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The background of the entire page is a halftone-style image of a crowd of people, rendered in shades of black and white. The people are shown from behind, looking towards the right side of the frame. The halftone effect creates a textured, dotted appearance.

**MEN, WOMEN AND THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION
OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN FOUR BRAZILIAN CITIES**
RESULTS FROM A QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE STUDY

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Oak Foundation commits its resources to address issues of global social and environmental concern, particularly those that have a major impact on the lives of the disadvantaged. While each program has its own area of focus as a whole, Oak Foundation adheres to six funding principles. These include funding initiatives that:

- Target root causes of problems
- Are replicable either within a sector or across geographical locations
- Include plans for long-term sustainability
- Have secured co-funding
- Strive to collaborate with like-minded organizations
- Value the participation of people (including children) and communities

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Founded in 1997 and headquartered in Rio de Janeiro, **Promundo** is a Brazilian non-governmental and not-for-profit organization that works to promote gender equality and to end violence against women, children, and youth. Promundo conducts research regarding underlying causes of violence and about gender equality and health; implements and evaluates programs that seek to promote positive change in gender norms and individual, family and community practices; and spearheads advocacy for the integration of these initiatives toward a gender-equitable perspective in public politics. In addition to its office in Rio de Janeiro, Promundo has a US office in Washington, DC, which coordinates international advocacy and Promundo project activities outside Brazil.

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Confronting sexual violence, sexual abuse, sex tourism, and the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents (CSECA)¹ has relied upon efforts from civil society and the Brazilian state alike in order to make the goal of children's and adolescents' rights a reality.

The phenomenon of CSECA involves cultural, social, economic, political, and legal factors. Aspects related to subjectivity, culture, values, norms and social representation connect CSECA to other, wider-reaching aspects of social life. Recognizing such social determinants' influences on practical culture and values becomes an important step toward social mobilization against CSECA.

To promote further understanding of the practices and factors associated with CSECA, Promundo, with the support of Oak Foundation, carried out a qualitative and quantitative study to map and understand men and women's perceptions of CSECA in four Brazilian cities, seeking to understand to what extent the attitudes of men and women contribute to its perpetuation.

Of the 602 men interviewed in Rio de Janeiro for this study, 14% said that they had engaged in sexual relations with minors under 18 years of age. And almost half of men who responded affirmatively to having had sexual relations with young girls between 12-17 years of age responded that engaging in such activity was a way for them to feel young. In addition, the percentage of men who affirmed to have had friends who had engaged in sexual relations with adolescents was more than double among those subjects who had engaged in sexual relations with adolescents than among those who had not. These results lead us to infer that peers have a major influence on other men to engage in transactional sexual relations with adolescents.

1. Throughout this publication, the acronym CSECA will be used to refer to the term Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents.

The study also found that, in the case of sexual relations with adolescents under 18 years of age, children and adolescents were blamed for transactional sex and their behavior morally condemned: 41% of men in Rio and 46% of women affirmed that they considered sex work involving minors an act of “adolescent prostitution” as opposed to sexual exploitation. This may reflect a perception that the practice of CSECA as connected to a perceived “availability” of adolescents for transactional sex.

Both men and women, on the other hand, condemned the participation of the youngest subset of adolescents in transactional sex. Here, the delineating factor was age. A majority condemned men who had transactional sex with adolescents between 12 and 14 years of age, placing the blame squarely on the men who abused them. Respondents often used terms such as ‘animal,’ ‘crazy,’ and ‘sick’ for men who had sex with girls in this age range. In addition, many respondents reacted with indignation at the behavior and created parallels between those children and the children with whom they live such as sisters and daughters and younger children victimized by men.

When asked about male adolescent prostitution, there was a greater intolerance, or a greater tendency to “blame the victim.” The blame for the practice fell on the boys and not with the government or the procurer – indicating a clear difference in gender perception between girls as victims and boys as having the agency to decide whether or not to participate in sex work.

Simultaneously, these results lead us to affirm that, in legal terms, there is ample recognition of the fact that children and adolescents should be protected from all forms of abuse and sexual exploitation. Respondents hold the government responsible as enforcers of laws and measures that should punish adults who engage in sex with children and adolescents.

The study also shows that many men who reported having had sex with underage adolescents also reported that they had had a romantic relationship with the adolescent (mostly girls), in effect alleging intimacy as a way to feel less exploitative. A number of men reported that they were unable to have sexual relations after having made a verbal agreement with the girl– again highlighting the tremendous ambiguity that men feel about this practice and providing a point of entry for prevention.

The study also highlights the need to train health care professionals, educators, and members of the justice and legal system about the attitudes and practices of adults who sexually exploit children and adolescents, as well as the need for such professionals to reflect on their own attitudes toward the practice.



Introduction

The use of children and adolescents in the “sex trade” constitutes one of the most permissible and normalized practices of violence in Brazil. According to data released by the Federal Government², reports of commercial sexual exploitation of children occur in 2,798 Brazilian municipalities, with the Northeast region representing the largest number of municipalities where such cases are reported (34%), followed by the Southeast (30%), South (18%), Central-West (10%) and North (8%). Data from the Brazilian National Hotline for reporting cases of child sexual exploitation between 2005 and 2010, found 25,175 cases of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. Among the capitals, the ranking of cities that reported the highest rates were Salvador (BA), followed by Rio de Janeiro (RJ), Fortaleza (CE), São Paulo (SP), and Natal (RN). The numbers are likely higher than what was been reported considering the stigma associated with this type of violence.

The Brazilian government’s recognition of the practice of CSECA as a national problem began in 2002 with the creation of the National Program to Confront Sexual Violence against Children and Adolescents, linked with the Special Secretariat of Human Rights of the Presidency of the Republic. While it is still a priority on the Brazilian government’s social agenda, there is limited research (aside from reported cases) on the attitudes and practices of adults related to CSECA.

2. Source: <http://www.sedh.gov.br/> (accessed on 20 September 2011).

This study, supported by the Oak Foundation, seeks to fill this gap. The study sought to collect data on the attitudes and practices of adults related to CSECA in three Brazilian states. The qualitative research took place between April and September 2009, in Florianópolis, Itaperuna, and Natal. The quantitative data took place in Natal and Rio de Janeiro, between September and December 2010.

In constructing the methodology, we used the following definitions for the terms applied to this research³:

SEXUAL VIOLENCE	The practice of abusive sexual practices. In the case of children and adolescents, this violence occurs via seduction, threat, blackmail or force.
SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS	An action in which an adult, with the objective of attaining sexual satisfaction, engages in sexually explicit conduct with a child or adolescent, with or without the victim's permission. The adult may or may not use force, threat, seduction, or gifts to achieve their desired goal.
CSECA AND SECA	Sexual (and commercial) exploitation of children and adolescents in sexual activities including, but not limited to, sexual commerce, child pornography, or exhibition in sexual performances (either public or private).
CHILD PORNOGRAPHY	Any representation of a child and/or their genital organs, involved in sexual activity, either simulated or explicit, for sexual purposes.
SEX TOURISM OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS	Touristic excursions that seek sexual pleasure. This type of tourism is not limited to foreigners, but rather includes any person regardless of their residency status and usually an intermediary that facilitates this abuse.

