

Human Security and the Bangkok Sex Industry: Farang Tourist's Perceptions on
Human Security in Bangkok's Lower Sukhumvit

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ความมั่นคงของมนุษย์และอุตสาหกรรมเกษตร: ฝรั่งกรับรู้เกี่ยวกับการท่องเที่ยวความมั่นคงของมนุษย์ในกรุงเทพฯ สุขุมวิท
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ธุรกิจบริการทางเพศในประเทศไทยได้ส่งเสริมการเจริญเติบโตทางเศรษฐกิจของประเทศมากกว่า 50 ปี และการท่องเที่ยวที่เกี่ยวกับการบริการทางเพศได้กระตุ้นธุรกิจการท่องเที่ยวทั้งด้านการพัฒนาทางเศรษฐกิจและโครงสร้างพื้นฐาน ประเทศไทยได้ออกกฎหมายหลายฉบับซึ่งได้กำหนดความคิดเกี่ยวกับการค้าประเวณีและมีการลงโทษผู้ฝ่าฝืนกฎหมายโดยเฉพาะ ซึ่งได้สร้างความเปลี่ยนแปลงเพียงเล็กน้อยต่อความแพร่หลายของธุรกิจบริการทางเพศและประเด็นความมั่นคงของมนุษย์ยังคงไม่เพียงพอสำหรับผู้ให้บริการทางเพศในธุรกิจที่ทำรายได้ 6.5 พันล้านเหรียญสหรัฐต่อปี ความเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับพลวัตของความมั่นคงทางเศรษฐกิจและความมั่นคงส่วนบุคคล (ความมั่นคงของมนุษย์) และการรับรู้ของประชากรที่แตกต่างของชายชาวตะวันตกจะช่วยในการสร้างการรับรู้ พฤติกรรม และท้ายที่สุดคือการลงทุนจากตะวันตกและการท่องเที่ยวในประเทศไทย เพื่อให้บรรลุความต้องการของผู้ให้บริการทางเพศในการตอบสนองต่อการบริ โภค การทุจริตเอารัดเอาเปรียบ และการขาดความมั่นคงของมนุษย์ยังคงพบเห็น ได้อยู่ ทั้งนี้ที่มุ่งมองเรื่องความมั่นคงของมนุษย์ได้รับความเข้าใจจากนักท่องเที่ยวชาวตะวันตก จะมีนักท่องเที่ยวส่วนหนึ่งละเว้นการใช้บริการทางเพศซึ่งสัดส่วนนั้นจะตระหนักและรายงานถึงการละเมิดในอนาคค และส่วนใหญ่จะแสดงการเปลี่ยนแปลงพฤติกรรมเล็กน้อยโดยทันที ด้วยความเข้าใจนี้จะสามารถพัฒนายุทธศาสตร์ที่ยั่งยืนเพื่อลดผลกระทบในทางลบจากการรับรู้ที่มีต่อธุรกิจการท่องเที่ยว และด้วยเหตุนี้ความต้องการจะลดลงและความมั่นคงของมนุษย์สำหรับผู้ให้บริการทางเพศจะเพิ่มขึ้นในที่สุด

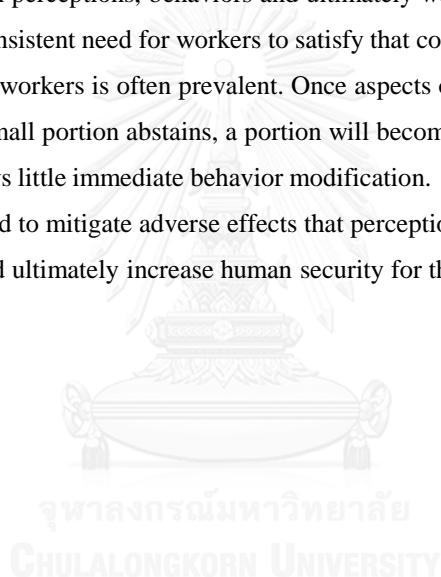


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Thailand's tourism industry has spurred its economic growth over the past 50 years and sex tourism has spurred the tourism industry in both economic and infrastructure development. Thailand has enacted multiple legislations that criminalize prostitution and penalize specific violators, all of which have made little change in the prevalence of the sex industry and human security remains lacking for sex workers in a 6.5 Billion USD per year industry. A comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of economic and personal security (human security) and perceptions of a distinct population of western men helps to formulate western perceptions, behaviors and ultimately western investments in and tourism to Thailand. To fulfill the consistent need for workers to satisfy that consumption, exploitation and the lack of human security for sex workers is often prevalent. Once aspects of human security are understood by western male tourists; a small portion abstains, a portion will become aware and report future violations and a large portion portrays little immediate behavior modification. With this understanding, sustainable strategies can be developed to mitigate adverse effects that perceptions have on the tourism industry and thus, decrease demand and ultimately increase human security for the sex worker.



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION to BANGKOK'S HUMAN SECURITY

According to the UNDP's 2014 Human Development report on Thailand, the country has made impressive gains and in 2013 ranked 103rd out of 186 countries on the Human Development Index (UNDP 2014). Recently, Thailand has increased the quality of education, provides better access to healthcare, transformed social rights and improved incomes to a livable wage. Bangkok has become one a regional hub for business, health care and transportation, all helping to solidify Bangkok as one of the most modern and technological advanced cities in Southeast Asia. The city continues to grow, modernize and develop through increased construction, placement of regional headquarters by multinational corporations and increased foreign investment in Thailand's factories.

Because of these social improvements, various aspects of human security are not only being investigated but policies are beginning to be implemented to ensure the betterment of society. Human Security is essentially the freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to live in dignity. As stated by United Nations Development Program:

Human security relates to much more than security from violence and crime. The human security approach broadens the scope of security analysis and policy from territorial security to the security of people. The 2012 GA Resolution stresses the role of "Member States in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to survival, livelihood and dignity of their people". In other words, threat(s) to – and values under threat in – people's lives are the key starting point of a human security report. (UNDP 2013).

Although development is occurring at a rapid pace and brings with it many benefits, this also creates a situation that is rife for exploitation both domestically and from abroad. Thailand's rapid development has helped to increase the demand for labor and services, and thus, the number of exploited persons in the Kingdom in order to

fulfill the need for increased infrastructure, staff and workers in this increasing development. This has prevented many of these workers from receiving the standard aspects of human security due to the increased demand for personnel and the worker's dire need for financial gain. For example, certain sectors of the tourism industry are currently marketed to segments of deviant and marginal populations that may be doing a disservice to other sectors. The understanding of what has and continues to drive millions of male visitors to Thailand is critical in increasing human security in both personal and economic realms of the worker, as well as general development due to the large influx of foreign money which enables the modernization and growth of the country.

In 2013, approximately 9% (World_Travel_and_Tourism_Council 2014) of Thailand's gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 387.3 billion USD (WorldBank 2015) was attributed to tourism. Thailand's Department of Tourism official data reports that in 2013; 26.7 million foreign tourists visited Thailand, with 17 million arriving into Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi International Airport, of which 5,731,782 were from Europe, Canada, US, Australia and New Zealand. The department's figures for 2014; 24.7 million foreign tourist visited Thailand, with 15.5 million arriving into Bangkok's airports of Suvarnabhumi and Don Muang. While China alone contributes 2.9 million of those visitors arriving in Bangkok's airports; 5,663,237 arrive from Europe, Canada, US, Australia and New Zealand (Department of Tourism 2014). This translates into an average of 15, 516 Caucasian (Farang) male visitors arriving in Bangkok's two airports every day.

1.1.1 STATEMENT of RESEARCH PROBLEM

Thailand's tourism industry has spurred Thailand's economic growth over the past 50 years and sex tourism has spurred the tourism industry in both economic and infrastructure development. During that time, Thailand has enacted multiple legislations that criminalize prostitution and penalize specific violators. These include; the Entertainment Places Act (1966), the Prevention and Suppression of Prostitution Act (1996), and the Penal Code Amendment Act No. 17 (2003). Even with the passing of these laws and acts, Thailand has made little change in the prevalence of the adult entertainment industry throughout the Kingdom and human security remains lacking

for millions of sex workers in the sex industry, which is reported to currently be a 6.5 Billion USD per year industry (Asiaone 2012). Going as far back as 1996, per Phongpaichit and colleagues: “Thailand’s Public Health Ministry conducted a survey that recorded 7,318 sex establishments all over Thailand, including: brothels, massage parlors, karaoke bars, discotheques, night clubs, bars, and restaurants” (Phongpaichit 1998). By 2005, another survey by the Ministry of Public Health counted 13,833 establishments in Thailand— bars, karaoke joints, guesthouses, massage parlors and coffee shops, among other places—where prostitutes and their clients meet (Facts_and_Details 2013).

Bangkok, as the prime hub for travel within Thailand and Southeastern Asia, receives daily a very large amount of foreigners. In 2013, Bangkok was named as the world’s No.1 tourist destination based on having the largest amount of foreign tourist arrivals in the Global Destination Cities Index Report (Mastercard 2013). With the amount of foreign visitors entering the city, it is easily understood that there is a high prevalence of the sex industry situated in Bangkok. Due to the migratory nature of the sex worker and the large number of part time sex workers, it is difficult to accurately estimate the number of women involved in the sex industry at any particular point in time in Bangkok or within Thailand.

In 2002, Rosalind Morris, a feminist researcher, “estimated that the prostitution industry brings in anywhere from 2.5-4 billion dollars each year and employs about 200,000 people” in just Bangkok (Morris 2002). While the International Labor Organization reported in 1998 “In Thailand, the Ministry of Public Health survey recorded 65,000 prostitutes in 1997 but unofficial sources put the figure between 200,000 to 300,000”(ILO 1998), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime stated in 2013 “Thailand alone contains as many as 250,000 sex workers” (UNODC 2013). Estimates on the number of sex workers in Thailand greatly vary, however, all sources tend to agree that number is much higher than reported by the government. Citing this gross discrepancy, Gutenberg Self-Publishing Press states:

Estimates of the number of prostitutes vary widely and are subject to controversy. A 2004 estimate by Dr. Nitet Tinnakul from Chulalongkorn University gives a total of 2.8 million sex workers, including 2 million women, 20,000 adult males and 800,000 minors

under the age of 18, but the figures for women and minors were considered to be grossly inflated by most observers, and to have resulted from poor research methods. ...According to a 2001 report by the World Health Organization: "The most reliable suggestion is that there are between 150,000 and 200,000 sex workers".... A recent government survey found that there were 76,000 to 77,000 adult prostitutes in registered entertainment establishments; however, NGOs believed there were between 200,000 and 300,000 prostitutes (Gutenberg Self-Publishing Press 2015).

In order to further develop effective development strategies, management of the unintended consequences must also take place. To achieve this, a comprehensive understanding of the link between international development and the adult entertainment industry must be refined through delineation. This includes understanding the dynamics of economic and personal security (human security) and how western tourists perceive them.

All three human security fundamentals: freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to live in dignity are often violated in the sex industry. This research is intended to verify/deny whether Farang tourists have prior knowledge of human security concepts, care about human security and would modify their behavior once an understanding of the tenants of human security has been gained.

Sexual consumption in Bangkok by a distinct population of western men (commonly referred to as Farang) helps to formulate western perceptions and ultimately western investments in and tourism to Thailand. These visitors input millions of dollars into the Thai economy not only through hotels, restaurants, entertainment and shopping. Many purchase and invest in condominiums, businesses, and open Thai bank accounts due to their continual visits to Thailand. To fulfill the consistent need for workers to satisfy that consumption, exploitation and the lack of human security for sex workers is highly probable. While sex tourism has been extensively studied and documented from a myriad of ways, inquiry is lacking about the perceptions of male tourists and the impact this perception has on issues of human security of the sex worker.

Past research has focused on the demographics, preferences (locales, sex workers, and duration), motivations, and actions of the sex tourists: historically on the Farang males with writings such as *Excuses, Excuses: Rationalizations of Western Sex Tourists in Thailand* (Garrick 2005), *British Sex Tourists in Thailand* (O'Connell Davidson 1995), *Lovelorn Farangs: The Correspondence between Foreign Men and Thai Girls* (Cohen 1986) and *Thai Girls and Farang Men: The Edge of Ambiguity* (Cohen 1982) all describing these peculiarities. Research on the rising Asian sex tourists to Bangkok is beginning to be presented through works such as the study on *Sex Behavior of Male Japanese Tourists in Bangkok, Thailand* (Yokota 2006). Many academics have focused on the exploitative side of the industry, focusing on proposed theoretical frameworks such as patriarchy and research into the stakeholders with works such as *Branding Thailand: Correcting the Image of Sex Tourism* (Nuttavuthisit 2007) and *Prostitution, Trafficking, and Traumatic Stress* (Farley 2003). There has also been a wealth of knowledge published on the sex worker and their motivations, situation and plight by writings such as *Sex Tourism and Sex Workers' Aspirations* (Brennan 2010) and *Sex Slaves: The Trafficking of Women in Asia* (Brown 2001). While recently, academics have begun to delve into the realm of women sex tourists, for instance the current University of Nevada – Las Vegas PhD case study titled *Female Sex Tourism: A Case Study of Bangkok, Thailand* (Scott 2014) and *Situating the Female Gaze: Understanding (Sex) Tourism Practices in Thailand* (Sanders 2010). Therefore a knowledge gap exists about how tourists perceive human security of the sex worker in Bangkok's entertainment zones. From this perspective this thesis will contribute to the bodies of knowledge in the fields of human security, international development, gender and tourism.

In fact, by investigating the role between tourists' perceptions of issues such as human trafficking, sexual violence and gender roles, international development theories such as human security will provide more nuanced understandings of both the tourism industry and its impact on society.

1.1.2 DEFINITIONS

Many of these terms can be used interchangeably or for other descriptions, however, here they will have distinct meanings.

Bar-Fine

The act of paying a bar for the sex worker's services in order to take her out of the bar. This is not inclusive of what the worker receives, only what the bar receives. Typically, there are two types of bar-fines: Short time and Long time. Short time is to spend a few hours, around 2 to 3, to have one sexual encounter with the worker. Long time is to have the worker for the entire evening and typically means multiple sexual encounters.

Coyote (s):

Dancers or draw girls in Bangkok's adult entertainment zones that are not sex workers.

Farang (s):

Foreign Caucasian (white) males in Thailand. Typically from Europe, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand

Go-Go's:

Dancers in Bangkok's adult entertainment zones that are also sex workers.

Punter:

The customer of the sex worker, AKA the john.

Sex worker:

People paid to conduct sexual actions with a customer.

Sex industry worker:

Anyone employed in Bangkok's adult entertainment zones who is not an actual sex worker. This includes the bar madam, waitresses, DJs, security and remaining staff.

Sponsor

The foreigner who regularly sends money to a Thai lady from his home country in order for her to be his girlfriend when he visits Thailand.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How do Farang tourists perceive the human security of the sex worker in Bangkok's lower Sukhumvit area? And, how does this perception influence the activities that tourists participate in?

