

GANG RAPE: The Perspectives of Moto-taxi Drivers across Cambodia A Rapid Country Wide Assesment

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Introduction

This study attempts to reach a balance between research and Advocacy. In 2002, the word bauk first gained public attention. Bauk, a mathematical reference to plus (+) in Khmer script, has come in recent years to be popularly used amongst young people as a colloquial reference to the practice of gang rape (bauk):

- One (or two) youths procure the services of a commercial sex worker, or the affection of a young woman.
- She is taken to a guest-house, where another 4 or more male youths are waiting (or will soon arrive)
- The youths coerce the woman into having sex with them all, often accompanied by violence (Fletcher & Wilkinson, PSI; 2002)

There have only been 4 previous studies, both qualitative and quantitative, undertaken into this is issue in Phnom Perh. These study draw attention to: shared cultural conceptions of masculinity, femininity and hierarchy, lack of understanding of human rights and sexual consent; peer pressure amongst men; a culture of impunity and lack of government capacity rendering police and judicial systems largely impotent; and the role of poverty pushing commercial sex workers to risk their safety in order to survive.

However, what has been absent to this point is research into the extent of gang rape in wider Cambodia. It is out of a desire to gain a greater appreciation of the extent of this issue that this study of the perspective of moto-taxid trivers across Cambodia has been undertaken.

Methodology

This study does not represent an attempt to completely quantify the issue of gang rape in Cambodia. The working hypothesis for the study is outlined below.

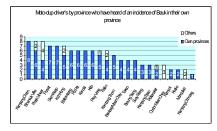
Knowledge and local practice of gang rape 'bank' exists outside of PanomPerh in all of the urban centres in Carbodia's provincial areas.

In order to test this hypothesis, interviewing was undertaken in the urban centres of 20 provinces and in a further 4 cities (excluding PhromPerh). A total of 24 researchers were recruited and trained by telephone and were required to identify twenty four areas for interviewing within their designated urban centre. In each urban centre, There were 8 mototaxi chives interviewing was undertaken over 2 nights in two ned-light areas between 9pmand 11pmand over 2 mornings between 5emand 6emoutside of guesthouse/accommodation areas on foot and took the nide offered by 192 mototaxi chivers (thereby reducing interviewer selection bias). The data was collected over two days on Saturday and Sunday between the $27^{\rm th}$ and $28^{\rm th}$ of December 2008. In addition to training and reporting by telephone, the assistant researchers were encouraged to call for 24 hour support throughout the data collection period if required

Results

The survey found the moto-taxi drivers knew about local instances of gargi rape across almost all urban centres in Cambodia, except Otor Mean Orey and Mondulikiri where only non-local instances were reported. The overall findings indicated that 61% (117) of the 192 moto-taxi drivers interviewed had heard of incidences of Irank. Of these, 50% had heard of an incident in the past 2 months. The majority of motor drivers identified perpetiators of Irank as being of average wealth and of being aged between 18 and 23 years of age.

Fig. 1



* Only in two provinces, had moto-taxi drivers had not heard of local incidences of bauk

Fig. 2

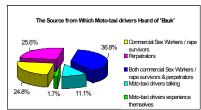
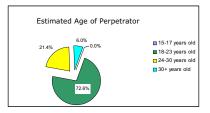
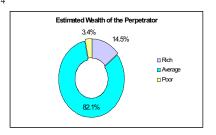


Fig. 3



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Discussion

These are the causes of influencing factors encouraging young people's involvement in gang rape as cited in previous studies based in Phnom Penh.

Causes and Influencing Factors:

Male bonding and saving money: 'We want our friends to enjoy [bauk]
 with us; close friends always share things together and its an economical
 way to have sex.' [Ploy, 21] (Bearup; 2003-88).

