self-identifying as heterosexual, who have not been tested for HIV and who are not venue-based have the lowest odds of reporting condom use. Those MSW reporting to be university educated, as a comparison group, have almost 100% predicted condom use across all sub-categories.

## 6.5 Condom use with non-commercial partners

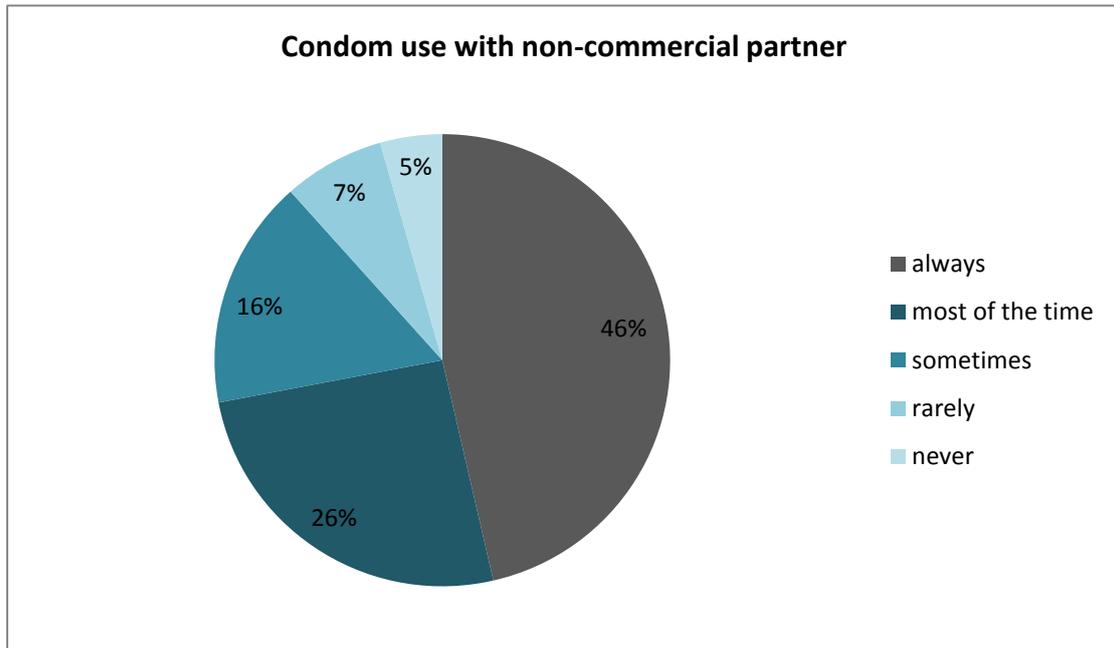
Compared with the 86% of commercial condom use reported in the previous section, rates of non-commercial condom use are found to be much lower here. Differential rates of condom use with non-commercial partners of sex workers (compared with commercial partners), have been identified previously in China among FSW (Y Hong *et al.* 2008a, W Jie *et al.* 2012), and elsewhere (C Wang *et al.* 2007, Deering *et al.* 2011, Hoffman *et al.* 2011). Respondents appear to consider the risks of HIV transmission to differ between commercial and non-commercial partners, perhaps mediated by differential levels of intimacy, trust or hygiene, and this is reflected in condom use levels:

- R: I use them [condoms] except when I am with my *nvpengyou* [girlfriend].  
I: Why not [with your girlfriend]?  
R: She belongs to me.  
I: ...what do you mean by that?  
R: She won't be having sex behind my back.  
(Male, 22, Guangxi Province)

He perceives the risk of unprotected sex to be lower with his girlfriend because he expects her to be faithful to him. He implies ownership of her, using this to explain why he does not need to use condoms with her.

- R: The second time I got gonorrhoea, I got gonorrhoea from a *419*, at that time I had already split up with him [ex-boyfriend], at that time I'd started to sell  
I: If you'd started to sell, how did you know that you got infected from a *419*, or was it infected through work?  
R: I went with a *jiejie* [sister], it wasn't long after I had split up with him [previous partner], the two of us went to Zhuhai for some fun, I met a person in Zhuhai, a north-easterner, and the two of us *zuole ta* [did him], no one used condoms.  
(Transgender, 32, Guangxi Province)

This respondent discusses a history of unprotected sex with non-commercial partners which she identifies as resulting in an STI. The proportions of respondents reporting different levels of condom use with non-commercial partners are shown in Figure 6-6.



**Figure 6-6 Proportion of non-commercial sex using condoms in previous month**

Just under half of respondents reported always using a condom with their non-commercial sexual partner in the previous month. This is lower than the proportion reporting consistent condom use with commercial partners, and indicates that the nature of the two types of relationship are different in terms of the levels of risk that the respondents perceive in each. In all subsequent analyses, this variable has been dichotomised to ‘always use condoms’ and ‘does not always use condoms’ as inconsistent condom use is a risk factor for HIV transmission (Yanpeng Ding *et al.* 2005, Chemnasiri *et al.* 2010). Analysing the non-commercial condom use data by sexual partner’s sex also shows significant differences (Table 6-5).

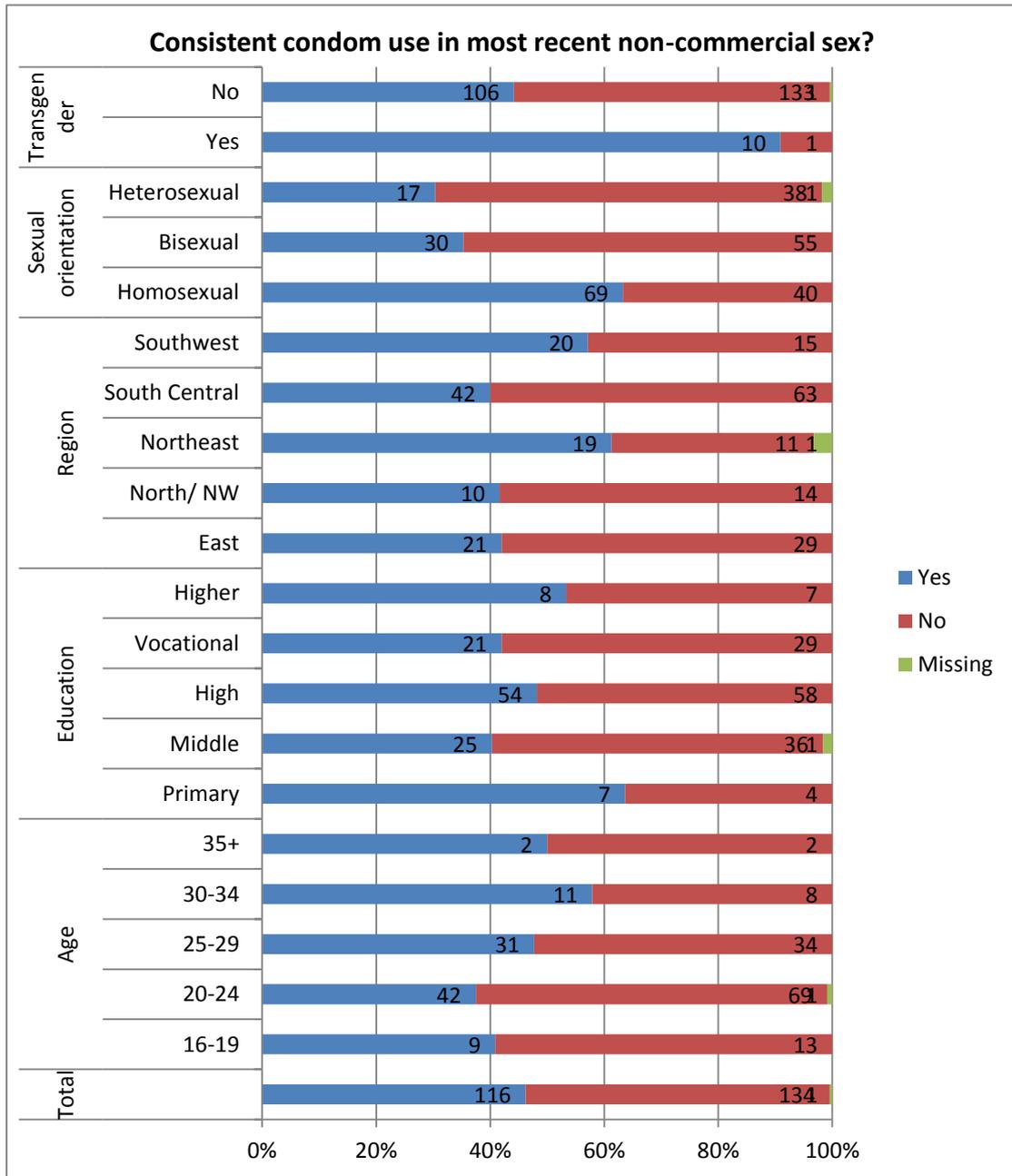
**Table 6-5 Non-commercial consistent condom use by sex of partner**

	Consistent condom use		
	No	Yes	Total
Female	74.7%	25.3%	100.0%
Male	45.0%	55.0%	100.0%

Pearson  $\chi^2(1) = 16.9777$   $p > 0.001$ ,  $n=206$

These data show clear and statistically significant differences in the rates of reported condom use by the sex of the most recent non-commercial partner, with higher rates

reported for male partners. This supports the previous findings which suggest different risks are associated with male and female partners. However, these findings also suggest that condom use rates are lower than those found in a meta-analysis of studies in China exploring condom use with the non-commercial partners of MSM, which reported overall rates of reported condom use with most recent female partner of 41.4% (Chow *et al.* 2011). This indicates that the MSW in this study are reporting lower levels of safer sex with their female partners than the MSM population in China more broadly.



**Figure 6-7 Consistent condom use with most recent non-commercial partner, disaggregated by sociodemographic respondents' characteristics n=250, missing=1.**

Those aged 20-24 years are the least likely to report consistent condom use (38%), while those in the 30-34 age group are the most likely (58%). Those with primary education or below report the highest levels of non-commercial condom use (64%), while those educated to middle school level have the lowest rates (40%). Consistent condom use also varies by region of origin, with those respondents coming from North Eastern and South Central China reporting the highest (61%) and lowest levels

(40%), respectively. Self-reported sexual orientation also shows considerable condom use variation, with homosexual self-identifying respondents reporting consistent condom use 63% of the time, compared with less than half that rate among heterosexual self-identifying MSW (30%). Those MSW who self-identified as transgender reported high rates of non-commercial condom use (91%) compared with the rest of the sample (44%). Fisher's test scores show that the differences in consistent condom use are significant at the 5% level for age, sexual orientation and identifying as transgender, but not for education or region of origin.

The data for consistent condom use with non-commercial partners (binary variable, 1= consistent) were used as the dependent variable, alongside a range of socioeconomic and demographic control variables and other variables from the survey (using a process of forwards selection) in a binary logistic regression. This regression modelling allows a more comprehensive analysis of the effects of different covariates on the odds of consistent condom use than would be the case if univariate analyses were used.

**Table 6-6 Binary logistic regression for non-commercial sex: consistent condom use at last non-commercial sex as dependent variable**

Variable		Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	[95% Interval]	Conf.
Age‡		<b>1.63**</b>	<b>0.33</b>	<b>1.10</b>	<b>2.42</b>
Education	Primary school	2.24	2.34	0.29	17.37
	Middle school	0.95	0.71	0.22	4.15
	High School	1.21	0.87	0.30	4.94
	Vocational school	0.84	0.63	0.19	3.68
	University	Ref	-	-	-
Region	East	0.83	0.36	0.36	1.92
	Northeast	<b>2.85†</b>	<b>1.63</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>8.77</b>
	North/ NW	0.55	0.35	0.16	1.91
	Southwest	2.18	1.06	0.84	5.65
	South-central	Ref	-	-	-
Self-identified sexual orientation	Homosexual	Ref	-	-	-
	Bisexual	<b>0.33**</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>0.16</b>	<b>0.69</b>
	Heterosexual	0.44†	0.23	0.17	1.16
No. places lived before Shenzhen‡		<b>0.65**</b>	<b>0.11</b>	<b>0.47</b>	<b>0.90</b>
Ever lived with a man as if married	No	Ref	-	-	-
	Yes	<b>3.11**</b>	<b>1.18</b>	<b>1.48</b>	<b>6.54</b>
HIV knowledge score‡		<b>0.71*</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>1.00</b>
Living arrangements	Alone	Ref	-	-	-
	With non-kin	0.54†	0.20	0.26	1.12
	With family/partner/other	<b>0.25**</b>	<b>0.13</b>	<b>0.09</b>	<b>0.70</b>
Cross-group concurrency	No	Ref	-	-	-
	Yes	<b>0.49*</b>	<b>0.17</b>	<b>0.24</b>	<b>0.97</b>
Self-identified gender	Male	Ref	-	-	-
	Transgender	<b>8.75*</b>	<b>9.68</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>76.43</b>
Intercept		3.43	3.37	0.5	23.49

‡ = standardised variable with mean 0 and SD 1.  
OR significance levels: \*\* = <1%; \* = <5%; † = <10%.  
Pseudo R2=0.251  
N=226

The impact of age on the likelihood of consistent condom use was found to be significant in the bivariate analyses (Table 6-6), and continues to be so here, with an increase in age of one standard deviation from the mean being associated with an increase in the odds of consistent condom use in non-commercial sex of 1.63, significant at the 1% level. This may be explained by older respondents having been exposed to more safe sex messages, or being in a more powerful position in condom

use negotiations with partners. With the exception of the north-eastern region, the effect of place of origin and education level are non-significant in the model.

When compared to the reference group of homosexual self-identifying MSW, bisexual respondents were significantly less likely to have reported consistent condom use in non-commercial sex, with odds ratios of 0.33 (1%. sig.). This indicates that the partners of bisexual MSW are potentially being exposed to greater levels of risk than those of their homosexual counterparts. The direction and magnitude of the odds ratio is similar for heterosexual respondents, but this result is less strongly significant (10%). Possible explanations for the results regarding self-identified sexual orientation might be that female partners are considered lower risk, and so if they constitute a considerable proportion of the non-commercial partners of the bisexual respondents, then those MSW may not feel it necessary to use condoms consistently.

As one interviewee explains:

- I: Have they [your female partners] asked you not to use it?  
R: They never did. But they never asked me to use it either.  
I: If you don't use it, how would they react?  
R: Not much of a reaction... Sometimes I wear it from the start. Sometimes I wear it after we started.  
I: You feel that they don't care if you wear it or not?  
R: Yeah.  
I: Are they scared of pregnancy?  
R: I don't know about them. I am.

(Male, 23, Liaoning Province)

It seems that there are fewer demands for condom use from female non-commercial partners, and echoing the verbatim responses in the survey to conceptualisations of 'safe sex', here fear of pregnancy appears to be a common theme instead.

Non-commercial partnerships with female partners have a longer average duration than those with men (Chapter 5). If, as the findings suggest, not using condoms is associated with trust and intimacy, this factor might be related to duration of partnership:

- R: I think that there are, huh, using them [condoms] is more safe, but between friends if a *nvpengyou* [girlfriend] and *nanpengyou* [boyfriend] are together doing it, if there are times when you use

condoms, then it would feel like it seems like that there is this type of, type of, do you not trust me ah, would feel like the relationship was *bu qinjin* [not so intimate].

(Male, 23, Hunan Province)

Greater levels of migration are associated with riskier sexual behaviours. Respondents reporting that they have lived in more places before Shenzhen than the mean significantly reduces the odds of them reporting non-commercial condom use, with a one standard deviation increase in number of previous locations being associated with a reduced odds of 0.65 of condom use, (1% sig.). Possible mechanisms for such a finding are more difficult to elucidate, and it is impossible to say from the survey data whether it is related to personality type, with those more likely to migrate also being more likely to take risks with their sexual partner, or whether there is another explanation. It must also be considered that since all of the sample have migrated at some point, this variable is looking at the amount of migration before arrival in Shenzhen. It is additionally possible that this variable is acting as a marker for amount of time spent working as a MSW, for although age is included in the model, specific variables for duration of sex work were not found to be significant and so were excluded. It seems likely that there would be a correlation between duration of sex work and number of previous sites of migration. In either case, condom use appears to decrease in non-commercial relationships with increased levels of migration. This strongly significant finding highlights a possible mechanism for the theorised link between HIV risk and migration (Weine *et al.* 2012).

Ever having lived with a man as if married was a significant predictor of non-commercial condom use, with those in this category having an increased odds of consistent condom use of 3.11 (1% sig.). The equivalent variable for ever having lived with a woman as if married was not found to be significant, and was excluded from the model. The reasons for the significance of ever having lived with a man as if married are not totally clear, but it might be hypothesised that this variable is picking up on an aspect of sexual practice that the sexual orientation variable is missing. As discussed in the previous chapter, sexual identity among these respondents is dynamic and changeable through time and context, and as such, self-identifying with one of the three (mutually exclusively presented) sexual orientations seems unlikely to adequately reflect non-commercial sexual practices.

Higher scores on the HIV knowledge scale are found in the analysis to be associated with lower odds of condom use in non-commercial sex (OR 0.71, 5% sig.). This is rather counterintuitive, as it might be expected that increased levels of knowledge about the possible routes of transmission of HIV to be positively correlated with condom use in all circumstances. The significance of this variable only becomes apparent once other measures were being controlled for in multivariate analyses. One explanation could come from the qualitative data, that suggest that MSW view their non-commercial relationships as being different from their commercial ones, and as such I speculate that, having more knowledge about HIV means that they feel that non-commercial partners present less risk, and therefore do not use condoms as consistently with them.

The respondents' living arrangements were found to be significantly related to their odds of consistent condom use with non-commercial partners in the model, with those reporting that they live with family, partner or other being less likely to consistently use condoms compared to the reference category of MSW who live alone (OR 0.25, 1% sig.). No one in the sample is currently living with their parents; therefore those in this category are likely to be in long term relationships with a cohabiting partner. Longer-term, more intimate relationships seem likely to explain their reduced condom use in this context.

Concurrency between non-commercial and commercial partnerships is included as an explanatory variable in the model and is found to be a significant predictor (5% sig.), of decreased odds of condom use in non-commercial relationships, with an odds of 0.5 compared to the reference group of respondents who have no history of cross-group concurrency. This is an interesting finding, as it suggests that there are multiple levels of risk interacting with one another for some of the respondents in the sample. Thus, an MSW who is engaged in concurrent relationships is also more likely to not be using condoms with their non-commercial partners. Meanwhile those living with non-kin also report lower levels of non-commercial condom use (OR 0.54, 10% sig.).

Finally, self-identifying as transgender was associated (5% sig.) with a large increased odds of condom use. These MSW had an odds of condom use 8.75 times that of their

non-transgender counterparts. This echoes the findings for commercial condom use in which those self-identifying as transgender had higher rates of condom use than their non-transgender peers, and suggests that this group of sex workers report undertaking more HIV-preventative practices with all of their sexual partners.

