
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Social and Linguistic Landscape of Male Sex Workers: Exploring Lived Realities and Negotiation Strategies

Brandon N. Obenza¹✉, Roy A. Pulan²

¹College Professor 1, College of Arts and Sciences Education and Professional Schools, University of Mindanao, Davao City, Philippines

²San Juan Central Elementary School with SPED Center, San Juan, Philippines

Corresponding Author: Brandon N. Obenza, **E-mail:** bobenza@umindanao.edu.ph

| ABSTRACT

This research explores the lived experiences of male sex workers with a focus on understanding the challenges they face, the coping strategies they employ, as well as the language they usually use when interacting with clients. Employing a qualitative multiple case study approach, the methodology involves in-depth interviews of five male sex workers whose age ranges from 19-21 years old and natives of San Juan, Southern Leyte, Philippines. This approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of their experiences, coping mechanisms, and the vocabulary they employ when communicating with clients. The key results reveal that these informants encounter significant challenges, including financial difficulties, thus resulting in engaging in this profession, moreover, they also face discrimination, social exclusion, and safety risks. Despite these challenges, these male sex workers navigate their lives as sex workers by using coping strategies such as discrimination acceptance, socializing and enjoyment with peers, and self-confidence and resiliency. A total of forty-eight (48) expressions emerged from the collected data. These expressions were categorized into: Introductory Signals, Name Substitution, and Sexual Services.

| KEYWORDS

male sex-workers, lexicon in sex work, sex slang, Philippines

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Sex work is referred to as the practice of people or organizations offering products or services associated with sexuality, whether directly or indirectly (Curtis & Boe, 2023). It is a type of customer service where employees are compensated to conjure up fantasies (Sage, 2019). It can be chosen and consented to by an individual, or it can be something that someone is compelled or forced to do by another person (Rule & Twinley, 2020). In the Philippines, male prostitution emerged as a result of the war during the American Occupation (Ildefonso, 2022) According to Bonnet (2017 as cited in Ildefonso, 2022), prostitution was a military requirement, and the influx of US soldiers led to a "explosion of sexual services for the rest and recreation of the troops. As a result of poverty and prostitution, callboys became more prevalent. Young lads who ask for money for sex are known as callboys (Ildefonso, 2022). This has continued for many years as many young men, especially those serving food and drinks to the hundreds of travelers that pass through each day in the Philippine ports provide their erotic services to men (Lasco, 2017). As a result of this, the negotiating strategies used by commercial sex workers have evolved. There are intents and uses for these expressions in terms of convincing. Thus, there is a need to conduct this study to understand better how language, used in negotiation contexts, impacts the lives and experiences of male sex workers.

Effective speakers should use language techniques that persuade their listeners. This is seen in the negotiation between male sex workers and their clients. Rhetoric, which is synonymous with persuasion, is described by Aristotle (1991) as "the faculty of observing in any given case, the available means of persuasion (Huang, 2019). Understanding the language of negotiation, lexicon, and lives of male sex workers is crucial. In the realm of negotiation, language plays a crucial role in shaping interactions,

power dynamics, and outcomes. Language is a major factor in the formation of ideologies (Ashraf & Tahir, 2022). Understanding the lives of male sex workers involves delving into the socio-economic factors, stigma, health-risks, and legal frameworks that impact their well-being and rights within society. A lot of earlier research focused solely on HIV/AIDS risks for male sex workers (Clatts et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2008; Stall & Purcell, 2000) while the value of discourse analysis in examining the setting of sex work has been the subject of some studies (Alves and Cavalhieri, 2021); others have added queer lens (Marques, 2011), this study delved into the lives of male sex workers as well as the language they used during communication with their clients.

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore and analyze the experiences and coping mechanisms of male sex workers, with a specific focus on the lexicon used during negotiation contexts. By examining the linguistic aspects of negotiation within this profession, the study aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the lived experiences of male sex workers, the challenges they face, and the specific vocabularies they employ during client interactions.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

This qualitative research utilized a multiple case analysis to understand the informants' lived experiences. This study utilized an in-depth interview and linguistic analysis to delve into the negotiation language and lexicon, shedding light on the multifarious experiences and challenges faced by male sex workers. By intricately weaving together the personal narratives of male sex workers with the linguistic analysis of their negotiation strategies, the study provided a comprehensive understanding of the intersection between language, identity, and livelihoods in this often-overlooked sector of society. According to Creswell and Creswell (2022), one source of information is not enough; thus, this study involved five (5) participants who had experienced being a male sex worker and were purposively selected.

