

DETERMINANTS OF EXTRAMARITAL SEX AMONG FILIPINO MEN

BY

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Reproductive health (RH) studies in the Philippines have been women-centered, so much so that RH has become synonymous with women's health, leaving men's health at the backseat despite their important roles as husband and father. The limited studies on Filipino men have looked at their recent heterosexual intercourse, their involvement in homosexual activities (e.g. Manalastas, 2005 and 2006), their risky sexual behaviors (e.g. Jimenez & Lee, 2000) and their contraceptive use and extramarital sex experience (e.g., Abejo, Go, Cruz, Marquez, 2006). Recently, because of the silent but growing threat of HIV/AIDS in the Philippines, more attention has been funneled on Filipino men especially on their risky sexual behaviors. One of these risky sexual behaviors is their extramarital sex experience. However, because of the "touchy nature" of the subject, statistics on the prevalence of extramarital sex in the Philippines is lacking (Medina, 1995). Although there are available estimates, most of these are based on small samples that lack socioeconomic details that impede generalization. For example, Vancio (1977) found in his study on the state of marriage in Metro Manila that 27 percent of the 248 respondents have had sex with a woman aside from their wife at one point during their marriage and 22 percent among those who admitted to having extramarital sex said that the affair is still going on. Meanwhile, Alano's (1990) study showed that only about two percent of the 200 respondents nationwide admitted to having had extramarital sex. Recently, national surveys designed to collect information on women's reproductive health and adolescent sexuality also yielded statistics on this topic.

(Table 1 about here)

Table 1 presents the level of extramarital sex in the Philippines using different national surveys in a ten-year period. Because of the disparity in the age range among these surveys, the statistics on extramarital sex they yielded are disaggregated by age-group to arrive at a comparable data. Focusing on the 15-27 age group, a considerable increase in the level of extramarital sex is observed. Data from the Philippines National Safe Motherhood Survey (NSMS) showed that five percent of Filipino men in union ages 15-27 were perceived by their wives to be engaging in extramarital sex. The estimate from the 1993 SWAF is quite lower. Only one percent and three percent of the husband and wife respectively reported that the husband had mistress or other woman. Meanwhile, a higher estimate in the level of extramarital sex is observed in 2002 and 2003 with eight and 22 percent respectively. However, it should be noted that the increase could be due to methodological and theoretical issues that will be further discussed later. Nevertheless, these statistics consistently show that Filipino men are at heightened risk of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) and HIV/AIDS since the opportunity for infection increases as the number of sexual partners increases (Natividad & Marquez, 2004).

This increased level of extramarital sex points to the need to assess its reproductive health consequences aside from its implications to the health of the marital relationship. In the Philippines where majority of AIDS cases are transmitted heterosexually (DRDF, 2008), men whose sexual activities extend beyond the marital boundary are at heightened risk of acquiring the disease. The risk is even elevated when the extramarital sexual activity involves unsafe sex with commercial sex workers who are highly exposed to contract the disease (Ahlburg, Jensen & Perez, 1997). The proliferation of business establishments that cater to the sexual needs of both locals and foreigners attest to the growing commercial sex industry in the country (Natividad & Marquez, 2004). It was reported in a

Manila study that about half of nonmarital sex experience of Filipino males are with prostitutes (as cited in Ahlburg, Jensen & Perez, 1997). A study on youth aged 15- 27 found that 11 percent of the sexually active respondents have ever paid for sex and more than half of them (56%) used condom during the sexual activity (Natividad & Marquez, 2004). Meanwhile, nine percent of Filipino in union in this present study reported that they have ever paid for sex and only about three percent of these men used condom during their most recent sexual encounter with commercial sex workers (NSO ORC Macro, 2003). This suggests that Filipino men could be engaging in unprotected risky sexual behaviors despite the availability of this protective device.

Moreover, men who practice sexual activity outside marriage become a “key agent” of the disease because they unwittingly facilitate the entry of the deadly virus into the household (Kimuna and Djamba, 2004). Further, because men hold the power in deciding when, where and whom to have sex and whether condom is to be used during intercourse their crucial role in HIV transmission has become more pronounced (Jimenez and Lee, 2000). Hence, it is important to examine this type of sexual behavior despite the “low and slow” HIV/AIDS situation in the country as this will have far-ranging implications in slowing the further spread of the disease. It also deserves a separate analysis from other risky sexual behaviors like premarital sex because it may have different causes and consequences as will be examined in this paper.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Since the groundbreaking study of Kinsey (1948) on human sexuality that explored the extramarital sexual behavior of American men and women, a host of factors have been examined as correlates of extramarital sexual behavior. Most prominent among these factors is the role of marital satisfaction on the extramarital activity of husbands and wives (e.g. Glass and Wright, 1977). Other correlates of extramarital sex that were found in previous studies are largely demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. For example, Ahlburg, Jensen and Perez (1997) found in their study in the Philippines that “men who were more educated, had wives of lower education, had been married for a longer time, were more likely to be in an occupation other than farmer, were younger, were living away from home at the time of the survey, and had had sex with someone other than their wives before marriage” were perceived by their wives to be engaging in extramarital sex (Ahlburg, Jensen & Perez, 1997 pp. 467-479). These findings were corroborated by Natividad and Marquez (2004) study on Filipino male and female youth’s risky sexual behavior where they found that those who are male, who are older, have high level of education, who are working and Catholic tend to engage in extramarital sex more than their counterparts.

