

Men Who have Sex with Men in Africa

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Outline

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Why research MSM in Africa?

- Population Council's strategic objective to improve the lives of vulnerable populations: MSM work in Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia.
- MSM 4 times more likely to be HIV infected than the general population in African countries (Baral) and high rates of risky sexual behaviors in MSM
- More data to develop and guide programs that address same sex sexual risk for HIV and STIs needed
- Need to reduce health and social inequities

Population Council's Research in South Africa

Men's Network study in Pretoria completed 2009

Investigate internalized homophobia, self-reported STIs, HIV conspiracy beliefs, and male sex worker (MSW) characteristics.

Enumeration of MSM engaged in transactional sex in Johannesburg and Durban completed 2010

Estimate the size of MSM engaged in transactional sex and explore contextual factors related to transactional sex among MSM in Johannesburg and Durban.

Definitions

- Internalized homophobia is defined as the self-hatred and shame MSM incorporate into their belief system about being gay
- Transactional sex is defined as any man actively seeking male clients, or currently willing to exchange sex for money or goods with other men

Methods: Men's Network Study, Pretoria

- Cross-sectional behavioural survey
- Respondent-driven sampling (RDS)
- Face-to-face interview
- Questionnaire:
 - Sexual risk behaviours
 - HIV knowledge
 - STI symptoms
 - Common HIV misconceptions and conspiracy beliefs
 - Internalized homophobia

Study Population and Recruitment, Pretoria

- 324 MSM (17 seeds and 307 non-seeds) were recruited from February to August 2009
- Eligibility criteria:
 - Men 18 years of age or older
 - Engaged in oral or anal sex with a man in last 6 months
 - Live in or around Pretoria (includes Mamelodi and Atteridgeville townships)

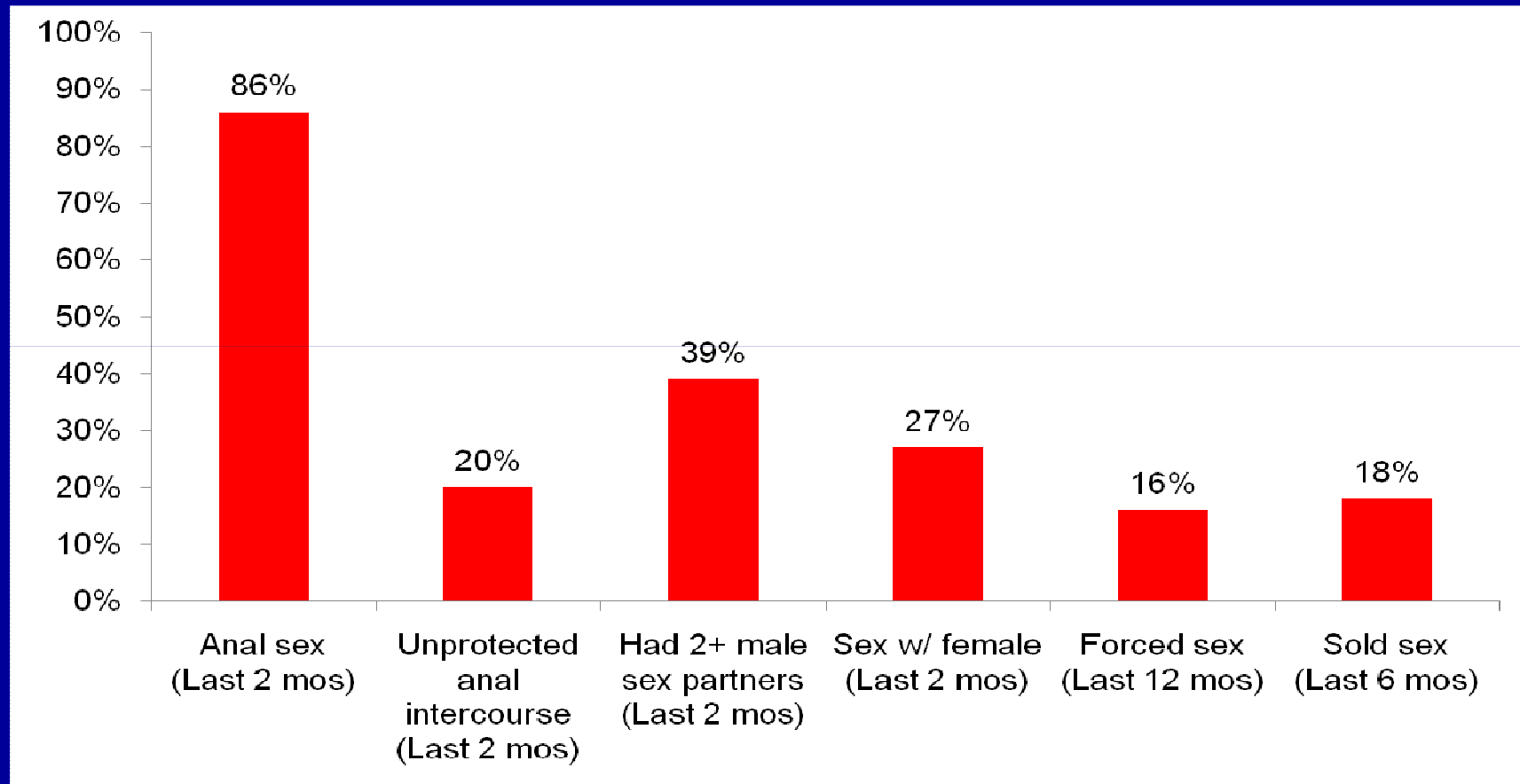
Demographics of MSM in Pretoria (N=307)

