

Gender Issues in the Informal Sector: A Philippine Case Study

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With rapid tourism growth and the presence of US military bases, prostitution is increasing in many developing countries, especially in South East Asia. This article examines the informal work opportunities for women and, using a Philippine case study, outlines how women as informal sector workers, contribute substantially to foreign exchange earnings. It finds that instead of providing a degree of financial freedom this work binds them into social and economic dependence.

Introduction

For a number of years now attention has been drawn to the fact that prostitution has increased in many developing countries, often in new forms. Most attention has been focused on a number of countries in South East Asia where a phenomenal rise in the numbers of young women prostitutes has been reported. This growth in prostitution has been associated by some observers with the rapid growth of tourism in these countries and the presence of the US military bases.

In the Philippines, migrant women represent a majority of those employed in the "hospitality industry" associated with tourism and rest and recreation which developed around the former US military bases. This article begins with a review of some general issues concerning employment opportunities for women in the informal sector. It continues with a brief background to the development of both tourism-related prostitution and that associated with the R & R industry. It then

examines, through a case study, how women in the Philippines, whilst remaining informal sector workers, are incorporated into two industries which contribute substantially to the foreign exchange earnings of the country. The women's experiences reveal working conditions and structures which instead of improving their situation financially as they had expected, commit them to a cycle of dependence from which it is difficult to escape.

The informal sector and employment opportunities for women

In many countries of Latin America, Asia, the Caribbean, Africa and the Pacific Region, large numbers in the workforce are involved in economic activities which are part-time, lack security and which fail to provide an adequate income.¹ The existence of such a large category of workers was recognised in the early 1970s and has generated much debate since about the concept of formal (waged) and informal (self-employed) sectors of employment. One of the first proponents of the informal sector concept was Keith Hart, who developed a typology of income opportunities in the informal sector from his study in Ghana.² His categories included both legitimate and illegitimate activities in the sector. Legitimate operators included self-employed artisans, tailors, beer brewers, streethawkers, shoeshiners; on the other side he listed drug pushing, prostitution, petty theft and smuggling among a large number of illegitimate activities.

The informal sector is characterised by small scale labour-intensive, often family owned businesses. Workers in this sector face considerable insecurity in terms of stability of income compared to formal sector workers. They do not enjoy the benefits associated with formal sector work such as paid holidays, sickness benefits, and pensions.³ The formal sector, by contrast, consists of large scale capital-intensive enterprises, which often rely on overseas resources, imported technology and semi-skilled and skilled workers.⁴

This dualistic approach to employment has been challenged by several authors.⁵ Moser suggests that it would be more useful to view urban productive activities as a continuum, thereby revealing "the complex linkages and dependent relationships between production and distribution".⁶ Some of these linkages

and, as Birkbeck argues, exploitative links are illustrated in his study of garbage pickers in the city of Cali, Colombia.⁷ His analysis reveals the linkages between the garbage picker and the giant paper industry. Although a hard, enterprising worker, the garbage worker remains poor. Although appearing to be self-employed garbage workers are not; nor are they employed by the factory though in practice they are working for it.

Bromley and Gerry also reject the dual sector view and employ a continuum stretching from “stable waged work to true self-employment whilst taking into account the intermediate categories and transitional processes along the way”.⁸ While one end of the continuum is fairly secure, stable waged work, the remainder can be described as casual work which they divide into four categories.

The first is short term waged work, where the worker is paid daily and is under contract but with no guarantee of continuity. The second type is disguised waged work. Companies subcontract work to individuals usually in their homes. Although not officially employees they may be tied to the company because of credit given, often in the form of raw materials or equipment. The third form, called dependent work, differs from the previous two in that the worker depends on a large enterprise for credit, raw materials or rental of premises or equipment. Usually a part of the product is appropriated although this is not as clear as in disguised waged work where a fixed proportion of the product of the worker’s labour is appropriated. The last category is true self-employment where the workers can choose their own suppliers, outlets and own the means of production.

Bromley and Gerry point out that casual workers may not necessarily be confined permanently to these categories. They can in fact move between categories or indeed be involved in several income opportunities at any one time, thus pointing to the link between mobility, casual work and poverty.

