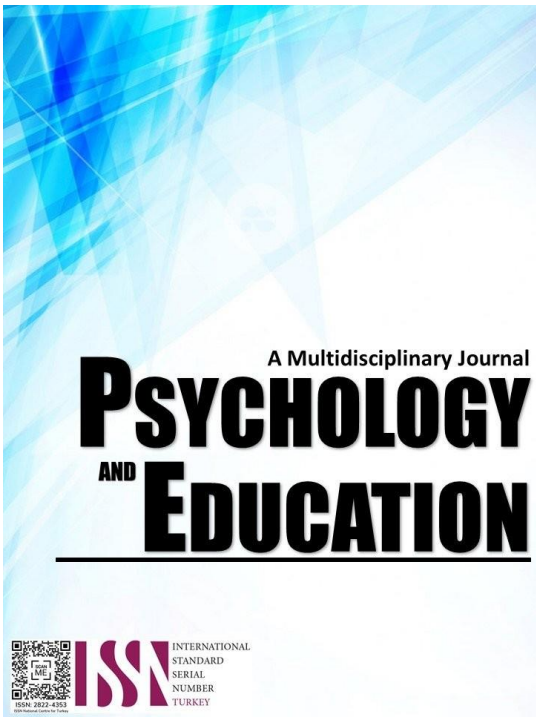


**MAMA-SAN: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON UNDERSTANDING  
SHAME AND REGRETS AMONG PROCURERS ON "WALKING  
STREET" PAMPANGA**



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## Mama-san: A Phenomenological Study on Understanding Shame and Regrets Among Procurers on "Walking Street" Pampanga

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### Abstract

Exploring the profound emotional dimensions within the world of sex work, this phenomenological study delves into the intricate experiences of shame and regrets among mama- sans operating in the vibrant yet complex setting of "Walking Street" in Angeles City, Pampanga. The research design is grounded in a desire to gain deeper insights into the complex emotions surrounding this group's involvement in the sex trade industry. Through a purposive sampling technique, individuals whose ages range from thirty (30) to sixty (60) years old, actively engaged as procurers will be recruited for face-to-face interviews. These interviews will explore into their personal narratives and experiences, aiming to understand how shame and regrets manifest within their daily lives. The interpretive phenomenological approach offers a valuable framework for capturing nuanced aspects of subjective experiences by emphasizing participants' lived realities. By adopting this approach, researchers seek a comprehensive understanding of the emotional landscape that shapes procurers' perceptions, motivations, coping mechanisms, and potential avenues for intervention or support. Data analysis will involve thematic analysis techniques that allow for identification and interpretation of recurring patterns within participants' accounts. This process will help uncover key themes related to shame and regrets while recognizing individual variation amongst procurers. Findings from this study are expected to contribute significantly to existing literature on shame theory as well as broader discussions surrounding sex work-related research. It is hoped that these findings may inform policies aimed at addressing the emotional well-being of individuals involved in similar contexts while offering insights into potential interventions targeting shame reduction strategies or support services tailored explicitly for this population

**Keywords:** *qualitative study, interpretive phenomenological approach, red-light district, walking street, shame*

### Introduction

The red-light districts around the world are intriguing and complex spaces that have long captured the attention of researchers and the general public alike. These areas are characterized by the presence of establishments offering sexual services, and the individuals who work within this industry often face unique challenges and experiences. One such red light district is "Walking Street" in Angeles City, Pampanga, which is renowned for its vibrant nightlife and its concentration of bars, clubs, and establishments catering to the sex trade.

A mama-san or mamasan is a woman in a position of managing, particularly one in charge of an East Asian geisha house, bar, or nightclub. A mama-san is a woman in Southeast Asia who works in a supervisory role at specific facilities, typically those related to drinking establishments. The term is a blend of the English word "Mama" and the Japanese suffix -san, which is a polite honorific appended to a person's name or title, and was coined by US soldiers in Japan after World War II, which likely influenced its spread to other Southeast Asian countries.

Referring to a lady in charge of a respectable restaurant or inn as mama-san is considered exceedingly impolite. Okami or okami-san is her proper title. Mama-san is a term used in Thailand and the Philippines to designate a woman who manages female workers in bars and brothels. To some sense, these are the local analogues of a madam, albeit the conventions of bar fine prostitution in Asia differ greatly from those of street or brothel prostitution in Western countries. In the United States, mamasan (often abbreviated MMS) refers to the lady who manages the personnel in Asian massage parlors.

The study "Understanding Shame and Regrets among Procurers in "Walking Street" Angeles City, Pampanga" aims to determine whether Procurers or Mama-san can feel shame and regrets during their work. Also, to determine the impact of working in an environment that can affect those women who work as a mama-san procurer. And the effects of the job in regards to their emotional, mental and social well-being.

This study addresses a significant gap in the existing literature by specifically focusing on the experiences of shame and regrets among procurer in the context of Angeles City's "Walking Street". It aims to comprehensively explore these emotions, their causes, coping mechanisms, and their intersection with societal norms and personal values among women in this red-light district. By concentrating on this geographic area, the research aims to unravel the unique experiences of shame and regret among mama-sans. The study's insights hold promise in guiding targeted interventions and support services to address emotional well-being in red-light districts, potentially reducing stigmatization and discrimination faced by procurers. Moreover, the findings serve as a foundation for advocacy efforts and policy reforms, offering a pathway to enhance working conditions and rights for procurers in "Walking Street," Angeles City, Pampanga. Ultimately, the study's significance lies in its potential to advance academic knowledge, inform support systems, diminish stigma, and drive advocacy and policy changes for the betterment of procurers' lives in this specific location.

## Research Questions

The red-light district in "Walking Street," Angeles City, Pampanga, presents a unique context where women engage in sex work, potentially leading to experiences of shame and regrets. This phenomenological study aims to understand the subjective experiences of shame and regrets among women in this specific setting. The study sought to address the following research questions aligned with the objectives:

1. What are the subjective experiences of shame and regrets among women engaged in sex work in the red-light district of "Walking Street" in Angeles City, Pampanga?
2. What factors contribute to the development of feelings of shame and regrets among women involved in sex work in the context of "Walking Street"?
3. How does societal stigma shape and influence the emergence and expression of shame and regrets among women in the red-light district?
4. What coping mechanisms and strategies do women in the red-light district employ to manage and navigate feelings of shame and regrets?
5. Based on the subjective experiences and identified coping strategies of women in the red-light district, what interventions and support mechanisms can be recommended to alleviate and address their experiences of shame and regrets?

## Methodology

### Research Design

The research design for this phenomenological study adopts an interpretive qualitative approach, specifically utilizing Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Creswell's emphasis on understanding human experiences within their contexts aligns well with this approach. By integrating Creswell's framework, the study aims to comprehensively interpret the subjective experiences of shame and regrets among procurers.

**Sampling Strategy:** Purposive sampling will be employed to recruit individuals within the specified age range (30 to 60 years old) who are actively engaged as procurers in the identified location. This targeted sampling strategy ensures that participants possess the lived experiences essential to address the research objectives.

