

# Transnational marriage: Thai migrants and foreigners<sup>1</sup>

Sutin Saisanguan

Researcher, Institute of East Asian Studies, Thammasat University

---

## Abstract

A transnational marriage, or an international marriage, is a marriage between two people from different countries. It is a by-product of the movement and migration of people. Currently, there are around 300,000 Thai women emigrants married to foreign men. Its trend is increased. The objectives of this study were to investigate demographic variables and socio-economic status of transnational marriage Thai migrants (TMTMs); and to examine the impact of cross-cultural marriage on the migrants, community and society as a whole. Research methodology was qualitative method. Both documentary and structured & in-depth interview 5 case studies were employed. Descriptive analysis was performed. Findings were (1) the majority of these TMTMs were women, adulthood, had primary schooling, previously married Thai men but divorced them; had a child prior married to their foreign husbands who paid them a monthly income, and, an economic stability and a quality of life concerned were common reasons why they got the marriage; however, the minority of these women were single, well educated, met their spouse at work or closed relations and have their own income; and also, (2) TMTMs' quality of life and high income due to the marriage create the social bonds of reciprocity. The 5 case studies reveal the same pattern as literature reviewed. Societies are now face with intensifying debates on the pros and cons of transnational marriage, however. The finding suggested that not only the TMTMs but also population at risk should be accessed needed information and tangible measures to improve QOL. To exchange information

---

<sup>1</sup> This article is the brief of the research on Transnational marriage: Thai migrants and foreigners. The project of research has supported by the Institute of East Asian Studies, Thammasat University, 2011.

among governments, NGOs, the media, and UN agencies was a key factor. Both research and investigative journalism can contribute to improve governance.

**Keywords:** Transnational marriage; International marriage; International couple;  
Cross-cultural marriage; Cross-cultural wedding; Intercultural marriage

---

## I Introduction

*Que.: "I have problems with my foreign husband due to causes of many difficulties, intention to separate. Could you give me some advices on the right in the case of marriage registry under the laws of Thailand? Ans.: The cases of divorce problems regarding to the Laws of Thailand, are as follows...etc." (Office of International Peoples' Rights Protection-OIPRP, 2009. p. 13)... "Nowadays, there are many Thai people in various countries. Majority of them go to foreign lands to work as labor workers, employees in various businesses, housekeepers, or some of them run retail shops or do businesses. Some are married or living as spouse with foreigners. And many of them had faced with legal issues, etc.... Office of the Attorney General realized the importance of the above issues, and had*

*ordered to set the OIPRP to protect the rights and provide legal assistance for the Thai people and those foreigners." (OIPRP, 2009. p.3)*

The description, shown above, reflected both problems and contribution of a governmental sector. This article was concern about how Thai women migrants married foreigners has increased dramatically and its consequences. The contents are as follows; introduction, background & statement of problems, objectives, literature review, methodology, results & discussions, and conclusion & recommendations.

## II Background & Statement of Problems

In general, the factor affected Thai women migrants married foreigners was economic motivation. But transnational marriage have complicated reasons. There

are a lot of Thai women married foreigners and its trend is increased. In 2010, it was estimated that there were more than 300,000 Thai women married foreigners. And they live in various countries over the world. With the help of globalization- the worldwide spread (of information) that anyone lived in any place of this world community could perceive, touch or be affected by incidents quickly and broadly - encourages people of all races, all languages around the world to have social network easily, fast and it is economical, including roles of transnational Medias, information technology, and online internet<sup>i</sup> social website and so on. It is seen that currently there are about a million people with Thai race/ nationality have resided in various countries around the world, such as approximately 250,000 people in the United States of America, 70,000 people in Taiwan, 50,000 people in Germany, and 40,000 people in Japan etc. Meanwhile tourists from international worldwide travelled in Thailand more than 10 million people per year in the last decade. Whereas Thai tourists, including businessmen, entrepreneurs, labors, students, and governmental staffs, go abroad annually. As the mentioned above,

whether it could say in overall that any women and men around the world have the opportunity to flirt, choose his or her spouse, or step into the cycle of family life every day and everywhere, and how? This article aims to answer two questions: 1) how demographic and socio-economic statuses of Thai migrants married foreigners are, and 2) how the socio-economic impacts are.