Women and work in the informal sector

Although several authors have shown the linkages between the two sectors in employment there has been little analysis of women’s work in the informal sector despite the growing evidence that women constitute a high percentage of casual

labour in many countries.⁹ The kind of work women engage in in the informal sector is often related to their domestic role and reflects the traditional sexual division of labour. Arizpe's study of women petty traders in Mexico City supports this argument: "Women sold sweets, fruit and chocolate in keeping with the traditional image of women as providers of food. Men vendors sell clothes, belts, jewellery and toys".¹⁰ In a more recent study of street traders in Jakarta, Murray found that women were in the majority of those engaged in food preparation and selling.¹¹

Apart from food preparation, other activities which women undertake to generate income and which closely resemble their domestic role are child care, laundry work and sexual services.¹² Women very often have to combine childcare with economic activities, as Moser shows in her study of urban women in Ecuador.¹³ The women in that study preferred selling to domestic service, particularly as it could be carried out in their own homes and therefore allowed them to take care of their children. However the responsibilities of their domestic role often mean that women are less mobile than men and tend to seek work which can either be carried out at home or where they can take their children with them. It has been argued that while there may be advantages for women in this type of working arrangement it often reflects their lack of choice.¹⁴

Employment opportunities for migrant women in the informal sector

There is very little specific reference in the literature to young women's activities in the informal sector. When it is examined it tends to be in the context of women's migration and the employment opportunities available to them. The options in terms of employment are limited for young women with little formal education or skills. Domestic service has traditionally been one area of employment open to migrant women, especially those without children.¹⁵

Another income opportunity activity of migrant women, particularly in some African countries, is illegal beer brewing and, associated with it, selling sexual services.¹⁶ Among Hausa

women migrants in northern Nigeria many survive in the city through the practice of *karuwanci* or courtesanship, often combining it with petty trading or waitressing.¹⁷ Several South-East Asian countries, including Thailand, South Korea and the Philippines, have seen an increase in commoditized sex. Providing sexual services to tourists, military personnel and a local clientele has provided many women with opportunities to generate income, working in massage parlours, bars and clubs in these countries.¹⁸

In this brief discussion on women's economic opportunities in the informal sector it is seen that women engage in a variety of activities for survival. These activities are linked to the marital status of women and whether or not they have dependents. Age is also a factor with younger women and particularly migrants engaging in domestic service. Providing sexual services, either combined with other petty commodity production or as a fulltime activity in itself, is carried out by significant numbers of women.

The tourist, rest and recreation industries and women's employment in the Philippines

The development of manufacturing for export industry in the early 1970s provided employment for thousands of young women in the Philippines.¹⁹ Two other industries which have also employed considerable numbers of women since the 1970s are R & R and tourism. The R & R industry had its origins in the establishment of the US military bases in the Philippines at the beginning of this century when the US replaced Spain as colonisers. The bases and the R & R industry evolved from the colonial relationship and the geo-political importance of the country in terms of western defence. The tourist industry, on the other hand, was fostered as part of a development strategy to earn foreign exchange.

Until the war in Vietnam only a small number of establishments on the periphery of the bases provided entertainment for the US servicemen. The Vietnam War established Olongapo, a town adjacent to the US naval base at Subic Bay, as the foremost centre for R & R.²⁰ Throughout the

conflict hundreds of ships and hundreds of thousands of servicemen passed through Subic and Olongapo. In 1973, for example, the average daily rate of visiting sailors was 8,000, spending over \$29 million in Olongapo that year.²¹ These numbers began to drop by 1976 as the conflict ended and the numbers of both establishments and women workers decreased. Throughout the 1980s and the early 1990s the R & R industry continued in Olongapo with 615 registered clubs/bars, 11,600 registered "entertainers" and twice that number of unregistered streetwalkers.²² The industry formerly catered to both resident military personnel stationed at Subic Bay and the 70,000 personnel of the 7th Fleet which docked regularly for repairs, replenishment and R & R.²³

The link has been made between the R & R industry and the development of tourism, particularly in Thailand and the Philippines.²⁴ In the case of Thailand the ending of the Indo-China conflict meant the R & R market had to be replaced. The answer was tourism. One commentator observed that "the marketing of erotic tourism had begun to build upon that foundation even before this clientele began to fade away".²⁵ The promotion of tourism in the Philippines began in 1973 with the launch of a massive hotel building programme financed mainly by the World Bank.²⁶ In a somewhat similar manner to Thailand's tourist promotion Filipino women were used to sell the country. As one writer noted: "with tourism it was a short hop from selling the archipelago's geographic beauty to selling its women's beauty to selling its women".²⁷ The government's strategy to increase the numbers of tourists bore fruit, with tourist arrivals doubling to one million between 1975 and 1980.²⁸ Despite the recession and the internal political upheavals of the 1980s the industry had earnings of US\$1.6 billion in 1989, making tourism one of the country's top three dollar earners.²⁹