THEORETICAL AND LEGAL LANDMARKS REGARDING THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS (CSECA)

In accordance with the Stockholm Agenda of Action (1996), CSECA is any type of activity in which a network or individual takes advantage of a child or adolescent's body based on a relationship of commercial exploitation and/or power. It is, in other words:

...a fundamental violation of rights. It encompasses sexual abuse, perpetrated by an adult, in monetary compensation or the like, either to the child/adolescent or to a third or varied party. The child or adolescent is treated as a sexual object or commodity. Sexual exploitation constitutes a form of coercion and violence against children and adolescents, equivalent to forced labor, and thereby constitutes a form of modern-day slavery (OIT/IPEC, 2007)⁴.

3. For more information, see: Barker G. and Ricardo, C. (2007); Fonseca, V. (2008); National Plan for Confronting Sexual Violence Against Children and Adolescents (2007) and Save the Children Europe Group (2005).
4. Available at: <http://www.oit.org.pe/ipecc/pagina.php?seccion=63&pagina=284>. Accessed on 12 April 2011.

According to Guadamuz and Calvo (2002), there are multiple and varied causes of CSECA. From a structural point of view, poverty, social inequality, and a lack of control over public and virtual spaces, in addition to skepticism about the effectiveness of law enforcement to end it, are factors that propitiate this type of exploitation. Family conditions – namely family violence, mistreatment, abandonment, and in appropriate or abusive sexual experiences in the home during childhood – are also related to CSECA from the point of view of individual/family factors.

Aside from this complex multi-causality, this type of exploitation has a myriad of consequences for its victims, affecting them in various spheres of their lives (Silva, 1998). Physical harm, unplanned pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, loss of self-esteem, distrust and humiliation are among them. It is also worth noting that these consequences are not just immediate or instantaneous; frequently they become life-long issues for trauma victims.

The legitimization and perpetuation of this type of violence is often sustained by a network of suppliers or buyers and/or context that makes it possible. The creator of this abuse is not simply the “exploiter-client”; the “intermediaries” – that is, all those who facilitate the abuse – are themselves implicated in these networks (UNICEF, 2001). For example, owners and employees of bars and hotels, taxi drivers, modeling agencies, tourist agencies, and relatives are also involved, from the contracting to the practice itself.

The issue of CSECA has gained visibility in both national and international discussions regarding violence prevention. One historic planning action came to fruition in 2008 at the “Third Worldwide Congress to Confront Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents” in Rio de Janeiro, at which authorities from more than 125 countries met to discuss actions and global goals for confronting the issue. At this meeting, which took place twelve years after the First Congress in 1996, it was reported that the numbers of children and adolescents who were being sexually exploited were still alarmingly high on a global level⁵.

The “Third Worldwide Congress to Confront Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents” also underlined the necessity to address both child pornography on the Internet, and sex trafficking of boys and girls⁶, as recently incorporated forms of exploitation in the practice of CSECA.

In Brazil, CSECA continues to be a serious issue, and solid research is lacking. Numerous studies on the topic have tended to ignore children and adolescents as individuals who have rights and have protection under the law. Some research on the topic has been overly simplistic treating victims as agents of the abuse, or blaming the abuse on social inequality related to violence, drugs, abandonment and poverty.

5. In total, 150 million girls and 73 million boys, under the age of 18, are estimated to be victims of sexual exploitation worldwide, according to the Report on Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. United Nations Fund for Childhood, Germany, 2009. Given the nature of the phenomenon, these numbers are merely an estimate and should be taken as that.

6. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/brazil/pt/activities_13277.htm. Accessed on 12 April 2011.

Brazil began to insert itself into the international discussion on CSECA at the end of the 1980s, trying to overcome the repressive and patronizing focus of the previous government by introducing new legislation: the concept of children and adolescents as social actors, and thereby bearers of legally enforceable rights. Furthermore, a debate emerged from the exclusive jurisdiction of juvenile court judges, due to political-administrative decentralization, that restricted the rights of states and expanded the responsibilities of municipalities and the more immediate community. Furthermore, it increased popular participation in representative organizations (municipal, state, and national councils on children/adolescent rights).

The attention this issue has received has also attracted diverse voices that have either sought to minimize the practice by focusing on a young person's right to sexual self-determination or ignore the issue. It is also increasingly clear that CSECA is enmeshed within societal gender norms that shape interactions between men and women in Brazil. In other words, this type of violence results from a complex social system based on power inequalities between men and women, which imposes rigid restrictions on men and women, and boys and girls. This limits their right to choose and reflect upon their lifestyles and individual relationships thus reducing individual agency (Barker, G.; Ricardo, C.; Nascimento, M., 2007-8).

Clearly, the majority of victims of this type of violence in Brazil are female children and adolescents. This reflects the widespread perception of the female body as a passive object for use independent of a woman's or girl's will, and male sexuality as uncontrollable, that men inherently need more sex than women (Ricardo & Barker, 2007).

Nonetheless, despite the fact that they do not make up a majority, it is of fundamental importance to recognize the reality of boys who are victims of CSECA. The data, in comparison with the volume of studies on female CSECA, is severely lacking. In this sense, the need to mobilize around the issue is urgent, as much on the part of the state as on the part of organized civil society and academia, in terms of having more rigorous data that can contribute to the implementation of programs and policies to combat this practice (Ricardo & Barker, 2007).

Given this reality, it is important to capitalize on the focus policymakers have given to prevent CSECA and understand how Brazilian society views this type of violence against children and adolescents. To accomplish this task this study explored (1) whether they indeed considered sexual exploitation a form of violence, (2) whether they identified 'culpable' actors for this type of crime, (3) their perception of the children and adolescents involved, and (4) the perceived actions necessary to resolve this national problem.



The Study

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Promundo adheres to emerging accepted practice regarding ethical codes in research and human/social sciences and shares the perspective that the interests of the researched groups should precede those interests of the research itself. This research followed formal ethical procedures: all informants gave their “informed consent” in writing; received information about Promundo and the research’s content and the objectives; and were given the option to not respond to any of the questions. Promundo also follows standard practices in terms of data safeguarding and confidentiality.

STUDY DEMOGRAPHICS

With the general objective of mapping perceptions, attitudes and practices of adult women and men regarding different themes related to sexuality, prostitution, pornography, and CSECA of both sexes, Promundo implemented this study in four Brazilian cities.

7. The number of habitants in the cities was taken from data from IBGE (2010). For more information, see: www.ibge.gov.br.
8. In agreement with Fonseca *et al* (2008: 20), tourism for sexual ends “consists in the organization of touristic excursions with the implicit object of procuring sexual pleasure for foreign tourists or tourists from other areas of the country, utilizing adults and/or children and adolescents to offer sexual services.”

The cities⁷

With 421,240 habitants, the state capital of Santa Catarina, **Florianópolis**, was selected as the representative city of the Southern region. The research was carried out in partnership with the Chico Mendes House, a not-for-profit organization situated in the Monte Cristo neighborhood, a region that abuts the municipalities of Florianópolis and São José. The Chico Mendes House has been active in the community since 1992, developing social projects for its residents, especially children, adolescents and women.

The city of **Itaperuna**, located in the interior of the state of Rio de Janeiro state, has an estimated population of 95,876 inhabitants. In 1980, the city, located in the northeast region of the state, had only 35,000 habitants. With this growth in the population, there has also been a corresponding increase in the number of large civil construction projects, which involve a considerable contingent of migrant men, living in the area solely for work. Given that we know that this type of migration often leads to an increase in sex work and CSECA, the site was selected.

Natal, the state capital of Rio Grande do Norte, is situated in the Northeast region of Brazil and with 804,739 habitants it is considered a city where tourists, especially foreigners, travel for sex tourism⁸. The recruitment of qualitative research participants came through a partnership with the Reference and Social Attention Center (CRAS) of the Africa community. The Africa population is situated in the north zone of Natal, the area with the greatest concentration of low-income residents.

