

Women Entertainers of Drayangs in Bhutan:

A Feminist Intersectional Analysis of Body Labour



MSc. Thesis in Management, Economics and Consumer Studies (MME)

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the subjectivity of the women entertainers who work in the Drayang, modern day entertainment centres in Bhutan particularly in the capital city, Thimphu. Drayang in the recent times had come under intense criticism and has been scrutinised for eroding Bhutanese cultural values, where alcohol and drugs were openly consumed and networking for sex took place. The objective of this research was to study: 1) how the women entertainers exercise their agency by deploying the theory of body labour through an intersectional analysis and 2) how women entertainers are victimised of economic and sexual exploitation. Through this research, it put to test the sensational claims made in the media, politics and in the social context. The findings are the results of largely semi structured interviews and observations of the respondents. It was evident from the analysis that women entertainers were victims of sexual and economic exploitation yet perform body labour. Agency of women entertainers as the ability to define their goals and act upon them are but limited at the work place. The women entertainers do no more than flirt with the male customers inside the Drayang however sexual exploitation cannot be completely written off as some indicated of sexual arrangements outside the Drayang although Drayang now operate under regulations. Contrary to the usual stereotypes of women working in such industries as immoral and of low character, people fail to understand that these very women are also working to send remittances to their parents, making good out of their lives and surviving economically in the face of the globalising economy that undervalues and underpays women at all levels.

Key words: Bhutan, entertainment, intersectionality, body labour, agency, exploitation

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GNH	Gross National Happiness
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
NSB	National Statistical Bureau
RGoB	Royal Government of Bhutan
BICMA	Bhutan Information, Communication and Media Authority
NCWC	National Commission for Women and Children
MoLHR	Ministry of labour and human resources
DYT	Dzongkhag Yargey Tshogdue
GYT	Gewog Yargey Tshogdue

GLOSSARY OF BHUTANESE TERMS

Dzongkhag	District
Ngultrums(Nu)	Bhutanese currency
Rigsar	Modern songs
Jinda	Owner
Dzongrab	Deputy governor

1. INTRODUCTION

Bhutan adopted a policy of cautious modernization, moving away from closed rural economy towards market-oriented growth. Since then lives of the Bhutanese people have changed leaps and bounds as a result of employment opportunities, urbanisation, improving lifestyles, living standards and increasing monetisation of the economy (Commission, 1998). More than 60% of Bhutanese citizens continue to earn their living in the countryside despite the declining importance of the agricultural sector to the GDP (NSB, 2011). More and more youth from the rural areas migrate to urban centres of Thimphu, Paro and other major towns to find work in non-farming activities (Lorway et al., 2011).

Modernity in Bhutan is said to have caused the increasing rift between its people and its unique culture (Commission, 1998). The introduction of television and internet are blamed for the cultural degradation in Bhutan (Lorway et al., 2011). Rigsar, modern popular songs and music developed in Bhutan in the late 1960s and since then have become the essence of the entertainment centres, but is not a logical continuation of the folk song tradition (Kinga, 2001). He further states that to diffuse the Bhutanese cultural values to the next generation, it is must to perform the songs and dances in the local language.

With modernization came the rapid growth of the music industry leading to increasing numbers of entertainment clubs. Like the growth of the television and the Internet, *Drayang*s (karaoke bars) also emerged where women approach mostly the male customers for financial ‘sponsorships’ to sing love songs grew in numbers and in the recent times have been sensationalised in the media and in the public spheres.

Drayangs in the recent times have been criticised for providing a venue where women entertainers are represented as having low moral character engaging in sexual activity with the male customers. It was also understood as a social space where alcohol and drugs are openly

consumed and networking for sex takes place (Lorway et al., 2011). Male customers' seek potential sexual partners in the Drayang. The male customers who frequent the Drayang are said to sexually exploit the women who are economically vulnerable where the employer exerts control. The growth of Drayang was also fed by growing number of youths who remain unemployed. Reportedly youth make up to 10,500 of the 13,000 unemployed Bhutanese, many of whom are school dropouts, but cannot compete with Indians (migrant manual labourers) for low pay-low skill positions such as construction and do not care to remain in rural areas (Walcott, 2011). So in such situations many remain unemployed and some start working in the entertainment centres to escape their lives of financial instability and for some to pursue their passion for singing and dancing.

1.1 Background on the Drayang in Bhutan

Of the many developments that Bhutan witnessed over the years, the burgeoning entertainments centres have been the centre of interest specially Drayang. Drayang first started operating in 1990 and currently there are about 27 Drayang in the major cities of the country. In 2009, Bhutan Information, Communication and Media Authority (BICMA) started licensing them. Thimphu, the capital city saw the first one and then the trend went on to other urban centres in the country assuming an urban phenomenon. Drayang in the local language means melody. Drayang as entertainment centres operate as Karaoke Bars where women perform for different spectators to traditional as well as modern music.



Currently, Drayangs in the country employs over 250 people and close to 61 per cent are women, most of them are compelled by economic circumstances to join the Drayangs, but for some, singing and dancing is their passion (Dema, 2012). The existing 27 Drayangs that have mushroomed in the country have become debatable and the women entertainers are no less in comparison to prostitutes. Observers, mostly public, feel Drayangs should be closed because a lot more happens there than singing and dancing. In an interview, a male corporate employee, Chenchu (40 years) said that Drayangs is an undercover prostitution (Pem, 2010). People frequent these entertainment centres and mostly so in the evening and continue late into the night. The intention of these visitors can vary from sexual and verbal exploitation of these women entertainers to pure entertainment. Drayangs are not just entertainment centres, but provide a source of employment where relationships are built dictated by the protocols of the employer and other agencies involved.

The Drayangs start at 6.00pm and goes on until 11.00 pm in the night in the weekdays and until 12.00 pm on the weekends. The dawn of the Drayang culture all began in the mid '90s when popular singers (male and female) started performing live in a hotel. It was then a place for everyone to come and enjoy the music, food and drinks, but few years later the trend

changed and the system of payment or a fee came about to request for songs and dances so that the male customers could see the woman of their choice perform (Pem, 2009).

These Drayang houses young men and young women who perform traditional as well as popular modern music and entertain the customers who are usually the office goers as their regular clientele and sometimes young boys are also seen in these Drayang.



On average, a Drayang employs 15 people (mostly women), while a discotheque employs 10, mostly women again and most people working in Drayang are between the ages of 15 and 24 (Pem, 2010). The attendance of a sizeable number of sugar daddies was also reported. The women in Drayang are said to cross the limits of morality and behaviour with these so called sugar daddies to gain sponsorship for songs and men paying to watch their favourite woman performing commodifying them as objects of consumption (Anon, 2010b). The women in the Drayang are entitled to a small portion of the sponsorship of the songs thus their behaviour which many people question.

1.2 Representation of women entertainers in the dominant discourses

In Bhutan, the emergence of Drayang and their daily conduct led to a growing discussion about sexuality, taking a gender specific tone in their articulation in the public domain and in

the recent times have come under intense criticism by public discourses as eroding Bhutanese cultural values, where alcohol are openly consumed and drugs are openly consumed and networking of sex takes place (Lorway et al., 2011). The following presents the dominant discourses in the public domain.

1.2.1 Hybridization of Bhutanese Tradition and Culture

The first dominant discourse is that Drayangas as institution and the women entertainers are blamed for the hybridization of culture which many locals feel will jeopardise the age old tradition and culture of Bhutan. The entertainment clubs, especially Drayangas, have been blamed in public discourse as eroding Bhutanese cultural values for blending the old traditional music and dances with Rigsar (new modern songs) and western music. Drayangas are seen as modern phenomena that are not part of Bhutanese culture thus portrayed as bad developments. These clubs are also claimed to be the breeding grounds for alcohol and drugs consumption and network for sex. Drayangas are one of the most prominent spaces where people consume alcohol and seek sexual pleasures thus becoming a hotly debated social space. This is not to say that the consumption of alcohol and drugs only takes place in these centres, but that they are among the many venues of consumption of the same.

According to Brooks (2008), the Institute of Alcohol Studies in Scotland have found venues like bars, pubs, and clubs have become more social grounds for women whose consumption of alcohol as the advertisers show are glamorous, fashionable, independent, desirable and in control. But it was in contradiction to drinking as male privilege and expression of patriarchal society (Brooks, 2008; Hey, 1986; Whitehead, 1976). In Drayangas as well, men come to drink and most of the undesirable activities that take place are blamed on alcohol. A similar study conducted in China by Chunqing Lin MD et al. (2010), showed that the use of alcohol in entertainment venues frequently preceded commercial sex activity.

They also found that although commercial sex is forbidden by law and subject to harsh punishment, yet it was considered an acceptable behaviour as found in their study.

1.2.2 Women entertainers as Victims of Sexual and Economic Exploitation

The other dominant discourse in the public domain was that these women are the victims of sexual exploitation. Different views have portrayed these women as victims of sexual exploitation and as having low moral character who are expected to flirt with customers to gain a sponsor and earn money for the bar owners. The entertainment centres especially the Drayangs have been the subject of discussion and controversy at policy levels (Anon, 2010b). Some policy makers in Bhutan view Drayangs and discotheques as a ground for creating social disharmony and conflicts (Dema, 2012). Further concerns have also been raised on Drayangs as venues of sexual exploitation and prostitution. For example, the labour minister, Dorji Wangdi, in a statement said that that the Drayangs must be closed and the employees of Drayangs should be provided with alternative jobs by the government of Bhutan (Pem, 2010).

These women entertainers are mostly economically disadvantaged, out of school and unemployed. In 2008, a press release by the Bhutan Observer indicted that young village women who were economically disadvantaged, working in entertainment clubs were involved in transactional sex. In Bhutan, as elsewhere, the causes of women taking to prostitution seem to be multifaceted. Poverty appears to be one reason, like wise materialism and the compulsive urge to live a glamorous lifestyle.

The nature of exploitation as discussed in the public domain was confined to sexual exploitation. The findings of the qualitative study explored the sexual networks that formed in the entertainment centres in Bhutan including the Drayangs in the capital city of Thimphu (Lorway et al., 2011). The findings show that at the time when they conducted the research, the girls (as given in the article) were drunk dancing on the stage and boys (also as given in

the article) made sexual advances. The study describes how male customers made physical advances especially those girls who were intoxicated and that the women enjoyed these advances meaning the girls did not really resist the advances. According to the article, the male customers who were intoxicated would slap these girls bums, hug, kiss, and pull them on their laps and women would smile and not resist them. The boys bought drinks for the girls and gave money to buy vouchers for their cell phones. The regular customers, in the words of the local researchers, wrote love letter to the girls instead of making request for the songs.

It also pointed out the threat of losing jobs in the Drayangns if they did not make the customers happy accumulated debts in the forms of drinks, food and sometimes rent. Thus they sought the attention of the wealthier customers to clear off their debts. Sexual networks between the male customers and the girls in the Drayangns were identified as regular part of the working atmosphere and it was said that the girls would initiate the meetings with the customers on their own for sex. These meetings were arranged on phone or in person at the entertainment centres as described in the study. Throughout the course of the evening these women sang and danced on the stage, exchanged numbers with customers and in some instances met up with the customers for sex after working hours. These transactions were not arranged by clubs owners and they were not oblivious of the arrangements either, instead, the meetings were negotiated by the women themselves to augment their earnings to pay for the rising cost of living in Thimphu and to support family members living in rural villages (Lorway et al., 2011).

However there are strong arguments by these women entertainers that the venues of exploitation are not confined only to Drayangns and that it remains in the morality and self-disciplines of the individuals. Such was the atmosphere then that Drayangns came under intense scrutiny from all angles, public, media and the politics thus leading to regulations.

1.2.3 Promoters of Traditions and culture of Bhutan

Other policy makers are of the opinion that Drayang could serve as a platform for promoting culture and tradition, by performing to traditional Bhutanese songs and dances wearing national dress. During a press meet sometime back, the home minister, Minjur Dorji, said, ‘Drayang help to preserve traditional culture and it would be out of question to close them’ (Anon, 2010a). Other organization like the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) also view Drayang as a source of income generating activities for socially and economically disadvantaged women.

The Drayang owners say their business employ and operate as business entities, solely meant for entertainment. They also argue that they help employ the unemployed and help in the promotion and preservation of culture. Besides introducing the new songs and dances, they also perform to the Zhungdra and Boedra (traditional songs and dances). In the recent times, the Drayang have also put in more productive and useful skill practice for the women, like tailoring (sowing) in the day time and also help employ some disabled boys. In an interview, Gyamtsho a class X dropout and, a visually impaired boy, working in a Drayang said he was employed by the Drayang, when he was jobless (Pem, 2010). Meanwhile, the Drayang owners are also aware of the social mishaps that the Drayang bring in the society, yet they operate because Drayang are a source of easy money making and a huge source of profit. No matter how strongly the Drayang owners defend their operation, majority of the Bhutanese people still perceive Drayang as social nuisance (Dema, 2012).

Drayang have been labelled differently by different people and faces serious image crisis (Editor, 2011). There has been a surge of moral policing, especially on the online forums. Many who make use of these forums are the educated mass in the society and most educated conservative writers say the Drayang business is anti-women and a blot on the tradition and

culture of Bhutan. These centres have been considered social nuisance. Unlike the popular notion that these places breed prostitution; spectators (office goers) who frequent the Drayang actually see talent in most of the performers. The media increasingly portray the sexualisation of Drayang. The young girls dancing to local and contemporary numbers are sexualised in their moves and the gazes of the spectators especially pleasing the heterosexual male.

1.2.4 Women as professional entertainers

The women, on the other hand argue, that they are just as moral and clean in their conduct. They say that they are performers for the purpose of entertainment and to earn a living. They also said that their enthusiasm and talent bring them into these businesses. Most women in Drayang whom the media interviewed are of the view that the notion of sexual exploitation is untrue and that their genuine interest in singing and dancing bring them to work for the Drayang. Some of them dreams of making a good name as professional entertainers and making it big in the entertainment business someday.

1.2.5 Women entertainers as Economic actors

The women in these Drayang are passionate about their work and it remains their only source of income in the face of growing competitive unemployment and high living standards of the city. Most women said that, if Drayang were closed down, it would be hard for them to find a better job and have no real alternatives given their low academic qualification (Anon, 2010a) . It is in these bars that women (singers and dancers) who are responsible for preserving culture migrating from the far flung villages in Bhutan works earn wages and send remittances back to their family in the villages.

Through all these constructions and perceptions, the women entertainers in the Drayang can be viewed differently. Some see Drayang as a social nuisance bringing about social

disharmony on one hand and as a platform to showcase talent, preservation and promotion of culture, source of employment and income on the other hand. Arguably, issues surrounding women's access to leisure activities and their use of public space are heightened when they seek to socialise in bars, pubs, and clubs; women who enter these spaces are subject to heightened (wanted or unwanted) male attention Snow et al. (1991) and Caven (1966) believes that there is a conventional cultural belief that attending a public bar is unfeminine. It is obvious in these constructions that men are still dominant and exerts power in their masculinity and their ability to make women entertainers perform. Young Drayang women, on the other hand, are seen pleasing men and seeking favour. They exercise agency in the way they are able to get the attention and sponsors through their body language. The dominant discourses of women entertainers in the public domain are depicted below:

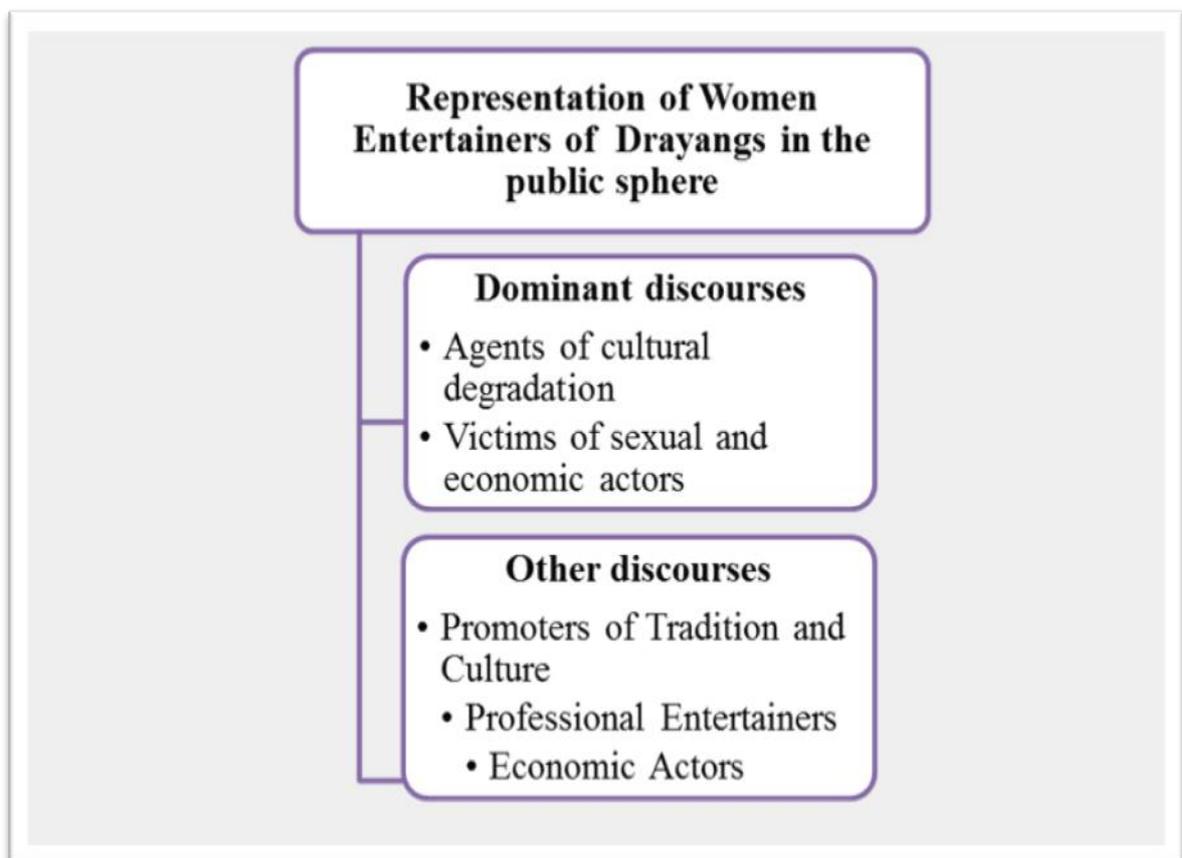


Figure 1. Dominant Public Discourses

1.3 Problem statement and justification

Keeping myself abreast with the current news, I constantly came across articles on Drayangs and heard people talk negatively about the women in the Drayangs and sometimes male friends sharing their experiences in the Drayangs, like how easy it was to find women who would agree to spend a night with them for some cash. It was fascinating to read the articles and wondered what it was like. Women working in the Drayangs were believed to be of low moral character and operating as undercover prostitution as has been the claims of the media and the politics and elsewhere in the public. Believing so, I never went to these places. My upbringing did not encourage me to visit these venues. But with constant scrutiny of the Drayangs and the women entertainers in the public discourses, I was intrigued and questioned myself about how I perceived the women entertainers, their conduct and the truth of the matter.