It is notable that the majority of these tourists are male. According to Department of Tourism figures, the air visitor arrivals for 1986 showed a 2:1 sex ratio in favour of males. The visitor arrivals from specific countries show a much higher gender imbalance. These countries include West Germany, Japan, and Switzerland.³⁰ In 1987, while 71% of visitors were in the Philippines for the purpose of holidays³¹ these figures are not disaggregated to correlate the percentage of males with the purpose of visit. It cannot be assumed that all males who visit for leisure include sexual entertainment as part of their holiday activities. Neither, as Truong argues, can it be assumed that

some males travelling for purposes other than leisure, for example business or conventions, do not include sexual entertainment during their visit.³²

The regulation of the “hospitality industry” and the government’s role

In the Philippines, the “hospitality industry” is the government’s term for the entertainment sector.³³ It is regulated by the government through presidential decrees and ordinances enforced by various city authorities.³⁴ Specifically, the New Labour Code provides for women who work in the industry and covers bars, hotels, massage parlours, night clubs and restaurants. Under the Code women are regarded as legal employees (whether they are compensated concomitantly or not) and, as such, are entitled to protection and various social benefits.³⁵

The government’s role in relation to hospitality workers and prostitution is an ambiguous one. For example, in Manila entertainment workers, in compliance with the Metro Manila city government regulations, must hold various licenses including a mayor’s permit, a health certificate and police clearance. The women must also have regular check-ups for venereal disease to work in the bars/clubs.³⁶ These tests are carried out at the government-run hospital of San Lazaro. In Olongapo the tests are carried out at the Social Hygiene Clinic run jointly by the City Health Office and formerly the US base facility.³⁷

This regulation of women workers points to an understanding on the part of the government that prostitution can be included in the services provided by these workers. Yet prostitutes can be prosecuted for soliciting on the streets. It would appear that prostitution is tolerated by the government so long as it can be regulated and contained within the entertainment establishments which, of course, is also a satisfactory arrangement for the owners and managers of these establishments.

The following case study examines the working conditions of a group of women employed in a number of bars and clubs in Manila and Olongapo. The women, who were all migrants, had

worked in various jobs in the informal sector prior to their employment in the bars and clubs. Therefore, it may be useful to consider this work in the bars/clubs as a continuation of their employment in the informal sector - albeit under different conditions of work, remuneration and regulation.

The conditions of employment

The experiences of these women reveal the dependent cycle many women enter into when they begin to work in the bars in Malate/Ermita and Olongapo. The majority of the women do not receive a salary. The exceptions are go-go dancers who are paid 40 pesos (£1.30) per night (in Olongapo), cashiers, and, in some bars, waitresses who may be paid about 5 pesos per night. The women earn through commission paid on "ladies drinks", usually one-third of the cost of a drink bought by a customer for the women. "Ladies' drinks" cost more so that the bar is not at any loss in paying commission to the women.

A second way a woman can earn is through commission paid on a bar fine, which is paid by the man should he wish to take the woman out of the bar. The bar fine can vary between 200 pesos (£6.50) and 2000 pesos (£62) depending on whether it is a small Filipino bar (one which caters mainly to Filipinos but not exclusively), a tourist bar, or a bar for the US military in Olongapo. The average bar fine is 500 pesos (£16), of which the woman receives one-third to a half. The bar fine for a young woman who is "cherry" (a virgin) begins at 2000 pesos (£62). Within this system the woman must sit with customers, talk, laugh, flirt, encourage the men to drink and, most importantly, buy them "ladies' drinks" - otherwise they do not earn.

If a man wishes to take out a woman the bar fine is negotiated between the Papa-san or Mama-san (Manager/ess) and the customer. The bar fine is regarded as compensation for the loss of the woman's services while she is outside the bar with the customer. Once they leave, the duration of time together, and whether or not sex is included and paid for, is a matter for negotiation between themselves. This appears to be a grey area and indeed a contentious one if the expectations of either are not met. Customers seem to believe that they have paid for sex through the bar fine and, despite denials of bar management, it appears there is a tacit understanding between management and the customer that this is the case. An explanation of the bar fine

by one woman worker, Inday, sheds some light on it.

