

## Abstract

Shanghai is one of China's most developed cities; by 2006, the GDP per capita had reached US\$7490, with the year-to-year economic growth exceeding 8% every year for the past decade. These results leave everyone impressed. Besides this factor, Shanghai is where the East meets the West, with a truly cosmopolitan cultural milieu. For these very reasons, many young Chinese come to Shanghai in search of their lucky pot of gold. But homosexual male-to-male sexual workers leave their hometowns for the big city, availing themselves of the chance to get rid of their family pressures, and to embrace new lives with their sexual orientation. So why do they instead choose to remain subject to the traditional Chinese way of thinking, being limited by the traditional Confucian precepts, seeing marriage as an absolutely essential element of life? What are the relations between economic development and social mores in terms of China's male-to-male sexual workers (sex or sexual)? As the economy develops very rapidly, the concept of sexulization has begun to sprout in China, so how can male-to-male sexual workers (sex or sexual) envision themselves in light of these trends? From the traditional views of the subservient master-servant Confucian vertical social relations, to the present circumstance of transforming one's body into a product for sale, does this help China's male-to-male sexual workers (sex or sexual) to oppose the constraints of the traditional Confucian views, so that they can, like China's female prostitutes, begin a quest for their equal human rights? These are among the many questions addressed in this study.

Therefore, the primary focus of this study is to understand the working milieu of the male-to-male sex workers (sex or sexual) in Shanghai, China, in appreciation of the background causes for underlying male-to-male sex work (sex or sexual) and perception of the entire process of their experiences. An in-depth study on these male-to-male sex workers (sex or sexual?) in Shanghai, China, was conducted as to when they left their hometowns, and how they came to grip with their sexual orientation yet had to return to face the issue of forming a traditional family (by marriage). How could someone who has been living in a country and society steeped in patriarchy, go to work as a prostitute for the male?

How strong are the forces of internal anxiety and external pressure upon these men's inner world? These are the core issues this study intends to explore and follow up.

After the research motivation for this study was specified and the author became acquainted

with these men, one realized that each of these men worked as male-to-male sex workers had within their personal histories, some skeletons which they wish they had left alone in the closet. Their inner worlds are both bitter and complicated.

This is also the reason why qualitative analysis was adopted in this study, to possibly penetrate the world of these men's hearts, and to analyze their individual family backgrounds, living predicaments, interactions with the broader world and social pressures, and other aspects during the interview process.

After interviewing with the 15 MB, the author has learned more from examining the circumstances of male-to-male sex workers (sex or sexual) who are willing to engage in the male-to-male sex trade and also willing to hold a traditional marriage, from the three perspectives of their sexual orientation, economic status and overall social environment. (A) From the sexual orientation point of view. Among the male-to-male sex workers (sex or sexual) in this study with the exception of one participant who was a heterosexual, the majority of the participants in this interview were all homosexuals staying in the closet. And many of the MBs in the countryside share common formative sexual experiences with other boys, such as sleeping together and masturbation...etc. In the more densely populated countryside where living conditions are relatively poor, it is quite common to see many boys sleeping together in one room, thereby increasing the opportunity for the boys to develop intimate contact. Therefore in light of their formative experiences, the ways they grew up actually contributed to these MB's acceptance of the male-to-male sex trade. (B) From the economics point of view. All of the research subjects had indicated that the main reason for becoming an MB was to make money. Money became the focal point of these MB's lifestyles because they had grown up in very poor rural areas and suffered from the pressures of an impoverished environment and unfair society. For recently-graduated students from the rural areas, the education which they have received at great expense is still not comparable with those students graduated from the city. Moreover, China is a social-networking or so-called "guanxi" in Chinese. Rural families often find absolutely no connections to help them find jobs. As a result, graduation spells unemployment. And consequently under great economic pressures, many rural youths go to Shanghai in search of their fortunes. However as they run into brick walls and run out of resources, selling their bodies becomes an easy way to increasing their wealth and a means of survival. (C) From the social environment point of view. Chinese people

have stepped away from communism due to the development of capitalism. The emergence of the commodity economy society enables people to pursue a material life and leave virtues of contented living behind.

Now with the formation of a capitalist society, wealth has become one of the standard measures for things. The impact of the worship for mammon on Chinese people now results in people using the amount of money as a criterion for interaction. Such a society gradually develops a positive attitude towards prostitution. Sensations, attitudes and affinity distance are all determined by the amount of wealth. Prostitution becomes a means of pursuing money.

According to the results from this study, respondents indicated that they have agreed that the sale of body is a tool or method for making money, and have repeatedly emphasized that money is the main factor of becoming MBs. Instead, sex trade was triggered by socio-economic oppression and self-expectations or expectation in sudden success (Structural tension theory, Merton). Furthermore, due to unequal social opportunities, for examples, most of the MBs have not attained good schools; neither does their family have good social relations, which results in a consistent and normal behavior of prostitution among the MBs.

For this reason, MBs are in need of social and public concern, while nonetheless such efforts cannot be completed through a group. The society should subvert its current social standards and the value classification, evaluate human values and needs with an attitude of non-judgmental awareness, and seriously look into each individual and his or her work. By understanding and helping those people in need, consequently we will develop a happy world in prosperity.