1.2.1 RESEARCH SUBQUESTIONS

Accordingly, this research will study the perceptions of tourists and how aspects of human security influence their decision making process. In an effort to answer these research questions, the following sub-questions will help guide this project:

- Do tourists understand/or care about the issues of human security such as forced prostitution and have they encountered any sex workers they felt were trafficked or unwillingly engaging in the adult entertainment industry?

- Did the tourist conduct any prior research or have prior experience in Bangkok which should have enlightened them on human security issues of the sex worker and did this influence their behavior, activities and decision making process?

1.2.2 OBJECTIVE

To comprehend how aspects of human security of the sex worker are perceived by Farang male tourists in Bangkok's entertainment areas and how that perception influences the tourist's behavior. Once this process is better understood, sustainable strategies can be developed to mitigate adverse effects that perceptions have on the tourism industry which is heavily marketed to adults from abroad and thus, decrease demand and ultimately increase human security for the sex worker .

1.2.3 HYPOTHESES

“Once aspects of human security are understood, a small portion will abstain, a portion will become aware and report future violations and a large portion will portray little immediate behavior modification.”

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

In defining sex tourism, we must first understand that it is an industry based off human nature and desires. Current academic literature on sex tourism is presented from a variety of authors typically focused on four key aspects: *who are the participants*, *what are the motivations*, *what are the mechanisms in the specific locale*, and *what are the implications and effects* of the sex industry. The questions of *who are the participants* and *what are the motivations* are critical and must be further delineated in order to develop an understanding of the behavior of those involved in the industry and in order to allow mitigation of its negative effects on society as pertaining to human security.

Through the identification of *who* the sex tourists are, most academics perpetuate negative stereotypes about the tourists and their actions (Manderson 1997, Garrick 2005, O'Connell Davidson 2011). Sex tourists are almost solely noted as men and typically, seen as middle aged and white travelling internationally to exploit the disadvantaged and enslaved women in developing countries without a care for the sex workers well-being or status (Mies 1986, O'Connell Davidson 1995, Ryan 1996, Opperman 1998, Opperman 1999, O'Connell Davidson 2011). Frequently, these studies focus on what the sex tourists do and how they transact to receive their fulfillment (Ryan 1996, Sanders 2010).

Research on the motivations or why sex tourists' travel to fulfill their cravings has led to the speculation that the vessel to fulfill these desires is unavailable or too disgraceful in their home locations (Farley 2003). Other researcher's state sex tourism is based on machoism and the financially secure preying and the financially destitute (Mies 1986, Manderson 1997). Few academics concede that in certain locales or instances, it is simply a convenient by-product of an already booming tourist industry, instead choosing to report that the primary reason to travel to a certain locale is purely to participate in the sex industry.

Past Academics have directly linked romance/ companion tourism as another form of prostitution and sex tourism. A relatively common phenomenon in Southeast Asia, is the often longer term girlfriend experience (GFE), which scholars have studied and found little morale distinction among those consumers and those of the adult entertainment venues (Brennan 2010).

One of the motivations for white tourists has been documented as the desire for exotic Thai women due to their small stature and almond eyes, which are unique features in the Caucasian dominated societies of Europe and America. A common perception is that Thai women are sexually charged, servile, quiet, uneducated, unassuming and hardworking which directly contrasts to the common perceptions of Western women (Manderson 1997). O'Connell Davidson echoes these perceptions when she quotes:

I just get turned on very much by Orientals ... They're completely different ... You ... take a girl from a bar, and it might be eleven or twelve at night, and you have a shower and get in bed and have sex, and then most guys go sleep till then morning. Then they'll have a bit more in the morning and then she'll go. I've had them in the morning tidy up the room, fold me clothes up, even wash me socks, stuff like that. (O'Connell Davidson 1995)

Due to Thailand's past as a poverty stricken country; many academics state that sex tourists hold the belief that Thai women can all be easily bought and would happily engage into any type relationship with a foreigner just to raise their standard of living and provide for their families. (Garrick 2005). Western men tend to believe they are more gracious, enlightened and forgiving than other cultures and feel obligated to assist these women by hiring, thus saving them from a night of exploitation with an unappreciative man. Rarely do these men realize that they too are exploiting these women, just with possibly more kindness. Since many of the Thai sex workers in Bangkok hail from the outer provinces, these men feel they are also providing humanitarian aid as they are aware that a percentage of the girl's earnings are often sent home to help support the families' livelihood or for future investment of a house. As Cohen cited in writings on foreign men providing money to Thai prostitutes "Please tell me how the purchase of your farm is doing as it is very important to me...I send you plenty of money so you can take care of yourself and prepare for the future" (Cohen 1986). These men often feel some sort of charitable satisfaction at having provided more money than what was originally negotiated and often look at themselves as doing their part in helping to alleviate the poverty problem on a micro scale.

Prostitution has found a modern avenue to advertise via backpage, craigslist and other sites. Academics have provided little research into the understanding of the use of internet and social media in conjunction with the sex industry. Social media allows for the quick communication and dating/networking sites such as Tinder, Badoo and BeTalk have provided a forum for sex workers to easily meet the punter under the guise of dating. As published by Rocha and colleagues “Like many other social phenomena, prostitution is increasingly coordinated over the Internet.... Over the past decade, the Internet has become an increasingly important vehicle for sharing information about prostitution”(Rocha 2010). Increasingly, sex tourists conduct research prior to travelling to their destinations on the activities and options. Sex tourists in Bangkok have established blogs and sites dedicated to informing each other of the methods, pricing and establishments catering to their consumptions. These sites do not list the illegalities, issues or human security concerns associated with the sex industry, instead they provide a “how to guide”. As Hughes states:

The most voluminous coverage is on Bangkok, Thailand. The men give information on everything from currency exchange rates to how to run a bar tab. The names, addresses and phone numbers for 150 hotels where men will feel comfortable are listed. All the city sections and their sexual specialties are listed and described. Does the man want massage? Discos? Escort services? A lady house? Japanese clubs? A short-time hotel? A blow job bar? There are detailed descriptions on all of them. At these Web sites the men are presenting an etiquette and buyer’s guide on how men should behave and solicit in all of these places (Hughes 1999).

Sex tourists seem to largely be either unaware or uncaring of the potential legal and ethical issues associated with the sex industry. A common misconception is that prostitution in Thailand is legal and well regulated. Volumes of research and data have been collected and analyzed citing the pros and cons for the legalization of prostitution. Most sex tourists who believe or want to believe that prostitution is legal in Thailand often site the same data points as those recommending decriminalization such as employing poverty stricken women who are choosing the lifestyle of their own free will. Academics for the legalization present these basic arguments, then present an

analysis on how labor laws and protections can then be instituted, providing healthier and safer environments for the sex workers while maintaining better control from nefarious elements and not punishing the poverty stricken sex workers merely trying to earn livable wages (Ahmad 2014, Johnson 2014). Conversely, a growing number of scholars have presented writings promoting the decriminalization of the selling of sex and the stricter enforcement of the buying of sex citing Sweden's "The Sex Purchase Act." This legislation is largely revered as a successful program to lessen the legal unfairness and exploitation of sex workers, and was implemented after conclusion that prostitution is fundamentally gender discriminatory towards women as the sex worker often has no other alternative. There is limited data that illuminates the recent concern of a drop in income of sex workers affected by the Swedish Act and those of prostitutes in Amsterdam's legal brothels, whereas the owner holds the license and can charge exorbitant rent fees, causing the worker to lose major portions of their income (Goldberg 2014).

Regardless of their national policies on the legalities of prostitution, national governments with the aid of international organizations have enacted policies and laws to inhibit human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of trafficked victims in recent years. The policies, directed to help implement the principles of human security, assume as fact that all sex workers must be coerced and/or trafficked. The US Department of State 2013 Trafficking in Person's Report states: "If there were no demand for commercial sex, sex trafficking would not exist in the form it does today. This reality underscores the need for continued strong efforts to enact policies and promote cultural norms that disallow paying for sex" (United States Department of State 2013). The US Government has then taken the steps to enact policies that allow for prosecution of US Government employees, military and contractors by the American legal system for engaging in prostitution, even in countries with legalized prostitution (Dale 2010, USDODI 2010). This concretely expresses the official stance of the US Government, that in order to stop these human rights violations, all prostitution must be stopped, regardless of the fact that prostitution is still legal in the American state of Nevada. The basic principles of human security are seldom addressed and the assumption is made that if prostitution laws are enforced, the workers will be protected through the obstruction to the industry. Within Thailand, prostitution

is illegal and three specific pieces of legislation are meant to curb regulate the sex industry: the Entertainment Places Act (1966), the Prevention and Suppression of Prostitution Act (1996), and the Penal Code Amendment Act No. 17 (2003). These acts do little to inhibit the industry and in fact, the Entertainment Places Act actually provides a quasi-legal defense for prostitution centric establishments with the allowing of “bath service providers” and “service partners.” According to Jon Fox of the Thailand Law Forum:

“Over the years, the Kingdom’s vibrant sex-industry has received varying levels of protection from its most loyal of customers, Thai men. Both the international and local media reported widely on the close relationships between brothel managers, local police, businessmen, and politicians..... Prostitution in Thailand is clearly illegal. However, there may be some sections of Thai law that are ambiguous, making it difficult to prosecute those charged under these laws” (Fox 2009).

The volumes of academia presented over decades of research and analysis has covered the vast majority of nuances of the actors, motivations, mechanisms and implications of the sex industry within a variety of locales (Cohen 1982, O’Connell Davidson 1995, Bishop 1998, Garrick 2005). The key exception, is that the perceptions and behaviors of the client once the element of human security is introduced and understood could possibly change. There is a large void in the current body of knowledge that would help academia comprehend the decision making processes of the clients upon being made cognizant of the human security concerns and international policies. Once these consumers are informed, will there be a change in their perceptions and ultimately their behavior?

1.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

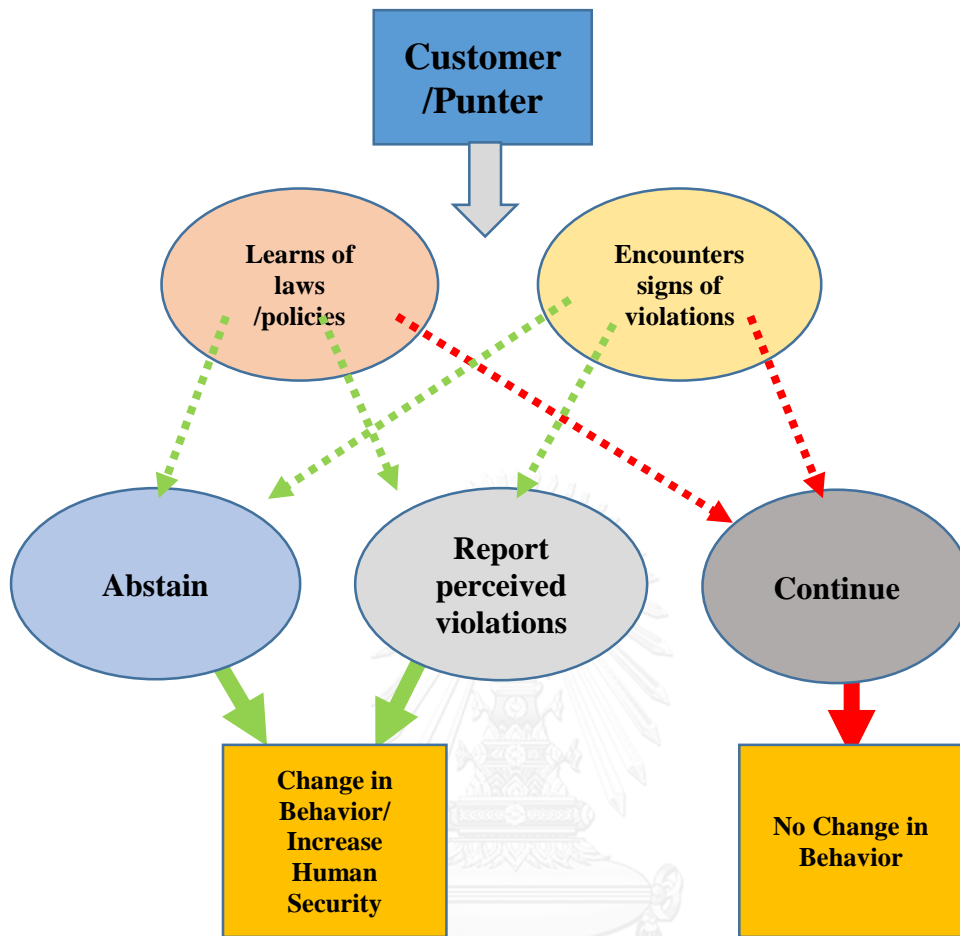
This work utilized conceptual tenets from the human security framework to examine perceptions of gender roles, ethnic, human trafficking and sexual violence. Rather than applying a top down approach deductively, inductive analysis, incorporating aspects of grounded theory, was applied to create new theoretical explanations as to the connection between tourists’ perceptions and negative outcomes

facing marginalized workers in Bangkok's lower Sukhumvit areas. Sensitizing concepts, or starting points which form the basis of grounded theory, such as ethnicity, race, class and gender helped to guide data collection in identifying key emerging characteristics, behaviors and patterns that are generated from perceptual beliefs. As Charmaz explains grounded theory:

Sensitizing concepts offers ways of seeing, organizing, and understanding experience; they are embedded in our disciplinary emphases and perspectival proclivities. Although sensitizing concepts may deepen perception, they provide starting points for building analysis, not ending points for evading it. (Charmaz 2006)

These findings were carefully scrutinized and coded to develop explanations as to how perceptions enhance or hamper varying categories within the security framework. Under the Human Security Framework, the key variables addressed in this thesis are; the current level of understanding of laws/policies concerning prostitution and human trafficking by the consumer, the perception change once those laws/policies are illuminated and the possible behavioral change in regards to prostitution as it pertains to human security.

1.4.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FIGURE 1.0



1.5 METHODOLOGY:

Mixed methods was primarily purposed for this study in order to understand the key factors that pertain to the Farang tourist's perceptions and behaviors. Quantitative and statistical research was limitedly conducted in order to ascertain baseline data. Qualitative data was heavily relied upon utilizing interviews, participant observation and analyzing social networking websites. Utilizing an interpretive strategy during data collection, data was constantly compared in order to establish patterns and emerging themes, then craft interviewing questions to delve into those patterns and themes.

1.5.1 METHODOLOGY MATRIX AND INTERVIEW STRATEGY TABLE 1.0

How do Farang tourists perceive the human security of the sex worker in Bangkok's entertainment zones? And, how does this perception influence the activities that tourists participate in?	Data Needed	Demographics of Interviewee
Do tourists understand/or care about the issues of human security such as forced prostitution and have they encountered any sex workers they felt were trafficked or unwillingly engaging in the adult entertainment industry?	*Understanding of International and local laws * Past & current experiences with prostitution	- age, national origin - marital/family status - cultural experiences - status in Thailand and previous visits, research - profession/education
How does this perception influence the behavior, activities and decision making process of the tourists?	*Change in perceptions/actions	Same as above

1.5.2 RESEARCH SITE

The fieldwork for this project was located in Thailand's capitol city of Bangkok. Bangkok was an excellent site for this research because it is often regarded as the world's prime sex tourism destination and serves as a hub for travel throughout SE Asia.