**Data Collection Methods:** Face-to-face interviews will be the primary method of data collection. This approach facilitates in-depth exploration and encourages participants to provide rich descriptions of their experiences. The interactive nature of interviews allows for a nuanced understanding of the emotional landscape and the manifestations of shame and regrets in their daily lives.

**Ethical Considerations:** This study will adhere to ethical standards, including obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality, and prioritizing participant well-being throughout the research process.

By integrating these elements into the research design, the study aims to capture the nuanced and unique aspects of procurers' experiences, providing a deeper understanding of the emotional dimensions within the context of "Walking Street".

### Participants

The research study on procurers in Angeles City's red-light district in Pampanga aims to engage participants aged thirty (30) to sixty (60) who fulfill the role of *mama-san* for interviews. To narrow the study's scope, exclusion criteria are being considered. These criteria are vital to concentrate on specific individuals or situations while upholding ethical standards and ensuring the safety, welfare, and credibility of both participants and researchers. Proposed exclusion criteria include age limitations, ensuring compliance with legal and ethical considerations related to age of consent. Additionally, individuals with a criminal record associated with human trafficking or exploitation would be excluded to prioritize safety. Those unable or unwilling to provide informed consent will also be excluded to guarantee understanding of the study's nature and involvement. Moreover, participants with severe mental health conditions or substance abuse issues that might compromise their ability to participate or provide accurate information would be excluded. Fluency in the research's dialect is another criterion to ensure effective communication. Residency or citizenship requirements, depending on the research location's legal and ethical guidelines, may lead to exclusion. Lastly, the criteria would exclude individuals coerced or forced to participate, emphasizing the voluntary nature of involvement. These criteria collectively aim to fortify the study's integrity while safeguarding the rights and well-being of all involved.

### Instrument

The research instrument for this qualitative phenomenological study will primarily consist of a semi-structured interview protocol, which will serve as the main tool for data collection. The interview protocol will be carefully designed to capture the experiences, emotions, and perceptions of shame and regrets among procurers or *mama-sans* working in the red-light district of "Walking Street" in Angeles City, Pampanga.

The semi-structured interview protocol will include a series of open-ended questions that allow participants to share their personal stories and reflections. The questions will be developed based on the research objectives and aligned with the identified thematic areas

related to shame and regrets. The protocol will provide a flexible framework for the interviews, allowing for in-depth exploration of participants' experiences while ensuring consistency across interviews.

The interview questions may cover a range of topics, including specific incidents that triggered feelings of shame or regret, coping mechanisms employed by the participants, societal attitudes and stigmas surrounding their occupation, and potential support mechanisms or interventions that may help address shame and regrets among women in the red-light district.

In addition to the interview protocol, consent forms will be developed to obtain informed consent from the participants. These forms will clearly outline the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. The consent forms will provide participants with the necessary information to make an informed decision about their involvement in the research.

One method of validation that can be incorporated into the research instrument is member checking. After conducting the semi-structured interviews with procurers or mama-sans in the red-light district, a member checking process can be implemented. This involves sharing synthesized or summarized findings with the participants themselves. The researchers can present these findings to the participants and seek their feedback, allowing them to confirm, elaborate on, or correct the interpretations made based on their experiences. This iterative process of validation enhances the credibility and accuracy of the study's findings by ensuring that the participants' perspectives are accurately represented and understood.

Thus, the research instrument for this qualitative phenomenological study will facilitate a comprehensive exploration of the experiences of shame and regrets among women in the red-light district. The semi-structured interview protocol will allow for nuanced discussions, while the consent forms will ensure ethical considerations and participant rights are upheld throughout the research process.

## Procedure

The data gathering procedure for this qualitative phenomenological study on understanding shame and regrets among mama-sans in the red-light district of "Walking Street" in Angeles City, Pampanga, will involve several key steps to collect rich and detailed data. The procedure will primarily revolve around conducting semi-structured interviews with the participants. The following steps outline the data gathering procedure:

**Participant Recruitment:** Participants will be recruited through purposive sampling, targeting mama-sans who have firsthand experience working in the red-light district. Collaboration with local organizations, support groups, and community contacts familiar with the area will aid in identifying potential participants. Recruitment efforts will prioritize sensitivity, respect, and adherence to ethical guidelines.

**Informed Consent:** Prior to data collection, informed consent will be obtained from each participant. They will be provided with a consent form that outlines the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality, and their rights as participants. The research team will address any questions or concerns raised by the participants before obtaining their informed consent.

**Semi-Structured Interviews:** The semi-structured interviews will be conducted in a safe and private environment, ensuring the comfort and confidentiality of the participants. The interviews will be audio-recorded, with the participants' permission, to facilitate accurate data capture. The research team will establish rapport and create a non-judgmental atmosphere to encourage open and honest discussions. In addition, a local authority who guards the street will assist us inside the street and will guide us through the interview process.

**Interview Protocol:** The research team will utilize a carefully designed interview protocol consisting of open-ended questions. The protocol will guide the interviews and cover various aspects related to shame and regrets, allowing participants to share their experiences, emotions, and perceptions in their own words. The interview questions will be flexible, enabling participants to elaborate on specific incidents, coping mechanisms, societal attitudes, and potential support mechanisms.

**Data Transcription:** Following the interviews, the audio recordings will be transcribed verbatim. The transcriptions will capture the participants' narratives and expressions, ensuring accuracy in the data analysis process. Transcriptions may be anonymized by using pseudonyms or participant codes to maintain confidentiality.

**Data Analysis:** Thematic analysis will be employed to analyze the interview data. The research team will identify recurring themes, patterns, and categories within the transcribed data. The analysis process will involve coding, categorization, and interpretation of the data to generate meaningful insights and understandings related to shame and regrets among the participants.

**Data Verification:** To enhance the validity and credibility of the findings, member checking and peer debriefing techniques may be employed. Member checking involves sharing the findings or interpretations with the participants to validate accuracy and provide an opportunity for their input. Peer debriefing involves discussing and reviewing the analysis process with other researchers or experts in the field to ensure rigor and reduce potential bias.

**Data Storage and Confidentiality:** The research team will store the interview recordings and transcriptions in a secure and password-protected location. Only authorized members of the research team will have access to the data. Confidentiality will be strictly maintained, and all identifying information will be anonymized to protect the participants' identities.

Through this data gathering procedure, the research team aims to collect in-depth and nuanced data on the experiences of shame and regrets among procurers in the red-light district. The procedure prioritizes ethical considerations, participant consent, confidentiality, and the generation of reliable and valid findings.

### Data Analysis

Thematic analysis will be employed as the primary method for data analysis in this qualitative case study. Thematic analysis is a flexible and widely used approach that allows for the identification, analysis, and interpretation of patterns and themes within qualitative data. It provides a systematic way of organizing and understanding the participants' narratives and experiences related to shame and regrets in the red-light district of 'Walking Street' in Angeles City, Pampanga.

Creswell often emphasizes the importance of systematically analyzing qualitative data to identify patterns, themes, and insights that emerge from participants' narratives.

