

## บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยนี้เป็นการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาสาเหตุและประเภทการย้ายถิ่นฐานของผู้หญิงไทยไปต่างประเทศ ตลอดจนปัญหาของผู้หญิงไทยในการย้ายถิ่นฐานไปต่างประเทศ และหาแนวทางการเตรียมความพร้อมหญิงไทยในการย้ายถิ่นฐานไปต่างประเทศ เก็บรวบรวมข้อมูลด้วยวิธีการสัมภาษณ์แบบเจาะลึก (In-depth Interview) เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัย ได้แก่ แบบสัมภาษณ์กึ่งโครงสร้าง (Semi-structured Interview Guideline) และแนวทางการสัมภาษณ์ (Interview Guideline) ทำการเลือกผู้ให้ข้อมูลสำคัญแบบเจาะจงจากผู้นำชุมชน เจ้าหน้าที่จากหน่วยงานที่เกี่ยวข้อง และผู้หญิงไทยที่จะย้ายถิ่นฐานไปต่างประเทศ จำนวน 40 ราย

ผลการวิจัยพบว่า

1) สาเหตุและประเภทการย้ายถิ่นฐานของผู้หญิงไทยไปต่างประเทศ พบว่า ผู้หญิงไทยที่ย้ายถิ่นฐานเพื่อไปประกอบอาชีพมีสาเหตุจากประเทศต้นทางคือ สภาพทางเศรษฐกิจของผู้หญิงไทย ได้แก่ มีอาชีพที่ไม่ค่อยมั่นคง มีรายได้ไม่มาก ไม่เพียงพอต่อการใช้จ่ายในชีวิตประจำวัน ไม่มีอาชีพเสริม และมีหนี้สิน มีคุณลักษณะส่วนบุคคลคือ ส่วนใหญ่เป็นโสดหรือหย่าร้าง สำเร็จการศึกษาระดับมัธยมศึกษาตอนต้นถึงระดับปริญญาตรี มีประสบการณ์ในการไปใช้ชีวิตในต่างประเทศในระยะสั้น และความสะดวก รวดเร็ว ค่าใช้จ่ายไม่สูงในการเข้าถึงข้อมูลข่าวสารต่าง ๆ ที่เกี่ยวข้อง รวมทั้งการเห็นความสำเร็จของเพื่อนหรือคนรู้จัก และค่าใช้จ่ายในการดำเนินการเพื่อการไปประกอบอาชีพในต่างประเทศไม่สูงนัก สาเหตุจากประเทศปลายทาง ได้แก่ สภาพทางเศรษฐกิจของประเทศปลายทางที่มีงานที่ให้ค่าตอบแทนสูงกว่าอาชีพในประเทศต้นทาง และการมีเพื่อนหรือคนรู้จักอาศัยอยู่ต่างประเทศ สำหรับสาเหตุของการย้ายถิ่นฐานไปต่างประเทศของผู้หญิงไทยเพื่อไปสมรสกับสามีชาวต่างชาติและอาศัยอยู่ในต่างประเทศ พบว่า สาเหตุจากประเทศต้นทางคือ สภาพทางเศรษฐกิจ ได้แก่ การประกอบอาชีพที่ไม่ค่อยมั่นคง มีรายได้ไม่สูง ไม่เพียงพอต่อการใช้จ่ายในชีวิตประจำวัน ไม่มีรายได้เสริม มีหนี้สิน มีคุณลักษณะส่วนบุคคล คือ หย่าร้างหรือโสด จบการศึกษาระดับประถมศึกษาชั้นปีที่ 4 ถึงระดับปริญญาตรี สาเหตุจากประเทศปลายทาง คือ สภาพทางเศรษฐกิจ ซึ่งจะเกี่ยวข้องกับการคาดหวังหรือได้รับความช่วยเหลือจากสามีชาวต่างชาติในด้านการเงิน และการมีเพื่อนหรือคนรู้จักอาศัยอยู่ต่างประเทศ