There are numerous areas within Bangkok providing adult entertainment venues, each typically oriented towards specific clientele. Numerous bars in the Patpong (Silom Soi 3) and Rama 9 are oriented towards male gay clients. Transgender/Ladyboy bars and establishments are scattered amongst straight bars located at Nana Plaza, Soi Cowboy and along Sukhumvit. Many bars, massage parlors and other establishments along Ekkamai, Thonglor and specific Soi's along Sukhumvit

above Soi 31, and plus a few select bars in Soi Cowboy specifically target the Japanese and Korean male sex tourists. Chinese male sex tourists and local Thai businessmen are typically catered to in the Ratchadapisek area, as well as many of the same establishments in Ekkamai and Thonglor as the Japanese. For Farang males, the most popular and easily accessible are the venues along lower Sukhumvit and the Patpong/Silom areas.

The lower Sukhumvit area was chosen due to the more open nature of this venue and the noted difference with the clientele, as they frequently seem to be older and/or travelling in smaller groups than in the Patpong/Silom area. While there are a few Ladyboy/Transgender establishments, typically, the majority of the businesses provide opportunities with only female sex workers. Furthermore, due to the volume of venues located within both areas, it was needed to narrow the focus to a manageable research site. This research site started at Soi 3 and the Nana Adult Entertainment Complex on Sukhumvit Soi 4, continued southeast along Sukhumvit encompassing the many bars, nightclubs, massage parlors and adult oriented establishments located on the side Soi's, and ending at Sukhumvit Soi 31, having included Soi Cowboy. The amount of financial transactions involved in this section of Bangkok on the sex industry is staggering and basically incalculable within any mean of accuracy.

1.5.2.1 NANA ENTERTAINMENT PLAZA

Nana Entertainment Plaza, as known as Nana Plaza, is located along Soi 4, just off Sukhumvit and is largely regarded as the world's largest adult entertainment complex. The plaza is horseshoe shaped with three levels of around 30 Go-go bars total and is lined along Soi 4 by numerous bars, massage parlors and free-lance prostitutes. This complex employs over a thousand sex workers and during peak tourist season receives thousands of visitors nightly. The bars receive vast amounts of money through the bar-fining of workers and pushing alcohol sales. Bar fines average about 600-700 Baht (roughly 30 Baht to the US Dollar or \$18-\$21 USD) and beers typically cost around 200 Baht. The sex worker keeps a percentage of the bar-fine and negotiates a rate for her services for either short time (2000 to 3000 Baht) or long time (3500 to 6000). Should the worker perform a short time service and it is before the bar closes, she returns in the hopes of finding another customer.

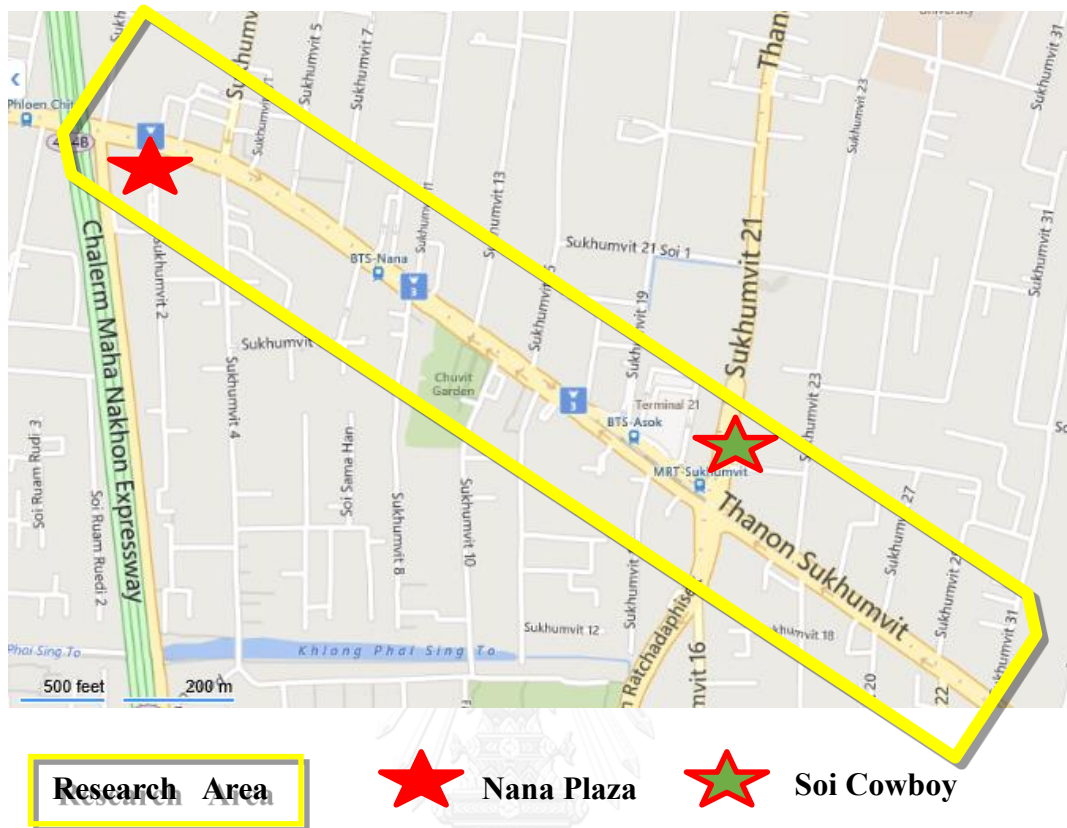
1.5.2.2 SUKHUMVIT SOI 3 and 4 to SOI 31

Along Sukhumvit from Soi's 3 and 4 to Soi 31 is the main tourist area of Bangkok encompassing shopping malls and plazas, fine restaurants and eatery's, shops and various businesses. Mixed within these establishments, there are hundreds of venues catering to the sex tourists via massage parlors, bars, impromptu street bars that are erected nightly, and street walker prostitutes. As you traverse lower Sukhumvit and look down the side Soi's on either side of the road, these types of venues seem to mostly populate the first few blocks off Sukhumvit. There are at least fifty massage parlors located along this stretch and immediately off Sukhumvit. Massages start from 300 Baht and can cost up to a 1,000 Baht depending on the type. Once inside the room, it is dependent upon the customer and sex worker to negotiate the additional charges for sexual acts. The bars typically have five to ten sex workers hanging around as free-lancer sex workers, as well as along the road, the number can vary from 20/30 to 70/80 depending on the time of night, day of the week and season. These free-lance sex workers usually charge from 1500 Baht to 3000 Baht for their short time services. Interestingly, the nightly erected street bars typically do charge a bar-fine which is around 500-600 Baht, plus the price of the girls services.

1.5.2.3 SOI COWBOY

Soi Cowboy is a strip of around 20 Go-go bars and a few regular bars. Situated one block north of and running parallel to Sukhumvit, Soi Cowboy lies immediately behind the Citi Group corporate building between Soi 21 (Asok) and Soi 23. Across the street there is a shopping plaza (Terminal 21) and numerous office complexes. Much like Nana Plaza, Soi Cowboy intakes hundreds of thousands of Baht on a busy night, just a slightly smaller scale as the bars in Soi Cowboy have fewer dancers and many Coyotes that are unavailable or too expensive to bar-fine. Other than the location, decorations and names; the bars, sex workers, customers and pricing structures are similar.

1.5.2.4 RESEARCH SITE MAP 1



1.5.3 SAMPLING/CASE SELECTION

Semi-structured and in-depth interviews, exploratory research, non-participant and limited participant observations were conducted. Initial interviews were conducted on site with subjects chosen via convenience utilizing semi-structured and unstructured questioning. Conversations were initiated as a limited participant near adult entertainment venues with Farang males through building rapport while asking generic questions concerning age, nationality, profession, family status, previous travels to Bangkok, status while in Bangkok, preferred venues and race to gather baseline data. Upon finding a cooperative subject, identification as a graduate student conducting thesis fieldwork and permission was asked to have in-depth discussions or to talk in a more conducive environment. Fitting subjects were Farang males present in the research areas. Farang males are categorized as Anglo-Saxon men from Europe or the US. In-depth interviews were conducted in a public venue such as a restaurants, street bars/cafes and coffee shops. The intent of this approach was to have a friendly and

informative dialogue or conversation rather than portraying the appearance of interrogating or data mining. Subject's names, addresses, phone numbers and personally identifying information (PII) were not collected in order to preserve the anonymity of the subject.

1.5.4 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Due to the focus on Farang's perceptions on human security of sex workers within Bangkok, the field study was limited to the lower Sukhumvit area of Bangkok as that is the most prominent and internationally known sex tourism venue in the city. Since all research was situated in the lower Sukhumvit area of Bangkok, it may be difficult to generalize these results to other sex tourist destinations throughout Thailand and the world. As sex tourists attempt to remain anonymous to avoid detection from authorities, families or to avoid embarrassment, the researcher did not collect PII data for interviewees and may encounter difficulties trying to re-contact should future clarification or follow up be necessary. To incorporate all well rounded approach, the researcher interviewed a small number of sex workers. Interviews of sex workers was primarily limited to questions on the Farang's treatment, mannerisms and overall care or lack thereof towards the worker and the worker's security. This proved difficult and provided limited results, as most sex workers along lower Sukhumvit speak limited English, with only a few having proficiency to speak conversational English past basic pleasantries.

1.5.5 TIMELINE TO COLLECT DATA

Due to the restricted amount of time available, the field study was conducted from late March to late May 2015. In-depth interviews with Farang tourists were conducted along Nana Plaza, lower Sukhumvit, and around Soi Cowboy. Data was also collected from sex workers in each area. Interview data was collected from a total of 29 Farang tourists and 7 sex workers total over six weeks.

1.5.6 FOCUS OF FIELD QUESTIONS

Upon the agreement to have an in-depth interview, researcher asked interviewees questions on the international policies on human security and prostitution, including the illegality within Thailand. Questions were then focused pertaining to the Farang's previous knowledge or prior research and perceptions on human security and illegality of prostitution, past encounters with perceived exploited/forced sex workers, actions taken with such if any, speculation on future behaviors once the understanding is achieved.

1.5.7 ANALYSIS OF FIELD RESEARCH

1.5.7.1 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analyzed via the qualitative method of incorporating aspects of grounded theory utilizing inductive analysis. Through inductive analysis, patterns, themes, and categories within the sex tourists rationale were grouped to understand their decision making process. Through analysis these patterns determined common rationales and outlying themes taking into account variables as outlined below.

1.5.7.1.1 NATIONAL/LEGAL VARIABLE

To better understand the nuances of the interviewee's perspective, data on country of origin was considered. The national/legal variable included country of origin laws on prostitution. In certain countries, these laws apply to their citizens even while travelling internationally in a separate sovereign nation such as the US Government's 18 USC Sec. 2423 (B) law which outlaws travel in foreign commerce "for the purpose of engaging in any illicit sexual conduct with another person" or (b) travel in foreign commerce and actually engage in "any illicit sexual conduct with another person" (USC 2002). These laws may have had a direct impact on the sex tourist's willingness to engage in the sex industry should they know it was illegal in Thailand and understand the concepts of human security.

1.5.7.1.2 CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS VARIABLES

Religious variables such as the ideology of Judeo-Christian guilt may also influence the interviewee's perceptions. Cultural variables such as military service, rural vs. urban upbringing and regions play an important role in the sex tourist's acceptance of human security violations and their willingness to engage in illegal and exploitative actions.

1.5.7.1.3 INDIVIDUAL VARIABLES

Individual variables included; marital status, profession, parental status and number of visits/duration to sex tourist locales such as Thailand, Philippines and the Caribbean. After to prolonged exposure to the adult entertainment industry, it was assumed that the sex tourist has become more desensitized to human security issues and is purely focused on the consumption of the sex industry.

1.5.8 MINOR QUANTITATIVE DATA

The researcher created a basic set of questions on concerning demographics and utilized quantitative methods in order to establish a base of study and to distinguish any common traits amongst one sub-group of Farangs when compared to another sub-group of Farang. For example, maybe sex tourists from particular nationalities, white collar vs. blue collar, age groups, or those with children tend to view human security issues with more regard than others. All structured interviews began with gathering and reconfirming this data.

1.5.9 DATA VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY - TRIANGULATION

Periodically the interviewees responses were cross checked by re-asking the same questions later in the interview, answers were also cross-checked against known facts (i.e.. locations, establishments, etc.), and finally, field collected data was cross-checked with existing literature to triangulate the data for more accurate results when possible.

1.5.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

According to the literature review, speaking with academics studying the field of prostitution and sex tourism, and to the best of the researchers knowledge; a study investigating the Farang sex tourist's perceptions on human security in Bangkok did not exist prior to this research. This research fills a gap in knowledge on whether informing and educating sex consumers of the illegalities and violations of the industry changes their perceptions and ultimately their behavior. Thailand has made substantial movements towards developing economic and industrial bases, however, tourism remains an integral piece to the Thai economy, with sex tourism a core foundation to the Thai tourism industry. To develop and institute policies that inhibit and prevent the human security violations of the sex worker, we must first understand the dynamics of the consumer who fundamentally drives the trade.

1.5.11 ETHICAL CONCERNS

Due to the deviant and sensitive nature of the data being collected, it would be unethical to collect PII information and then disclose that identifying information and negate the anonymity of the interviewee. Any specific references to a particular interviewee have a pseudonym assigned. As prostitution is illegal in Thailand and by nature of this field of study, most interviewees are committing illegal activities and I did not report such. However, would I have encountered an interviewee who has actually witnessed trafficking, violent physical abuse and workers being held against their will, I would have been be compelled to report the name and location of the establishment to the appropriate local authorities. To ensure that the tenets of ethical field research were adhered to, this research complied with all provisions dictated by the Master of Arts' in International Development Studies Program under the Political Science Faculty of Chulalongkorn University.