The data analysis process will involve several steps. Initially, the research team will become familiar with the data through repeated readings of the interview transcripts, immersing themselves in the participants' stories and gaining a comprehensive understanding of the content. They will then proceed to code the data, identifying meaningful units of information that pertain to the research objectives. These codes will capture various aspects such as specific incidents of shame and regrets, coping mechanisms, societal attitudes, and support mechanisms.

Next, the coded segments will be organized into categories and subcategories based on their similarities and relationships. This process of categorization will help cluster related codes together, allowing the research team to identify emerging themes that cut across the participants' narratives. These themes may represent common experiences, patterns, or phenomena related to shame and regrets in the context of the red-light district.

Once the themes are established, the researchers will delve into a deeper level of analysis, interpreting the data within each theme. This involves examining the variations and nuances within the theme, exploring the underlying meanings and contexts, and identifying any contradictions or divergent perspectives. The researchers will engage in discussions to refine and validate the interpretations, ensuring the trustworthiness and rigor of the analysis.

Throughout the analysis process, the research team will maintain reflexivity, acknowledging their own biases and assumptions and taking steps to minimize their influence on the interpretation of the data. They will also consider the wider socio-cultural context of the red-light district and its impact on the participants' experiences.

Finally, the findings will be summarized and presented in a coherent and meaningful manner. The research team will construct a narrative that captures the identified themes, subthemes, and key insights, supported by relevant quotes and examples from the data. This narrative will provide a comprehensive understanding of the experiences of shame and regrets among women in the red-light district, shedding light on the complex dynamics and individual perspectives within this context.

Thematic analysis offers a robust and systematic approach to analyzing and interpreting the qualitative data, enabling the research team to uncover the rich and nuanced experiences of shame and regrets among the participants. The findings will contribute to the existing knowledge base on this topic, potentially informing interventions and support mechanisms for women in similar contexts.

### Ethical Considerations

The interview will be conducted with caution and adhere strictly to the rules of ethics when conducting the research. In the course of our study, researchers may face several potential risks.

Firstly, participant vulnerability is a concern, as individuals engaged in certain occupations may be susceptible to coercion or exploitation. Secondly, maintaining confidentiality and privacy is challenging within a small, closely-knit community like Walking Street, where unintentional disclosure could have severe consequences for participants. Lastly, obtaining genuine informed consent may be difficult due to the inherent power dynamics and vulnerability of the participants.

**Participant Vulnerability:** To mitigate these risks the researchers will not coerce them or use force on them. The respondents are free to choose how to respond to the questionnaires and behave without worrying about being punished. In this case, it's important to follow the informed consent principle. Every respondent was made aware that they could leave or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

**Informed Consent:** The right to consent to or reject audio recordings was given to the respondents.

**Recording and Documentation:** If they object to being recorded, the researcher will take handwritten notes throughout the interview.

**Review and Approval:** After the interview, the respondents will be asked to comment on the notes to ensure that they accurately reflect their responses.

**Confidentiality and Privacy:** The respondents were not obliged to provide their legal names to protect their privacy.



**Participant Identities and Voluntary Participation:** The study was voluntary; the participants' identities were kept private and only the researchers have the access to the data's that were gathered. The study's content was meticulously researched and appropriately cited by the researchers. The researchers conducted the study according to all guidelines and thoroughly recorded all the data they gathered. This proposal has been reviewed and approved by the Our Lady of Fatima University - Institutional Ethics Review Committee (OLFU - IERC) which is a committee whose task it is to make sure that research participants are protected from harm. Refuse to use any forgery, fabrication, falsification, or purposeful misrepresentation of the collected data, the researchers protect the integrity of their work.

Upon completion of the interview process, as an expression of gratitude towards the respondents for their valuable participation in our study, we intend to provide them with a small token of appreciation, a perfume to be exact that is suitable for daily use. As for the duration of data retention, the researchers will store the collected data until the finalization and publication of our research study. In the process of disposing of the gathered data, including voice recordings, all copies, backups, and shared files will be permanently deleted. Additionally, soft of questionnaires and consent forms will be erased, while hard copies will undergo secure measures such as shredding or incineration to prevent any possibility of reconstruction. The researchers are committed to documenting the details of data deletion, including what data was deleted, the timing of deletion, and the methods employed in the deletion process. This meticulous approach ensures transparency and accountability in managing and securing the collected information.

## Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings and analysis in accordance with the primary purpose of the study that is to understand and describe how shame and regrets play out in the lives of procurers on "Walking Street" Angeles City, Pampanga, consequently aiming to raise awareness and understanding about their perspectives regarding their work and how it affects their lives.

In conducting this research, the researchers gathered data through semi-structured interviews from 6 adults working in "walking street" Angeles City, Pampanga. Appropriately, the method for analyzing the verbal statements from the participants was done in three levels: (a) transcription, (b) initial coding, and (c) theme generation. Constant comparison was employed at each level of analysis to further distill the data until patterns appeared. Subsequently, the following paragraphs are the themes derived from the accounts of the participants which answered the research problems.

### Subjective Experiences Of Shame And Regrets Among Mama-Sans

Based on the gathered data, participants in the interviews shared their subjective experiences concerning shame and regrets related to their job. They portrayed how they define shame and regrets and explained how these emotions impact their day-to-day life and well-being. Shame is described as a self-conscious emotion arising from the sense that something is fundamentally wrong about oneself, while regret is associated with unpleasant emotions like sadness, disappointment, and guilt. These emotions often stem from cultural norms, religious beliefs, or societal perceptions that view sex work as taboo or immoral.

#### Theme 1: Identity And Survival

The main idea is about how mama-sans, despite facing judgment for their work, prioritize providing for their families. They sometimes feel bad about their job but focus on the practical side of supporting their loved ones. Their stories show they're strong and practical, dealing with both societal pressure and personal doubts. They emphasize the importance of understanding their job in the context of family needs and the challenges they face. Overall, their experiences highlight the need to support them in practical and emotional ways.

##### Sub-theme 1: No Regrets

While societal norms might label mama-san, as immoral or unacceptable, the participants engaged in this job view their work entirely differently. Thus, these reports:

"Pagsisisi? Hindi kami nagsisisi dahil may rason bakit kami nagtrabaho sa ganito at heto ang nakakatulong sa amin, lalo na sa pamilya namin"

("Regrets? We don't have regrets because there is a reason why we worked here and this is what helps us, especially our family.")

Participant 1 "Walang ibang work noong nakaraang pandemic, no choice kami. Dahil nga wala kaming choice kailangan naming magtrabaho, para makakain, katulad niyo nag aaral din mga anak ko, kailangan ko magbayad ng tuition fee nila. Malaking tulong sa akin 'to.'"

("There was no available work during the pandemics so we didn't have any choice but to engage in this kind of work since we had to eat. Just like you, my children are also studying, that's why I needed to work to pay off their tuition fees. That's why this job is a big help for me.")

Participant 4 "No, I have no regrets. May desisyon din kasi na hindi pinagsisishan lalo na kung para naman sa pamilya 'yong ginagawa mo.'"