## 6.6 Female partners and gendered power differentials

Respondents who had female partners (whether commercial or not), explained condom use as optional, and generally their choice, with their female partners being represented as less able to negotiate with them. This was either because they did not demand to use them, or did not have the power to insist on condom use:

R: The women generally don't demand to use them... if you have a condom yourself, you can put it on, if you don't have one then you can just go into her, and she won't care... Women, it's like this, if you don't wear a condom and just go straight in, you are immediately making love, she can't tell you to first pull out, put a condom on, and then put it back in. She can't say, it's not possible to say, pull out, and then put it back in ... Male clients can make you wear a condom, with female clients generally very few have a requirement to use condoms. Many male clients desire not to use condoms, and many do want to use condoms, but women clients just don't talk about it.

(Male, 24, Henan Province)

Men are being represented here as demanding condom use (or non-use), while women appear to lack the power to prevent these male partners from having sex with them without condoms. This appears to be a clear example of gendered power disparities. Furthermore, it suggests that female partners of MSW may be at increased risk of HIV transmission. They may be unaware that their partners are also having sex with men, and furthermore are not able to negotiate protection from potential infections. This example shows an inversion the power dynamics described in the literature between (female) sex worker and (male) client (Amaro *et al.* 2000, X Yang *et al.* 2006, Shannon *et al.* 2008), and suggests that when sex is being sold by a man to a woman the power dynamics remain gendered, rather than being based on economic power disparities between worker and client. The (male) sex worker here presents his position in relation to his (female) clients as one in which he has control over condom use.

The risks associated with unprotected sex vary by partner type in the participants' representations. In discussing their male partners, the MSW's main concern is sexual health and HIV, while for their female partners (both commercial and non-commercial), the MSW representations of concerns around 'safe sex' appear to be more focussed on pregnancy, which can be avoided using measures other than condom use:

I: And you said you don't like wearing condoms when you go and buy sex, how about when having fun with these [non-commercial] *nvxing* [girls], how would you feel?

R: It's usually without a condom...

I: Do the girls not ask you to wear condom?

R: Yes, some ask, some don't, some don't care, some do... hmm, if I hadn't brought a condom, I usually force. It's usually like that, I don't feel comfortable wearing that. And not wearing a condom, usually I'll give her [emergency contraceptive] pills.

I: She'll take pills?

R: Right, it's usually like, if you, how to say it, it's usually after 2 to 3 days I'll give her a pill.

I: 2 to 3 days to have a pill? [What if ] you are not with her after 2 to 3 days? Would she take it herself?

R: Yes.

I: ...Is it easy to find contraception pills?

R: Yes, it's easy.

I: Oh, but they are not worried they might get pregnant?

R: No, not worried.

I: And you are not worried about them getting pregnant?

R: Not worried, if that happens they will take care of it themselves...No, if that happens, if they were pregnant, if I had money I will give them some money to abort it.

(Male, 22, Hunan Province)

Such attitudes towards female partners highlight how gendered power differentials can place the female partners of the MSW in a relatively marginal position. Furthermore, the risks of sex with female partners are represented here as revolving around the risk of pregnancy, which is largely not considered to be of concern to the MSW.

## 6.7 Conclusion

This chapter draws on the study participants' representations of safe sex to understand their behaviours around HIV and STI avoidance. Those representations are sometimes parallel to, and at other times in tension with, wider public health discourse around

safe sex and specifically the use of condoms. The majority of study participants recognise the importance of condoms in reducing the risk of HIV transmission, but both the contexts of sexual activity, and the mechanisms through which condoms are thought to prevent HIV transmission lead to a more complex situation for this group. Issues of intimacy with non-commercial partners, perceived lower (or different risks) with female partners, and fatalistic attitudes all appear to play a mediating role in the ability and desire of these MSW to use condoms consistently. Evidence of a local germ theory around the role of hygiene in ensuring safe sex emerges in which condoms are seen as being an important part of maintaining cleanliness during sex. This theory extends beyond condom use to include careful pre- and post-sex washing and inspection of partners. Hygiene is also used as a metaphor to counteract the perceived dirtiness of sex work and sex with particular individuals. There is evidence that through the conceptualisation of condom use as a good hygiene practice, other good hygiene practices e.g. avoidance of body odour, and general cleanliness, might be obfuscating the importance of condom use for the prevention of HIV. Together, these findings highlight the importance of socially constructed meanings of risks and ways to mediate them. This echoes Douglas' (1992) contention that actors making decisions involving judging risk "...come already primed with culturally learned assumptions and weightings" (ibid.:58).

The likelihood of condom use in commercial and non-commercial sex for this group is highly context dependent, and contingent both on the type of partner, circumstances, and some of the background characteristics of the MSW. A reversal in power dynamics between MSW and their female clients is noted, and the evidence suggests that the power to insist on condom use rests in the hands of the male partner, rather than the client in this case. This supports some feminist readings of the commercial sexual encounter in which gender is perceived to be a key driver of sex worker risk exposure (cf. Shrage 1989, Overall 1992), and highlights how structural-level gender inequalities might play out at the micro-level of HIV risk.

The multivariate analyses also suggest that there are a range of levels of influence on the condom use likelihood for these MSW, including migration history, self-identified sexual orientation and/ or gender, and the types of sex work and levels of experience that the sex workers have. This builds on the evidence presented in the previous

empirical chapters and suggests that taking a contextualised view of male sex work in Shenzhen not only provides an opportunity to gain a more comprehensive view of the lives of these individuals, but also allows an understanding of the complex range of factors that might be playing a role on their risk of HIV transmission, even to the level of most recent reported condom use. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first time the factors affecting the risk of inconsistent condom use between MSW and their non-commercial partners has been modelled using a multivariate approach.

In understanding HIV risk as being the product of multiple interactions of different parts of the environment in which these MSW work, I emphasise that condom use is but one element in this complex picture. Modelling condom use in commercial and non-commercial sexual encounters can only account for a small part of the HIV transmission risks, mediated by the participants' positions in the wider social, economic and sex industry structures. Indeed, the MSW's conceptualisations of safe sex, often including the use of condoms, are also informed heavily by these wider contexts. As such, while presenting these individual-level findings, I highlight that they cannot be divorced from the social situations, networks and representations that the actors are embedded within.

## 7 Conclusion

### 7.1 Introduction

In conclusion, I bring together the results presented in this thesis, and outline the contributions they make both to the demographic debates in terms of HIV and sexual health, and to the wider literature on male sex work in and outside of the Chinese context. I also draw on the methodological and theoretical contributions that this thesis makes in using a mixed methods approach to address a demographic problem. Finally, I outline the limitations of this study, and potential future directions for research in this area.

This thesis addresses the research question: What are the HIV risk environments of male sex workers in China? This question was broken down into subsidiary questions, namely: What are the experiences of MSW in the context of contemporary Chinese society? How is sex work organised and experienced by the MSW? What are the interactions between different types of relationships that MSW have and their attitudes, behaviours and subjective experiences? And, how do MSW understand and negotiate their HIV risk? As I have addressed each of these in turn through the thesis, the following discussion draws together all of the key findings in order to synthesise the broader question regarding the HIV risk environments of MSW in China.

This thesis contributes to a growing body of literature that sits in the interstices between anthropology and demography. It explicitly draws on the social epidemiological framework of the HIV risk environment in order to address the question of HIV risk among a group of male sex workers in Shenzhen. This is a framework which has allowed me to conceptualise multiple levels of influence on the study participants' HIV risks and wider experiences in the sex industry and beyond. The methodological design of the study, and subsequent data collection aimed to explore the risk environment to the fullest extent possible within the constraints of the study, and as such, multiple interconnected, and yet at times somewhat disparate strands emerged. The risk environment framework permits the analysis to move away from existing studies among similar groups in the Chinese context, in that it explicitly

goes beyond the attitudes and behaviours of individuals, understanding them to be sited in the wider political, economic and social structures in which they live and work. This approach is novel in the Chinese male sex work context.

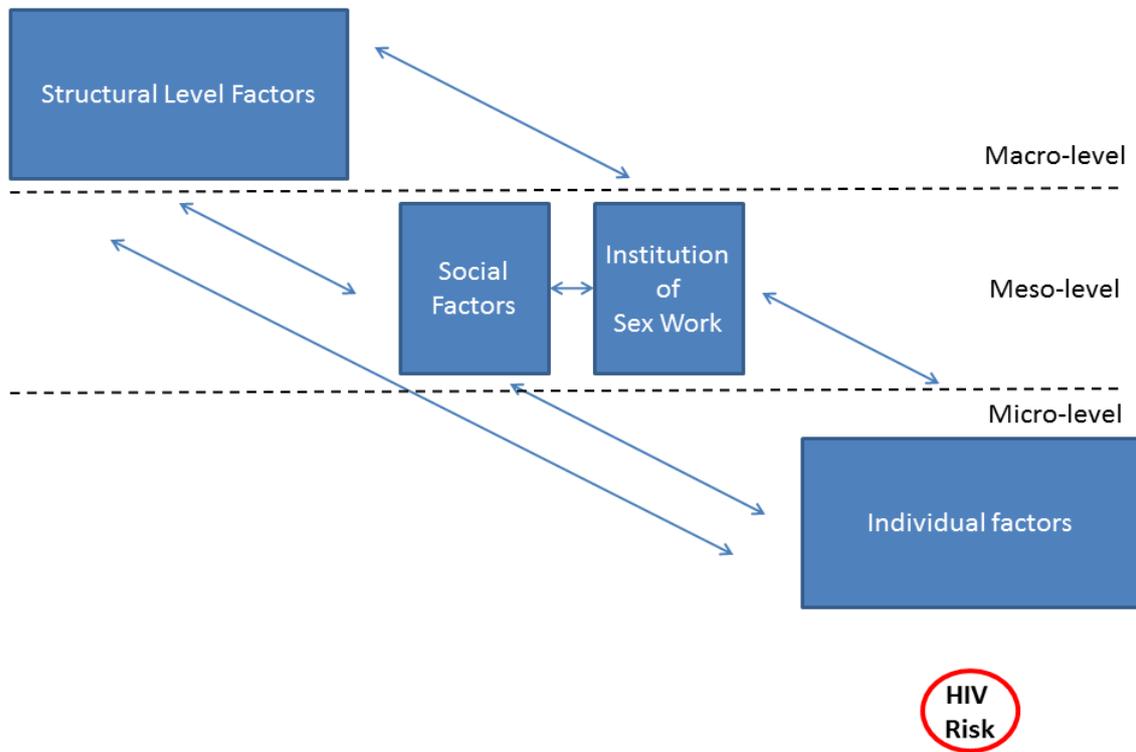
Taking a multidisciplinary approach allowed me to conceptualise processes which have traditionally been quantitatively analysed in demography, (such as rural-urban migration and HIV risk), in a more nuanced way by exploring the emic experiences of the participants, alongside more etic, analytical perspectives. In addition to the thick descriptions (cf. Geertz 1973) that anthropological demography can bring to these questions, I also consider research amongst socially, culturally and economically marginalised groups to be a profoundly political endeavour (Dewey *et al.* 2013): China's male sex workers are marginalised not only from mainstream cultural and non-mainstream subcultural norms (i.e. the gay community (Rofel 1999)), but also from official statistics on HIV (which focus on MSM, female sex workers, etc., but exclude MSW). As Scheper-Hughes (1997) comments, a critically interpretive and analytical approach is needed in demography, and allows consideration of those thought "hardly worth counting at all" (ibid.:220). It is with this in mind that I undertook this study, aiming to explicitly represent the participants' voices, in a challenge to their exclusion from much of the official and academic literature.

Kong (2010) situates male sex workers within China's changing social, economic and sexual landscapes, presenting them by turns as both subalterns (cf. Dutton 1998) and members of a modern and cosmopolitan group. This nuanced view forms the basis for some of the work presented in this thesis, in which I extend the argument that MSW are both multiply-stigmatised and constrained by their circumstances, but active decision-making agents, in order to understand their HIV risk.

This study is the first to employ mixed methods to understand the HIV risks among MSW in China. I employed this approach to both the data collection and analysis for this project. By using mixed methods, I was better able to conceptualise the multiple levels of influence heightening HIV risks, within the social ecological conceptualisation of HIV. This is a growing area of research, and mixed methods have been used to understand HIV among MSW in a small number of studies internationally, for example in Pakistan (Collumbien *et al.* 2009, S Hawkes *et al.*

2009), Dominican Republic (Padilla *et al.* 2010), the USA (Mimiaga *et al.* 2009), and Colombia (Bianchi *et al.* 2014), although many more studies exist using mixed methods to examine HIV risk among other groups, including MSM and female sex workers (cf. Goldsamt *et al.* 2005, Mustanski *et al.* 2011, Strathdee *et al.* 2012, Ugarte Guevara *et al.* 2012).

Building on the work of Baral (2013a), Rhodes and colleagues (2002; 2005a; 2005b) and Barnett and Whiteside (1999; 2006), I conceptualise HIV risk as being the product of multiple macro-structural and meso-level conditions which can then impact on subsequent individual behaviours, practices and risk exposures. In outlining the migration histories and socioeconomic backgrounds of the study participants within the context of China's modernisation in the reform era, I present a backdrop for their entry into Shenzhen's male sex industry. I want to emphasise though that this is not a deterministic model, but rather one in which those men who have entered into selling sex are conceptualised as being able to exert their agency within these wider social structures. Drawing on all of the findings in this study, Figure and Table 7-1 below represent the key influencing factors identified as significant either from the emic perspectives of the participants, or from my analysis of the data collected in this project.



**Figure 7-1 Interrelations between different levels of influence on the risk of HIV transmission**

Figure 7-1 aims to highlight the interrelatedness of the multiple levels of influence on the risk of transmission of HIV for MSW in this study. Using this study’s findings, Table 7-1 below outlines the specific elements that have emerged as important in mediating or generating risk at each level of this process.

**Table 7-1 Factors found to play a role in the framework for HIV risk**

Level	Factor
Structural	The <i>hukou</i> household registration system
	HIV/AIDS treatment policy
	Illegality of sex work
	Police entrapment
	Rural-urban inequality
Social factors	Access to education
	Migration opportunities
	Social capital and <i>guanxi</i>
	Filial duties and family obligations
	Stigma and discrimination
Institution of MSW	Financial resources
	Role of <i>mami</i>
	Different routes into sex work
	Stigma and discrimination
	Police involvement
	Violence from clients
	Mobility between work places
Diversity of work places	
Individual factors	Social networks of MSW
	Identities
	HIV knowledge
	Understandings of safe sex
	Partner types
	Sexual practices
Negotiating power	
	Condom use

In the following section, I will outline the key findings from this study, indicating areas of novelty, or possible implications for the results, drawing together the elements identified in Figure 7-1 and Table 7-1.

## 7.2 Summary of findings

This thesis makes a number of contributions to the literature. I will begin by outlining the methodological contributions and insights that I have developed in this project, before discussing the substantive findings.

From a methodological perspective, in using a participatory approach to study a marginalised group in China, I sought to address some of the main challenges in undertaking research among a vulnerable group engaging in illegal activities. In a recent book on ethical research among sex workers, Dewey and Zheng (2013) call for

greater levels of community participation in such work. However, no previous studies in China have adopted this approach in their work among MSW.

The use of community advisory boards (CAB's) to provide ethical approval and oversight in research among marginalised communities has become more prevalent in recent years (MY Gao *et al.* 2007). In this project, the CAB's alongside the MSW CBO provided members of Shenzhen's MSW community with an opportunity to discuss the research, review the survey instruments and give their approval for the project. In undertaking this project, I took the decision to avoid involvement with any official mainland Chinese government bodies. The reasons for this were that both I and the MSW CBO were concerned that seeking official approval for the project would draw unwanted attention to the MSW community in Shenzhen, which could both pose a risk to the participants (and their livelihoods), and to the work of the CBO. Furthermore, had I gained official approval for the project, this would have in no way implied the approval of the community I wanted to work with. Indeed, in a situation in which a group is both socially marginalised and subject to potential legal sanction, I felt strongly that the aim of my research was to investigate a community that had heretofore been largely ignored, whilst giving them a voice in my research. It would thus have been counter to the aims of the research to use official channels, which in turn would have necessitated carrying out the research through the public health authorities and governmental NGOs in Shenzhen (as was the case in a previous doctoral research project among MSM in Shenzhen (cf. Chapman 2007)). Evidence from the study participants suggests that they felt able to speak openly to me and the CBO, given that they were aware that neither of us was linked to the authorities. Furthermore, being able to disseminate preliminary research findings to a group of community members not only meant that key results relating to HIV knowledge, condom use, etc. could be discussed in the group, but also that the results could be partially validated by listening to the participants' reactions to them. Thus, in including members of the community, and CBO workers in the process of knowledge creation, the results presented here provide a unique and rigorous insight into the dynamics of the male sex industry in Shenzhen, alongside the complex contextual factors involved in HIV risk for this group.

This study found that all of the participants had migrated away from their *laojia* [hometown], with the majority being rural-to-urban migrants. The migration experiences of the study participants are intimately intertwined with the Chinese government's *hukou* household registration system, which acts to limit access for rural-registered citizens to services in cities, and has been identified by numerous authors (Bao *et al.* 2011, T Cheng *et al.* 1994, Fan 2008, F-L Wang *et al.* 2011, Dutton 1998, Chan 2009, Afridi *et al.* 2012) as contributing to the sharp rural-urban, and rural-resident-in-urban areas disparities seen in China. By mapping the self-reported migratory pathways of my respondents, I outlined their principal areas of movement through China on their way to Shenzhen. Being able to quantify and map these migration trajectories for the first time means that we can now see how migration and sex work might intersect geographically as well as temporally for these men. Furthermore, it allows an analysis of the likelihood of migrating through different major cities in China. The results of which suggest that geography plays an important role, with proximity being a significant determinant of choice of locale.

The findings though, suggest a more complex situation than purely socioeconomic disparities driving migration. While the *hukou* system limits access to services to the many urban employment opportunities (indirectly through poorer education in rural areas), nevertheless for many of the participants, moving to the city represented an active engagement with wider discourses of modernity in China. Such engagement also intersected with the sexual, gender and sex worker identities of many of the participants (echoing Shephard's (2012), findings on queer transnational migration processes), with subsequent implications for their exposures to HIV risks through their commercial and non-commercial sexual networks. Mirroring Kong's (2010:178-9) discussion of MSW in Beijing and Shanghai, the participants presented Shenzhen as a locus of development, and their migration there as a means of accessing the cosmopolitan lifestyles, along with the wealth, assumed to be a part of living in this modern city. These factors are not only considered to represent modernity for these men, but both Song (2010) and Farrer (2002) argue that access to wealth and consumer good are in fact integral elements in contemporary Chinese constructions of masculinity: in moving to Shenzhen, these migrants are becoming *real* men. They hope to transform the relative lack of power they hold as poor, rural migrants through their migration and adoption of a more urbane lifestyle, repositioning themselves

discursively in relation to contemporary China's masculine ideals. I thus presented findings around the mobility and migration of MSW, set within a discussion of wider social and economic change, with the aim of demonstrating the interrelatedness of broader structural processes and more immediate decision making and agency for the participants.