CHAPTER II

FARANG TOURISTS AND SEX WORKERS IN BANGKOK'S LOWER SUKHUMVIT

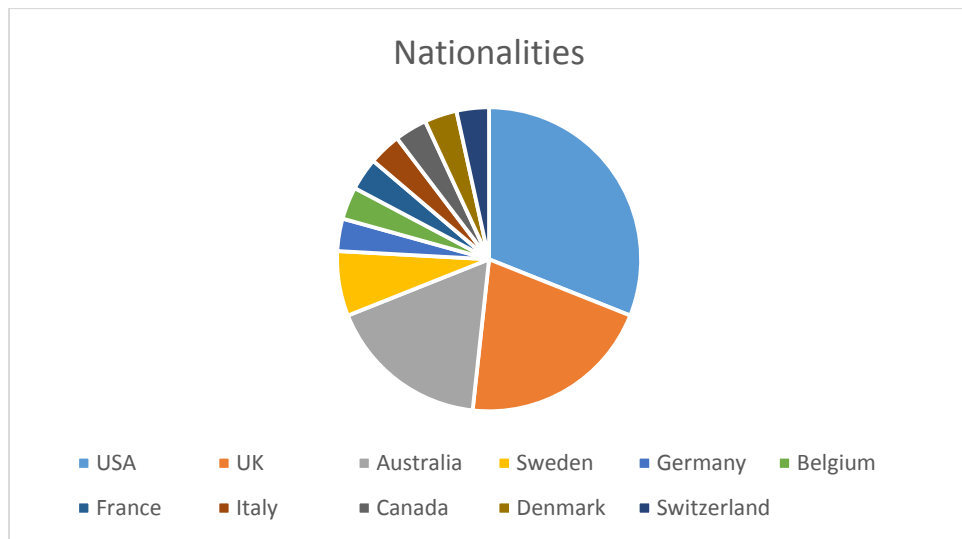
2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

2.1.1 FARANG INTERVIEWEE PROFILES

In total, 29 Farang tourists were interviewed with the demographic profiles of the Farang interviewees having many any commonalities. In general, the typical profile of Farang interviewed was over 40, had been married or is currently, is a “white collar” worker and has previously been to Bangkok. This stereotypical Farang interviewed was usually overweight, slightly unkempt, dressed ordinary and while drinking, was not inebriated. Either through observation or directly stated by the Farang interviewee, most of these Farang preferred what they called the “Issan look”. The “Issan look” is where the woman has darker skin, slightly different facial features typically including a larger nose and is what a majority of the women from the Issan province of Thailand look like. Many of these men often preferred multiple ladies during their time in Bangkok vice the same lady for their entire stay. They were mostly cheerful as many portrayed the “I’m on holiday and going to enjoy myself attitude” as they went about their evening in lower Sukhumvit.

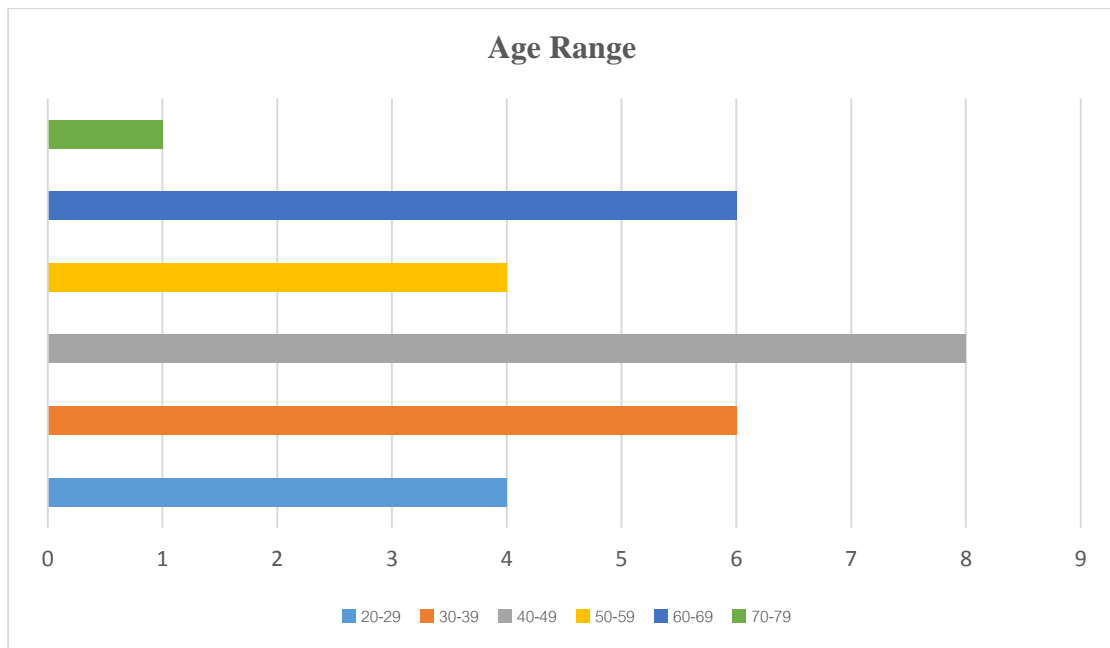
Conversations were attempted to be initiated with at least 6 to 8 Farang before an actual conversation resulted. Generally, if a conversation resulted, over half of the Farang would agree to speak in-depth on the subject of their perceptions of and experiences in lower Sukhumvit. Often, if a Farang looked out of place, such as a man obviously in his 50s wearing hip-hop clothing or someone looking very novel, attempts were made to converse with these individuals. Seldom would they respond to conversational attempts and never did they agree to interviews. Thus, these interviewees typically represent the main-stream Farang tourist and do not encompass all the unique characteristics of the various “Farang” visitors to Bangkok.

2.1.1.1 FARANG INTERVIEWEE NATIONALITIES



Farang interviewees came from 14 different nations with all speaking conversational English or better. The nationalities were as follows: 9 Americans for 30%, 6 from the United Kingdom (UK) for 20%, 5 Australians for 15%, 2 from Sweden at 5%, 1 interviewee each from Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, Canada, Denmark, and Switzerland at 5% of total interviews. While Russia, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France each send a half million or more tourists per year to Bangkok (Department of Tourism 2014) and Americans are not the highest percentage of Farang tourists to Bangkok; a higher percentage of Americans were interviewed when compared to Farang interviewees of other nationalities. This is attributed to the fact that the interviewer was American and thus, conversations and rapport was more natural and easier to build upon hearing the interviewer's accent in the initial ice breaker of the conversation. European Farang interviewees typically had more trips to Bangkok and seemed more attuned to the nightlife around lower Sukhumvit. Of note, none of the Americans or any of the other Farang under the age of 35 interviewed has ever sponsored a Thai girl.

2.1.1.2 FARANG INTERVIEWEE AGES



Farang interviewee age's ranged between early 20s to the mid-70s, with the majority of interviewees being between the ages of 40 to 59. Age of interviewees are as follows: 20-29 years of age = 4 at 14%, 30-39 years of age = 6 at 21%, 40-49 years of age = 8 at 28%, 50-59 years of age = 4 at 14%, 60-69 years of age = 6 at 20%, 70-79 years of age = 1 at 3%. The stereotypical interviewee over 40 years of age was usually grey haired or greying, looked his age or at times older as he often times looked tired and worn. For example, "Ted", a businessmen from the United Kingdom who was in Bangkok on holiday after some meetings in the region. When I first met Ted, I assumed he was in his early sixties by his weathered face and being dressed like a retiree golfer. Ted was early fifties, thinning grey hair, long bushy eyebrows that needed trimmed and showed his years of office work through his large waistline. Ted had made many trips to Bangkok and Southeast Asia over his years and seemed to have an all knowing attitude due to it. Similar to Ted, most Farang interviewees dressed to their age groups with older interviews typically wearing polo styled collared shirts or button up dress shirts frequently with slacks or jeans, whereas most of the younger interviewees wore t-shirts and shorts or were dressed stylish to go to the upscale clubs later in the evening.

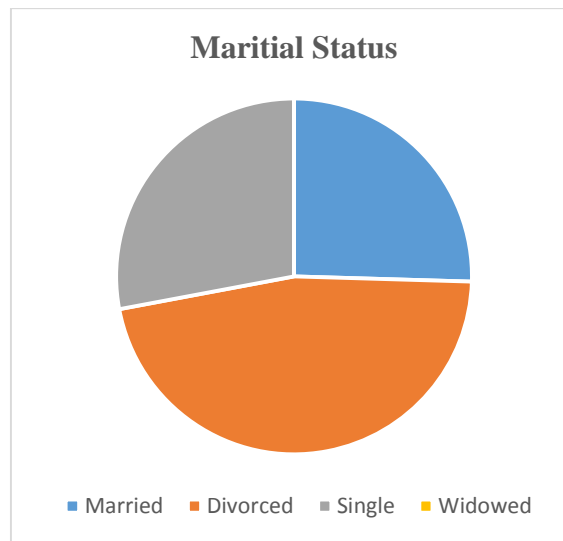
During research to the lower Sukhumvit area, it was also observed that the majority of the Farang tourists patronizing establishments and loitering around the area appeared to be in the age range from the mid-thirties to late fifties. These middle aged and older men typically were alone, whereas the interviewees in their early thirties and younger, were in groups of two or three. The majority of the older interviewees were quick to engage in conversation and some even seemed to brag about their Bangkok experiences. Likewise, the younger Farang that attempts were made to initiate conversations with typically met with little response or interest in talking. This is attributed to the age factor whereas elders typically like to share their “wisdom” and also younger men typically have less patience and time for talking, while preferring to be more active.

2.1.1.3 FARANG INTERVIEWEE PROFESSION/EDUCATION

Professional or “white collar” professions made up the majority of Farang tourists interviewed, with only ten percent claiming to have manual labor or “blue collar” professions. Professions ranged from business owners, to information technology workers, business to business salesmen, consultants, employees of western governments and office workers/managers. Only 1 out of 29 was retired, Marc, and he recently retired from his office job in Switzerland and was here on holiday looking for his retirement home. Marc was early sixties, held a graduate degree, was divorced and had adult children, his mother and father had both passed away, so he held little tying him to his home country. He stated that he always enjoyed his many trips to Thailand and for years planned to move here immediately upon retiring. Marc went on to say that within a week of finishing his work, he was in Thailand and is now in the market for a condo either in Bangkok or Pattaya.

The vast majority of the interviewees held college degrees with the remainder having attended some type post-secondary education. Of note, two unemployed, yet recently graduated college students were added into the “white collar” subgrouping as it is assumed they will find employment into the professional sector once their graduation trip to Southeast Asia is complete.

2.1.1.4 FARANG INTERVIEWEE FAMILY STATUS



Of the 29 Farang interviewees in and around the adult establishments in lower Sukhumvit, 15 were divorced, 5 were married and 9 stated they were single. While only a total of 15, slightly over 50%, had children, the percentage was significantly dropped because every interviewee below the age of 30, was never married, and did not have children. Interestingly, many of these same men that had children admitted that their children, and in a few instances- grandchildren, were around the same ages as some of the sex workers in these areas.

Another intriguing observation is that quite a few of these married men out to meet women were still wearing their wedding rings while doing so. Max for example, is married to his long time wife who is back home in Italy battling cancer. I met Max outside the Landmark as he was awaiting his current girlfriend while wearing his wedding ring. Max is in Bangkok supposedly on business for his family company that he runs, but freely admits that he is now and has frequently come to Bangkok over the years “for business”, when it is really to meet the various women he sponsors as his girlfriends.

2.1.1.5 FARANG INTERVIEWEE PREVIOUS BKK EXPERIENCE

The majority of Farangs interviewed had been to Bangkok before. Only three claimed it was their first experience, with two of those travelling together after just having graduated college. Four stated they had previously been to Bangkok three times

or less. All of these interviewees with less than five previous trips to Bangkok were under the age of 40. Twenty one interviewees stated they had been to Bangkok over 10 times, with three estimating over a hundred different trips to Bangkok. These three were all above the age of 50 and claimed to also come for business reasons on most of those occasions. These three older Farang all currently have or have had girlfriends in Bangkok that they have sponsored over the years.

2.1.1.6 FARANG INTERVIEWEE PRIOR RESEARCH

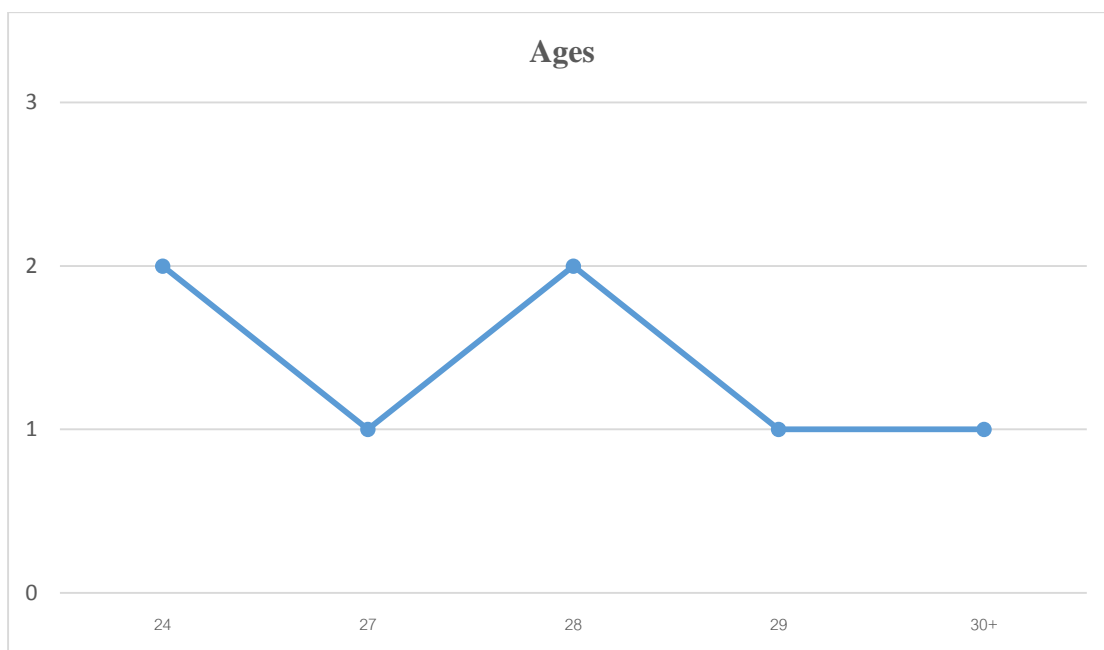
While all interviewees planned to visit the lower Sukhumvit area of Bangkok, only a limited number did any prior research or attempted to meet/contact sex workers utilizing the internet before their current trip to Bangkok. Those with extensive prior experience already knew where they were going and at times who they would be meeting while here, thus as Max stated “why would I, I already have a beautiful girl here that I take care of”. I also surmise that since the majority of Farang visitors are over the age of 40, they are not as technology driven and/or dependent as many of the younger generation and this correlates to the lack of prior research. No interviewees claimed to have researched Thai laws regarding prostitution before coming to Bangkok this trip.

2.1.2 SEX WORKER INTERVIEWEE PROFILES

In total 7 sex workers were interviewed and another 5 held brief conversations. In general, the typical profile of the female sex worker interviewed was Thai, under 30, single, no professional career and not originally from Bangkok. These women all related stories of needing money to take care of families and called the Farang either customers or their sponsor when that was the case.

The majority had the “Issan look” and wore short blouses showing their mid-drift and tiny shorts and/or were wearing extremely tight clothing. These ladies often tried to get attention of the Farang that were walking by as we chatted, especially once they realized that this was a conversation/interview, not chatting leading to a business transaction, then they seemed to become much less energized to talk.