(“No, I have no regrets. You actually have a choice to not regret, especially if you’re doing it for your family after all.”) Participant 5

When considering the concept of regret in their professional context, the individual underscores a unique viewpoint influenced by the demands of their actions during the pandemic. They highlight a lack of remorse for pursuing work that might be unconventional or frowned upon by society. Instead, their focus centers on the practical necessity of supporting their family, especially during difficult times when other job opportunities were limited. They express a feeling of regret, not for the kind of work they do, but rather for the unavoidable situation that pushed them in this direction. The mention of sin and purity indicates a complicated interaction between personal beliefs and outside limitations. Ultimately, they conclude that their choices were guided by the practical need to provide for their family, while acknowledging the moral complexities inherent in such circumstances.

### **Sub-theme 2: Unburdened by Shame**

The participants described their specific moment or situation differently when they felt a strong sense of shame in their role as a procurer. They expressed diverse feelings about shame within their job. Thus, these reports:

“Iba kasi ‘yong mundo namin sa mundo ng nasa labas, kasi yung mga nasa labas kadalasan tingin palang samin mababa na. Wala kaming kasalanan na nagtrabaho kami sa ganito kasi kami inaaasahan ng buong pamilya naming.”

(“Our world is different from people outside the the walking street because the people outside normally look at us as below them. It’s not our fault that we are working here because our family expects from us.”)

Participant 1 “Well, pagkahiya, hindi eh, sobrang dalang lang siguro? Hindi kasi namin kinakahiya ang aming trabaho kahit ganyan kami na tinitignan ng ibang tao na parang ang lowlife namin.”

(“Shame? Well, no, maybe sometimes, I guess. We don’t feel any shame in our job even through other people look at us like we’re low lives.”)

Participant 4 “Wala, on my part, wala kasi siguro sa edad ko na ‘to. kasi para sa’akin, I’m working for myself kasi nga nag-iisa ako sa buhay, so I need to survive.”

(“None on my part, maybe because of my age. For me I’m working for myself because I don’t have anyone else in my life that’s why I need to survive.”)

Participant 5 “Maraming natutulungan itong trabaho na ‘to pero may konting pagsisisi at pagkahiya pa rin. Kahit konti lang siguro, minsan, oo. Pero dedma kasi kailangan eh.”

(“This kind of work helps a lot people but of course, there are still some shames and regrets. I think there’s a little shame sometimes yes but overall, I just ignore it because of needs.”)

Participant 6 As the participants talked about their jobs, they show a clear view of how they feel and handle things. They talked about having mixed feelings, which come from dealing with life's ups and downs and having to rely on themselves. They mention how important money from work is for them, and they generally feel good about it. But sometimes, they feel a bit embarrassed. They see their job as just a way to earn what they need, not as something defining who they truly are. They know their work is crucial for survival, yet they sometimes feel a bit guilty or embarrassed, though they don't let these feelings take over. Their statements emphasize the importance of financial stability derived from their job, which they deemed essential for their families' well-being.

This aligns with studies such as Patel, S., Kerrigan, D., et al. (2015), which explores the role of work in supporting families among marginalized professions, elucidating the intricate decision-making process and familial responsibilities. They get that some people might see their job in a bad light, but they don't blame themselves. Despite occasional moments of doubt or societal disapproval, they firmly delineated their work as a means of sustenance rather than a defining aspect of their identities. This parallels Dodillet, S. and Östergren, P.'s (2011) exploration of shame in sex work, where individuals compartmentalize their work to sustain a livelihood without letting it define their self-worth. They see their work as necessary for their family and different from doing something wrong. Even though some might think it's not right, they believe it's okay because it follows the rules. Overall, they try to balance the importance of their job with these moments of doubt. The implications drawn from the mama-sans' subjective experiences emphasize the need for holistic support systems that recognize the intricate interplay between societal perceptions, familial responsibilities, and individual coping strategies. Understanding these nuanced dynamics is crucial in developing interventions and support mechanisms that address the multifaceted challenges faced by individuals engaged in stigmatized professions.

### **Factors That Contribute To Feelings Of Shame And Regrets Among Mama-Sans**

Exploring what causes feelings of shame and regret provides valuable insights. Participants' stories offer a deep dive into the complex reasons behind these emotions. We aim to understand the associated aspects of social perspectives, personal beliefs, and various aspects of this job through studying these various data. The study attempts to uncover the different factors that impact the strong feelings of shame and regret felt by mama-sans.

### **Theme 2: Mama-San’s Emotional Insights**

In the study, the researchers explored the complex emotions mama-sans face in their work. Despite society's misunderstandings, mama-sans show strength in dealing with feelings of shame and regret. The researchers have seen how societal misconceptions can make these feelings worse, highlighting the need for better understanding and empathy. Religious beliefs can also add to their emotional challenges, showing the importance of tailored support.

However, some mama-sans exhibit confidence and self-assurance, despite societal judgment. Their stories teach us the importance of self-acceptance and respect for different viewpoints. Overall, the study emphasizes the need for understanding and support for mama-sans in sex work.

### **Sub-theme 1: Lack of Awareness**

The participants opened up about their lack of shame and regret in their work, but they believe that other mama-sans might feel differently. They think this might be because other people have different views and beliefs and some might not fully understand their job. To further understand this theme, the following statements are thus reported:

“Puro lang din kasi panghuhusga yung iba pero ‘di naman talaga nila alam dahil na siguro sa mga sabi-sabi rin ng iba.”

(“Everyone else if full of judgement even though they don’t know anything. Probably because of other people’s opinions as well.”)  
Participant 4

“Hindi porket ganito ang trabaho namin, eh masama na gaya ng nakikita sa TV. Iba kasi ang pagkaka-alam ng mga tao dahil sa mga napapanood nila, mali yung nakikita nila, hindi ganoon ‘yon.”

(“Not just because our work is like this we are bad people like portrayed in television. Other people don’t understand because they are misinformed by what they watch. What is portrayed as us is wrong and different.”)

Participant 5 Studying various perspectives among mama-sans reveals that, while the participants themselves do not experience shame or regret about their job, they believe other mama-sans may feel otherwise. They believe this is because others have different points of view and may not completely grasp their work. The participants emphasize the significance of survival and family well-being, implying that any differences in opinions may be due to differences in perceptions.

This shows the need to understand and respect diverse viewpoints, especially towards those in similar jobs and it shows how important it is to understand and help people in this job, considering how different everyone's thoughts about it can be.

### **Sub-theme 2: Religious Beliefs**

The participant's answer reveals that religion affects how they feel about their work, causing feelings of shame and regret. This shows how their religious beliefs impact their emotions tied to their job as mama-sans.

“Iyong Christian church, minsan pumupunta sila dito, nagsha-share sila ng word of God. Tapos minsan nahihiya kasi nga nagsasalita sila tungkol sa Diyos. Nayuko nalang din kami o ‘di kaya eh aalis na lang.”

(“The Christian church sometimes comes here to share the word of God. Sometimes we do feel shame since they are talking about God. So we would often look down or leave.”)