I first went to a Drayang in 2007 with some male friends and to my surprise I was the only female “customer” as my friends tagged me and I felt a little intimidated in such surrounding. It was not the most comfortable place to be as I was the only female spectator besides the women working there. There was a huge crowd of men, sometimes mocking, sometimes shouting and sometimes hugging the women. Most men were drunk. The women would come with their record book and ask the male customers to sponsor songs for them. They never approached me. They would sit with the male customers, talk to them, get their drinks and flirt with them. The men and the women would whisper to each other and laugh out loud. I was totally uncomfortable however spent about an hour or so watching the women perform and the men enjoying the performance. This experience bothered me a lot. It kept me wondering why women work there and why endure all the criticism and my sympathies lie with them. Thus my research in this field to look at these performers and appreciate them as economic actors who provide for themselves and their families through their work as dancers

and singers who help in the promotion of the traditions and culture of Bhutan. They also adapt to new culture of Drayang and negotiate their work as performers.

Bhutan faces growing challenges to address the issues that crop up in these entertainment centres and more so when women are involved. The emergence of these Drayang over the years and the kind of services the employed women provide have come under intense surveillance and has assumed a debatable role as an institution of social nuisance where sexual relationships are formed. Every night these women face a crowd of audience seeking entertainment of all sorts and sometimes they are fondled and molested. Although they face all these humiliation they continue to do the same every night. The National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) has so far received five complaints from the Drayang women (Anon, 2010a). Here its raises the question of why these women continue to do so. Men frequent the Drayang for various reasons ranging from purely entertainment to seeking sexual pleasures although the purpose of the Drayang may not be so. This study will focus on how the women entertainers enact subjectivities, are victims of exploitation (economic and sexual) and how these women entertainers become economic actors allowing them to exercise some agency who are able to provide for themselves and their families through an intersectional analysis of body labour.

1.4 Objectives

The objective of this research was to study how women entertainers enact their agency by deploying the theory of body labour through an intersectional analysis and how women entertainers are victimised of economic and sexual exploitation. Through this research, it put to test the sensational claims made in the media, politics and in the social context.

1.5 Research questions

General Research Questions (GRQ)

1. How do the women entertainers enact their agency through body labour?
2. What is sexual exploitation for women performers in the Drayangs and how consistent are the understandings of sexual exploitation in the dominant discourse?

Specific Research Questions (SRQ)

1. How do these women perform body labour for owners, customers, peers, family and others and what are the benefits and harms of performing this labour?
2. How do the women entertainers cope with the effects of body labour?
3. How do they negotiate power with owners, customers, peers, family and others?
4. How do these women manage or manipulate emotions and feelings to display outward appearances?
5. How do the women effectively accomplish the task complying to display rules?
6. What kind of cognitive and behavioural strategies do they employ to face the challenges that they confront sexually and emotionally?

1.6 Outline of the thesis

The outline of the thesis presents four chapters. Chapter 1 presents the introduction which discusses the emergence of Drayangs as a result of modernization. The introductory chapter also presents an introduction into the field of study and the existing dominant discourses on Drayangs. Further in this chapter, the objectives of the research and the research questions can be found.

Chapter 2 discusses the research methodology. The theoretical framework is based on body labour and its embodied dimensions in the works of (Kang, 2003). Kang engaged the

ideas of emotional labour as studied by (Hochschild Arlie, 1983). The theory of emotional labour was expanded further by (Ashforth, 1993; Morris & Feldman, 1996). It also discusses the conceptual framework which shows the interrelated concepts of body labour, agency and exploitation of women entertainers. This chapter also presents the location of the present study where the research took place and various methods are discussed.

Chapter 3 shows the results and analysis of the interviews that took place with seven women entertainers, five customers and two owners of Drayang. The general findings are presented followed by the intersectional analysis of body labour, agency of women entertainers and exploitation (economic and sexual exploitation) leading to answering the research questions.

Chapter 4 presents the conclusion. The concluding part describes the constraints (administrative, getting consents for interview and time) faced during field work. It also presents the limitations of the study and few recommendations deemed necessary if future researches are intended in the similar direction are also included in this chapter as part of the recommendations.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Many scholars and professionals have defined the term body labour, exploitation and agency in different ways. In this research, theories were combined to present a feminist intersectional approach in investigating the concept of body labour and the intersections of sexuality, gender and class engaging the ideas Arlie Hochschild as studied by (Kang, 2003). The theoretical framework was based on body labour as it involves the management of both bodies and emotions in provision of services by the women in the Drayangs and captures the embodied dimensions of gender, sexuality and class in their performance. In using this theory, it also brings forth the notions of agency and exploitation as experienced by the women entertainers.

Although the context in which Milian Kang researched body labour was different from the intended study, Milian Kang considers body labour as an experience and performance of women according to the context (race and class) in which women find themselves, the present research presents a similar approach by considering gender, sexuality and class in a typical male dominated venue. Kang defined body labour as the sense of being cared for in a social and safe place and the emotional management of bodily contact in service interactions. Here the women in Drayangs who perform body labour at home doing domestic chores, singing, dancing, getting drinks, attending the customers and talking to them, preparing themselves for the show at work embodies the contributions it makes to the study of body labour and looks into the intersections of class, sexuality and gender in their performance. By bringing together the study of body labour and the intersections of class, sexuality and gender, the study shows how body labour was performed for wages and the agency exercised by the women entertainers in the Drayangs. Through my study of Drayangs and the performers, body labour and the intersections of class and gender were studied. Four different theories were used to

develop the theoretical framework (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hochschild, 2003; Kang, 2003; Morris & Feldman, 1996).

Body labour involves the exchange of body-related services for a wage and the performance of physical and emotional labour in this exchange (Kang, 2003). She introduced the concept “body labour” to designate a type of gendered work that involves the management of emotions in body-related service. She broadens the subject matter of emotional labour by looking into the embodied dimensions of emotional labour and further examines the intersections of race, class and gender in the provision of body related services in nail salons. She studied three distinct patterns of service shaped by class and racial inequalities between women. She compared nail salons in three racially and socioeconomically diverse settings and female customers of New York City to understand emotional labour and the intersections of race, class and gender. She presents in her analysis the actual interactions between the consumers and the ones who provide the body related services and those hierarchies that are prevalent in these kinds of transactions.

Similarly, I was able to study how the women entertainers performed body labour in the Drayangs in their provision of creating a pleasant and a safe place for the male customers and how these women induce positive feelings in their male customers. I could build on this theory to demonstrate how the intersections operate in this kind of system although Kang and I differed slightly. Kang studied three racially and socioeconomically diverse settings, female customers and female service providers. The difference arises in the fact that my study did not break into different racial and socioeconomic diverse settings and it studied the typical provision of services in a male dominated location.

While engaging in body labour, it requires the management of feelings to create bodily and facial displays compliant with social requirements (Hochschild, 2003). Emotional labour

has an exchange value, since it is paid wages for. It is the act of displaying socially desirable appearance and emotions during transaction. Hochschild stated that it was painful to commercialize and commodify body and emotions. Hochschild shows how feelings are managed to display body and facial expression publicly. She shows through her example of the flight attendants whose roles and responsibilities are defined by the airline undergo emotional labour in maintaining the body and facial expression (smile particularly). She finds that it was always the man who claimed the smiles of these attendants for various reasons thus commercializing emotions for the profit of the company. They sell their feelings without much in return besides the wages they were paid. They manage their own emotions by managing the emotions of the clients. She talks about two different ways of displaying outward appearance and managing emotions: surface acting and deep acting.

Surface acting is when one regulates the emotional expression or putting on of an outward appearance through the verbal and nonverbal presentation like facial expression, posture and tone. The persons displayed emotions differ from felt emotion. In deep acting one modifies feelings to display the desired emotion or evoke the right feeling for the work all of which required immense effort. Here the person evokes the actual feelings and experiences to display the same. Hochschild that when such displays and emotions enter the realms of the market these feelings are commoditized which according to her is unpleasant. According to her, the exploitation of emotions in such jobs relates to strain (stress and burnout) which are described as its embodied aspect in this study.

Likewise deploying the theory of Arlie Hoschild's works of emotional labour, I made a similar comparison of the flight attendants to the Drayang girls and the company or the airlines to the Drayang owners who wrote the script for them. I was able to gain insights through the performance of the women entertainers in the Drayangs based on the outward display of the body and emotions as put forward by Hochschild as in surface acting used to

protect their deep emotion and feelings. I used these to understand the exploitation of the body and the emotions of these women entertainers. It also looked into how by entering into the mainstream entertainment business, these Drayangs women entertainers alike profit from the commercialization of their feelings and commodification of their bodies.

Building on the works of Hochschild, Ashforth and Humphrey were more focused on emotional labour as observable behaviour rather than just the management of feelings by considering the concept of identity (Ashforth, 1993). According to them the act of displaying the correct or right emotion (conforming to a display rule) was defined as emotional labour. They state that surface acting and deep acting results in stress and burnout, but the service providers can employ various strategies (behavioural and cognitive) to combat these problems and realign themselves to the identification with various groups, organization or work. They also show the functions and the dysfunctions of emotional labour in terms of task effectiveness. They stated that if the displayed and the observed emotions are in compliance with the display rules and are sincere, the tasks could be accomplished. Thus in the process it may not be so much of a stress as indicated by Hochschild rather develops as a routine and becomes easy as task requirement and for task effectiveness.

According to them, as a service provider, emotional labour allows them to express themselves. If the workers don't display a sincere expression, it may be dysfunctional and does not allow in the effective accomplishments of the tasks. Emotional labour is defined as the effort, planning and control that one exerts during transaction to display the organizationally desired behaviour (Morris & Feldman, 1996). They agree that the emotions are partly socially constructed and that when the organisationally desired emotions and the felt emotion connect, yet there is still a concerted effort to maintain organisationally desired emotions. They also acknowledge the commercialization of emotions as was also evident in Hochschild's findings, but differ from her in their consideration of the appropriate expressive

behaviour that is organisationally desired rather than the management of feelings. Using this theory, I looked at various strategies evident from their observable behaviour like flirtatious movements, effort to conceal anger, working independently, planning together to gain financial sponsorship, are some example to combat their emotions to realign themselves to the identification with various groups, organization or work making their task effective and much easier. One way of fighting their emotions was the identification of the self with others.

According to social identity theory, people tend to classify them-selves and others into various social categories, such as organizational membership, religious affiliation, gender, and age cohort (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Thus by identifying oneself with certain groups' individuals rely more and more on the group to define what one chooses to do including display rules to conform in the group. They believe that the identification makes the emotional labour performed more enjoyable and enhance wellbeing. The theory propounded by Hochschild and Ashforth and Humphrey is elaborated further by (Morris & Feldman, 1996). Morris and Feldman are similar to Hochschild in considering the control and modification of emotions by the individual concerned. They are also similar to Ashforth and Humphrey in taking the social constructs. Although they presented emotional labour in terms of four distinct dimensions, emotional dissonance as a result of mismatch in displaying organizationally desired emotions not genuinely felt was more obvious in the research conducted.

Similarly, I was able to study how women identify themselves with certain groups' or as individuals, they rely more and more on the group to define what one chooses to do including display rules to conform in the group believing that the identification makes the emotional labour performed more enjoyable and enhance wellbeing of the women entertainers. It was also clear that women worked as individuals, in partnerships and if need

be in groups as well making their task easy and effective at the same time conforming to the display rules.

Body labour was defined as the exchange of body-related services for a wage and the performance of physical and emotional labour in this exchange (Kang, 2003). While engaging in body labour, the actual interactions between the consumers and the ones who provide the body related services and the hierarchies that are prevalent in these kinds of transactions become evident. Through body labour agency become evident with owners and the male customers. The agency women entertainers enact are defined by their interactions with the owners, the male customers and their peers. Agency is defined as the ability of the individual to define their goals and act upon them (Kabeer, 2002). Kabeer says that agency is not just the observable action, but also includes the meaning, motivation and purpose resulting in an activity bringing forth their sense of agency, or 'the power within'. Agency has a positive and a negative side in relation to power. In the positive light, agency is the ability to make choices and follows the goals in the face of opposition from others, whereas when uses threat and deception to exert agency over others override it has a negative connotation (Kabeer, 2002).

As the definition above suggest agency is the ability of the individual to define their goals and act upon them. The same concept was used to understand the goals of the women entertainers and how they acted upon it to achieve it. It helped me understand the goals and aspirations of the women entertainers and what they did or would like to do to achieve their aspirations. It also provided the scope for understanding how they negotiated or exercised their agency with the peers, owner and male customers at work and family at home.

Due to their economic conditions, women entertainers like all women of all classes especially the poor were exploited throughout history and still remain exploited all over the world (Albee & Perry, 1998). Around many parts of the world, poor women and girls sell

their bodies as prostitutes or have to take up menial jobs with no protection, live at the mercy of exploitative male society and are considered cheap labour, less worthy of education, sex objects and source of temptation (Albee & Perry, 1998). It is said that the sex industry over the years have become a very profitable business for the individual, networks and the government as well who come to depend on the sex industry revenue (Jeffreys, 1999). Girls in the third world countries perform dangerous work, are underpaid, unprotected and sexually exploited (Albee & Perry, 1998).

There are two types of exploitation: consensual and non-consensual (Koettl, 2009). When coercion, fraud or deception becomes the means of exploitation, it is called non-consensual whereas when exploitation is a result of lack of other economic opportunities and leads to the unfair treatment of the exploited it is known as consensual exploitation (Koettl, 2009) . Some choose to be exploited driven by circumstances when one is not able to provide for oneself or when they are financially very vulnerable. When circumstances are hardest on an individual, they can resort to consensual exploitation, in such cases the individual is not forced or deceived rather they choose to be financially dependent resulting in low wages, long working hours, inadequate benefits and other forms of stress and pressure that determines the wellbeing of the worker (Koettl, 2009). Thus the employer buys and benefits from the labour of the employees giving them the amount to cover the labourer's necessary consumption funds that they think justifies the service provided and distributing the rest as they choose (van cler Veen, 2000). Others radical feminist who study traffic in women argue that domination, specifically men and other dominant group's politically and legitimized demand to physical, sexual and emotional access to capacities and bodies of others, other pro-sex theory defines agency as the ability to negotiate in their jobs (Miriam, 2005). Women who chose to be prostitutes are shaped by their social, political construction of poverty, sexual abuse, homelessness and family obligation (Jeffreys, 1999).

There has also been various feminist debates about the notions of prostitution, some feminist argue that prostitution is the result of women's subordination, some considering it a choice of the women themselves and some say women are forced due to economic circumstances, thus prostitution evokes a very strong and conflicting judgements from considering it an empowering legitimate work, criminal offence to total condemnation (van cler Veen, 2000). The power relations involved in this kind of work are obscured (Jeffreys, 1999). Men who avail the services are said to be free from social stigma attached with prostitution where as women who provide the services are considered as performing degrading work, having low morality and a social threat to the society (van cler Veen, 2000).

The employer buys and consumes the labour of the employees who provide their services to the customers. The employer pays the employee a wage equivalent to the total service provided by the employee and appropriates and distributes the rest (van cler Veen, 2000). The obligations of the bonds between the employer and the employee lays the terms and the conditions allowing the employer to exert control, prevent employees from moving into other employment and makes employee to keep a part of their earnings and the rest is appropriated by the employer who uses the surplus to pay the other employees and on other expenditures (van cler Veen, 2000). The male customers avail services in return for the amount they give out as sponsors making women vulnerable and financially dependent on them.

This theory described above on agency and exploitation was useful in understanding how due economic constraints women face in their lives, they chose to work in the Drayangs that provide them a source of income. It was also helpful in understanding how employers appropriate wage equivalent to the total service provided by the employee and distributes the rest. Then as performers they are dependent on the male customers for their financial sponsorship leading to their sexual exploitation as potential sexual partners for the male customers who flirt, sit close, put their arms around the women entertainers and sometimes

arrange to meet for sex. The theories deployed for this study looks into the interrelated concepts of exploitation (economic and sexual) illuminating light on how women entertainers exercise their agency using the theory of body labour.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

This section explains the various concepts deployed to better understand the concepts of body labour.