“If a customer pays your bar fine it means they can take you out, right? He can take you to the club or to other bars or the hotel. For example if he take you to an hotel and then if you don’t like to make love to him you can’t refuse, because if he get mad and then he go back to the club and he complain to the Papa-san and he refund the money and the Papa-san get mad and then you’re the one who has to pay the money so whether you like it or not you go with the customer because of the situation in the bar.”³⁸

The women’s interactions with the bar management

The Papa-san/Mama-san is a central figure in the working lives of the women. They are usually not the owners but manage and control the day-to-day running of the bar. The smaller bars usually have just one or two managers but the larger bars can have many more. The women use the word pimp interchangeably with Papa-san/Mama-san. Remy says: “If you are a manager you are also a pimp.”

She points out the importance of maintaining a good relationship with him/her:

“He is the one who is calling the customers, introducing you (saying): ‘She’s good, she’s pretty’, like that. He’s the one who’s going to get the money first, he will recommend the girl and he will get the commission. He’s got favourites, if you are quarrelling with him he will not give you a customer, very difficult.”

Angelina’s experience illustrates what can happen when a woman disagrees with the manager.

“I got a Spanish man for three hours only. He pay 500 pesos (£15). I got 75 pesos (£2.50). The other went to the floor manager. When the Spanish man came back to the bar again the manager gave him to another woman. I was angry and jealous. When the Spanish man came back he give me drinks only and a tip. The manager was angry with me because of the tip the Spanish man gave to me. He wanted half.”

The women have very little choice in whether they go out with a customer or not. Inday comments: "If someone pay your bar fine and I don't want to go with you (them) I can't refuse because our managers, they get mad. If you complain they get mad so you force yourself to go with that customer."

Elena makes a similar point and also recognises the managers' expectations. She usually goes out with just one customer but "sometimes two if he wants to pay the bar fine cos the manager he's mad if you don't want to go with him, cos you know it's my job."

It is in the manager's best interests if the women go out with customers as (s)he gets 70 pesos for every bar fine, according to Inday (in Olongapo). His basic daily salary is 30 pesos (£1) plus 1 peso on drinks. In Inday's bar the manager did not have bed and board. It is possible that different remunerations and conditions apply in other establishments. In general the women have no rights, not even to be sick, or to take a day off. Most work six/seven days per week. As Inday says: "I really don't like working in the bar because we don't have freedom. For example, if you are absent one day you pay a fine of 40 pesos. If you are sick, even with a lettet and even if you have commission due the Papa-san would not pay you because you were absent."

Commission owed to the women is often withheld by the manager in the case of illness, but also to protect the management against lulls in the business, especially in Olongapo where the number of ships coming into Subic naval base has dropped considerably in recent years with the US withdrawal.

"Sometimes relations with the manager aren't good cos if you have commission sometimes he don't want to give it to you he want to have a deposit there for the week, even if you need it. He don't wanna give it to you cos he knows you don't work every night, because sometimes when the ship is gone the girls, they don't want to work because they're too tired."

Some of the women point to another reason why fines are imposed for absenteeism. According to Carmen: "The manager fine you 400 pesos because the manager thinks you have guy in the house."

In other words, the woman's time must be regulated by the bar management and she must not go into business on her own account. Lin points out that in the bar where she worked, in Malate, Manila, working hours for the live-in staff were from 7.00 p.m. to 2.00 a.m. and, for her, from 9.00 p.m. to 2.00

a.m. as she lived outside of the bar. She says: "We could not go out of the bar without customers before 2.00 a.m. because the manager or pimps were going to think that I am going to meet customers outside without paying the bar fine."

Lin sees a difference between women who live in (usually over the bar) and women who stay in rented accommodation outside:

"Live-ins are much more restricted than stay-outs, because if during the day a customer goes to the bar they are forced to work, forced to go with the customer. Even if they want to go shopping or to see a movie they would always be questioned because if the manager were going to know they were going with a man they would be charged a bar fine."

A woman might be able to make extra money by meeting customers/boyfriends outside the bar during her time off. She then gets the equivalent of the bar fine for herself, a practice the bar management are aware of, hence the close supervision of the women.