Participant 5 The personal experiences of the participant indicate the significant impact of religious beliefs on their perception of job as a mama-san. The encounter with the Christian church at work instill feelings of shame and regret. The discomfort shown during religious talks reveals a discrepancy between what they do and their religious beliefs, resulting in disappointment caused by cultural concepts of sin. This shows the difficult relationship between faith and their job, highlighting the emotional problems encountered by mama-sans trying to manage their religious values with the demands of their job in the sex industry.

The elucidation of factors contributing to feelings of shame and regret among mama-sans reveals intricate influences impacting their emotional experiences within this job. Notably, a lack of societal awareness emerged as a significant factor, aligning with Krusi, A., Chettiar, J., Ridgway, A., Abbott, J., et al.'s (2016) study on stigma in sex work. Participants expressed feeling misunderstood due to societal misconceptions, emphasizing the need for accurate representations of their work to diminish stigmatization and foster respect.

Additionally, religious beliefs surfaced as a potent influence, echoing findings from Brown, L., Macintyre, K., and Trujillo, L. (2018) on the impact of religion on shame in sex work. Participant 5's encounter with the Christian church underscored the discordance between personal faith and the demands of their job, evoking feelings of shame and regret. This highlights the intricate balance and emotional turmoil experienced by mama-sans in navigating conflicting religious values and the realities of their profession.

The narratives shared by participants offer valuable insights into the complex interplay of societal misunderstandings and personal belief systems, underscoring the need for a more empathetic understanding of the challenges faced by mama-sans in reconciling societal expectations, personal values, and the demands of their job.

### **Sub-theme 3: Free from Shame and Regrets**



Based on the data gathered, participant 1 and 6 have a clear awareness of the factors that regularly lead them to feel free of shame. Their perspectives highlight a remarkable sense of self-assuredness and an immunity to external judgment. Thus, these reports:

“Wala naman kaming pakialam kung ano sasabihin ng iba dahil hindi rin naman sila makapagbibigay sa amin kahit isang butil ng kanin para mabuhay.”

(“We don’t really care what other people say since they don’t contribute even one grain of rice in our lives anyway.”)

Participant 1 “Wala naman akong pakialam sa opinyon nila e, basta nagta-trabaho ako. Para sa akin, kahit ganito trabaho ko, marangal naman para sa’kin. As long as wala naman akong nilalamangan na kapwa ko at ina-agrabyadong tao.”

(“I don’t really care about other people’s opinions as long as I get to do my job. For me, even though this is the kind of work I do it’s an honest job, and as long as I’m not hurting anyone all is good.”)

Participant 6 The narratives of participant 1 and 6 shed light on a distinct sense of self-assuredness and immunity to external judgment, aligning with recent studies on empowerment within marginalized professions. Krusi, A., Chettiar, J., Ridgway, A., Abbott, J., et al. (2016) highlight empowerment as a crucial factor in mitigating stigma in sex work. Participant 1’s and 6’s perspectives resonate with this notion, reflecting a profound self-confidence that shields them from external opinions and societal judgments. Their perspectives underscore a profound self-confidence and an indifference to external opinions. The statements express a clear disregard for societal judgment, emphasizing the insignificance of others’ views on their work. These individuals’ unwavering self-awareness and resilience also echo sentiments expressed in Brown, L., Macintyre, K., and Trujillo, L.’s (2018) study on shame in sex work, emphasizing the importance of self-acceptance and confidence in navigating societal judgments. Participant 1 and 6’s narratives highlights the need for societal acceptance and understanding without imposing judgment on their livelihoods, fostering a climate of inclusivity and respect for diverse occupational choices. Despite acknowledging occasional feelings of shame, participants maintain a positive outlook, minimizing its impact. This suggests the importance of understanding diverse lifestyles and refraining from judgment. Ultimately, it highlights the participants’ resilience in their roles, fostering a need for societal acceptance and understanding without imposing judgment on their livelihoods.

The experiences of mama-sans regarding shame and regret in their job illuminate crucial implications across societal, supportive, personal, and policy realms. Understanding the nuanced emotions and challenges faced by these individuals underscores the need for a more informed and empathetic societal outlook toward sex work. Encouraging supportive environments, tailored interventions, and non-judgmental spaces becomes essential for their emotional well-being. Empowerment initiatives fostering self-acceptance and dignity within the profession are vital, while policy efforts should prioritize the rights and fair treatment of individuals in sex work. Education and awareness campaigns play a pivotal role in combating stigma by providing accurate information and promoting empathy. These implications collectively highlight the necessity for a more inclusive, respectful, and understanding societal landscape that values the dignity and rights of all individuals, regardless of their profession.

### **Societal Stigma That Shapes And Influence The Development And Manifestation Of Shame And Regrets Among Mama-Sans**

Findings show that the societal stigma deeply affects the procurers in terms of broader community impact as well as how misconceptions and stigma affect the participant’s self-esteem and well-being from other people’s perspectives. The findings also indicated how the participants regard the difficulties they face in terms of their relationships with other people with regards to their jobs.

#### **Theme 3: Misconceptions And Unjust Judgment**

Based on the data gathered, the participants have identified societal stigma as a significant factor influencing the emergence and expression of shame and regret. Their narratives shed light on the impact of societal judgments, thus, these reports:

“Lahat ng tao walang karapatan mang-husga, eh kasalanan na nila ‘yon kung mang-huhusga sila. Basta hindi na namin problema iyon, isipin na nila gusto nilang isipin.”

(“Anyone doesn’t have a right to judge others, it’s not our fault if they are gonna judge us. We just let them think what they want to think.”)

Participant 4 “Iyong sa ibang tao, mga hindi naman nagwo-work dito kaya wala naman alam ganon, mababa tingin nila talaga dahil sa sabi-sabi na rin nga ng mga tao na hindi raw kami dapat gayahin, tama naman ‘yon.”

(“For other people that don’t work here and don’t know anything about this place they view us as below them. They often tell other people to not be like us and I think that’s also true.”)

Participant 5 “Syempre hindi rin maganda yung nagja-judge sila, dahil nga sa ganitong trabaho, mga ginagawa eh para sa iba ‘di tama pero dahil ‘di naman nila alam lahat ng pinagdadaan ng mga babae dito na nagta-trabaho sa bar diba. Para sa’kin hindi maganda na i-judge mo yung tao kung ano man estado or trabaho nya sa buhay.”

(“Of course, it’s not good to judge others because of their occupation. This job may not be right but since they don’t have any idea

what we're going through they have no right to judge us. For me, it's not good to judge other people no matter what status or job they have.")