### III Objectives

The objectives of this study were: (1) to investigate demographic variables and socio-economic status of TMTMs; and (2) to examine the socio-economic impact. It is to be hope that the findings of this research may be used as supportive information in the There were around 1,800 million people used internet worldwide and approximately 19 million people were internet users in Thailand which was the 25<sup>th</sup> in the rank of this world in the year 2009. Communication via the internet is the one of channels to promote international marriages increasingly, including the marriages of TMTMs. training of social sciences, such as sociology, demography, criminology, social psychology, and social work etc., including in the course of family

demography, family changing, transnational migration of woman labors with reproductive ages etc. It may motivate all stakeholders to realize involvement of possible suggests in practical measures to prevent and resolve adverse effects, such as doing real estate business of foreigners hidden in transnational marriage, the flow of consumerism and materialism through simulating behavior of cross-cultural spouse could be victims of crime etc. As the result of the findings, this will lead to policy recommendations in possible practice and to strengthen good citizens.

#### IV Literature Review

A good marriage is created with a profound sense in value, purpose of life together and standing side by side to face this world (Thongrungrroj, 2004, p. 128). In sociology, human was born with society because by nature human cannot stay alone, they must live together as community, have relationship as well as interdependence under the same regulations, and be as family, community and society. Family is a very significant institution of humans. The cycle of family life starts from courtship, choosing spouse, marriage, nurturing children until they grow

up, separate and have their new families, and finally, the end of its cycle is the death of spouse or divorce. And it also depends on society, value, culture and traditions of the various nations (Vasikasin & Haemaprasit, 2002, pp. 3-4)

The cross-cultural marriage, or transnational marriage, means the marriage<sup>ii</sup> of woman and man who comes from different traditions, different cultures, different races, different religions, and different local or different countries. The transnational marriage may be occurred due to transnational migration, industrial development, process of becoming an urban society, calling and travelling to see each other, temporary visit, or living in other countries because of study, work, travelling, holidays, political asylum, or relocation of immigrant family etc. (Sue, Lung & Chen, 2011). Those conditions may cause the close affinities and then lead to courtship and choose spouse etc. as in the cycle of family life, and macro-level factors influenced the increased number of transnational marriage more; including globalization made the world to become as one village, transnational media, transportation, information

technology. Aforesaid factors support people to contact each other worldwide easily, quickly and economical. In additions, the other factors are international tourism and business related to the spread of culture, international values such as value of democracy, values of human rights, and values of gender equality etc.

The spread of international values such as awareness of the inequality of female due to gender determined by social or cultural condition to act the role of woman or man, the values are extremely significant to change relationship of family in some societies unexpectedly; including women do not work chores anymore in some societies, voluntarily remain single, delayed marriage, and rate of divorce is increased (Weeks, 2005, pp. 409-410). As a result, some societies have to import foreign women from developing countries to do chores considered as the household tasks of married woman who is his wife. And then, there are businesses of dating companies, matchmaker agencies or others that man can order from them to import transnational wife or bride from oversea. And since the 1970s it was seen that transnational brides or wives via postal

services migrated from developing countries, such as Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, and Thai etc. for transnational marriage of foreigners lived in industrial countries; such as U.S.A., Canada, and in Europe; such as Germany etc. Later 1990s, the import wives via postal services were expanded to new industrial countries; including Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore (Kawaguchi & Lee, 2012; Pirazzi & Vasant, 2004). In the same time, the needs of transnational labor both men and women are increased in the new industrial countries. As a result, woman labors from developing countries are pushed to transnational labor markets given opportunity for the labor both men and women to have relationship with different cultural men and women in workplaces, and then it can lead to transnational marriage (Prompukping, 2011; Lapanun, 2010). It could be seen that there were many transnational marriages in advances industrial countries, such as South Korea. During the years 1990 – 2004, there were 197,634 cases of transnational marriages or about 3.5 percent of the total marriages: 5,568,489 cases and the number were increased 4,710 cases compared with the

year 1990 (1.2 percent of the total marriages). And in the year 2004, it was increased to 35,447 cases (11.4 percent of the total marriage). Similarly, during the year 1993 – 2009 in United Kingdom the total number of migrated spouses from different culture was increased around 30,000 cases compared with the year 1992, and later it was about 80,000 cases in 2009 (Charsley, et. al., 2011)