The quantitative data was collected in the city of **Rio de Janeiro**, with a population of 6.1 million, in a large low income neighborhood called Complexo de Maré, in the region of the city known as the Leopoldina Zone. The region has seventeen communities and a population of 130,000. The region is seen as a particularly violent area in popular media and news outlets, which often highlight the (very real) conflicts between local narco-trafficking factions and police oppression. This situation creates chronic tensions, along with informally marked borders between rival gangs.

METHODOLOGY

Two research methodologies were utilized: one qualitative, with focus groups and in-depth interviews in three cities; and the other quantitative, in two cities. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection took place in Natal.

Methods and collection of qualitative data

Qualitative research took place between April and September 2009 in Florianópolis, Itaperuna, and Natal. Researchers conducted focus groups and semi-structured interviews with men and women, between 18 and 59 years of age. This methodology permitted the exploration of how men and women navigate social spaces and times, and how they demarcate social differences and legitimize social spaces and power through gender norms.

This portion of the research was conducted in two stages for each city. First, there were focus groups with men and women, from 18 to 59 years of age. Due to the age range, the groups were separated into two subgroups: one of youths 18-29 years old and the other of adults 30-59 years old. With the groups in place, the corresponding researcher would select two men and two women from each group who showed significant interest or awareness of the themes discussed to participate in in-depth, individual interviews.

It was with this methodology that the research in Natal took place, in partnership with the Municipal Secretariat of Social Action, and conducted at CRAS. The first group was composed of nine men with an average age of 23; the second group included eight men with an average age of 41. The four in-depth interviews took place the following day.

The women's groups had an average age of 32 and the majority participated in the organization's women's group where themes such as HIV/AIDS prevention and self-care were discussed. After this focus group, one in-depth interview was carried out with a 21-year-old woman.

In Florianópolis, some difficulties arose in the formation of the older men's group. During the week in which the researcher was in Florianópolis, the weather was especially cold and rainy. Therefore, the community's roads were nearly impassable. Another problem was that, contrary to what was observed in Natal where a large portion of men were either underemployed or unemployed, in Florianópolis it was rare to find a man at home. The difficulty of finding willing participants was also prevalent with the younger men, since many of them both studied and worked.

9. For reasons of confidentiality, no names are used. We only identify as M and F for male and female, and cite the age.

The first men's focus group, somewhat younger than other groups (average age of 20), included five participants. One of the group's salient characteristics was that the participants held more equitable visions of gender and had a respect for sexual diversity. After several failed attempts to invite men via home visits and personal contacts made through the women and younger men in the study, it became clear that finding a group of older men would be difficult. Thus, the researcher opted to interview two men individually who were interested in the study: a 42-year-old and a 58-year-old.

The women's group was slightly older: average age of 48 and four participants over 50 years of age. One difficulty was that two children were present during the focus group (one 7 year old and a baby, grandchildren of a participant) creating a distraction for the group.

In **Itaperuna**, qualitative data were collected from the men at a natural gas pipeline work site. The women were selected through a partnership with the Prefecture's Secretariat of Social Action⁹.

Methods and collection of quantitative data

The quantitative research took place between the months of September and December 2010, in Natal and in Rio de Janeiro with men (n=602 in RJ and n=100 in RN) between the ages of 24 and 59, and women (n=612 in RJ and n=100 in RN) between the ages of 18 and 59.

The team of interviewers in Rio de Janeiro was composed of twelve female interviewers, twelve male interviewers, and two escorts under Promundo supervision. In the city of Natal, an opinion research firm was contracted to collect the data. This team was composed of seven female interviewers and two male interviewers. Both the Rio de Janeiro and Natal-based interviewers completed a four-hour-long training session, in which they were presented with the research objectives and oriented to the research themes and methodology. The level of education among the interviewers ranged from a middle school education to university graduates.

The interviewees responded to surveys related to perceptions and constructions of gender, violence, and SCECA. The questionnaires were divided thematically in correspondence with the study's objectives:

- PART 1**_Characteristics of the interviewee
- PART 2**_Relationships
- PART 3**_Attitudes about gender
- PART 4**_Behavior among family of origin
- PART 5**_Attitudes, continued
- PART 6**_Men and sexual relations
- PART 7**_Use of Internet for sexual means
- PART 8**_Participation in campaigns and/or programs

For reasons related to the research's focus, Part 7 and questions about sexual debut were added only to the men's questionnaire¹⁰.

Data collection took place in respondents' homes and surveys were administered by the interviewer. In Rio de Janeiro, the communities were divided into sectors and each interviewer received a map designating their corresponding sector. The escorts' role was to take them to the desired addresses. The use of escorts contributed to the inexistence of a refusal rate¹¹.

The timeline of data collection in Rio de Janeiro was affected due to constant police incursions in the area involving gunfire exchange with traffickers in the community. With the exception of these incidences, on no occasion was police or trafficker presence an impediment to the research. However, the interviewees said that they felt, at times, unsafe and intimidated due to the outward display of firearms by some traffickers in the community.

The development of the survey questionnaire and discussion guide was a challenge. Promundo understands that it is completely inadequate to use the term "child prostitution" when discussing children and adolescents (and in differentiating between children and youth) in that it does not attribute responsibility to the adult who commits this act. With that in mind, the use of the term CSECA proposes an inversion of emphasis, away from the "prostituted child" and focusing on the "exploitative adult."¹² That said, it is worth noting that on the questionnaire the term "prostitution" was used in the majority of questions to facilitate understanding between interviewer and interviewee. The decision to use this

10. Please contact Instituto Promundo at Promundo@promundo.org.br for more information on the questionnaires or visit our website.

11. In addition to a badge, vest and ID slips that identified them as Promundo consultants, the fact that the escorts were residents of the community helped to give additional credibility and facilitated better contact with the residents. The interviews took place without the escort's presence, who left the premises upon an interviewee giving consent to participate.

12. Fonseca, *et al.*, "For the end of sexual exploitation: what can men do?" Promundo, 2008, p.21.

13. When Promundo conducts research in other states, there is always a search for institutional partners with expertise in managing quantitative research, aligned with a financial investment within the preset budget. In Natal, a great difficulty arose due to this issue. After nine months of searching, we opted for a partnership with a private firm, with local recognition for their implementation of such research. Natal was chosen for both quantitative and qualitative research because of its widespread recognition as a city with a strong index of sex tourism, with an emphasis on adolescent girls. Due to budget limitations, it was not possible to carry out a survey in Florianópolis.

term was made after pre-testing the questionnaires. The researchers opted to utilize this term, as “sexual exploitation of children and adolescents” was not well recognized by the participants. Aside from that, it was additionally perceived by the researchers that the term “exploitation” seemed to evoke negative associations making respondents omit otherwise honest responses. The term will also be used during the description of results to follow a question that refers to the age of such “prostitutes”.

Specificity of the study¹³

This study concentrates on the perception and practices of men and women regarding sexual exploitation of children and adolescents of the female sex. Although we are aware that the universe of sexual exploitation includes male children and adolescents, as well as male transvestites and transsexuals, as noted earlier, girls constitute the group most affected by this situation (Ricardo and Barker, 2007).

In Natal, the high cost of carrying out the survey research meant that the sample size was small and is not significantly representative thus tests of association were not done. Instead, results should be seen as illustrative.