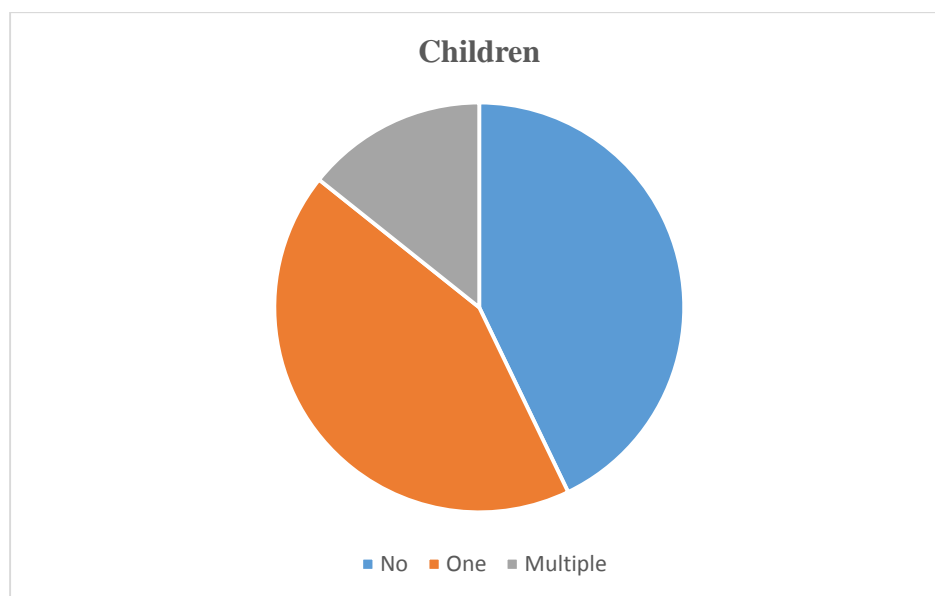
2.1.2.1 SEX WORKER INTERVIEWEE AGES



The ages of the sex workers interviewed ranged from 24 years of age to early 30s, with only one of the seven interviewed stating she was over 30 and she declined to give her exact age. The majority of sex workers in the Nana Plaza and Soi Cowboy area appeared to be around twenty to the mid- or possibly late twenties. The youngest consenting to be interviewed was Jum. Jum was 24 and had been in Bangkok working around lower Sukhumvit for over two years. Jum is a single mother of a three year old boy who is back in Issan. She stated that she came to Bangkok to work once he was almost one and old enough for her to leave him with her parents. Jum sends 10,000 to 20,000 Baht per month to her family to take care of him and she goes back to visit for a week about every two months. She further stated that she soon planned to quit working in Soi Cowboy and go back to Issan for good as she has saved money and misses him.

Along lower Sukhumvit, the percentage of sex workers in their twenties appeared to lessen considerably, as there were numerous observations of sex workers that appeared to be in their mid-thirties or older. However, these ladies declined to be interviewed or were presently engaged in conversations with Farang men and thus no attempts were made to collect data from them. All sex workers interviewed appeared healthy, relatively happy and were in good spirits.

2.1.2.2 SEX WORKER INTERVIEWEE FAMILY STATUS



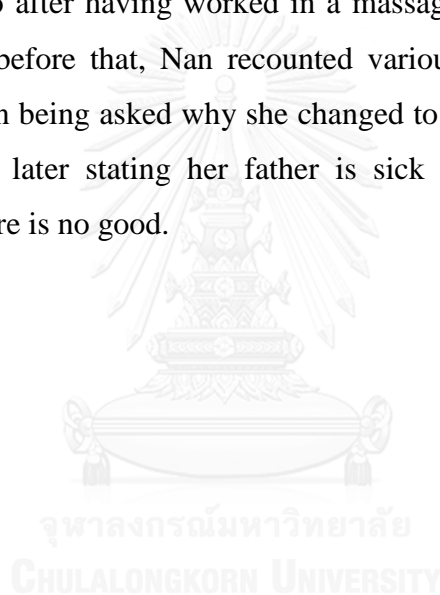
All seven sex workers interviewed stated they were single and slightly more than half, 57%, had children with all stating that their children reside with their families in their home province vice here in the Bangkok area with them. Only one of seven, 14%, had more than one child. All of these single mothers related stories of sending money back to families to care for their children and gave the perception as these children are the driving economic factor for this lifestyle. Giep, a 27 year old mother of three children who all have different Thai fathers, has been in Bangkok for only two months working at a small bar along Sukhumvit Soi 22. She was anxiously awaiting her upcoming trip back home to see her children. Giep stated these two months are the first time she has ever been away from them and hopes she can make large amounts of money quick, so she can quickly return to her children. Another single mother was Tao, who held a factory job during the week and freelanced along Sukhumvit occasionally to make extra money. She stated it was an easy way to make extra money whenever her mother, who was taking care of Tao's son, called asking for more money.

Even those without children, frequently stated economic factors such as being dependent upon for financial support by their parents/families. Tip, a 28 year old who has been in Bangkok for six years, stated that the majority of her high earnings has went to support her parents, sibling's children and often even extended family members.

2.1.2.3 SEX WORKER INTERVIEWEE ORIGINATION

All sex workers interviewed were Thai and six of the seven originated from provinces outside the Bangkok area. Of these six, five claimed to have been in Bangkok two years or less and travel back to their homes every two to three months to visit families and children. The only sex worker not from Bangkok claiming over two years working here, was Tip, a high earner with two Farang sponsors who has been in Bangkok for over six years.

The only sex worker interviewed that actually originated from Bangkok, was also the only one over the age of 30. Nan stated she started working around Sukhumvit around two years ago after having worked in a massage parlor for one year. When asked what she did before that, Nan recounted various unskilled jobs (7/11, hotel reception, etc.). Upon being asked why she changed to this type of work, she replied for the money, then later stating her father is sick in the stomach and that the government health care is no good.



CHAPTER III
INTERVIEWEE PERCEPTIONS ON HUMAN SECURITY IN BANGKOK'S
LOWER SUKHUMVIT

3.1 FARANG INTERVIEWEE PERCEPTIONS ON HUMAN SECURITY

The theme concurrent through each subgrouping of Farang tourists, be it nationality, age, marital status or job type; was that most Farang do not understand the dynamics of human security as pertaining to the sex workers in Bangkok. They tend to believe that they are causing no harm, providing economic assistance to poor women and believe these sex workers are freely making the choice to perform this kind of work. While few will change their actions, on the positive note, most Farang tourists state that they will now be more attuned to the human security situation as it pertains to the sex worker in Bangkok

Farang perceptions on human security, sex workers in Bangkok and prostitution did not deviate between the citizens of different nations. In general, the perceptions of these Farang tourists from these 14 different nations remained largely the same- the women have no human security concerns and engage in prostitution for the economic reason of fast and easy money.

The majority of Farang visitors interviewed in the lower Sukhumvit area held professional careers and were typically higher educated or at least professionally savvy, yet even with their education and knowledge, most tended to either not know, understand or care about the issues of human security before being interviewed. Once the elements of human security of freedom from fear, freedom from want and to live in dignity were explained, many Farang felt those tenants were not applicable, yet stated they would be aware of the situation when dealing with the sex workers.

Every interviewee that had over 10 previous trips to Bangkok was aware that prostitution was illegal in Thailand and of the plight of the sex worker, yet the majority of these seasoned Bangkok visitors seemed hardened to the scene and portrayed less regard for the sex worker's rights and human security situation.

3.1.1 FARANG CASE EXAMPLE 1

Paul, a married Belgium businessman in his sixties stated that he has visited Bangkok hundreds of times and he pays large amounts of money for “high quality” women and they are willing to do whatever he wants. He was slightly overweight, well dressed, well groomed (except for the many prominent long hairs growing out his ears), wore his wedding ring and a very expensive watch.

Paul explained that in Bangkok his money speaks volumes and has for almost 40 years and this why he enjoys his business trips to Bangkok. He boasted to have a few regular girls that he at times buys expensive gifts such as name brand purses and clothing for them before he travels to Bangkok, then laughed that they probably sell for a small percentage once he leaves. He stated that he pays whichever girl he chooses extremely well for the few days he is in town, he does not require sex every night and that they are lucky to spend time with him in his fine lodgings and eating expensive meals when he sees one of them. I asked Paul how much he pays them to spend time with him while he is in town, he remarked that it varies: sometimes he may bring them \$200 to \$800 worth of items each and pay 3,000 to 5,000 per day. Other times he may just give them 10,000 to 15,000 Baht. I remarked “that is actually not that much money when divided by three to four days” and he replied “it is a sure thing for them and that they live well when with me.” Paul then stated that he has sent them money when they have had sick relatives and has on a few occasions flown a couple of these different Thai women to Europe, Cambodia, Laos or Vietnam to stay with him while on short business trips there and allowed them to go shopping while he is in meetings.

I began to talk with Paul about human security and the freedom from fear, freedom from want and to live in dignity and how it applies to the women here in Bangkok. I opined that many of these women may be working of their own free will, but in the end, they have little options as there are no opportunities to make the money needed to support their families. Paul stated he “does not care about their personal lives or what problems they might have.” His attitude was one of a superiority and since he is extremely wealthy, he felt he could do and buy whatever he desired without any implications.

He stated they know he is married, have been to his house he owns in Bangkok, know about his adult kids and he knows a little about their private lives, but in the end, “this is a simple business arrangement and everybody is happy.” Upon asking again if he felt they may be pressured or forced by other actors to keep up this activity, he stated “I treat them well and do as they wish when not with me. The rest of the time, their life is of no matter to me, I just expect them to be available should I come to town and desire to see one.” It is clear that this wealthy Farang does not care about the implications of human security toward the sex worker.

3.1.2 FARANG CASE EXAMPLE 2

Mike and Dave, two married US Government workers both in their 40s, travelling together. Mike was married with children and Dave was single. Both were dressed in shorts, sandals with polo type shirts eating outside Soi Cowboy before they “have a few drinks and watch some shows.” I asked them if they were aware that prostitution is illegal in Thailand. Mike and Dave both knew prostitution was illegal in Thailand and then adamantly added that they always ensure any worker they spend time with at the bar is: of legal age, freely working and that they do not utilize sexual services, just enjoy the shows and atmosphere. When asked if they had heard of human security, both had a basic understanding of human security and relayed examples of such. I explained the tenants of freedom from fear, freedom from want and to live in dignity, then asked them if they “felt that the activities within the lower Sukhumvit area of Bangkok violated any of the tenants of human security.” They replied that “no, these activities probably didn’t violate any human security tenants.” I asked “why do you think that?” One stated “these women are here on their own and are just trying to make as much money as they can.”

They stated that they would hit six to eight bars this evening, typically buy a couple of girls a drink and just chat while watching the other girls on stage. After one drink or so, they planned to leave for another bar. When asked if they should encounter a worker they perceived as forced in anyway, would this change their intended actions for the evening, both replied yes, they would leave immediately. Both stated that they never have asked if the workers were forced, however, they usually chat with them about the girls’ background, family and such over a drink. Since they never speak with

the workers for more than a few songs and the music is so loud; they never have delved into these issues.

Mike stated that they are out to have “fun, not to drag the evening down and while such issues are important, they feel there is little forced sex work taking place around this area.” When asked why they felt that way, Mike replied “The typical thing- they are from the countryside, got pregnant young- have a kid or two, and their family is poor, so they came to Bangkok to make money.” When asked “do the girls ever state their family expects them to do this type of work or remit large amounts of cash?” Dave stated “the girls never get that far into their story, but a few may ask for tips and say they need the money for family/kids, etc.”

One of these men stated that many of the girls seem to enjoy the work and hustle of the tourists and that while the whole industry can be sleazy; this is just out having some innocent fun while providing these women an income. He went on to say that while this is not the best way to earn a living, most of these girls seem to be getting along fine and probably can make more in a year without ever going on a bar fine than they could elsewhere working normal jobs in two to three years.

These two men seemed educated on the basics of human security, illegality of prostitution in Thailand and on human trafficking, however, both portrayed this is not applicable to Soi Cowboy. Towards the end of the conversation, I again explained the tenants of human security: freedom from fear, freedom from want and to live in dignity, Mike and Dave were then asked of their perception of human security of the sex worker in lower Sukhumvit. Both replied that the tenant to live in dignity could be lacking, however, they further stated that they felt many of these women feel dignified and unashamed of this lifestyle. At the end of the discussion, they were asked what they would do should they encounter a worker they perceived as forced or trafficked, both stated that should they ever encounter a circumstance where they believed the worker was forced, they would leave and report it.

I asked Mike and Dave if they did any research prior to coming such as “where to go to meet ladies or reviews on the bars?” Mike said no, Dave said he had and read a few forums with reviews of the bars in Nana and Soi Cowboy. I asked Dave “did any of these forums listed any laws, policies, treatments, or rights of the sex workers?” He replied no. While very friendly and talkative, these two men were cautious how they

answered questions and continually stated they are just “having a boy’s night out” and always ensure they do not get involved with any violations of laws or people’s rights and freedoms.

3.1.3 FARANG CASE EXAMPLE 3

Max, a married Italian business owner who is 73 years old, has adult children and his oldest granddaughter is in her mid-twenties. He was grossly overweight, dressed in a faded cheap looking button up stripped shirt and cargo shorts, unkempt grey hair, and bushy mustache, sitting outside the Landmark hotel. Max states that he comes to Bangkok four to six times a year for a few days each trip for many years now. He remarked that his trips used to be longer, however, since his wife is battling cancer, he must make all his trips short. This information on leaving his cancer stricken wife in Italy to visit his girlfriend in Thailand was not pursued as I did not want to make Max feel bad and he cut the discussion short, as he was being very open and talkative about his Bangkok experiences. Max runs his family’s business passed down from his father and shares ownership with his brother who is disabled and not able to work. He later stated that he claims these are business trips, but often they are only to see his girlfriend or girlfriends that he sponsors. Max has sponsored the same 27 year old Thai lady for 4 years. Before her, he has taken care of many Thai women over the last 20 plus years, sometimes he has sponsored two Thai ladies at the same time. Max even confessed to having the same arrangement in Manilla and a girlfriend in Italy. While amazed that this older gentlemen had the wherewithal and finances to support all these women, this information was not pursued due to the focus of this study on Bangkok’s lower Sukhumvit area, yet is mentionable in Max’s case.

I asked Max “just how do you meet all these ladies?” Max replied that he met his current girlfriend working at the hotel where he was staying at the time, he continually talked to her and asked her out, on his next visit she said yes. I asked him “how did you go about sponsoring her?” He replied that he just “offered to pay her a monthly salary to be his girlfriend when he came to visit every few months.” He stated that he started loving her and spending all his time and a lot of money on her when he came, and he then gave up the other Thai girlfriend that he already had. He opined that this one he really cares about and sometimes, there is no sex when he visits, they just

enjoy each other's company. I asked him what they typically do when he visits and he talked of taking her on short trips around Thailand to Samui, Phuket, and Krabi, and that on a couple of occasions has even flown her to meet him on his actual business trips in Turkey, Beijing (China) and Bali (Indonesia). Max says he really loves her, but because he has a family and business in Italy and that he is too old to give her the family that she wants; he can only come and visit her. He further stated that he knows she sees other men and he hopes that one day she will meet a good guy to give her a family instead of her selling her body. I asked Max "how much money does it cost for you to take care of her every month?" Max replied he transfers 1,000 Euros to her account every month, sends more if she requests it for valid needs, and gives her another 30,000 to 40,000 Baht as he is departing from his visit.