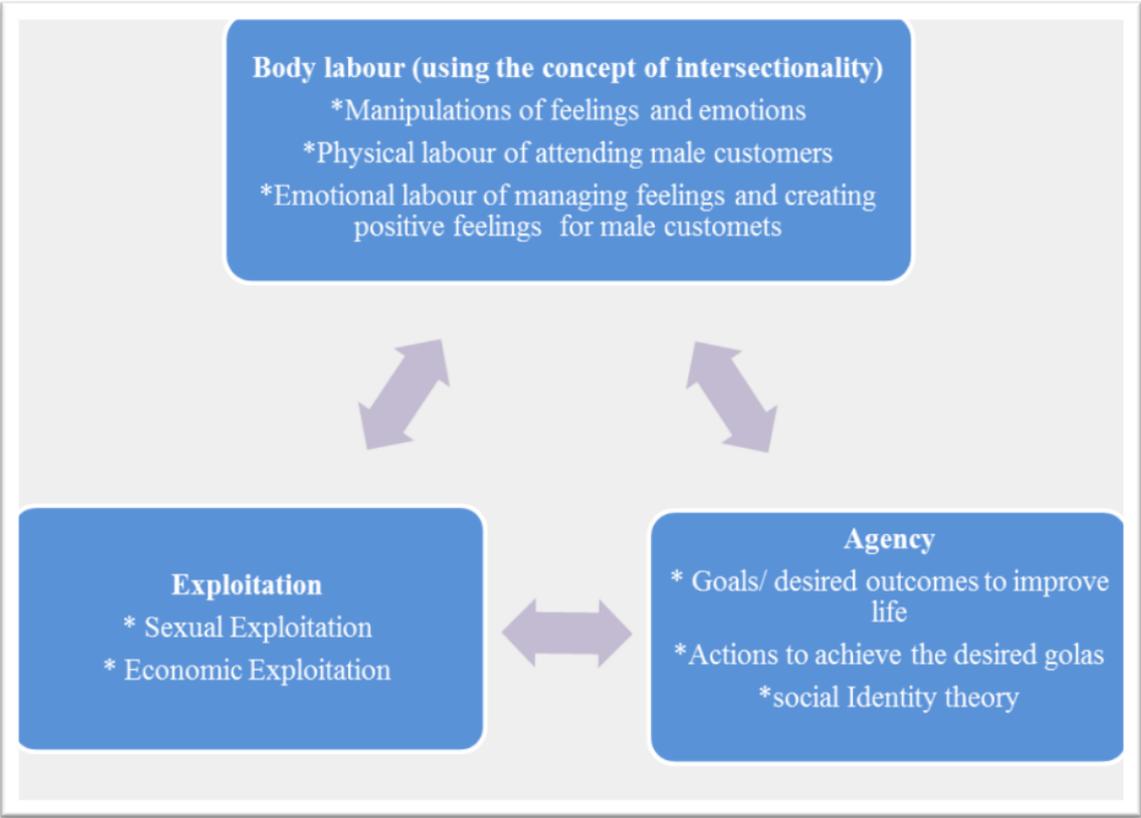


Figure 2.conceptual framework

The conceptual framework depicted above explains the interrelated concepts used to study the body labour, agency and sexual exploitation of women entertainers:

First, manipulations of feelings and emotions were studied with particular emphasis on surface acting. Surface acting is when one regulates the emotional expression or putting on of an outward appearance through the verbal and nonverbal presentation like facial expression,

flirtatious movements, lively conversations, posture and tone evident in the performance of women in Drayangs to seal their deep emotions and feelings. The person's displayed emotions differ from felt emotion. In this research, surface acting was easier to identify. The physical labour of attending the customers and the emotional labour of managing feelings and creating positive feelings for customers was studied as part of body labour. Secondly, sexual exploitation as a result of economic constraints/challenges was studied. Economic exploitation as result of their subordination to the employer and sexual exploitation as result of their subordination to male customers is presented. The agency women exercised in terms of their desired goals, negotiations at work with the owners and the male customers and the actions they performed like identifying with groups or working in partnerships enhancing their wellbeing come forward while explaining women entertainers as victims of economic and sexual exploitation illuminating light on how they exercise their agency when discussing body labour.

2.3 Research methods

Proper approval from Thimphu Dzongkhag (district) was availed for the conduct of the interview in the Drayangs. The field work was carried out from 1st September to 20th October 2012 in the capital city of Thimphu. Of the twelve Drayangs in Thimphu, I was able to visit seven Drayangs at least three times and almost every other second night in the Norbuling Drayang. There are no pictures from the field work as all the respondents did not want to take pictures and disclose their identity. But to support the presented scenario/ situation pictures were downloaded from Google. The names of the women entertainers are numerically reflected as Respondent 1 to Respondent 7, the names of the male customers likewise numbered alphabetically Respondent A to Respondent E and different names are assigned for the two owners I interviewed. However the names of the Drayangs have not been changed.

2.3.1 Literature review

Since very little scientific studies have been done on Drayangs besides few related to health issues, there was no other source of information. However, I was able to get whatever little information there was with the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources. Online forums, blogs and newspaper articles were analysed to better understand the scenario. Studies conducted earlier by various researchers on prostitution, sexual exploitation, economic exploitation, migration, trafficking and emotional labour were also reviewed.

2.3.2 Sample selection

While I was exploring the Drayangs during which, the purpose of my attendance was not known, I followed the snowball sampling approach to select the venues and interview participants as there were many who hesitated to be interviewed, but suggested the names of some participants who would be willing to participate.

2.3.3 Observations

I attended the Drayangs sometimes at the early hours to see the atmosphere then and mostly during the peak times of the social activity. The observations took place mostly after 8pm at the peak of the social activities. Observations and informal conversations took place with them whenever I visited their Drayangs. While visiting the Drayangs, I particularly observed the ambience and decorum in the Drayangs. I also observed the interactions between the owners and the workers, the women and the male customers. It was equally interesting to observe how some women approach the male customers, how some of them were engaged in conversations, some asking for requests and the some who would be performing. When it was possible and comfortable to talk to the women, I engaged them in conversations and asked about their professional and domestic life, their likes and dislikes and their aspirations are some examples.

2.3.4 Semi Structured interviews

The respondents were very hesitant in the initial stage when they were told they were going to be interviewed and the owners were no different. The women needed the consent of the owners before they sat for any kind of interview no matter what the objectives of the research. The owners shared that they were constantly bothered by the researchers and imposters pretending to be officials on inspection and question their business, hence their scepticism and unwillingness to help or provide information to the researchers. The semi structured interviews based on literature review was prepared prior to the field work. The interviews were conducted in the local language and later translated for the readers understanding.

Five women gave their consent to be interviewed after they consulted the owners which took some time. After the approval of the owners, these women were interviewed twice for an hour and hour and a half in some cases. The interviews were carried out at the work place and sometimes in their homes and generally lasted an hour and hour and a half in some cases. The interviews were recorded and few men wanted to do the questionnaire instead of being interviewed. The interview questions helped determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents and also further probed to find out more about their other sources of income, why and how they got into the business and challenges they confront in their everyday lives as performers. This helped in understanding how they negotiated power with various people involved and how sexuality, gender and class played a role. A total of seven women entertainers were interviewed with in-depth interview successfully done with two women. The two women working in Norbuling Drayang did not seek the consent of the owner and agreed to be interviewed in their homes. These two women were interviewed thrice and while I was in the Drayang explained about the working conditions, identified the regular customers, explained the request system, their duties, their performances, their collections and their experiences. In-depth interview was carried out with a total of five customers and two

owners of the Drayang. The Demographic characteristics of the Respondents are as shown below:

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of women entertainers

Name	Village	Age	Level of education	Marital status	Number of children	Name of the Drayang	Years of experience
Respondent 1	Thimphu	21	cl.11	Single	None	Norbuling Drayang	1 year
Respondent 2	Thimphu	23	cl.10	Married	1 (4 month old daughter)	Norbuling Drayang	2 years
Respondent 3	Punakha	23	cl.10	Single	None	Tashi Tagay Drayang	2 years
Respondent 4	Dagana	20	cl.4	Single	None	Tashi Tagay Drayang	2 weeks
Respondent 5	Sakteng	18	None	Single	None	Tashi Tagay Drayang	1 month
Respondent 6	Tongsa	21	cl.10	Single	None	Norling Drayang	2 years
Respondent 7	Tashigang	21	None	Married	1 (12 month old daughter)	Norling Drayang	3 years

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of Drayang Owners

Sl.no	Name	Village	Age	occupation	Marital status	Number of employees
1	Rabgye (name changed)	Tashigang	39	Civil servant	Married	10 female 2 male(1 MC and 1 bouncer)
2	Singye (name changed)	Thimphu	30	Businessman	Married	16 13 female 3 male

Table 3. Demographic characteristics of male customers

Sl.no	Name	Age	Village	Occupation	Marital status	Frequency of visits to Drayangs
1	Respondent A	40	Thimphu	Business	Married	Twice or thrice a year
2	Respondent B	32	Bumthang	Civil Servant	Married	Thrice a year
3	Respondent C	29	Mongar	Civil servant	Married	Four times a year
4	Respondent D	30	Tashigang	Civil servant	Married	Thrice a week
5	Respondent E	28	Thimphu	Civil servant	Married	Every weekend

2.3.5 Questionnaires

A set of questionnaire specific to women entertainers, male customers and the Drayang owners was prepared prior to the field work. The questionnaire was used with three male customers as they did not want to be interviewed. The customers were easier to approach. Questions on exploitation of women very sensitive for the owners as well as the customers and many of them least commented on it fearing the disclosure of their identity and are embarrassed about the stigma attached to the work.

2.3.6 Analysis Method

The initial plan was to use ATLAS ti for the data analysis, but because of time constraint and also because I was using it for the first time, it proved very difficult. The language could be changed, I was not familiar with the software in the native language and also ATLAS ti did not allow me to transfer data to another system. After much discussion and support from my supervisor and other experts, we decided to do coding of the interview manually as that meant saving a lot of time as well. The raw data was analysed by identifying the consistent emerging themes in the interviews conducted. Through the interview conducted, phrases, lines,

expressions and sayings were put together according to the themes that would directly help me in answering my research questions.

2.3.7 Self reflexivity

Capitalizing on the shared gender identity, I was able to gain access and develop rapport with the female respondents. However the number of respondents in this research is not representative of the women entertainers working in Drayangs across the country as it was not the intention of the study. While analysing this data set, I avoided my own class privileges to blind me in understanding these women's experiences in the Drayangs with the owners and the customers. I entered as novice and did not let my prior understanding and knowledge of the women entertainers and the Drayangs to influence me. I also made sure that the owners and the male customers were comfortable to talk to me and that I did not come across as another person studying sexual exploitation of women and misjudging them.

2.4 Study Area

Bhutan known to the rest of the world as the Land of the Thunder Dragon lies in between china and India. Bhutan is a small landlocked country in South Asia nestled between two giant neighbours, India in the south and China to its north. Bhutan welcomed modernization with the adoption of the first five year plan in 1961 thus bringing about an end to the policy of isolation. The development philosophy of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was replaced by His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck with Gross National Happiness (GNH) in the late 1980s that values social and cultural wellbeing over material wealth accumulation (Lorway et al., 2011).



Figure 3. Map of Bhutan

Dzongkha is the national language of the country. Bhutan's economy is one of the smallest and least developed with total agricultural land under cultivation around 8% of the total geographical area and contributes around 21% share to GDP livestock rearing providing the main sources of livelihood (NSB, 2011). Although Bhutan is a mountainous country with difficult mountaineous terrain and a widely dispersed population, Bhutan has witnessed rapid socioeconomic progress. The country's real annual economic growth grew by 6.8 per cent in 2003 and its per capita has increased from \$239 in 1980 to \$1,523 in 2006 (NSB, 2011).

The country has an area of area of 38,394 Sq. km. and as of July 2011, inhabited by 708,265 people (NSB, 2011). In 2009, the forest cover in Bhutan was recorded as 72.2% of its total area with 42.7% under protected forest area. Bhutan is among the top countries in the world for conserving and protecting its environment and is one of the global biodiversity hotspot (MOA, 2009).

The country is currently divided into 20 Dzongkhag (districts), which are further divided into Gewogs (blocks). Each district has a District Development Committees (DYTs) by 1981 and the Block Development Committees (GYTs) were established in 1991. About 80% of the people have access to basic development services and facilities such as health, education, water, sanitation and agricultural services (RGoB, 2007). The GDP has managed to

quadruple itself over the past decades with the establishment of the hydroelectric power plants in Bhutan although Bhutan lacks other forms of resources (Whelpton, 2009). Hydro power is the largest income generating industry in the country which is used for further development of the rural economy, education and health in the country (Lorway et al., 2011).

The map of Bhutan indicates the location of the study area where the data collection was concentrated.



Figure 4 Map of Thimphu Dzongkhag

Thimphu Dzongkhag

Thimphu is the largest and the capital city of Bhutan with area of 2,067sq.km and a population of 104,214. Thimphu became a town in 1961 and grew as the capital of Bhutan (Bureau, 2011). Thimphu has seen a lot of socio economic development and is the most developed Dzongkhag in the country. The main source of income comes from Agricultural product like potatoes, Chilli, livestock farms and Cordyceps for people at the higher grounds (Bureau, 2011). Rapid development and changes are taking place in the city centre giving way to modern infrastructures and amenities, but by regulation, all buildings are required to be designed in traditional style with Buddhist paintings and motifs. Thimphu houses the seat of the king and the parliament. Thimphu has a monsoon-influenced subtropical highland climate. Thimphu features a wet season which runs from May through September and a dry season that covers the remainder of the year.

Thimphu dzongkhag also has the highest number of entertainment centres in Bhutan. It is a host to a large number of discotheques and Drayang. Twelve out of twenty seven Drayang are located in Thimphu spread across the city. Thimphu and other major towns like Paro and Phuentsholing are the recipients of rural youth who migrate to urban centres to seeking better opportunities in life (Lorway et al., 2011).

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the results and analysis. The chapter is the result of interviews conducted with the women entertainers, owners and the customers. This chapter presents the general findings of the study and then highlights the concepts of body labour, agency and exploitation (economic and sexual) of women entertainers in an intersectional analysis.

3.1 General findings

3.1.1 Location of Drayangs

According to a press release, Drayangs in Bhutan operated illegally until April 2009, however now they operate on license issued by Bhutan Infocomm and Media Authority (BICMA), on the conditions set by the regulating authority with the annual fee of Nu. 25,000 (equivalent to 384.62 euros) (Pem, 2009). BICMA requires that Drayangs be located indoors in town away from Dzongs (fortresses), monasteries, schools, hospitals, government offices, residential areas and should have safety measures like security persons, safety kit, fire extinguishers, exhaust fans as is also the requirement of the other entertainment centres (Pem, 2009). It was also required for them to have sound proof systems in place with separate restroom for men and women with proper sanitation facilities and availability of condoms and birth control methods (Pem, 2009). All the seven Drayangs in the capital that I visited were licensed. All these are located away from the mentioned locations however from my observations, not all Drayangs were able to fulfil all conditions set by BICMA. Some of the Drayangs did not have separate restrooms for men and women and lacked basic sanitation and the owners said they were working towards fulfilling the standards set by BICMA. Most of the Drayangs are located in the heart of the city. Few of the Drayangs are located in what people would popularly call the basements (underground) and some in the dark alleys (Drayangs located in the backstreets) of the city. When the owners were asked about the chosen location of the

Drayangs, factors like rent, parking, limiting disturbances in the neighbourhood, easy access were pointed out.

3.1.2 Ambience of the Drayangs

The first thing one notices when entering a Drayang is the flashy lights that dangles from above the ceiling lit up the room. As soon as one enters in any Drayang, one immediately faces the stage where women are either singing or dancing. People with their backs to the exit fill the room, giggles and voices of people resound in the dimly lit room. Women dressed in traditional clothes (kira for women) dance and sing on the stage, some women attend the clients and some bring the drinks. The women working in the Drayangs were polite, always smiled and were always engaged in performing, talking to customers, serving drinks or requesting for sponsorships. Some women would approach the male customers in partners and some would approach them individually. The male customers sometimes would immediately take out some cash to sponsor the songs, some choose to make the women plead, some will make them wait and then there are some men who would flirt before they sponsor the songs. Most of the male customers would have their drinks in front of them, some half-filled, some just getting started and some would be just sitting and watching women perform. The man behind the bar I noticed was one of the busiest taking the orders and handing out the drinks. The payment for the drinks could be made while placing the order or upon getting the drinks.

Loud Rigsar music plays on modern music systems. Rigsar songs, mostly love songs are part of the new entertainment centres that developed in the 1960s particularly popular among the urban youths (Kinga, 2001). Rigsar songs are considered the result of non-Bhutanese songs and music, a big influence of the Bollywood thus lacks the depth and the seriousness of the traditional songs, the nature, theme, music and style sets them apart from the traditional songs/music and are more readily available as commercial venture (Kinga, 2001). It was believed that Rigsar songs are new developments and because of its strong

influence from the Bollywood and Hollywood pop songs, it was no longer able to transmit the social values like the traditional songs and music laden with religious themes (Kinga, 2001). Rigsar songs are also different in the sense that it does not have to be always performed in group like in the traditional dances, instead it was usually a solo laden with love theme songs performed on the stage. In the 1980s, however, the Rigsar songs were used to fulfil the educational purpose, to teach students from southern Bhutan (mostly students from Nepalese origin) as learning Dzongkha (national language) for them was difficult thus to make it easier and develop more interest in the language (Kinga, 2001). Very rarely other music like Bollywood and Hollywood are heard in Drayangs.

A blend of the traditional and modern decorations is particularly centred on the stage in most Drayangs. The traditional motifs and decorations (frills on local design and pattern) are hung over the stage in the Drayang. The stage in the Drayangs, usually raised where the women perform can be as simple as a wooden floor with minimal decorations in some Drayangs to wooden floor adorned with the latest musical equipment's like drums and piano, flashy disco lights to the posters of the Royal couple and all possible traditional Bhutanese paintings. The raised stage is big enough to accommodate about 10 to 12 young women. Most of the Drayangs has a typical classroom like seating arrangement so that customers can face the women performers on the stage with tables in the front to place their drinks.



