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Gender-based Violence Against MSM in Viet Nam

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Special APCOM lunch time session at ICAAP 10:

Moving from sheer quantity to queer quality: Emerging HIV and social research issues among MSM and transgender persons

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Introduction



- **Action research aimed to document violence against MSM in Vietnam**
- **Research participants:**
 - 17 MSM from 17-36 years old (8 from HCMC and 9 from Hanoi)
 - 8/17 living with family
- **Research methodology:**
 - Story telling and writing
 - In-depth interviews
 - Drawing



Violence Behaviours

Beating	12
Scolding/offending	13
Detention at home	5
Taking off clothing	4
Isolate from community and other MSM	7
Sending out of house	2
Force to skip or change school	8
Threaten/blackmail/cheating/slander	4
Cut off economic support	7
Forced sex	5



Venue of Violence	
Home	16
School	7
Public places	7
Work place	6
Police station	3
Living neighbourhood	5



...I kept being scolded by my family members and made fun of at school so i did not want to go to school anymore. I was even taken clothese off by my male classmates in the classroom. They said let see if i've got a penis. Thats why i skipped school a lot but my dad did not know so he kept beating me. (Gay born in 1991, Hanoi)

Mom did not say anything but going in the house and beating me non stop. She even asked my sister to pour fish source on the wounds so that the pain will stop me from doing girly things. She said she would have laid duck or chicken egg that could earn her some money rather than giving birth to me, not a boy but also not a girl. (Transgender born in 1986, HCMC)

Violence toward MSM is often not recognized

This sounds terrible but what should we do differently? As parents we should do this to take our children back to the right track. We should do this to fulfill our responsibilities as parents.

(Father of a gay man, Hochiminh city)

These stories are touching but I don't think they are true. Many of them are very extreme.

A reader, Hanoi)



Consequences

Stress/depression/not willing to talk to people, body mortification	17
Drop school/school adversely affected (fail at school year-end exam, moving to a different school...)	10
Drug use/pocket picking, cheating, etc./unsafe sex/fighting	7
Attempt suicide	6
Leave home wandering	6
Sell sex	5



I was down again and nothing could stop me. My studying deteriorated seriously. I joined motorbike racing and got an accident, lost two teeth and lots of scratches with scars on my face (Gay, aged 25, Hanoi)

Conclusion



- Violence against MSM is prevailing and causes serious physical and mental health and social consequences to MSM including HIV infection
- Most violence against MSM were from people who suppose to protect them i.e. family members, teachers, peers and policemen and still not to be aware of.
- Story telling and arts are powerful healing and empowering tools.

Thank you for sharing the book. I cannot imagine that you remember that thing for so long and I also have not known that what we did could make you hurt for that much. I am so sorry for that and I wish your future will be different. You and people like you will be respected and will have a better life. (A reader, Hochiminh city)

Recommendations



- Gender identity and sexual orientation should be included in sexuality, reproductive health and HIV programs.
- Support services for MSM should include also psychological support and reference to violence prevention and counseling.
- Family-based violence prevention and children protection programs should include MSM as one target group.
- HIV interventions for MSM should incorporate a component on violence prevention.



- EXHIBITION: LOVE AND PAIN

Booth 22 of Center for Creative Initiatives
in Health and Population (opposite the
Youth Pavillon)

Exhibition hall 1, Bexco