There appear to be ambivalent feelings for managers amongst the women. Inday says: "Some Papa-sans and Mama-sans are very strict with the women. Some are really nice, there's also a Papa-san and Mama-san who treat them like animals."

Some women seem to see management and themselves as being equally affected by the lack of business. Joy thinks the relationship between the management and girls is fair because: "No customer for the girls, none for the management also."

Others like Angelina, Vicky and Remy feel that it is the bar owners/management who make money not them: "We only have commission."

Why this is so they explain thus:

"In Filipino culture we have the so called Utang na Loob system which means that when someone owes help to somebody else, the tendency is to pay for it in terms of help also. In the case of the women working in the bar the women sees that they owe to the management, that the management helped them to get a job so they tend to pay."

According to Lin, some women fall in love with their managers.

"When I was working in that bar [in Malate] we had three pimps. Three women are quarrelling over one pimp, so one of them won the game and she became the steady girlfriend of the pimp. She washed his clothes, she was the one her boyfriend give first to the customers and she would go out; kind of, she was earning for the two of them.

Lin adds that now she cannot understand why the women were fighting over the pimp when “the pimp is in fact selling them to the customer.”

Regulation of prostitution

To work in the bars legally the women must have a permit from the mayor’s office, a health test and a certificate, all of which cost 200 pesos, according to Elena in Olongapo. This is a deterrent to changing bars often. Elena: “It’s too hard to change, pay the manager 200 pesos; you can go to any kind of bar if you got the money to pay for the papers. Some bars pay for the permits and certificates and then deduct the cost from the women’s commission.”

Other bars were not strict in terms of permits and health certificates, as Lin explains: “The management is not very much strict on that; in our bar, all of us has no health cards and licenses because it was only during the raids that the women were forced to get it, it was the government rule.”

(The raids referred to police raids in the Malate/Ermita area as part of a clean-up drive by the police in 1987/88. Lin’s bar was subsequently closed by the police.)

In Olongapo the women must have bi-weekly checks at the Social Hygiene Clinic, set up jointly by the city health department and the US Navy. The Clinic contacts the bar manager if a woman’s smear test is positive to ensure that she does not work until she is cured. The women pay for the tests themselves although medicines are free of charge. In San Lazaro Hospital, Manila, women pay for both tests and medicines.

Power relations

In looking at the women’s interaction with the bar management, it can be seen that all aspects of their work in the bar are regulated - work hours, their time off, how they behave there, who they go out of the bar with, and the conditions under which they do that. The management also regulates what they earn, the percentage of the commission shared with the management, their permits and other licenses required by the city authorities.

The unequal power relations between the women workers and the bar management are evident from the beginning of their working lives in the bars. This is shown by the fact that some women are in debt to the bar even before they begin to work, while others accumulate debts over time.

The fact that the majority of the women earn only from "ladies' drinks" pushes them into going out with customers and prostitution. The earnings from "ladies' drinks" are so low (15 pesos average in Malate and 20/25 pesos in Olongapo) that the women could not meet the basic daily cost of living on these alone. Both the seasonal nature of tourism, and the infrequency and reduction of ships docking at Subic naval base mean that the women have to survive periods with little or no income. This may be more severe in Olongapo where the whole industry was structured to service the US Navy.

The principal way the woman earns money is through the bar fine, (she may also secure extra from the customer) but the woman appears to have no part in this negotiation which takes place between the manager/Papa-san and the customer. Although there is a fixed bar fine it does seem that the price a customer pays can be negotiated either upwards or downwards. Several women observed that good relations with the manager were very important if one wanted customers. Lack of choice is central to the women's experience. They cannot pick and choose customers, they must work to survive and they may find it difficult to move to another bar because of debt and the costs involved as workers. The women appeared to have no rights despite government regulations and city ordinances. They had no basic pay or sickness benefits and in some cases health regulations were flouted. If this lax approach to health regulations is widespread it could have serious implications for both the women's own health and the wider population, particularly in relation to AIDS.

These women are engaged in an informal sector economic activity which is insecure and does not provide an adequate income. While many informal sector workers combine several activities to generate income, the bar workers are engaged in just one. These women are not independent self-employed workers; neither do they appear to fit into the other categories suggested by Bromley and Gerry, although one could argue that when they leave the bar with a customer they can, if they wish, negotiate a price for whatever service is rendered, thereby giving them some autonomy. This, of course, depends on the co-operation of the customer.