When asked if he was aware that prostitution was illegal in Thailand, he stated he was aware. I asked Max if he thought it "unusual that such an open sex industry complex exists, even though it is illegal in Bangkok?" He replied "no, the illegality is for political reasons and that Thailand is based on foreign money." I then asked him "are you aware of the concept of human security- the freedom from fear, want and to live with dignity?" He replied that he was not. After explanation, I then asked "do you perceive a lack of human security among the sex workers here in Bangkok?" He stated "there is a possibility for some of them." Upon being asked if now being made aware of the tenants of human security has changed his perception of the sex workers in Bangkok, he said yes. I asked him "how?" Max replied "many women have little choice but to do this work as they have poor families to support." I then asked Max "will this change your actions?" He replied "no, I have a girlfriend here and don't pick up the ladies."

He was further asked that "even though you currently have this girlfriend, would this perception affect your future actions should you no longer have this girlfriend?" Max replied "possibly and I will remember this conversation." Upon being asked "why do you think the ladies do this type of sex work?" Max replied because "they are poor and need money." He then explained how many Thai women need money to assist family and how this is the only viable option. He seriously doubted that any of the women working in the lower Sukhumvit area were forced into prostitution and fully

believed it is economically driven. I then asked Max “could being economically driven into prostitution violate the tenants of human security?” Max stated it does not.

Upon looking at Max’s attire, it seemed he must either spend all his money on sponsoring ladies or he was exaggerating his prowess, however, with the details, photos and same repeated statements; Max’s story seemed convincing. While not directly concerned with the tenants of human security, nor the fact that his current wife is fighting cancer; Max’s care for his current girlfriend and over all concern towards the women he has sponsored in the past seemed very genuine and kind hearted. Yet, when asking Max questions about the sex workers in lower Sukhumvit, in his answers he seemed to separate them from his girlfriend that he himself said “sells her body” while he is currently sponsoring her. Since Max spoke of her with such fondness, I did not want to point out the obvious fact the she too is a sex worker and offend him.

3.1.4 FARANG CASE EXAMPLE 4

Greg, a late thirties, a divorced Australian construction worker with two children who has been to Bangkok quite a few times over last 15 years. Greg was sitting at a bar along Soi 11 and having a beer while paying more attention to the people on the street as they walked by than the ladies in the bar. He was slender, wearing jeans and a t-shirt and seemed to just be relaxing. He stated that he comes to Bangkok about once a year to just have fun and relax.

I asked Greg if he conducted any prior research before coming to Bangkok, he said he had. He could not recall the site names, but that they had many reviews and advertisements about bars and for women. Greg was asked if he utilized any online dating sites to meet women in Bangkok prior to his arrival, he replied no, but that he has been chatting with some since he arrived. He went on to state that he had a few email addresses and Line ID’s of some of the women he has met in his previous trips and is in communication with them to meet up while here. I asked him “how is that going?” He showed the Line chats with two different ladies, and I remarked that “it looks as if you should be meeting them soon.” Greg said “yes, but I haven’t been able to line out the schedule with either yet, as they seem to always be busy.”

I was asked Greg if he knew prostitution was illegal, he stated yes and further remarked that “it is illegal in many places and never enforced.” I then asked “why do

you think it is never enforced?” He replied that “the tourism money is too good here and is needed for the economy.”

He was then asked if he knew and understood the concept of human security-freedom from fear, freedom from want and to live with dignity. Greg had not heard of the concept. I explained how freedom from fear, freedom from want and to live in dignity could be applicable to a myriad of situations, not just forced prostitution, such as having to perform tasks and jobs one would never desire just to feed your family. I then asked him “what do you think about the concept as applied towards the sex workers in the lower Sukhumvit area and do you think they were working by free will within the concept of human security?” Greg remarked about the sex workers “they are working by their choice.”

He was then asked if he had ever encountered a sex worker that he thought was forced into the sex industry, he stated no. I then asked him “so, what is your perception on why they were doing this type of work?” He replied “for the money.” Greg was then asked if he had “ever inquired with them or this is merely your assumption?” He replied that he has spoken with quite a few sex workers and most have talked of kids and families to support, he knows that most of the people in the countryside are poor, so he assumes it is for the money.

I then asked Greg “what would you do if you encounter a lady you believe is forced in any manner?” He replied “I’m not sure.” I asked him if would report forced prostitution, he said maybe. I asked “to whom if you did?” Greg again replied “I’m not sure.” He was then asked “if now knowing the concept of human security would make you more cognizant when talking to the sex workers and could possibly change your behaviors toward them”, he replied “yes.” When asked if he “has a different perception of the sex workers in the lower Sukhumvit area”, he stated “no, these women do this simply to make large amounts of money.”

Greg clearly was failing to grasp the tenants of human security when applied to the sex workers in Bangkok’s lower Sukhumvit. Due to Greg’s many trips to Bangkok and continually witnessing the sex workers quest for easy money, he has come to believe that all the sex workers in the lower Sukhumvit area are doing this for the fast easy money and cannot see that possibly there could be a few working out of necessity.

3.1.5 FARANG CASE EXAMPLE 5

Torb, a Swedish information technology worker in his late-twenties, never married, no kids and holds a university degree, on his first trip to Thailand. Torb was in Bangkok on holiday with a co-worker who has been here once before. They planned to spend a few days in Bangkok, then travel around Thailand for a few weeks and then return to Bangkok for their final few days of vacation before flying back home.

I asked Torb if he “conducted any prior research on Bangkok nightlife in lower Sukhumvit by looking at websites, forums or chat rooms?” He said “yes, I looked at some forums discussing the various clubs and discos.” I then asked him if he utilized any of the dating sites or escort services advertised on many of the forums. He stated he did not utilize any of dating sites to try to meet Thai women or sex workers. When I asked “are you was aware that prostitution is illegal in Thailand?” He seemed surprised and stated he was not aware of that.

Upon asking him if he ever heard of human security and if it applied here, he stated that he did not know about human security in itself, however, did know and comprehend human rights. I then asked him why he thought the ladies here (Nana Plaza) perform this type of work, he replied for easy the money.

Torb was asked if he “has encountered a lady that you think may be forced in any manner into sex work since you been in Bangkok?” He replied “no.” I asked “what would you do if you should encounter a lady you perceive as being forced in any manner: leave, report it or what?” He stated that he would leave. He was then asked “why not report it?” He said “yes, I would report it.”

I explained the tenants of human security and then asked him “how do you now perceive the sex workers?” He replied “they do not have the freedom from want.” I asked him if the tenant of live with dignity was possibly being denied, he stated that he believes in certain situations it is. When asked “does now knowing this change his actions tonight?” He stated “no.” I asked him “why not?” and Torb replied (because) “I will do nothing wrong.” He was then asked if now knowing this will make you more aware of the ladies when you deal with them and look out for signs of being forced or coerced, he said “yes.” In closing, I again asked Torb his “perception of the sex worker in lower Sukhumvit as pertaining to human security, and now understanding this, if they are being forced into this work?” Torb stated how he still perceived the ladies,

“they are freely doing this to make faster and easier money”, then further added “many have little option due to financial needs” showing at least he was starting to grasp a basic understanding of the tenants of human security.

3.1.6 FARANG CASE EXAMPLE 6

Jay, a Canadian in his late 30s, never married, no kids sitting at a bar along Sukhumvit Soi 22. Jay was clean cut, but had a bit of waistline, overall a decent looking guy. He was dressed in shorts and a stylish t-shirt, with Nike shoes and a nice Tag Heuer watch. Jay does computer work and has lived in various parts of Asia for the last 10 years, to include a few years ago living in Bangkok for a year. He has been to Bangkok many times over the last ten years, sometimes for business and sometimes for pleasure; this time is for pleasure.

Jay stated that he used to have a Thai girlfriend from when he lived here and he basically sponsored her for a year after he had moved. He stated that he got tired of her always wanting money and that was all the relationship seemed to be about, her asking for money. I asked Jay “always asking for money for what?” He said “for everything: for her family as somebody is always sick or hurt or they have something broken that needs to be repaired, for her kids as they always need something, or for her to pay bills as she didn’t make much money at her job that month.” He went on to explain that he realized after he moved from Bangkok, that money was all she cared about when he was living here with her and what he provided for her. When asked what kind of job the girlfriend had, he stated she had a clothes shop, but never sold any clothes.

I asked Jay if he was aware of prostitution being illegal in Thailand, he said yes. I then asked him “what do you think of everything that goes on when it is actually illegal?” He replied “I never really considered it.” I asked him if he knew or had heard of the concepts of human security: freedom from fear, freedom from want and to live in dignity, he said no. I then explained them and how they could possibly apply here in Bangkok such as “there are women doing this of their own free will however, being denied the right to live with dignity because they have no other option than to do this type of work.” Jay was then asked if he “ever encountered a lady you thought may have been forced into this work?” He said “no.” When I asked “if you should encounter such, what would you do?” He said “I’d probably leave.” I asked Jay if he would

report it if he thought it was physically forced work and he said probably. When asked “to whom would you report it?” Jay stated the “Thai police.”

I then asked Jay if “now knowing these concepts of human security would change your perceptions or actions?” He said “it may.” I asked Jay to clarify, he said “if I did encounter a woman I thought was working against her will, I would report it.” He was asked “so you wouldn’t before, but would now?” He said “I don’t know if I would have before, but I would now.” I then asked Jay “so you think many of these women are forced into this?” He said “no, it’s an easy way to make cash.” I asked “even after applying the tenants such as freedom from fear, freedom from want and live in dignity?” Jay replied “most Thais are poor, only a few have any real money, then many of these women are from Issan or places like that and have very poor backgrounds, they are just trying to make some decent money to support themselves and their families while they can.” He went on to say that he has talked to many that are also taking classes at universities or language lessons or using the money to start small businesses. I asked Jay “so you think most just do this to just get themselves set up for the future?” He said “not most, but quite a lot.” I then asked him what he thought happens to the rest, he said they get tired of this lifestyle or get married to a foreigner or quit when they get too old and a younger sister or someone else starts to support the family.

I asked Jay “how long do you think this profession is viable for these women?” He surmised “20 years at the most, usually 5 to 10.” Since Jay had extensive experience in Asia, I asked him “how does this area of Bangkok compare with much of Asia when it comes prostitution and the working ladies?” Jay stated “it’s much the same, but this area (lower Sukhumvit of Bangkok) is a lot more open and availability of ladies doing this when compared to anywhere else.”

I asked Jay “do you perceive the sex workers in Bangkok as having more freedom than those elsewhere?” He said “yes, they do.” When asked to clarify, he said “here the girls switch bars and come and go, with many working regular jobs and moonlighting at the clubs for extra money and in hopes to meet a Farang boyfriend or sponsor.” I then asked him if the sex workers move around as much in other places, he said not so much. Jay was asked if he perceived this area of Bangkok as the most

prevalent spot in the world for this type thing, he replied “either here or Angeles City, Philippines.”

I asked Jay if he conducted any prior research on the nightlife and sex workers in the lower Sukhumvit area from any blogs, forums or sites. He stated that he had in the past for Bangkok and other places, just not recently. I stated that I was surprised since Jay was “computer savvy and on one all day, I would think it would be too easy to check everything out” and then asked him if he ever utilized any of the dating sites to meet women in Bangkok or sex workers. He replied “no, just regular girls, but there are some on those sites.”

I then asked Jay “does talking about this stuff and hearing the human security concepts change your plans for the evening?” Jay laughed and said “no, I don’t have any plans, just plan to have a few drinks, relax and hang out.”

He portrayed that this is the chosen profession of these women in order to make large amounts of easy money until they are too old. Jay is another example of the Farang that has multiple Bangkok experiences of frequently witnessing the sex workers ply their trade and tell their tale, that he cannot correlate the tenants of human security to even a few of these sex workers and only perceives money as their prime motivator for all.

3.1.7 FARANG CASE EXAMPLE 7

Brian, an American from the East Coast in his early thirties, has been divorced once, has no children. He has a college education and is currently between jobs in the information technology field. Initially, I didn’t realize Brian was an American because he was so skinny, was wearing shorts and a t-shirt with the Union Jack on it, and was very timid looking when he entered the bar on the corner of Sukhumvit Soi 22. He sat down and ordered a beer and then began talking to the waitress fluently in Thai.

After striking up a conversation with Brian, it turned out he is an American on vacation here as he is currently unemployed due to a month gap between the start of new job and end of his old, so he came to Bangkok, because he loves Thailand. I asked him why he loves Thailand so much and he said “A few years ago, I came on vacation and loved Thailand. I met this girl and then went back home. A month later, I decided to move to Thailand.” He quit his job, moved here and married her. Brian lived in

Bangkok for four years teaching English and doing IT work on the side. He stated that the “Thai wife didn’t work out, so eventually I moved back to US.”

Brian says he will always love Thailand and the people, but just can’t make a good life here. I asked “why not, you’re an IT professional, there is a need for those skills everywhere?” He stated “unless a Western Corporation brings you here, you will only be paid Thai wages or slightly above if you are Farang. Farang’s have to pay more for everything here and the women all expect the Farang to have money.”

I asked what he meant by us Farang’s expected to have more money and he continued with “the women are used to either Farangs on holiday that are living and spending money recklessly because they are on holiday or the Farang that are older and are well paid executives. These guys can spend a lot daily, regular guys cannot afford to.”

I remarked “that’s how many people are, not just Thais or women.” He replied “yes, that’s true, but here the women are different. Whether it be one of these girls (pointing to ladies in the bar) or an educated and professional lady that you meet shopping at the Embassy Mall: they all expect you to have a bank roll.” I remarked that I have been all over and often it can seem that is the case anywhere, but depends on the woman you meet. He said “yes, it does, but here it is worse.” When asked why he thought it was, he replied “because of the whole Thai culture; the woman has to feel taken care of and they have to put on the face and show what they have, so the expectation is high. Plus, they are used to Farangs just throwing money around.”

Brian was then asked “then why do you keep coming back?” He said “I love the culture, the vibe of Bangkok, the women are gorgeous, the food is great, and this is just an awesome place.” I said “I feel exactly the same, so why not stay?” Brian asked me “how long you lived here?” I replied almost a year and had been a few times for holidays before. He said “It wears you down, stay for 4 or 5 years straight and you will see.”

I asked “since you speak Thai and had semi-immersed into the culture, did you ever encounter any instances where you came across women that were forced into prostitution?” He replied “No, in the main areas like this, I think they all do it for the cash. If you go to certain areas of BKK, there are Burmese and Chinese girls that are there and they could be forced into it, those places cater to the Thais and other Asians.”

He was asked if he had ever been to those clubs or massage shops in those areas. He replied “no, never a need. Besides, that is not the type of thing I want to get involved in.” I asked what he meant. He replied “I prefer to hang around the comfy Farang areas.” I asked “What do you mean, you speak Thai, you seem like a nice guy, why would it be a problem?” He replied “I prefer to stay in my comfort zone” and smiled.