All the bars in the Drayangs I visited were well decorated and arranged with varieties of drinks. Throughout the night, these women lure the customers, mostly men, for financial sponsorship to sing or dance. Loud songs continue playing; women repeatedly approach the male customers for sponsors and take turns or repeatedly go up the stage and perform to the request as the men immerse themselves in performance of the women and to the melody of the songs. The record keeper, who is usually male takes note of the request of the customers and then announces the amount and the song requested publically as the women bring him the requests.

But not all Drayangs can boast of providing a good space with some of them having very little space to move about with no proper seating arrangements and lack proper sanitation. While Drayang hopping, one afternoon, in the heart of the city, I went to see what the atmosphere was like before the show. I was greeted by a man in his twenties, it was very dark, stinking and litter everywhere. He was the caretaker of the Drayang as he later told me. He told me that the women will come soon and clean the mess. The lavatory was very dirty. However, the same Drayang in the evening gets a facelift, there are lights, well arranged seats and the even the lavatory is better (cleaned and well kept) and late into the night the story repeats again and the rest is history.

The Drayangs are quiet in the daytime. However, by 5pm, the Drayangs bustle in activities. Women clean the place, arrange the tables and chairs and get ready for the night. They take turns to get ready in front of the mirror wearing their best makeup, clothes and high heel shoes. The music is played loud in the room and the women anxiously wait for the customers. While they wait, some just go up the stage and sing a few songs or practice few dance moves. Some just sit on the chair and relax themselves. As soon as a customer walks in, they are on their feet ready to attend the customer. They wait a while for the customer to settle down and then approach them to ask what they would like to have and later approach them for

the sponsorship. The men are approached by one woman after the other throughout the course of the night. Through my observations I did not find any sort of ordering while approaching men, women seemed to know when to approach the customer. When the man was by himself, the women would walk up to them and exchange pleasantries. Few minutes into their conversation, the women would ask for sponsorship. In the similar way, the other women also during the course of the night approached the male customers.

As the evening progressed, more and more customers flow in. The place becomes noisier and the music slowly turns full volume. The women are all over the place, some are engaged in conversation, some laughing at what the customer just told her, some carrying the drinks, some either dancing or singing, some requesting the sponsorship and some just sitting with the men and some men whispering at which women nod their head or just slap their back or get away while the men call after them.

All women who work in the Drayangs maintain a notebook where she maintains the record of the amount sponsored for the song or dance and the name of the customer and ask them to sign it.



As soon as she gets the sponsor, which sometimes requires her to convince the customer by telling him that she has not had a single sponsor, sometimes she flirts with the male customers by letting them put their arms around her, being close to them or hold them and exchange comments and sometimes insisting to sponsor by not leaving the customer until he has done so. She takes the record to the owner who is usually seen behind the bar or the behind the music system and he keeps the record too and then publically announces the name of the customer and the song or the dance. Usually whatever amount, the cheerful voice of the one behind the mike would announce the request and call the woman to perform. The one announcing the requests would also attempt his best to make the evening fun for the customers, they would always have humour in their announcements.

Personally to me, it was very sad sometimes to see how women would approach men for sponsors and men take advantage of this situation. They would ask the women to bring the drinks sit next to them and tease them and then there are some women who are asked to perform first before getting the sponsor. Some women would be asked by the customers to come at a later time to get the sponsor which sometimes they never get as the men keep postponing the sponsors and keep drinking. Women have to perform for different amount, some men sponsor just Nu.100 (equivalent to 1.53 euros) and sometimes in a lucky night they earn Nu.10,000 (equivalent to 153.84 euros) for various songs and dances in total. The amount men give away as sponsorship however varies from individual to individual and the women never say anything about the amount in front of the customers. But, in their own comfort zones I am confident they discussed their patrons and the amount sponsored. The amount the men give away as sponsor was announced publically thus many men who visit the Drayangs and sponsor the songs and dances do not really sponsor less than Nu.300 (equivalent to 4.62 euros) and those who have cash (businessman and also the office goers)

can spend a lot on the drinks and requests as was also evident from my interviews with the five customers:

Sponsoring songs: Nu. 500- 1000 per night (Respondent A, 40 years old, married Businessman)

Requests: Nu.1500 and drinks: Nu.1500 per night (Respondent C, 29 years old, married civil servant)

About 1500 in a night for the requests and the drinks (Respondent D, 30 years old, married civil servant)

I spend more on the drinks about Nu. 1500 in a night and about Nu.1000 for the songs as many women approach for the sponsors (Respondent E, 28 years old, married civil Servant)

3.1.3 Demographic characteristics of the women entertainers

The general impression has been that women from flung villages in eastern Bhutan worked in Drayangas as was also reported in the local newspapers and other articles, but I found out that women from all over the country now work in the Drayangas. During my interviews with the seven women and the two owners, I found out that there were women from as far as Sakteng (highlands) in eastern Bhutan to Gelephu in southern Bhutan. But young women who come from the villages who work in the Drayangas are the ones who are caught in this morally charged terrain (Lorway et al., 2011). Most of them come from poor family background with many siblings. These women face huge economic constraints, family responsibilities and lack of choice in the surrounding they live. They also endure a lot in the villages working in the fields sometimes. Thus they move from the villages to the cities seeking better opportunities. But for some, Drayangas are a platform to show their talent and some genuinely come to pursue their interest in singing and dancing. The survey findings of the College of Business studies sampled 20 Drayangas and interviewed 620 people (owners, workers and members of the public and policy makers) discovered that some 29.7 percent of the employees have

joined Drayang out of their own interest followed by 27.9 percent who were influenced by their friends (Pem, 2011).

The scenario above became evident in my interviews with the women entertainers when they were asked why they left their villages and how different life was in Thimphu:

I left my village after class ten as it was expensive for my parents to educate me and we could not afford it besides I come from a poor family. I have two sisters who are villagers. In the village I have to help with the household chores and also in the field where as here I have time for myself and also learn many things like new songs and dances and also how to do some embroidery and stitching. I also earn money which I can send home and spend some for myself. (Respondent 3, 23 years old, Tashi Tagay Drayang).

The above lines are indication poverty, lack of resources to continue her education, her obligations to her family (doing household and field work), her desire for freedom and the importance of remittances she sends home to help her family. It echoes the sentiments of women who are driven by economic poverty from impoverished regions of the country.

I was not interested in studies and although my parents wanted me to complete my studies, I gave up and came here to work after my friend who was already working here suggested me to come and work. I have a step mom from whom there are three siblings and step father from whom there are four more siblings. There is nothing much to do in the villages but here there are lot of things to do like practicing dance which I like the most and learning new songs. In village I had to work in the field too. (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

This quote shows that she was influenced by her friend to come and voluntarily started working in the Drayang to pursue her interest in singing and dancing.

Both my sister and I didn't not qualify for higher education after class 10 so I let her study and I came looking for job since then I have been working in this Drayang. It's different because in the village you have to take care of the household chores and also look after so many things and work in the field too. (Respondent 2, 23 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

Working in the Drayang was more attractive than having to work in the fields for Respondent 2. This quote also shows that due to financial constraints these women face, as a result give up their chance on education to let other siblings study while they start earning, in this case the women were working.

This particular interview below was interesting as the parents sent them to work and earn money to augment the family income needed to support the large family. Likewise the study of the Filipino household, the women are sometimes sent by the family to work to supplement the family income as it was believed the daughters always maintained their ties with the family thus sending them to work to help their family and not for their own sake (JAMES, 1996).

I left my village so that I could work and earn some money. I heard on the radio about the vacancy so came here to work after my parents agreed. I have four siblings back home and life is difficult high in the mountains attending the household chores. (Respondent 5, 18 years old, Tashi Tagay Drayang)

I left my village because my parents sent me to work here. I am slightly blind by birth. My parents heard about this Drayang and how the “Jinda” (owner) helps the disabled people. He employs people who are blind and help us make money through our songs, we do not dance. In the village I was helping my parents (cleaning the dishes and sweeping) and I was not really able to help at home (in terms of physical work). (Respondent 6, 21 years old, Norling Drayang)

I could not study after class 4 and was helping at home in the village. Then one day my friend told me that she heard on the radio that there was a vacancy in this Drayang. It took me a week to decide if I should work here or not then finally after discussing with my parents I came here. Here we learn new songs and dances and embroidery too and professional singers and dancers come and teach us also. Life in the village is difficult with very little to earn and having to support large family (5 siblings). (Respondent 4, 20 years old, Tashi Tagay Drayang).

Popular mediums like radio and TV are frequently used to advertise the vacancy in the Drayang. Radio is more effective in reaching the general mass. Over the years radio has proved to be the most effective medium to reach the larger mass in the society reaching far and wide in Bhutan (Pek, 2003). The Bhutan Broadcasting Service estimates that about 400,000 people, or 60 percent of the population, listen to the radio which airs 24/7. These mediums also use local celebrities like popular singers to advertise the Drayang. While I was in Bhutan, I came across one advertisement in the local cable network that had a local comedian plus a singer who was well known speak about a particular Drayang seeking men and women who would want to work and find employment in this Drayang. He called for application from men and women who are interested in singing and dancing and those who

need to learn as well. Attractions like trainings, housing and food and making good money were offered. Besides this, he also mentions that the employees would get the opportunity to learn traditional instruments, songs and dances. These advertisements show a very elaborate stage where men and women perform traditional dance dressed in their uniforms. Basically a picture of men and women having good time learning instruments, songs and dances, dressed well and the attraction of earning an income was painted. Offers were open for both men and women who could perform.

The ages of the seven women I interviewed ranged from 18 to 23 years old and I did not come across anyone under 18 years of age as my sample size was very small. Drayangs are mandated by the Labour and Employment Act of Bhutan, 2007 to verify the age of the women who come to seek employment, in this case Drayangs by producing the citizenship identity card. Section 170 of Labour and Employment Act of Bhutan, 2007 states the minimum age of employment at 18 years old. However, during their recent inspection conducted on 8th to 17th August 2012, the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources found out that the employers had failed to produce the documents of their employees to determine the proof of age. The survey findings of Gaeddu College of Business Studies show that most Drayang employees are between the age of 18 and 26. Close to eight percent of them are less than 18 years of age.

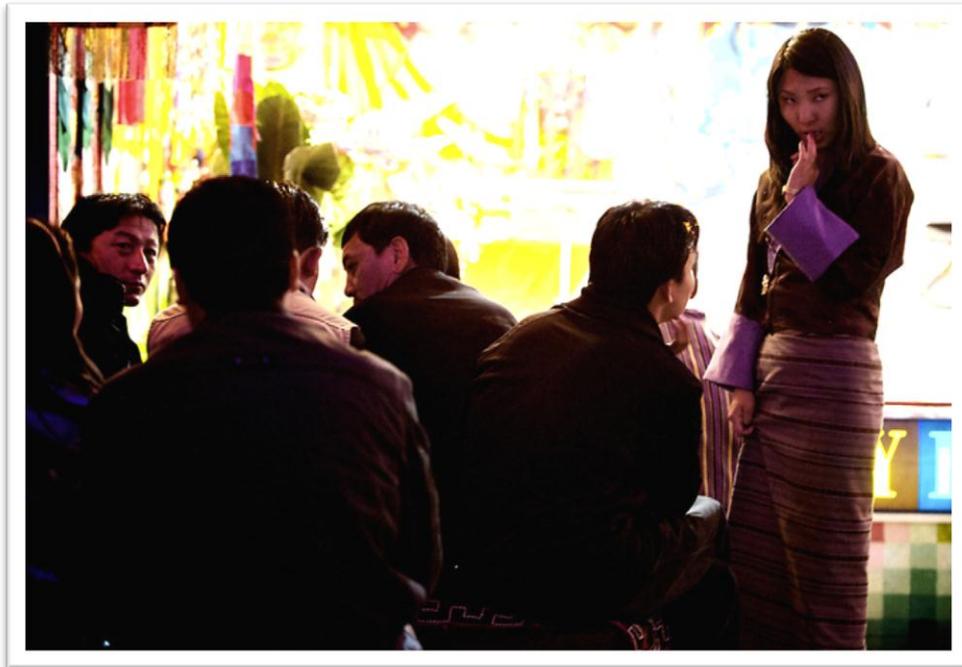
Most of them have been working in the Drayangs for more than a year (3 years as maximum years of experience) with one new recruit that I interviewed who had been working for two weeks at the time of interview. The level of education differed greatly between the women, some had a high school education and some of them have a primary school education and some have never been to school. More than 33 percent of the employees are uneducated (have no education at all) and come from low income families with 81.2 percent of their parents being farmers (Pem, 2011).

3.1.4 Contract signing

Chapter V of the Labour and Employment Act of Bhutan, 2007 requires that a contract be signed between the employer and the employee. All women who work in the Drayang sign a contract of employment for a specific period. Although the earnings are dependent on the request accumulated at the end of the month, there are some Drayang that do have a wage system, but not clearly defined with the minimum identified at Nu.3000 (equivalent to 46.15 euros). They are not allowed to hop from one Drayang to another or quit their job before the contract was over and if they do so, they have to pay a fine which varies from Drayang to Drayang, from Nu.5000 (equivalent to 76.92 euros) to Nu. 10,000 (equivalent to 153. 84 euros) was illegal according to the Labour & Employment Act, 2007.

3.1.5 Patrons of the Drayang

Unlike in the past where only men frequented the Drayang, in recent time women are also seen in these Drayang. I was surprised at the presence of quite a number of women in Norbuling Drayang. It was also equally interesting to find Indian migrant workers enjoying the show as well as performing themselves with the women. The migrant workers are immediately noticeable as they don't wear the national dress, they are dressed in trousers and blazers or a shirt tucked in their pants. While hopping from one Drayang to another, I also saw some elderly men who came to watch the show enthralled by the performances. Sometimes a wealthy Indian guy was seen surrounded by women and the man equally enjoying the attention and sponsor most of the women. The middle class office goers however are the regular clientele in the Drayang.



As was also indicated by the owners, I never encountered anyone who belonged to a high social class or anyone who held high positions in the government service in the Drayang during my visits. Mostly office goers I was told were the regular ones. I also saw mostly office goers, evident from the words of the women entertainers and with my conversation with male friends who frequented the Drayang. Most people who never went to Drayang wanted to go the Drayang out of curiosity as my own sisters and friends wanted to. However the resorts, restaurants, pubs and clubs are also visited by the office goers although more so by the people in a higher social ladder or those who can afford it.

Not all Drayangs can benefit or profit from huge number of spectators. Some Drayangs are more popular than the rest. The owner of Tashi Tagay Drayang known for his social cause draws a huge crowd and the media labelled “Drayang with a cause”. This Drayang and the owner feature in the newspapers more often than others (see Appendix II)



This particular Drayang employs entertainers (men and women) with disability (mostly blind) which makes it different from the rest of the Drayangs. Besides employing them to sing and providing an income, the owner of the Drayangs also gives them training on using musical instruments and hires professional singers and dancers to train them. The customers would like to see them perform and empathize with them. I was told by my friends and relatives that they would like to visit this particular Drayang so that they can help them and would like to see how disabled people could perform in the Drayangs. Many of the workers feel that people come there to watch their performance to help them and because they are disabled as Respondent 3 pointed out:

There are some customers who are “standard” customers who come here to get entertained and help us by sponsoring our songs and especially helping the disabled who are also working here. They come here and enjoy our performance and leave.

Rich people like the Dashos (title given to someone who has authority or power) will not come to the Drayangs, it’s only the middle income groups who come here and watch the show. The rich would visit the discotheques and other bars which are privately owned. The children of the rich parents also won’t come and work here either. They will find work in the offices or elsewhere and those who have their own business will employ their children so it’s only the poor who come to work here and we don’t make lots of money like people think we do as the number of Drayangs has grown over the years. You are also here because you need to do the research otherwise I don’t think you will be here (Rabgye, name changed, Drayang owner)

This shows that there was a distinction between the choices people make while visiting the venues of entertainment based on their class and social standing. The owner makes it clear that customers visiting different kinds of entertainment centres assert their class privilege. According to the two owners I interviewed, men of status, women from rich family, those who own wealth and those who own their own business do not become spectators or performers, perhaps out of unduly curiosity might visit these venues. They would visit the privately owned clubs and bars. The Drayangs according to the owners are open for all, but these venues are mostly frequented by middle class working people. The poor are not able to afford to sponsorship for songs however they come and watch the performance. The influx of the customers reflected the social class of the clientele as was evident in the beauty salons of middle class neighbourhood which had mostly middle class women as their customer base (Harvey, 2005). Likewise social class was reflected through their customer base in the nail salons of three racially and socioeconomic diverse settings in New York (Kang, 2003).

Then there are other Drayangs also known for other reasons. When I asked customers why they chose to this particular Drayang (Drayang not named here as requested by the interviewee), they told me that the women there were more beautiful and that there was always huge crowd in this Drayang. Another reason was that they were regulars and was easily entertained by the women sometimes without having to make any payments. And for some, they are out to have good time with friends.

Most of my friends go there and enjoy drinking beer with them. (Respondent A, 40 years old, business man)

I visit the Drayangs to see the beautiful girls dancing and singing. (Respondent B, 32 years)

Seriously there are beautiful women there and it is the right place to hang out with friends. (Respondent C, 29 years old)

I visit the Drayangs because my friends go there and we get entertained. (Respondent E, 28 years old)

Another reason why men frequent a particular Drayang was because they could arrange for meeting or date after the show was over with those they already know and have become the regular customer as Respondent 1 confirmed:

We are on our own after the show; I think these men are very close to them to sponsor all that money. There have relationship (physical/ sexual relationship) and they meet after the show. (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

None of the Drayangs in the capital however go without customers any night. There are always some who are there sipping their drink or just watching and some of them talking to the women.