These migration findings also feed into the subsequent analyses in Chapter 6 in which I found that increased levels of migration (measured by number of previous locations of sex work), is associated in multivariate analyses with reduced levels of condom use with non-commercial partners. While in previous studies in China, rural-urban migrants have been found to have higher levels of HIV (and other STI) risk behaviours (Parish *et al.* 2003, X Li *et al.* 2004b, Z Hu *et al.* 2006, JD Tucker *et al.* 2006, L Zhang *et al.* 2013a), and poorer attitudes towards PLHIV (Bouanchaud 2011), it has largely remained unclear whether this was because they represent a special group in relation to their non-migrating peers, or whether there might be something intrinsic to the process of migration that increases their risk. Drawing on the findings from Chapters 3 and 4, there are indications that the reasons the participants have for migrating include accessing greater economic capital and exploring sexual and gender identities frequently parallel their reasons for working as sex workers. In the social ecological conceptualisation of HIV risk for this group then, migration, sex work, and the subsequent risks that they face or negotiate can all be understood to be part of the same system. This provides a more subtle understanding of the interconnections between migration and HIV risk in this population than alternative approaches have been able to.

Given that all of the participants in this study were migrants, the effect of the number of migration events was modelled. The findings suggest that with each additional experience of migration, there is a reduction in the odds of consistent condom use with most recent non-commercial partner. The findings for consistent condom use with most recent commercial partner were more tentative, but broadly showed the same pattern, with those MSW reporting having sold sex in other cities before Shenzhen being less likely to report condom use. These findings are novel in the context of Chinese MSW, and provide evidence to support the previously largely

theoretical links between mobility and HIV risk in this group. This has implications both for HIV risk, and safer sex messaging interventions.

Some of the study participants had begun sex work before arriving in Shenzhen, while for others, their experience of the male sex industry began in this city. Nevertheless, the interconnectedness of the work of male sex workers and the phenomenon of mobility appeared frequently in their representations of their work. Such a mobile group is not only potentially difficult to target for safe sex interventions, but also has been identified as being at risk of carrying infection widely. On the other hand, their very mobility might make them a particularly good group for spreading prevention messaging at a national level, with an appropriate peer-led approach perhaps being a feasible intervention. Participatory safer sex messaging has been found to significantly increase levels of HIV knowledge, attitudes and condom use among MSM in one study in Chengdu, Sichuan Province (MY Gao *et al.* 2007).

The findings suggest that there are a range of motivations for entering sex work, with this heterogeneity reflected both in the reasons that they discuss for entering the industry and in the ways in which they started to work selling sex. While there has been brief discussion of motivations for entering sex work in the Chinese literature previously (Kong 2010), being able to map the distribution of different motivations across a large sample represents an extension to this previous qualitative work. While financial reasons predominate, they frequently intersect with other motivations for selling sex, including being able to explore (same)sexual desires, and echoing the findings for migration, a wish to be a part of cosmopolitan, modern China, through consumption, but also through accessing urban identities. Evidence also emerged of sex work being seen as a potential source of empowerment, although for the majority of the study participants, financial motivators were the predominant driver of their work. The need for greater material resources was discussed in relation to filial duties to support family members, or to escape poverty, but also to have greater spending power. Indeed, the links between economic and social capital can be seen as highly important in contemporary China, particularly amongst men whose relative position of power might depend on their ability to access expensive consumer goods. In linking these findings to the broader framework of the HIV risk environment, what emerges is a picture of macro-level social, economic and cultural factors (including

filial family obligations, and heteronormative partnership expectations) that provide the backdrop for entering sex work for many of these men. Their subsequent position both within the sex industry, and in non-commercial sexual networks in Shenzhen then places them in a position of potential vulnerability to HIV infection.

The picture of routes into the sex industry is similarly varied, with social networks and the role of *guanxixue* being important for some participants, while the internet or an escalation in services being significant for others. To date, little has been written about the mechanisms by which men start to sell sex in China.

I have shown throughout the discussion of Shenzhen's male sex industry that static approaches to conceptualising the work of these men are inadequate. Not only are these MSW highly mobile between geographical areas of China, but also between venues within Shenzhen. The findings suggest that many of the men have a high rate of change of venue location and type. Contrary to previous studies among Chinese MSW (Z Liu *et al.* 2009c, Xiangdong Meng *et al.* 2010, Tao *et al.* 2010b, Xu *et al.* 2011), I found that characterising the participants by single venue type to be inappropriate, as over a third of the survey respondents reported working in multiple venues concurrently. The findings suggest that it is interactions with other actors in the sex industry (or the authorities) which are associated with different risks, rather than the places where those interactions occur. These interactions also provide different opportunities, and the participants actively negotiate these circumstances in order to continue to make a living from their work. This dynamism in Shenzhen's male sex industry has not been captured previously, and suggests not only that many of the MSW in Shenzhen are more cognisant of the range of available sex work types and venues, but also that many of them are actively managing multiple positions in the industry. I suggest one possible way to understand the structure of the sex industry in Shenzhen is by considering the presence or absence of a *mami* [pimps]. These actors exert influence on the work and lives of the MSW under their control, but also can provide condoms and engage in other activities that may be protective to their workers.

The findings suggest a complex range of interactions between different actors and institutions in Shenzhen's male sex industry. The MSW are engaged in active

negotiations with each other, their clients, their *mami* [pimps], and the police. Other sex workers were represented as both a potential source of support and information, but also as competition and in the context of HIV, potentially a source of infection. The threats from clients that emerged in this research include violence and robbery, risks managed through a number of strategies by the MSW, including not carrying valuables, information sharing with other MSW in their social or professional networks, and through the protection of having a *mami*. The role that *mami* play though is represented as both potentially protective, and as a source of further risk. They might insist on the MSW providing them with sexual services, or money in order to refer clients, or might be seen as overly controlling, preventing the MSW from leaving their premises. On the other hand, they might provide condoms, or intermediate between MSW and their clients, or might provide some protection from police raids (through their own *guanxi* networks). Meanwhile the risk of arrest, through police raids or crackdowns during the Shenzhen Universiade sporting event were characterised by many of the respondents as posing a threat both to their freedom, and their livelihoods, with *mami* and MSW venue managers reacting to the risk of raids by firing many of their sex workers. While the impact of sporting events on female sex work has been noted in a number of different contexts, (for example, Gould 2010, Pillay *et al.* 2010, Isgro *et al.* 2013), to the best of my knowledge, impacts of such events have not previously been noted amongst MSW populations. As the Universiade event was an unexpected precursor to this study, studying its effects on MSW was not the primary objective. Nevertheless there is evidence that it had some impacts on the local male sex work market in Shenzhen.

The interaction between police raids and the *hukou* system was highlighted, demonstrating how central government policy in relation to urban and rural citizenship can have direct consequences for the MSW on the ground, who are rendered vulnerable to being removed from Shenzhen during crackdowns involving checks on residency documents. In presenting the emic viewpoints of the respondents though, I have aimed to show how these various threats are negotiated and managed in the sex workers' daily lives. The findings show that the MSW manage the various sources of risk and power imbalances in creative ways, either through mobility between different workplaces, through their social networks (which may include police officers), or through their dealings with their clients and *mami*.

The active management of positions in the sex industry and relations with other actors within it raised questions around the identities of MSW in this study. I used Goffman's (1963) conceptualisations of stigma and stigmatised identities alongside Butler's (1988; 1990) work on performativity and Crenshaw's (1991) work on intersectionality to develop an understanding of the ways in which the study participants manage their multiple identities; categories which include their identities as sex workers, their sexual orientation and gender identities, and their identities outside of the circle, as husbands, boyfriends, sons, etc. In order to do this, I have focussed primarily on the sexual networks and partnerships that these MSW are a part of, and the ways in which they are represented. In keeping this narrow focus, I concentrated on the elements of identity and identity management that are pertinent to the social ecology of HIV in this group (Baral *et al.* 2013a). The findings show that many of the MSW hold multiple, sometimes contradictory identities. For example, they may represent themselves as gay *MB* to their male clients, and as heterosexual bar workers to their girlfriends. I suggest that different identity categories are employed in different places, situations or with particular social or sexual contacts. The survey data suggest that for many of the respondents, their self-identified sexual orientation is not necessarily reflected in their sexual partnership history, raising questions of the utility of such sexual orientation categories in the case of Chinese MSW more broadly. The implication of these findings is that sexual practices and the ways that MSW describe themselves are frequently not coterminous. This is not a novel finding in itself (with studies elsewhere, for example in Cambodia (Girault *et al.* 2004), the USA (Wohl *et al.* 2002, Ross *et al.* 2003, Pathela *et al.* 2006, Siegel *et al.* 2008) and China (Q He *et al.* 2006, D Song *et al.* 2013) finding similar discordance between behaviours and self-identified sexual orientation). However, in drawing on identity theory, in the context of some identities being highly stigmatised in China, I have underlined how identity management among the MSW represents a self-protective tactic in many cases. Asking MSW to identify with a specific sexual orientation category is standard practice in studies of this group in China (Chow *et al.* 2012), but the findings here suggest that such categorisations are potentially problematic insofar as they are usually assumed to then map directly on to sexual partner types. The findings presented here suggest that self-identified sexual orientation as a survey question can only be considered to be a measure of an identity

that the respondent is presenting in that context, and that such a category is likely to be fluid over time and in different places.

I use the term ‘complex sexual networks’ to encapsulate the wide range of sexual partner types that were described during the research. MSW have both commercial and non-commercial partnerships, frequently with men and women, and of multiple sub-types, including *419*'s [one night stands], ‘regulars’, long term and shorter term relationships, wives, boyfriends, girlfriends and *kuaican* [fast-food – commercial quickies]. This range and number of sexual partners frequently leads to complex webs of different relationship types, with high rates of partner concurrency. In the respondent's representations, their sexual partner types differ not only in their characteristics as being paid, paying or non-commercial, but also their duration, and the degree of intimacy involved. The normative expectations of many MSW's families for them to marry, have children and fulfil their filial duties also appeared frequently in their narratives. Some were already married, and through their migration, had both geographically and sexually distanced themselves from their wives. For others, finding a wife was seen as the natural next step once they returned home with their earnings from selling sex to men and women. These findings were by no means limited to those respondents who self-identified as heterosexual, in line with the findings on the fluidity of identities.

Sex work, however, was also perceived by some of the MSW as posing a potential threat to their future identities as filial sons and husbands. Imbalance was presented as a metaphor for the effects that selling sex to men could have, with the result that the MSW would no longer find women attractive, or would not be able to perform sexually with their future wives. The conflation of sex worker and homosexual identities emerged as a common theme, both in the MSW's self-descriptions, and in their explanations of the stigma they felt from others. As a result, some of the interviewees discussed having sex with female sex workers or female casual partners to restore their balance. This notion of balance fits with the traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) system's beliefs in maintaining harmony and balance between yin and yang elements. TCM remains a major part of China's health system (S Wang *et al.* 2005), and its central tenet of balance between different opposing elements permeates lay understandings of health and wellbeing. In employing this metaphor of

imbalance brought about through selling sex, these men then are indicating a desire to redress that balance through sex with women, paid or non-commercial.

In view of the discussion of identity management and the desire of some of the respondents to restore balance through their partnerships, I presented data on partner concurrency. These findings showed that many of the study participants were engaging in multiple concurrent sexual partnerships with both commercial and non-commercial partners. While partner concurrency might appear a moot point among a group of people whose job is to sell sex, I focus on data showing concurrency between commercial and non-commercial partners. These data are novel in the Chinese context, and suggest an amendment to the UNAIDS guidelines for measuring partner concurrency might be useful for sex working populations, given their high numbers of partners, and rates of partner change. I propose an alternative measure based on most recent three commercial and three non-commercial partners in order to have a more appropriate estimator of concurrency for a population with implicitly high rates of partner change, and a range of sexual partner types. I found that 45% of the 251 MSW in the sample were involved in concurrent partnerships of this type. Concurrency has been suggested to be a potential driver of the HIV epidemic in numerous contexts (Morris *et al.* 1997, Mah *et al.* , Morris *et al.* 2010, Mah *et al.* 2011), and the findings here suggest that both commercial and non-commercial partners of MSW may unknowingly be involved in concurrent partnerships.

Partner concurrency represents a potential source of HIV risk, acting at the interpersonal level in the social ecological framework. Nevertheless, HIV transmission only remains possible in the case where one partner is infected, and the infection is able to pass from them to another partner through contact with body fluids. I used measures of consistent condom use to estimate the risk of HIV transmission, as for reasons outlined in the methodology chapter, HIV testing was neither feasible nor desirable in this study. The findings on reported condom use were presented separately for commercial and non-commercial partners. Consistent condom use was more common at last commercial sex (86%) than last non-commercial sex (46%), and multivariate analyses showed that there are a range of factors that influence the likelihood of reporting consistent condom use for the MSW in this study. Key findings for condom use in commercial sex were that having only

primary-level education, and having sold sex in other cities than Shenzhen were both linked to lower likelihood of condom use, while having a male commercial partner, working more than 20 hours a week selling sex, having been tested previously for HIV, and being more comfortable having sex with women were all associated with increased levels of reported condom use. These findings suggest that interventions to increase condom use between men and their clients could be focussed at specific groups, particularly those with lower education levels, those who have larger numbers of female commercial partners, and those who only work part-time in the sex industry. Indeed these are the MSW who are perhaps least likely to have been exposed to safer sex messaging in the past. Furthermore, promoting rapid HIV testing among MSW would not only enable them to make more informed decisions relating to their health, but is also shown here to be associated with increased rates of condom use.

The findings for consistent condom use in most recent non-commercial sex are novel in this context. Studies among MSW in China have previously focussed exclusively on commercial sexual partners (e.g. Mi *et al.* 2007, FY Wong *et al.* 2008, Xi *et al.* 2009), but given the high rates of commercial-non-commercial partner concurrency, and lower rates of reported condom use with non-commercial partners, it seems that non-paying or paid partners should be a greater focus in studies of HIV risk behaviours. The analysis suggests that increased age, reporting ever having cohabited with a male partner, and self-identifying as transgender are all associated with an increased odds of reporting condom use at last non-commercial sex. On the other hand, increased levels of migration, self-identifying as bisexual, currently living with a partner and being in a concurrent partnership are all associated with a reduced likelihood of reporting condom use. These findings suggest that those MSW who are most mobile and who are involved in concurrent partnerships might also be the ones most at risk of infection (or transmission) of HIV to their non-commercial partners. Given that this study has found that the vast majority of the MSW are unlikely to disclose their MSW identity to non-commercial partners, I suggest that encouraging condom use in non-commercial sex should be a priority area for this group, at the very least among their 419 relationships.

In examining the reasons for condom (non)use among MSW, and the multiple meanings that are ascribed to the term *anquan xingxingwei* [safe sex], I have presented the participants as conscious actors, negotiating not only multiple risks and affective situations, but also multiple contested meanings. Safe sex is not a neutral term in the context of male sex work in Shenzhen. Its interpretations are tied in to ideas around hygiene and cleanliness, which in turn are employed by MSW as a way to counter the perceived dirtiness of their work. Showering and personal hygiene are considered by many of the participants to be integral to safe sex, and are conflated with condom use by some respondents in their understandings of disease avoidance. Standing in contrast to the desired distance between themselves and dirty clients, the relationships that many of the respondents had outside of their work, with girl or boyfriends and casual partners were expected to be closer and more intimate. One explanation for reduced levels of condom use in non-commercial sex therefore is that condoms prevent intimacy, and intimacy is something considered desirable to regain balance in the sexual and emotional lives of many of the respondents. The use of cleanliness practices and hygiene for disease prevention has been described previously in a recent ethnographic study of FSW in Hainan Province (Yu 2013), and I develop this idea by presenting these practices both as a physical measure used by MSW, but furthermore as a metaphor for their work. Drawing on the work of Douglas (1991; 1992), the presentation of hygiene as a safe sex practice here highlights how in conceptualising their work as ‘dirty’, the sex workers are perhaps employing this metaphor for transgression of social norms in Chinese society. The dirtiness of their work linking the stigma of selling sex they experience in Chinese society to the reflexive practices of hygiene that they are able to employ to counteract that stigma. Given the centrality of hygiene as a discourse among these men, and the success of ‘100% condom use’ campaigns for commercial sex workers in reducing HIV and STI epidemics elsewhere (for example, in Thailand (Rojanapithayakorn 2006)), and I suggest that a sensible intervention might consider harnessing the hygiene metaphor to promote greater levels of condom use among MSW in China by emphasising the hygienic nature of condoms.

Sex work debates have tended to focus on the gender power disparities implicit within a dynamic of female sex worker-male client relations. Alongside other studies of male sex work, the findings here challenge us to take a different position, one in which

gender roles are less relevant (in the case of male sex worker-male client), or indeed highlighted but potentially reversed (male sex worker-female client). What has emerged from this study though is a picture in which the gendered power differentials persisted in some contexts. The MSW represent themselves as being in control of condom use with their female clients. They discuss condom use with female clients as being contraceptive, rather than disease preventative, and female clients (and indeed female non-commercial and paid commercial partners) not being presented as ‘risky’ from a sexual health perspective. Given the focus on prevention of pregnancy, many of the MSW considered ‘safe sex’ to be relatively unimportant with female partners, as pills (both contraceptive and emergency) and abortions are readily available.

In view of the previously described findings relating to the dynamic nature of sexual orientation identity, filial duties to return home to marry (a woman), high levels of commercial-non-commercial partner concurrency, and relatively low rates of condom use (particularly with female partners), the findings suggest that the non-commercial female partners of the MSW in this study are in a particularly vulnerable position in relation to their HIV risk; similar arguments have been made regarding the wives of MSM in China (Chow *et al.* 2013). Given that this group are almost exclusively unaware that their male partners are working in the sex industry, they remain invisible to intervention efforts. As such, interventions targeting MSW and emphasising the importance of condom use also with their non-commercial partners could be potentially protective to this group (L Zhang *et al.* 2012), as could interventions targeting the partners (wives, girlfriends and boyfriends, etc.) of MSW more broadly, although how this group could be identified is not clear.

### 7.3 Limitations

The sampling strategy I employed in this research limits the generalizability of the findings from this study beyond the context of male sex work in Shenzhen at the time of research. In addition, the purposive selection of members of the first community advisory board may also have introduced bias into the cognitive testing of the survey instruments, and more broadly, to the discussions and framing of the research in those meetings. In addition to these considerations, and following my discussion of the key findings from this thesis, it is important to reflect on the other limitations of this study.

