

**TRANSFORMING SEXUAL IDENTITY AMONG YOUNG
MYANMAR MIGRANT MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN,
INTERNALIZED HOMONEGATIVITY AND SEXUAL RISK**



HEIN LATT AUNG

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS (HEALTH SOCIAL SCIENCE)
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY
2017**

Copyright by Mahidol University

COPYRIGHT OF MAHIDOL UNIVERSITY

TRANSFORMING SEXUAL IDENTITY AMONG YOUNG MYANMAR MIGRANT MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN, INTERNALIZED HOMONEGATIVITY AND SEXUAL RISK

HEIN LATT AUNG 5837912 SHHS/M

M.A. (HEALTH SOCIAL SCIENCE)

THESIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: THOMAS GUADAMUZ, Ph.D.,
PIMPAWUN BOONMONGKON, Ph.D., THAMMARAT MAROHABUTR, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

This qualitative research was aimed to explore homonegativity experiences faced by YMMSM and internalized homonegativity in Myanmar and Thailand contexts, to explain the process of transformation of sexual identities, attitudes and practices towards homosexuality, and eventually to examine sexual risk practices in the socio-cultural context of homosexuality and internalized homonegativity among YMMSM (Young Myanmar migrant men who have sex with men). This study was undergone in Samut Sakhorn province in Thailand, especially, in Mahachai where the major cluster of Myanmar migrants work and live. Twenty YMMSMs were interviewed by using in-depth interviews and findings were supported by 6 key informant interviews and participant observations. Content and discourse analyses were used.

Findings show that homonegativity that YMMSM faced were psychological, physical and verbal abuses by family, relatives and heteronormative society towards homosexuality and feminine behaviors. As consequences, they gained internalized homonegativity such as negativity of self, inferiority of self, misery feelings and emotions. The results also show that they are lack of health knowledge and health care policy for migrant workers is also weak. As results of physical, verbal and psychological abuses, intense internalized homonegativity were perceived by YMMSM; lead them make an escape from heteronormative society to modern gay society. In Thailand, transformation of sexual subjectivities are gradually made with the help of social media, social contexts of gay cultures and homosexuality; which caused YMMSM practice same-sex relationships at risk, especially, in intimate partner relationships with the aim of searching for freedom from homonegativity from heteronormative society.

**KEY WORDS: INTERNALIZED HOMONEGATIVITY, SEXUAL BEHAVIORS,
SOCIAL CONTEXT, MYANMAR MIGRANTS, MSM**

192 pages