3.1.6 Profitability of the business

The Drayang owners confessed that maintaining the business was not profitable anymore as numerous Drayangs have emerged in the recent times. Singye, name changed, 30 years old recalls how when few Drayangs existed business was better. He told me few years ago, there were not many Drayangs and people did not have many choices in selecting the venues. However, in the recent times, besides numerous Drayangs that mushroomed, there are other venues like, bars, restaurant bars, clubs, pubs and discotheques that are more attractive. He told me that people have more choices and many things appeal to their senses. Few years ago, he was able to profit from huge crowd and from the sale of drinks. But now there are many Drayangs and that there was immense competition among the Drayang owners for technology improvement to cater the growing popularity of modern music which according to him was very expensive. He told me about the payments he has to make to the workers, increasing prices of commodities and rent in Thimphu.

3.2 Body labour

Body labour is a commercialized exchange in which the service providers attend to the physical comfort and feelings of the customers (Kang, 2003). It also requires that the service

providers manage their own feelings and emotions to create a safe place and ensuring that the customers feel safe. Body labour is the sense of being cared for in a social and safe place and the emotional management of bodily contact in service interactions (Kang, 2003). Everyday interactions in the Drayangs between the performers and the customers, between the employer and the employee and interaction among the women entertainers bring forth the exchange processes that take place between these people that shapes the relation and the performance of body labour. Women entertainers profit using their bodies for commercialized exchange working for long hours for a minimum amount based on request system that other middle class women in the society look down upon. Women entertainers, who have migrated from the villages, have no or limited education, cannot find jobs capitalize on the choice they make. A market value is placed on the women and their performance.

Marketing strategy demands that women are properly dressed, well groomed and attend the customers to their best which was sometimes emotionally demanding and the Drayangs as institution catering to male customers are no different in their demands as well. There are also customers who demand to be attended by particular woman. The owners exert their authority by telling the women how they should behave and conduct themselves and also ask the senior women to help the new recruits. The women are told be courteous to the male customers, attend them and give their best while performing for the customers. The senior women entertainers are also required to teach the new recruits how to conduct themselves, how to approach the customers and teach them the songs and dances.

Drayangs are increasingly about body labour, repeatedly dancing on the stage, bringing drinks, attending various customers, engaging in lively conversations, shopping for the bar, sometimes running to a nearby shop to get doma (areca nut and betel leaf with a dash of lime), making them feel comfortable, preparing themselves, complimenting men and cleaning the halls after the show. Women entertainers have to be courteous, always smiling,

please the customers and make them happy. Women entertainers sit down with the male customers and starts conversation. All women in most Drayang's wait for the customers to walk in. As soon as a customer walks in and settles down on a comfortable chair and relaxes himself, women approach him asking what he would like to have. They take the order and leaves to bring the drinks.

Respondent 1 and likewise other women entertainers in Drayang's bring forth the various facets of body labour as the demands of the job. Respondent 1 usually leaves her house by 4pm. Once at the Drayang, along with other women entertainers, she helps them prepare the hall (cleaning, arranging the tables and chairs, sweeping) for the evening. When the cleaning was over and the stage was set, it was time to get ready for the show. She spends considerable amount of time on her face and her dress ensuring she looked good. When the evening begins, she was seen dressed in bright green kira and a matching tego looking tall and slender. Respondent 1 sat next to the customers, conversation begin, she would bring the drinks as the customers' requests and within few minutes of the conversation she took out her book and asks for financial sponsorship for her songs/ dances. She then took the request to the owner and came back to sit with the customer and resumed their conversation. When she heard her name called out, she left the customer to perform for him. She left with a bright smile on her face and goes up the stage and performs. As the evening progressed, she accumulated her requests, attended more male customers and she was repeatedly seen on the stage performing to various numbers.

Unlike the nail salons racially and socioeconomically diverse, in this study it looks at a women entertainers defined by their class, sexuality and gender perform in a typically male dominated arena, in this case the Drayang's. These women entertainers perform body labour for the male customers capitalizing on the use of their sexuality to result in more financial sponsorships. Manipulation of sexuality was key to the Filipina hostesses working in Japan

(Parreñas & Boris, 2010). The Filipina hostesses sexually excited their male patrons with seductive dances or songs while scantily dressed or through sexual conversations and actions. In the Drayangs as well sexuality was equally important but in this case women entertainers are fully dressed and sexual conversations and actions are not explicit apart from the mere flirtation (holding hands, putting arms around the shoulders and sitting very close) with the male customers. These women capitalize on their sexuality by performing for men accentuating the curves of their body. The female body is commodified in the work place where body was integral part of the experience offered for men who gaze. Men visit the Drayangs for various reasons and the women make use of their affect and sexuality to forge relationship with the customers to build friendship by smiling, being courteous, warm, open, engaging in lively conversations and appearing and disappearing to serve them their drinks.

The women were subjects of male gaze as means through which they earn their money and in doing this the women were able to use it as a power and taking pride in their bodily display and movements through their performance (Goddard, 2000). Sexuality is furthered in their provocative, erotic and sensual in the performance at the new entertainment centres bringing forth sexualisation and commodification of culture. The use of the human body with its intricate movements in the dances are highly linked to sexuality (Hanna, 1988). The women entertainers used their sexuality to excite and seduce men through their performances which was highly provocative but they denied having any sexual contacts.



In doing so, these women employed strategies to result in bigger sponsorships. Women entertainers exercised agency in the use of their sexuality and the bodily attributes to invite gaze from the male patrons benefitting themselves. The men flatter them, affirm that they are sexy, desirable and get the sponsor they need. An exchange value was placed as a result of the commodification of the body. The women smile, flirts, tease men and play along with them thus men find them as potential sexual partners. Then these women were also very caring and nurturing in her services like listening to men, bringing these men their drinks and finally she was the performer upon whom the men customer gazed.

The women entertainers were very conscious of their makeup and their looks reinforcing the rules of perfect body and looks.



We don't discuss this but we are always competing in the Drayang to get the sponsors and the bonus. We have to be beautiful and be able to dance to any number so that people like us and sponsor us. If we are good performers and look beautiful we always make good money. I do not mix too much with the other girls besides my best friend. There are some girls here who are very competitive and they have their regular clients who come here and sponsor huge sums of money for them. We can never approach these customers because the girls are with them throughout the night. I don't want to make too many friends here because there are chances that we might fight and quarrel. We are 16 of us working here so there is lots of competition to get sponsorship for the songs and dances. There are few girls here who are very popular (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang).

We have uniform as our dress, but we have to buy our make ups and other stuffs like shoes. I like high heels as it makes me taller. I like to wear a little make up to enhance my look like lipstick, powder, kajal and scent. I also like the new jacket style tego (outer open jacket that is designed to accentuate as much of the feminine features as possible.) that helps me my body look better. Men like women who are slim and who can perform well (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

The women have to buy these things (make up, high heel shoes) on their own which adds the cost to their earnings that is split in paying the rent, used for necessary consumptions and buying cosmetics that will help them conform to the media image of beauty. Increasing attention is paid to employees 'attitude and appearance as a strategy in the service companies in providing quality service and customer care (Nickson, Warhurst, & Dutton, 2005). Although this did not come very evident from the owners, yet women indicated of the same in their like for enhancing their look to compete among the peer to gain more sponsorship. These women devoted a lot of time on their bodies (physical appearance) to maximize their exchange value with the customers by forging their relationship with them and use the bodily attributes to function as currency (Patterson & Elliott, 2002).

Respondent 1 told me that she loves makeup and that she always looks good with the makeup. She also loves to wear bright colours. She loves to wear tego (outer jacket over the kira) that accentuates the upper half of her body. She pays immense attention to her face, she told me she uses a foundation to make her look fairer, applies a lipstick, mascara and paints her eyes. During my visits, I always saw her looking good with the makeup and her hair let loose.

The women were also likely competition and envy for the peers within the Drayang. Though not very salient and also evident from the interview, the women during my observations work hard on their body (ensuring they are slim) and face (make up). High heels, makeup and clothes are important to these women. Besides being popular by gaining the most sponsorship, being beautiful exerted pressure on the rest to do the same. There was a trend

once in one of Drayang's to give away prizes (sometimes in cash and sometimes in kind like rice cookers, boilers etc) to those women who earned the highest. Later the practice was dissolved as the owner noticed that it was demoralizing some women who earned very less and in doing so, nepotism clearly became evident as I found out during my interview with the women and the owners. In this practice, it was found that some women earned a lot and the rest did not.

Respondent 1 finds it very unnecessary to compete with the rest of the women. She thinks one should just do her own work and not be bothered by how the others are dressed and look. But I got the impression she was bothered. She talked about how looking good was important and how she likes to wear makeup. She thinks she is not popular like the other women in the Drayang, but while observing I saw that she was among the many faces that was regularly on the stage performing for the customers. According to her, she was not popular like the rest as she does not really get huge amount for sponsor and her relationship with the customers do not extend beyond the working space. In trying to look good, the women are commodifying their bodies as objects of desire thus the men find them more desirable.

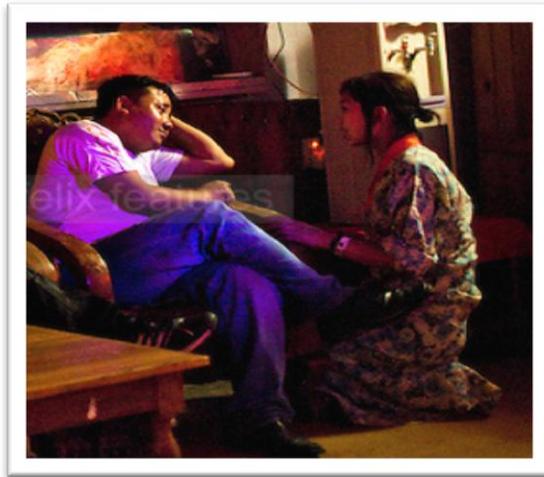
A sense of competition makes life challenging for them in terms of behaviour, looks, popularity and earnings. Respondent 1, 21 years old, who lives on her own explained it was difficult when all of them have to do the same. All 16 women have to get the financial sponsorship so it sometimes becomes quite challenging in trying to convince the customers that they have not had a single sponsor so that the customers can give the sponsorship. All of them approach the same person, so she felt that at times the customers are also not really willing to sponsor the song as he has to spend a lot if he chooses to sponsor everyone.

One night, I noticed a well built and elderly looking Indian man, he sat between women and the rest of the women also kept going back and forth for him. They were engaged

in conversation. They laughed and the women were getting closer to him. Later as the evening progressed, I came to know that the man had the highest amount sponsored for the songs and dances. The two women I became closer to also got their sponsors. The man was the center of attention and I was particularly surprised at how he enjoyed the attention and kept sponsoring the women. The man was constantly laughing and talking to different women, he diverted his attention from one particular woman to another woman frequently. He was sometimes holding the women and relaxed himself as the women performed for him, fetched his drink, entertained him and listened to him.

Sometimes multiple women collectively approach the male customers as in the case of the migrant workers, in this case, the women all seemed to work together forming an alliance. They were all working towards making this particular man happy and attending to his needs as they understand that working together benefited them. In this case all women who approached him were sponsored and women knowing this worked collectively. Unlike other times, this particular night I found that even Respondent 1 and Respondent 2 joined the rest of the women to work in solidarity so all benefitted from the collaboration.

Customers are aware of women who pay attention to them and demand to be attended by the same woman like Respondent E who wants to see the same woman attend him and when asked why, he said because she makes him feel good by listening to him and she makes him happy. Some of the women find listening to the complaints of the customers and the owners very stressful and demanding likewise their competition with the rest of the women winning the sponsorship were pointed out as very tiring.



There was a commodified relation between the male customers and the women. Women manipulate their feelings and emotions while at work. Once at work, they wore their makeup and plastered a smile on their faces very similar to the Filipina hostesses although the context is very different. They put on the best of their facial expression ensuring that they manage their own emotions by managing the emotions of the customers. Surface acting happens when one regulates the emotional expression or puts on an outward appearance or modify their display without shaping their inner feeling which was more visible to me also with the women entertainers (Hochschild, 2003).

It was also obvious from the interviews that the women entertainers at the work place were mostly acting out to make the customers happy or performing care work for male customers for example from the quote below we can understand that Respondent 2 was irritated, but she was she was not able to manifest her irritation instead kept on listening ensuring she was paying attention to needs of the customer.

Sometimes we have to pretend to be sad and sometimes to be happy so that the customers are happy. We have to make sure that we are also equally interested or concerned for him although we may not really feel it. (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

They put on a facial expression or the body postures were very obvious in the displays of these women entertainers. The women entertainers were always playing shy, smiling and never during my observation saw any woman angry or unhappy to perform. Instead as soon as they heard their names being called out, they smiled and go up the stage to perform. Once on the stage, throughout their performance, these women wear the brightest smile on the faces. They were at their best expressions and posture while attending the customers.

Most women entertainers always sat crossed leg and turned their bodies to male customers. They flirted when the customer was flirting by laughing to their jokes or at some comments the male customers would make. Even when the male customers sometimes pushed and pulled them, the women never complained instead they smiled and controlled their anger. The women put on encouraging smiles to ensure that the customers are assured that these women were paying attention to their conversation by attentively listening to them, sometimes laugh appreciatively, show concern, display a serious look if the conversation is serious and just move with the flow.

Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayangs explains how when she does not like to sit and seem to be enjoying the conversation. She tells me that there are times when she does not like sitting next to the male customer. She elaborates that during such days, she was forcing herself to sit next to the customer like any other day and pretends to enjoy the conversation, laugh when the customer laughs and smile when he is smiling. These nights according to her are particularly stressful when she was most of the time pretending. Likewise, Respondent 2, 23 years old, Norbuling Drayang, also thinks that some nights are particularly more stressful than the rest of the nights. There are times when she finds herself very tired yet she needs to continue entertaining customers. Sometimes the customers can be drunk and get very close; however she could not be annoyed at the customer. She has to carefully ensure that customers are not noticing her dislike for the customers behaviour, she

talks along with him while continue to seemingly enjoy the company. The longer she has to bear with the customer, the more she needs to employ her emotion and more she needs to pretend which results in fatigue and discovering the men as “boring” in her words.



Besides working at their own respective homes, some of these women entertainers also have to shop for the bar in Drayang before the show, clean the hall and arrange the seats for the spectators.

Usually in the day time before I go to Drayang, I make sure that I wash my clothes, visit my friends, clean the house and attend to other things (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

Before I go to work, I spend time with my daughter and finish all the household chores, washing the clothes, cooking and cleaning so that when my husband comes back he can have time to take care of her (Respondent 2, 23 years old, Norbuling Drayang)



The women entertainers in some Drayangs have to shop for drinks before the show begins. The women would walk to the nearby shop to get the drinks and walk back carrying the drinks which requires physical strength in carrying the drinks. There are some Drayangs where the owners bring the drinks. The women were also required to clean the hall before the show in some Drayangs and after the show in the other Drayangs. The women have to sweep the floor, mop the floor, pick up the trash customers may have left behind, take the empty glasses and the bottles to the kitchen, clean the empty glasses, and clean the stage while some of them arrange the seats. The men take care of the equipment. Although the work was shared yet it demanded time and effort from these women which according to many of them were exhausting especially at the end of the show. Respondent 3 gives an account of the above mentioned scenario:

Before the show starts, I have to go down to the shop which is close to the Drayang to get the drinks and other things that we might need in the Drayang for the evening. In the mornings when we have time, we clean the hall and prepare the seats for our customers otherwise it mostly happens in the late afternoons (Respondent 3, 23 years old, Tashi Tagay Drayang).

Singye, name changed, owner of the Drayang also painted a similar picture:

It is mandatory to clean the hall every day before the show begins and also they have to arrange the table and chairs properly for the customers so that they are comfortable when they come in.

Performing sometimes without breaks and attending to a large crowd was also another aspect of their job which put immense physical pressure on their bodies. Respondent 1, 21 years old was among the many women repeatedly approached by the men for her performance. She sings and dances as well. She performs Rigsar as well as Bollywood numbers when requested. Sometimes she performs two or three numbers in a row without breaks. As soon as she finishes performance she takes an empty seat or just sits next to one of the customers. When I complimented on how popular she was and how much customers liked her, she was shy and told me how she would like to rest in between performance so that she could relax a bit.

In the uptown nail salons of New York City, besides extensive physical pampering the emotional needs (servicing of the bodies) of the white middle class customer was of great importance which took a toll on the emotions and physically stressed the service providers. Likewise in the Drayangs, besides performing to the requests of the male customers, it was equally important for them to be attentive to their customers by engaging in conversations, sitting close to them and make them feel good. Sometimes it was very tiring taking a physical toll on these women entertainers when have to keep themselves engaged in conversation when seemingly enjoying with the male customers. It was also stressful when the owners of the Drayangs reminded them of their work and the expectations when these women entertainers do is please the owners and the customers.

Researchers have shown that surface acting results in burn out and depression which is the experience of emotional dissonance (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). Emotional Dissonance is the mismatch between the felt emotions and the display of emotions required by the job wherein the need to control, skill and actions arises (Morris & Feldman, 1996). Sometimes because there is a mismatch between the felt emotion and the display of emotions, it becomes very tiring and annoying. The emotional management of feelings was cited as the most difficult aspect of her job.