First, it was inevitable that as a researcher, I went to the field with some preconceptions about what I might find, and with an ‘academic lens’ through which to view those findings. I tried as much as possible to be consciously aware of my positionality to the research, and the participants. In taking a participatory approach and working alongside a community MSW organisation, I hoped to be able, as much as possible, to take their views, ideas and perspectives into account throughout the fieldwork process, and subsequently in analysis. I have tried to use the voices of the participants as much as possible in this thesis to provide them with an opportunity to ‘speak’, and to provide a grounding for my analyses.

Like the field of demography more generally, this thesis is at its heart empirically driven, and I wanted to employ analytical lenses to different parts of it, but always bearing in mind the original data and voices of the respondents. In choosing any framework or theoretical lens through which to understand empirical findings, the researcher arguably leaves themselves open to criticism for privileging one position over another.

A key limitation to this study is its reliance on self-reported sexual behaviours and condom use as markers for HIV risk. While it was not possible in this context to collect biological samples (for the reasons discussed in Section 2.xx), nevertheless it is likely therefore that some biases are inevitable in these measures. A 2001 study in four African cities found systematic underreporting of sexual intercourse and unprotected sex among young men and women, by comparing self-reported behaviours and HIV and STI test results (Buvé, et al. 2001). While the study was not focussed on sex workers, it nevertheless highlights the potential disconnect between self-attributed practices and biomarkers. Likewise, a 2007 study among FSW in Mombassa found significant levels of over-reporting of condom use, through comparisons between self-reported behaviours and vaginal swab results for prostate specific antigen (Gallo, et al. 2007), again indicating that this group are likely to underestimate their levels of unprotected sex in a survey. This means that levels of condom use reported in this study may be underestimates, but it is not possible to draw any firm conclusions as to the degree of underestimation here, due to the lack of biological data.

Another limitation of this study was with regards to those participants who self-identified as transgender. This was a small subgroup within the MSW community in Shenzhen, and although during data collection I tried to ensure that they were represented in the final sample, it was only possible to recruit 10 individuals for the survey, two of whom agreed to be interviewed. Because of the small number in the final study, it was not possible to analyse the data for them separately. It seems likely that their experiences of selling sex in Shenzhen were different to the other sex workers, given that there were gendered elements to their experience that those MSW self-identifying as men would not have had. Furthermore, the transgender sex workers tended to work primarily in parks and on the streets, something that was much rarer for the other MSW. In drawing on the intersectionality literature, I showed that different categories of MSW might be subject to multiple, and multiplicative sources of stigma, and this is almost certainly the case for those who identify as transgender. However, this thesis did not set out to examine the experiences of transgender sex workers explicitly, and as such I feel that while this is a significant limitation, further research needs to target this group specifically.

In only basing the fieldwork in one city in China, inevitably the migration data in particular is necessarily tautological, as I was only able to contact individuals who had migrated to Shenzhen. A more comprehensive, multi-site study might have been able to gain a more complete picture of the major MSW migration trajectories at a national level. However, the migration history data that was collected does at least develop some understanding of the major routes and sites of migration for those MSW who passed through Shenzhen at the time of fieldwork, and given that this is the first time such data has been collected in China, it lays some groundwork for future work.

Finally, as with any social science research, the generation of knowledge is a collaborative effort between researcher and researched, and so the knowledge created in that process is necessarily contingent on the context and situation in which that data is gathered and analysed, as well as the instruments used to collect it. Questions of reliability and validity should always be at the heart of any research effort, never more so when the research is on a sensitive topic, and a marginalised population, in which the opportunities to have a voice are limited. The responsibility for providing a ‘true’

account and a fair analysis rests with me as a researcher, and I took several measures to ensure that this thesis would be a fair reflection of the situation among MSW in Shenzhen at the time of fieldwork. Feeding back preliminary findings to the community advisory board and the CBO, and getting their feedback helped me to ensure that I was on the right track, but I also used the qualitative and quantitative data elements to triangulate the findings, and largely through referring back to the voices of the participants, I hope to have provided as good an account as possible of the multiple factors that play a part in both their daily lives, and their HIV risks.

#### 7.4 Future research

Despite a recent growth in interest in male sex work in the academy, it remains by and large an under-researched area globally. The focus of the majority of studies to date in China has been on the levels of HIV knowledge, attitudes, practices, and prevalence, usually from a purely quantitative perspective. Gathering such data is of course important for understanding the dynamics of the HIV epidemic at an individual level, but I believe that in taking a broader view of the drivers and factors involved at multiple levels of ‘distance’ from an individual’s practices, we are better able to understand some of the complexities of the conditions in which HIV might be transmitted. As such, future research into MSW in China might employ the social ecological framework for HIV risk that I have elaborated in this thesis in different geographical areas, both gaining a more comprehensive view of the environments of MSW in different contexts, and to test whether the framework holds in those situations.

Migration, and specifically rural-urban migration in the context of China’s restrictive *hukou* system, is the subject of substantial scholarly attention. However, of MSW, who are a highly mobile group, very little is known. This study makes a contribution to that knowledge, but a larger scale study might consider collecting migration data in a number of locales, or might consider finding ways to ‘track’ the movements of MSW through the country, perhaps recruiting a sample of MSW to give regular updates on their location over a period of time.

Transgender sex workers remain largely invisible from the literature, and too few in number in this study to be able to draw any firm conclusions about their experiences

of sex work as male-to-female transgender individuals. Being marginal to both mainstream society through their sex work, and to the sex industry because of their transgender identity means that the voices of this group are rarely heard. They are also unusual in the context of the MSW industry in that they report selling sex to heterosexual self-identified men alongside the other 'usual' clients of MSW. This means that it is likely that they are exposed to different levels and types of risks. Indeed, there is a lack of studies that seek to understand non-Western non-normative gender identities and masculinities, and the formations of power that they are party to. The complexity of competing masculine and gender roles (alongside multiple identities highlighted in this thesis) in contemporary China certainly deserve greater attention. Future research should target these groups in China, ensuring that they become more visible in the literature.

In being part of the same sexual networks, the clients (and non-commercial partners) of male sex workers are a central part of the social ecology of HIV risk in this context. While not the focus of this study, these groups are under-represented in the Chinese literature and investigations in to their lived experiences and HIV risks would add important information to our knowledge of the wider contexts of which MSW are a part, and improve our knowledge of their social and sexual networks. Further, of particular interest would be the study of female clients of male sex workers in China, challenging the traditional gendered readings of the commercial sex encounter; a group hitherto largely invisible in the Chinese literature.

Finally, in the context of anthropological demography, social epidemiology and mixed methods research in demography more broadly, future research might consider ways to better incorporate social theories in order to widen the analytical breadth of these fields. There is an increasing and welcome acknowledgement of the potential enrichment that integrating theories around gender, identity and behavioural or action theories (Greenhalgh *et al.* 1995, Riley 1999, Sigle-Rushton 2010) might bring to traditionally demographic questions. Further advances in this area would not only benefit our understandings of demographic processes, but might also highlight the importance of demography to other parts of the academy.

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## Appendix A: Survey questions and sources

The below section details questionnaire items that I included in the survey. Sources of questions are given where appropriate.

### Sexual Relationship Power Scale

Taken from {Pulerwitz, 2000 #278}, also used (in adapted form) in China amongst FSW and migrants by {Yang, 2009 #274}.

#### Relationship Control Factor/Subscale

Each of the following items is scored on a 4-point Likert scale, where 1 Strongly Agree, 2 Agree, 3 Disagree, and 4 Strongly Disagree.

1. If I asked my partner to use a condom, he would get violent.\*\*
2. If I asked my partner to use a condom, he would get angry.\*\*
3. Most of the time, we do what my partner wants to do.
4. My partner won't let me wear certain things.
5. When my partner and I are together, I'm pretty quiet.
6. My partner has more say than I do about important decisions that affect us.
7. My partner tells me who I can spend time with.
8. If I asked my partner to use a condom, he would think I'm having sex with other people.\*\*
9. I feel trapped or stuck in our relationship.
10. My partner does what he wants, even if I do not want him to.
11. I am more committed to our relationship than my partner is.
12. When my partner and I disagree, he gets his way most of the time.
13. My partner gets more out of our relationship than I do.
14. My partner always wants to know where I am.
15. My partner might be having sex with someone else.

### Demographic and Health Survey Questions

1. In what month and year were you born?
2. How old were you at your last birthday?
3. Have you ever attended school? To what year?
4. Are you currently married or living together with a woman as if married?
5. Have you ever been married or lived together with a woman as if married?
6. Do you currently live together with a man as if married? [own question]
7. Have you ever lived together with a man as if married? [own question]
8. what is your marital status now?
9. Is your wife living with you now or elsewhere?
10. Have you been married or lived with a man/ woman only once, or more than once? How many times? [own]
11. how old were you when you first lived with a partner?
12. How old were you when you first had intercourse?
13. When was the last time you had sexual intercourse? [days, weeks, months, years]

14. When was the last time you had sexual intercourse with the second to last person? [d/w/m/y]
15. When was the last time you had sexual intercourse with the third to last person? [d/w/m/y]
16. continue...
17. was a condom used? (answer for all partners individually)
18. what was your relationship to this person with whom you had sexual intercourse?
19. How long ago did you first have sexual intercourse with this person (for each)?
20. How many times during the last 12 months did you have sexual intercourse with this person?
21. How old is this person?
22. In total, how many people have you had sexual intercourse with in the last 12 months?
23. In total, how many people have you had sexual intercourse with in your lifetime?
24. Do you know of a place where a person can get condoms?
25. Where is that? [list...]
26. if you wanted to, could you get yourself a condom?
27. What is your occupation?
28. Do you usually work throughout the year or do you work seasonally, or only once?
29. Are you paid in cash, in kind or not at all?
30. Now I would like to talk about something else. Have you ever heard of HIV/AIDS?
31. Can people reduce their chance of getting the AIDS virus by having just one uninfected sex partner who has no other sex partner?
32. Can people get AIDS from mosquito bites?
33. Can people reduce their chance of getting the AIDS virus by using a condom every time they have sex?
34. Can people get the AIDS virus by sharing food with a person who has AIDS?
35. Can people get the AIDS virus through witchcraft or other supernatural means?
36. Is it possible for a healthy looking person to have the AIDS virus?
37. Can the virus that causes AIDS be transmitted by a mother to her baby: during pregnancy? During birth? During breastfeeding?
38. Are there any special drugs that a doctor or nurse can give to treat AIDS?
39. Are there any special drugs that a doctor or nurse can give to cure AIDS?
40. I don't want to know the result, but have you ever been tested for the AIDS virus? Did you receive the result?
41. Where was the test done?
42. After you had the test, did you receive counselling?
43. How many months ago was your last HIV test?
44. Would you buy fresh vegetables from a shopkeeper if you knew he had the HIV virus?
45. If a member of your family or close friends got the HIV virus, would you want it to remain a secret or not?
46. If a member of your family or close friends got sick with AIDS, would you be willing to care for him or her in your own household?
47. In your opinion, if a teacher has the AIDS virus but is not sick, should they be allowed to continue teaching in the school?
48. Should children aged 12-14 be taught about using a condom to avoid HIV? What age? Why?
49. Now I would like to ask you some questions about your health in the last 12 months. During the last 12 months, have you ever had a disease which you got through sexual contact?
50. Did you seek any kind of advice or treatment? From whom?
51. If a partner knows that their partner has a disease that can be transmitted though sexual contact, is he or she justified in asking to use a condom? [Own Q]
52. If a partner knows that their partner has a disease that can be transmitted though sexual contact, is he or she justified in refusing to have sex with them? [Own Q]
53. are you covered by any kind of health insurance? What type?

54. In the last 12 months, did you pay anyone in exchange for having sexual intercourse?
  55. Have you ever paid anyone in exchange for having sexual intercourse?
  56. The last time you paid someone in exchange for sexual intercourse, was a condom used?
  57. Was a condom used every time you paid someone for sexual intercourse in the past 12 months?
  58. Have you ever received money or gifts from someone else in exchange for sexual intercourse?
  59. In the past 12 months?
  60. In the past month?
  61. How many times in the past 12 months?
  62. Past month?
  63. Was a condom used the last time?
  64. Was a condom used every time in the past 12 months?
  65. Which brand of condoms was used the last time?
  66. Did you also use lubricant? Which brand?
- Where did you obtain the condom the last time?

### **Questions from sex work interactions survey**

(Minichiello 2001)

1. Where do you live?
2. Money-wise, do you usually feel that you: cannot make ends meet, get by, can manage plus save, do not have money problems?
3. Do you have sexual relationships with men?
4. With women?
5. Is your regular partner: male, female, trans, no partner?
6. Has your partner been tested for HIV? What were the results?
7. How many different non-commercial sexual partners have you had in the last month?
8. How comfortable are you with having sex with men?
9. Now we would like to know whether you smoke, drink alcohol or take any drugs... [list of Q's]
10. would you say that in general, your physical health is: excellent, good, average, poor, very poor?
11. Mental health [same options]
12. when did you last have a check-up for a sexually transmitted infection?
13. What was the result?
14. Have you ever been tested for HIV?
15. Do you feel good about being a sex worker?
16. Do you find sex work stressful?
17. Do you personally know someone who has tested positive for HIV?
18. Has this experience changed the way you do sex work?
19. Of all the reasons listed below, what would you say is your main reason for doing sex work? Chosen profession; money; by accident; friends or acquaintances do sex work; sexual drive; pay for drugs; curiosity; flexible working hours; lack of alternatives; other
20. how long have you been working as a sex worker?
21. How long have you worked in Shenzhen as a sex worker?
22. Have you done sex work in places other than here? Where?
23. Do you do sex work: full time; part time; weekends only; opportunistically; when I feel like it

24. Is sex work your only source of income? If not, what other sources?
25. What type of sex work do you do? Street; agency; private escort; parlours; other
26. what type of clients do you usually work for? Male; female; couples; trans; other
27. how do you feel about condoms? (remember, this is how you feel, not how you think you should feel, and there is no right or wrong answers): [Likert scale]
28. if the client suggests using a condom, it makes the job easier
29. condoms create a sense of security
30. using condoms interrupts the pleasure for clients
31. condoms are a hassle to use
32. sex with condoms is more hygienic
33. if a condom is not handy, I would have sex anyway
34. I wouldn't use a condom if I had a strong sexual desire for a client
35. a condom is not necessary when you know enough about the client and trust them
36. I may not use condoms with regular clients
37. I always assume that all my clients are HIV positive
38. I think it is my own responsibility to provide the condoms
39. I think it is the client's responsibility to provide the condoms
40. I think it is the bosses responsibility to provide the condoms
41. I think it is the responsibility of other groups (NGO's, health services, etc) to provide the condoms
42. I think it is society's responsibility to provide the condoms
43. I would always tell the client that there are things that I would not do without using condoms
44. if the client objects to using condoms, I would not have anal or oral sex with him
45. there is no way that I can make a client use condoms if he doesn't want to
46. it is easy for me to convince clients to use condoms
47. even when a client does not want to use condoms, it is easy for me to use condoms
48. I wouldn't use a condom if the client insisted on not using one
49. with your non-commercial sexual partners, generally speaking how often do you use condoms? Always, almost always, half the time, rarely, never
50. how safe or unsafe do you think the following sexual activities are? [list] [Likert scale]
51. now we want to ask some questions about contracting HIV. [Likert scale]
52. if I take care of myself, I can avoid HIV
53. it is a matter of fate if I get HIV
54. whether or not I get HIV depends on the risks I take
55. whether I get HIV depends on other people
56. most people do not realise the extent to which getting HIV depends on accidental happenings
57. to prevent HIV, I can only go on the information I have been given by experts
58. there are so many STI's around that you can never know how or when you might get one
59. only careless people get HIV
60. I am the only one responsible for protecting myself against HIV
61. How likely is it that you would have safe sex in the following situations? [Likert]
62. the client is disrespectful and demanding
63. the client does not argue with you and does whatever you say
64. you have special feelings for the client
65. the client is married. He says he only has sex with his wife and she is safe
66. the client is dirty and unattractive
67. the client is paying your living expenses so you will only have sex with him
68. you are travelling overseas with your client, all expenses paid

69. the client creates no hassles for you
70. you would like to have an intimate relationship with the client
71. the client says: “you know I am safe, I am in a permanent relationship”
72. the client is abusive and says “i am paying for you, I have the right to do whatever I want”
73. you are with a client who is more caring than other clients
74. you are with a client who you would like to have as a partner or lover
75. a client tells you “you are clean, I am married, so we don't need to worry about condoms”
76. the client provides for all your financial needs

## Appendix B: Questionnaire (English-Chinese Version)

Survey of occupational health and safety

多谢你参与这个问卷调查，提供宝贵意见！

Thank you for taking the time to answer this questionnaire!

AGE	您的年龄是 How old were you at your last birthday?	.....岁 ..... Years	
MON EY	您的收入情况 Money-wise, do you usually feel that you:	A 入不敷出 Cannot make ends meet	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 勉强过活 can get by	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 尚可，且有盈余 can manage, plus save	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 没有任何经济上的问题 do not have money problems	<input type="checkbox"/>
GEN DER	你会怎形容你自己? How would you describe yourself?	同性恋 Gay	<input type="checkbox"/>
		双性恋 Bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
		异性恋 Straight	<input type="checkbox"/>
		跨性别 Trans	<input type="checkbox"/>
		其他 Other....	<input type="checkbox"/>
RELS TAT2	B 您现在的婚姻/关系状况是 What is your current relationship status	A 单身 Single	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 伴侣 [非同住] In a relationship, but not living together	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 与伴侣同居 cohabiting with a partner	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 已婚 married	<input type="checkbox"/>
		E 离异 divorced	<input type="checkbox"/>
		F 丧偶 widowed	<input type="checkbox"/>
		G 其他 Other....	<input type="checkbox"/>
CUR FEM	您当前是否已婚或是与女性伴侣同居并且有性生活 Are you currently married or living together with a woman with whom you have sex?	A 是 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 否 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
EVFE M	您之前是否结过婚或是与女性伴侣同居过并且有过性生活 Have you ever been married or lived together with a woman with whom you had sex?	A 是 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 否 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
CUR	您当前是否与男性伴侣同居并且有性生活	A 是	<input type="checkbox"/>

MAL	Do you currently live with a man with whom you have sex?	yes	
		B 否 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
EVM AL	您之前是否与男性伴侣同居过并且有过性生活 Have you ever lived together with a man with whom you had sex?	A 是 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 否 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
AGE PAR	您第一次与您的伴侣同居的时候是多少岁? How old were you when you first lived with a partner?	.....岁 .....Years	
AGE IST	您第一次发生性关系是在多少岁? How old were you when you first had sexual intercourse?	.....岁 .....Years	
AGE ISTG	与您第一次发生性关系的这个人是谁? Was this person:	A 男性 male	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 女性 female	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 与多人 a couple	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 跨性别 trans	<input type="checkbox"/>
		E 其他 other	<input type="checkbox"/>
MAL 6	您过去六个月有与任何男性有性交么? in the last 6 months, have you had sexual relationships with men?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
FEM 6	您与男性发生性行为时的感受是 (从非常不舒服到非常舒服, 填写1至5之间的数字来描述) How comfortable are you having sex with men? Totally uncomfortable ... Totally comfortable (1 to 5 scale)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1, <input type="checkbox"/> 2, <input type="checkbox"/> 3, <input type="checkbox"/> 4, <input type="checkbox"/> 5,	
FEM 6	您过去六个月有与任何女性有性交么? in the last 6 months have you had sexual relationships with women?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
FEM COM	您与女性发生性行为时的感受是 (从非常的舒服到非常的不舒服, 填写1至5之间的数字来描述。) How comfortable are you having sex with women? Totally uncomfortable ... Totally comfortable (1 to 5 scale)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1, <input type="checkbox"/> 2, <input type="checkbox"/> 3, <input type="checkbox"/> 4, <input type="checkbox"/> 5,	
REG PAR	如果你有伴侣, 他/她是: If you have a regular partner, are they:	男性 male	<input type="checkbox"/>
		女性 female	<input type="checkbox"/>
		跨性别 trans	<input type="checkbox"/>
		其他 other...	<input type="checkbox"/>
NON C30	最近30天, 您和多少个不同的人发生过非交易性质的性关系? (如果不确定, 可以给出一个大概的数目, 或是直接填写不知道。) How many different non-commercial sexual partners have you had in the last 30 days? (if you are unsure, then give an approximate number)	..... 不知道 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
NON C12	最近12月当中, 您和多少个不同的人发生过非交易性质的性关系? (如果不确定, 可以给出一个大概的数目, 或是直接填写不知道。) How many different non-commercial sexual partners have you had in the	..... 不知道 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

last 12 months? (if you are unsure, then give an approximate number)

NON CLIF 您一生当中, 和多少个不同的人发生过非交易性质的性关系? (如果不确定, 可以给出一个大概的数目, 或是直接填写不知道。) .....  
 How many different non-commercial sexual partners have you had in your lifetime? (if you are unsure, then give an approximate number) 不知道   
 don't know

Please think of the 6 people you have had sex with most recently, the first three involving payment, the second 3 not involving payment...