Characteristic		Population-based Estimates (%)
Age	18-25 years	71.7
	26-42 years	29.3
Race	Black	93.7
	White/Other	6.3
Education	≤12 years	73.6
	Some college	26.4
Township	Yes	71.9
	No	28.1
Marital status	Single, not living with partner	87.4
	Living with partner or in union ^a	12.6
Sexual Identity	Homosexual	58.0
	Bi/heterosexual ^b	42.0

^a1% was in civil union with a man.

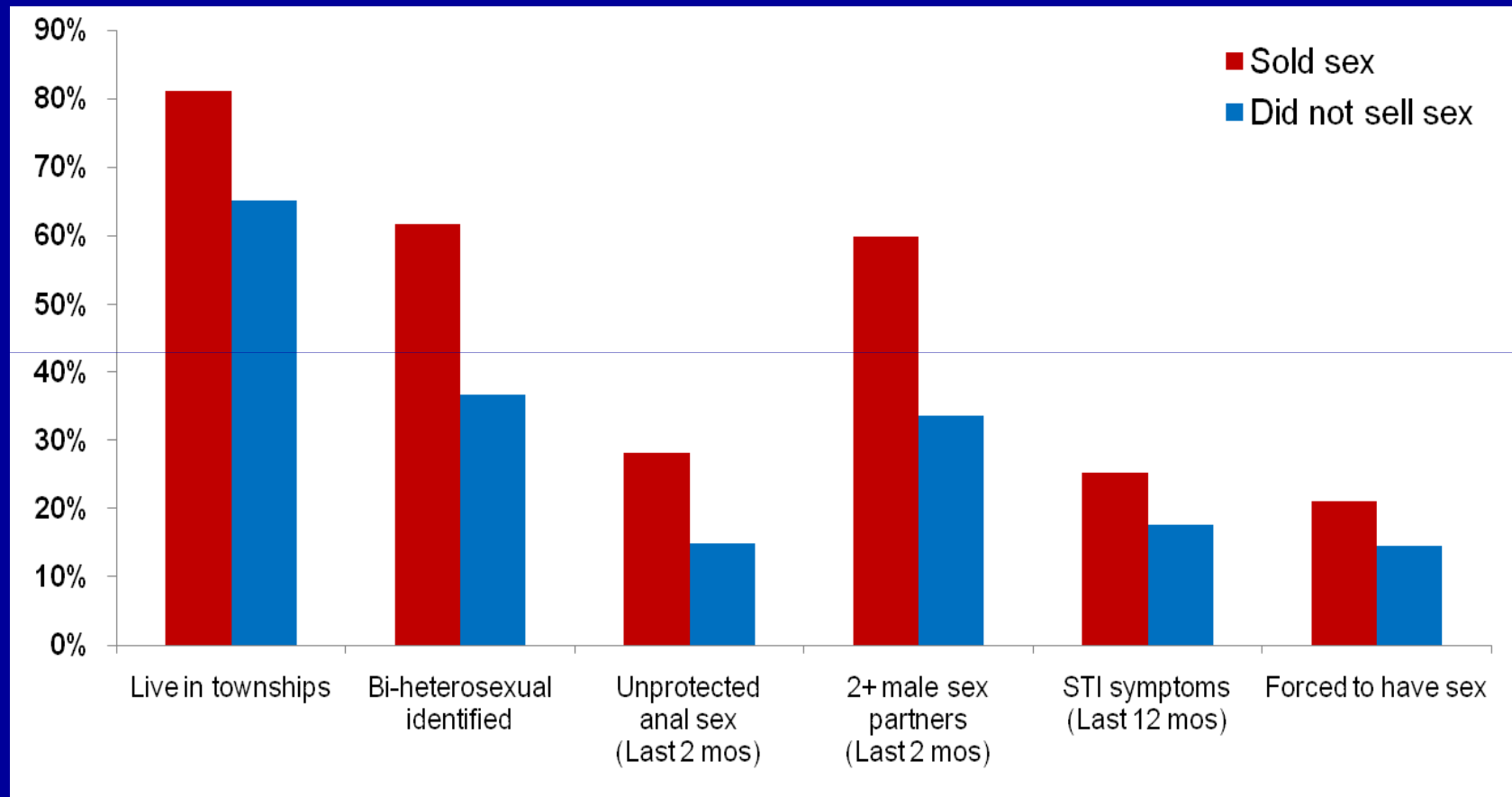
^b Only 2% of the sample were heterosexual MSM

Sexual behaviors of MSM, Pretoria



Last sex partner type:
Steady (51%); Casual (49%)

MSM selling sex have a different profile than MSM not selling sex



Although not significantly different, MSM selling sex appear to have a higher risk profile compared to those not selling sex

HIV Testing & STI's among MSM

- 29% of MSM had never tested for HIV
- Over half (53%) of those who tested did not disclose they had sex with men to their HIV counselor
- 18% of MSM reported symptoms of STIs in the previous 12 months
 - 40-46%* reported discharge from or sore, blister or ulcer on penis
 - 55%* reported sore, blister, ulcer around the anus

MSM not seeking treatment for STIs, Pretoria

- Of the 55 MSM reporting STI symptoms:
 - 41% did not seek any advice or treatment from provider
 - Of the 59% who sought STI treatment:
 - 52% went to a government clinic/hospital
 - 45% went to a private clinic/hospital
 - 9% went to a pharmacy
 - 6% went to a LGBT clinic
 - 34% did not reveal to the provider that they had sex with men

Internalized Homophobia, Pretoria

- High levels of internalized homophobia
 - 10-15% reported “*often/very often*” having feelings of internalized homophobia
 - Over 20% reported “*sometimes*” having feelings of internalized homophobia
 - Internalized Homophobia was associated with identifying as bisexual/heterosexual (AOR 5.5; CI 2.5-12.0)

Methods: MSM Engaged in Transactional Sex, JHB/DBN

- Capture-Recapture to estimate population size (Durban and Johannesburg)
- In-depth interviews to explore contextual factors related to transactional sex among MSM in Durban

Study Population and Recruitment in JHB/DBN

Capture-Recapture

- Peers enumerators (MSM or MSW) identified members of the target population

In-depth interviews (Durban only)

- Interviews were conducted with 19 participants
- Snowballing technique and recruitment in various entertainment spots for MSM and through Durban Gay and Lesbian Community Centre.
- Participants 18-24 y.o, mostly from townships and unmarried.