*Transnational migration of Thai people married a foreigner:* It was found that women preferred to marry foreigners, including German (50,000 people), French (30,000 people), American (30,000 people only from California State), English (10,000 people) and Taiwanese (8,000 people). However, the period of 1961 – 1970 there were approximately 5,000 Thai people migrated to settle in the United States and the proportion of women to men was 3 to 1. Those of them consisted of wives of American soldiers who stationed at a military base of the U.S. located in Thailand during the Cold War for Indo-China War as well as the soldiers rested at tourism location in Thailand, and professionals, especially physicians and registered nurses, businessmen, and entrepreneurs. And later, there were many types of Thai

women travelled to the Federal Republic of Germany for sex services, marriages, or other works. It was expected that those Thai women used the method of marrying German for transnational migration since 1975 and it was increased every year. In 1996, there were total 23,870 Thai women resided legally in Germany (Juntavanich, et. al., 1999; Lapanun, 2006). And afterward, in 2006 the total of Thai people who lived in this country were 49,952 consisted of 42,952 female, and 7,143 male. Especially, in the period of 1993 – 2003 Thai women was the first rank of Asian countries that women married Germans (Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, 2006, pp. 7-8). In addition, during the years 1980 – 2000 there were more than 80 percent of Thai-American citizens who were migrants settled in the U.S. and increased from 45,000 people (1980) to be around 111,000 people (2000). And particularly, in 2000 Thai migrants who moved to the U.S. were 40% male and 60% female. Roughly, 1 over 3 of women was spouses of American soldiers (Hidalgo & Bankston, 2010). From a survey of the Office of the Nation Economic and Social Development identified that a period of years 2003 –

2004 there were not less than 15,284 Thai women from North-east of Thailand travelled to oversea for marrying foreigners especially Europeans and Americans (Vanichavaroj, 2004). The findings from the study of Vongthanavasut, Nivasavat and Nuntabutra (2005) were as follows; the average age of Northeast women married foreigners was about 35 years and more than 70% of them finished grade 4. At the same time, there was still a group married Thai men previously but divorced them, and majority of these women had a child of the family. And then, they started their new lives with foreign husbands, especially Europeans such as German, British and Scandinavians. For the age of foreigners with whom Northeast women preferred to marry, the average age was 50 – 60 years upward, and the average income was around 600,000 Baht per month.

As a result of transnational marriage of Thai and foreigners, there were pros and cons as follows; Thai migrants who married foreigners remitted to their home, such as in the period of 2003 – 2004 there were remittances of the cases of Northeast Thai women married foreigners, the average remittance was more than 122 million Baht per month or about 1,464

million Baht per annum (Vanichavarot, 2004) etc. These remittances enhanced the economic status and upgraded well-being of their families, and created their good image of being foreigners' wives or having Caucasian husbands likewise some provinces in Northeast, such as people in Srisaket province would celebrated Thai blessing ceremony to welcome "Caucasian son-in-law". This ceremony was set to be annual event in each year, such as in March 2007. International spouses of Thai women and Caucasian husbands will be invited to join this ceremony. The wrist-binding ceremony "Caucasian son-in-law" is honored by the province. It is shown that the Caucasian sons-in-law are the important persons for the province because the benefits from their remittances make Thailand have economic growth. Although transnational labors worked in overseas have remitted quite a lot back to Thailand as well, but they never had such the honor or they were not invited to the ceremony from the province same as the Caucasian sons-in-law (Prompakping, et. al., 2005, p.1). The other hand, some of Thai migrants married foreigners got failure, disappointment, suffering, problems and they asked for help such as illegal

