

## Conference Paper

# A Qualitative Study of Sexual Behavior among Indonesian Married Men with Migrant Worker Wife

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## Abstract

**Background:** In Indonesian context, a formal sexual activity is legal only for those who are married. Married men which their wife work as migrant worker cannot obtain their sexual need properly. This circumstance leads them to accomplish their need in risk sexual behavior. With a large number of international female labors from Indonesia and inadequately information on the HIV-related risk behavior among married men with migrant worker wife in Indonesia, more research is necessary to better understand in the sexual behavior context. **Objectives:** This study aims to explore how Indonesian married men with migrant worker wife behave for their sexual activities to meet their sexual needs. **Methods:** This study used qualitative semi-structured interviews, exploring participants' experience of their sexual behavior. Participants are married men and their wife work as migrant worker and assigned for at least six months. Purposive sample techniques used to reach the participant. Data were analyzed using Colaizzi's phenomenological method. **Results:** The study emerged three themes: sexual needs completion, safe sexual behavior, and sexual needs management. Peer invitation and sexual desire were the primary reasons to visit female sex workers. Condom use was not continuously applied for every sexual activity. Self-management is needed for individual who consider of not doing sexual activity with other woman instead of his wife. A knowledge of HIV was discussed within the article briefly. **Conclusions:** The findings suggest that self-management is fundamental role in how MILW performing sexual behavior. HIV-related health education and safe sexual behavior need to be provided for this group.

**Keywords:** HIV-related infection, international labor, married men, sexual behavior

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## 1. Introduction

Infection of *Human Immunodeficiency Virus* (HIV) and *Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome* (AIDS) disease are serious public health problem that requires special attention. Transmission of HIV through sexual behavior at risk of changing partners has a high enough value of 24% in 2017. High risk groups such as sex workers, man sex with man (MSM), transgender people, drug users, detainees and migrants have the potential to transmit or contract HIV / AIDS [1].

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The number of Indonesian workers leaving to overseas continues to increase every year. Seen from the number of migrant workers who work abroad, it becomes a special concern for people who have been left behind by their partners to become migrant workers, because couples who are left working for long periods of time cannot meet their sexual needs (intimate) with their legal partners. Physical separation with a legitimate partner becomes a serious problem that must be passed by a partner because they cannot meet at any time. Physical separation with loved ones is one of the events that can trigger loneliness that has an impact on physiological needs [2].

Fulfillment of sexual needs is one of physiological needs (*physiological needs*), this need must be met because it is directly related to biological maintenance and survival [3]. Important aspects of meeting the needs of sexuality must be considered properly, because it can be a trigger for couples who are left working abroad to engage in risky sexual behavior by having sexual activity by changing partners. The balance of sexual needs must be considered in every married couple [4].

A man who is married and left by his wife to work as an Indonesian migrant worker abroad has problems meeting his sexual needs. This triggers married men to try to meet their sexual needs by engaging in sexual relations with sex workers and close acquaintances. This behavior puts this group at risk of contracting HIV as well as the risk of transmitting HIV to their legal partners.

The key groups to spread HIV infection have been identified, but there are no studies that explain how the contribution of married men who have wives work as migrant workers in the spreading of HIV. In-depth identification is needed to what extent this group is at risk of contracting HIV and the possibility of spreading HIV to their partners. This study purposed to explore how Indonesian married men with migrant worker wife behave for their sexual activities to meet their sexual needs.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Study design

Married men experience of sexual behavior was explored through descriptive phenomenology. This research was approved by the Ethical Committee of Health Research at the Faculty of Dentistry, University of Jember.

## 2.2. Settings and participants

This research was carried out in East Java Province, Indonesia. East Java Province is the province that sends the most number of workers abroad (44,351). As for the number of HIV cases, East Java ranks second highest after Jakarta province.

The inclusion criteria in this study were married men and their wives working as Indonesian migrant workers abroad and separated for a minimum of six months. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling in which the researchers chose based on predetermined inclusion criteria. The number of sample retrieved during the interview processes, which meant that we decided to stop interview for other participants after there were no more new information from the last participant. There were five participants who were involved in this study.

