

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF LONG-TERM SEX WORK ON  
MALE ADULT FILM ACTORS' PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

by

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# The Effects of Long-Term Sex Work on Male Adult Film Actors' Personal Relationships

## THESIS APPROVAL

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## ABSTRACT

Sex work is known as the oldest profession in the world. However, there is a serious lack of information and studies conducted on it. Sex work has been a part of all cultures throughout history. Stigmatization has followed this profession throughout all of this. There is limited research on the needs and lives of sex workers. There is even less information and research on male sex workers. Most studies on male sex workers have focused on HIV/STDs or substance use. This IPA qualitative study is a more personal and intimate look into the lives of four male sex workers. The results of the study revealed four major superordinate themes of sexual evolution, compromising personal relationships, splitting between professional and private selves and going against stereotypes. These four main themes were broken down into eleven subthemes such as “Intimacy Over Sex,” “Dating Issues,” “Fragmented Identity” and “Positive Experiences.” It was found that acts of emotional labor with clients could be both harmful and helpful for the workers. Most of the participants in this study enjoyed their years as a sex worker which is in contrast to other existing studies which found the opposite, this difference could be related to the gender of the study participants. There is a need for more mental health services for male sex workers and it is suggested that one way to reach this underserved population is by working within their community itself through programs involving peer counseling and more extensive training for practitioners.

**Keywords:** prostitution, sex work, male sex workers, male escorts, porn stars, personal relationships, adult industry, sex industry, adult film actors

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