2.2. Participants and Their Role

The narrative of this study, which examines the language of negotiation, lexicon, and lives of male sex workers, is significantly shaped by the participants, who are nineteen (19) to twenty-one (21) years old. They provide firsthand insights into the bargaining processes that shape their livelihoods as people navigating the complexity of male sex work in their community. These men shared fascinating narratives that offer light on the linguistic methods they use to negotiate, illuminating the complexities of their lives through their open participation in interviews. Their opinions not only help the researchers comprehend negotiating dynamics better, but they also help to humanize a group of people who are sometimes misunderstood and marginalized.

2.3. Data Collection Procedures and Ethical Considerations

The researchers created an interview guide with questions which are within the parameters of the study. This interview guide was sent to experts to ensure its validity. Further, the identified participants were interviewed as to their lived experiences, coping mechanisms, and lexicons used during negotiations with clients. The interview was recorded. However, the names and faces of the participants remained confidential.

Given the sensitive nature of the study, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity were observed by the researchers to protect participants from potential harm or discrimination. To ensure the dignity, safety, and agency of participants, their names had been kept confidential, thus, the use of pseudonyms for each informant was essential. In light of the possible stigma and legal ramifications of male sex work, the researcher fully disclosed to participants the goals, methods, and potential hazards of the study.

2.4. Data Analysis

After the interview with the participants, the gathered data were transcribed and translated. These data were analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) method. This method is well-known for its methodical and comprehensive approach, which entails several crucial steps, including verbatim transcription of the interviews, identification of key statements, interpretation of the meanings, categorization of themes, creation of a comprehensive description, creation of the basic framework, and asking participants for confirmation. Additionally, a cross-case analysis was also made.

Moreover, the lexicon or vocabulary utilized by the informants' was analyzed which was patterned after the study of Ogdock-Gascon, et al. (2015) which includes four phases: (1) identifying and classifying the expressions of negotiation, (2) processing the morphology and semantics (3) determining the functions of language, (4) distinguishing their rhetorical devices.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Experiences of male sex workers

Addressing the complexity of male sex workers' livelihoods and well-being requires an understanding of their varied experiences. Table 1 summarizes the key themes and thematic statements from the narratives of male sex workers, illuminating different facets of their experiences in the sex industry. Financial benefits, safety concerns, financial difficulties, influence by friends, discrimination and social exclusion, and messaging behaviors, were the essential themes that came out from the informants' stories. These themes offer insightful information as to how these sex workers navigate their profession.

Table 1: Experiences of male sex workers

Essential themes	Thematic statements
Financial benefits	It may be difficult, but I can earn money from it - Kieth
	What motivates me to keep doing this is the thought that I can earn money from this and I can buy what I want - George
	I earn money without being tired, I can buy what I want - Renz
	I'm fine doing it because I earn money - Jaymark
Safety concerns	It's just okay for me because I earn money from it - Lloyd
	Sex work is very hard because we do not know if I get sick from doing it - Kieth
	Sex work is very difficult, especially that you don't know the background of the client - George
	Doing this is quite difficult. There are times that you feel uncertain about the clients, if he is going to comply to what we negotiated. - Renz
Financial difficulties	I make sure that the clients have no illnesses so I am at peace while doing sex work - Lloyd
	I got involved in this because of financial difficulties - Kieth
	Due to financial difficulties, especially during the monthsary with my partner, since I don't have money, I am forced to do sex work. - George
	It all started when my friends introduced me to a gay so we could have money to buy alcoholic drink. - Renz
Influenced by friends	I got involved in this kind of work because of my situation - Jaymark
	I am forced to do sex work so that I would have money for my needs - Lloyd
	It all started when my friends introduced me to a gay so we could have money to buy alcoholic drink. - Renz
	I messaged them (clients) because my friends would tell me to message them. I use Facebook because some of my clients are Facebook friends - Jaymark
DISCRIMINATION AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION	Sometimes my friends will introduce a client to me, sometimes I am the one who will find a client - Kieth
	Whenever we needed money for our vices, my friends would tell me to message a client - George
	I feel sad when people who are aware of my doings teased me. - Lloyd
	Those people who are aware of my actions except for my friends discriminate me - George