Meanwhile, another study in Tanzania showed parallel results. Using a survey data conducted in 2003, Mbago and Sichona (2007) found current age, education, age at first sexual intercourse and premarital sex of men to be significantly associated with extramarital sex in Mbeya region, considered to have the highest HIV prevalence rate in Tanzania. Sex before marriage emerged to be the strongest correlate of extramarital sex among the four variables. The odds ratio showed that those who did not have premarital sex experience are four times less likely to engage in extramarital sex than those who did.

Treas and Giesen (2000) observed that studies on extramarital sex failed to incorporate some significant factors into a single model. To remedy this “piecemeal” approach, they grouped the major determinants of extramarital sex found in previous studies into three: tastes and values; opportunities; and primary relationship and fitted them in a multivariate model. Tastes and values reflect the person’s thoughts on sex and attitudes toward extramarital sex while “opportunities” refer to some characteristics or circumstances that predispose the person to engage in extramarital sex. Primary relationship refers to the relative difference of the couple in terms of age, religion and education; marital satisfaction; whether the couple cohabited before marriage; and the type of union (e.g. legally married or cohabiting). Also added in their model are the “demographic risk factors” that include sex, age, education, whether the respondent is African American or not and how the interviewer perceives the frankness of the respondent. Their results showed that those who have “stronger sexual interests, more permissive sexual values, lower subjective satisfaction with their union, weaker network ties to partners and greater sexual opportunities” have higher likelihood of sexual infidelity (pp. 48-60). Moreover, even controlling for permissiveness of personal values for extramarital sex, those who are cohabiting are found to be more likely to engage in infidelity. This suggests that the cohabitators’ low investment in the union rather than their less conventional values on extramarital sex accounted for their elevated risk to engage in infidelity. Furthermore, cohabitators who later got married were no different in their demand for sexual exclusivity compared with those who did not cohabit before marriage (Treas & Giesen, 2000).

Recently, studies relating extramarital sex to wealth (e.g. Kimuna & Djamba, 2004), religion (e.g Hill, Cleland & Ali, 2004), alcohol use (e.g. Kongnyuy & Wiysonge, 2007) and post natal abstinence (e.g. Ali & Cleland, 2001) have been conducted in the African

region and some Latin American countries where the threat of AIDS is becoming palpable. Kimuna and Djamba's (2005) data did not support their hypothesis that uses the evolutionary perspective where wealthy men are expected to embrace more permissive sexual behaviors as their study found that out of the three proxy variables (e.g. education, occupation and household wealth index) used to represent wealth, none were found to have significant relationship with extramarital sex. Another study in Brazil revealed that religious affiliation affects the likelihood of men to engage in extramarital sex with the evangelicals showing a decreased likelihood of extramarital sex than other religious groups (Hill, Cleland & Ali, 2004). Meanwhile, Kongnyuy and Wiysonge (2007) showed that alcohol use increased the likelihood of a person to engage in extramarital sex in Cameroon. Cleland and Ali (2004) likewise found support to the relationship between the practice of post natal and extramarital sex in Ivory Coast which has already been established in Benin. They found that men whose wives are observing postnatal abstinence are more likely to engage in extramarital sex.

OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

With the recent availability of data on Filipino men's sexual behavior, this study aims to describe and identify some factors associated with extramarital sex in the Philippines. This study differs from previous studies in many aspects. One of the major departures of this study from earlier studies is its utilization of a nationally representative sample of Filipino men with broader age range that covers individuals who are highly exposed to the risk of extramarital sex. By using a nationally representative survey, the problem of generalizability encountered by earlier studies is overcome. Since this study uses a self-reported sexual activity of Filipino men, a more reliable data is generated, remedying the

weakness of previous research that relied on their wives' perception of their husband's sexual behavior.