- Peer-pressure: "I knowthat bank is not good ... I have a sister too ... but
 my friends force me [for example] there are ten friends and nine go... I
 cannot stay by myself." [Bull, 21] (Banux 200891).
- We think we will not be able to stop [back] as long as we still have many friends who encourage us to do so to prove our faithfulness to friends.'
 (Millimm WHO 2008)
- Conceptions of Mesculinity: 'I like htalk because I follow my friends to be a man.' [Lion, 17] (Bearux, 2008-89)
- Structured Hierarchy related to Gender and Status: 'they had sex very roughly with me. . they spoke to me very badly and called me as if I was an animal.' [Solima—sex worker] (Grant; 2004-49).
- Notions of Fernininity: "I have never experienced bank with the good girl, just only with prostitutes or beer girls." [Dos, 22] (Beaupt, 2003:87)
- Drug Use: 'after we use drugs we feel happy, need sex and we are brave.' [Spike, 19] (Bearup; 2008:97).

Other Potential Factors:

Evidence that brank is not limited to see-workers: "for me and my friends
we also use brank with the student. I just have sex with that girl like a
sweetheart, two or three times. After that I call to my friends to brank her
and then I break up with her" [Sporty, 20] (Beauty 2003/91).

The results from this study local incidences of show that knowledge of bank amongst moto-toxi drivers was found in every urban centre, except for in the two provinces of Ouchor Mean Chey and Mondalkini. The areas in which the highest proportion of moto-taxi drivers related incidences of bank could generally be categorised as populated, bustling 'growth' centres of Carrbodia.

These findings would generally suggest that as cities become more populated there is more likelihood youth involvement in gang rape exists.

It is significant that the commercial sex workers were able to talk about their experiences of rape with moto-dip-chivers. Perhaps this finding should cause us to consider what role CSWs could be playing amongst advocacy efforts to stop rape, promote gender awareness and human rights, while commercial sex workers are not the only women in society who are raped, but they might be the only women willing to talk publicly about it.

The gang rape of prostitutes is becoming visible as a social issue because of the willingness of both the victims and the perpetrators to speak about the problem However, it is argueble that gang rape is a very visible symptom of a much larger societal problem of non-consensual sex in Cambodia that is kept very quiet. The treatment of many commercial sex workers is deplocable and their suffering difficult to fathorn yet perhaps there is some sense of empowement in being able to speak out their objections to the violence that has been perpetrated against them Perhaps for the majority of women who have suffered rape in Cambodia, and those who continue to suffer physically and psychologically, their trauma is borne everyday in silence and isolation.

Conclusion

The working hypothesis for the study was:

Knowledge and local practice of gang rape (bauk) exists outside of Phnom Penh in all of the urban centres in Cambodia's provincial areas.

Knowledge of gang rape existed amongst 61% of the *moto-taxi* drivers spread throughout each of the 24 provinces and cities, partially supporting the study

hypothesis. However, whilst knowledge of bauk existed in each province and city, in two provinces, Odor Mean Chey and Mondulkiri, moto-dup-drivers had not heard of any instances of bauk that had occurred locally. It should be noted that 87.2% of moto-dup-drivers who reported having heard of bauk stated that they had heard this either directly from commercial sex workers, the perpetrators themselves, or from a mixture of both sources. This provides an indication that information about bauk is not simply being spread through rumors passed among moto-dup-drivers themselves.

Recommendations

Implications for Youth Sexual & Reproductive Health Programs:

- Giving out condoms is not enough We need to promote safe and responsible sex, providing information and education about human rights and sexual consent.
- Improve access to free counseling and health services for survivors of rape
- · Address social and recreational gaps for youth
- Use role models to stimulate positive behaviour change among young men – recruiting 'cool' peer educators and provide them structured opportunities to educate their peers.
- Contribute to strengthening the legal and regulatory environment by raising awareness of the problem
- Encourage young men to take responsibility for their sexual behaviour and for the problems of HIV and STI's facing young people.

Playing Safe Project

 Currently the UNFPA and EU is funding a project called Playing Safe under the (RHIYA). The project is coordinated by CARE Cambodia in partnership with Khmer Youth Association. The project adopts a rights based, youth empowerment approach which seeks to promote safe and responsible sexual behaviour as modern and cool in the context of recreational and sporting activities.

Main activities of Playing Safe Project:

- 1. Peer Education Training
- 2. Youth Centre Activities
- 3. Outreach Activities
- 4. Research, Advocacy & Youth Network



Van Outreach Activity: Peer educators have been talking to the young males on sexual and reproductive health - safe and responsible sex.

www.playsafe.info