COM1-3; CAS1-3; ADAT, BDAT, REL, YR, SEX, AGE, CON	有金钱或物质的性关系 Commercial partner			非金钱或物质的性关系 Non-commercial partner		
	最近一位 Most recent person	上一位 2 <sup>nd</sup> most recent person	上上一位 3 <sup>rd</sup> most recent person	最近一位 Most recent person	上一位 2 <sup>nd</sup> most recent person	上上一位 3 <sup>rd</sup> most recent person
A您上一次发生性行为是什么时候? Date of last sex with this person	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 天 <input type="checkbox"/> 周 <input type="checkbox"/> 月 <input type="checkbox"/> 不知道	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 天 <input type="checkbox"/> 周 <input type="checkbox"/> 月 <input type="checkbox"/> 不知道	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 天 <input type="checkbox"/> 周 <input type="checkbox"/> 月 <input type="checkbox"/> 不知道	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 天 <input type="checkbox"/> 周 <input type="checkbox"/> 月 <input type="checkbox"/> 不知道	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 天 <input type="checkbox"/> 周 <input type="checkbox"/> 月 <input type="checkbox"/> 不知道	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 天 <input type="checkbox"/> 周 <input type="checkbox"/> 月 <input type="checkbox"/> 不知道
B您是多久之前和这个人第一次发生性关系的? Date of first sex with this person	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 天 <input type="checkbox"/> 周 <input type="checkbox"/> 月 <input type="checkbox"/> 不知道	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 天 <input type="checkbox"/> 周 <input type="checkbox"/> 月 <input type="checkbox"/> 不知道	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 天 <input type="checkbox"/> 周 <input type="checkbox"/> 月 <input type="checkbox"/> 不知道	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 天 <input type="checkbox"/> 周 <input type="checkbox"/> 月 <input type="checkbox"/> 不知道	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 天 <input type="checkbox"/> 周 <input type="checkbox"/> 月 <input type="checkbox"/> 不知道	..... <input type="checkbox"/> 天 <input type="checkbox"/> 周 <input type="checkbox"/> 月 <input type="checkbox"/> 不知道
C您和这个人的关系是 Relationship to this person	<input type="checkbox"/> 我付了他 <input type="checkbox"/> 他付给我	<input type="checkbox"/> 我付了他 <input type="checkbox"/> 他付给我	<input type="checkbox"/> 我付了他 <input type="checkbox"/> 他付给我	<input type="checkbox"/> 恋爱关系 <input type="checkbox"/> 只是随意遇到的一个人 <input type="checkbox"/> 419 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他....	<input type="checkbox"/> 恋爱关系 <input type="checkbox"/> 只是随意遇到的一个人 <input type="checkbox"/> 419 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他....	<input type="checkbox"/> 恋爱关系 <input type="checkbox"/> 只是随意遇到的一个人 <input type="checkbox"/> 419 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他....
D在过去的12个月中, 您和这个人发生过几次性关系? How many times in last 12 months had sex with this person?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-100 <input type="checkbox"/> 100+	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-100 <input type="checkbox"/> 100+	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-100 <input type="checkbox"/> 100+	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-100 <input type="checkbox"/> 100+	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-100 <input type="checkbox"/> 100+	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-100 <input type="checkbox"/> 100+
E这个人是谁? This person was:	<input type="checkbox"/> 男性 <input type="checkbox"/> 女性 <input type="checkbox"/> 跨性别 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他....	<input type="checkbox"/> 男性 <input type="checkbox"/> 女性 <input type="checkbox"/> 跨性别 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他....	<input type="checkbox"/> 男性 <input type="checkbox"/> 女性 <input type="checkbox"/> 跨性别 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他....	<input type="checkbox"/> 男性 <input type="checkbox"/> 女性 <input type="checkbox"/> 跨性别 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他....	<input type="checkbox"/> 男性 <input type="checkbox"/> 女性 <input type="checkbox"/> 跨性别 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他....	<input type="checkbox"/> 男性 <input type="checkbox"/> 女性 <input type="checkbox"/> 跨性别 <input type="checkbox"/> 其他....
F这个人的	.....歲	.....歲	.....歲	.....歲	.....歲	.....歲

年龄是  
how old  
was this  
person

G您和这个人发生性行为时，使用安全套的情况是  
was a condom used

<input type="checkbox"/> 总是使用						
<input type="checkbox"/> 大多数时候						
<input type="checkbox"/> 有时候使用						
<input type="checkbox"/> 很少使用						
<input type="checkbox"/> 从不使用						
<input type="checkbox"/> 不知道						

E 您知道可以购买到安全套的地方么?  
U Do you know a place where a person could buy condoms?  
Y  
C  
C  
N

A 知道   
yes  
B 不知道   
no

S 如果您想要用安全套的话，您能找到吗?  
A If you wanted to, could you get yourself a condom?  
F  
C  
C  
N

A 能   
yes  
B 不能   
no  
C 不清楚   
don't know

S 您是如何理解“安全性行为”这个词的呢?  
A What do you understand by the term “safe sex”?  
F [Please write down the first 3 things you think of]  
E  
S  
E  
X

(自由回答)1  
2  
3

以下性行为中，您认为各自的安全等级是多少？（从非常安全到非常不安全，填写1至10之间的数字来描述）  
How safe or unsafe do you think the following sexual activities are? 1 – 10 scale (totally safe - totally unsafe)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	非常不安全									非常安全
K 亲吻 I kissing S S	<input type="checkbox"/>									
F 拥抱 U hugging C C	<input type="checkbox"/>									
M 手淫 A masturbation S T	<input type="checkbox"/>									
C 使用安全套口交 F oral sex with a condom V C	<input type="checkbox"/>									
C 不用安全套口交 F oral sex without a condom V C C	<input type="checkbox"/>									
V 使用安全套男女性交	<input type="checkbox"/>									

A vaginal sex with a condom

V  
C

V 不用安全套女性交

A vaginal sex without a condom

V  
C  
C

P 使用安全套肛交（当您处于1的位置）

I insertive anal sex with a condom

A  
I

U 不用安全套肛交（当您处于1的位置）

I insertive anal sex without a condom

A  
I

P 使用安全套肛交（当您处于0的位

R 置）  
A receptive anal sex with a condom

I

U 不用安全套 肛交（当您处于0的位

R 置）  
A receptive anal sex without a condom

I

F 肛门部口交

I rimming

N  
N

EVP 您有过通过金钱手段来买得性关系的经历么？ A 有   
AY Have you ever paid anyone in exchange for having sex? yes

B 没有   
no

EVP 有过多少次呢？（如果不确定，请大概给出一个数字） .....  
AYN How many times? (if you are not sure, please just give an approximate answer)

PAY 在过去的12个月中，您有过通过金钱手段来买得性关系的经历么？ A 有   
12 In the last 12 months, have you paid anyone in exchange for having sex? yes

B 没有   
no

PAY 有过几次呢？（如果不确定，请大概给出一个数字） .....  
12N How many times? (if you are not sure, please just give an approximate answer)

PAY 在这几次通过金钱手段来买得性关系的经历中，使用安全套的情况是 A 总是使用   
12C Was a condom used every time you paid someone for sexual intercourse in the last always 12 months? always

B 大多数时候   
most of the time

C 有时候使用   
sometimes

D 很少使用   
rarely

E 从不使用   
never

EVP 您有过收取金钱或是礼品来进行性交易的经历么？ A 有   
AID Have you ever received money or gifts in exchange for sexual intercourse? yes

B 没有   
no

PAID 30	A 在过去的30天中, 您有过收取金钱或是礼品来进行性交易的经历么? Have you received money or gifts in exchange for sexual intercourse in the last 30 days?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
PAID 30N	B 在过去的30天中有多少次? How many times in the last 30 days?	..... times	次 <input type="checkbox"/>
TYP E	您的工作是怎样的? What kind of sex work you do?	A 街边站活 Street	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 会所 agency	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 伴游 private escort	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 按摩店 massage parlours	<input type="checkbox"/>
		E 桑拿, 洗浴中心 saunas	<input type="checkbox"/>
		F 私人地方 private apartments	<input type="checkbox"/>
		G 其他 other	<input type="checkbox"/>
PAID 7	在过去7天中, 您有过收取金钱或是礼品来进行性交易的经历么? Have you received money or gifts in exchange for sexual intercourse in the last 7 days?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
PAID 7N	在过去7天中, 您有过几次收取金钱或是礼品来进行性交易的经历? How many days in the last 7 days?	.....次	<input type="checkbox"/>
PAID 30C	在过去的30天中收取金钱或是礼品来进行性交易的经历中, 安全套的使用情况是 How often was a condom used when you received money or gifts for sex in the last 30 days?	A 总是使用 always	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 大多数时候 most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 有时候使用 sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 很少使用 rarely	<input type="checkbox"/>
		E 从不使用 never	<input type="checkbox"/>
PAID 30L	您会使用润滑液么? Did you also use lubricant?	A 总是使用 always	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 大多数时候 most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 有时候使用 sometimes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 很少使用 rarely	<input type="checkbox"/>
		E 从不使用 never	<input type="checkbox"/>
PAID 1C	上次收取金钱或是礼品来进行性交易, 有没有使用安全套? Was a condom used the last time you received money or gifts for sex?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>

		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>										
WHE RCO N	您上一次是在哪里获取到安全套的呢 Where did you obtain the condom the last time?	A 外展工作人员 outreach worker	<input type="checkbox"/>										
		B 非政府组织 NGO	<input type="checkbox"/>										
		C 客人 Customer	<input type="checkbox"/>										
		D 会所 Agent	<input type="checkbox"/>										
		E 药房 pharmacy	<input type="checkbox"/>										
		F 桑拿(浴池) Sauna	<input type="checkbox"/>										
		G 商店 shop	<input type="checkbox"/>										
		H 疾病预防控制中心 CDC	<input type="checkbox"/>										
		I 其他 (请写出具体地点) ..... other	<input type="checkbox"/>										
HO WFE EL	您对收取金钱或是礼品来进行性交易的看法是怎样的呢? How do you feel about receiving money or gifts for sex?	(自由回答) [Free answer]											
STR ESS	您感觉这个工作很有压力么? 从一点儿也没有压力到十分有压力, 填写1至5之间的数字来描述。 Do you find this work stressful? 1- 5 scale (not at all stressful – very stressful)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>1 一点 儿也 没有 压力</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5 十分 有压 力</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	1 一点 儿也 没有 压力	2	3	4	5 十分 有压 力	<input type="checkbox"/>					
1 一点 儿也 没有 压力	2	3	4	5 十分 有压 力									
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>									
REA SON	您从事这个工作的主要原因是什么呢? what would you say is your main reason for doing this work?	(自由回答) [Free answer]											
TOL DFF1	您告诉您的家人或是您身边不是从事这项工作的朋友自己是一名性工作者这一情况了么? Have you told any of your family or non-sex-working friends about your work?	A 是的, 告诉了我的家人 yes, family	<input type="checkbox"/>										
		B 是的, 告诉了我的朋友 yes, friends	<input type="checkbox"/>										
		C 没有, 谁都没有说 no, neither	<input type="checkbox"/>										
TOL DFF2	如果您是“已经告诉他们了”这一情况, 那么他们的反应是怎样的呢? If yes, how did they react?	(自由回答) [Free answer]											
TOL DFF3	如果您是“没有告诉任何人”这一情况, 为什么呢? if no, why haven't you told anyone?	(自由回答) [Free answer]											
SEL LTI	您从事这个工作有多久了呢? For how long have you been doing this work?	.....天/周/月/年											

ME		
SEL LHE RE	您在这个城市，从事这个工作有多久了？ How long have you done this work in this city?	.....天/周/月/年
SEL LOT H	您在其他城市有从事过这个工作么？在哪里？ Have you done this work in other cities? Where?	A 有，城市名字，所在省..... Yes [city name/ province] ..... B 没有 <input type="checkbox"/> no
CLI MON	A 你平均每个周约有多少客人？ How many clients do you have a month on average?	.....
HRS WK	B 你每周工作几多小时？ How many hours do you usually work in a week?	.....小时 hours
ONL YIN C1	这个工作是您唯一的收入来源么？ Is this work your only source of income?	A 是的 <input type="checkbox"/> yes B 不是 <input type="checkbox"/> no
ONL YIN C2	如果不是的话，您其他的收入来源是什么？ If not, what other sources do you have?	(自由回答) [free answer]
CLIT YP	您服务的对象是(如果是全部，可全选。) What type of clients do you work for? (tick all that apply)	A 男性 <input type="checkbox"/> male B 女性 <input type="checkbox"/> female C 跨性别 <input type="checkbox"/> trans D 其他 <input type="checkbox"/> other
SAF E	您觉得这个工作安全吗 How safe do you feel selling sex?	A 一直觉得他们没有威胁，自己很安全 <input type="checkbox"/> I always feel safe B 有时顾客会很蛮横甚至暴力，但是我自己能解决 <input type="checkbox"/> clients can sometimes get violent, but I can handle it C 顾客都很蛮横甚至暴力，我觉得很 <input type="checkbox"/> 不安全 clients often get violent and I feel unsafe D 大多数时候我觉得都不安全 <input type="checkbox"/> I feel unsafe most of the time E 我一直都觉得不安全 <input type="checkbox"/> I feel unsafe all of the time
PRO BS	过去12个月,你有没有遇到警察或执法人员? In the last 12 months, have you experienced any problems from the police or other authorities?	A Yes <input type="checkbox"/> B No <input type="checkbox"/>
	如果有,请补充资料 If yes, then please describe:	(自由回答)
CON	您对于使用安全套的一些感受(请注意:这里是需要您自己的真实感受,而不是您认为您应该要有的感受。没有正确或错误的感受。)(从一点儿也不同意到十分同意,填写1至5的数字来描述) <b>How do you feel about condoms? (remember, this is how you feel, not how you think you should feel, and there is no right or wrong answers):</b>	

		1 一点儿也不同意	2	3	4	5 十分同意	不知道
a	如果顾客要求使用安全套, 这会使工作更轻松些 If the client suggests using a condom, it makes the job easier	<input type="checkbox"/>					
b	使用安全套会有安全感。 Condoms create a sense of security	<input type="checkbox"/>					
c	使用安全套会打扰客人的性质 Using condoms interrupts the pleasure for clients	<input type="checkbox"/>					
d	使用安全套会更卫生一些。 Sex with condoms is more hygienic	<input type="checkbox"/>					
e	即使手边没有现成的安全套, 我还是会进行性活动。 If a condom is not handy, I would have sex anyway	<input type="checkbox"/>					
f	如果我对某个顾客有极强的性欲望的话, 我不会使用安全套。 I wouldn't use a condom if I had strong sexual desires for a client	<input type="checkbox"/>					
g	当自己对一个顾客有足够的了解和信任的时候, 就不必要使用安全套了。 A condom is not necessary when you know enough about a client and trust them	1 一点儿也不同意	2	3	4	5 十分同意	不知道
h	和一个固定的顾客我可能就不会使用安全套。 I may not use condoms with regular clients	<input type="checkbox"/>					
i	我总会事先认为我的顾客都是HIV阳性。 I always assume that all my clients are HIV positive	<input type="checkbox"/>					
j	提供安全套是我自己的责任。 I think it is my own responsibility to provide condoms	<input type="checkbox"/>					
k	提供安全套是顾客的责任。 I think it is the client's responsibility to provide the condoms	<input type="checkbox"/>					
l	提供安全套是我老板的责任。 I think it is the bosses responsibility to provide the condoms	<input type="checkbox"/>					
m	提供安全套是其他组织的责任。(例如健康服务中心, 一些非政府机构等等。) I think it is the responsibility of other groups (health services, NGOs) to provide the condoms	<input type="checkbox"/>					
n	提供安全套是社会的责任。 I think it is society's responsibility to provide the condoms	<input type="checkbox"/>					
o	我总是会告知我的顾客, 如果不使用安全套的话, 某些性行为自己是不会做的。 I would always tell the client that there are things I would not do without condoms	<input type="checkbox"/>					
p	如果顾客拒绝使用安全套, 我是不会同他进行口交的。 If the client refuses to use condoms, I would not have oral sex with him	<input type="checkbox"/>					
q	如果顾客拒绝使用安全套, 我是不会同他进行肛交的。 If the client refuses to use condoms, I would not have anal sex with him	<input type="checkbox"/>					
r	如果他不希望使用, 我不可以强迫顾客使用安全套 There is no way I can make a client use a condom if he doesn't want to	<input type="checkbox"/>					
s	说服顾客使用安全套是件很容易的事情。 It is easy to convince clients to use condoms	<input type="checkbox"/>					
t	即便是顾客不愿意使用安全套时, 我自己也会很轻易地使用安全套。	<input type="checkbox"/>					