On account of previous findings, this paper hypothesizes that the socio-demographic characteristics of Filipino men in union (legally married or cohabiting) impact on their extramarital sexual behavior. Specifically, Filipino men in union who are older, with higher educational attainment, living in urban areas, Catholics, working in white-collar jobs, have had premarital sex, in a consensual type of union, got married early and have had sex at a young age are more predisposed to such behavior than their counterparts. In addition, those who have no living children, those who are infecund, have undergone sterilization or are undecided to have another child, who have permissive attitude towards extramarital sex, does not feel justified when the wife refuses to have sex with him when she knows that he has other sexual partner, those who have gotten drunk at least one day in the last three months are hypothesized to be more likely to engage in extramarital sex than their counterparts.

DATA AND MEASURES

Data Source

The study uses the 2003 Philippine National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), a nationally representative survey conducted by the National Statistics Office (NSO). The survey employed a stratified multi-stage cluster sampling design. The 2003 NDHS was the first national demographic survey ever conducted in the Philippines that interviewed male respondents. It collected information on Filipino men's socio-demographic and health concerns including fertility, contraceptive behavior, sexual activity, participation in health

care, attitudes toward women, HIV/AIDS and other RH-related concerns. The woman's questionnaire on the other hand, contains similar but more comprehensive information on birth pregnancies, contraceptive method, use of contraceptive methods, and other socio-demographic information (NSO and ORC Macro, 2004). Men were interviewed in every third household of the NDHS sample. In total, 4766 Filipino men 15 to 54 years old were interviewed. Since this study will examine the extramarital sexual behavior of Filipino men who have been in a union, only 2746 respondents are included in the analysis.

Extramarital sex

This paper examines the extramarital sex experience of Filipino men in union. Extramarital sex is operationalized as currently having other sexual partners aside from the reported partner or having had sex in the last 12 months with women other than the wife or live-in partner. This is based on two questions from 2003 NDHS. The first question is: "Apart from the woman/women you have already mentioned, do you currently have any other regular, occasional, or regular and occasional sexual partners?" The second question is asked among those who answered that the last person they had sex with was their spouse or cohabiting partner: "Have you had sex with any other woman in the last 12 months?" Those who admitted to having a regular, occasional or regular and occasional sexual partner or those who answered that they have had sex with other woman in the last 12 months will be considered to have had extramarital sex.

In this paper the term "extramarital sex", "extramarital affair", and "infidelity" are used interchangeably to mean having had sex outside marriage. However, in its strictest sense, extramarital affair may mean more than sex outside marriage since it involves the

presence of emotional involvement while infidelity refers to the violation of a vow or promise which can also happen among those who are not yet in union (Thompson, 1983).

Explanatory variables

Previous studies have found the following characteristics to be significant predictors of extramarital sex and as such are employed as explanatory variables in the present study: current age, educational attainment, type of residence, religion, occupation, the experience of premarital sex, age at first sex, type of union, age at first union and number of living children. Moreover, their fertility intentions, attitudes toward extramarital sex specifically whether or not the wife is justified to refuse sex if she knows that her husband had sex with other women or whether the husband has the right to have sex with other woman if the wife refuses to and whether they have gotten drunk at least a day in the last three months are included in the set of predictors.

Current age of the respondent is ascertained by asking how old he was in his last birthday. Educational attainment is the highest level of schooling that the respondent had attained and is grouped into: primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. Primary includes those who never attended school or reached or finished elementary; secondary is comprised of those who reached or finished high school and vocational training while tertiary is constituted by those who at least reached college level of education.

Religion is classified into three major groups: Catholic, Islam and other Christians (e.g. Protestants, Iglesia ni Cristo and other Christian denomination). Islam, although constituting a small percentage relative to other religion is categorized separately as they have different sets of cultural norms and social mores that may provide a striking contrast

from the behavior of their Christian brothers. Occupation is classified into five categories: professional; clerk and service worker; farmer, forester and fisherman; trade, plant and machine operator; and other job occupations not classified.

Premarital sex refers to the experience of sex before marriage. Age at first sex and age at first union are derived from the question asking the respondent about his age during these events. Type of union indicates whether the respondent is legally married or living-in with a woman. Both categories are considered in union in the present study but were analyzed separately due to their hypothesized differential impact on Filipino men's extramarital sex behavior.

Number of living children is dichotomized into not having any living children and having at least one living child. Fertility intention reflects the desire of the respondent to have more children in the future and as such is categorized into: wants another child; wants no more children and unable to have more children. The last group includes respondents who are infecund, have undergone sterilization procedure and those who are unsure whether or not they desire more children.