**Participant 6** The participants' narratives poignantly underscore the detrimental effects of societal stigma on the emergence and expression of shame and regret within the context of their profession, aligning with recent studies on stigma and its influence on well-being. Krusi, A., Chettiar, J., Ridgway, A., Abbott, J., et al.'s (2016) research on stigma in sex work highlights how societal judgments perpetuate misconceptions and negatively impact individuals' self-esteem. Participant 4 and 5's accounts echo these findings, emphasizing the prevalence of societal judgments and their consequential impact on self-perception. The unjust judgment and misconceptions imposed by society profoundly affects the participants, leading to varying levels of internal conflict. Participant 4 emphasizes the futility of others' judgments, asserting that everyone has the right to their opinions but highlights the absence of the need to be affected by these judgments. Participant 5 reflects on the differing perceptions within their community, acknowledging the prevalent judgment but emphasizing the lack of choice in their circumstances. Participant 6 stresses the importance of understanding and refraining from judging without knowing the challenges faced by individuals in their line of work.

The statements of the participants emphasize the necessity of empathy and understanding in the context of our society. When people pass judgment, it is typically because they do not completely understand the hardships and struggles that individual in different job experiences. Having open discussions, educating, and raising awareness can help break these misunderstandings. By fostering a culture of empathy and respect, we can counteract the negative impacts of societal judgment, easing personal feelings of shame and regret.

The implications arising from the societal stigma faced by mama-sans are profound and multifaceted. The findings highlight the urgent need for societal empathy, understanding, and education to counteract the misconceptions and judgments that deeply affect these individuals. Addressing societal stigma through open dialogue, awareness campaigns, and education becomes crucial to fostering a more empathetic and respectful environment. It is imperative to encourage a culture that refrains from unjust judgment, respects diverse professions, and acknowledges the complexities of different occupational choices. By promoting understanding and empathy, society can significantly reduce the negative impact of stigma on individuals' feelings of shame and regret. Moreover, initiatives focusing on community education and engagement can help bridge the gap between societal perceptions and the lived experiences of mama-sans, fostering a more inclusive and supportive social landscape.

### **Coping Mechanisms And Strategies That Mama-Sans Employ To Manage And Navigate Feelings Of Shame And Regrets**

Findings show that the participants lack sources of support but they did share some valuable lessons and advises for other people as well as specific strategies and practices that they employ in their jobs to navigate feelings of shame and regrets.

#### **Theme 4: Adaptive Strategies**

In exploring the coping mechanisms and strategies employed by mama-sans to manage feelings of shame and regret, our study uncovers two significant sub-themes: Peer Support and Spiritual Resilience. Peer Support illuminates the intrinsic value of camaraderie and mutual understanding among colleagues, providing avenues for sharing personal difficulties and offering support. Participants underscore the profound motivation derived from personal experiences and the kindness exhibited by their employers, fostering resilience and emotional sustenance within the workplace environment. On the other hand, Spiritual Resilience highlights the profound impact of faith and spirituality in providing solace and fortitude amidst adversities. Prayer serves as a powerful conduit for seeking guidance and inner strength, empowering individuals to confront societal stigmas associated with their work with dignity and resolve. Their reliance on faith fosters moral integrity and responsibility towards their families, fostering solidarity and mutual understanding among peers. Overall, our findings emphasize the adaptive nature of coping strategies employed by mama-sans, underscoring the importance of supportive environments and diverse coping mechanisms in navigating the challenges posed by societal stigma.

#### **Sub-theme 1: Peer Support**

The participants discussed the insightful things they had learned from peers or coworkers on handling these emotional well. Thus, these reports:

"Lahat kami dito nago-open open. Nagshe-share kami ng mga problema tulad ng dahilan na 'yong tatay at nanay ko walng trabaho, kaya mas pinipili ko 'to. Nagsasabihan kami sa isa't isa. Kami-kami lang din yung magtu-tulungan."

("Everyone here opens up to everyone. We share our problems like the instance that my parents don't have jobs so I chose this occupation. We open up to each other since we are the only ones who will also help each other.")

**Participant 2** "Nag-tulungan lang kami para lahat aangat, 'Pag hirap sila, tutulungan namin sila, 'di namin papabayaang siyempre alaga ko sila. Mga boss namin dito, mababait, may concern sila sa amin."

("We're just helping each other so that everyone can lift themselves. If they're struggling, we'll help them, we won't let them down, of course I'll take care of them. Our bosses here are kind, they are concerned about us.")

**Participant 6** Based on the insights shared by the participants, they've highlighted the value of peer support and camaraderie in navigating the emotional challenges inherent in their job. Their conversations with peers and colleagues serve as avenues for mutual

understanding, sharing personal difficulties, and offering support. Krusi, A., Chettiar, J., Ridgway, A., Abbott, J., et al.'s (2016) study aligns with the participants' reliance on peer support networks. Participant 2 and Participant 6 highlight the value of camaraderie and mutual understanding among colleagues, echoing the study's insights into how peer support aids in navigating emotional challenges within stigmatized professions. The acknowledgment of familial financial burdens as a driving force behind their work choices emphasizes the profound motivation derived from personal experiences, resonating with the study's findings on the influence of cultural and societal factors on individuals' career decisions in marginalized professions.

Moreover, the recognition of the kindness and concern exhibited by their employers further reinforces their sense of belonging and support within their workplace environment. In essence, these exchanges reveal the intrinsic value of peer support networks, fostering resilience, and offering emotional sustenance, ultimately aiding these individuals in navigating the emotional complexities inherent in their job while fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose among them.

### Sub-theme 2: Spiritual Resilience

The participants' inclusion of faith as a guiding force also emphasizes the profound impact of spirituality in providing solace and fortitude amidst their adversities. For some, prayer becomes a conduit for seeking guidance and inner strength when confronted with emotional or societal challenges. The belief in a higher power offers them a sense of reassurance and resilience, empowering them to confront the societal stigmas linked to their job. Spirituality goes beyond simply as their personal comfort. It gives their job a greater feeling of purpose and significance. They rely on a wellspring of inner strength by anchoring themselves in their faith, helping them to manage their own paths with confidence and determination.

"Basta nandiyan lang ang family ko, go lang ang buhay at syempre connection kay God, kasi siya lang ang pagkakapitan mo eh, anytime na nag-struggle ka sa buhay, siya lang kasi hindi ka dapat lumapit sa iba, sa panahon ngayon, mahirap na magtiwala kase lalo ka masisira."

("As long as my family is there, I just keep going in life and of course, my connection with God, because He's the only one you can hold on to, anytime you struggle in life, it's only Him.")

Participant 5 "Basta trabaho lang nang trabaho at magdasal, magtiwala lang sa Diyos na makakaraos din. Ang mababahagi ko lang, just pray to God, yun ang number one (1), yung connection sa kaniya, walang ibang makakatulong sa'yo, sa kaniya lang talaga lalapit, promise."

("Just keep working and praying, trust in God that you'll get through. What I can share is, just pray to God, that's the number one thing, the connection with Him, no one else can help you, you should only approach Him, I promise.")

Participant 4 "Nagdadasal lang talaga ako, nagsi-simba, ganoon lang. Ang mabibigay ko lang sigurong payo is, Diyos lang ang parati mong tatakbuhan sa lahat. Nakakatulong 'yon at lagi ko lang talagang takbuhan kapag nakakaranas ako ng ganyan is, simbahan talaga, ida-daan ko sa pray para ma-ilabas lahat, kasi wala naman akong malalapitang iba o matatakbuhan kung hindi ang diyos, siya lang ang makakaintindi ng lahat. Laking tulong at ginhawa niya sa lahat, 'yon lang."