	Even when a client does not want to use condoms, it is easy for me to use condoms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
u	如果顾客坚持不使用安全套的话，我便顺从不会使用。 I wouldn't use a condom if the client insisted on not using one	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NON CON	与您非金钱关系的性伴侣发生性行为时，您使用安全套的情况是 With your non-commercial sexual partners, generally speaking, how often do you use condoms?	A 总是使用 always	<input type="checkbox"/>	B 大多数时候 almost always	<input type="checkbox"/>	C 有时候使用 half the time	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 很少使用 rarely	<input type="checkbox"/>	E 从不使用 never	<input type="checkbox"/>		
AIDS KNO W	您听说过艾滋病么？（HIV/AIDS） Now I would like to talk about something else. Have you ever heard of HIV/AIDS?	A 听说过 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	B 没有听说过 no	<input type="checkbox"/>	C 不知道 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
AIDS SIT	您认为当前中国艾滋病的形势是 What do you think of the current HIV situation in China?	A 很好，没有问题 Not a problem	<input type="checkbox"/>	B 有一些问题，但处于控制之中 a small problem but under control	<input type="checkbox"/>	C 是一个严峻的问题，但处于控制之中 a serious problem, but under control	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 是一个很严峻的问题 a very serious problem	<input type="checkbox"/>	E 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>		
AIDS a	如果一个人只有一个未感染艾滋病的性伴侣，并且此伴侣没有其他性伴侣，您觉得患艾滋病的几率会降低么？ Can people reduce their chance of getting the AIDS virus by having just one uninfected sex partner who has no other sex partner?	A 会 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	B 不会 no	<input type="checkbox"/>	C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
b	通过输未经检测的血液，一个人有患艾滋病的可能么？ Can people get the AIDS virus from receiving an unscreened blood transfusion?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>	C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
c	与感染者共用针头，一个人有患艾滋病的可能么？ Can people get AIDS from sharing needles with an infected person?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>	C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
d	通过蚊子叮咬，一个人有患艾滋病的可能么？ Can people get AIDS from mosquito bites?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>				

		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
e	每次性行为时都使用安全套，能降低感染艾滋病的几率么？ Can people reduce their chance of getting the AIDS virus by using a condom every time they have sex?	A 能 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 不能 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
f	与艾滋病病人共餐，会感染艾滋病毒么？ Can people get the AIDS virus by sharing food with a person who has AIDS?	A 会 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 不会 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
g	与艾滋病病人共用饮水杯，筷子，或在同一餐桌共餐，会感染艾滋病毒么？ Can people get the AIDS virus from using the same drinking glass, chopsticks or eating together at the same table as a HIV positive person?	A 会 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 不会 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
h	一个看上去健康的人会有携带艾滋病毒的可能么？ Is it possible for a healthy looking person to have the AIDS virus?	A 会 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 不会 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
i	母亲在怀孕，分娩，哺乳的时候，会将艾滋病毒传播给婴儿么？ Can the virus that causes AIDS be transmitted by a mother to her baby: during pregnancy? During birth? During breastfeeding?	A 会 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 不会 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
j	有治疗艾滋病毒的特效药物么？ Are there any special drugs that a doctor or nurse can give to treat AIDS?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
k	有医好艾滋病毒的特效药物么？ Are there any special drugs that a doctor or nurse can give to cure AIDS?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
ATT a	如果您得知一个蔬菜店的老板携带艾滋病毒，您还会从那儿买菜么？ Would you buy fresh vegetables from a shopkeeper if you knew he had the HIV virus?	A 会 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 不会 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

		don't know					
b	如果您的家人或是好朋友携带艾滋病病毒，您是否会保密么？ If a member of your family or close friends got the HIV virus, would you want it to remain a secret or not?	A 是 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		B 否 no	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>				
c	如果您的家人或是好朋友患有艾滋病，您是否愿意在自己家中照顾对方呢？ If a member of your family or close friends got sick with AIDS, would you be willing to care for him or her in your own household?	A 是 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		B 否 no	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>				
d	您认为，如果一个老师携带艾滋病病毒，但还未发作患病，他们还能继续在学校教课么？ In your opinion, if a teacher has the AIDS virus but is not sick, should they be allowed to continue teaching in the school?	A 能 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		B 不能 no	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>				
e	您认为应该教授的孩子使用安全套来预防艾滋的相关知识么？多少岁合适？ Should children be taught about using a condom to avoid HIV? What age?	A 应该 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		B 不应该 no	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		.....岁 .....years					
FAT E	现在我们来讨论一些关于艾滋病感染的问题： (从一点儿也不同意到十分同意，填写1至5的数字来描述) <b>Now we want to ask some questions about contracting HIV: 1 – 5 scale (strongly disagree – strongly agree)</b>	1 一点儿也不同意	2	3	4	5 十分同意	不知道
a	如果我自己小心的话，我就能避免感染。 If I take care of myself, I can avoid HIV	<input type="checkbox"/>					
b	能否会感染艾滋完全是自己命数的问题。 It is a matter of fate if I get HIV	<input type="checkbox"/>					
c	能否感染艾滋取决与自己所承担的风险。 If I get HIV depends on the risks I take	<input type="checkbox"/>					
d	能否感染艾滋取决于另一个人。 Whether or not I get HIV depends on other people	<input type="checkbox"/>					
e	大多数人没有意识到能否感染艾滋取决于意外事故的发生。 Most people do not realise the extent to which getting HIV depends on accidental happenings	<input type="checkbox"/>					
f	预防艾滋，我只能依靠专家给出的建议。 To prevent HIV, I can only go on the information I have been given by experts	<input type="checkbox"/>					
g	周围有那么多的性传播疾病，很难清楚自己是在何时如何感染上的。 There are so many STI's around that you can never know how or when you might get one	<input type="checkbox"/>					
h	只有粗心大意的人才会感染艾滋。 Only careless people get HIV	<input type="checkbox"/>					
i	保护自己不感染艾滋只是我自己的责任。	<input type="checkbox"/>					

I am the only one responsible for protecting myself against HIV		1	2	3	4	5	不知道
SS	下列情形中，您会采取安全性行为的可能是 (从不可能到非常有可能，填写1至5的数字来描述) <b>How likely is it that you would have safe sex in the following situations? 1 – 5 scale (very unlikely – very likely)</b>	1 不可能	2	3	4	5 非常有可能	不知道
a	顾客很无礼并且要求苛刻。 The client is disrespectful and demanding	<input type="checkbox"/>					
b	顾客没有和您讨价还价，并且很顺从您。 The client does not argue with you and does whatever you say	<input type="checkbox"/>					
c	您对某个顾客有特殊的感觉。 You have special feelings for the client	<input type="checkbox"/>					
d	这个顾客已经结婚了，并且他告诉您他只与自己的妻子发生性关系，并且她很安全。 The client is married. He says he only has sex with his wife and she is safe	<input type="checkbox"/>					
e	这个顾客感觉很干净并且对您没有吸引力。 The client is dirty and unattractive	<input type="checkbox"/>					
f	这个顾客付给您生活费，且您只于他发生性关系。 The client is paying your living expenses so you will only have sex with him	<input type="checkbox"/>					
g	您和您的顾客一起在国外旅行，他出所有的经费。 You are travelling overseas with your client, all expenses paid	<input type="checkbox"/>					
h	这个顾客不会给您带来任何麻烦。 The client creates no hassles for you	<input type="checkbox"/>					
i	您想和这个顾客发展一段亲密关系。 You would like to have an intimate relationship with the client	<input type="checkbox"/>					
j	顾客向您保证说：“您知道我很安全的，我有稳定持久的关系。” The client says: “you know I am safe, I am in a permanent relationship”	<input type="checkbox"/>					
k	顾客很蛮横，要挟您说：“我付给您钱，我有权利想怎么做就怎么做。” The client is abusive and says “i am paying for you, I have the right to do whatever I want”	<input type="checkbox"/>					
l	这个顾客比其他顾客更有爱心。 You are with a client who is more caring than other clients	<input type="checkbox"/>					
m	您想和这个顾客发展一段伴侣或恋爱关系。 You are with a client who you would like to have as a partner or lover	<input type="checkbox"/>					
n	这位顾客对您说：“您很安全，我又结婚了，所以不必要担心那么多。” A client tells you “you are clean, I am married, so we don't need to worry about condoms”	<input type="checkbox"/>					
o	这位顾客支付您所有的开销。 The client provides for all your financial needs	<input type="checkbox"/>					
PER KNO W1	您认识艾滋病的人吗？ Do you personally know someone who has tested positive for HIV?	A 认识 Yes					<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 不认识 No					<input type="checkbox"/>
PER KNO W2	这使您改变您从事性工作的方式了么？ Has this experience changed the way you do sex work?	A 改变了 yes					<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没改变 no					<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不知道 don't know					<input type="checkbox"/>
HIV TES	您有做过HIV检测么？ I don't want to know the result, but have you ever had an HIV test?	A 有 yes					<input type="checkbox"/>

T1		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不知道 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIV TES T2	你的上次检测是在哪里做的? Where was your last test done?	A 医院 hospital	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 性传播疾病诊所 STI Clinic	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 某非政府机构 NGO	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 疾病预防控制中心 CDC	<input type="checkbox"/>
		E 其他 .....	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Other	
HIV TES T3	您做检测之前和之后，有获得咨询么? Before and after you had the test, did you receive counselling?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不知道 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIV TES T4	您上一次HIV检测在什么时候? (多少月/年之前) How long ago was your last HIV test?	...月 months	
		...年 years	
HIVI NFO	您自愿查询或咨询过关于HIV或是AIDS的相关信息么? Have you sought information on HIV/AIDS voluntarily?	A 有，上个月的时候 in the last month	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 有，六个月之前 in the last 6 months	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 有，六个多月之前 more than 6 months ago	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 从没有过 never	<input type="checkbox"/>
HIVF F	您和您的家人，朋友或是别的MB's讨论过与HIV或是AIDS相关的话题么? Have you discussed HIV/AIDS related issues with your family, friends or other MB's?	A 有，上个月的时候 in the last month	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 有，六个月之内 in the last 6 months	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 有，六个月之前 more than 6 months ago	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 从没有过 never	<input type="checkbox"/>
PHY SH	您觉得自己现在的身体健康状况是 Would you say that in general, your physical health is:	A 非常好 excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 一般 average	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不好 poor	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 非常不好 very poor	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEN TH	您觉得自己现在的心理健康状况是 Would you say that in general, your mental health is:	A 非常好 excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 一般	<input type="checkbox"/>

		average	
		C 不好 poor	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 非常不好 very poor	<input type="checkbox"/>
ALC O	您饮酒的次数是 How often do you drink alcohol?	A 从不 Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 很少（一个月最多有一次） rarely	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 一个月几次 a few times a month	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 一星期几次 a few times a week	<input type="checkbox"/>
		F 每天都喝 everyday	<input type="checkbox"/>
SMO KE	您吸烟么？ Do you ever smoke tobacco?	A 从不 Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 很少（一个月最多有一次） rarely	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 一个月几次 a few times a month	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 一星期几次 a few times a week	<input type="checkbox"/>
		F 每天都喝 everyday	<input type="checkbox"/>
DRU GS	您使用毒品么？ Do you ever take drugs?	A 从不 Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 很少（一个月最多有一次） rarely	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 一个月几次 a few times a month	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 一星期几次 a few times a week	<input type="checkbox"/>
		F 每天都喝 everyday	<input type="checkbox"/>
STI1 2	现在我想问一些关于您在过去十二个月中的身体状况的问题。在过去的十二个月中，您患过性传播疾病么？ Now I would like to ask you some questions about your health in the last 12 months. During the last 12 months, have you ever had a disease which you think you got through sexual contact?	A 患过 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不知道 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
STI1 T1-2	您有咨询任何建议，获取任何治疗么？向谁？ Did you seek any kind of advice or treatment? From whom?	A 有 朋友 friends	<input type="checkbox"/>
		家人 relatives	<input type="checkbox"/>
		同事 colleague	<input type="checkbox"/>
		中医 CTM	<input type="checkbox"/>
		当地健康服务中心 local health centre	<input type="checkbox"/>

		医院 hospital	<input type="checkbox"/>
		性病诊所 STI clinic	<input type="checkbox"/>
		非政府组织 NGO	<input type="checkbox"/>
		其他 other	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有	<input type="checkbox"/>
PRT NC	如果一个人已获知其伴侣有性传播疾病，他（她）有理由提出使用安全套么？ If a partner knows that their partner has a disease that can be transmitted through sexual contact, is he or she justified in asking to use a condom?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
PRT NR	如果一个人已获知其伴侣有性传播疾病，他（她）有理由拒绝与其发生性关系么？ If a partner knows that their partner has a disease that can be transmitted through sexual contact, is he or she justified in refusing to have sex with them?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不清楚 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
PRO V	你来自那个省..... Which province were you born in?		
SHE N1S T	您第一次来到深圳是什么时候？(多少年/月之前) When did you first move to Shenzhen?	年 .... years	
		月 ..... months	
GEO NO	离开家乡后,你去过几个其他的城市工作? How many other places have you stayed in since you left your place of birth?	.....个	
GEO OTH N/D	请你告诉我那些地方和在那里多久? Please could you tell me the name of each place and approximate dates for when you were there?	地方名 Place name:	日期(年/月) Date:
		_____	/
		_____	/
		_____	/
		_____	/
		_____	/
		_____	/
SHE NNO	你来深圳多少次了? How many times have you lived in Shenzhen?	.....	
MOV INT1	您打算在今后两年内离开这个城市么? Do you intend to move away from this city in the next 2 years?	A 有 yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有 no	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 不知道 don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
MOV INT2	如果您离开此地的话，打算搬到哪里呢? Where do you think you might move to?	(国/省/市/县 名称) .....	
		name	
MOV INT3	为什么您打算离开这里? Why are you intending to move?	(自由回答)	
HKS	您现在的户口是	A 农村户口	<input type="checkbox"/>

TAT	What is your current Hukou status?	rural	
		B 城市户口 urban	<input type="checkbox"/>
HKL OC	您现在在户口上填写的户籍所在地是 Where is your current Hukou for?	A 与出生地一样 birthplace	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 深圳 Shenzhen	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 其他城市/省/镇/村..... (名称) other	<input type="checkbox"/>
EDU C1/2	您接受过的最高教育是 What is the highest level of education you have attained?	A 没有接受过正式的教育 No formal education (illiterate)	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 没有念完小学,但是会读写 did not finish primary school but capable of reading/ writing	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 家教,私塾 home school	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 小学 elementary school	<input type="checkbox"/>
		E 初中 middle school	<input type="checkbox"/>
		F 高中 high school	<input type="checkbox"/>
		G 职业学校 vocational school	<input type="checkbox"/>
		H 大学本科生 undergraduate	<input type="checkbox"/>
		I 研究生 post-graduate	<input type="checkbox"/>
		L 其他 other	<input type="checkbox"/>
EDU C3	您多少岁的时候结束了正式的学校教育? At what age did you complete formal schooling?	..... 岁 years	
LIV AR	您现在的和谁住在一起? Now we would like to know a bit about your living arrangements. Do you currently live:	A 自己一个人 alone	<input type="checkbox"/>
		B 室友 with non-kin	<input type="checkbox"/>
		C 和父母/亲戚 with family	<input type="checkbox"/>
		D 和伴侣 with partner	<input type="checkbox"/>
		E 其他 other	<input type="checkbox"/>
FAT OC	您父亲(曾经)的职业 what is/ was your father's occupation	.....	
MOT OC	您母亲(曾经)的职业 what is/ was your mother's occupation	.....	
MED INS	您有医疗保险么? What type of medical insurance do you have?	A social	社会保险 <input type="checkbox"/>
		B Private	私人保险 <input type="checkbox"/>
		C 没有 none	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix C In-Depth Interview Guide

### Migration history

1. When did you leave your hometown?
2. Why?
3. Tell me about what happened between then and coming to Shenzhen.
4. Why did you come to Shenzhen?
5. How do you feel about living here? What are the good things? What are the bad things?
6. Do you plan to stay here for the foreseeable future? Why/ why not?

### Entry into SW

- ✦ how long ago did you start this job?
- ✦ How did you start doing this job?
  - e.g. did you plan to come to Shenzhen and start this kind of work, was it accidental, did someone else introduce you to it?
- ✦ Did anyone introduce you to sex work?
- ✦ Have you introduced anyone else to this work?

### Economics of SW

- ✦ how/ where do you meet your clients?
- ✦ Talk me through how you might negotiate with a client - how does it work?
- ✦ What happens if a client offers you more money to not use a condom?
- ✦ What do you do if a client refuses to pay?
- ✦ Do you have both male and female clients? Which do you prefer? Why?
- ✦ What differences, if any, are there in the services you might be expected to provide? Are there any other differences between having male and female clients?

### Mami

- ✦ do you have a mommy, or someone else who acts as an agent for your work?
- ✦ How did you start to work for them?
- ✦ What are the reasons that you use such an agent?
- ✦ Please describe your relationship with your mommy

### Work and relationships

- ✦ how would you describe your sexual identity?
- ✦ Are you currently in a relationship? How did you meet them? Is this how you would usually meet other non-commercial partners?
- ✦ does your work affect your personal relationships? How?
- ✦ Lots of guys say said that they are less likely to use condoms with regular partners than with their clients... why do you think that is?

- ⤴ If a client pays more, do you think some people would not use a condom?
- ⤴ If you find a client attractive, would you be more likely to not use a condom with them? Why?
- ⤴ What do you think are the main differences between having sex with clients and regular partners?
- ⤴ If you have a regular partner, do they know what kind of work you do?
- ⤴ How many Mbs have regular partners? How do you meet regular partners?
- ⤴ What happens when partners become regular? Has this ever happened to you? Can you describe how it is different or similar to your other types of relationship (i.e. other clients, or non-commercial partners)
- ⤴ do you have any MB friends in Shenzhen? How close are you? Do you talk to each other about your work, feelings, if you're having a bad day?
- ⤴ Do you have any non-MB friends in Shenzhen?

### **Safety & the authorities**

- ⤴ have you ever had any problems while doing your work? What sort of problems?
- ⤴ We have heard that the authorities made a lot of boys' work more difficult during the university olympics this summer. Did this affect you at all? How? Have things now changed?

### **Society**

- ⤴ have you told anyone that you do this kind of work? How did you tell them? How did they react?
- ⤴ How do you think society views your work? Why is that?

### **The future**

- ⤴ do you enjoy your work?
- ⤴ If didn't do this kind of work, what would you like to do instead?
- ⤴ Do you think you will continue to do this work in the future? For how long? What would you like to do afterwards?

### **HIV**

- ⤴ what do you think are the main risks involved in your work?
- ⤴ Do you worry about them very much?
- ⤴ Do you worry about sexual health? Why/ why not?
- ⤴ Have you been tested for STI's? How often do you get tested? Do you think that this is something that most MB's do? Do you discuss it with other people?
- ⤴ How could your work be made safer?

### **Power**

- ⤴ do you ever have problems with clients? What sort of problems?
  - e.g. do clients ever become violent? Do they ever refuse to use condoms? Do they ever refuse to pay? How do you resolve this?

