

**RISK AND HEALTH-SEEKING BEHAVIORS: THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO
THE OCCURRENCE OF SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STD's AMONG THE
REGISTERED FEMALE SEX WORKERS IN ILOILO CITY**

A THESIS

Presented to

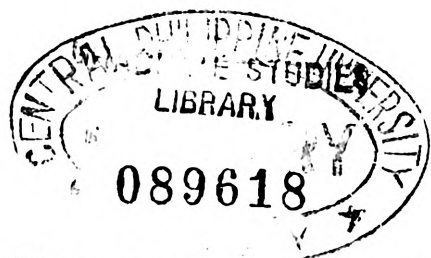
the Faculty of the School of Graduate Studies

CENTRAL PHILIPPINE UNIVERSITY

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

MASTER of ARTS in NURSING



by

PHOTOCOPYING NOT ALLOWED

NERISSA DY-DE ASIS

March, 1998

**RISK AND HEALTH-SEEKING BEHAVIORS: THEIR RELATIONSHIP
TO THE OCCURRENCE OF SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STD's
AMONG THE REGISTERED FEMALE SEX WORKERS
IN ILOILO CITY**

by

NERISSA DY - de ASIS

ABSTRACT

This investigation primarily aimed to determine risk and health-seeking behaviors and the occurrence of the signs and symptoms of STD's among the registered female sex workers in Iloilo City. Furthermore, it also aimed to determine if there is a relationship between the respondents' risk and health-seeking behaviors and the occurrence of the signs and symptoms of STD's.

The sample respondents of this study included 146 registered female sex workers who were regular clients of Iloilo Social Hygiene Clinic. They were randomly selected from an official list of the clinic and were accessed in bars, disco houses and in the clinic during their periodic check-up.

A standardized interview guide adopted from DOH and UCLA Behavioral Research guide was used to gather the data for the study. Data processing and analysis were done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows Version 6.0. Statistical tools used were means and frequency distribution to describe the characteristics of the respondents. The chi-square, Cramers V and eta coefficient were used to analyze associations between variables. The level of significance of the associations between variables was tested at 5 percent level.

The findings of the study revealed that registered female sex workers were mostly in their mid-twenties, high school-educated, single and working in a bar/club garden.

For the past week preceding the interview, the female registered sex workers had single sex partners, but reported a low condom usage. There were a few (5 percent) of the sex workers who were intravenous drug users. There was low incidence of STD among them. Iloilo Social Hygiene Clinic remains to be the focal avenue for STD check-up and treatment among the female registered sex workers.

A significant correlation was found between the number of sex partners and the incidence of three signs and symptoms of STD among the respondents (pain/burning sensation during urination, yellowish discharges from vagina and sore/ulcers in the vagina). Only pain or burning sensation during urination and sores/ulcer in the vagina were found to be significantly linked with frequency of condom use. On the other hand, only the occurrence of yellowish discharges from the vagina was connected with intravenous drug use.

Contrary to what were expected, the occurrence of the signs and symptoms of STDs was not related to the sex workers' sexual practices. Supportive of the principles of health promotion was the result that, a lower occurrence of the signs and symptoms of STDs among sex workers can be attributed to their healthy and consistent health-seeking behavior, especially with the assistance of Iloilo Social Hygiene Clinic.

With the significant findings of this investigation, the researcher strongly recommends to concerned government organizations and non-government organizations to intensify and strengthen their STD prevention and control program, with emphasis on the importance of using condom consistently, since consistent condom use has a direct

proportional relationship with the incidence of STDs. It is also recommended to Iloilo Social Hygiene clinic and City Task Force on Prostitution to strictly implement the regulatory measure of issuing pink cards to sex workers who are not sick of STD.

To future researchers, the writer further suggests that they look more closely into internal psychological factors and relationship dynamics that affect risk behaviors and health seeking behaviors of the sex workers.