Two measures of attitudes toward extramarital sex are also considered as predictors. The respondent is asked whether he feels justified when the wife refuses to have sex with him when she knows that he had sex with other women. Those who answered "yes" and "depends or don't know" are grouped together as opposed to those who said "no". Another question is on whether the husband thinks he has the right to have sex with other woman when his wife refuses to is also asked. Similarly, those who answered "yes" and "depends or don't know" are grouped together, with the "no" answer constituting a separate category.

Finally, the variable on the experience of ever gotten drunk in the last three months is derived from the question asking the respondent the number of times he has gotten in the last three months preceding the survey. Those who said that they have gotten drunk but not in the last three months and those who never experienced getting drunk at all were combined. Meanwhile those who admitted that they have gotten drunk at least one day in the preceding three months are taken as separate category.

METHOD OF ANALYSIS

Simple descriptive statistics are employed to present a profile of Filipino men in union according to the selected explanatory variables. Chi square statistic is used to test whether the observed relationship between each of these explanatory variables and extramarital sex experience is statistically significant.

Binary logistic regression is employed to identify which of the explanatory variables best predicts the likelihood of engaging in extramarital sex among Filipino men. This is the most appropriate technique since the dependent variable is dichotomous. All the variables that are hypothesized to impact on the extramarital sexual behavior of Filipino men are simultaneously entered in the multivariate regression model. This model will be the basis of determining the net effects of the significant predictors on extramarital sex experience.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Characteristics of sample respondents

Table 2 presents the distribution of the sample respondents according to the selected explanatory variables. The mean age of Filipino men in union is 37 years (S.D. 9). There are more respondents who had secondary (43.1 %) than those who had primary (38 %) and tertiary (19.4%) education. Slightly more men reside in urban (47%) than in rural (53%) areas. A great majority of Filipino men in union (82%) are Catholic outnumbering their Muslim brothers (4.3%) and those belonging to other religious denomination (13.7%), as is the case for the entire country.

The Philippines being an agricultural country, it is not unexpected to find that almost a third (30.2%) of the respondents work as farmers or in other agriculture – related occupation. This was followed by those working as traders or plant and machine operators (28.3%). Only one in ten are professionals while eight percent work as clerks or service workers. The rest (22 %) are working in other occupation or are not working.

Almost half (48.3%) have had sex before they entered a union and 43.1 percent of all Filipino men in union experienced their sexual debut by the end of their teenage years. Among those who are in union, 88 percent are legally married while 12 percent are in consensual union. The mean age at first union is 23 years (S.D. 5). Their average number of living children is three and only about eight percent of the sample respondents have no living children. Half of the respondents said that they do not desire more children while 37 percent said that they desire more. The rest (12%) are either infecund, have undergone sterilization procedure or undecided.

One in ten of the respondents agree that the husband has the right to have sex with other woman if the wife refuses to. A similar percentage feels that the wife is not justified to refuse sex when she knows that her husband had sex with other woman. About 40 percent of the respondents declared that they have gotten drunk for at least a day in the last three months, and 60 percent said they have not gotten drunk in the preceding three months or have never gotten drunk at all.

](Table 2 about here)

(Figure 1 about here)

As noted earlier, 21.4 percent of Filipino men in union admitted to having had extramarital sex. Among those who have had extramarital sex, 80 percent had sex with regular partners only, five percent with occasional partners only, and three percent with regular and occasional partners. The rest (12%) have had sex with other women that are neither regular nor occasional partner aside from their present partner.

Bivariate analysis

A considerable variation in the incidence of extramarital sex by socio-demographic characteristics (see Table 3) is observed. Filipino men in union who belong to other religious denomination other than Catholic (25%) reported a higher level of extramarital sex than those who are Catholic (20%) or Muslim (3.4%). It is understandable why the incidence is low among Muslims since this type of sexual behaviour is considered taboo (Mitsunaga et al, 2004).

A significantly greater proportion of Filipino men in union who have had premarital sex reported that they experienced having an extramarital sex compared with those who never had premarital sex (24% vs. 20%) suggesting a relationship between the two sexual behaviors. Likewise, a clear pattern is observed between age at first sex and the experience of extramarital sex. The incidence of extramarital sex is highest among those who experienced their sexual debut during their teenage years and is lowest among those who have had their first sex during their 30's. This suggests that younger age at sexual initiation is associated with extramarital sex experience in later years.

There are more Filipino men in consensual union than in legal marriage who admitted to having had sex outside union (28% vs. 21%). Those who have no living children reported a higher level of extramarital sex (27.6%) than those who have at least one living child (21%). However, Filipino men who are incapable of having more children or are undecided whether to have another child reported the highest incidence of extramarital sex (28%) compared with those who desire (22%) or do not desire another child (20%). Meanwhile, the experience of getting drunk in the last three months preceding the survey showed a significant association with extramarital sex experience. Those who have gotten drunk in

the last three months reported a higher level of extramarital sex (25%) than those who have not gotten drunk in the preceding three months or have never gotten drunk at all (19%).