For Respondent 1 who loves singing and dancing, she was among the many women who was constantly on the stage either performing or singing as per the request of the customers. She told me that customers are very important for the business as well as for them since these customers pay them and it also meant maintaining good relations with her customer. For her, customers have to be pleased all the time and it was necessary that they are having a good time so that they can come again. Attending the customer demand fulfilling their physical needs (physical comfort) and also meeting their emotional demands which usually means engaging in lively conversations to make the customer comfortable and relaxed. She ensured that she made the customer very comfortable and felt good. She sat close to the male customer and on the request of the customer got closer. Like her, other women in the Drayang were seen holding the hands of the customer and some hugging them. Then there are few who listen intently to the customers. Some of the women find listening to the complaints of the customers and the owners very stressful and demanding likewise their competition with the rest of the women winning the sponsorship were pointed out as very tiring.

Constantly women were on their feet or sitting down with the customer while seemingly enjoying whatever it was that they were doing, but all was not true. Respondents told me how hard it was to laugh along with the customer when she did not really want to laugh or when what the customer said wasn't funny at all. However she plays along with it and fakes a laugh or displays an expression that confirms the customer he was being attended. Then there are other women like Respondent 7, who find the conversation boring yet disguise her feelings of being bored and put on an outward expression of confirming their interest in the conversation.

I am sometimes very irritated at the customer who asks the same question over and over again but don't show it to him and keep answering his questions with a fake smile and never show it on my face (Respondent 2, 23 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

Sometimes I meet some very boring people who talk about their work but I pretend to enjoy the conversation. (Respondent 7, 23 years old, Norling Drayang)

According to social identity theory, people tend to classify them-selves and others into various social categories, such as organizational membership, religious affiliation, gender, and age cohort (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Thus by identifying oneself with certain groups' individuals rely more and more on the group to define what one chooses to do including display rules to conform in the group. They believe that the identification makes the emotional labour performed more enjoyable and enhance wellbeing. Within the workings of the Drayang, identities were formed. There are in-groups who are similar with the self and there are out-group who are different from the self. Identifying as the in-group and the out-group accentuates the perceived similarities and the differences between the self and the identified group (Stets & Burke, 2000). Respondent 1 and Respondent 2 explained this identification of the self with others in the following lines:

We are not very close with the rest of the women her as they are more popular and there are men who sponsor a lot of for them. I think they have physical relationships. (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

Kezang and I work together in partnership and we are happy. We don't need to be like the others who are very close with the customers. (Respondent 2, 23 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

They did not identify with the other women working in the same Drayang thus they identified themselves as in-group working together and the other women as the out group. They identified with each other as they were best friends since school days and they have known each other for a long time. They do not bond with the rest as they think rest are competition and cannot be like the rest whose relationships with the customers extend beyond the time and place in the Drayang. This example shows the complexity of building identities and assimilation in the new working environment. Here oneness and otherness was used to define themselves in relation to their peers as was also explained how based on nationalism individuals can identify themselves (Adib & Guerrier, 2003).

This classification of the self and the other represents the outward resistance to managerial control and also means that stooping to behaviours their peers' projected meant being very low in their conduct. Thus, in doing so, Respondent 1 and Respondent 2 projected themselves as doing good building a positive self conforming to their own partnership and learning their ways in the Drayang by disciplining themselves and their body. Through this, it confirms that women can either choose to be part of the group or do not identify with the group and build their own identity defining their choice of friends.

Yet there are others who conform to the groups. They learn to sing, dance, clean and follow the dos and the don'ts of the subject rules of the Drayang they work for. When they conform to the groups norms, they are rewarded with acceptance and a feeling of pride, but not conforming to the group meant rejection and the feeling of shame (Scheff, 2002). In this case, conforming to the group becomes more enjoyable by learning together and helping each other thus enhancing their wellbeing. Thus by performing body labour, women affirms, enhances and celebrates the wellbeing and status of others (Hochschild, 2003). Like Respondent 4, who by conforming to the group in her Drayang has learned the ways, made new friends and come to like her work.

The seniors help me and tell me how to walk, talk and behave in front of the customers. They also teach me how to dance and sing

The pressure to learn and adapt in the new environment and family pressure was evident in this case. Respondent 4 had to learn the norms of the Drayang. She had to discipline her body to ensure that she fits with the rest by waking up at the same, following the dance moves taught by her seniors, learning to speak and how to approach the customers are some examples.

I don't want them (her parents) to know because I don't intend to stay here for a long time and working in Drayang is not appreciated because they think that the girls here are like prostitutes and cause family break ups although that is not true. When I have

earned some money and saved a bit I want to open a shop and leave drayang (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang).

While interviewing her, I could understand that she came into the business when she was left with no other options to be employed. She told me she would like to continue working in the Drayang for few years and then when she has saved enough, she would like to open a shop. She told me that it was better to leave the Drayang as people will never talk good about Drayangs clearly indicating her aspirations for a better life.

I know that people talk bad about us women working in the Drayangs. I have people say that women in Drayangs are like prostitutes, but that's not true. Even my family thought so but later they changed their mind since I was doing well (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang).

Because we are paid to sing and dance, people think we are like prostitutes.(Respondent 2, 23 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

It was also emotionally painful for most of the women I interviewed to have known that working in Drayangs meant doing a degraded job and people judging them.

I first heard about the Drayang on Kuzu on the radio so then I came to Thimphu and approached the owner who was kind enough to employ me. In the beginning my parents and family protested when I told them that I got employed in a Drayangs. They told me that I was humiliating them. But after I came here and started working it was fine because what we heard about the women in the Drayangs were not true. In fact it all depends on self to take care and not be humiliated. I have good times with my friends and learning new things.(Respondent 3, 23 years old, Tashi Tagay Drayang)

The quotes above clearly shows the women entertainers' awareness about the stigma attached with their jobs and it come as no surprise for me to know that the women entertainers at some point in their lives would like leave the Drayangs and earn money more honorably elsewhere. Yet there are other women entertainers who are genuinely interested in singing and dancing and see no better platform to show it than the Drayangs.

For them they are commodifying their body and emotions for the owners in exchange for the money they earn through their performance (body labour), they experience emotional dissonance. It was common in the Drayangs the interactions between the male customers and

the women, requires the women to manage their emotions, sometimes listen to abuses or be abused more so when the men are intoxicated and adhere to the rules of the Drayangs set by the owners and this repeats every night.

Most women confirmed that they do not like it when men misbehave, when they have to engage in conversations for prolonged period, and dancing on the stage without breaks, all this takes it physical and emotional toll on the women. Women experience mismatch between the felt emotions and the display of emotions required by the job. Women have to smile at all times although that may not be the actual feeling. Sometimes women may be shouted at by customer, she might be angry herself however she acts to produce the right emotions and smile. Emotional dissonance can result in emotional exhaustion and job dissatisfaction. Respondent 2, explained how sometimes she feels bad about leaving her daughter and the need to keep smiling, laughing and attending the customers are in conflict with each other. She told me that while at work, she doesn't really have a choice and that she needs to keep going which at times stresses her out. Since the service providers must fit the situation by displaying right emotions which may not be genuinely felt, it demands careful planning and thought that is sometimes stressful (Hochschild, 2003).

When the work involves the face to face interaction, it demands greater control of emotional expression as both the verbal and facial expression requires regulation (Morris & Feldman, 1996). When the workers were on their own, they have the freedom to express themselves more freely, but being on work demands the displaying of organizationally desired behavior and emotions that may not be genuinely felt creating emotional dissonance. They bring forth the public discourses that are prevalent in the society and the need to situate in a better job to conform to the norms of the society. All women I interviewed were aware of the general opinion and disagreed with that saying it was not true and that everything was dependent one's behavior which was also what the owners believe.

Thus it can be concluded that women entertainers manipulate their feelings and emotions displaying surface acting and conceals their deep emotions and feelings at work. The women entertainers make use of their affect and sexuality to forge relationship with the male customers without the provision of sex resulting in bigger sponsorships. The women entertainers perform body labour at home and likewise at their work place: perform on the stage repeatedly, bring drinks, attend various customers, smiling, engage in lively conversations, shopping for the bar, sometimes running to a nearby shop to get doma, make the male customers feel comfortable, prepare themselves, compliment men and cleaning the halls after which clearly indicates the limited agency they are able to exercise at work however they determine the use of their sexuality.

3.3 Agency of women entertainers

Agency is defined as the ability of the individual to define their goals and act upon them (Kabeer, 2002). Pro-sex theory defines agency as the ability to negotiate in their jobs (Miriam, 2005). In this study likewise as discussed in the theoretical framework, agency is understood as the ability of the women entertainers to define or negotiate in their jobs and how they act on their defined goals and aspirations. Using the concept of agency, it states how women entertainers negotiated their power with the owners, male customers and family and with their peers.

As was evident from the earlier statements where the women said that they left the villages because life was difficult in the villages where they had to do household chores and field work as well. The decision to become a business owner because it offers the advantage of balancing work and family reflects one particular way in which entrepreneurial decisions are influenced by gender (Harvey, 2005). Men can easily find jobs that are physically demanding jobs like in mining, construction, factories etc while such jobs are not conducive for females. They are motivated to work in the Drayangs as it demands less physical strength

and allows them attend to their other priorities (some had to look after the baby, some had to attend social obligation etc.) and pursue their dreams of making it big in the entertainment industry. At the same time, the kind of work women pursue also reflects their agency in the choice they make for their livelihood.

Respondent 2, 23 has a three month old baby. For her, the only option left after she came looking for job with her level of education was working in the Drayang. She is happy to be working in the Drayang although she is aware of how people misjudge her and her profession. She says working in the Drayang gives her the time she needs with her daughter before her husband comes back from work to take care of her. The free time that is available to her before the show allows her to devote attention to her daughter partially fulfilling the role of a mother. Thus her choice of work reflects her gendered choice in balancing her obligations as a mother and as a performer of a Drayang. The parents take turns looking after the child as hiring a baby sitter would have been too expensive for them as was also evident in the findings of Harvey who reported that aspects of intersectionality are present and that as working-class women, professional child care may be too costly consider it a financially viable option.

It is said that Othering process comes into play when identities are constructed in relation to another (Adib & Guerrier, 2003). These women entertainers are identified as the 'Others' in the public discourses who are different from the rest of the women in Bhutan as they work in the Drayang and are constructed as immoral women who engage in sex work. The women entertainers are identified as the other who are different, but when she was defined by what she does (attending male customers), she was commodified as a product in her relationship with her customers who perform sexual act. Consumption produces female entertainers as spectacles and fodder for the male gaze who gawk at the women entertainers. The existence of gender power relations are evident in the fact that the women entertainers

have to work to make the owners and the customers happy to maintain the flow of revenue in the Drayangs.

The feminised roles of the women entertainers as pet, mother and sex object as was found in a restaurant by looking into the works of the women who work in the Bazooms restaurants as Bazoom girls (Loe, 1990). Likewise, the women entertainers in the Drayangs are no different with these women who flirt, smile and play along with the male customers to gain financial sponsorship making her a pet in the hands of the male customers although it is important to mention here that unlike Bazoom girls, women in Drayangs did not expose their bodies instead they are fully clothed in the national dress. In her attending to the male customers by creating a safe place, ensuring the physical and emotional comfort, bringing the drinks, listening to the customers, engaging in lively conversations and entertaining them, she performs care work. Then when she is gazed at becomes an object of desire these women entertainers are objectified as sex objects.

Unlike other women in the society who take up better jobs, for these women entertainers, Drayangs are their means to securing financial stability thus shaping them differently. Women who decided to become entertainers in the Drayangs were shaped by their class positions as well with most of them coming from a farming background with no other source of alternative income. With domestic obligations and financial instability interweaved with their gender and class along with their level of education, Drayangs are their only means of income and employment.

The women entertainers exercise but limited agency in their work place. Their only forms of resistance to the established power structure comes in the form of these women getting together and gossiping about the owner, the customer or for that matter even their peers. Women in partners or in groups express their grief or share complaints about the

management and their control. For example, Respondent 1 and Respondent 2 working in different Drayangs complained about the owners did not grant them leave when they wanted to go and visit their family in the village and made them work. There was never a direct confrontation to the management I was told as they fear they would lose their jobs. Then others like Respondent 4 and Respondent 5 get together and talk about their peers who they think are engaged in sexual acts with the male customers. Getting together and discussing their grievances was another way of resisting however no direct challenge was posed to owner or the customers as was evident from the inspection of Ministry of Labour and Human Resources (MOLHR) where much was disclosed with the inspectors where the owners were not present.

Women entertainers exercise limited agency or their ability to define their goals and act upon them are limited. The goals in the lives of these women entertainers differed from pursuing their dreams of making it big in the entertainment industry to getting out of their current jobs and living a decent life by opening a shop. Women in the Drayangs perform for the owners, customers, peers and their family. Their goals are defined by the owner in the Drayangs, their dresses, their salary are some examples and further the need to earn money leaves them to act upon the actions decided by the owner. The women entertainers have no power to bargain or negotiate their contract, salary, free time, leave, provident fund, job description, dress and working hours.

The women entertainers also have no say when it comes to holidays. According to section 108 of the Labour and Employment Act, 2007, an employee is entitled to a minimum of nine public holidays each year. According to them, in a recent inspection carried out in July 25th and 26th, 2012, out of sixteen Drayangs across Thimphu and Paro, twelve of them had not observed public holidays. Although the employees are entitled to various types of leave such as sick leave, annual leave, causal leave, maternity leave, and paternity leave, fifteen

Drayangs have not provided the entitled leave to their employees as per the act and regulation on leave. From the interviews that I conducted I could gather pretty much gather the same although there was one Drayang that had granted maternity leave to two women. Women entertainers prefer not to take leave as deductions were made from what they earned. Drayangs that provide in facilities (food and room) to the women are stricter with their movement than others. Women have to remain locked inside during holidays when they are not working as Respondent 3 pointed out which according to her the owner taking care of the workers and has to seek the permission of the owner if they needed to go out. The workers have to work at odd hours. As per the mandate of the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, the working hours must not exceed eight hours per day and forty eight hours per week. Although most of the Drayangs comply with this mandate during the time of the inspection, some Drayangs maintain Tuesdays are off day thus no other time for rest was granted. The services provided by the women entertainers that exceed the mandated working hours are not paid for.

Most Drayangs do not have a Provident fund system and most women were not aware of the provident fund and the benefits of the same. Section 14 of the Regulation on provident fund (PF) requires that PF be maintained. According to the inspection record of the MoLHR, four Drayangs have instituted the PF system without maintaining PF with the authorized financial institutions rather they deposited the deducted amount in the saving account of the employers. There are no other benefits of social security program provided to the workers.

Women are also bound by their obligations to their family and friends. Some women who work in the Drayangs were able to augment family income or sometime simply work as a survival strategy when left without any other choices. Some (four of the seven women I interviewed) send remittances back to their villages for their family and there was one who had recently joined and needed the money for her own necessary consumption like buying

new clothes and shoes, but in the long run she intends to save and send remittances to her family in the village.

Women entertainers in Drayangs enact agency through body labour in the Drayangs through the manipulations of feelings and emotions capitalizing on their affect and sexuality. Their aspirations and wellbeing is overridden by the demands of the job and contract with the owner that limits their movement to other jobs before the contract period is over. The women entertainers have limited say in their work place as the owners exert control, prevent employees from moving into other employment and keep a part of the earnings. The women are able to tolerate their work as they can help their family through the remittances they are able to send home. The women entertainers are dependent on the male customers as well, but they forge relationships with the male customers to get bigger sponsorships and can determine the use of their affect and sexuality.

3.4 Exploitation of women entertainers

The women entertainers who are economically disadvantaged are accused performing sexual acts and as having low morality. Unlike other studies of women in entertainment business who are engaged in sexual behaviours, Drayangs in Bhutan are recent modern phenomenon and does not cater to prostitution. The newspaper articles, the online forum and also discussion at the policy levels describe women entertainers as victims of sexual exploitation and how Drayangs give way to prostitution. Given this scenario, Drayangs are blamed for the sexual exploitation of women and that women working in Drayangs are considered misbehaving and ill-mannered.

All Drayangs employed at least eight women and draws middle class clientele. All the owners profess to help these women who are unemployed and those who cannot support themselves. The owners are adamant that the Drayangs as entertainment centres should be

respected and women in Drayang be treated and considered like any other women. They said they provide employment and help these men and women make a living to support themselves and would like to see them do well in their lives when they decide to leave the Drayang. Namgay Dorji, 30, owner of the popular Tashi Tagay Drayang in Thimphu is among the many owners who work to benefit the employees and help them build a life. His is the only Drayang that supports the disabled who perform in his Drayang and in the daytime train them in embroidery and musical instruments. His life was not a smooth one thus his interest in helping those who are unable to help themselves (see appendix II)

The relationship between the owners of the salon and the stylist are most unique especially the ideology of help (Harvey, 2005). Likewise was obvious in the works of Namgay Dorji who experienced the struggles of life opened a Drayang with this ideology. Respondent 3, 23 shared how when she was taken under his wings of care and since then has been earning a decent amount. Then there are women who support each other like Respondent 1 who decided to work in the Drayang after her friend who started making a living for herself.

3.4.1 Sexual exploitation

As was discussed in the dominant discourses, the women entertainers in the Drayang are represented as women of low character and victims of sexual exploitation. It was discussed in the theoretical framework that radical feminist who study traffic in women argue that domination, specifically men and other dominant group's politically and legitimized demand to physical, sexual and emotional access to capacities and bodies of others. Women who chose to be prostitutes are shaped by their social, political construction of poverty, sexual abuse, homelessness and family obligation (Jeffreys, 1999). Becoming financially dependent on the owner and the male customers makes the women entertainers their potential source of sexual exploitation. However, the sexual practices in the Drayang found earlier, which now seems almost invisible is different from the sexual exploitation discussed elsewhere as these

Drayangs are not explicit in sexual networks and these are entertainment venues of recent developments.