Nelson, who carried out a study of women in the informal sector in Kenya, argues that prostitution in Mathare Valley can be seen as "an economic activity in which the owner-operator cannot have the means of production appropriated from her".³⁹ They therefore could be said to be self-employed. Murray, in a study of prostitutes in Jakarta, comes to the conclusion that they are "self-employed entrepreneurs who aspire to material happiness".⁴⁰ The women in Murray's study were self-employed, using the bars to meet customers without any apparent "pay-off" to the owners apart from remaining on good terms with them and their security staff.

The women in this case study are linked into two major industries in the formal sector - tourism and R & R. Truong, in a study of prostitution and tourism in Thailand, points out that in supplying tourist services two new categories of wage labour emerge - formal and casual. The casual workers provide personal services which attract tourists. The formal workers are employed under definite conditions of pay and benefits; casual workers' income is determined by commission and other forms of unregulated payment. Truong argues that women workers may be employed in both simultaneously, "under the guise of formal occupations such as hostess, waitress, bartender, masseuse, go-go dancer, etc. The female workers may also be engaged in prostitution on their own account. The 'personal' nature of their services means that their work is seen as non-productive. Therefore it can be paid irregularly and is easier to control".⁴¹

Conclusion

It is suggested in this article that women's work-cycle be conceptualised as a continuum. The women's move into employment in the hospitality industry can then be seen as a continuation of their work in the informal sector of the economy. This avoids a static analysis of their employment and explains their move into the bars in terms of efforts to improve their economic circumstances and social mobility. From the experience of these women it is clear that work in the bars was not their intention on arrival as migrants. The decision to do so appears to have been made as options decreased and responsibilities increased, in terms of children or other family.

The hospitality industry appears to be an integral part of the efforts to increase the number of tourists and could be said to be part of the wider tourism industry. The data from this study show, however, that the conditions under which women are employed do not fulfil the criteria for formal sector employment, i.e. salary/wage, social security benefits, pensions, etc. From the terms of their employment what they do could be considered casual work in that it does not provide a secure income, with most women earning only through commission. Yet, according to the government's Labour Code, the women are legal employees and as such are entitled to various social benefits.

The conditions under which the women enter this employment show that they are neither self-employed nor independent workers either, unlike the women in Murray's study in Jakarta⁴² or Nelson's in Nairobi.⁴³ The women are not free to use the bars as a place where they meet customers and negotiate their own terms, rather they are employed by the bars under definite conditions of work, including hours of work, rates of commission, dress and behaviour, and fines for absenteeism. As has been pointed out already, even the women's free time is monitored by the management, in some cases in order to prevent them making independent arrangements with the customers.

The women's relationship with the management is a complex one. It appears to be exploitative, whereby the management accumulate at the women's expense, for example, through the absence of salary/wages, and the unequal sharing of the bar fine. Secondly, the unequal power relation between the women and management is further manifested by the role of management in negotiating the bar fine with the customer. This act of negotiation which excludes the women underlines their subordination by men, in this instance both the management, (usually a man), and the customer. This negotiation expresses the commodification of the women's sexuality.

The relationship between the women and the management also shows that in many respects it is a dependent one on the women's part. The data illustrates how the cycle of dependency develops, often through debt initially, but also through the complex interpersonal relations and the cultural norms which underpin them.

Appendix

This article is based on an extract from a larger study carried out in the Philippines in 1989.⁴⁴ The aim of the study was to understand prostitution there through the perceptions and the subjective interpretations of a group of women who are, or who had been, engaged in prostitution. Consistent with this perspective the research approach used was qualitative and included life histories and participant observation. The life history method was considered appropriate as it gives a voice to women whose voices are rarely heard, although they are often spoken for, and about, by others. In addition to telling their own individual stories the life history can give insights into the society of which they are a part.⁴⁵ Secondly, this method allows for the life experience to be examined over time, showing the women's lives to be evolving rather than static, covering for example their migration histories and work cycles.⁴⁶ Both the life history method and participant observation were conducive to the development of rapport and trust between the author and the women informants. This is particularly important when researching sensitive topics such as prostitution and perhaps even more so when the researcher is from outside the particular culture and unfamiliar with the nuances of social interaction in that society. The life histories of fourteen women were collected in both Manila and Olongapo; to protect their identity pseudonyms are used.

Footnotes

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