(Table 3 about here)

In sum, religion, premarital sex experience, age at first sex, age at first union, type of union, number of living children, fertility intentions and the experience of being drunk in the three months preceding the survey are significantly associated with extramarital experience. As what have been hypothesized, those who have had premarital sexual experience, who had engaged sex early, who are in consensual type of union, who are infecund, have undergone sterilization and undecided, and have gotten drunk in the last three months preceding the survey tend to more likely report that they have engaged in extramarital sex. Meanwhile, current age, education and type of residence of the respondent did not show any significant association with the extramarital sex experience of Filipino men unlike what was found in previous studies (e.g. Alhburg, Jensen & Perez, 1997, Mbago & Sichona, 2007) where older and highly educated men and those who are living in urban areas are more likely to engage in sex outside marriage. Likewise, occupation, age at first union and attitudes toward extramarital sex did not show any significant association with the extramarital sex experience of Filipino men in union. However, the bivariate results could be confounded by other factors, hence the need to enter all the hypothesized predictors in a multivariate logistic regression model to examine the role of each predictors when taken together.

Factors affecting the extramarital sex experience of Filipino men: A multivariate analysis

The results of the multivariate logistic regression predicting the likelihood of extramarital sex is shown in Table 4. Based on the model, not all predictors exert a significant influence on the extramarital sexual behavior of Filipino men. Current age, place of residence, occupation, age at first union and the two attitudinal factors which were insignificant in the bivariate analysis remain unimportant in the multivariate analysis. The experience of premarital sex and number of living children lost their significance when other variables are held constant. Meanwhile, education which was insignificant in the bivariate analysis emerged as significant when entered in the multivariate model.

As hypothesized, education exerts a significant negative influence on the likelihood of engaging in extramarital sex. Those who had primary education are 28 percent less likely to engage in extramarital sex than those who are college undergraduate or those who obtained a college degree. Likewise, those who had secondary education are 17 percent less likely to engage in extramarital sex than those who had college education but the relationship is not significant. Previous studies have shown that higher level of education is associated with permissive attitudes towards infidelity (Blow and Kelly, 2005) and those who have permissive attitudes towards infidelity are more likely to engage in it. However, measures on attitudes used in the study toward extramarital sex did not show significant effect on extramarital sex.

Meanwhile, religion also exerts negative association with extramarital sex. Specifically, being Muslim reduces the likelihood of engaging in extramarital sex by 86 percent.

Moreover, Filipino men who belong to religion other than Catholic are 28 percent more likely to engage in extramarital sex than the Catholics but the relationship is not significant. The strong taboo against this type of sexual behavior among Muslims probably contributes to their reduced likelihood in engaging in extramarital sex. This could also be the result of the Muslim culture that allows men to have more than one wife unlike other religions. It has been shown in earlier studies that monogamous men are more likely to engage in extramarital sex than their polygynous counterpart probably because of the presence of other sexual partner when the other wife is away but there are also some findings that showed men with three wives to be more likely to engage in extramarital sex, followed by monogamous men when compared with men with two wives (Mitsunaga et al, 2005). However, since there were only less than one percent (24) Filipino men who have more than one wife in the sample, the present study could not elaborate further on the extramarital sexual behavior of Filipino men who are in a monogamous relationship in contrast with those who are in polygynous type of marriage.

The effect of age at first sex on extramarital sex is also worth noting. Every year increase in age at first sex reduces the likelihood of engaging in extramarital sex by five percent. Their relationship was already recognized in previous research (e.g. Cleland and Carael, 2000) but Hill Cleland and Ali, (2004) surmised that it could be the result of reporting bias with those men who exaggerate their number of extramarital sexual partner being more likely to report an earlier sexual debut. They also offered an alternative biological and sociological explanation for this observed relationship. Biological, in that there are some males who inherently have stronger sexual drives than others or sociological, in that the set of sexual conduct which a person acquired early in life through socialization with his family and other social network may continuously persist in later sexual lifestyle.