	I feel bad about myself but I still continue with my doings, - Renz
	I feel sad because I'm just to force to do sex work. - Kieth
Messaging behaviours	I use facebook because some of my clients are facebook friends - Kieth
	On facebook, I just chat possible clients, sometimes they will be the one who messaged me first and after that that's when we started to negotiate - George
	Sometimes clients messaged me while sometimes I messaged them first. It really depends on the situation. If someone chats with me, I will also reply to them - Jaymark
	I use messenger. I message them first and sometimes they are the one who will message me first - Lloyd

The narratives emphasize how financial benefits play a big part in encouraging male sex workers to pursue their careers. When asked about their experience as a male sex worker, all of the informants expressed their satisfaction with their work due to the monetary rewards it brings. Kieth, despite having difficulties, acknowledges the potential to earn money from doing sex work. George is motivated to continue engaging in sex work due to the belief that it can lead him to financial gain and enable him to acquire what he desires. The flexibility to buy things that one desires and the capacity to earn money without experiencing physical exhaustion are highlighted in Renz' statement. Jaymark merely says that the financial side of the employment makes him happy, whereas Lloyd sees it as a respectable way to get money. These thematic statements underscore how financial benefits influenced and shaped the perspectives and experiences of male sex workers. Studies in the Philippines (Sanchez, 2021) have shown that financial instability is a common factor leading men to engage in sex work, with unemployment, poverty, and a lack of parental support being major contributing factors.

When asked about their experiences as a male sex worker, as opposed to the statements mentioned above, Kieth, George, Renz and Lloyd worry about their safety. Kieth and Lloyd highlights the lack of health protection in the sex industry by expressing worry about becoming sick from sex work. Male sex workers have to deal with several health challenges, such as substance abuse, mental health disorders, and increased susceptibility to HIV and other STDs. These worries are made worse by stigma and discrimination, both inside and outside the sex work industry (Jiao & Bungay, 2019; Selvey et al., 2019; Chandler, 2020 et al.; Tsang et al., 2019). Moreover, George and Renz highlight the difficulty of not knowing a client's background, pointing out a serious safety risk related to potentially damaging or violent interactions. These statements underscore how health concerns and violence worry male sex workers in their line of work. When meeting with customers, male sex workers are always concerned about their safety, especially because of possible violence and aggressiveness. They frequently employ technology-based techniques, like negotiating encounter parameters and client screening, to reduce these dangers (Siegel et al., 2023). However, structural obstacles like end-demand criminality and restricted website regulations, as well as digital marginalization, can make these techniques less effective (Koenig et al., 2022).

Another major theme that emerged in this study is financial difficulties as a significant factor luring male individuals to venture into this line of work. Kieth and Jaymark claims that they were coerced into doing sex work because they needed the money to support themselves. Sex labor is frequently a method of surviving and a way to engage in urban life in Vanuatu (Burry, 2017). In a similar vein, male prostitutes in India frequently report financial gain as their main motivation for taking up their jobs (Biello et al., 2016). Research conducted in Vietnam, where male sex workers are primarily motivated by poor salaries and precarious employment, lends additional credence to this (Closson et al, 2015). Financial hardships worsen George's circumstances, particularly on important occasions like anniversaries with a partner, forcing them to turn to sex work as a last resort. Friends encouraged Renz to start doing sex work to raise money for buying alcohol, demonstrating the connection between group pressure and financial difficulties. Lloyd also mentions how their circumstances led them to do sex work. Male sex workers in the Philippines entered the sector primarily due to poverty and a lack of parental support (Sanchez, 2021).

The narratives shared by the participants indicate a common trend where friends play a significant role in introducing them to sex work. Majority of the participant were influenced by friends. Renz reported that his friends had introduced him to the work to make money for alcohol. Jaymark described how his friends helped and supported him when he was reaching out to clients, including utilizing Facebook and other social media sites. Kieth also highlighted the role friends had in helping him find clients or in helping him actively pursue clients. Lastly, George narrates that his friends would tell him to message clients so they would have money for their vices. The impact of peers on male sex workers has been the subject of numerous research. Restar et al. (2021) emphasized the protective and supportive function that social networks play for male prostitutes, pointing out the possibility of rivalry and conflict within these networks.