"I really just pray, go to church, that's it. Maybe the advice I can give is, always run to God in everything. That helps and whenever I experience something like that, I really just go to church, I'll pour it out in prayer to let it all out, because I don't have anyone else to go to or run to except God, He's the only one who can understand everything. He's a great help and relief to everyone, that's all."

Participant 6 Moreover, faith serves as a source of hope, instilling in them the belief that their actions, despite societal judgment, are rooted in a sense of righteousness and responsibility towards their families. The participants' reliance on faith and spirituality echoes the findings of studies such as "Religious Coping Mechanisms and Psychological Well-being of Female Sex Workers" by

Okanlawon et al. (2017) and "Exploring Religious Coping among Male and Female Sex Workers in Southeast Asia" by Limet al. (2018). These studies delve into how individuals in stigmatized professions, particularly female and male sex workers, utilize religious coping mechanisms for resilience.

For the participants in our study, prayer serves as a conduit for seeking guidance and inner strength in confronting emotional or societal challenges. They find reassurance and empowerment in their belief in a higher power, enabling them to address the societal stigmas associated with their profession. The spiritual facet of their lives extends beyond personal comfort, infusing their work with a profound sense of purpose and significance. Anchored in their faith, they draw upon an inner reservoir of strength, navigating their paths with unwavering confidence and determination.

Participant 5 articulates this sentiment, emphasizing the lack of shame in their actions, supported by familial connections and a deep-rooted connection to God as their sole refuge during life's struggles. Participant 4 echoes this reliance on prayer, citing it as their primary recourse and the sole source of assistance, while Participant 6 underlines the unique understanding and solace found in their religious community.

This reliance on faith instills a sense of moral integrity and responsibility towards their families, fostering solidarity and mutual understanding among peers engaged in similar work. It becomes a unifying force, allowing them to share collective prayers and support,

bolstering their emotional resilience and enabling them to navigate the complexities of their job with unyielding resolve and dignity. Overall, the implications emphasize the need for inclusive workplaces and communities that prioritize empathy, support networks, and respect for diverse belief systems. By embracing these principles, society can contribute to reducing stigma, nurturing emotional well-being, and promoting solidarity among individuals engaged in stigmatized professions like that of the *mama-sans*.

### **Interventions And Support Mechanisms That Can Be Recommended To Alleviate And Address The Experiences Of Shame And Regrets Among Mama-Sans**

Interventions and support mechanisms that can be recommended to alleviate and address experiences of shame and regrets among *mama-sans*. The participants shared their hopes and needs for their job and working industry. The participants also mentioned existing supports such as their peers and employers that helps them go through the hardships of their jobs. They also voiced out their discontent with the local organizations for their lack of assistance.

#### **Theme 5: Fostering Empathy And Support**

This study delved into interventions and support mechanisms designed to alleviate the experiences of shame and regret among *mama-sans*. Participants highlighted the importance of family support and their connection with God in navigating life's challenges. However, they also expressed discontent with the lack of assistance from local organizations, underscoring a gap in support services. The participants emphasized the significance of recognition and respect in their workplace, indicating a need for practical programs and accessible aid. Moreover, *mama-sans* stressed the importance of understanding and respect in their working environment, seeking acknowledgment of their difficulties and a platform to be heard and respected for their contributions. These findings underscore the necessity for empathy, understanding, and acknowledgment within the workplace, urging organizations to cultivate a supportive environment that values the experiences and efforts of *mama-sans*. By promoting open-mindedness and dispelling societal misconceptions, targeted interventions can help reduce stigma and foster inclusivity, ultimately improving the well-being of individuals in marginalized professions.

#### **Sub-theme 1: Support Networks**

Local organizations and authorities play an essential role in assisting those dealing with shame and regrets. Unfortunately, far too often, those in need of help are not able to access the resources and support they require. This leaves them feeling lost and alone, struggling to cope with the overwhelming emotions of shame and regret. To gain further insight into this theme, the following statements are thus reported:

“Wala naman sila ginagawa para sa amin. Kahit alam nilang nahihirapan ‘yong mga nagtatrabaho dito, ‘di naman sila gumagawa ng hakbang. Kaya ganoon na lang din tingin sa amin ng iba, dahil na rin sa hindi nila binibigyan ng halaga yung tulad namin.”

(“They don’t do anything for us anyway. Even though they know that those who work here are struggling, they don’t take measures. That’s why others look at us that way. They don’t value people like us.”) Participant 2

“Respect ganoon lang sana, ‘yon kailangan namin eh. Sana bigyan nila kami ng importance sa mga ganoon na bagay kasi unfair naman diba. Matino naman kami nagta-trabaho pero wala eh. Ayon, sana matulungan na makakuha ng respect. Ganoon lang naman ‘yon.”

(“Respect just that, that’s what we need. I hope they give us importance in such things because it’s unfair. We are working hard but what can we do? I hope they help us gain respect, that’s it.”) Participant 3

“Wala silang maitutulong, walang mga pakialam samin. Kasi sana bigyan kami ng proteksiyon, ituring kami na same lang ng ibang nagta-trabaho. Maayos at matino naman kami. Hindi naman tulad ng iniisip ng iba. Sana tulungan kami irespeto at huwag madumi tingin, ‘yon.”

(“They can’t help us; they don’t care about us. I wish they would give us protection, and consider us just like other workers. We are good and proper people. It’s not like what others think. I hope they’ll help us be respected and not look at us like we’re dirty.”)

Participant 4 “Siguro, livelihood program. Oo, kasi marami rin naman dito gusto din magbagong buhay kaso hindi nila magagawa ‘yon kung walang source of income, walang pagkakakitaan, so actually naisip ko na ‘yan. Kung ako lang mayaman, magkakaroon ako ng livelihood eh. Sana bigyan kami pansin. Fairness and awareness, parang ganoon.”

(“Maybe, a livelihood program. Yes, because there are many people here who also want to change their way of living but can’t without a source of income that’s why I thought about that. If only I were rich, I would make a livelihood program. I hope they also pay attention to us and treat us with fairness and awareness.”) Participant 5

The experiences shared by the *mama-sans* illuminate the necessity for interventions and support mechanisms to alleviate the burden of shame and regret within their community. While the support from peers and employers has been instrumental in helping them navigate their job challenges, the absence of substantial aid from local organizations remains a significant gap, mirroring findings from studies like "Challenges Faced by Marginalized Communities: A Study of Coping Mechanisms" by Lee, S., Chen, L., and Patel, R. (2019). Participants voiced their discontent with the lack of recognition and assistance from local bodies, indicating a prevalent feeling of being undervalued and neglected. These sentiments reinforce the urgent need for practical programs and accessible aid, aligning with



conclusions drawn from research on marginalized groups' coping strategies.