The type of union also emerges as significant predictor of extramarital sex among Filipino men. Those who are legally married are 28 percent less likely to have had sex outside marriage than those who are living-in or in consensual union. The higher likelihood of cohabiting men to engage in extramarital sex compared to the legally married can be viewed from an economist's perspective. According to Treas and Giesen, (2000) the investment made by legally married couple are far greater than the one made by those in consensual union. They are more likely to have children, have acquired home jointly and have publicly taken the vow of matrimony, thus they face a higher exit costs than the cohabiting couple should the marital relationship be dissolved. This could be the reason why cohabitators have more secondary sex partners than the married couples (Dolcini, et al, 1993, as cited in Treas & Giesen , 2000). This result suggests that marriage deters an individual from engaging in infidelity as was observed by Blow and Kelly (2005) in their review of literature. Moreover, cohabiting couples may have less commitment on the relationship than the legally married (Nock, 1995). This commitment mechanism in legal marriage serve as a protective factor against infidelity for some couples. It was further argued that the protective factor of marriage might be more closely related to the commitment in the relationship rather than the marriage institution per se (Blow & Kelly, 2005).

Moreover, Filipino men who are infecund, have undergone sterilization or are undecided whether or not to have another child are 41 percent more likely to engage in extramarital sex than those who want another child. Sevilla (1982 as cited in Medina, 1991) maintains that the growing knowledge and easy access of Filipino men to contraceptive methods have contributed to the increasing prevalence of extramarital sex. The use of contraceptive methods enable men to "sow their wild oats" without having to think of siring another child or keeping another family. This perhaps, explains the heightened likelihood

of men who are infecund or have undergone sterilization procedure to engage in extramarital sex compared with those who want another child. In relation to this, the absence of living children which was significant in the bivariate analysis but lost its significance in the multivariate model merits some explanations. In the Philippines, children are highly valued and are deemed necessary to keep the marriage intact. Because they act as a “bond” that keeps the marriage from falling apart their absence is likely to spell marital problems and may cause infidelity of the husband. In rural areas, the belief that a husband is justified in fooling around or siring a child with another woman when the wife can not bear a child is still common (Sobritchea, 1990).

Aside from early sexual debut that were found to be significantly associated with extramarital sex, other risky non-sexual behavior like alcohol use also emerged as significant factor in the study. Those who have gotten drunk at least one day in the last three months are 32 percent more likely to have had extramarital sex than those who did not or never experience getting drunk. Kongnyuy and Wiysonge (2007) argue that an intoxicated person is more likely to engage in unprotected sex even with high risk partners since alcohol lowers his cognitive reserve. In the Philippines, it was reported that casual sex among married men happens when the power of alcohol takes over their sober mind (DRDF, 2008). Moreover, in a country, where men are given the privilege to “go out with the boys” it is not uncommon for them to seek the service of commercial sex workers to entertain them during their drinking, hence it is safe to assume that extramarital sexual activity may happen during their drinking spree.

(Table 4 about here)

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This paper described the levels of and examined the factors associated with extramarital sexual activity of Filipino men in union. It can be observed that a substantial difference in the level of extramarital sex is found in the study compared with the earlier statistics yielded by other nationally representative surveys.

Two major reasons can be cited for these differences. First reason is on who reported the extramarital sexual activity. Previous findings on this topic have relied on the wives' report of their husband's extramarital sex experience (e.g. Ahlburg, Jensen & Perez, 1997).

Although the wives' report may be true, there are some reasons to doubt its accuracy. For example in my preliminary analysis of the 2003 National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) data both husbands and wives were interviewed, I found that the husband's and wives' report of his level of education and current age differ by four percent and 7.7 percent respectively (data not shown). This suggests that wives' report of their husband's characteristics may not always be accurate. I argue that if information as basic as age and level of education can not be accurately elicited from the wife, there is more reason to doubt their perception on sensitive topic such as their husband's sexual behavior. One of the few studies that used Filipino men's report of their own sexual activity is the SWAF survey. This survey also demonstrates how perception of the wife differs with the behavior of the husband. About five percent of the wives' reported that they are aware that their husbands have mistress, while only two percent of the husbands admitted to actually having a mistress. This survey could have been the closest data source from which the present statistics can be compared but another problem is encountered which brings us to

the second reason for the differences in the estimates of extramarital sex: semantic problem.

The word “mistress” instead of the term “extramarital sex” was used in the SWAF survey unlike this present paper. It should be noted that the two words although used interchangeably in the literature connote different meanings. To have a mistress means that a person is having an affair with another woman which is quite different from engaging in extramarital sex. They are similar in that sexual contact outside marriage is consummated but differ in that the other term involves an emotional commitment. The presence of emotional commitment is what sets “extramarital affair or relation” apart from “extramarital sex”. Moreover, extramarital sex may also refer to a “one-night stand” while extramarital affair may mean keeping a mistress or “no.2” that involves a degree of permanence, exclusivity and economic support (Santiago, 1981). This semantic problem perhaps justifies the large difference between the statistics found in the SWAF survey and the present study.