transnational migration, transnational human trafficking, various transnational crimes, and disguise marriage etc. Sometimes the cross-cultural marriages of Thai migrants and foreigners are used as a strategy for other purposes such as migration for working overseas, disguise agent i.e. disguise spouse married with Thai people who is right of land ownership, whereas the rights of land benefits or real estate still belong to the foreigners (Potananichom, 2011) etc., and those events occurred instead of the marriage that was built to be a family as an oldest social institution and essential existence of human society. In addition, some of them got stress due to adjustment in daily life, communication, language, culture and unfamiliar environment, such as cold weather, pollen allergies, depression etc. The accumulated stress could cause problems with foreigners and lead to quarrel until assault and divorce finally. Some foreign husbands want only children, and then the problems of divorce raised and they sued their wives for divorce and took legal proceeding, and so on. It was seen that there were pros and cons for transnational marriage, and it was a complex phenomenon affected people and

society widely at both national and international levels. Therefore, it should do research on cross-cultural marriage continually and all aspects of the marriage to apply the findings of the study to be various options for developing country.

## V Methodology

Data collection was taken from secondary data and case studies with in-depth interviews by structured interview. The method was started with literature review to get an overview of the phenomenon, and then case studies were recruited to be representatives covered the studied variables. The data was collected by in-depth interviews with a structure interview that allowed the interviewees to express their opinions and sharing freely. And the criteria of selected documents for the research related with the purposes was accuracy and reliable of the documents. So, the documents could be used as representatives of the population, and they were recruited with clear and understanding, including essence conclusion and implications. The case studies of this research were spouses of Thai migrants married foreigners. The Thai informants were migrants who resided or



used to live with foreign spouses more than 1 year counted from the date of interview. There were 5 cases joined in this study. The research design of the in-depth interview was a structured interview or guideline of questions which consisted of questions about background of the spouse including age, marital status, educational level, and occupation; questions about the marriage to foreigners including how to know her foreign husband, her husband's nationality, her husband's age, occupation, the highest of educational level, the main factors affecting the decision making to marry, marital status, how many children, sponsorship of husband, and the questions about changes after marriage, including occupation, income, property, career, adjustment and participation in the community activities. The data was analyzed by descriptive analysis.

## VI Results and Discussions

The related literature review and 5 case studies of this research could answer the research questions and achieve all purposes. The research found about (1) demographic characteristics, socio-economic status of Thai migrants had cross-cultural marriage with foreigners and

(2) the socio-economic impacts on the Thai migrants. The conclusions were, as follow;

*Demographic and Socio-economic Status:* Key findings from *literature review* are *summarized* that TMTMs could be classified into 3 groups, regarding to the table 1, group 1, Thai wife were under 35 years old who usually were single, graduated with bachelor degree, had just completed degree, were looking for job, needed to further study, or make a living in overseas or started to work. Their foreigner-husband- ages were similar, and their decisions making on marrying foreigners were closeness and sense of deeply impression. There were many channels of Thai migrants married foreigners, including self-contact, meeting at workplace or academic institution, parent roles in making decision and wedding ceremony. Group 2 were 35 – 44 years of age and most of them were widows with children. They had burdens of taking care parents and raising their children. Their educational levels were primary school, and their family backgrounds came from rural area. Before marrying foreigners, they worked in agricultural sector or secondary labor markets, such as working in restaurant,

housekeepers, hair dressers etc. So, they were labors, transnational woman labors, insufficient incomes and burdens. Whereas their foreigner husbands were aged retirement, very different age, and it might

be likewise being rented wife or American soldier's wife in the period of Vietnam War, 1960s or wife via postal services in 1980s.

**Table1:** Cross-cultural spouse between Thai wife and foreigner husband by age

		Husband (Foreigner)		
		< 35 yrs	>35 yrs	>35 yrs
Wife (Thai)	age < 35 yrs; Education: Bachelor	Group 1	-	-
	age 35- 45yrs; Education: almost Under Bachelor	-	Group 2	-
	age >45 yrs; Education: Bachelor and higher	-	-	Group 3

Source: *Summarized from literature review*

And the last, group 3, were Thai women aged 45 years and above. Their educational levels were usually bachelor degree and higher. They had security jobs, regular incomes, professionals, or some of them were known in the society or they were Thai who lived with family in overseas, and some of them were born in foreign countries. Therefore, they often met their spouses during study abroad, doing research, field trips in overseas, business which had to contact with foreigners,

travelling abroad, or being professionals in a foreign country or between countries. In additions, they might be introduced to their spouses by relatives or friends, seeking via internet, or dating companies.