## 2.3. Data collection

Information in this study was collected in January - February 2019. Researchers initially obtained information about men who were married to migrant workers by officers in the relevant regions. After getting the information, the researcher visited each respondent's home and explained the purpose of the study and asked to sign a sheet of consent to participate in the study. There are two prospective respondents who refuse to participate in research due to privacy reasons.

Researchers then conducted in-depth interviews with all respondents to explore experiences about their sexual behavior during separation from his wife. Each interview ran for 30-45 minutes in each participant's home in a quiet and not too noisy condition. The interview guide was prepared to explore the experience of men who have migrant worker wives in meeting their sexual needs. The interview instrument contained several things including respondents' demographic data, knowledge about sexual needs and HIV-AIDS, how to meet sexual needs, and the use of condoms in sexual activity. The guideline was designed to specify information about respondents' behavior in fulfilling their sexual need.

During the interview process, information submitted by participants was recorded by researchers after obtaining permission from participants. Researchers also take notes on important matters and write down non-verbal moods and expressions shown by the participants. The researcher notes sheet did not contain the participant's identity, but was given a code for the benefit of the data analysis process.

## 2.4. Data analysis

The process of analyzing data uses the Colaizzi method by carrying out all the steps. All recordings and important notes that have been written during the interview (including non-verbal expressions, body position, and the situation around the interview place) are listened to repeatedly and written in the data transcription. Meaningful statements made by participants were then identified, mixed and matched and then transformed into categories and themes. The categories and themes obtained were then verified by other the research members to ensure that the themes were appropriate based on the original statement of the participants. All themes obtained and agreed upon are then compiled in a structured thematic form regarding the phenomenon of sexual behavior of men who have wives as migrant workers.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. Sociodemographic characteristics

There were five participants joined in-depth interviews. The demographic characteristics of participants can be shown in table 1.

TABLE 1: Demographic characteristics of participants.

P	Age (year)	Education	Occupation	Work duration of wife (year)
P1	34	High School	Farmer	5
P2	30	High School	Entrepreneur	5
P3	28	High School	Entrepreneur	2
P4	31	High School	Entrepreneur	3
P5	32	High School	Farmer	3

All participants are husbands who have been left by their wives working abroad as Indonesian migrant workers. Participants have experienced physical separation from their legal partners for approximately 2-5 years. Overall participants are still in the productive age range. Two out of five participants stated having a sexual partner other than with their legal wife.

Based on the results of in-depth interviews, we found three main themes: sexual needs completion, safe sexual behavior, and sexual needs management.

### 3.2. Sexual needs completion

All participants revealed that sexual needs were related to sexual activity. Sexual needs must be fulfilled and become an obligation especially for men who are married. The 28-year-old respondent said "our main goal is to marry, to have sex". The 31-year-old respondent stated that "intercourse must be fulfilled".

TABLE 2: Main themes of married men with migrant workers.

Themes	Statements
Sexual needs completion	I am married, the main purpose is to do sexual activity I must fulfill the physical (sexual) relationship I pay FSW to have sexual intercourse I wait for my wife return to Indonesia to have sex
Safe sexual behavior	I did not use condom for my regular partner (3 different FSWs), but if I doubt (the other FSW) then I used condom I did not use condom lately I do not have sexual intercourse, but my wife
Sexual needs management	I try to be loyal just to my wife I go to work and work in order to distract my desire to have sexual intercourse I focus on caring for my children

\* FSW: Female Sex Worker

All participants stated that while his wife was left working abroad, the desire to have sexual relations often arose. Respondents who worked as farmers (34 years) said "it is natural that humans have the desire to have sex". 30-year-old respondent said "lust sometimes appears sometimes disappears, sometimes it can be suppressed sometimes also does not depend on the mind".