This study shows that considerable proportion of Filipino men still engage in this risky sexual behavior. Whether the observed increase in the level of extramarital sex is real and not caused by some methodological caveats discussed earlier, the findings underscore the real threats these men may be facing because of their risky sexual activity. First, it may threaten the sanctity of the marriage and undermine the foundation of the family. Medina (1995) maintains that infidelity of the husband is a very common cause of marital conflict among Filipino couple. Second, it threatens the health of the man and his wife as he becomes the “key agent” that opens the gateway for the entry of sexually transmitted disease such as HIV. Hence, in view of the silent but growing threat of HIV AIDS in the country, which was shown to be heterosexually transmitted, the crucial role of these men

who engage in extramarital sex can not be discounted. The risk is even higher among those who engage in unprotected sex and patronize commercial sex workers. Data from the present study shows that nine percent of Filipino in union had ever paid for sex and only three percent of these men used condom during their most recent sexual intercourse with a commercial sex worker. If the respondents in the present study may actually be referring to commercial sex workers as the regular partners they mentioned in the survey, then their risk of contracting the disease is compounded because it is more likely to be unsafe. It was reported in a study that both registered and non registered sex workers are more likely to use condoms with non-regular sexual partners and less likely to do so with regular partners, either spouse/boyfriend or regular clients (DRDF, 2008). The risk is further compounded when other sexual and nonsexual risky behaviors are added in the equation. The study found alcohol use and early sexual debut which are also considered risky behaviors to be associated with extramarital sex. The interplay of these risky behaviors is referred to by Jessor, Donovan and Costa (1991, as cited in Arnett, 1998) as the “interrelated syndrome of risk behaviors”. Extramarital sex then is one of the important pieces that complete the puzzle in understanding AIDS transmission in the Philippines.

On account of previous studies that suggested a relationship between marital power and extramarital sex (e.g. Tanseco, 1970), this paper earlier attempted to incorporate marital power in the Filipino household as one of the predictors of extramarital sex. However, as much as this paper wanted to examine marital power, the current data do not fully capture the power dynamics in the marital relationship. Although some indicators of marital power like patterns of decision-making are available, these are just based on attitudes and not on actual behavior and are too limited to represent marital power. It is thus suggested that future studies will look on the role of marital power on extramarital sex experience of Filipino men.

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Charts and tables

Table 1: Estimates on the level of extramarital sex among Filipino men in union : 1993-2003

Age group	Data Sources				
	1993 NSMS ²	1993 SWAF ¹	1993 SWAF ²	2002 YAFS ¹	2003 NDHS ¹
15-27	4.5	0.4	3.1	8	22.1
28-54	9.5	1.9	5	-	21.4
54+	13.5	-	-	-	-
All	9	1.5	4.6	8	21.6
N	7956	1000	1000	2505	2746

Notes :
¹ as reported by the husband
² as reported by the wife

Figure 1: Percentage distribution of Filipino men in union by type of extramarital sexual partners; Philippines 2003

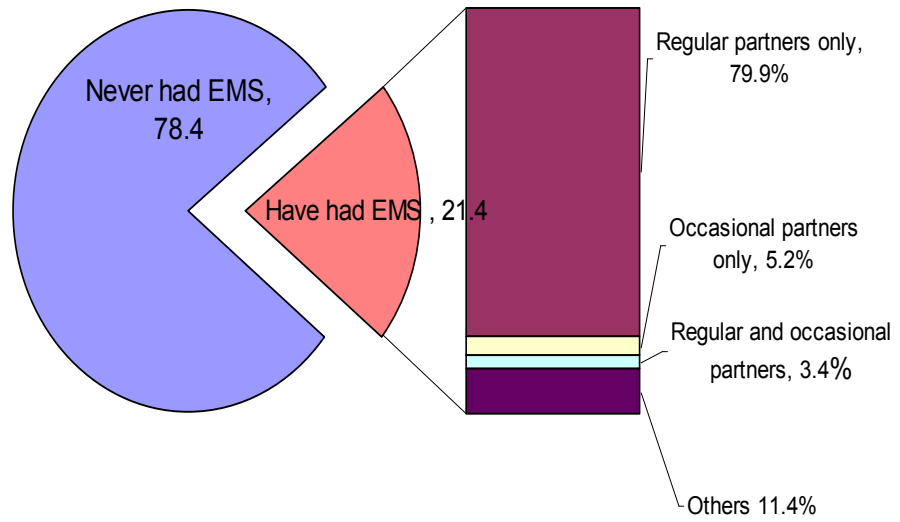


Table 2 : Percentage distribution of Filipino men in union by selected characteristics: Philippines 2003

