

# A study of AIDS/STI-related knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and practices among establishment-based money boys in Shenzhen, China



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## Introduction

The HIV epidemic among men who have sex with men (MSM) has become one of major concerns in China. Money boys (MBs) who typically sell sex to MSM may also have sex with women and can be a bridge to the heterosexual population.

## Methods

In Shenzhen, China, 28 establishment-based MBs were interviewed in-depth, and 418 MBs were surveyed using computer-assisted self-interview. Time-location cluster sampling was employed. Blood samples were collected for HIV, syphilis, HCV, and HSV-2 antibody testing.

## Results

MBs self-identified as homosexual, heterosexual, or bisexual. They sold sex to both men and women, some bought sex from male and/or female sex workers, and also had male and/or female casual and/or stable partners.

MBs change establishments frequently. One fifth (20.8%) reported ever using drugs, such as ketamine and methamphetamine. Their consistent condom use was lower with non-commercial female partners than with commercial male partners (Figure 1).

HIV/STI prevalences were HIV 3.3%, syphilis 10.5%, HSV-2 11.0%, and HCV 1.4%. Overall prevalence of any HIV/STI was 21.8%; prevalence was 58.3% among ethnic minorities and 21.1% among Hans (China's largest ethnic group); 28.1% for those who had only male partners, but 16.7% for the rest. Odds for HIV infection was significantly higher for MBs with only male partners [OR=8.01 (95% CI: 1.77, 36.26)].

For any HIV/STI, odds were significantly higher for older (OR=1.11) and minority (OR=6.48) MBs, and for those younger at sexual debut (OR=1.15), having only male partners (OR=1.79), or having more male casual partners in the last 6 months (OR=1.26). See Table 1.

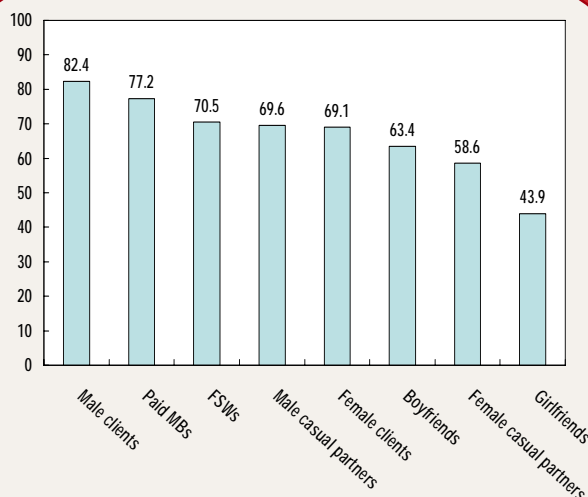


Figure 1. MBs' consistent condom use with various types of partners (%)

Table 1. Factors associated with HIV/STI infections among establishment-based MBs (N=418)

Factors	OR's (95% CI)	
	Univariate	Multiple
Age (older vs. younger)	1.07 (1.02, 1.13)	1.11 (1.04, 1.19)
Ethnic minority (yes vs. no)	5.19 (1.60, 16.83)	6.48 (1.94, 21.65)
Age of sexual debut (younger vs. older)	0.98 (0.89, 1.07)	1.15 (1.03, 1.28)
Gender(s) of sexual partners (male vs. both)	1.94 (1.22, 3.11)	1.79 (1.05, 3.05)
Number of casual male partners	1.24 (1.01, 1.52)	1.26 (1.00, 1.59)

## Conclusions

MBs, especially homosexual and ethnic minority MBs, are at high risk of HIV/STI infections, and have a potential to spread HIV/STIs to both homosexual and heterosexual groups. As a "core group" of the HIV/STI epidemic, appropriate targeted interventions emphasizing safer sexual activities with all types of partners need to be implemented especially among homosexual and ethnic minority MBs.

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