### **Buying Sex**

- ⤴ some MB's also buy sex.

- Why do you think that is?
- Some also say they are less likely to use condoms when they buy sex – do you think this is true? Why do you think they might not use condoms when they buy?

### **Further questions from the surveys**

- ⤴ Many people say that they haven't told other people because they are worried that they won't “understand” - what does this mean?
- ⤴ Many people equate selling sex with being gay, i.e. didn't tell family about work because they wouldn't accept gay people...
  - explore this correlation – what about selling sex to women? What about being gay but not selling sex?
- ⤴ Hygiene:
  - Many people we have talked to consider kissing to be relatively unsafe. How do you feel about this? Why?
  - Is hygiene something that you worry about in your work? What do you do to keep good hygiene?
  - How do you think hygiene is related to sexual health?

## Appendix D: Transcriber confidentiality agreement



### Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement

*The HIV Risk Environments of Male Sex Workers in China: A Mixed Methods Study, London School of Economics and Political Science*

This research is being undertaken by Paul Bouanchaud, PhD candidate in the Social Policy Department of the London School of Economics.

The purpose of the research is to explore the beliefs and behaviours relative to the work, occupational safety and HIV risk of men who sell sex in a city in southern China.

As a transcriber for this research, I understand that I will be hearing recordings of confidential interviews. The information on these recordings has been revealed by interviewees who agreed to participate in this research on the condition that their interviews would remain strictly confidential. I understand that I have a responsibility to honour this confidentially agreement.

I agree not to share any information on these recordings, about any party, with anyone except the Researcher of this project. Any violation of this and the terms detailed below would constitute a serious breach of ethical standards and I confirm that I will adhere to the agreement in full.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to:

1. Keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the content of the interviews in any form or format (e.g. transcripts, translations, .doc files, etc.) with anyone other than the Researcher.
2. Keep all research information in any form or format (e.g. transcripts, translations, .doc files, etc.) secure while it is in my possession.
3. Return all research information in any form or format (e.g. transcripts, translations, .doc files, etc.) to the Researcher when I have completed the transcription tasks.
4. After consulting with the Researcher, erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the Researcher (e.g. CDs, information stored on my computer hard drive).

Translator:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(print name) (signature) (date)

Researcher:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(print name) (signature) (date)

*This study has been reviewed and ethically approved by the appropriate LSE Ethics procedures*

## 邀请：问卷调查

你好，

我们正进行一个职业健康及安全的研究，关于在深圳提供服务的男性和跨性别工作者。我们想邀请你参加一个问卷调查，只需大约要40分钟，我们会给你100元人民币以答谢你的宝贵意见和时间。

研究是不记名的，所有资料亦会保密，不会因此让你的个人资料和身份被暴露。这个研究是一个博士论文有关，或者不会对你的工作有直接影响，但我们相信这些资料让大家更了解这个行业，有助改善工作环境，确保工作安全和健康。

如果你参加这个问卷调查，请你跟深圳夕颜联络和预约时间(星期一至五上午10时下午6时)，联络电话13798520169或13418536910，

谢谢！

**保罗Paul**

## Invitation: Survey

Hello,

We are currently doing some research into the occupational health and safety of men and trans people who work in the personal services industry in Shenzhen. We would like to invite you to come and take part in our project, by filling out a survey. This should take less than 40 minutes, and we can compensate you 100RMB for your time.

All of the data we collect will be completely anonymous and confidential – we will not ask for your name or any other personally identifying information.

The research is part of a PhD project and the information that we collect will probably not be directly helpful to you. But, we do hope that the data generated in this project will increase our levels of knowledge about the work you do, the risks you face, and how these things might be improved in the future.

If you would like to take part, you can come to our offices between 10 am and 6 pm Monday to Friday, or call us to make an appointment on: 13798520169 / 13498536910.

Thank you! Paul保罗

## **Appendix E: Information for participants (English version)**

This study is part of a PhD research project being conducted in Shenzhen over the next few months by a student from the London School of Economics, and the Chinese University of Hong Kong, working closely with [CBO name]. This study will look at various aspects of sex worker's lives, with the aim of improving our understanding of the different problems that sex workers might face in Shenzhen, and the strategies they use in improving their occupational safety.

We are doing research on various aspects of sex worker's lives, with the aim of improving our understanding of the different problems that sex workers might face in Shenzhen, and the strategies they use to assist clients to comply with safer sex messages. I am going to give you information and invite you to be part of this research. You do not have to decide today whether or not you will participate in the research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research.

This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information and I will take time to explain. If you have questions later, you can ask them of me or of another researcher.

This research will involve filling out a questionnaire, which should take no more than 40 minutes of your time. You may also be asked if you consent to having an audio recording made of the questionnaire completion. This part of the research is to help us find out if certain parts of the questionnaire are unclear, as well as to gather extra information on issues that are not in the questionnaire but that you feel are important.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not.

We are asking you to help us learn more about the lives of male sex workers. We are inviting you to take part in this research project. If you accept, you may answer the questionnaire yourself, or it can be read to you and you can say out loud the answer you want me to write down.

If you do not wish to answer any of the questions included in the survey, you may skip them and move on to the next question. The information recorded is confidential, your name is not being included on the forms, only a number will identify you, and no one outside of the research team will have access to your survey.

This part of the research project takes place over 4 months in total. After completing this survey, we may ask you if you would like to participate in another part of the project. Again, you are completely free to choose whether you want to participate, and there will be no negative consequences if you do not.

We are asking you to share with us some very personal and confidential information, and you may feel uncomfortable talking about some of the topics. You do not have to answer any question or take part in the survey if you don't wish to do so. You do not have to give us any reason for not responding to any question, or for refusing to take part in the interview.

There will be no direct benefit to you, but your participation is likely to help us find out more about your community in Shenzhen, and possible ways to encourage safer sex behaviours.

You will not be provided any incentive to take part in the research. However, we will give you 100 RMB to compensate you for your time, and travel expenses.

The research being done in the community may draw attention and if you participate you may be asked questions by other people in the community. We will not be sharing information about you to anyone outside of the research team. The information that we collect from this research project will be kept private. Any information about you will have a number on it instead of your name. All data from this project will be stored securely.

If you have any questions, you can ask them now or later. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact Paul Bouanchaud (13588852826) or [name] at [CBO name] Information Center. This proposal has been reviewed and approved by the London School of Economics ethical review process.

## **Appendix F: Informed Consent – Information for participants**

*Adapted from WHO Guidance (WHO 2010) and Minichiello (Personal Communication)*

This study is part of a PhD research project being conducted in Shenzhen over the next few months by a student from the London School of Economics, and visiting scholar at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. This study will look at various aspects of sex worker's lives, with the aim of improving our understanding of the different problems that sex workers might face in Shenzhen, and the strategies they use to assist clients to comply with safer sex messages.

We are doing research on various aspects of sex worker's lives, with the aim of improving our understanding of the different problems that sex workers might face in Shenzhen, and the strategies they use to assist clients to comply with safer sex messages. I am going to give you information and invite you to be part of this research. You do not have to decide today whether or not you will participate in the research. Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research.

This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information and I will take time to explain. If you have questions later, you can ask them of me or of another researcher.

This research will involve you filling out a questionnaire, which should take no more than 40 minutes of your time.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not. If you choose not to participate all the services you receive at this CBO will continue and nothing will change.

We are asking you to help us learn more about the lives of male sex workers. We are inviting you to take part in this research project. If you accept, you may answer the questionnaire yourself, or it can be read to you and you can say out loud the answer you want me to write down.

If you do not wish to answer any of the questions included in the survey, you may skip them and move on to the next question. The information recorded is confidential, your name is not being included on the forms, only a number will identify you, and no one outside of the research team will have access to your survey.

This part of the research project takes place over 4 months in total. After completing this survey, we may ask you if you would like to participate in another part of the project. Again, you are completely free to choose whether you want to participate, and there will be no negative consequences if you do not.

We are asking you to share with us some very personal and confidential information, and you may feel uncomfortable talking about some of the topics. You do not have to answer any question or take part in the survey if you don't wish to do so. You do not have to give us any reason for not responding to any question, or for refusing to take part in the interview

There will be no direct benefit to you, but your participation is likely to help us find out more about your community in Shenzhen, and possible ways to encourage safer sex behaviours.

You will not be provided any incentive to take part in the research. However, we will give you 100 RMB to compensate you for your time and travel expenses.

The research being done in the community may draw attention and if you participate you may be asked questions by other people in the community. We will not be sharing information about you to anyone outside of the research team. The information that we collect from this research project will be kept private. Any information about you will have a number on it instead of your name. All data from this project will be stored securely.

If you have any questions, you can ask them now or later. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact [Name of CBO]

## Appendix G: Univariate and multivariate analysis for number of migrations

		Univariate				Multivariate			
		m1	m2	m3	m4	m5	m6	m7	m8
		coef/se	coef/s e	coef/s e	coef/s e	coef/s e	coef/s e	coef/s e	coef/s e
Age Group	16-19	Ref.	-			Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
	20-24	1.684*** (0.586)				1.471* (0.588)	1.715** (0.588)	1.469* (0.583)	1.657** (0.582)
	25-29	1.476** (0.616)				1.008 (0.633)	1.389* (0.619)	1.060* (0.629)	1.355* (0.616)
	30-34	2.043*** (0.778)				1.336 (0.822)	1.720* (0.821)	1.380* (0.804)	1.666* (0.804)
	35+	0.592 (0.710)				-0.110 (0.842)	0.121 (0.812)	-0.036 (0.828)	0.081 (0.802)
	Single		Ref.	-		Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Relationship status	Married/ Cohabiting		0.962* (0.493)			0.901* (0.483)	0.923* (0.488)	0.897* (0.480)	0.894* (0.484)
	Divorced/ Widowed		0.263 (0.485)			0.864 (0.602)	0.946 (0.611)	0.831 (0.597)	0.889 (0.603)
	Primary or below			Ref.	-	Ref.	Ref.		
Education Level	Middle School			0.276 (0.956)		0.327 (0.944)	0.383 (0.948)		
	High School			0.439 (0.934)		0.454 (0.922)	0.415 (0.928)		
	Vocational School			0.934 (0.976)		1.155 (0.958)	0.934 (0.966)		
	Higher Education			0.214 (1.135)		-0.073 (1.126)	-0.177 (1.127)		
	Both Farmers				Ref.	Ref.		Ref.	
Parents' Occupations	Farmer & Worker				1.989** (0.646)	1.791** (0.644)		1.825** (0.639)	
	Both Workers				0.730	0.795		0.820	

				(0.508)	(0.507)		(0.505)	
Worker & Professional/ Own business				-0.477 (0.488)	-0.630 (0.519)		-0.394 (0.496)	
Worker & No job				-0.302 (0.532)	-0.283 (0.539)		-0.206 (0.536)	
Both Professional/ Own business				-0.611 (0.646)	-0.621 (0.669)		-0.437 (0.652)	
No work				-0.314 (0.741)	0.045 (0.793)		-0.043 (0.782)	
Intercept	1.368** (0.535)	2.594** (0.187)	2.286* (0.902)	2.677** (0.241)	0.928 (1.073)	0.760 (1.056)	1.362* (0.594)	1.274* (0.534)
Number of observations	215							
Adjusted R2	0.039	0.009	-0.008	0.046	0.089	0.047	0.087	0.052
Log-Likelihood	-484.57	-488.89	-489.65	-482.69	-472.43	-480.49	-474.88	-482.04

note: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

## Appendix H: Concurrency variable creation

The equation below shows how the proportion variables were created.

$$P_j = \frac{\sum_{i=1,2,\dots,a,b} C_i^j}{\sum_{i=1,2,\dots,a,b} D_i^j} = \frac{C_{12}^j + C_{23}^j + \dots + C_{ab}^j}{D_{12}^j + D_{23}^j + \dots + D_{ab}^j}, \text{ for all non-negative values of } C^j \text{ and } D^j$$

Where:

$$D_{ab}^j = S_b - E_a, \text{ if } E_b \geq E_a$$

$$D_{ab}^j = S_a - E_a, \text{ if } E_b < E_a$$

$$C_{ab}^j = S_a - E_b, \text{ if } E_b \geq E_a$$

$$C_{ab}^j = S_b - E_b, \text{ if } E_b < E_a, \text{ for all partnerships, } 1, 2, \dots, a, b$$

$S_a$  is the start date of relationship a

$E_a$  is the end date of relationship a

$D_{ab}^j$  is the total duration of relationships a and b for sex worker j

$D_{ab}^j$  is the duration crossover (or concurrency) for relationships a and b for sex worker j

$P_j$  is the proportion of relationship time spent in concurrent partnerships by sex worker j

## Appendix I: Concurrency analysis

### Correlations of concurrency measures

		Overall concurrency ratio	Cross-group	Within group	
				Commercial	Non-commercial
Overall concurrency ratio		1			
		-			
Cross-group		0.9276	1		
		(<0.001)	-		
Within group	Commercial	0.5798	0.3544	1	
		(<0.001)	(<0.001)	-	
	Non-commercial	0.5023	0.169	0.1089	1
		(<0.001)	(0.122)	(0.339)	-

**Table: Distribution of cross-group concurrency by selected background characteristics**

			Cross-group concurrency		
			Yes	No	Total
Total		n	115	136	251
		%	(45.8)	(54.2)	
Age	16-19	n	10	12	22
		%	(45.5)	(54.5)	
	20-24	n	57	55	112
		%	(50.9)	(49.1)	
	25-29	n	29	36	65
		%	(44.6)	(55.4)	
	30-34	n	10	9	19
		%	(52.6)	(47.4)	
35+	n	9	20	29	
	%	(31.0)	(69.0)		
Education	Primary	n	8	3	11
		%	(72.7)	(27.3)	
	Middle	n	28	34	62
		%	(45.2)	(54.8)	
	High	n	53	59	112
		%	(47.3)	(52.7)	
	Vocational	n	22	28	50
		%	(44.0)	(56.0)	

	Higher	n	4	11	15
		%	(26.7)	(73.3)	
Region	East	n	26	24	50
		%	(52.0)	(48.0)	
	North/ NW	n	5	19	24
		%	(20.8)	(79.2)	
	Northeast	n	10	21	31
		%	(32.3)	(67.7)	
	South Central	n	59	46	105
		%	(56.2)	(43.8)	
Southwest	n	14	21	35	
	%	(40.0)	(60.0)		
Sexual orientation	Gay	n	42	67	109
		%	(38.5)	(61.5)	
	Bisexual	n	47	38	85
		%	(55.3)	(44.7)	
	Straight	n	26	30	56
		%	(46.4)	(53.6)	
Transgender	Yes	n	3	8	11
		%	(27.2)	(72.7)	
	No	n	112	128	240
		%	(46.7)	(53.3)	

### Logistic regression of cross-group concurrency

Using a binary variable for cross-group concurrency<sup>55</sup> as the dependant variable, a set of socio-economic and demographic variables were first inserted in to the model both to assess what contribution they made to likelihood of reporting concurrency, and also to act as controls. Subsequent rounds of forward variable entry were used, aiming to include any variables in the model that were theoretically linked to concurrency, and which were found to be associated with it in the regression estimation. The final model is shown in the table below.

**Table: Logistic regression for cross-group concurrency**

		Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	[95% Conf. Interval]
Age‡		0.844	0.174	0.563 1.265
Education level	Primary or below	18.315**	21.636	1.808 185.494
	Middle school	1.470	1.036	0.369 5.855

<sup>55</sup> Constructed using equation in Appendix H above which gave the proportion of time spent in cross-group concurrent partnerships for all respondents, and then recoding the variable to 1 for any time spent in cross-group concurrency and 0 for no time spent in such relationships.

	High school	2.411	1.636	0.638	9.118
	Vocational school	1.580	1.145	0.382	6.535
	University	Ref	-	-	-
Region	East	4.810*	3.420	1.194	19.384
	Northeast	2.937	2.260	0.650	13.270
	South-central	5.474**	3.726	1.441	20.785
	Southwest	2.186	1.647	0.499	9.571
	North/ Northwest	Ref	-	-	-
Sexual orientation	Gay	Ref	-	-	-
	Bisexual	1.982†	0.795	0.903	4.351
	Straight	0.756	0.371	0.289	1.980
Transgender	No	Ref	-	-	-
	Yes	0.212*	0.164	0.047	0.965
Duration of sex work in Shenzhen	1 year or less	4.558**	1.784	2.116	9.817
	More than 1 year	Ref	-	-	-
Ever lived with a woman with whom were having sex	Yes	2.427**	0.842	1.229	4.792
	No	Ref	-	-	-
Ever lived with a man with whom were having sex	Yes	2.143*	0.753	1.077	4.265
	No	Ref	-	-	-
Commercial partner gender variable‡		0.559**	0.105	0.387	0.808
Intercept		0.014**	0.014	0.002	0.097

‡ = standardised variable with mean 0 and SD 1.  
OR significance levels: \*\* = <1%; \* = <5%; † = <10%.  
Pseudo R<sup>2</sup>=0.205  
N= 232

The model was fit to the 232 cases with non-missing data, and has a pseudo R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.2<sup>56</sup>. Several of the socio-demographic variables had significant effects on the odds of being in a cross-group concurrent relationship. The age of the MSW was not significant, once other variables were controlled-for. The education level of the respondent was only significant for those who had a primary (or below) level of education. Being in the lowest education group was associated with an increased odds (18.3) of being in a concurrent partnership when compared to those with a university education, although the small number of people in this group has resulted in a large standard error for this variable, and while the direction of the effect is fairly stable, the exact estimate of the odds may be unreliable. Region of birth was also found to have a significant effect on the odds of

<sup>56</sup> Like R<sup>2</sup> in linear regression, pseudo R<sup>2</sup> in logistic regression is a measure of fit, although it cannot be interpreted in the same way (as the proportion of variance explained by the model), as the models are calculated using maximum likelihood estimators (rather than OLS). Therefore, it is reported here, and in later sections, merely to give an indication of the models' fit.

concurrency, with those in the South-central and Eastern regions being more likely to be in concurrent partnerships than those in the reference category, controlling for the other variables. The reasons for this are unclear, although both of these regions are typically considered to be wealthier than elsewhere in China (discussed in Chapter 4), and as such, perhaps the patterns of non-commercial relationships are different for these men.

Sexual orientation does not appear to play much of a role once other variables are controlled-for here, with self-identifying as bisexual having an increased odds of concurrency of 2.0 at the 10% level of significance, compared to the gay reference category. This effect, though not strongly significant, is nevertheless interesting, as it implies that the bisexual men in the sample are more likely to have both commercial and non-commercial partners simultaneously, and given their bisexual identity, that perhaps those partners are likely to be both male and female, potentially widening their networks of sexual contacts into multiple groups. There is no significant difference between those MSW identifying as straight vs. gay. The effect of being transgender is also significant in predicting the likelihood of cross-group concurrency in the model, with reduced odds of concurrency of 0.21 compared with the non-transgender reference category.