2) ปัญหาของผู้หญิงไทยในการย้ายถิ่นฐานไปต่างประเทศ พบว่า ผู้หญิงที่ย้ายถิ่นฐานเพื่อไปประกอบอาชีพประสบปัญหาเกี่ยวกับการสมัครงานและการได้งานทำ บริบทของกฎหมาย การใช้ภาษาในการสื่อสาร ความแตกต่างของสังคมและวัฒนธรรมของประเทศปลายทาง และปัญหาอื่น ๆ เช่น ความกังวลเกี่ยวกับการถูกหลอกจากบริษัทจัดหางาน และมีความเป็นห่วงครอบครัวในประเทศต้นทางผู้หญิงไทยที่ย้ายถิ่นฐานเพื่อไปสมรสกับสามีชาวต่างชาติและอาศัยอยู่ในต่างประเทศประสบกับปัญหา เกี่ยวกับกระบวนการ

ดำเนินการเกี่ยวกับการไปสมรสกับสามีชาวต่างชาติ ปัญหาเกี่ยวกับกฎหมาย ปัญหาเกี่ยวกับการสื่อสารรวมทั้ง ปัญหาเกี่ยวกับสังคมและวัฒนธรรม

3 ) แนวทางการเตรียมความพร้อมของหญิงไทยในการย้ายถิ่นฐานไปต่างประเทศ พบว่า ผู้หญิงไทยควรศึกษาข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับประเทศปลายทางทางการศึกษารายละเอียดของตำแหน่งงานและองค์กรที่จะไปทำงานเรียนรู้ภาษาของประเทศปลายทางเพิ่มเติมศึกษาประวัติและครอบครัวของ (ว่าที่) สามี ศึกษาที่ตั้ง และการติดต่อสถานทูตไทยประจำประเทศปลายทาง หน่วยงานที่เกี่ยวข้องควรจัดทำหลักสูตรเตรียมความพร้อมให้กับผู้หญิงไทยที่จะเดินทางไปต่างประเทศ (โดยไม่มีค่าใช้จ่าย) ปฐมนิเทศเพื่อให้คำแนะนำก่อนการเดินทางไปต่างประเทศ. และให้ความรู้เกี่ยวกับหน่วยงานที่เกี่ยวข้องเพื่อช่วยเหลือในต่างประเทศ เครือข่ายหญิงไทยในต่างประเทศควรประชาสัมพันธ์ข้อมูลเครือข่ายหญิงไทยในต่างประเทศพัฒนากลุ่มเครือข่ายทางสังคมออนไลน์ และการพัฒนา Application ให้กับผู้หญิงไทยเพื่อเตรียมความพร้อมในการย้ายถิ่นฐานไปต่างประเทศ

## Abstract

This qualitative research aims to study the causes and types of migration of Thai women abroad, and the problems of Thai women in migration abroad to find ways to prepare Thai women for immigration abroad. Data was collected by in-depth interview. The research tool was the semi-structured interview. This research, employing purposeful selection, recruited community leaders, the advisor to the municipal council, the village headman and the village headman's assistant, relevant officers, and forty Thai women who were planning to migrate overseas.

The results of the research were as follows:

**1) Causes and types of migration of Thai women to foreign countries**—the economic problems of Thai women including unstable occupation, low income insufficient for everyday living, no extra jobs, no additional income, and debts were driving factors. Most of these women were mostly single or divorced. Their education levels are between lower secondary and Bachelor's degree. Some women had experience living abroad for a short period of time. Besides their economic problems, the migration was driven by the convenient and speedy migration procedures, low fees and accessible information on migration. In addition, these women's motivation lies in the social and cognitive context in which they are engaged e.g. friends or acquaintances having a successful life after their migration overseas. The pull factors from the destination country attracting the Thai women's migration include several reasons such as the social and economic benefits of living in the destination country or having friends, relatives, or acquaintances living in the destination country. The findings revealed the main push factors of the country of origin were economic problems. This could be detailed as insecure occupation, low income, and lack of extra jobs or extra income. Moreover, they appeared to have debts. Most of these women are single or divorced. Another pull factor is the economic conditions of the destination country with higher paying jobs. Moreover, they usually know someone (e.g. friends or acquaintances) living abroad. Their level of education was generally between grade four and a Bachelor's degree. The reasons for the immigration of Thai women involve expecting or receiving help from a foreign husband in financial matters and having friends or acquaintances living abroad.