Results

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

TABLE I_SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

	NATAL		RIO DE JANEIRO	
	FEMALE (N=100)	MALE (N=100)	FEMALE (N=612)	MALE (N=602)
AVERAGE AGE	36 YEARS	40 YEARS	36 YEARS	40 YEARS
RACE: BLACK	81%	65%	55%	54%
RELIGION: CATHOLIC	68%	67%	48%	64%
NO RELIGION	7%	16%	18%	17%
COMPLETED PRIMARY SCHOOL	56%	43%	61%	64%
HAS CHILDREN	74%	64%	84%	75%
IN A STABLE RELATIONSHIP	74%	81%	70%	72%
EMPLOYED	54%	74%	48%	78%
SALARY IF EMPLOYED	FEMALE (N=53)	MALE (N=74)	FEMALE (N=296)	MALE (N=470)
MONTHLY INCOME: UP TO OR UNDER MINIMUM WAGE ¹⁴	57%	11%	45%	18%
BETWEEN 1-2 MINIMUM WAGES	28%	55%	48%	48%

14. The monthly minimum wage in 2010 = R\$510,00, roughly US\$283.

MEN AND THE “SEX MARKET”

Qualitative results show, generally, that there is an understanding that in public space the sex market’s offerings (pornography and/or prostitution) privileges men. What about this “service” interests men? Some responses referred to “biological determinants”: men consume sex based on their alleged natural tendency and propensity to satisfy their sexual “instincts.”

“ Men are just suckers. If he passes a place, and there’s a sweet little girl, all made up, with those little clothes just so....
(M1_38 YEARS OLD – NATAL)

Some men were repelled by the demand sex workers seeing it as “degrading” for men to have to pay for sex.

Men were deeply ambivalent when they spoke about prostitution or sex work. While they acknowledged that it was widespread, they also believed the practice to be underground, marginalized, and something that undermines “normalcy,” and in that sense, to be condemned.

MEN AND THEIR SEXUAL RELATIONS WITH “PROSTITUTES”

In general, when asked about sexual relations with “prostitutes” over 18 years of age, men and women held significantly different opinions of men having such relations if the men engaging in the practice were single. In addition, with regard to morality there was a larger level of acceptance of the practice of sex work by men than by women. At the same time, more women (81%) than men (70%) believed “prostitutes” to be in their situation as a result of personal choice. The other opinions are shown in the chart below:

TABLE 2 RESPONDENTS WHO “AGREE” WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS REGARDING SEX WITH PROSTITUTES OVER 18 YEARS OF AGE

	NATAL		RIO DE JANEIRO	
	FEMALE (N=100)	MALE (N=100)	FEMALE (N=612)	MALE (N=602)
IT IS A COMMON PRACTICE AMONG MEN	74%	83%	59%	77%
IT IS OKAY AS LONG AS HE ISN'T MARRIED OR IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEONE	50%	69%	51%	77%
SEX IS A SERVICE THAT CAN BE BOUGHT LIKE ANY OTHER, INDEPENDENT OF THE PROSTITUTE'S AGE	31%	38%	18%	20%
THAT SHE IS MORALLY WRONG	59%	56%	47%	42%
THAT IT IS HER CHOICE	79%	73%	81%	70%

In the IMAGES (International Men and Gender Equality Survey) data from Rio de Janeiro, conducted by Promundo¹⁵, one specific section addressed men in the “sex market.” Of the 750 men interviewed who answered questions related to “prostitutes” over 18 years of age, 44% of them “agreed” that, “sex is a service like any other and, therefore, can be bought.” Of those men who agreed with this statement, 29% felt that, “prostitution is morally errant,” distancing themselves from the data espoused above. Between IMAGES and this current research project on sexual exploitation, 65% and 70%, respectively, reported that, “prostitution is a woman’s choice.”

In terms of the practice of sexual relations with children under 18 years of age, the research revealed high percentages of those who placed blame on children and adolescents. Forty-one percent of men and 46% of women in Rio affirmed that it was an adolescent girl’s choice to engage in sex work. This calls attention to the fact that the practice of CSEA may be connected to a perception of “availability” on the part of the adolescent (mainly girls), an implication that brings urgency to reflect on what makes men seek out adolescent girls, and about the victimization of those adolescents.

With regard to children under 18 years of age, it should be noted that men from Rio de Janeiro reported lower percentages than other sites when asked about whether having sexual relations with adolescent “prostitutes” is something all men do at least once in their life. Table 3 shows other results regarding the interviewees’ opinions about adolescent “prostitution”:

15. IMAGES is a part of a global research project called the Men and Gender Equality Policy Project (MGEPP) coordinated by Promundo and the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), that took place in 12 countries. In Brazil it was conducted in the cities of Rio de Janeiro and Recife. In Rio, 750 men were interviewed in one lower class community and one middle class neighborhood. For more information, please see Ricardo, C., Segundo, M., Nascimento, M. *Experiências e atitudes de homens e mulheres relacionados com equidade de gênero e saúde: resultados preliminares de uma pesquisa domiciliar realizada no Rio de Janeiro, Brasil. [Sumário de pesquisa]*. Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Promundo. 2009. Also, Barker, G. et al. *Evolving Men: Initial Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)*. Washington, D.C.: International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Promundo. January 2011.

TABLE 3 RESPONDENTS WHO AGREED WITH THE FOLLOWING PHRASES REGARDING SEXUAL RELATIONS WITH “PROSTITUTES” UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

	NATAL		RIO DE JANEIRO	
	FEMALE (N=100)	MALE (N=100)	FEMALE (N=612)	MALE (N=602)
IT IS A COMMON PRACTICE AMONG MEN	23%	38%	18%	15%
IT IS SOMETHING THAT ALL MEN DO AT LEAST ONCE IN THEIR LIVES	42%	41%	32%	12%
IT IS MORALLY WRONG	82%	80%	81%	75%
IT IS HER CHOICE	51%	63%	46%	41%

Based on the IMAGES results from Rio de Janeiro in relation to involvement with “prostitutes” under 18 years of age, 45% of men “agreed” that “it is the woman’s or girl’s choice” to engage in sex work, 67% believed that “it is morally wrong,” and 22% “agreed” that “sex is a service like any other” even in cases involving minors under 18 years of age.

Some respondents recognized the existence of sexual exploitation of children in cases where force is used. In other words, if the sex was forced or coercive the act was believed to be sexually exploitative.

16. The notion of status is relevant because it suggests a distinctive divide among prostitutes: among sex professionals, there exist those “luxury escorts”, who distinguish themselves for not being out in the “street”.

“ A child, sometimes it happens, many are really violated, when it’s against their will. Sometimes they’re taken by force. And sometimes, she ... it’s the child itself that seeks it out. So I think, too, then the issue of needing money comes in ... I think that it’s because they’ve got no shame, adults who seek out children. Or sometimes it’s ... well, there are men that have that desire, right? (...) or, want to know how it is, how it is to get a younger girl.”. (F1_21, NATAL)

Nevertheless, in the majority of conversations, two belief patterns emerged regarding women’s involvement in prostitution: there was recognition that women professionalize sex work as a result of socioeconomic conditions, and that women choose to engage in it for a variety of reasons such as because they want to, there is a *status*¹⁶ they want to maintain, addiction to drugs, because they do not want to seek other kinds of work or, finally, because they like it.