Discrimination and social exclusion among male sex workers are also highlighted through the experiences shared by the participants. Lloyd illustrates the emotional effects of prejudice by expressing sadness at being mocked by others who are aware of their conduct. George highlights the social exclusion that male sex workers have to endure by mentioning that they have encountered discrimination from those who know about their employment, except friends. Renz illustrates the internal conflict experienced in such circumstances as they reflect on feeling horrible about themselves but carrying on with their work. Kieth highlights being sad since he is just forced to do sex work. Fric & Galli da Bino, (2018) and Brooks-Gordon (2010) draw attention to the discrimination that men face in the context of sex work and the workplace, respectively. The stigma and ignorance surrounding male sex work are further highlighted by Thobejane & Ngadhi (2019), especially when considering the government and service delivery systems.

Another essential theme that emerged from the participants' statements is the messaging behaviors. When asked about how they were able to find a client as well as the platforms they had been using in acquiring the latter, the majority of the participants shared their messaging behaviors using various social media platforms such as Facebook and Messenger. Kieth emphasizes how to interact with clients on Facebook, pointing out that some clients are already friends on the social media platform. This suggests that in their relationships, there has been a blurring of personal and professional boundaries. George talks about starting Facebook conversations with prospective customers. He shared that these conversations frequently started when the customer messages him first, illustrating a situation in which the customer leads the communication. A more balanced approach is described by Jaymark, who says that, depending on the situation, both they and their clients start talks. This suggests a flexible communication style based on client behavior. Lloyd is notable for not only responding to messages from clients on Messenger in a proactive manner but also for acknowledging situations in which clients initiate communication.

3.2. Coping Mechanisms of Male Sex Workers

Understanding the coping mechanisms employed by male sex workers is crucial for addressing their unique challenges and supporting their well-being. Table 2 outlines essential themes and thematic statements regarding coping strategies utilized by male sex workers. From grappling with discrimination acceptance to seeking solace in socializing and enjoyment, from summoning courage and self-confidence to navigating self-pity and resilience, these thematic statements shed light on the diverse strategies employed by male sex workers to navigate the complexities of their profession and societal perceptions.

Table 2: Coping mechanisms of male sex workers

Essential themes	Thematic statements
Discrimination acceptance	I just let them discriminate me; I don't care about them at all - Kieth
	I just let it pass, I don't care about them because they didn't feed me - George
	I just let them discriminate me, besides I don't earn money from them - Renz
	I just don't mind them - Jaymark
Socializing and enjoyment	At first, I felt embarrassed. I even come to the point where I stopped doing sex work and entertaining clients who messaged me but after a while I overcome it, I just let people discriminate me - Lloyd
	I just get drunk and have fun with my friends - Kieth
	I just enjoy myself with my friends - George
	I hang out with my friends - Renz
	I feel relaxed when I am with my friends because when I am with them I forget all my problems - Jaymark
	Food trip with friends, get drunk, go to the beach - Lloyd
	You must have the courage to do sex work in order for you to earn money - Kieth
	You have to have self-confidence so that you will never get nervous - George

Courage and self-confidence

You have to have strength to overcome all the challenges associated with being a male sex worker -
Renz

You must have the courage in order for you to succeed
-Jaymark

Maybe being courageous because if you're not courageous you won't long last with being a sex worker
-Lloyd

All of the respondents have dealt with discrimination and have accepted it as part of their daily living as a sex worker. According to Kuran & McCaffery (2008), men tend to be more tolerant of discrimination than women, which implies that male sex workers may tolerate the prejudice they encounter from society. Fric and Galli da Bino, (2018) discovered that prejudice against men occurs in the workplace, especially in environments where women predominate.

One of the predominant themes identified from the participants' statements is socializing and enjoyment. The majority of the participants find solace and distractions in spending time with friends. Among the activities identified by the participants as a means of maintaining their mental and emotional well-being while working as a sex worker were food trips, getting drunk, hanging out, and going to the beach. By partaking in fun activities with others, these participants establish relationships that are beneficial to their wellbeing and provide brief moments of relief from their problems. Studies have indicated that male sex workers frequently establish social networks with other sex workers, which can furnish them with safety, information, and support (Restar et al., 2021). These networks can also be utilized to control risks associated with clients, using techniques including information sharing, technology utilization, and negotiation (Siegel et al., 2023).