**2) Problems of Thai women in immigration**—the Thai women migrating for employment faced difficulties relating to job applications, getting jobs, understanding the

legal system, language in communication, and adaptation to the society and culture of the destination countries. Other concerns involved fear of being deceived by recruiting agencies and concern about their families in their country of origin. The Thai women who migrate to marry foreign husbands and live abroad faced the problems of complex procedures for marrying a foreign husband, legal issues, communication, and adjustment to the new society and culture.

**3) Means for preparing Thai women for immigration abroad**—it is recommended that Thai women carefully study information about the destination country and details of the position and organization that will employ them. In addition, it is essential that they learn the language of the destination country and learn about the background and family of their prospective husband prior to their migration. It is also wise to find the location, contact persons and numbers of the Thai consulate in the destination country. It is also pointed out that the relevant agencies provide (free of charge) preparation courses for Thai women who are preparing to migrate abroad. Recommended topics for the courses include orientation and giving advice before traveling abroad. As for the relevant agencies abroad, for example the Thai Women's Networks, they should provide information about their functions and the kinds of assistance they offer. Most importantly, the development of online social networking groups, help lines, and mobile applications for Thai women to prepare for immigration abroad are considered to be of great use.

## Executive Summary

This study titled “Means for Preparing Thai Women for Migration Overseas” aims to study the causes, types, and problems of immigration for Thai women who migrate abroad, as well as finding ways to prepare Thai women for immigration abroad.

This research, employing a qualitative research methodology, recruited forty key informants with purposive selection, three community leaders (the advisor to the municipal council, the village headman, and the headman’s assistant), two officer from the Khon Kaen Employment Office and the Rattana Women and Family Development Learning Center Khon Kaen Province, and thirty-five Thai women immigrating abroad (seven Thai women interested in migrating to work abroad, four Thai women interested in migrating to marry foreign men, eleven Thai women currently or formerly working abroad, and 13 women currently or formerly living abroad with foreign husbands. The data were collected through an in-depth interview on the topics set forth in the objectives of the research.

In addition, in examining the data of the research results, data from two phases were reviewed. The first phase started from the beginning of the field data collection. After collecting data, just prior to the data analysis, data validity was checked by data triangulation. The second phase was data analysis based on qualitative research methodology. The data were analyzed and interpreted in accordance with supply chain principles, as a whole. Additional data collection was administered while the additional data were verified by the informants, to complete the research purposes. For the incomplete data, more information was collected, verified by the informants, and analyzed using the Descriptive Analysis Method and the Interpretive Analysis Method.

### Research Results

The findings of the study are presented in this section, which is divided into three parts: causes, types, and difficulties of Thai women’s migration overseas, as well as figuring out how to better prepare Thai women for immigration to other countries, as described below.

#### 1. Causes and types of immigration of Thai women abroad

This section offers research findings on the reasons that motivate Thai women to migrate abroad: Type of immigration, namely migration to pursue a career abroad and migration to marry a foreign husband and live abroad.

## 1.1 Causes of immigration abroad of Thai women for occupation

The reasons for the migration of Thai women to pursue a career abroad are presented by considering the country of origin (a push factor) and the destination country (a pull factor), as the following details.

### 1. Country of Origin

The results showed that the economic conditions of Thai women are an important factor driving Thai women to decide to migrate abroad for employment. Most of these Thai women have less stable occupations, such as private or temporary workers and merchants. There is not much income from the main occupation, approximately 8,000-30,000 baht per month, which is not enough for daily expenses. They also do not have an extra job, while they have debt of approximately 420,000-3 million baht from buying a car, building a house, investing in business, spending in daily life, and tuition or child education expenses, etc. Such liabilities are apparently both formal and informal loans.

Most are single or divorced with educational backgrounds from lower secondary education to a Bachelor's degree. They have short-term experiences of living abroad in the form of student exchange or work. Most importantly, with the advancement of information technology that connects different areas and enables communication to be easy, fast, and convenient, Thai women are able to access relevant information they need about the migration. This directly influences such decisions. Moreover, the fees for the migration to overseas have become more affordable. It is estimated that migration to work abroad including airfare, accommodation, and documents is about 50,000-60,000 baht, making it possible for women to seek employment abroad. Additionally, these women perceive the success of friends or acquaintances who are working abroad, and they regard these persons as their role models and want to be successful as well.