“ I think almost all of them do it out of necessity. Either for food or to pay for school. But it’s out of necessity. I think it’s very rare that a woman will do it because she wants to, you know, because she likes it (...) I respect it, it’s their lives. I have a sister, yeah, I already told you, she’s a prostitute. I respect her. I don’t have anything against it”. (M4_19, FLORIANÓPOLIS)

“ (...) if a person thinks that they want to sell their body, well, everything is legalized. I feel like, she gets that money there, she has to have money, won’t she get money that way?” (M6_53, ITAPERUNA)

“ My opinion, my perception, I’m against prostitution itself. (...) There are so many people with difficult lives, who pick themselves up, chase after a goal. They get themselves a dignified job. They get a job, something normal (...) I can’t come to see the positive aspects of a prostitute. I can’t see it. I can’t (...). Principal factor of risk in prostitution is sickness. Then drugs. I think that prostitution and drug usage in today’s world is practically hand-in-hand”. (M7_32, ITAPERUNA)

“Evil,” “wrong,” and “dirty” were terms frequently used to talk about sex work. However, despite these negative and socially constructed perceptions men justified their hidden search for sex workers based on “curiosity,” “lack” of satisfactory sex at home, and even to meet their “physiological needs.” In a men’s focus group in Itaperuna, the following statements were made:

- “ From my point of view, I wouldn't marry a prostitute. Do I use them? Of course, but I wouldn't marry (one) because society showed me that it's ugly”. (MEN'S FOCUS GROUP_ITAPERUNA)
- “ Society has showed me that it's wrong and also a woman who lives on sex to get her work done, it's a job like any other, let's look at it from that side, prostitution ... I think I wouldn't marry one, (...) now, there are all types of women. There are women who really like to do that. And there are others who don't”. (MEN'S FOCUS GROUP_ITAPERUNA)

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH CSECA

Families were frequently blamed for creating an environment conducive towards sexual exploitation, classified as negligent for not creating dialogue and providing education to inform their children about sex and sexuality. Respondents seldom mentioned the underlying economic and social causes of sexual exploitation – issues that must be at the forefront of policies to end it.

Within the family, it became clear that many respondents viewed women as the primary culprits who “allowed” their children to engage in sex work. The “natural” role of mothers to care for children meant that they were frequently blamed for not “controlling” their sons and daughters, and thus allowed them to be enticed into sexual exploitation. Yet, one of the interviewees, from Natal, said:

- “ (...) she's the principal caretaker, with the kids, in my house, because I have to put bread on the table for my family and we share the work, she takes care of the house and I take care of my work and we go through life that way” ... (M3_27, NATAL)

Similarly, fathers were often referred to within the context of their traditional male role at home. In other words, they were said to act out in violent and repressive ways in order to protect their children from vulnerable situations.

- “ Moms and dads don't have control of their kids anymore! (...) When a child, adolescent starts to want to have a boyfriend/ girlfriend... the dad has to grab them and thrust a sickle into each one of them” ... (M3, 27, NATAL)

A few male respondents called on fathers to be more engaged in non-violent ways:

“ The responsibility comes from the home, from the parents; it’s not just the mother, but the father who must participate in that education because in the way that they raise their children, the children should have that understanding; now it’s never how the parents want it because in the street or even at school, that poor advice and bad influence still comes”. (M4_36, NATAL)

Another reported factor respondents believed attributes to CSECA speaks to the appeal of unrestrained consumerism, which supposedly seduces adolescents drawing them into sexual exploitation. In this case, the submission to CSECA was not restricted merely to meeting basic necessities, but rather attending to the *status* attributed to money and the products one can acquire with it:

“ There are some types of girls who want to have what they don’t have, when they don’t have the means to do so, and so they just go out with people with money for the status of it. And that for me is a form of prostitution. If you have relations with a person with money and go out with that guy just for the status of it, to get new clothes. I think that is our reality here, we don’t have a lot of child sex exploitation. Here in the region, what we have more of is prostitution for status, we have a lot of that in this region”. (WOMEN’S FOCUS GROUP_ITAPERUNA)

CHILDREN’S AND ADOLESCENTS’ PARTICIPATION IN CSECA

When asked about the participation of children and adolescents in the “sex market,” we saw, for example, the unequal patterns of gender in the socialization of adolescents in their sexual life. The interviewees said that beliefs around masculinity for men come from within the family and sexuality education. For example, the men’s focus group in Itaperuna, in large part, defended boys having access to pornography while denying girls the same permission, saying”

“ I think that there shouldn't be an age, I think that age, in the same way that a 14-year-old boy checks out the internet, or buys a little magazine, or an older brother buys one or even sometimes the dad buys one, man, if thire own father himself encourages the boy seeing it, what's the reason to limit access to 18-year-olds? The 16-year-old guy still doesn't have the ability to discern right from wrong. I think the films should be prohibited for kids under 16. Pornography is my perception of film and art, if a dude sees a Playboy, I don't think there's any problem in seeing a woman there. It's just that I think there are a lot of really young guys, 14 years old, watching porn films, and I think they don't know what's right from wrong. The prohibition, I think, makes the person make more poor choices. Everything that's wrong the guy wants to do. The prohibition is the thing that I think brings the kid to those things, but if he were to have that idea, at the start of adolescence with only 12, 14 years, he wants to discover some things”. (MEN'S FOCUS GROUP _ITAPERUNA)

Children's participation in “sex work” was uniformly objected to as a practice. Yet the determinate that delineated blame from being placed on either the child or those creating the demand, once again, was age. For those between 12 and 14 years, respondents believed there was no reasonable justification for them to be involved in sex work. Instead, they placed responsibility on the men who violated those children, characterizing them as “animals,” “crazy,” and “sick.” Respondents frequently made parallels between children who are sexually exploited and those with whom they live such as their sisters and daughters emphasizing their revulsion to the practice.

“ I don't agree. It's completely wrong, they should be in jail. If a kid come and offers herself to me. What should I do? In the role of an adult man, or even as a father”. (M8_AGE NOT MENTIONED, FLORIANÓPOLIS)

“ 15, 16 years? One of those girls already knows what she wants and how she wants it. She knows really well what she wants, what I want and how I want it”. (MEN'S FOCUS GROUP _ITAPERUNA)

RESEARCHER *At what age do you think she's able to discern, able to control what she wants?*

“ 16 years. When she's 16, she already knows what to think, she knows what's good and what's wrong. That age is already sufficient for her to understand what happens in her own life”.

RESEARCHER Before that, you think her having a relationship with an adult couldn't be equal to adult with adult, for example, like that? Less than 15 years old?