An owner of a Drayang I interviewed told that women in the Drayangs are blamed for all wrong reasons. After the interview, around 11pm, he took me to a small shop very close to his Drayang, located in the extreme corner of the building. He told me that he would pretend to buy doma (areca nut and betel leaf with a dash of lime) and I should just walk in with him and watch. I curiously went with him and stepped inside the shop. To my surprise the room was filled with smoke and seated on the long benches were young customers (men and women) who from what observed also belong to middle class and these men and women were dressed casually (in denim jeans and shirts). Everyone lifted their face to see us and resumed their smoking and drinking. There were quite a number of young men and women smoking and some very drunk and some half way through their drinks. They were talking and using abusive words. After the owner purchased his doma, we stepped outside and little further away from the shop, he offered me a doma and told me that women in Drayangs are not exploited, but spaces and men and women like them give birth to exploitation and in the process the Drayangs are blamed. Sexual exploitation according to him meant sexual contacts with the male customers and female entertainers. Women in Drayangs don't wear skimpy clothes, but the women who go to the discos do so according to him. However in a positive light, he told me that in the recent, there has been a slight improvement in the status of the Drayangs since the regulations came about.

All Drayangs have a request system where women approach the men to get financial sponsorship for their performance leading to economic dependence of women resulting in their sexual exploitation. The prevailing system of request in all the Drayangs was one of the sources of economic exploitations of the employees. This system provides conditions for these women to be potentially sexually exploited by male customers. This system of request

was partly responsible for making women very vulnerable to men's advances and claims (Lorway et al., 2011). Since the songs and dances are based on the sponsorships from the male customers and their earnings are dependent on the accumulation of financial sponsorship at the end of the month, the women are not able to resist the advances male customers make as doing so would result in loss of their income leaving them no room for negotiation. Men take advantage of the fact that women have to gain the sponsorship for the songs, thus they ask women to sit next to them and talk to them or tease them for a long time before they consent to sponsor the request. Women take turns to approach the same man for sponsors and the customers enjoy the attention. The amount doesn't matter to the women as long as they don't go empty handed in a night and the employers ultimately benefiting from the request women gather throughout the night. The interaction and the relationships between women and the customer are very important for the profitability of the business.

We have to bear with all kinds of customers. They are important for our business so it's important to make them happy. (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

We are performing for the customers, without them it is not possible for us to make money. (Respondent 2, 23 years, Norbuling Drayang)

Success of the business and the money earned by the women are dependent on the customers as created by the owner thus reinstates the importance of drawing a huge crowd and pleasing customers wherein comes the behavior of these women entertainers who are subjected to the wishes of the owners and the male customers.

The women entertainers cannot afford to blatantly reject the customers as it means their own loss thus they coyly deflect them. Talking romantically for Respondent 3 was not a comfortable. According to her, when things are awkward for her, she would listen to the customer and answer him as politely as possible and when she can see a possible reason to leave like getting more drinks for the customers, she leaves convincing him she would be back as Respondent 3, 23 years old, working in Tashi Tagay Drayang explained:

“When the customer starts talking romantically and when he tells me how beautiful I am and how he would like to know me better. I don’t like this because I know his intentions are not good but I cannot be rude to the customers so listen to him and when it’s possible to leave I leave him alone”.

There are few other customers who come here, get drunk and try to hold and kiss us and flirt with us. I don’t like them because we are here to entertain people not attend them this way. There are some customers who offer drinks to us but we are not allowed to drink while on work. I have to treat my customers well and be nice to them always and cannot be rude to the customers. I leave him alone and inform my boss if the customers misbehave and gets out of hand. A little bit of flirting (like sharing a naughty joke, holding hands or being very close) is fine with me as long as they don’t touch me (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

Clearly flirting, touching, misbehaving and being romantic are understood as exploitation for these women entertainers. Customers misbehaving or physical (sexual) advances or touching them are what the women don’t like and they can only ensure that they reject such advances by carefully limiting intimacy to just sitting close, hugging the male customers and not voice out their disgust and threaten patronage to the Drayang.

According to Drayang operator who employs people with disability, it is his job to make sure that women who work here are safe and free from any kind of exploitation.

Exploitation (referring to sexual exploitation) does not happen in his Drayang and women working here are all taken care of. I don’t know about other Drayangs, but sometimes the customers drink a lot and become wild so we ask them to leave politely. (Singye, owner of a Drayang)

There was an indication of the possibility of exploitation in the other Drayangs. According to this conversation, exploitation for him was sexual exploitation in the Drayangs between the customers and the women.

Huge amounts of alcohol are consumed in the Drayangs. Tea and other beverages are also served, but most of the people are seen sipping beer, popular brands are Fosters, an Australian brand and Hit, locally brewed beer in Bhutan.



Most of the men in the Drayangs become intoxicated soon after their arrival. The owners profit a lot also from the sale of alcohol. Although alcohol consumption has been a part of Bhutanese culture for a long time, but the recent urban drinking practices are more and more said to be leading to extensive sexual networking and gender inequalities shaping new vulnerabilities for women. The very source of socio-sexual networks formation between older men and younger girls was the consumption of alcohol (Lorway et al., 2011).

During my observation, I noticed that lot of alcohol was consumed and sure enough, after the consumption of alcohol, men become intoxicated and misbehaved. They want the women to sit beside them, listen to them and then get very close to the women with some male customers literally pulling them close to them. The women in turn lure the customers and make them consume more alcohol. The women encourage the men to drink more and as men become more and more intoxicated, it was interesting to watch how the men kept sponsoring for anyone who approached him. The men become bolder and don't hesitate to comment, flirt and sometimes also perform with the women on the stage. Late into the night, some customers leave drunk, some say their goodbyes and the crowd starts thinning away and then the Drayang closes.

Men portray their masculinity through the consumption of alcohol. Their confidence is boosted after the consumption of alcohol. Alcohol use is a culturally entrenched symbol of masculinity signifying the entrance into manhood and conforming his acceptance among fellow men(Lemle & Mishkind, 1989). Heavy drinking according to them symbolises greater

masculinity and the more a man tolerated his alcohol, the more manly he is deemed. However among the customers, there are those who are popular and some who are not. Although women in the Drayangs attract as many customers as possible and make them their priority, yet most women despise men who make sexual advances and physical contacts after being intoxicated. A survey carried out by a group of students of the Gaeddu College of Business Studies associated most problems of harassment and exploitation in Drayangs with alcohol (Pem, 2011).

Male customers who are office goers are the important clientele in the Drayangs. For the customers, these women entertainers are their potential sexual contacts. The physical comfort and the entertainment needs of customers are the most pressing priority of the owners as well as the women entertainers. The songs and dances are performed as per the request of the customers. Drinks have to be served and men have to be attended at all times ensuring they are having a good time either by listening to them, laughing with them or just performing for them. Women have to gain financial sponsorship for the requests and men take advantage of this fact sometimes. The request system favors the owners and the male customers providing them the opportunity to show his masculinity by making women financially dependent on him and making the women either wait, make them perform, beg them and flirt with them for various amount of money.

The conversation usually begins with the exchange of pleasantries and then the women ask the customer to sponsor a song or a dance. Women will ask the man to sponsor, some literally begging and some flirting with him, hugging and holding him as pleased by the customers. Some women are straight forward to ask for the sponsorship while there are some who will cajole the customers before asking them to request a number. Many times women sit next to the man who drinks and after sometime gets her request and then turns her attention to other men in the room. I was also told that meetings are arranged with the customers with

whom they spend the night in exchange of some cash. This became apparent when I interviewed a customer who also had a similar experience. Dorji (name changed) describes how he was able to fix a date with one of the women entertainers:

As usual I would go to the same Drayang, she would sit beside me, and we have known each other for a long time now since I am a regular here. That night I told her to come for ride with me but she said she will not be able to go. I insisted she come with me and that she could bring a friend if she wanted to. I told her to talk to her friend. She spoke to her friend and then told me to wait for her after the show. We went for ride and after that I took her to a hotel room and the next morning she left very early and I paid her like Nu. 1000 and my other friend took the other friend. (Respondent D, 29 years old, married civil servant).

Customers are good or bad based on how they behave with the women. Perhaps this categorization of good customers and bad customers are conscious attempts at desexualizing their interactions with the male customers like the Filipina hostesses who did the same by defining the male customers as father figure, big brother or a friend (Parreñas & Boris, 2010). Constructing the male customers as good and bad drew a line between their interactions thus shaping their morality. The women I interviewed also told me that men become “bad” under the influence of the alcohol, they start using filthy language, start abusing them verbally and sometimes sexually as well.

There are also some other customers who misbehave and try to touch us after they are drunk. (Respondent 3, 23 years old, Tashi Tagay Drayang)

When men are drunk, they are not aware of what they are doing. When we ask them for requests when they are drunk, they dont check the amount, they just sponsor whatever they have and sometimes they dont sponsr at all (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

I have a group who comes regularly here. They are my best customers because they come here and we sit and talk and they advise me (tells her to do her job well or some of them male customers tell her to be good and work hard). They just drink, sponsor our songs and watch us perform. We make fun of each other and just have good time as friends. There are few other customers who come here, get drunk and try to hold and kiss us and flirt with us. I don't like them because we are here to entertain people not attend them this way. There are some customers who offer drinks to us, but we are not allowed to drink while on work. (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

There are few customers who just come here to be entertained and drink. They sponsor for their favorite songs and just spend some time relaxing and then leave. I like them a

lot. And then there are few who come and drink a lot and under the influence of alcohol try to get more closer with us.(Respondent 2, 23 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

My favorite customers are those who don't talk dirty (sex) and flirt (touch) with us. They just listen to our stories and offer to help. I hate those customers who flirt and talk dirt and force us to drink when we are not allowed to smoke or drink. (Respondent 6, 20 years old, Tashi Tagay Drayang)

Besides sexual exploitation, this quote also indicates to verbal exploitation where women entertainers have to endure verbal abuses when male customers are intoxicated. The women I interviewed told me that sometimes the male customers talk about sex and under the influence of alcohol men flirt and try to get closer to these women so that they can touch them inappropriately. When they are confronted with verbal abuses which are demoralizing (asking them to spend a night) or make them angry, the women would refuse to acknowledge those comments and just change the topic.

The best customers are ones who come and advise us that we should do our jobs well, earn good money and help our parents. The customers I don't like are the ones who want to hold our hands and ask many questions (like about her interests, aspirations, family, friend) which I don't like. (Respondent 5, 18 years old, Norling Drayang)

There is an indication that attending to customers and engaging in conversations for a prolonged period was tiring and took its toll on these women after a while.

I cannot attend the customers like the other girls since I am partially blind so we don't have to serve drinks also and usually people will come and request for songs and we sing in groups or individually after our friend helps us on the stage. So anyone who supports us are nice to me. (Respondent 6, 21 years old, Tashi Tagay Drayang)

Men are also more confident in approaching women once they are drunk and exactly what a male customer told me:

It is usually difficult to approach a woman when we are not drunk. But once I am drunk, it's just very easy. (Respondent D, married, 32 years old, civil servant)

However in the recent times, with regulation and inspection of the relevant agencies like MoLHR and BICMA, women in the Drayangs are not allowed to drink or smoke during working hours. They are not even allowed to use their cell phones while at work. The costs of

the drinks in the Drayang was also much higher than the usual price to reduce the consumption of alcohol and to discourage the young boys from visiting Drayang as a civil servant also owning a Drayang said:

The price of the drinks here are double the price in the town and the Ministry of Trade has no problem with this as this move is aimed at curbing the consumption of alcohol and discouraging young male customers from frequenting the Drayang. (Singye, name changed, 42 years old)

It was also equally interesting to find Indian migrant workers enjoying the show as well as performing themselves with the women. The migrant workers are immediately noticeable as they don't wear the national dress, they are dressed in trousers and blazers or a shirt tucked in their pants. While hopping from Drayang to Drayang, I also saw some elderly men who came to watch the show enthralled by the performances. Sometimes a wealthy Indian guy was seen surrounded by women and the man equally enjoying the attention and sponsor most of the women. Mostly office goers are seen in these Drayang and sometimes young boys walk in to drink and watch the performance. But still the numbers of men outdo the presence of women.

Customers keep changing but there are few faces we see regularly and they are mostly office goers. (Respondent 3, 23 years old, Tashi Tagay Drayang)

Different people come here mostly office goers. Sometimes we even have families come and celebrate birthdays. (Respondent 1, 21 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

The regular clients are mostly the office goers who want to spend some time getting entertained after a hard day's work in the office. (Respondent 2, 23 years old, Norbuling Drayang)

I am not sure if there are regular customers here but the girls tell me that some of them are regular ones here and I think most of them are office goers. (Respondent 6, partially blind 21 years old, Tashi Tagay Drayang)

And a recent recruit in one of the Drayang described this:

In the last one month I see few faces that come here often and they are mostly office goers. (Respondent 5, 18 years old, Norling Drayang)

Because women have less access to resources and limited agency, body labour plays a greater role; the women let men display their masculinity. Apart from this, the men bring forth their

masculinity by consuming the performance of the women entertainers in return for the sponsorship of their songs and dances. The male customers also maintain their masculinity by making the women work for their money by flirting with them, making them perform first or simply just making these women wait.

When I interviewed the male customers, they also point to exploitation of women in the Drayangs:

Drayang is a subtle manner is on a way to becoming a place like red light area because girls are exploited in many ways. Yes I think women are exploited, obviously men with money esp. private business sector who sponsor lots of money to get more than just the entertainment. (Respondent A, 40 years old, businessman)

Drayangs are a good place to hang out as long as they are not exploited. (Respondent C, 29 years old, civil servant).

I agree there is exploitation of women taking place here. As long as one can give them good cash women don't mind spending time with men also. Men are blamed for ruining women, but women should be blamed as well, the women in the Drayangs are so bold these days. (Respondent E, 28 years old, civil servant)

Although he did not really say it, but it was obvious from this that exploitation for him meant sexual exploitation and women are exploited by men who have money. According to another customer the Drayangs in the recent times have changed a lot: women have become bolder! Although I missed out on asking what he meant by women are bold, I could understand that he meant women are not shy anymore and are more outgoing than women in the past.

3.4.2 Economic Exploitation

The theoretical framework presented economic exploitation as the result of lack of other economic opportunities resulting in low wages, long working hours, inadequate benefits and other forms of stress and pressure that determines the wellbeing of the worker (Koettl, 2009). Due to economic constraints, in such cases women entertainers are not forced or deceived rather they choose to be financially dependent. In this study, the women entertainers as a consequence of their social and economic situation are dependent on the owners for

employment who provides them an income and for some a source of remittance for their family. The women entertainers are also dependent on the male customers for the financial sponsorship of their songs and dances.

The entrepreneurs exploit the opportunity to establish a business that caters to male fantasy offering the customers a combination of alcohol and young women as performers. Driven by the lack of employment opportunities, income and the attractive urban life styles in Thimphu bring these women to work in the Drayang. More and more youths from the rural areas of Thimphu are said to be migrating to the urban centres seeking better lives and employment opportunities. Women from the rural pockets and elsewhere in Bhutan are no different to this situation and they are trapped in the cities of Thimphu and Paro and other cities where the living costs are very high (Lorway et al., 2011). All these factors, contribute to make the women in these Drayang very vulnerable leading them to be financially dependent on the Drayang owners who do not pay very high salary and to the male customers on whom their monthly collections are dependent. Thus the employers pays the women amount equivalent to their work and the surplus is appropriated in other expenditures. Women entertainers get amount equivalent to their work and the rest is appropriated by the employer who uses the surplus to pay the other employees and on other expenditures (van cler Veen, 2000).

The owners of the Drayang do not pay very high salary to the women working for them. The salary in the Drayang ranges from Nu.3000 (equivalent to 46.15 euros) to Nu.8000 (equivalent to 123 euros) although most of what the women earned was dependent on accumulation of the request at the end of the month. Sometimes salary deductions were made by the employer if the women failed to come for cleaning or took leave. The increase in the salary of the employee was the dependent on their performance and their bonus on the accumulation of the request at the end of the month. The women work hard for the bonus

since it helps them a lot, but the amount they earned was not so much comparing to the amount they earn for their employers. A woman gets Nu.1500 (equivalent to 23.07 euros) as bonus if she was able to get Nu.30, 000 (equivalent to 461.53 euros) as request at the end of the month. When women seek employment with the Drayang, it was at the discretion of the owner to determine the salary of the worker as was also evident from what Tshering and Pema (name changed) in their early twenties, recently employed, told me:

The owner told me that I will be given Nu.3000. (Respondent 4, 20 years old, Tashi Tagay Drayang)

I could not tell my employer although I would have liked to start off with Nu. 5000. The owner told me that I will be given Nu.3000 and I was new here so couldn't say anything. Life is difficult in Thimphu (Respondent 5, 18 years old, Tashi Tagay Drayang).

Salary deductions were also the norm in some Drayangs if the women working in those Drayangs took leave. According to the inspection carried out by MoLHR, some workers, although they work on fixed salary yet they have to also make a minimum amount of Nu: 9000 (138.46 euors) per month through request system. If the employee has accumulates less than Nu: 9000 a month, the difference between the amount collected and the Nu: 9000 was deducted from the salary of the employees. It was found out that one of the employees was once paid with Nu.400/- in a month although her salary was fixed at Nu.5000/- as she failed to collect Nu: 9000. It was also found out that employers deducts Nu.300/- or Nu.500/- (differing form Drayangs to Drayangs) from their salary/wage as a security deposit which is not permitted in the Labour & Employment Act, 2007. This way was another way of ensuring the women came for work and did their jobs well. The owners of the Drayangs and sometimes another man responsible for announcing the requests exert their pressure on the customers and the women entertainers for financial sponsorship.

The owners conduct meetings at regular intervals to tell the women about their behaviour and conduct. In turn the women are asked to reflect and make necessary changes.