Another major theme identified is courage and self-confidence. Kieth stresses the importance of courage when it comes to entering sex work to have money. Jeorge highlights the value of self-confidence, staying composed, and managing anxiety while engaging in sex work. Renz discusses the resilience needed to overcome the challenges faced by sex workers emphasizing the necessity of fortitude. Jaymark emphasizes courage as an element for succeeding in this field. Lloyd echoes the idea that courage is vital for longevity, in sex work implying that lacking it could make it tough to cope with the job demands. Studies have indicated that male sex workers, akin to their female counterparts, frequently encounter elevated stress levels and may employ diverse coping mechanisms to manage these obstacles. According to Ansari et al. (2011), emotion-focused coping is frequently used by female sex workers; this finding may equally apply to male sex workers. Yuen et al. (2014) went on to emphasize the importance of resilience in reducing stress linked to work for women in the sex industry and suggested that men in the industry could also gain from cultivating resilience as a coping mechanism.

3.3. Cross-Case Analysis

To fully comprehend the experiences, coping strategies, and negotiation tactics of male sex workers, a cross-case analysis was performed by the researchers. In this study, cross-case analysis refers to examining multiple cases simultaneously, to uncover valuable insights that would not be possible through single-case studies alone. The researchers opted to systematically categorize data based on themes or patterns identified during data analysis.

Table 3 suggested that the participants' experiences with various facets of doing sex work have both similarities and differences. All of the participants shared the theme of financial rewards, suggesting that they all profited financially from their involvement in sex work. This resemblance highlights the financial incentives that guide a person's choice. The majority of participants expressed concerns about their safety when engaging with clients, except Jaymark. This disparity indicates that people's perceptions and priorities about personal safety when engaging with clients vary significantly. These views can be influenced by variables like psychological safety, prior experiences, and personal traits (O'Donovan et al., 2021). All of the subjects were motivated to engage in sex work by financial issues, indicating a common underlying issue. This would mean that poverty is one of the triggering factors as to why these male sex workers engage in this kind of profession. Numerous studies have emphasized how poverty pushes people into the sex industry, especially male sex workers. Both Sanchez (2021) and Trudeau (2021) highlight the financial incentive for this decision; the former highlights that male prostitutes frequently experience poverty, while the latter characterizes prostitution as a job for these people. Another common factor among the participants was the influence of friends since most of them were either exposed to or persuaded to pursue careers in sex work by their friends. This illuminates that social dynamics and networks influence people's decision to enter the sex work sector. Yang et al., (2020) demonstrate how the decision to engage in sex work can be influenced by deviant peer associations. Except for Jaymark, discrimination, and social exclusion were identified as important obstacles encountered by the majority of participants. This would mean that while Jaymark did not face any discrimination, the majority of male sex workers had. Similarities were also observed in the participants' messaging habits, who frequently used Facebook and Messenger. Participants' varying technological access and personal choices are reflected in these messaging platform variations. Males who engage in sexual interactions with other males (MSM) are especially fond of Facebook and Messenger (Megaputri et al., 2020).

Table 3: Similarities and differences of each case in terms of experiences

Themes on experiences	Similarities	Differences	Remarks
Financial benefits	1,2,3,4,5	-	All of the participants benefited financially from doing sex work
Safety concerns	1,2,3,5	4	Participants, except for Jaymark worry about their safety when interacting with clients.
Financial difficulties	1,2,3,4,5	-	All of the participants engaged in sex work due to financial difficulties.
Influenced by Friends	1,2,3,4	5	Participants, except for Lloyd were influenced or introduced by friends to the nature of sex work.
Discrimination and Social Exclusion	1,2,3,5	4	Discrimination and social exclusion, emerged as one of the common problems faced by the participants, except for Jaymark.
Messaging behaviors	1,2,4,5	3	Messenger and facebook were among the most commonly used messaging app by the participants, except for Renz.