Examining other, non-SE variables, those MSW who have worked for less than a year as sex workers in Shenzhen are 4.6 times more likely to be engaged in cross-group concurrent partnerships than those who have been working there for longer. This variable remains significant when total duration of sex work<sup>57</sup> is also included in the model. The possible reasons for this effect might include the following: the MSW in the sample who have only been working in Shenzhen for less than a year might be more likely to have non-commercial partners whom they plan to return to after working in the sex industry. Those who have worked for longer periods may have also started in the same way, but then separated from those partners subsequently:

I: Will you go back to your girlfriend in Dalian?

R: Yeah.

I: Do you miss her?

R: A bit.

I: Because it has only been a month [since you started sex work]?

R: Yes.

(23, straight, Liaoning 11113004)

On the other hand, it is possible that those who have been engaged in selling sex for longer durations have less interest or ability to be in non-commercial partnerships concurrent with their commercial sex, or that such relationships tend to be 419s and so are less likely to be concurrent with their commercial partnerships, as described in section 6.1.1 above.

The both variables describing ever having lived with a man or woman with whom you were having sex found to be significant and had odds ratios of 2.1 and 2.4 respectively, indicating a more than doubling in the likelihood of being in a cross-group concurrent

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<sup>57</sup> data not shown, as total duration of sex work has no significant effect, and does not alter the strength or direction of the other variables' effects

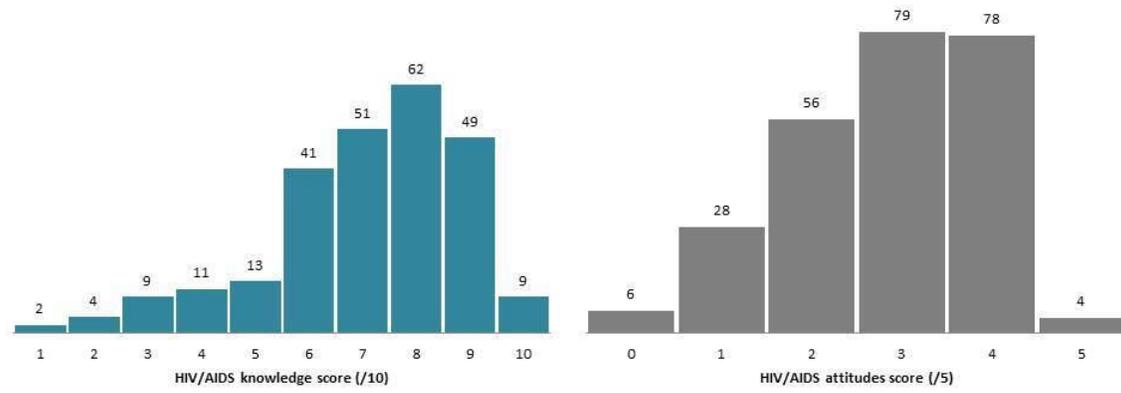
relationship. However, the respondents were also asked whether they were *currently* living in such a situation, and for both male and female partners, these variables were not found to be significant in the regression model, when included either alongside or instead of the 'ever lived with partner' variables (p values of 0.58 and 0.64 for female and male partners respectively, models not shown here). This indicates that there might be an alternative mechanism that is driving increased concurrency among those who have ever lived with a partner, although such a mechanism is not clear from these data.

Finally, the proportion of commercial partners who were male (commercial partner gender variable) has a significant effect on the likelihood of being in a cross-group concurrent relationship in the model. What this means is that with an increasing proportion of commercial partners being male (rather than female), the odds of being in a concurrent relationship decrease, while controlling for the other variables in the model. Conversely, those who are reporting to have more female commercial partners are also more likely to be undertaking concurrent relationships, regardless of which sexual orientation they report having.

## Appendix J: HIV Attitudes and Knowledge

**Table 0-1: HIV knowledge and attitudes variables**

Variable name	Survey question	% Answered correctly
AIDS1	Can people reduce their chance of getting the AIDS virus by having just one uninfected sex partner who has no other sex partner?	70.5
AIDS2	Can people get the AIDS virus from receiving an unscreened blood transfusion?	78.4
AIDS3	Can people get AIDS form sharing needles with an infected person?	94.8
AIDS4	Can people get AIDS from mosquito bites?	53.0
AIDS5	Can people reduce their chance of getting the AIDS virus by using a condom every time they have sex?	93.2
AIDS6	Can people get the AIDS virus by sharing food with a person who has AIDS?	84.1
AIDS7	Can people get the AIDS virus from using the same drinking glass, chopsticks, or eating together at the same table as an HIV positive person?	69.6
AIDS8	Is it possible for a healthy looking person to have the AIDS virus?	82.1
AIDS9	Can the virus that causes AIDS be transmitted by a mother to her baby: during pregnancy? During birth? During breastfeeding?	91.2
AIDS10	Are there any special drugs that a doctor or nurse can give to treat AIDS?	16.7
AIDS11	Are there any special drugs that a doctor or nurse can give to cure AIDS?	73.3
		% with more positive attitudes towards PLHIV
ATT1	Would you buy fresh vegetables from a shopkeeper if you knew he had the HIV virus?	43.8
ATT2	Is a member of your family or close friends got the HIV virus, would you want it to remain a secret?	12.8
ATT3	If a member of your family got sick with AIDS, would you be willing to care for him or her in your own household?	78.5
ATT4	In your opinion, if a teacher has the AIDS virus but is not sick, should they be allowed to continue teaching in the school?	60.8
ATT5	Should children be taught about using a condom to avoid HIV?	86.3



**Distribution of knowledge and attitudes scores**

## Appendix K: Factor analysis

### Correlations between sexual practice variables

```
. corr kiss hugg mast orwc orwoc vawc vawoc piiai uiiai prai urai rimm
(obs=241)
```

	kiss	hugg	mast	orwc	orwoc	vawc	vawoc	piiai	uiiai	prai	urai	rimm
kiss	1.0000											
hugg	0.3352	1.0000										
mast	0.1998	0.3072	1.0000									
orwc	0.1416	0.2312	0.4450	1.0000								
orwoc	0.3850	0.1190	0.1735	0.2307	1.0000							
vawc	0.1666	0.1337	0.1904	0.3653	0.1178	1.0000						
vawoc	0.3158	0.0480	-0.0049	-0.0062	0.4054	0.1157	1.0000					
piiai	0.0922	0.0717	0.2804	0.4932	0.1814	0.4555	-0.0323	1.0000				
uiiai	0.2700	0.0319	0.0045	0.0321	0.4187	0.0334	0.3501	0.1781	1.0000			
prai	0.0870	-0.0154	0.1588	0.4387	0.1947	0.3181	0.0230	0.5991	0.1630	1.0000		
urai	0.1925	-0.0696	-0.0244	-0.0002	0.5225	0.0691	0.4959	0.1367	0.5836	0.2002	1.0000	
rimm	0.3729	0.0681	0.2164	0.2677	0.4215	0.1447	0.2688	0.2206	0.4162	0.2828	0.3874	1.0000

```
Factor analysis/correlation
Method: principal factors
Rotation: (unrotated)
```

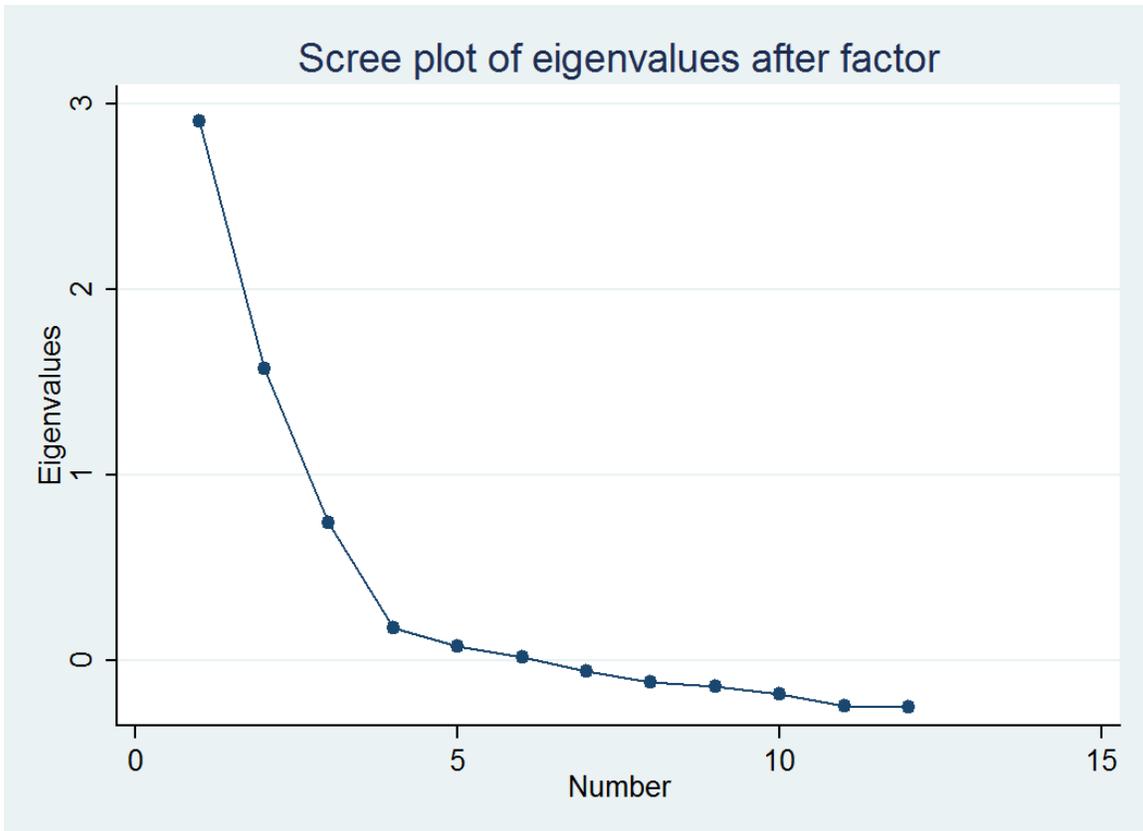
```
Number of obs = 241
Retained factors = 6
Number of params = 57
```

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
Factor1	2.90897	1.33652	0.6445	0.6445
Factor2	1.57245	0.83110	0.3484	0.9929
Factor3	0.74134	0.56508	0.1643	1.1572
Factor4	0.17627	0.10183	0.0391	1.1962
Factor5	0.07443	0.05298	0.0165	1.2127
Factor6	0.02145	0.07661	0.0048	1.2175
Factor7	-0.05515	0.05789	-0.0122	1.2052
Factor8	-0.11304	0.02528	-0.0250	1.1802
Factor9	-0.13831	0.04072	-0.0306	1.1496
Factor10	-0.17904	0.06606	-0.0397	1.1099
Factor11	-0.24510	0.00577	-0.0543	1.0556
Factor12	-0.25088	.	-0.0556	1.0000

```
LR test: independent vs. saturated: chi2(66) = 829.66 Prob>chi2 = 0.0000
```

Factor loadings (pattern matrix) and unique variances

Variable	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Factor4	Factor5	Factor6	Uniqueness
kiss	0.4764	-0.1273	0.3855	0.0741	0.1267	-0.0378	0.5853
hugg	0.2148	0.1609	0.4691	0.0421	0.0476	0.0614	0.7001
mast	0.3476	0.3460	0.3023	-0.1267	-0.0848	0.0297	0.6440
orwc	0.4964	0.5163	0.0717	-0.0724	-0.1016	-0.0117	0.4662
orwoc	0.6348	-0.2654	0.0872	-0.0437	-0.0920	-0.0145	0.5084
vawc	0.3909	0.3385	-0.0419	0.2662	0.0016	-0.0056	0.6599
vawoc	0.4236	-0.4302	0.0728	0.1969	-0.0836	-0.0230	0.5839
piai	0.5377	0.4832	-0.2759	0.0469	0.0516	0.0413	0.3947
uiai	0.5395	-0.3961	-0.1196	-0.0869	0.0982	0.0686	0.5159
prai	0.5091	0.3528	-0.3432	-0.0182	0.0473	-0.0349	0.4948
urai	0.5720	-0.4937	-0.2277	0.0079	-0.0694	0.0410	0.3707
rimm	0.6058	-0.1246	0.0379	-0.1613	0.0617	-0.0717	0.5811



3 factor solution

Factor loadings (pattern matrix) and unique variances

Variable	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Uniqueness
kiss	0.4764	-0.1273	0.3855	0.6083
hugg	0.2148	0.1609	0.4691	0.7079
mast	0.3476	0.3460	0.3023	0.6681
orwc	0.4964	0.5163	0.0717	0.4819
orwoc	0.6348	-0.2654	0.0872	0.5190
vawc	0.3909	0.3385	-0.0419	0.7308
vawoc	0.4236	-0.4302	0.0728	0.6302
piai	0.5377	0.4832	-0.2759	0.4012
uiai	0.5395	-0.3961	-0.1196	0.5378
prai	0.5091	0.3528	-0.3432	0.4986
urai	0.5720	-0.4937	-0.2277	0.3773
rimm	0.6058	-0.1246	0.0379	0.6161

### Rotated factor solution (Varimax orthogonal rotation)

Rotated factor loadings (pattern matrix) and unique variances

Variable	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Uniqueness
kiss	0.3764	0.0459	0.4979	0.6083
hugg	-0.0195	0.0614	0.5366	0.7079
mast	-0.0272	0.3351	0.4679	0.6681
orwc	-0.0046	0.6324	0.3436	0.4819
orwoc	0.6253	0.1572	0.2555	0.5190
vawc	0.0562	0.4878	0.1676	0.7308
vawoc	0.5876	-0.0794	0.1347	0.6302
piai	0.0953	0.7671	0.0346	0.4012
uiai	0.6741	0.0876	0.0071	0.5378
prai	0.1728	0.6838	-0.0624	0.4986
urai	0.7789	0.0796	-0.0989	0.3773
rimm	0.5153	0.2582	0.2275	0.6161

Factor rotation matrix

	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3
Factor1	0.7191	0.5954	0.3583
Factor2	-0.6813	0.7058	0.1943
Factor3	-0.1372	-0.3838	0.9132

FA diagnostics

Raw residuals of correlations (observed-fitted)

Variable	kiss	hugg	mast	orwc	orwoc	vawc	vawoc	piai	uiai	prai	urai	rimm
kiss	0.0000											
hugg	0.0726	0.0000										
mast	-0.0383	0.0350	0.0000									
orwc	-0.0568	0.0079	0.0722	0.0000								
orwoc	0.0151	-0.0156	0.0183	0.0464	0.0000							
vawc	0.0396	0.0149	-0.0499	-0.0005	-0.0369	0.0000						
vawoc	0.0312	-0.0079	-0.0253	0.0004	0.0160	0.0988	0.0000					
piai	0.0039	0.0079	0.0097	-0.0034	-0.0076	0.0702	-0.0320	0.0000				
uiai	0.0087	0.0358	-0.0098	-0.0227	-0.0184	-0.0485	-0.0401	0.0464	0.0000			
prai	0.0216	-0.0205	-0.0365	0.0284	-0.0049	-0.0147	-0.0159	0.0602	-0.0130	0.0000		
urai	-0.0551	-0.0062	0.0165	-0.0130	0.0482	0.0031	0.0578	0.0049	0.0522	0.0050	0.0000	
rimm	0.0539	-0.0598	0.0375	0.0286	0.0006	-0.0483	-0.0442	-0.0344	0.0446	0.0314	-0.0120	0.0000

Factor analysis with different numbers of factors (maximum likelihood)

#factors	loglik	df_m	df_r	AIC	BIC
1	-215.2601	12	54	454.5202	496.3378
2	-83.48277	23	43	212.9655	293.1159
3	-29.40755	33	33	124.8151	239.8134
4	-20.94803	42	24	125.8961	272.2575
5	-9.306579	50	16	118.6132	292.853
6	-3.917302	57	9	121.8346	320.468
7	-1.289019	63	3	128.578	348.1202

the models with 5 6 7 factors are Heywood cases

Estimation sample factor

Number of obs = 241

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
kiss	6.298755	2.904371	1	10
hugg	9.701245	.9094175	4	10
mast	8.228216	2.273441	1	10
orwc	8.497925	2.057759	1	10
orwoc	3.348548	2.660453	1	10
vawc	8.46473	2.140824	1	10
vawoc	2.551867	2.359027	1	10
piai	8.095436	2.227485	1	10
uiai	2.215768	2.090435	1	10
prai	7.547718	2.549266	1	10
urai	1.692946	1.588078	1	10
rimm	3.020747	2.590766	1	10

(Factor analysis correlation matrix)

## Appendix L: Analysis of commercial and non-commercial condom use

### Commercial condom use: Fisher's test results

Tests of significance in rates of condom use by background characteristics

Fisher's exact test results		
Variable group	P value	Significant at the 5% level?
Age group	0.302	No
Education	0.037	Yes
Region	0.795	No
Sexual orientation	0.242	No
Transgender?	0.496	No

### Non-commercial condom use, by selected variables

		Condom use with most recent commercial partner					
			Yes	No	Missing	Total	
Total		n	116	134	1	251	
		%	46	53	0	100	
Age	16-19	n	9	13	0	22	
		%	41	59	0	100	
	20-24	n	42	69	1	112	
		%	38	62	1	100	
	25-29	n	31	34	0	65	
		%	48	52	0	100	
	30-34	n	11	8	0	19	
		%	58	42	0	100	
	35+	n	2	2	0	4	
		%	50	50	0	100	
	Education	Primary	n	7	4	0	11
			%	64	36	0	100
Middle		n	25	36	1	62	
		%	40	58	2	100	
High		n	54	58	0	112	
		%	48	52	0	100	
Vocational		n	21	29	0	50	
		%	42	58	0	100	
Higher		n	8	7	0	15	
		%	53	47	0	100	
Region		East	n	21	29	0	50
			%	42	58	0	100

	North/ NW	n	10	14	0	24
		%	42	58	0	100
	Northeast	n	19	11	1	31
		%	61	35	3	100
	South Central	n	42	63	0	105
		%	40	60	0	100
	Southwest	n	20	15	0	35
		%	57	43	0	100
Sexual orientation	Gay	n	69	40	0	109
		%	63	37	0	100
	Bisexual	n	30	55	0	85
		%	35	65	0	100
	Straight	n	17	38	1	56
		%	30	68	2	100
Transgender	Yes	n	10	1	0	11
		%	91	9	0	100
	No	n	106	133	1	240
		%	44	55	0	100

### Non-commercial condom use: Fisher's test results

Significance tests for differences in non-commercial condom use by background variable

Fisher's exact test results		
Variable group	P value	Significant at the 5% level?
Age group	0.046	Yes
Education	0.545	No
Region	0.100	No
Sexual orientation	<0.001	Yes
Transgender?	0.050	Yes