### 2. Destination country

The results showed that the economic conditions of Thai women are also a major motivation for Thai women to decide to migrate abroad to pursue a career. Workers in agriculture, call center staff, babysitters, restaurant employees and massage instructors, etc., who receive monthly salaries of 45,000-150,000 baht and the compensation is somewhat higher than the work done in the original country. These women send 10,000-30,000 baht to their homes every month. Another important motivation is having friends or acquaintances living abroad because it is a source of information or checking information

about the job they are interested in doing and helping to build confidence when traveling to work abroad.

Concerning Thai women's preparation for working overseas, the findings revealed that the majority of them planned their trip three months to two years in advance, learning about the destination country's language, society and culture, and information about jobs. They used several media and relevant agencies to research such information.

## **1.2 The reasons for the immigration of Thai women to marry foreign husbands and live abroad**

As for the reasons for the immigration of Thai women to marry foreign husbands and live abroad, the results of the research will be presented by considering the country of origin as a push factor and the destination country as a pull factor.

### **1. Country of origin**

The results showed that the economic situation of these women was a key factor in their decision to migrate to marry a foreign husband and live in another country. In Thailand, jobs in salons and sales generate about 7,000-50,000 baht per month. With no extra income or extra job, they also have debts of approximately 90,000-150,000 baht from borrowing money from commercial banks, relatives, or acquaintances. Most of these women are divorced or single. Some of these Thai women have been married once or twice before meeting a foreign husband, while others have been in a short relationship with a foreigner (e.g. 6 months). Both debt and lack of marital success with Thai men are considered to be main reasons for their migration overseas to marry a foreign man. In fact, there are some Thai women who cited that they received love and understanding from the other party as the reason for their migration. In terms of education, these women have completed anywhere from fourth grade to a Bachelor's degree.

### **2. Destination country**

The results of the research revealed that the economic condition of the destination countries are the main pull factors for Thai women to decide to migrate abroad to marry foreign husbands and live abroad. This could be explained by their expectation to receive financial assistance from their foreign husband, whether it is to support the family or other expenses in Thailand including building a house and buying land, etc. In this study, the destination countries are Sweden, USA, Netherlands, Italy, England, Japan, France, South Korea, and Iceland. Furthermore, according to the research findings, having a friend or

acquaintance living abroad who can guide them to get to know or check information about a potential husband they want to contact and help build confidence, is another important motivation in relocating to another nation.

In preparing to marry a foreign husband and live abroad, Thai women were well prepared in terms of language, society and culture, as well as learning about social and cultural systems such as food, weather, language, culture and lifestyle (including the laws). They have ways to learn language and culture by themselves from various media such as websites, travel guidebooks, foreign language learning textbooks, and documentaries, etc. In addition, some Thai women acquire information from friends or acquaintances who married foreign husbands. Interesting topics include preparation for living abroad as well as knowledge about rights they will be eligible for as a wife of a citizen of that country.

However, most women still do not know how to proceed with their marriage abroad as their husbands do all the work. They prepare for other things such as where to obtain assistance from the Thai consulate in the destination country, how to communicate with families in Thailand for assistance, and the use of various types of social media as a means of obtaining assistance when experiencing various problems abroad.

## **2. Problems Of Thai women in immigration abroad**

In presenting research findings on the problems of Thai women immigrating abroad, type of immigration, namely immigration to pursue a career abroad and immigration to marry a foreign husband and live abroad.

### **2.1 Problems of Thai women in immigration abroad for occupation**

The results showed that Thai women who migrate abroad to pursue a career face a variety of problems, including problems with applying for and getting a job, problems in the use of language in communication, problems relating to the law, knowledge and understanding of differences in society and culture of the destination country.

#### **Problems of applying for and getting a job**

The results showed that these women did not have much of a problem with applying for or getting a job, since most of them have friends or acquaintances who work and live in the destination country, from whom they can inquire about or check relevant information. Moreover, some have used employment agencies to facilitate the process of



applying for a job abroad. These women reflected concerns about the fees associated with choosing such channels and concerns about scams by the recruiting firms they opted for.