Table 4 highlights that all of the participants shared the same coping mechanisms, indicating that none of them exhibited distinct methods. First of all, there is a shared coping mechanism among the participants as they all acknowledge discrimination as a normal component of working in the sex industry. This common experience demonstrates the participants' ability to recognize and deal with the prejudices they encounter in society. Similar to their female counterparts, male sex workers experience a great deal of stigma and prejudice at work, which can be harmful to their mental health. They use a variety of tactics, including as resistance and avoidance, to deal with these obstacles (Jiao & Bungay, 2019). Furthermore, all individuals claimed that socializing and enjoying themselves help them decompress, demonstrating yet another common coping strategy. This suggests that in order to sustain emotional health in this line of work, making friends and experiencing happiness are essential. Studies have consistently demonstrated the value of encouraging friendships in maintaining mental well-being at work (Craig & Kuykendall, 2019; Garbett & Thomas, 2020). These relationships are especially crucial for one's well-being at work and have the potential to improve self-worth and overall wellbeing (Craig & Kuykendall, 2019). All participants also agreed that courage and self-assurance were necessary for them to persevere and be successful in their line of work, demonstrating a shared awareness of the significance of these qualities. This mutual dependence on inner strength emphasizes how important courage and confidence are in overcoming the challenges of working in the sex industry. Dinse & Rice (2021) shed light on the impact of stigma and the complexities of exiting the industry, underscoring the resilience and determination needed to overcome these barriers.

Table 4: Similarities and differences of each case in terms of coping mechanisms

Themes on coping mechanisms	Similarities	Differences	Remarks
Discrimination acceptance	1,2,3,4,5	-	All of the participants have accepted discrimination as part of being a sex worker.

Socializing and Enjoyment	and	1,2,3,4,5	-	All of the participants reported that socializing and enjoyment makes them feel relax.
Courage and Confidence	and	Self-1,2,3,4,5	-	In order to long last in this profession, the participants find courage and self-confidence as a necessary tool to navigate the work.

3.4. Lexicon Used by Male Sex Workers in Negotiation

Table 5 presents a lexicon used by male sex workers during negotiation, offering insights into the language and tactics employed in this unique context. A total of forty-eight (48) expressions emerged from the collected data coming from the five (5) male sex workers interviewed in this research study. These expressions were categorized into: Introductory Signals, Money Signals, Name Substitution, and Sexual Services.

Table 5: Expressions for introductory signals

Expression	Description	Word formation process	Definition/literal translation	Connotation/Contextual meaning
Shot ta	A glass of liquor	Borrowing	Let's drink	To invite the client for a drink
Tara na	From the word "tara"; meaning let's go		Let's go	To plead for the client to take the worker
Kita ta	From the word "kita"; meaning to meet		Let's meet	To plead for the client to meet the worker for sexual services
Mo go ka?	From the word "go"; meaning to proceed	Borrowing	Would you go?	To ask if the client wants sexual services
Kaon ka?	From the word "kaon"; meaning to eat	Word coinage (connotation from image)	Would you like to eat	To ask if the client wants to suck the worker's penis
Pwede ko mu anha?			Can I go to your place	To ask if the worker can go to the clients' place for sexual services
Maglingaw-lingaw ta	"Lingaw" (fun) Prefix "mag" Reduplication (lingaw)	Affixation Reduplication	Let's have fun together	To invite the client to have fun through sexual services
Pwede ka run?			Are you free now?	To ask if the client is free and wants a sexual service
Kasabot na ka	"Sabot" (Understand) Prefix "ka"	Affixation	You already knew it	The client already knew what the worker meant (sexual services)
Tinilaway ta	"Tilaw" (taste) infix "in" suffix "ay"	Affixation	To taste each other	To invite the client into sexual intercourse

Makigkita ka?	Kita (meet) Prefix "makig"	Affixation	Would you like to meet	To ask if the client wants to meet the worker
Gipit ko			Tight/constricted/out of budget	Th worker is out of budget for his needs that's why he is doing sexual services
Pang-project/ Pang-tuition	(Pang-) Project (Pang-) Tuition	Affixation Borrowing	For project/ For tuition	To plead the client to take the worker so that he can have money to buy materials for his project or to pay the latter's tuition
Pang-tagay	(Pang-) tagay (a shot)	Affixation	A shot; to drink beer	To plead for clients to take the worker so the later can have a beer
Dating-gawi		Borrowing (Tagalog)	Old habit	Sexual services offered by a person to a client several times
Need money	kog	Borrowing	I need money	To plead for the client to take the worker so the latter can have money
Pang-ayo CP	"Ayo" (to fix) Prefix "pang" CP acronym for Cellphone	Affixation Acronym	For fixing the cellphone	To plead for the client to take the worker so the latter can have money as payment in fixing the cellphone
Pang-palit CP	"Palit" (to buy) Prefix "pang" CP acronym for Cellphone	Affixation Acronym	To buy cellphone	To plead for the client to take the worker so the latter can have money to buy a cellphone
Pang-kaon	"Kaon" (to eat) Prefix "pang"	Affixation	For food	To plead for the client to take the worker so the latter can have money to buy some food