Pop Council's Enumeration of MSM Engaged in Transactional Sex

Jo'burg, S. Africa (2009) 496 (95% CI, 437-555)

Durban, S. Africa (2010) 612 (95% CI, 61-1163)

Lagos, Nigeria (2009) 865 (95% CI, 707-1023)

Kano, Nigeria (2009) 640 (95% CI, 576-704)

Port Harcourt (2010) 358 (95% CI, 173-543)

Mombasa, Kenya (2006) 739 (95% CI, 690-798)

Comment on Durban Enumeration

- Reasons for wide confidence interval in Durban:
 - An assumption of cap-recap not met:
 - The population was not closed (A big football match kept people home during the first capture. Hence we may have missed a lot of people during the first capture.)
 - Very few recaptures, thus increasing the variance and confidence interval
 - 51 captures (round 1), 41 captures (round 2), and only 4 recaptures.
- MSM engaged in transactional sex in Durban may be more 'informal'; this may explain why the estimate is greater than in Jo'burg

Primary Reasons for Transactional Sex Work, Durban

- Transactional sex is common among MSM to maintain their lifestyles, instant gratification

“ Aah, that does happen because gay world is very competitive, a very highly costing world, so kids who love the flash life or whatever, so they date men for money. They do things for money just so that they maintain gay life”

- Having “sugar daddies” as sex partners allow them to maintain the ‘gay’ lifestyle; Sugar daddies have money and are looking for fun with young boys.
- Some MSM were introduced to transactional sex by their peers who felt that any sexual engagement with another men should have rewards.

Sexually Transmitted Infections Among MSM, Durban

- Low knowledge about sexual transmitted infections (STI), especially STIs associated with unprotected anal intercourse.
 - Only one participant was able to describe symptoms of STIs that are associated with unprotected anal sex
- Some believed that women were more susceptible than men to acquire HIV/STI attributed the level of risk to increased wetness within a women's vagina.

Key Findings, Durban

- Evidence that MSM who sell sex for money or gifts exist (but informally).
- These men tend to have higher-risk behaviors and are often gay identified - bottoms.
- Their sex partners are mostly married heterosexually-identified older men.
- Had low knowledge about STI's related to anal sex and some believed that women are more at risk of contracting HIV because of the wetness of their vagina.

Key Findings in Johannesburg

- Non gay-identified men selling sex to non gay-identified men
- MSM selling sex are known and sometimes work in the same spots as female sex workers
- Unlike in Durban, sex sold mainly for survival (formal)


Key Findings in Pretoria

- High risk sexual behaviors somewhat high (multiple partners, selling sex, UAI)
- Many MSM are not informing HIV counselors about their same sex behaviors
- Not testing for HIV was associated with endorsing HIV conspiracy beliefs.
- MSM who self-identify as bi-sexual were more likely to experience internalized homophobia
- Many men not seeking care for STI symptoms or are not telling providers about anal sex

Limitations

- Study participants were mostly young and black thus may not be representative of the larger MSM population in SA
- Recruitment of non gay-identified men to participate in face-to-face interviews
- Informal nature of transactional sex in Durban meant that some identified men would not confirm that they are selling sex for money or goods

Program Implications

- Need strategies to reach non-gay identified men
- Programs should address stigma, internalized homophobia, GBV/IPV, mental health, and substance abuse through systematic screening, tailored interventions, and MSM friendly approaches.
- Gender-Based Violence an important factor in MSM's sexual health
- Need to train HIV counselors/health care workers to probe for same sex behaviors and to provide non-judgmental services
- Need to increase MSM awareness of anal STI  Population Council

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