#### **Problems in the use of language in communication**

The results of the research revealed that most of them faced problems in the use of language in communicating with employers or colleagues abroad thus requiring friends or acquaintances to assist in such communication. However, they solved the problem themselves initially by studying more foreign languages to develop skills to be able to communicate.

#### **Problems arising from the provisions of the law**

The results of the research revealed that most of these women did not face legal problems because they prepared before immigration by studying and understanding the relevant laws at some level. Nevertheless, some of these women admitted that they had been affected by the law regarding the qualifications for working abroad, making it impossible to travel to work legally and having to work illegally.

#### **Problems with knowledge, understanding, and differences of society and culture in the destination country**

The findings of the study revealed that during the initial stage of migration for occupation and residency in the destination country, the majority of these women had problems with knowledge and understanding of differences in society and culture of the destination country. Gradually, they were able to adjust to the new country's lifestyle and culture.

#### **Other problems**

The results showed that these Thai women are most likely to be concerned about being deceived by recruiting companies and are somewhat concerned about their families in the country of origin.

### **2.2 Problems of Thai women in immigration abroad to marry a foreign husband and live in a foreign country**

The findings revealed that Thai women face difficulty in immigration overseas to marry a foreign husband and reside abroad, including issues with the procedures in marriage

with a foreign husband, problems with the law, communication issues, as well as societal and cultural issues.

### **Problems concerning the procedure of marrying a foreign husband**

The findings revealed that the majority of these Thai women had no trouble dealing with foreign husbands since they are officially married to their husbands. Furthermore, the husband had planned and prepared all of the necessary details, as well as outlining the many stages of marriage, in order to help them to comprehend the whole process. However, some of them reported difficulties in obtaining precise information regarding the marriage. The only sources from which they sought information were the husband's relatives.

### **Legal problems**

According to the findings, the vast majority of Thai women had little difficulty with the law and legal privileges that come with marriage since they had studied these prior to the marriage. More importantly, in most cases the foreign husbands prepared the documentation and arrangements for them.

### **Communication problems**

The results showed that most Thai women faced communication problems because most of them did not take language preparation seriously, causing problems in communication. Thus most of them relied on their husband or relatives of their husband or friends to help with communication.

### **Social and cultural problems**

The results showed that this group of Thai women, prior to immigration to marry and live abroad, gained some understanding of the society and culture of the destination country through additional inquiries of their foreign husbands. In addition, some Thai women who have a high level of education or who had previously traveled abroad were found to be better able to learn and adapt to such foreign cultures and societies.

### **3. Means for preparing Thai women for migration to other countries**

Thai women can be prepared for immigration to other countries in three ways. Target group classification: Thai women who want to go to another country, relevant authorities, and Thai women's networks overseas, as well as the following information.

#### **3.1 Preparation means for Thai women to migrate abroad**

In regard to recommendations for Thai women to immigrate abroad, the results showed that women looking to immigrate to pursue a career abroad should be prepared with important information about the destination country, such as social and cultural conditions, as well as the firms for which they are going to work. In the case of Thai women traveling to marry a foreigner, they should prepare knowledge and understanding on the background and family of the prospective husband before making a decision whether or not they should marry him. Both groups are advised to learn the language used in the destination country as well as the address and location of the Thai consulate, health and medicines for personal use, and emergency numbers.

#### **3.2 Means for relevant organizations on how to prepare Thai women for immigration abroad**

Relevant agencies should provide training courses for Thai women planning to travel overseas, such as legislation, laws, and rights to be aware of, as well as conduct an orientation activity for people planning to travel abroad to provide guidance before departure. They should also be supported on how to review documents, check recruiting agencies, and check employment contracts including a variety of channels for assistance when they are in trouble while living overseas. One of the most helpful strategies is to provide language courses at no cost for Thai women who are interested in immigrating overseas.

#### **3.3 Means for Thai women seeking to immigrate to other countries for Thai women's networks overseas**

Thai women's networks abroad should have public relations in more channels, such as LINE groups, Facebook groups, and websites, so that Thai women can learn about these networks. Furthermore, it is essential for Thai women when living abroad that they know the services, functions, communications channels, and a person who can be reached in an emergency. In addition, a mobile application to improve access to information and further support in the event of an emergency and to prepare Thai women for migrating abroad should be developed.