I asked if he knew prostitution was illegal, he said yes. I then asked “have you ever heard of human security and the tenants of freedom from fear, freedom from want and to live in dignity?” He replied “that is all basic human rights stuff. I am aware, just not the name human security and those exact definitions.” I asked if he ever encountered any workers that looking back he now felt were forced in anyway. He replied “No, when I lived here I didn’t really participate in the short time thing very much. I met my ex-wife right away my first trip, then we were together most of the time when I lived here, then I just dated some normal girls for the last few months.”

I asked Brian “what about this trip?” He said “yes, I have been doing the bar fine thing. It’s just easier that way. I’m only here for a few weeks and just having fun.” He was then asked if “on this trip to Bangkok, have you encountered any girls you thought were forced?” He stated “no, they are just trying to make as much as they can. They all have families or someone to support. It’s their fastest and easiest way.”

I asked Brian if he ever asks them why they do it. He replied “not exactly, but I talk to them in Thai about their family, where they are from, what they like to do for fun. Same stuff you would talk with a girl on date in the States.” I asked him if any ever allude to being pressured, and he replied “some talk of how their family needs money, sick parent, kids in school, etc.- those types of pressures.” I asked “so, economically forced, not physically forced?” He replied “they never say they have been forced, just how they have financial issues.”

Brian was then asked “what would you do should you meet a sex worker who says she is forced?” He said “they wouldn’t tell you, me or any other dude.” I said maybe, but you speak Thai very good, maybe she would need help and ask you. He said “depends on what it is about. This isn’t the States, things are different.” I then asked “if you went to a place where you felt the girls were pressured or forced, would you stay and if so, would you return?” He replied “I would probably leave, I guess it depends on if I already paid.”

I asked “would you return?” He said “no, especially if I reported it to someone. I would not go back there.” I remarked “yea, that’s probably a good decision to stay away.” He continued “things here can be great, but can be crazy too. We are Farang and will never understand how things work, nor be trusted. If they heard of any issues and I had just been there, they may suspect me. I just try to play things smart and avoid any issues. That’s why I stay in the Farang areas.”

I asked Brian if he ever used any of the dating sites to meet women in Bangkok, he said he had when he lived here. I asked what about before this trip, he said no. When asked if he ever read any of the forums or blogs dedicated to the adult entertainment in Bangkok, he said he had, but it has been a long time. I remarked that “you’re a computer guy, why not?” He stated that he already knew the areas he would be going and instead just kept up on news and happenings in Bangkok.

3.2 SEX WORKER INTERVIEWEE PERCEPTIONS

3.2.1 SEX WORKER CASE EXAMPLE 1

Tip, a 28 year old sex worker proudly stated that in six years, she has paid off and improved her parent’s house, bought her mother a small restaurant and both parents’ cars. Tip is single, no kids and from Issan. She stated that she has never felt threatened and entered this life for money to take care of the family at the urging of her older sister who was already married, because her sister had friends that made good money working like this in Bangkok.

When asked how much she makes, she smiled and stated that she has two sponsors and receives 50,000 Baht from one, she calls “Grandfather, because he is so old” and 30,000 from another, each over the last three to four years. Tip further stated that whenever the family has a major issue, she calls or emails Grandfather and he often sends more money in addition to his monthly 50,000 Baht. I asked her how much and she replied it depends “sometimes 20,000 Baht, one time he send another 50,000 Baht.” Coupled with meeting guys in bars, she claims that she makes between 100,000 to 200,000 Baht a month (on average Thai women holding university education working in a corporate office make 18,000 to 25,000 Baht/month).

When I asked Tip “how much have you saved or what have you bought with all that money?” She proudly replied that she has “300,000 Baht in the bank.” I then pointed out that this was merely two to three months wages for her and she had made so much money over the past few years, then asked her “why haven’t you saved more?” She stated that it is difficult as her family and extended family all rely upon her for support. She is paying for schooling for multiple nieces and nephews, her aunts and uncles need medical care, and that there is not enough money to take care of all the family. She relayed a few stories of how she is constantly being contacted by family members for money. I asked “Is this loans, borrowing money, or gifts to them? And do they pay you back?” Tip replied that some ask to borrow, but none ever repaid her. I said “so you keep giving them money and they never repay you?” She stated “this is OK as I make good money and it is my responsibility to take care of the family.” When asked about the families jobs/careers, Tip relayed that the majority are unemployed. She further talked about relative’s cars breaking down, buying an iPhone for her 18 year old nephew (who is also not working or going to school), continually buying and bringing items from Bangkok home to family members and basically supporting them all.

I asked Tip “does your family know what you do to make all this money?” She replied “no.” As she talked about everything she has bought them and how much money she has given them, it was clearly evident that while she had a lot of pride in being the family savior, her family members took full advantage of her generosity and must have an idea of her profession as Thai women typically don’t make these large amounts of money.

Later, she relayed how when one of her sponsors, Grandfather, came to visit and he wanted to meet her family and see all the things “he paid for”. Tip took him to the countryside to meet the family and see the house and car he helped pay for. I then asked her “what did your family think of this old man when you brought him home?” She replied “I told them before visiting that he was my sponsor. They liked him.” I said “so you told them he was your sponsor, then so your family must know what you do, but nobody talks of it?” She replied “I don’t know.” I then pointed out to Tip that “you are making large amounts of money in Bangkok, bringing old Farang home who they know is your sponsor,” and then asked her “what do you think that your family

thinks you do for this money, or they just care about the money?” She replied “they need the money.”

When asked if the Farang ever ask if she is forced or pressured into this work, she said no. She was then asked if her sponsors ever asked in the beginning. She said they knew her family relied on her for money and that is why she did this work and why they give so much a month so she could stop. She was asked if they knew about each other and she said no. She was then asked if the Farang typically treat her well, she said yes. When then asked again if any Farang ever ask if she is OK or why she does this, she stated the sponsors and some others ask if she is OK and needs anything. To clarify, she was asked as far as your safety or as in more money or gifts? She said for money or somethings. She was asked again “is the only pressure is to go with customers is for the money to give to your family and take care of yourself?” She stated “yes, I must help my family have a good life.” When asked what she will do when she loses a sponsor or gets too old, she nonchalantly replied she has no plan, but will probably find a Farang to marry and take care of her. Throughout the interview, Tip seem to boast of her earnings and having her two wealthy sponsors and was definitely proud of all she has given her family and how they look upon her as the provider.

3.2.2 SEX WORKER CASE EXAMPLE 2

Giep, a 27 year old single Thai lady with 3 children. She has worked in a small bar around Soi 22 just off Sukhumvit since she came to Bangkok two months ago from eastern Thailand. She states that had seen and heard about the money to be made in Bangkok from the other girls from her hometown who had come to Bangkok. Once her third child was old enough for her to leave, she came to Bangkok to make money to support them. She stated she receives no money from the fathers of the kids and was working a job with small money before. I asked her “did anyone pressure you or force you into this work?” She replied no, that she needed the money because of the kids. She was “where or how did you know to find a place to do this?” She stated “it is easy to find” and went on to tell that many of the girls from her home talk of places to work. She further stated that she had a relative that had a friend working in a bar and they needed more girls to work there. Her relative gave her the friend’s phone number and address in Bangkok. She came and started working.

When asked how much money she makes in a day, she replied some days it is good money, some days it is little money. I asked her “like how much on the good and how much on the bad days?” She stated “some days only 200 Baht because not many customers, some days 6-7,000 Baht.” I asked “why the difference?” She replied because maybe she is bar fined twice, plus drinks and tips, it is not the same each day. I replied “being bar fined two times in one day is pretty good.” She smiled and said yes, and then relayed that some of the other girls frequently get bar fined two or three times in one night.

I asked “How much money have you made the past two months in Bangkok?” She replied that she does not know. “How much have you sent home?” To which she replied “5,000.” I asked Giep “why so little if sometimes you can make that in one night?” She stated that some days she makes little money and she has sent 10,000 Baht before. For clarification, she was then asked “since you have been in Bangkok, you have sent 15,000 Baht home?” She said “no, more.”

Upon being asked if she uses websites or dating sites to meet guys that are coming to Bangkok on holiday, she said no. When asked how she meets customers, she said they come to the bar, sometimes some customers that she has seen before will Line her to see if she is available before they come.

I asked “do you ever feel forced to go with a customer?” She replied “no.” I then asked “what if you said no to customer, what would your boss do?” She replied that it is her choice and boss wants her to go. To clarify, I asked “what if the boss wants you to go and you say no?” She said “I not go.” I then asked “what would happen if you said no two or three times in one night?” She replied “I will go.” I tried to clarify this by asking, “even if you do not want to go, you would go?” She replied “I will go.” When asked why, she stated “to make the money.” For clarification, she was asked again “what if there are two different guys that try to bar fine you one night and they seem like bad guys, can you say no to both?” Giep replied “I can go” (not sure if she doesn’t understand, or doesn’t want to answer or feels she needs to make the money and can’t say no two times in a night).

Upon being asked how the Farang treat her, she replied OK. When asked if they treat her better to her than other customers such as Thai, Japanese, Arab, etc., she replied that she only has had Farang customers. She was then asked if they are usually nice,

she replied yes. Giep was asked “do any ask how you are or why you do this work?” she said “no.” Next, I asked her “do any ask if you are OK?” She replied that she always uses a condom. For clarification, she was asked, “no I mean, do they care if you are safe and not in trouble with your boss or anyone?” She replied “no, my manager is good.” When asked if she knew any places along Sukhumvit where the girls are not as free to work as she is and can’t leave except for bar fines, she said no.

She was then asked “have you ever felt threatened while doing this work?” She replied “no.” I then asked “Have you had any trouble with police?” She said no. When I asked if her manager has to pay them to leave the bar alone, she said “mai been lai” (it doesn’t matter).

Giep was asked if the Farang tip well, she said maybe. I asked “why maybe, what do you mean?” She replied “some old do, but not the young.” She was asked to explain, she said “the grandfathers have more money”. I then asked her “do any Farang try to take care of you or sponsor you?” She said no. She then stated she has seen one Farang customer many times and he wants to see her outside of her bar, but she doesn’t want to. I asked “why, because it is away from the bar and your boss will be mad since they are not getting the business?” She replied because “I don’t want, he is butterfly (has many girls) and is not good.” I asked her “would you like to have a Farang sponsor or boyfriend?” She said “yes.” When asked “why, because they seem like good guys?” She replied “yes.” She was then asked “And because they have lots of money?” She smiled and said “yes.”

She was then asked if any of the Farangs she meets care about her safety and she replied that she didn’t understand. When asked “do they ask if you do this work because you need money or because some person makes you?” Giep said “no.” I asked “the Farang just want to have the sex and then you go?” She replied that some ask her to stay the night. She was then asked if she does stay the night, do any talk with her about her future or stopping this type of work and she said no. When asked “what do they talk with you about?” She said “many things.” She was asked “like what?” and she replied “many things.”

Giep was then asked “when do you feel you could get enough money and stop doing this?” She was unsure, but relayed that she wants to move back home to her children. She was asked “So, if you could find a good sponsor to pay you, you would

stop working here and move back to your children?” Giep said “no.” When asked why, she said because “I need to make money for the kids.” I tried to clarify by saying “if the sponsor pays you what you make now, you could then stop and only come to Bangkok when he visits.” She said “no.” I asked “So if you had a sponsor that would pay you a lot of money, you wouldn’t stop?” She said “no.”

While talking with Giep, it is evident that the money to support her children was the main motivator to come to Bangkok and be a sex worker. However, now that she sees the money to be made, it seems that she may be destined to become caught up in the cycle of easily earning large amounts of money and may not be able to quickly walk away from this lifestyle.



CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSION ON FARANG TOURIST'S PERCEPTIONS ON HUMAN
SECURITY IN BANGKOK'S LOWER SUKHUMVIT

4.1 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWEE DATA

After numerous interviews and meetings with both the Farang customer and the sex worker, it is clearly evident that most Farang do not: understand the dynamics of human security or the impact of prostitution in Thailand. While still partaking in the sex industry, the majority of these Farang believe they are causing no harm and state that they will now be more attuned to the human security situation. In fact, most still believe they are providing economic assistance to poor women, who otherwise have little opportunity for economic gain. These men had never really thought about human security or the impact on the sex worker.

The nature of the sex business in Bangkok itself makes it difficult for most observers to understand the lacking of human security tenants. Because so many Thai women solely come to Bangkok in order to freely submerge themselves into this trade for the easy money to support their families and gain a better lifestyle; it is easy to believe there are no issues of human security. However, while the driving factor of providing for your family is a motivator for most people in most professions; few understand that a lack of viable options is the main draw for many of these poor and often only basically educated women which violates the tenant of freedom from want. Furthermore, the gratification and sense of pride these women receive when they are held in esteem by family members for providing these gifts and large sums of money on a regular basis, keeps the sex worker from understanding herself that she is lacking in the human security tenant of living with dignity. Until she does, it will be difficult for her Farang clients to then also feel and understand that she is not living with dignity.

While agreeable and mutually beneficial, the relationship between the Farang and sex worker is not always based on equality. Predominately, the sex worker is in economic need to make money to support her family and the Farang is here spending his disposable "holiday money" on sex much cheaper that it would be to purchase in his country of origin. Typically, these men held all the power in these situations and

the worker was usually on the weaker side of the “bargaining table” when dealing with the Farang. When discussing my research with another scholar researching sex tourism, he related a story whereas he was sitting at a nearby table and witnessed a lady propositioning a Farang in a bar around 1 am and asked for 3,000 Baht for a short time. The Farang rejected and they chatted for a while. Around 1:30 she then tried for 2,500 Baht, he again rejected. Finally, once it was close to 2 am and the bar’s closing time, she offered 2,000 Baht and the Farang accepted. Hers and most sex worker’s choice is often very simple, take the reasonable “market” rate offered and perform the desired acts, or not make any money tonight. This example shows who typically holds an unequal power in these arrangements, the Farang, and correlates directly into a loss of dignity and prevention from a freedom from want.

Not surprising, was the few very wealthy self-centered Farang who had no issues in treating these ladies like sexual objects. While one, Max the 73 year old married Italian, did have genuine feelings for his current Thai girlfriend, he too portrayed himself as having little understanding of these ladies loss of dignity. Instead Max believed he was making her life better and providing for her future until she found a decent guy to marry and have a good life with. Max also failed to understand that his financial support might help to push her deeper into the abyss of this trade by initially wetting her appetite to the money to be made when she had a normal job, her realizing the ease to make this money and how to manipulate the Farang, and then her family coming to expect even more from her as she increased her earnings. Instead, Max wholeheartedly believes he is a Good Samaritan and taking care of the woman he loves.