“ No, she's wrong, because if she...she is tempting an adult, you get it?” (M3_27, NATAL)

However, if the adolescent (girl) was seen as physically mature (in terms of development), respondents believed that they had relative autonomy and mobility to make a decision whether or not to engage in sex work. If the girl's body is “developed” and she is seen as “sexually available,” interviewees almost completely abandoned comparisons with family members as they did for examples that involved younger girls. Entering into sexually exploitative networks had a different connotation in this context. Interviewees affirmed that socioeconomic conditions largely impact entry into sex work while implying that it is the girl's choice to be involved in such an activity:

“ The child goes after some adult; and the more adult she becomes, she becomes hopeless; unemployment, sometimes she has a kid and can't maintain him due to unemployment and many do it due to drugs to keep up their addiction. You're only 16 years old. It's not permissible to work. So they get into that type of thing. Looking for prostitution. It's what happens. In the majority of times I see it there, I think that, in general, I agree with it. I see in the mornings on TV the reports, the adolescents of 14, 15, 16, even younger. Because they can't find jobs”. (M2_AGE NOT MENTIONED, FLORIANÓPOLIS)

The incorporation of adolescents into the “sex market” looks to be, according to the respondents, something that happens due to socioeconomic conditions:

“ (...) the child, she doesn't think very well yet, she's not really with it when it comes to the way it is and the way it isn't. (...) A grown woman, experienced, already knows what's good, what's bad (...) a friend of mine, 16 years old, told me that what she did for money wasn't because she liked it; she came to selling her body because of money”. (F1_21, NATAL)

“ Ah, I think if a 12 year old girl, or younger, is prostituting herself, it must be out of necessity, because she’s needing to. Now, if she’s older, you know, if she happens to, well there that happens because she wants to. Because she has some addiction (...) But for me I think it’s normal for both [men and women to prostitute themselves]. I just don’t think so in situations involving children. Minors, I don’t think that’s normal at all”. (M9_AGE NOT MENTIONED, FLORIANÓPOLIS)

LAWS THAT PENALIZE PROSTITUTION AND CSECA

The research revealed opinion differences between men and women (especially in Rio de Janeiro) in relation to the legal system involved in these issues, particularly regarding the prohibition of sex work and the penalization of men who have sex with them, when a clear indication of their age does not exist.

Nevertheless, when we pointed out that a “prostitute” could be younger than 18 years old, men from Rio de Janeiro and women from both regions were almost unanimously in favor of banning the practice, and almost 90% of the respondents look favorably upon criminalizing men who have sex with adolescents.

TABLE 4 RESPONDENTS WHO AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING PHRASES REGARDING SEXUAL RELATIONS WITH “PROSTITUTES”

	NATAL		RIO DE JANEIRO	
	FEMALE (N=100)	MALE (N=100)	FEMALE (N=612)	MALE (N=602)
TO PROHIBIT PROSTITUTION, REGARDLESS OF AGE	55%	40%	48%	19%
TO PENALIZE MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH PROSTITUTES, INDEPENDENT OF THEIR AGES	53%	41%	43%	13%
TO PROHIBIT PROSTITUTES UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE	95%	79%	95%	91%
TO PENALIZE MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH PROSTITUTES UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE	92%	87%	94%	89%

These results lead us to affirm that, in legal terms, there is ample recognition that children and adolescents should be protected from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation. Interviewees charged lawmakers with the task of upholding the law and punishing adult men who engage in sex with children and adolescents.

MALE RESPONDENTS AND SEXUAL RELATIONS WITH ADOLESCENTS

The men's questionnaire contained a block of questions that explored whether or not respondents had engaged in sex with adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17. It is important to stress that those interviewed were intentionally selected (from 24 years of age and up) as we were interested in learning more about the behavior of adults who engage in CSECA. Fourteen percent (n=602) of those men interviewed in Rio responded that they had engaged in sexual relations with minors. Of those, 32% (n=82) had engaged in sexual relations with adolescents under 18 years of age within the 12 months preceding data collection.

In concordance with the data in the table below data from IMAGES in Rio de Janeiro showed that among all those who responded to the question about having had sex with a sex worker (n=626), 56% confirmed that they had. It is worth noting that the men interviewed in Rio de Janeiro for IMAGES had the highest reported rates of paying for sex than any of the other countries included in the study (seven countries total in more than 20 cities). In the IMAGES questionnaire, men who reported having had sex with a sex worker (n=351) were asked if they suspected that the sex worker was younger than 18 years old: 17% of those men said they thought they had sex with a sex worker under the age of 18.

TABLE 5_RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE HAD SEX WITH A SEX WORKER

	MEN – RJ – IMAGES (N=626)
YES, WITH A WOMAN	54% (338)
YES, WITH A MAN	0,5% (3)
YES, WITH A TRANSVESTITE	1,6% (10)
NO	44% (275)

In this study, among the men who said that they had not engaged in such sexual relations with a sex worker (n=519), 54% of the interviewees from Rio de Janeiro (as was the case in Natal) said that they “would not dare” engage in such an act. However, it remains unclear if this was due to respect for the child and adolescent rights, or due to a fear of punishment from the judicial system or social stigma. Research shows that the fear of possible punishment can have a diminishing effect on having sex with adolescents (OIT, 2004).

Among the men who had engaged in sexual relations with 12-17 year old girls (14%), almost half justified this behavior by reporting that it made them feel younger, and fewer than a third of them had used a condom during the sexual act. Aside from that, half of the men in Rio de Janeiro reported having had some sort of affectionate relationship with the adolescent, as can be seen in Table 6. This suggests that some men either felt the need to transform the encounter into a relationship to reduce their guilt about engaging in sex work with a minor, or that men do have ongoing sexual encounters with the same adolescent girl.

TABLE 6 RESPONDENTS AND THEIR SEXUAL RELATIONS WITH ADOLESCENTS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE (THOSE WHO RESPONDED AFFIRMATIVELY TO HAVING PAID FOR SEX WITH A GIRL UNDER 18)

	RIO DE JANEIRO (N = 82)
HER YOUTH MAKES ME FEEL YOUNGER	48%
YOUNG BODIES ARE MORE ATTRACTIVE	70%
I ALREADY HAD A RELATIONSHIP WITH HER	50%
IT MAKES ONE FEEL MORE VIRILE	45%
I WAS UNDER THE USE OF A 'SUBSTANCE'(*)	31%
USED A CONDOM IN ALL SEXUAL ACTS	33%

(*) ALCOHOL, MARIJUANA, AND OTHER DRUGS, LEGAL OR OTHERWISE.

These results reveal the situation of vulnerability that children and adolescents face when having sex with adult men based both on gender and age power differences.

Responding to whether or not the respondents knew of other men – 24 years old or older – who had engaged in sexual relations with adolescents between 12 and 17 years of age: 28% (n=612) of the women and 35% (n=602) of men in Rio de Janeiro said that they knew men who had done so.

Profile of men who have had sexual relations with adolescents

This section examines the profile of men who said they had had sex with adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17. It is fundamental to note that this is a difficult, delicate and complex task; there is of course no stereotype of such men, but it is important to look for patterns.

For the construction of a behavioral profile, a cross-section of data was created, in order to point out nuances that allowed us to see tendencies between those men who have had sex with adolescents and those who have not.

TABLE 7_PROFILE OF MEN IN RIO DE JANEIRO WHO HAVE AND HAVE NOT HAD SEXUAL RELATIONS WITH ADOLESCENTS

	HAD SEXUAL RELATIONS WITH ADOLESCENT (N=82)	DID NOT HAVE SEXUAL RELATIONS (N=519)	P VALUE (* SHOWS THOSE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT)
AVERAGE AGE*	35 YEARS	41 YEARS	0.001*
FINISHED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	37%	45%	0.531
RELIGION: CATHOLIC	62%	64%	0.432
SUFFERED FROM VIOLENCE IN CHILDHOOD ¹⁷	46%	49%	0.700
AVERAGE AGE OF FIRST SEXUAL ENCOUNTER*	14 YEARS	15 YEARS	0.002*
HAS A FRIEND WHO HAS ALREADY ENGAGED IN SEX WITH AN ADOLESCENT*	69%	30%	0.001*
ENTERED SEX CHAT ROOMS	87%	75%	0.246
FEEL THAT THERE SHOULD BE A LAW THAT PENALIZES THOSE WHO HAVE SEX WITH ADOLESCENTS < 18 YEARS OLD*	80%	90%	0.002*
HAS HEARD OF A CAMPAIGN REGARDING CSECA	65%	61%	0.261

* SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENTIATIONS AFTER THE CHI-SQUARE (ONE-SAMPLE AND TWO-SAMPLE) TESTS AND MANN-WHITNEY.