#### *Data Analysis from Case Studies:*

The findings were in brief, Table 2, as follows;

*Gender and Age:* 5 Thai cases studies were all female. During interviewing, they were 27 – 30 years old

and their marriage period was 2 – 15 years.

Age at marriage were 24 – 32 years .

**Table 2** Spouses of case studies: age and period of their marriage

Case Study Thais	Current Age		Age at marriage with a foreigner husband		Period of marriage (years)
	Thai wife (years)	Foreign husband (nationality, years)	Thai wife (years)	Foreign husband (years)	
1 Mrs A	50	Japanese, 65	35	50	15
2 Mrs B	27	Japanese, 29	25	27	2
3 Mrs C	32	American, 40	24	32	8
4 Mrs D	42	English, 76	34	68	8
5 Mrs E	27	Norwegian , 26	25	24	2

Source: Research's Analysis

*Marital status, occupation before-after marriage, and number of children with foreign husband:* For the case studies, 4 cases were single before marrying foreigners, and 1 case was widow with one child: Mrs. D. There were 3 cases that had regular incomes during in Thailand as well as before marriage- Mrs. A, Mrs. D & Mrs. E. The other two, Mrs. B studied foreign language in Australia and Mrs. C worked in

the project of cultural exchange in the U.S.

For Mrs. A and Mrs. E, each of them has one child with her foreign husband, whereas the rest of them have no child yet. The case of Mrs. D, it is sure that she has definitely no child with her husband who is now 76 years.

*Information about foreign spouse:*

Mrs. A's and Mrs. B's husband are Japanese. Both Mrs. A and Mrs. B graduated bachelor's degree, and worked

as employees of Japan Company. Both of them were close and knew their husbands at the workplaces. They were deeply impressed their husbands who were smart and security economic status. While Mrs. C's husband is American who has Master in accounting and lawyer, and is rich. She was close and impressed deeply her husband. She wished to make a living in oversea as well. Mrs. D's husband is Scottish whose aged 76 years. Due to his sincere effort, keeping on meet her for the needs to have her to take cares him during elderly, so that she married to him because of her gratitude. And, Mrs. E, her husband is a European with Norwegian ethnically. He graduated with a bachelor's degree. His career is an employee of a company. Pattern or channel to know each other was near by the workplace, and the main factors affected her decision to marry him were his handsome, similar age and living in oversea.

Either literature review or case studies reveal that the main reasons affected Thai women migrants' decisions to marry the foreigners were expectations of economic security and upgrade their living standards. There are many channels of the process of their marriage, as follows: self-

contact, meeting at workplace or tourist attraction, and being introduced by their relatives and friends had relationship with foreigners. For their parents, they did not involve the decisions, just only perception of their marriages. They did not pay attention for wedding ceremony, only emphasized the legal marriage. They expected incomes and upgrade their living standard from their foreign husbands. And the western husbands did not mention their backgrounds, chastity of women, and they treated their Thai wives with respect their woman dignities and had responsibilities higher than Thai man husbands. In additions, there are some Thai women impressed on marrying to foreigners because of neighbors. While most of foreign husbands understand their wives' responsibilities to help their parents and relatives, and they realize how their differences are but they still need their wives to take care them during their elderly. In rural Thai society the marriage of spouse with very different age is common, and in the case of foreigner married Thai woman is the benefit of the women's family. Majority of the elderly who divorced and lost their wives due to passing away feel loneliness, and they are

fulfilled by Northeast or Isaan community. The relationship of both sides complements each other, or it should say that the western husband with elderly adulthood expects to be served, have cares from gentle Asian wife who is follower, and pleases him while Thai wife expects economic security, and upgrade income, living standard in material including upward mobility of social class.