All women told me how they have to adjust to the situation to ensure that the cash flows in and the customers are happy. The owners as a way of guiding them tell them exactly what was expected of them and how they should conform to the scripts he writes for them. In doing so, the performers have to display organizationally desired behavior maintaining the bodily and facial expressions in making the customers happy. Thus the women entertainers compelled by economic conditions find work in Drayang become dependent on the owner but they are economically exploited resulting in their low wages and long hours of work and the earnings appropriated by the owner.

The Drayang still remain entertainment venue where women are entangled in power dynamics in relation to their employers, male customers, family, peers and the society at large. The women entertainers adhere to the orders of the owners. The dos and the don'ts are formulated by the owners. The women are bound to their owners with the contract they sign making it necessary for them to follow strictly the terms and conditions of the contract and limiting their movement on their choice. Women are guided through meetings at regular intervals, like once every week, about their behaviour and attitudes towards the customers.

The women are reminded to come on time, clean the hall, be nice to the customers and refrain from being mean or rude to the customers. The owner explains about the importance of customers and how women need to ensure they come back by performing well for the customers. They are told to please the customers at all times making their comfort and the entertainment of the customers their top priority for the flow of income and for the income of the women themselves as I found out during my interview.

Women perform every night for different men. The owners of the Drayang claimed that pleasing and entertaining customer does not mean consenting to sexual contacts. The owners maintain that should any physical, verbal or any kind of abuses happen in the

Drayangs, the women can approach the owner and he would take care of them which usually meant politely asking the person to leave as was told in the interview. These women are the source of income for the owners. The owners of the Drayangs deploy a lot of strategies to make the women work, the women are responsible for the cleanliness of the Drayangs hall (some clean the Drayangs after and some Drayangs before the show), failure of which results in the deductions of their salary.

Thus it can be concluded that due to social and economic constraints, women exercise limited agency become financially dependent on the provider who exploit them resulting in their low wages and long hours of work and the male customers who seek potential sexual partners. These women entertainers claim that what has been written and said about them is untrue. For these women entertainers touching in inappropriate places, kissing, molesting, verbal abuses, arranging for sexual dates and misbehaving are understood as exploitation. What has been discussed in the public sphere cannot be ignored and written off as sexual exploitation very subtly stills remains part of their jobs for some of them though not very explicit since licensing, regulations and guidelines have been set.

4. CONCLUSION

Public discourses singled out Drayangas as space for exploitation and blamed them for under cover prostitution that these Drayangas and the women entertainers never planned and the women entertainers suffer more than anyone else involved in the business. For most of them, showing up at work every day would be difficult if they focused solely on the on the exploitative nature of their job. Instead, most workers see their work as gratifying in one way or another, be it through positive customer interactions or through a sense of pride in being able to support themselves and their families or by just liking what they are or as some say help in promoting the tradition and culture of Bhutan. Although the nature and the extent of sexual exploitation have undergone tremendous change, yet it is still a subtle part of Drayangas. Intimate physical relationship with the male customers is demonstrated in sitting close, engaging in conversation, holding hands and allowing the customers to put their arms around the shoulders.

Although Drayangas now operate under much surveillance and supervision by the various agencies, exploitation of women entertainers in various forms is still overlooked and much is concentrated on the sexual exploitation of women. Drayangas are their means of making a living instead of getting employed in low paid jobs. As a result of modernisation, there has been growing inequalities in wealth accumulation; however Bhutan has been described as having a low level of class struggle (Lorway et al., 2011). Women all over the country who are driven by economic poverty, upon finding no other alternative opportunity seek employment in the Drayangas although there are few women who are genuinely interested in perusing their interest in singing and dancing making them financially dependent on the owners who employ them and on the male customers for financial sponsorship.

Finding employment in the Drayangas has allowed many women overcome the constraints they faced financially although they still remain among the many who earn

minimum in the market economy. For them their job is their livelihood. Through their earnings the women are able to augment the family income through the remittances and increase their power in the household. They have time for themselves and the family since the work begins in the late afternoon, this allows them to attend to other social obligations although it is not possible to generalize the same for all women entertainers as there were only two women who were married.

Media, public and others are oblivious of the stories of long hours of work, odd hours work, noisy crowd and loud music, performing a degraded work, engaging in lengthy conversation, emotional conflict and uneasy assimilation into their new work are some of the agonising conflicting burdens these women undergo.

In recent times, many organisations have mobilized their efforts to improve the status, labour rights and working conditions in the Drayangs, however they overlook the dynamics of body labour and the embodied dimensions of sexuality, gender and class in their performance. The women entertainers define themselves as working women who entered the Drayangs as their source of income and not as victims of exploitation, but they fail to understand that they are victims of their own manipulations of feelings and emotions for displaying the organisationally desired behaviour.

This research shows the findings of the interview conducted to show how intersections affect the decisions women make, how consistent were the understandings of exploitation in the dominant discourses and how body labour was performed. Although my research was based on the results of observations in few Drayangs in the capital city alone and the in-depth interviews with very small sample size over a period of less than two months, much of what I read and heard has changed. Drayangs are longer as explicit in sexual network formation as the research reported. Drayangs are regulated and agencies like the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources, Bhutan InfoComm and Media Authority (BICMA), National Commission

for Women and Children (NCWC), Bhutan Association of Women Entrepreneurs (BAOWE) have all come forward to render necessary support to the Drayangs by protecting the women, framing guidelines and inspecting the Drayangs. Labour Act, licensing Drayangs, age limit for entry into Drayangs for entertainers as well as performers, provident funds, working atmosphere and wages are some of the initiatives of the agencies that have helped the Drayangs and the workers.

Despite inspections and regulations, Drayangs still remain a hotly debated social space with opinions differing. Some argue that Drayangs have changed and become less exploitative of women yet others argue that Drayangs need to create a more conducive atmosphere for women to work. However it was evident that women perform body labour. There are also indications of sexual exploitation, for the women it meant flirting, touching, misbehaving, using filthy language, for the men it meant finding potential sexual partners by fixing date after the show and for the owners, a complete denial of exploitation. Women have limited ability to define their goals and act upon them as they are the victims of manipulations of feelings and emotions in producing an organisationally desired outcome, however they define the use of their sexuality without the provision of sex in their work and how they earn income and negotiate power with their peers, owners and customers. Thus it can be said that Drayangs indeed help the unemployed who gain some agency within their family and friends yet it comes at the cost of these women entertainers performing body labour defined by their economic circumstances, gender, sexuality and class in the society. Contrary to the popular claim of women entertainers being no different than prostitutes, prostitution is not a reality as most of the entertainers do nothing more than flirt with customers.

4.1 Recommendations for further research

This is a qualitative research conducted in the Drayangs illuminating light on how the women entertainers exercise their agency by deploying the theory of body labour. There is the need for the concerned ministries and the organisations to further look into the nature and various forms of exploitation and help develop ways and means to earn their income more honourably in the Drayangs. This research is limited to a small sample size, thus it would be recommended to do future studies covering larger population and over a longer period of time. This research is confined to women entertainers in the business and did not cover those women entertainers who had left the business, so it would be equally interesting to include them in future research to shed light on the positive changes in the lives of the women entertainers.

Salary of the performers should be determined and should not be based on the accumulation of the collection of request at the end of the month. The association of Drayangs could look into this and determine a basic salary for the employees. There is a need to replace the request system which breeds exploitation and find a better way to replace the request system. Instead of a request system, an entrance fee could be collected from the customers who visit the Drayangs.

The association of Drayangs should look into the ways and means to improve the working conditions and improve the status of the Drayangs through a common rule and guidelines. More benefits and other kinds of allowance should be introduced to help the entertainers earn more than they currently earn. Professional trainings and education on labour laws and rights should be conducted and education on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases for both the employers and the employees are important.

Finally I would like to share the findings of my research with the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources and the National Commission for Women and Children so that they

can benefit from study and see the different dynamics of the labour performance of these women entertainers. In doing so, I hope policies, regulations and incentives beneficial for the women entertainers will come by that will help them earn honourably. I would also like to do the same with my respondents. The two respondents that I interacted the most, they would be told the results of their participation orally.

4.2 Limitations of the study

The data gathered through interviews conducted with the seven women, two owners and the five customers was not to make any kind of concrete generalizations. However through this, it was meant to show not only how women entertainers were victims of economic and sexual exploitation, illuminating light on how they exercise their agency but also perform body labour. Because the data set was also limited to the women who are in the business and does not extend to women who left the business to share their stories, it was not possible to detect if working in the Drayangns indeed made a positive change in the lives of women who worked in the Drayangns.

The duration of the research was also very short. Substantial amount of time was lost in seeking approval from the relevant agency to conduct the research. Each agency pointed to another which consumed my time. With the support and help of the Cultural officer, Dzongrab of the Thimphu agreed to approve the research. None of the Drayangns consented to the conduct of interview without the official approval from the relevant agency.

Another short coming of this research was that the women who were interviewed were very obvious of the fact that they were interviewed and did not feel comfortable. Apart from that they also needed the consent of the employer before they could be interviewed thus while interviewing much of what they said to me seemed more rehearsed. It also took me sometime

to warm up my relationship with the respondents. When questions on sexual relationships or exploitation were asked, all the respondents were very sceptical and hesitated to answer the and those who shared I doubt honesty in their answers as they sounded scripted to me apart from the two women with whom I spent more time.

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APPENDIX I Questionnaires

Serial No _____ Duration of the interview _____ Date of interview _____ Venue _____

1. Name of the respondent (Optional) _____
2. Sex of the respondent
 Male Female
3. Age of the respondent _____
4. Village _____
5. Dzongkhag/ District _____
6. Marital status
 Single Divorced Married Living together Other (specify)
7. Do you have any children?
 Yes (*if yes how many children do you have?*) _____
 No
8. Have you ever attended school?
 Yes No
9. What is the highest grade you have completed in school?
10. Why did you leave your village? Is being here different from being in the village? How?
11. Can you tell me about your work?
12. Can you tell me about your home?
13. When did you start working in the first Drayang?
14. How is it like working here? (segregate likes and dislikes, the best part and the worst part of being in this job)

15. What time does your work start and end? (timeline will be used specifying the work days and non-work days)

16. Do people comment about your work? What do they say?

17. Do you dress and speak as you please? If no why?

18. Do you any other job apart from this?

Yes

No

19. Who are your best customers? Why are they the best? (this will lead to asking about the non-popular customers and why)

20. How do you attend the best customers? (will be probed to understand the manipulation of feelings and emotions and how they deploy behavioral and cognitive strategies)

21. Do you have regular clientele? Who are they?

22. What do the customers do here?

23. How is working with other girls in the drayang like?

24. What kind of songs do you play in your drayang? (*please indicate on the scale of popularity from 1-5*)

	<i>1 unpopular</i>	<i>2 Slightly popular</i>	<i>3 Popular</i>	<i>4 Very popular</i>	<i>5 Most popular</i>
Rigsar					
Boedra					
Zhungdra					
Hindi Songs					
English Songs					

25. Do you work full time in this Drayang?

Yes

No

26. What do you do in this drayang apart from singing and dancing?

27. What is your monthly income? (*Amount in Ngultrum*)

28. How much do you earn in a given night?
29. Does your income differ with the income of the other girls? Why?
30. Does the drayang provide you housing facilities or do you stay in a rented apartment, with friends, relatives, family or with your spouse?
31. How many different employers (Drayang) did you work under? And how does the working environment differs between them?
32. Were you able to negotiate your salary?
33. Do you receive wages, salary or other payments either in cash or in other form from this employer for this work?
34. Are you entitled to the benefits of social security program in this job?
35. Do you get the payments on time?
36. Do you receive any additional payment in the form of tips, gratuities, bonuses, food, clothing, housing or transportation in this work?
37. Do you send home some portion of the money you earned from this job?
- Yes No
38. How much do you send in a month (*approximate amount in Ngultrum?*)

Questionnaires' for the Drayang owners (Managers)

1. Name of the respondent (Optional) _____
2. Sex of the respondent
 Male Female
3. Age of the respondent _____
4. Village _____
5. Dzongkhag _____
6. Marital status
 Single Divorced Married Living together
7. When did you start operating this business?
8. What were the terms and conditions under which you started this business?
9. How many boys and girls are working in your drayang?
Boys _____ Girls _____
10. What are the requirements for a boy or a girl to be employed in your Drayang?
11. How long do you employ them for?
12. When can they renew their contract if contract signing is the norm?
13. Do you define the roles for these employees? How?
14. Do you also employ physically challenged people? And how
15. Is this job covered by a collective bargaining agreement?
16. What are various facilities you provide for your employees ?
17. Are any income, social security or workers compensation taxes deducted from their salary?

18. Who are the people who mostly frequent your Drayangs?
19. What are the rules and regulations for your employees in your Drayang?
20. Do you also have a set of rules and regulations also for the customers?
21. How do you intend to help the unemployed youths who come to seek jobs with you?
22. Is it mandatory in your drayang to wear national dress and play the traditional music? Why?
23. What do you think about what the public and the media has to say about the conduct in the drayangs?
24. What can you do to improve the reputation of your Drayang?
25. What can you do as an employer to help improve the lives of the employees?

Questionnaires' for the customers

1. Name of the respondent (Optional) _____
2. Sex of the respondent
 Male Female
3. Age of the respondent _____
4. Village _____
5. Dzongkhag _____
6. Marital status
 Single Divorced Married Living together
7. How often do you visit Drayangs?

8. How much do you spend per night? (*approximate amount in Ngultrum*)

9. Where do you spend much of your money?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsoring songs | Nu. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drinks | Nu. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Requesting songs | Nu. |

10. How long do you remain in these Drayangs?

11. What attracts you to the drayangs?

12. Why do you visit the Drayangs?

13. Are the women working here different from the other women?

14. What do you think of the women working here?

15. What do you think of the Drayangs?

Questionnaires' for the organizations

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a student in Wageningen University doing my masters in consumer studies. This interview is intended to collect data for my thesis work "Drayangs in Bhutan". Apart from interviewing the Drayang employers, employees and the customers, I would also like to hear your ideas on the role of Drayangs at policy level to have an overview of the drayangs. I am hopeful that my findings will also help appraise the decision makers to make Drayangs in Bhutan a good venue. If you are interested I will also forward a copy of my final thesis.

Name of the organization_____ Name of the respondent (Optional) _____

1. How do you perceive the role of Drayangs?

2. How do you think the Drayangs can help in the society?

3. What is your opinion on the Drayang as the source of income, platform for talent and employment opportunities?

4. From the view of your organization, what are the future plans for Drayangs at the policy level?

APPENDIX II Cause Branding

The owner of the Tashi Tagay Drayang known for his philanthropic cause employs 15 entertainers with disability from different parts of the country (Zangpo, 2012). His is the only Drayang that employs entertainers with disability.

His humble beginnings and the various challenges he faced in life, he told me, which is why he identifies with the less fortunate people in the society. I approached him one morning and he welcomed me to his Drayang and offered me tea, but the look on his face (a frown on the face and a wrinkled temple) made me feel uneasy. As I settled down, I explained him the purpose of my visit. He did not look very welcoming and a constant check on his watch made me more uneasy. He told me that he appreciated what I was doing and would extend his possible support so that the interview with the women in his Drayang was possible. He told me that in the recent times, many researchers, some fake, have come and interviewed him and his employees. I explained him the objectives of my research. I asked about his Drayang and his social cause. He explained that he identified with the unfortunate people and would like to help them by employing them in his Drayang. He provides the employees food and accommodation and trains them in songs and dances by hiring professional singers and dancers and further trains them in embroidery. The owner gives Nu.20, 000 to his employees as a consolation if an immediate family expires of which there is no mention in the other Drayang.

He further told me that all that researchers believe that Drayangs are places where women are exploited and men can easily find their sexual partners and forgets the other benefits (employment and income) the same was able to provide to many who are employed (Tshering, 2010). His employees are under strict rules he told me, they stay in house, practice their songs and dances and also say their prayers. However in the recent times, the owner was finding it immensely difficult to support them and his business has been running on losses. On

September 8th, 2012 in an interview by Bhutan Observer, the owner stated that he was no longer able to provide housing and other facilities for them, therefore he asked the employees to find their own livelihood (Zangpo, 2012).

In corporate business, doing good to others can reap benefits which can be grouped in two: those which enhance the company image generally, and those which promotes a specific product (File & Prince, 1998). In this case, although the owner was adamant that his business was purely based on a social cause, however he failed to acknowledge that he was promoting these entertainers as products on sale. He also did not see that by bringing forth the social cause he was promoting himself and the general image of his Drayang through consumers purchasing these services in the entertainment business. Here knowingly or unknowingly, he concealed the fact that he reaps the benefits from his employees who are used to further the interest of the business associating the business with concern and help for the entertainers with disability. A similar scenario was also shown in the Dove's campaign for real beauty where the corporate strategy merges brand with social cause (Murray, 2012). Dove campaign's for women all over the world who fight to achieve the idealised standards of beauty by accepting women of different forms (age, shapes and sizes) not necessarily meeting the standards of beauty associating corporate identities with social cause uplifting the image of the corporation.

Branding is said to cause trouble between marketing and consumers when it results in furthering the internal interest rather than that of the consumer (Holt, 2002). In this Drayang, the social cause of helping the disabled by providing jobs, food, accommodation and training (music and embroidery) comes at the cost of these male and female entertainers with disability performing for the customers. People visiting this Drayang feel that going to this Drayang and sponsoring few requests will do good to the entertainers. The conflict in this case arises when the owner earns through their performance (body labor) and the general

impression of the Drayangs in the society. Thus the conflict of the social cause in business of such nature. When I visited the same Drayang, I did not mind sparing a few thousand as I felt that in doing so I would be helping them. People also get entertained in the process of helping the needy. The male and female entertainers with disability in this Drayangs perform on request as well. These men and women sing but do not perform or dance on the stage. A feeling of help and charity for a social cause was seen as the reason for people visiting this Drayangs.