Surprisingly, all the ladies seemed to take pride in recounting the occasions when they had made large amounts, and those with sponsors seemed to even boast of having these men send them money all while they are still out having other men pay them for their company; none of these sex workers relayed and portrayed any loss of dignity in performing this work, the only sorrow or complaints expressed were those lamenting on missing their children. Many seemed to possess a gratification in making so much money off the Farang. Once again Max comes to mind, while chatting with Max he began to show pictures on his phone of him and his Thai girlfriend on their various trips around Thailand. I could sense the pride and care Max had for her as he spoke of those trips. However, he became to show sadness as he spoke of how she

frequently stands him up or is late meeting him during his visits here and how she often withholds sex and affection when they are together. He then stated that he knows she is using him for his money because she seldom initiates their phone calls unless it is to request additional money besides her “salary”, but he doesn’t care because he loves her. While this phenomenon of the sex worker holding a large amount of the power in the relationship between the Farang tourist and the sex worker is unique, is quite common with those Farang that sponsor a Thai lady.

Once explained the negativities and various aspects concerning the sex worker; many Farang changed their opinion and stated that while they would continue with their plans, they would be more cognizant of the personal situation the sex worker was involved in. There were two noted exceptions: First, was the Belgium businessman (3.1.1 FARANG CASE EXAMPLE 1) who clearly felt entitled due to his wealth and had no regard for laws, human security and the personal dignity of the sex worker. Second, was two US Government workers (3.1.2 FARANG CASE EXAMPLE 2) who were already aware of the illegality of prostitution in Thailand and human security tenants.

The sex workers interviewed all stated that they have no physical security issues or dangers and that they entered this work for the economic opportunity as there was no viable employment in their home regions. Pim, a single 24 year old from Chanthaburi with no children, stated that she is now expected to send home at least 15,000 Baht per month in order to care for her family. She moved to Bangkok a few years ago and started working in a hotel. The pay was low and she saw and heard how much the ladies were making who were going with the Farang, she decided to do the same and quit her hotel job. She began to make 50,000 to 60,000 Baht per month and her family become reliant on her. Pim claims there are many expenses as her Mother now only works part time, her father no longer works and they have her sister’s young children living with them. When asked if her sister contributed, she remarked that her sister also receives some of the money because she only works part time and must pay all the bills at her own house because her sister’s husband also does not work. When the Farang continually hear stories such as hers, they come to believe all sex workers are in the industry for economic gain due to greed or in order to support large families where many of the family members chose not to work.

Being a middle aged Farang male that has travelled worldwide extensively and visited Bangkok previously; the author was not surprised by these sex workers responses as to why they work in the industry, especially in such an open adult entertainment venue such as Bangkok. However, the author was very surprised by the bravado shown and lack of embarrassment held by most sex workers, and especially how the families of these women shamelessly use and take advantage of them for financial gain. Many workers smiled about and a couple joked about the fact that these Farang can spend what the workers perceive as large amounts of money on them. All related that they do this to take care of themselves and to assist their families. A few proudly spoke of the businesses, cars, electronics and other items they have been able to purchase for their parents, children and other family members from their earnings. When the issue of disease or pregnancy was approached, most nonchalantly stated they almost always ensure their clients wear condoms.

While utilized constantly in every facet of life, internet usage for research of Bangkok's adult entertainment areas or to make prior arrangements with Bangkok sex workers was not significantly found. Most Farang interviewed came to the lower Sukhumvit area based on past experiences and knowledge. The few Farang that did utilize the internet were younger and had no or few previous trips to Bangkok. They stated that they limitedly utilized websites and forums dedicated to the Bangkok nightlife for research on where to go and could not recall the names of the sites or much of the content.

Due to the nature of the sex industry in Bangkok, it is difficult for the average person to see the inequalities in the relationships and the violations of the tenants of human security. Since many Farang still held the belief they are helping these poor women who freely chose this lifestyle and many sex workers themselves seemed to take great pride in the money they have made, the underlying issues that affect the tenants of freedom from fear, freedom want and to live in dignity are not seen or realized.

Past research on sexual behavior of male sex tourists typically paints these men as having little care or regard for the sex workers and that these men are merely focused on the consumption. While sexual consumption is the main activity these men are focused on, most portrayed a sense of ethics when the issue of trafficking and forced

prostitution was introduced into the conversation. In fact, those few interviewees who admitted to sponsoring a Thai lady or have had a long term relationship with a Thai sex worker (current or former), showed a great deal of concern and care towards the sex worker. John, a 43 year old American, comes to Thailand every three to four months for a month and was here visiting his current Thai girlfriend. John had been married once before and it was to a Thai sex worker. He was unable to get her a visa to the US and said it just didn't work out as she could not quite the life when he was back in the US. John later met and is now engaged to another Thai lady, who he says used to be a part-time sex worker, but now just works as a waitress in the bar. John fully believes she has stopped that work as she calls him every night when she finishes her shift. John went on to proudly show pictures of the items he has purchased her and talked of his plans to start a family in the US with her. As he talked about her, he was smiling and I could feel his love towards her. While men like John are not the majority of Farang sex tourists, however, there are more than past research has admitted.

Demographically, past research has categorized these Farang sex tourists as all financially secure overweight middle aged or older men who have already been divorced at least once, shamelessly grasping onto younger attractive poor helpless ladies. While the majority are financially secure overweight middle aged or older men who are currently married or have already been divorced at least once; a few of these men actually care for the sex worker and it seems the sex worker cares for little more than their money. Furthermore, there is a significant percentage of younger (under 40) and single men in lower Sukhumvit just out to party on holiday and sexual consumption is a part of that, but not the sole purpose for their trip.

This research has confirmed three points. First, most Farang are unaware of the human security concerns in the sex industry and may change their behavior only if these issues should manifest themselves in the course of patronizing a sex worker (possibly in order to avoid guilt, trouble or embarrassment). Even when human security was directly defined to these Farang tourists, many still held a rather narrow interpretation of human security, perceiving as the life these sex workers lived was not applicable to human security concerns. Second, most sex workers catering to the Farang in the lower Sukhumvit areas of Bangkok have little physical security concerns, yet have large economic burdens placed upon them by their families and their personal desire for

modern material possessions. The author observed most workers as young ladies (early twenties to mid-thirties) taking what they perceived as an easy road to escape a poverty stricken lifestyle. They portrayed themselves as lucky to be living a life whereas they did not have to work a regular job and made more money than most other Thai women.

A few of these sex workers seemed to give the impression that the ladies who preferred to live a regular lifestyle free from the sex industry, were not taking full advantage of the money that could be made in this lifestyle. Many sex workers actually smiled when recounting tales of multiple bar fines in one night and how much money they had made. A few even seemed to gloat at the gullibility of the Farang and the fact they had sponsors sending them thousands of Baht every month in order for the girls to be their “girlfriends” when these Farangs visited a few times a year. The attitude of many of these ladies, correlates directly to why many of the Farang have the perception of this type of work is purely economic gain for fast and easy money. Lastly, the more time the Farang has spent in Bangkok, the less they cared about human security issues of the sex worker. Those Farang that have many experiences in Bangkok/Southeast Asia, seemed to be numb to the issues of the sex worker and even human security concerns in general, expressing that is how things are and that one should enjoy it. Their perception of human security concerns did not correlate directly to the freedom from fear, freedom from want and to live in dignity when applied to the sex workers in lower Sukhumvit.

4.2 ANSWERS TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

4.2.1 ANSWER TO RESEARCH QUESTION 1

How do Farang tourists perceive the human security of the sex worker in Bangkok’s lower Sukhumvit area? The vast majority of male Farang tourists in Bangkok’s lower Sukhumvit area do not perceive any human security issues for the sex worker. They frequently do not arrive with the foreknowledge of the tenants of human security: freedom from fear, freedom from want and to live in dignity. Even once explained, most Farang still held a narrow interpretation and felt these tenants non applicable to these ladies. Furthermore, those with limited or no prior visits to Bangkok, are not even aware that prostitution is illegal in Thailand.

4.2.2 ANSWER TO RESEARCH QUESTION 2

And, how does this perception influence the activities that tourists participate in? Since the Farang tourist perceives the sex workers plight as only economically driven, the Farang tourist feels little sorrow, angst or guilt in partaking in the sex industry within Bangkok's lower Sukhumvit area.

The Farang interviewed all fell within three activities: those looking to pay for sex for the evening, those who stated they were only watching and enjoying the atmosphere, and those who believed they were changing the sex workers life for the better by "sponsoring" her or making her their holiday girlfriend. This correlated directly into which venues the tourists chose along lower Sukhumvit. Those looking for short term sex or just to enjoy the atmosphere tended to frequent Nana, Soi Cowboy, massage parlors, and impromptu street bars along the road. Those who were meeting their sponsored girlfriends or looking to meet a holiday girlfriend, typically chose nicer restaurants with bars or small quiet bars on the Soi's off Sukhumvit.

4.3 ANSWERS TO RESEARCH SUBQUESTIONS

4.3.1 ANSWER TO RESEARCH SUBQUESTION 1

Do Farang tourists understand/or care about the issues of human security such as forced prostitution and have they encountered any sex workers they felt were trafficked or unwillingly engaging in the adult entertainment industry? The Farang interviewed did state they had not encountered any sex workers whom they perceived as being forced, trafficked or physically abused into performing sex work. Most Farang interviewed stated they would leave should they encounter a situation whereas they perceived the sex worker was being forced into sex work, with the majority of those stating they would report such to the authorities.

4.3.2 ANSWER TO RESEARCH SUBQUESTION 2

Did the tourist conduct any prior research or have prior experience in Bangkok which should have enlightened them on human security issues of the sex worker and did this influence their behavior, activities and decision making process? Many of the Farang interviewed had prior experience in Bangkok, those that had considerable

experience portrayed less care for the human security for the sex worker. The few who did conduct any prior research into Bangkok's adult entertainment industry, merely looked at forums, blogs and websites offering advice and advertisements for various bars, go-go bars, clubs and discos. No Farang interviewed stated that their prior research contained any information as to the human security issues of the sex worker.

4.4 HYPOTHESES ANSWERED

“Once aspects of human security are understood, a small portion will abstain, a portion will become aware and report future violations and a large portion will portray little immediate behavior modification.” No portion of the Farang interviewed stated they would abstain or that they were changing their plans for the evening once the topic of human security was introduced and explained. The majority of Farang interviewed did become cognizant of human security issues and stated they would report to authorities if they encountered a situation whereas they perceived the sex workers as being forced into prostitution. However, the majority of Farang interviewed still did not fully understand the tenants of human security and kept the belief that the sex workers in lower Sukhumvit had no human security concerns.

Due to actions and attitudes portrayed by the sex worker, these men held fast in their convictions that they were doing nothing to hamper the human security of the sex worker and that they were actually assisting the sex worker by providing monetary compensation in order to uplift the worker's lifestyle. The sex workers did not outwardly express or portray any lacking of dignity, instead some even portrayed a superior demeanor for easily taking the Farang's money, which directly correlates into the Farangs perception when he sees and senses this attitude.

The Farang and sex workers both portrayed that they truly believe that these are mutually beneficial arrangements. Because of these beliefs, a true understanding of the tenants of human security of freedom from fear, freedom from want and to live in dignity was never realized, thus it was never thoughtfully applied to the situation of the sex workers by the Farang. Without this realization and application, the Farang visitors to Bangkok will not perceive this lacking of human security tenants and will continue their actions.

4.5 RECOMMENDATION

In order to ensure Farang visitors to Bangkok are cognizant and informed of the sex workers rights, human security concerns and the illegalities concerning prostitution in Thailand: informative messaging campaigns must be implemented enlightening the visitor and encouraging reporting of any perceived issues. A delineation must be made in these messaging campaigns for the Farang tourists to understand human security is more than forced prostitution. These campaigns must be endorsed and enforced by the Thai government.

Furthermore, these young sex workers need to be thoroughly educated on the hazards of the industry and their rights and methods to ensure their safety, as well as given counselling to ensure they are planning for their future.

Most importantly, prostitution must be addressed in Thai culture itself. It is fully understandable for a single mother do take whatever means in order to feed and shelter her children. However, prostitution seems acceptable, welcomed and at times recommended by family members for the poor country girls to come to the city to make big money as prostitutes in order to support not only their parents and children, but often even extended family. This is not acceptable. Often these women provide so much to their families, that family members begin to stop working and then even expect even more from the young lady who is selling her body in order to support their laziness and/or greed. Everyone ignores how the money came, which could be a source of shame, instead they take pride in the amounts of money being made and the things it has bought. Financial wealth is highly looked upon in Thai society, as in many societies, and these sex workers and their families cherish that money and the respect that it brings, more than the sex workers' health and dignity. Even after basic living needs are satisfied; it is considered much more important to have the large amounts of money, the newest cell phones and fashions, and the prestige of looking wealthy vice the method by which all this came. Most of the sex workers interviewed seemed to brag and beam with pride as they recalled the sums of money given to and items purchased for family members with their sexual earnings.

As many of these women stem from the countryside of Thailand, education and smart messaging campaigns must be directed to the countryside outlining how wrong it is for a young lady to sell her body in order to indulge their family members in greed.

These messages could then portray how the sex worker ends up poor, diseased and alone because their family is now mad at her once the money stopped rolling in because she became too old or too diseased to make what she used to and they were accustomed to spending that amount. These campaigns must be endorsed and enforced by the Thai government. Once the source of pride in making large amounts of money from the Farang is removed and replaced by the stark realities of how things often turn out, many young women will reconsider getting into the sex industry.

4.6 SUMMARY

While issues of human security are not immediately apparent in the Farang frequented areas of Bangkok's lower Sukhumvit, most Farang tourists are unaware of the negative possibilities associated with the sex worker's security. Once the Farang became informed and cognizant of the human security elements of sex workers, they typically stated that they would pay closer or more attention to the situation the worker is in and would report any encounters with what they perceived as forced sex workers, however, they are not going to change their plans, as they are out enjoying their limited time in Bangkok before departing Thailand.

These Farang still held a narrow interpretation of human security concerns when applied to the sex workers in lower Sukhumvit, due to the actions, attitudes and behaviors of the sex workers themselves. In fact, many Farang felt that since these liaisons were obtained by consent and leading to a win-win situation for both parties, thus their actions were actually helping the ladies' situation. The sex workers interviewed all relayed their reasoning for this type of work as being economically driven, while a few also portrayed themselves as superior for being smart enough to take this easy money from the Farang. This noticeable attitude correlates directly to why most of these Farang still felt these women are out to make fast and easy money vice lacking in the tenants of human security.

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APPENDIX



จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย
CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

VITA

Growing up in the rural American Midwest, I was always enamored by foreign cultures and dreamed of seeing the world. Excelling at sports in school and my desire to travel, plus coming from a poor family, the military seemed like the perfect option for me. I joined at the age of 17, left home and began to see more of the U.S. and the world. Completing my Bachelor's degree at nights and weekends gave me a sense of accomplishment and the dedication to accomplish tasks no matter how dauntless they seem. I had gotten married and had a daughter, then after graduating college and serving over ten years, I decided it was time for a new challenge and exited the U.S. military.

Working in the corporate world for four years taught me many things, most importantly, that I prefer a challenge, not a mundane career and I desire to continuously being immersed in foreign cultures. I returned to the U.S. military and began to deploy and serve in locales throughout the world. Enjoying the travel, adventure, experiencing different cultures and meeting new people; I decided that upon completing my service, I would move overseas and pursue graduate studies.