17. The types of violence in question were: insults or swearing; humiliation or threat; slapping or hitting; kicking or biting; punching or cuffing; beating/spanking. The interviewees could also specify other types of violence from which they had suffered.

Based on the responses of men from Rio de Janeiro (n=601), it is apparent that there is a significant discrepancy between the characteristics of men who reported having had relations with adolescents (n=82) and those who had not (n=519).

The average age of interviewees who had engaged in a sexual act with an adolescent was younger when compared with the men who had not had sex with children and/or adolescents. In addition, there were significant differences between the two groups with regard to: 1) current age – those who had had such sexual relations were younger; and 2) age of first sexual experience – those who started having sex at a younger age. This undermines the current misconception that those who engage in sex with minors are older men.

There were also significant differences between the groups who had friends who had engaged in sexual activity with adolescents demonstrating the importance of peer influence.

Another significant difference came with respect to the opinion over whether a law should exist that penalizes those who have sex with minors. There were significant differences between those men who felt that such a law is necessary and those who did not, again perhaps suggesting a sense of guilt and/or deep ambivalence about the act. Differences were not found with relation to: 1) religion; 2) knowledge of campaigns about CSECA; and, 3) use of or access to chat rooms with sexual content.

Even among those who had not had sexual relations with children and adolescents in Rio de Janeiro (n=519), we asked if those men would have sex with adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17: 89% (461) said that they would not, 7% (38) said they would and 4% (18) said they did not know.

USE OF THE INTERNET FOR SEXUAL PURPOSES

Of those interviewed, 36% of men from Natal (n=100) and Rio (n=602) affirmed that they had accessed the internet in the last year. Of those who had we asked a series of questions. Table 8 shows the results when these “users” accessed the Internet for sexual purposes:

TABLE 8_INTERVIEWEES THAT HAD ACCESSED THE INTERNET IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

	NATAL (N=36)	RIO DE JANEIRO (N=218)
IT'S APPROPRIATE TO USE THE INTERNET FOR SEXUAL MEANS BECAUSE IT'S WHERE YOU REALIZE YOUR SEXUAL FANTASIES	58%	33%
ACCESSED THE INTERNET SEARCHING FOR NUDE PHOTOS AND/OR SEXUAL EXPLICIT MATERIALS IN THE LAST YEAR	44%	32%
ACCESSED THE INTERNET SEARCHING FOR LIVE SEX SHOWS IN THE LAST YEAR	33%	26%
HAS OR HAS HAD A FRIEND, 24 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER, WHO ACCESSES NUDE PHOTOS, SEXUALLY EXPLICIT MATERIALS, LIVE SEX SHOWS OR SEX CHAT ROOM INVOLVING ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS	36%	39%
DOES NOT FEEL THAT IT IS APPROPRIATE TO VIEW THESE MATERIALS IF THE FEMALE (IN THE IMAGE) IS YOUNGER THAN 18	75%	76%

There were no differences between men in the two cities regarding whether they felt it was appropriate to “chat” with someone who was younger than 18 years old (75% and 76% in Natal and Rio de Janeiro, respectively).

Qualitative research revealed that women are also “consumers” of pornography, but perceive that they do so for different purposes in relation to men. As the women in the Itaperuna focus group noted:

The woman goes on to look, to see if there's a film for her to watch, but she doesn't buy anything [...]

A woman doesn't have that need to keep looking. The mind of the man for that type of thing is much more fertile, isn't it? He sees a naked woman, he imagines a million things [laughs] that he can do with her. And the woman sees a naked man and I won't say that she doesn't feel anything, but it's different”. (WOMEN'S FOCUS GROUP_ITAPERUNA)

MEN AND BOYS IN “PROSTITUTION”

In general, the offering of sexual services was seen predominantly as a female practice. Asked about men and boys who provide sex for money, participants provided a range of responses: from intolerance to acceptance, with innumerable qualifications of moral tenor:

“ So you have a woman who could be like fifty-something, one day she wants to find one of those boys, for example, she’s already a lonely solitary woman without a husband, she’s going to find a boy like that, and he gains some money. I’m more in favor of men prostituting themselves than I am of women”.
(M1, 38 YEARS OLD, NATAL)

“ Some have the need itself, the majority, like the women. It’s just that I wouldn’t do it... I don’t know, I’d prefer to cut paper, make my living in some other way”. (M4_19, FLORIANÓPOLIS)

Many of the responses reveal homophobic attitudes:

“ The man who prostitutes himself with another man, I feel, is wrong”. (M1_38 YEARS OLD, NATAL)

“ The homosexual man has his own life, does what he wants, and the man who comes to get involved is his equal; I wouldn’t go, ever! But there are dudes who go. And men who get involved with another man, I don’t think that’s normal at all”. (M1_38 YEARS OLD, NATAL)

Responses revealed an even greater intolerance when young adolescent boys engage in sex work – an intolerance that placed blame on the boys themselves and not upon either the state or those who pay for sex – thus reflecting deeply rooted gender norms, including characteristics of hegemonic masculinity, that boys somehow have the agency to control if they are sexually exploited.

As noted above, we also saw subtle and not so subtle homophobia. Respondents said they abhorred discrimination, but presented a critical and negative point of view regarding the values, practices and behaviors of homosexuals. At its most explicit level, this homophobia showed up in comments suggesting fear/shame of getting near to it, and complacency toward acts of sexual violence toward boys and men.

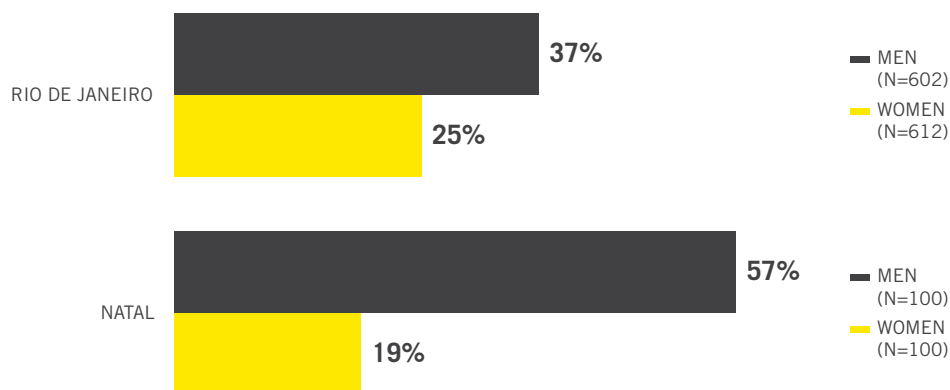
The specific reality of boys who are sexually exploited needs more attention within the field of CSECA, particularly efforts to critically deconstruct ways that hegemonic masculinity and homophobia pervade attitudes about it. While respondents in the case of girls showed a kind of sympathetic but at the same time victimizing gaze toward young girls who are sexually exploited, in the case of boys they seemed nearly indifferent.

GENDER ATTITUDES

Regarding violence against women

As can be seen in Graph 1, in regards to the question, “*In any rape cases is it necessary to know if the victim is promiscuous or has a reputation in the community,*” men tended to respond affirmatively more than women did. These results reflect the socially legitimized attitude that women should not “incite” sexual desire in men since this provocation leaves men with few options but to “respond instinctively” including using force. This perception relieves male aggressors of responsibility since women are expected to remain conservative both in physical appearance and in their sexual expression.