*Economic and Socio-Cultural Impacts:* Regarding to literature review and case studies, the economic and socio-cultural impacts of Thai migrant's marriage to community and Thai society in overall could be summarized as follows;

*Economic Impact:* After marriage, there were many significant changes in household material resources. Majority of women married to foreigners has got regular incomes from their husbands. Due to the marriage, the flow of revenues is increased, and affect to other resources as well. The main reasons of the cross-cultural marriage of women are economic aspect and focus on upgrade economic status from marrying foreigners according to the attitude- "To be married to a foreigner will upgrade the living standard". Their expectations are to raise their incomes and

to upgrade their living standards. In addition, some provinces have got governmental funds to support activities such as many hundred transnational couples were invited to join in the traditional ceremonies which were formed by province and villagers, and then the ceremonies were organized in the village as the center of the community. The research on the life of Thai women in overseas by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development stated that in the period of year 2003 – 2004, there were more than 15,284 Isaan (Northeast) Thai women married foreigners, particularly Europeans and Americans. And those women remitted in average more than 122 million Baht per month or around 1,464 million Baht per year to Thailand (Vanichavarot, 2004).

*Social Impact of Acceptance Caucasian Son-in-Law:* The family members of women had cross-cultural marriage or relatives in community encouraged the women to marry due to the significant economic. For the cases of Isaan women married foreigners, majority of them finished primary school. They were poor, and they had been married including having children from the previous

marriage. While their spouses were Western men, particularly Europeans who were mostly well educated and rich. Until today, some of local communities in Thailand have accepted increasingly to enter the context of migration of woman labor as well as the upgrade of economic status and society of the Thai women after marrying foreign husbands (Vongthanavas, et. al., 2005).

*Some cases were victims of crime:* Due to being blind to the situation, the cross-cultural spouse may sometimes become “disguise agent” who means legal representative may be as a man or juristic person instead of an agent who could not do the legal act legally or aims to avoid the law, for example, Thai spouse who is a holder of ownership rights in property in Thailand or establishes a company to hold shares on instead of a foreign spouse for keeping status as a Thai person. So, the authority in administration or dominant enterprise still belongs to the foreigner (Potavanich, 2011).

*Impact on Thai Society in overall:* In the past, the overall of Thai women who married foreigners were poor and did not usually disclose them because they thought that they would be looked down as

a mistress, a rented wife, or a concubine.

At present, however the overall of Thai women who married foreigners are brave to fight and have challenges in lives, including being ready to face the future that is different from the original. In additions, they brave to break the tradition, culture, beliefs and habits, and they feel that they are valuable (Ngamvun, 2005).

The 5 case studies of Thai women who faced problems of cross-cultural marriage were, as follows; 1) Thai woman married a New Zealander had two children. She disappeared after coming back to visit Thailand; 2) Thai woman married a Greek, and then moved to live with husband's family in Athens. She was forced to work as labor and was not allowed to go out from the house for more than 5 years. After that, the Embassy of Thailand helped her and sent her back to Thailand; 3) Thai woman married Japanese, and everything was fine in the period of 2 first years of their marriage. And later, her husband did not work, and forced her to work as sex worker at night until she got HIV infection. The Embassy of Thailand sent her back to Thailand; 4) Thai woman married a retired Swedish and they lived in Thailand. Later, her husband got sick with elderly and

cancer. Thai wife looked after him very good until he passed away. She paid for the cost of medical treatment more than 1.5 million Baht but she could get reimburse from the medical benefits only 200,000 Baht; And, the last, Thai woman and her Pakistan boyfriend were cheated to travel and stay at hotel in Hong Kong, and then her boyfriend disappeared. She had not money to pay the hotel cost. Consulate General of Thailand sent her back to Thailand.