External factors greatly affect the fulfillment of sexual needs. Respondents who work as entrepreneurs say "I go to a brothel, but not often". Another respondent said "because my wife is not at home, I was invited by a friend to prostitution". A statement from a 28-year-old respondent "the first time I was invited by a friend to a brothel, and then go alone for the next visit".

### 3.3. Safe sexual behavior

Two participants said that when having sexual relations with other than their wives, they considered using safety. The 30-year respondent said "I use condoms if I have sex with people I have not known before". While the 28-year-old respondent said "I used a condom to anticipate contracting the disease".

### 3.4. Sexual needs management

Not all respondents (3/5) have sexual relations with sex workers. The 31-year-old respondent said "I look after myself and not be kind, and only have sexual relations with my wife". This statement is supported by 32-year respondents who say "I am loyal to a partner. I focus on caring for and raising children"

## 4. Discussion

Sexual needs are one of the basic needs *physiological* that must be met, sexual needs are often considered to be the fulfillment of lust in physical fulfillment, namely sexual activity. Fulfilling sexual needs according to another view is the way two individuals in channeling interactions to meet sexual needs that include exchanging ideas, experiences, values, emotions and fantasies of the two individuals [5]. Physical separation that occurs in participants who are left behind by their partners as Indonesian migrant workers (BMI) who work abroad is one of the driving factors in risky sexual behavior due to changes in sexual needs that occur. Sexual behavior is said to be risky if sexual behavior can result in negative impacts such as abortion, pregnancy out of wedlock, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and also HIV / AIDS [6].

The results of this study indicate that two out of five participants whose legal partners have left overseas working as Indonesian Migrant Workers cannot fulfill their sexual needs with their legal partners so that the two participants have another sexual partner. The results in this study are supported by previous research conducted by [7] regarding risky sexual behavior in male migrant workers in North India which shows that 41 out of 262 respondents who do not live with their partners have other sexual partners[7]. Sexual behavior that occurs due to the separation of life with this partner is one of the driving factors leading to sexual behavior at risk of HIV transmission, as well as the lives of Indonesian migrant workers (BMI) working abroad.

Based on the results of research conducted on people with spouses of Indonesian migrant workers who work abroad that risky sexual behavior by two of the five participants begins with the emergence of sexual desire that cannot be muted or detained, then participants who are physically separated from their partners in a long time trying to meet sexual needs. In meeting the sexual needs of two out of five people with a partner of Indonesian migrant workers (BMI) in this study stated that in meeting their sexual needs they reach localization to use the services of women sex workers (FSW). This study is supported by previous research by [6] regarding factors related to risky

sexual behavior in *Truckers* at Tanjung Emas port in Semarang that results *bivariate* show (63.3%) of the 100 respondents who provided access to sexual transactions that affected risky sexual behavior [6].

Three of the five respondents in this study explained that they had never had sexual relations other than with their legal partners, all three participants stated that they were able to refrain from having sexual relations with other women. The results of this study are in line with the results of previous studies regarding the satisfaction of sexual relations with wives with husbands who work on cruise ships, the results of the interviews of three participants in this study stated that all participants felt there were no obstacles when far apart in sexual affairs according to their wives while their husbands worked at work. Cruises can withstand sexual desires that arise [4].

Behavioral prevention of transmission of sexual diseases (HIV) faithfully to one partner carried out on a person cannot be separated from the awareness in maintaining commitment, besides this awareness arises because of knowledge that supports the transmission of sexual diseases, one of which is HIV. According to research conducted by [8] on rural residents in Enugu State of Nigeria on awareness of HIV prevention methods stated that as many as 89 (30.1%) of 296 respondents in preventing HIV transmission by remaining loyal to one HIV negative partner [8].

## 5. Conclusion

The findings suggest that self-management is the fundamental role in how married men with migrant wives perform sexual behavior. HIV-related health education and safe sexual behavior need to be provided for this group.

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## Conflict of Interest

The authors report no real or perceived vested interests that relate to this article that could be construed as a conflict of interest.

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