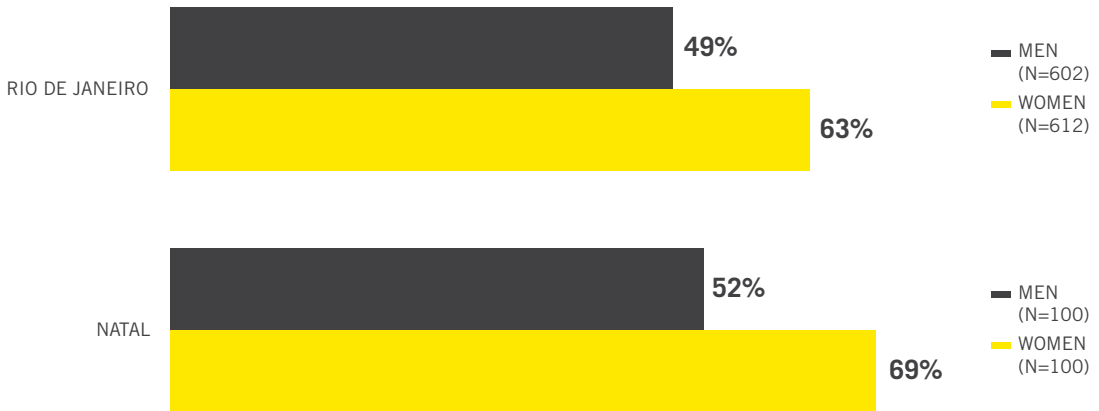
GRAPH 1 _AGREE WITH THE STATEMENT “IN ANY RAPE CASE IT IS NECESSARY TO KNOW IF THE VICTIM IS PROMISCUOUS OR HAS A REPUTATION IN THE COMMUNITY”



Regarding sexual relations

When asked about whether “men need sex more than women do” we saw similarities in the concordance of men and women (44% and 46%, respectively). Graph 2 confirms the existence of the belief that sex equals virility for men from both men’s and women’s perspectives. With regard to the statement, “*men are always ready to have sex,*” women respondents from Rio de Janeiro responded affirmatively in greater numbers (63%) than men from Natal (49%).

GRAPH 2_AGREE WITH THE STATEMENT “MEN ARE ALWAYS READY TO HAVE SEX”





Questions

for reflection and recommendations

- Based on the results presented here, the issue of gender, gender norms and conceptions of hegemonic masculinity must be part of the discussion of understanding the conditions of CSECA, both in terms of prevention as well as protection and support of children and adolescents who are sexually exploited.
- There is an urgent need to train health professionals, educators, and those who guarantee human rights to deal with the complexity of these attitudes related to CSECA and question their own views about gender and sexual/reproductive rights.
- Taking into account the ambivalence of the perception of CSEC, having a frank discussion about gender norms, masculinities, unequal power relations and sexual and reproductive rights are a path to reduce the homophobic attitudes toward boys and young men involved in commercial sexual exploitation. In particular, these discussions must be held together with duty bearers.
- Both the health and the educational systems require training around gender issues and CSECA, in particular in knowing how to appropriately support and detect cases of CSECA and to work closely with the judicial and child protection system.

AN EXAMPLE OF TARGETED CSECA PREVENTION WITH A GENDER LENS

In Brazil, Promundo is currently working with Petrobras in the thirteen Brazilian states where they have installations. This training seeks to build on partnerships between Petrobras and local NGOs to reduce sexual exploitation in Petrobras work sites. The two-day workshops include education for health professionals and community leaders and build on existing Promundo tools, including its Program H and M materials. These provide a way for local staff working to reduce CSECA to reflect about gender norms and expectations and put this learning into practice as they design prevention approaches.

- It is necessary for health professionals, educators, and those who guarantee human rights to be educated on the Statute of Children and Adolescents (SCA), Brazil's children's rights legislation, which, in Article 18, speaks to the **responsibility of all** to guard the dignity of children and adolescents, saving them from any dehumanizing, violent, terrorizing, vexing, or embarrassing treatment.
- Given that the majority of interviewees supported penalizing men who have sex with "prostitutes" under 18 years of age, it is absolutely necessary to reinforce the juridical-legal apparatus relative to CSECA. The SCA, in Article 244, considers the crime of sexual violence: to submit a child or adolescent, as defined in Article 2 of the law, to **prostitution or sexual exploitation** with a punishment of four to ten years in prison and fines. In this way, it is necessary to mobilize civil society to demand that the State follows through on this legislation relative to such practices.
- It is imperative to call greater attention to CSECA suffered by male adolescents and boys, keeping in mind the invisibility of the issue, even within studies and interventions regarding CSECA. It is necessary to offer support to studies relative to the presence of male children and adolescents in situations of sexual exploitation. In the case of boys, young men, and transvestites/transsexuals, even greater attention by service providers to their vulnerabilities and needs is required.

- For the Brazilian government, collaboration between the state and national government is required, in particular in terms of data collection. There is also a need for better monitoring of the National Plan for Confronting Child-Youth Sexual Violence.
- Government should collaborate more with civil society, and universities in joint program development to prevent and monitor CSECA.
- There is a need for more campaigns targeting men with messages about ending CSECA. These include scaling up campaigns such as the “Real men don’t buy girls”¹⁸ campaign which includes the participation of celebrities, actors, and athletes, with Kaká (Brazilian soccer star) as the Brazilian representative. The Rio Declaration (MenEngage 2009)¹⁹ and the Third Congress to Confront Sexual Exploitation²⁰ reaffirmed the importance of men and boys’ roles in preventing CSECA. The findings here provide multiple insights on what new and expanded campaign messages might include. These campaigns must take a critical view – and encourage men to internalize them – of norms related to masculinity that naturalize the using of underage girls for sex.
- One largely untapped potential for engaging men in ending CSECA is around their role as caregivers and fathers. Men who are engaged caregivers and fathers show a strong revulsion for other men who sexually exploit children and could be strong advocates on the issue. Similarly, tapping into the potential caregiving attitudes of other men may be a way to move ahead of prevention. Given that peer influences showed up as a strong determinant for men’s paying for sex, it can also be a strong element for prevention. In this vein, campaigns like MenCare (www.mencare.org), which look to involve men in caregiving can be a useful tool in promoting the duties of men in the care and protection of adolescents, including insuring that they are not victimized through sexual exploitation.

18. See: <http://demiandashon.org/realmen>.

19. In accordance with the Rio Declaration (First Global Symposium Engaging Men and Boys on Achieving Gender Equality, 2009), “Sexual violence committed by some men results from social norms that tolerate exploitation of women and girls, boys and men. The objectification and commodification of women and girls, boys and men, naturalizes sexually violent and coercive behaviors. Ending sexual violence and exploitation requires holistic strategies that span the global and local, and involve men and boys in the confrontation of attitudes and inequalities that confer men to a position of dominance, so that all human beings can be treated with dignity and respect.” Available at: <http://www.menengage.org/images/files/declaracao-rio-ingles-para.pdf>.

20. The Rio de Janeiro Declaration and Call to Action to Prevent and Eliminate Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. III Worldwide Congress to Confront Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. Rio de Janeiro, 2008. In Article 44, the declaration notes that it is necessary “to conduct research regarding contemporary patterns of socialization of boys and men through different contexts to form and identify factors that would promote and strengthen men and boy’s respect towards girls and women and that would engage them in action-based initiatives that discourage practices and engage in preventative work regarding child and adolescent sexual exploitation.”

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