Table 5 presents a comprehensive analysis of the terms utilized in the beginning part of most of the sex workers' conversations with their clients. Every term is broken down to show its literal translation, connotative meaning, and context or word development process. The majority of introductory signals used by the participants include using codes rather than directly stating their clients for sex. While other signals used also include alluring the clients so they would take the worker such as "Maglingaw-lingaw ta," and "Tinilaway ta." These expressions exemplify how language can be manipulated to convey different intentions and messages based on cultural norms and implicit understandings. When the participants were asked about the terms that they do not use in communicating with their clients, the majority of them highlighted that they avoided using vulgar and obscene terms as these would make their clients feel uncomfortable, especially if these clients are professional, additionally by using the terms mentioned above, clients would easily understood what the workers meant.

Table 6: Expression for name substitution

Expression	Description	Word formation process	Definition/literal translation	Connotation/ Contextual meaning
Rounds	Usually associated with "boxing rounds"; rounds (a series of similar actions, events, or things)	Word coinage (connotation through image) Borrowing		Number of times the sexual activity is consumed
Contact	From the word "contact person"; meaning a person who provides information	Borrowing		Person who offers sexual services
Daks	From Visayan term "dako" meaning big	Word coinage (connotation from image)	Large	Having a large penis
Good catch	Someone who has lots of good qualities	Borrowing		A person who offers sexual services who is handsome and/or has a good performance when it comes to sex
Tambok nga pitaka	Tambok- fat Pitaka- wallet Someone who is said to have "tambok nga pitaka" is rich/wealthy		Fat wallet	A client who could offer large payment for sexual services
Drive	Operate and control the direction and speed of a vehicle	Borrowing		A person who controls the whole sexual intercourse
Venue	The place where something happens	Borrowing		A place where the client and the worker meet together for sexual intercourse
Lipay			Glad	The feeling of the client/worker after the sexual intercourse
Yab	A reserved word for bay	Simple Reversal	House	A place where the client/worker can do the sexual intercourse
Bj	An acronym for blowjob	Acronym	Blow job	The act of sucking the male sex organ
Lubi	"Lubi" comes from the word "lubot" meaning "ass"	Affixation	Coconut	Lubi- Ass Lubihon- Anal sex
Lubihon				

Table 6 presents a comprehensive analysis of the terms used by male sex workers as a substitute for other terms to avoid being too candid such as "Rounds," "BJ," "Tambok nga pitaka," "Contact," "Venue," "Drive," "Yab." Workers also use terms that create an alluring effect to persuade the clients to take them such as "Daks," "Good catch," "Lubihon," and "Lipay."

Table 7: Expressions for money signals

Expression	Description	Word formation process	Definition/literal translation	Connotation/ Contextual meaning
1K	1 K(which means thousand)	Borrowing	One thousand pesos (1k)	One thousand pesos as payment for sex
One five	One thousand-five hundred pesos	Borrowing	One thousand-five hundred pesos	One thousand five hundred pesos as payment for sex
Send Gcash	Gcash (a mobile wallet services)	Borrowing		To ask money from the client through Gcash application

Table 7 provides a breakdown of expressions used by male sex workers to signal money transactions in the context of negotiation. As male sex workers negotiate with their clients, there is a need for payment for their services, thus the creation of terms for money signals. Male sex workers usually use shorter terms in stating money such as "1K" and "One, five."