	%
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	
Current age	
< 24	8.4
25-29	14.6
30-34	17.5
35-39	18.3
40-44	16.0
45+	25.2
Education attainment	
Primary	37.5
Secondary	43.1
Tertiary	19.4
Type of place of residence	
Urban	53.1
Rural	46.9
Religion	
Catholic	82.0
Islam	4.3
Others	13.7
Occupation	
Professionals	11.2
Clerks and service workers	8.3
Farmers, foresters and fishermen	30.2
Trades, Plant and machine operators	28.3
Others	22.0
SEXUAL EXPERIENCE	
Premarital sex	
Have had premarital experience	48.3
Never had premarital experience	51.7
Age at first sex	
< 20	43.1
20-24	38.7
25-29	14.3
30+	3.9
MARRIAGE AND FERTILITY	

Type of Union	
Currently married	87.5
Consensual union	12.5

Age at first union	
< 20	19.5
20-24	45.6
25-29	24.2
30+	10.7

Number of living children	
No living children	8.1
At least one living child	91.9

Fertility intentions	
Wants another child	37.1
Wants no more child	51.0
Infecund, sterilized and undecided	11.8

ATTITUDES

Husband has right to: have sex with another women	
No	89.6
Yes, depends, don't know	10.4

Wife is justified in refusing sex when the husband has sex with other woman	
Justified, don't know, depends	90.1
Not justified	9.9

ALCOHOL USE

Times gotten drunk in the last 3 months	
Not or never gotten drunk	60.2
Drunk at least a day	39.8

Total	100.0
N of cases	2746.0

Table 3: Percentage distribution of Filipino men in union having extramarital sex (EMS) by selected characteristics: Philippines 2003

CHARACTERISTICS	PERCENT WHO HAD EMS
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC	
Current age	
< 24	23.0
25-29	21.5
30-34	22.7
35-39	19.1
40-44	22.7
45+	21.4
Educational attainment	
Primary	19.8
Secondary	21.8
Tertiary	24.2
Type of residence	
Urban	22.3
Rural	20.8
Religion ***	
Catholic	22.0
Islam	3.4
Others	25.0
Occupation	
Professionals	20.7
Clerks and service workers	24.9
Farmers, foresters and fishermen	22.5
Trades, Plant and machine operators	20.5
Others	20.9
SEXUAL EXPERIENCE	
Premarital sex *	
Have had premarital experience	23.4
Never had premarital experience	19.8
Age at first sex *	
< 20	23.7
20-24	21.1
25-29	17.4
30+	16.7
MARRIAGE AND FERTILITY	
Type of union *	
Currently married	20.6

Consensual union	28.1
Age at first union	
< 20	22.1
20-24	20.8
25-29	22.3
30+	21.8
Number of living children *	
No living children	27.6
At least one living child	21.0
Fertility intentions **	
Wants more children	21.8
Wants no more children	20.0
Infecund, sterilized and undecided	27.7
ATTITUDES	
Husband has right to have sex with another women when the wife refuses to	
Yes, Don't know and Depends	25.7
No	21.1
Wife is justified in refusing sex when the husband has sex with other woman'	
Justified, depends, don; know	21.2
Not justified	24.9
ALCOHOL USE **	
Times gotten drunk in the last 3 months	
Not or never gotten drunk	19.3
Drunk at least a day	24.6
N of cases	2746

* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 *** p < 0.001

Table 4: Summary statistics from logistic regression equations predicting the risk of Filipino men in union to engage in extramarital sex : Philippines 2003

Predictors	Extramarital sex	
	Exp(B)	
Respondent's age	1.00	
Education		
Primary	0.72	*
Secondary	0.83	
Tertiary (reference)		
Place of residence		
Urban	1.10	
Rural (reference)		
Religion		
Islam	0.14	***
Other Christians	1.28	
Catholics (reference)		
Occupation		
Farmers	1.33	
Traders	0.97	
Clerks	1.17	
Other occupation	1.01	
Professionals (reference)		
Premarital sex		
Have had premarital sex	0.88	
Never had premarital sex (reference)		
Age at first sex	0.95	**
Type of union		
Legally married	0.72	*
Consensual union (reference)		
Age at first union	1.02	
No. of living children		
No living children	1.34	
Have at least one living child (reference)		
Experience of ever gotten drunk		
Ever gotten drunk	1.32	**
Never or not gotten drunk (reference)		
Fertility intentions		
Want no more children	0.92	
Infecund, sterilizes and undecided	1.41	*
Wants another child (reference)		
Right to have sex w/ other women		
Yes	1.25	
No (reference)		
Wife has right to refuse sex		
Yes	0.84	
No (reference)		
Cox & Snell R square		0.032
* p <0.05 ** p < 0.01 *** p <0.001		