Participants' perspectives shed light on the essential role that local groups and authorities play in aiding persons who are dealing with emotions of shame and regret. However, the opinions stated point to a recurring issue: a lack of accessible services and help. This lack of assistance leaves individuals feeling isolated and unsupported, amplifying their struggle to manage these overwhelming emotions.

### Sub-theme 2: Respect and Open-mindedness

Mama-sans often feel overwhelmed and isolated, and it can be difficult to find someone who understands their situation. Showing understanding and a willingness to listen can be a powerful way to show them that you care. Showing understanding and listening is essential for mama-sans, as they want to be heard and respected for their hard work. The various challenges they faced as mama-sans when it comes to exhibiting empathy and open-mindedness. Based on the interview, the participants shared statement, specifically participants 4, 5 and 6.

“Understanding, kailangan namin ng pag-iintindi. Laking bagay noon samin, sana maibigay. ‘Yon lang talaga eh. Kasi nga iba ang tingin sa amin. Sana maging open sila sa amin. Unawa at pagtanggap lang talaga.”

(“Understanding, we need understanding. It’s a big deal for us, I hope it can be given. That’s all really. Because they look at us differently. I hope they’ll be open to us. All we need is understanding and acceptance.”)

Participant 4 “Understanding and listen, pakinggan kami. Bigyan kami chance ng mga tao lalo na ng mga taong iba ang pagkaka-intindi sa amin kasi mahirap ‘yon eh. Hindi naman kami makapag-explain sa lahat di’ba? Sana mabigyan kami chance na maintindihan at pakinggan.”

(“Understanding and listening, listen to us. Give us a chance, especially people who look at us differently because it’s hard. We can’t explain it to everyone, can we? I hope we get a chance to be understood and listened to.”)

Participant 5 “Pag-iintindi nalang siguro, ‘yon lang talaga. Wala na ako iba hihilingin kung hindi yung intindi at respect lang sa amin. Sana mas maging open ang mga tao sa ganitong trabaho na hindi ito masama, hindi kami mababa. Normal lang din kaming nagta-trabaho. ‘Yon lang.”

(“Maybe understanding. I don’t ask for anything else other than understanding and respect for us. I hope people will be more open to this kind of work and know that it is not bad and we are not inferior. We also work normally after all. That’s all.”) Participant 6

The Mama-sans' shared narratives point out the need of empathy, understanding, and respect in their working environment. They seek acknowledgement and an opportunity for addressing their difficulties because they are feeling excluded and frustrated. Their plea for understanding and respect, emphasized by participants 4, 5, and 6, echoes similar sentiments expressed by marginalized communities in various studies. For instance, "Empowerment Through Understanding: Coping Mechanisms of Stigmatized Professions" by Garcia, M., Rodriguez, E., and Khan, A. (2018) emphasized the significance of empathy and acceptance in nurturing a supportive environment for marginalized populations. The need for an inclusive workplace environment that acknowledges their experiences and values their contributions emerges as a crucial recommendation. Organizations can proactively address these needs by cultivating an environment of active listening and understanding, drawing from insights gleaned in studies focused on fostering supportive environments for stigmatized professions. When giving care and support, it is important to listen intently and express comprehension. Their expressed desire for understanding and respect emphasizes the importance of these feelings in their working life. Creating a workplace that honors their experiences, recognizes their efforts, and respects their work promotes morale while also increasing productivity. Organizations may build a culture of mutual understanding by accepting their wants and frustrations and providing an environment where individuals feel heard and respected, resulting in a more productive and harmonious working relationship. Cultivating empathy, respect, and acknowledgment of their work is essential within workplaces, creating an inclusive environment where mama-sans feel supported and heard, thereby boosting morale and productivity. Encouraging open-mindedness in society by dispelling misconceptions and normalizing their work through awareness programs is crucial to reduce societal stigmatization. Ultimately, targeted interventions, accessible support mechanisms, and a shift in societal attitudes toward empathy and respect can significantly alleviate the experiences of shame and regret among mama-sans, fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for individuals in marginalized professions.

### Conclusions

Shame and regrets wield significant influence in the lives of procurers in the red-light district, influenced by a myriad of factors. However, their manifestation is complex, delving beyond superficial observations. This study has revealed that procurers navigate these emotions in unique ways, offering an in-depth understanding of how they actively mitigate these sentiments...

The lack of shame in examining their life and work provides a degree of self-acknowledgement underlining the significance of recognizing individual satisfaction from societal expectations. A significant number of mama-sans perceive their work as a means of supporting their families, fostering a mindset that mitigates feelings of shame.

The participants expressed that they had no regrets about their job, despite it being criticized or socially unacceptable because it was



not a matter of fault but a need to meet their familial expectations.

The participants emphasized their reliance on prayer and spiritual connection with God reduces or minimizes their feelings of shame and regret in regard to their work.

Based on the responses given, it can be concluded that resilience is a major factor that the participants have adopted in their jobs which helps them negate their feelings of shame and regrets.

The misconceptions and prejudices surrounding the job that procurers in the red-light district do contribute to the pervasive stigma that negatively affects their well-being and sense of self.

According to the participants, there is a negative impact on the absence of local authorities and organizations' support networks in the workplace, which increases one's susceptibility to unpleasant emotional experiences.

Society frequently labels mama-sans as superficial or immoral, which further strains their already fragile emotions, lowers their sense of self, and makes them feel alone. They have stated that they often feel alone and powerless and that it might be difficult for them to find a sympathetic listener.

This research has highlighted the impact of shame and regret experienced by women on Walking Street in Angeles City, Pampanga. To further understand these experiences in different contexts. The researchers specifically recommend the following:

Future studies should focus on other red-light districts and sex work settings outside of walking street. Attention should be given to the distinct cultural factors and characteristics of each context in order to gain a better understanding of the experiences of women in these settings.

Conduct an extensive literature review to gain a better understanding of the research topic and related concepts such as shame, regret, and procuring.

Future researchers should strive to ensure ethical considerations are upheld throughout the research process, taking into account the potential risks associated with procurers' participation in the study. Establish a strong ethical framework prior to the research. This should include informed consent from participants, anonymity and confidentiality, and clear benefits to the participants.

Given the potential ethical challenges associated with engaging with vulnerable populations and sensitive topics, it is recommended that researchers take extra precautions to ensure appropriate ethical considerations. This should include an ethical review of the research project prior to its commencement, as well as clear communication with participants about what to expect and how their data will be stored and used. Additionally, researchers should strive to be transparent and responsive to any ethical concerns that arise during the course of the research

To ensure the depth and authenticity of the data collected, a qualitative approach should be taken for this study. Qualitative methods such as focus group discussions or interviews would allow participants to openly discuss their experiences in a safe and comfortable environment, and provide more in-depth information than a quantitative survey. Additionally, the use of a trained moderator and an anonymous platform for data collection could help to reduce the potential for social desirability bias.

Develop a theoretical framework to help frame the research. This can include theories of shame, regret, and the commercial sex industry.

Consider including a comparative analysis of the study in other regions to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon of shame and regret among procurers.

Following these research recommendations should help ensure that the study is conducted in an ethical and effective manner.

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