#### *Results of Case Study Analysis:*

The changes and adjustment after marriage, the findings were, as follows; Mrs. A had to leave her job, and to do house work, take care and serve children as well as husband, in the same way Mrs. D had to stop her business to take care husband. Whereas Mrs. B, Mrs. C and Mrs. E still worked because they had just married, were still young and in the working age. It is obvious that everyone established family, the security properties were supported by their husbands, and they had to adjust themselves to language, culture and living after migration to overseas which were domicile of husbands except Mrs. B moved back to live in Thailand.

## **VII Conclusions & Recommendations**

*In conclusion, the main factors affected TMTMs are, including economic motivation, family debt, failure of marriage, beginning of new life, simulation and value.* The most popular group 2, 35 – 44 years of age, almost of them were widows with children, had burdens to raise children and parents, finished primary school, and their family backgrounds came from rural area. While foreign husbands were retired and they need someone to take care of them in elderly. Likewise group 2, most of them was aged men who divorced or their wives passed away. So, they felt loneliness, and they expected their Thai women to take care and serve him during his elderly. For Thai women, they expected the security life, spent their lives in foreign countries, and they were excited as well as they relax during their appropriate age. It is clear in the case study of Mrs. D who is now 42 years and is widow with children. She was a migrant got married to Scottish, and then followed husband to live in oversea to serve and take care of her husband with 76 years. The next question was in her own family in Thailand; her mother was 64 years, and who looked after

her parents. The answer was whether her sibling was the person. Finally, Mrs. D was the person who was sponsor in finances, felt proud to do that, built the properties, was pride of family, but she had to be far away from her old mother and lived in the other part of this world. If to compare with the quality of life, mother lived in Thailand could not the elderly benefits enough from Thai government, whereas social welfare from government provided for foreigners was perfect. If it was imaginary that Mrs. D's husband passed away, how she continued her living in abroad or came back to Thailand. Whatever she chose, Thai society got impact both directly or indirectly. That issue may be the issue of discussion, analysis, critics, or research further.

*Transnational marriage is pros and cons, success and failure.* If the society choose to perceive [Some information is perceived due to selection (selective perception), so people tend to select to perceived only the interested or related information and ignore the information that they are not interested even though it is benefits for them. That is one of error perception], particular the spouses who are successful or extend

positive outcome aim only the excellent result, and then they ignore the failure. Due to the impacts which are not considered to cover all aspects, the reality of image or overall picture can be distorted. And then, it can lead to values that do not relate to the reality, and it may cause long-term damage unexpectedly. Societies have intensified debates on the pros and cons of transnational marriage. Therefore, it should use scholarly articles as an instruction, such as the study of the guideline of preventing and assisting to protect Thai women worked in overseas (2011), the migration of Thai women to Germany: causes, living conditions and impacts for Thailand and Germany (1999) and so on, which reflected the role of social science research for developing country.

*Recommendations for implementation:* 1) Measures of continuity prevention of exploitation or exploiting the cross-cultural migrants such as orientation of Thai migrants aimed to be cross-cultural spouse, legal counseling services collaborated with NGO about wedding agreement, marriage contract, Visa regulation etc. And, 2) The exchange of information between government, NGO,



media organization and governmental sectors of various countries.

*Recommendations for further researches:* 1) Research on a secret agent who transnational spouse may involve in situation innocently, research on the real properties and the authority to make decision on transaction of properties got from transnational marriage. And also,

2) Social science research on the study of ways to strengthen the good values about family and marriage, relationship pattern of the family members of cross-cultural spouses due to the family is the oldest and significant social institution for the existence of human society.

## References

*Thai*

Federation of Thai and Foreign Spouse Networks Association of Thailand. (2010). Articles of

Federation of Thai and Foreign Spouse Networks Association of Thailand.

<http://www.thaiforeignspouse.com/Module/About/>

International Labor Office. (2007). International Labor Standards on the Rights of Migrant workers:

Guidelines for policy makers and practitioners in Asia and Pacific. Bangkok.

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/library/download/pub08-01.pdf>

Juntavanich, S.; Ratanaoran-Mixz, P.; Ruankaew, P.; Nitayanunta. S.; and Khemkruit, A. (1999).

*A Study of the migration of Thai women to Germany: causes, living conditions and impacts for*

*Thailand and Germany.*Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press.