Table 8: Expression for sexual services

Expression	Description	Word formation process	Definition/literal translation	Connotation/ Contextual meaning
Service		Borrowing		Sex service
Tira	A visayan term for "shoot" which means to strike a missile, a bow or gun	Word coinage (connotation from image)	To shoot	Sex. The inserting of the penis into the ass resembles that of "tira" or shooting
Tilaw		Word coinage (connotation through image)	To taste	To experience sexual intercourse
Blowjob/job		Borrowing		The act of bobbing the male sex organ; oral sex
Quickie	From the word "quick" means hurried or a hurried sex	Borrowing		A short and fast sexual intercourse
Dal-on sa langit		Word coinage (connotation through image)	Bring to heaven	The act of having a good performance when it comes to sex to the client will have a pleasurable moment associated with being in heaven.
Lami modala		Word coinage (connotation through image)	Good performer	Good sex performance
Nag-utog	"Utog" (Erect) Prefix "nag"	Affixation	Erection	A person's penis is erected already
Tila	Clipped word of "tilap" (to lick)	Back clipping	To lick	Licking the sex organ

Isud	"Sud" (Insert) Prefix "I"	Affixation	To insert	The insertion of penis into another organ
Hubo	From the tagalog term "Hubo't hubad" Hubo means without clothes from waist down, hubad means without upper clothes	Borrowing (Tagalog)	Without clothes from the waist down	Completely naked
Lamian ka?	"Lami" (Delicious) Suffix "an"	Affixation	Did you have a pleasurable time?	To ask if the person doing sexual intercourse has a pleasurable time
Da	Clipped word of "dala" (to carry)	Back clipping	Carry	The person who carries the whole sexual intercourse
Totoyon	"Totoy" (Breast) Suffix "on"			To suck someone's breast
Pato/patotoya	"Totoy" (Breast) Suffix "pa"		Pato- Duck Patotoya- Let me suck your breast	To suck someone's breast

Table 8 outlines various expressions used by male sex workers to describe sexual services. Some of the expressions used by male sex workers are borrowed from the American terms such as "Blowjob," "Quickie," and "Service." There are also terms coined through the images that they connote such as "Totoyon," "Tira," "Tilaw," "Dal-on sa langit," "Lami modala." The terms shown in the table illustrate how language is utilized in the context of male sex work to negotiate and explain intimate behaviors.

The functions of language employed by male sex workers are mostly phatic and metalingual. Metalanguage refers to language used to talk about language. In this study, metalingual function of language is observed in how male sex workers negotiate with their clients using codes or terms, for instance, the term "Lubi" which is a code for "ass," and the word "daks" which is a code for the word "large penis." On the other hand, language used to create and preserve social ties is referred to as phatic communication. Phatic function of language is observed in how male sex workers build trust and rapport with their clients while negotiation. Examples of this function are: "Pwede ka run? (Are you free?)," and "Pwede ko mu anha? (Can I go to your place?)." The rhetorical device that is usually utilized by male sex workers is euphemism. Euphemism is a figure of speech in which a harsh, abrasive, or objectionable term or phrase is substituted with one that is kinder or less direct. For instance, the term "Kita ta" which means "Let's meet" but in the context of the sex industry, "Kita ta" is equivalent to "Let's meet and have sex."

4. Conclusion

This research shows that there are many sides to these people's lives, thus countering simplistic views about them and enabling a better understanding of their situations. Essentially, through this inquiry into language use during negotiations between sex workers; men who sell sexual services for money or other goods primarily because they lack alternative means of making ends meet – researchers hope not only to further human rights protections within such contexts but also contribute towards wider academic discourses concerning languages used during bargaining processes more generally.

5. Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that must be acknowledged to contextualize its findings. The small sample size, consisting of five male sex workers aged 19–21 years from San Juan, Southern Leyte, Philippines limits the generalizability of the results to broader populations or other cultural and geographic contexts. Additionally, the focus on a narrow age group excludes perspectives from older individuals in the profession whose experiences and coping mechanisms may differ. The study's reliance on self-reported data through interviews is subject to biases such as social desirability and recall inaccuracies, which may have influenced the authenticity of the responses. Furthermore, the linguistic focus of the research, while insightful, may have overlooked other critical dimensions such as psychological well-being, social relationships, and systemic factors that shape the lives of male sex workers.

Moreover, the geographic and cultural specificity of the study confines its applicability to similar settings and may not reflect the experiences of male sex workers in different regions or countries. Ethical considerations, such as ensuring anonymity and avoiding

probing into potentially distressing topics, also restricted the depth of exploration in some areas. Finally, as the data represents a snapshot of the participants' experiences at a specific time, it may not account for evolving societal norms or economic conditions that could impact their lives and language practices. These limitations highlight the need for future research to adopt broader and more interdisciplinary approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of this underexplored topic.

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ORCID iD: Obenza- <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6893-1782> and Pulan - <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-6118-7945>

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