Lapanun, P. (2006). Dynamics and Research Approaches: A Study of Cross-Cultural Marriage of Women

in Esaan Society. *Journal of Mekong Societies.* 2 (3), 1 – 33

Lapanun , P.; Mettarikanon, D.; and Apichartvullop, Y. (2008). Cross-cultural Marriage: A Study of

Knowledge. Khon Kaen: Center for Research on Plurality in the Mekong Region, Khon Kaen University.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Protection of

- the Interests in Thailand and Abroad, the Consular Isaan Department of the Embassy, Seoul, (2012). Think carefully before marrying a South Korean.  
<http://protectthaicitizen.blogspot.com/2012/10/blog-post.html>
- Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, (2006). *Survey, Compilation, Synthesis and Interpretation of Literature Related to the Issues of Human Trafficking in the Federal Republic of Germany*. Bangkok: Bureau of Standards Social Development and Human Security.
- Ngamvan , S. (2005). *Thesis on Dynamic of stereotype of Thai women's who married the foreigners*.  
Master of Arts Program in Women's Studies. Graduate Volunteer. Thammasat University.
- Office of the Attorney General, Office of International Peoples' Rights Protection (OIPRP). (2008). *Law should be known for Thai married foreigners*. Bangkok: Department of Peoples' Rights Protection and Legal Aid.
- Potavanich.Piyanuch. (2011). *Disguise Agent. Research Report*. Submitted to Office of the Ombudsman Thailand.  
<http://www.ombudsman.go.th/10/documents/public/Apreport.pdf>.
- Prompakping , B.; Plonbumrung, A.; Prompakping, N.; and BoonJua, S. (2006). *Cross-cultural Marriage of Rural Women in Isaan*. Research Report. Submitted to Office of the National Culture.
- Punvanich, K. (2004, June 4). Import Husband: To Create Deviate Cultural Values. *Matichon*, p. 310.
- Supap , S. (1993). *Society and Culture: Values, Family, Tradition*. Bangkok: Thaiwattana Panich.
- Thongrungrroj , J. (2004). *Art of Living*. Bangkok: Ruam Duay Chauy Kun Press.
- Vanichavarot, D. (2004). *Life of Thai Women in Abroad. Research Report*. Office of the Northeast Economic and Social Development. Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board.
- Vasikasin, V. and Haemaprasit, S. (2002). (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). *What does Thai society expected women?*

- Bangkok: Thammasat University Press.
- Vongthanavasu, S.; Nivasavat, V.; and Nuntabutra, K. (2005). *Impact on Marriage Migration on the Family in Northeastern Thailand*, Khon Kaen: Prathamakhun Press.
- English*
- Charsley, K., Hear, N.V., Benson, M., & Storer-Church, B. (2011). Marriage-related migration to the UK. Home Office. Occasional Paper 96.
- Hidalgo, D. A. & Bankston, C.L. (2010). Blurring Racial and Ethnic Boundaries in Asian American Families: Asian American Family Patterns, 1980-2005. *Journal of Family Issues* 31: 280-300.
- Kawaguchi, D. & Lee, S. (2012). *Brides for Sale: Cross-Border Marriages and Female Immigration*. Harvard Business School. Working Paper, 12-082. [http://eprints.lib.hokudai.ac.jp/dspace/bitstream/2115/20498/1/KULP\\_RANGTHONG.pdf](http://eprints.lib.hokudai.ac.jp/dspace/bitstream/2115/20498/1/KULP_RANGTHONG.pdf)
- Sue, B.C., Lung, F.W. & Chen, C.H. (2011). Mental health of female foreign spouses in transnational marriages in southern Taiwan. *BMC Psychiatry* 2011, 11:4. <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-244X/11/4/>
- Weeks, J. R. (2005). *Population: An introduction to concepts and issues*. (9th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

---

<sup>1</sup> June 30, 2012, there were around 2,400 million people used internet worldwide and approximately 20 million people were internet users in Thailand. (<http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm> ; <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats3.htm>) Communication via the internet is the one of channels to promote international marriages increasingly, including the marriages of TMTMs.