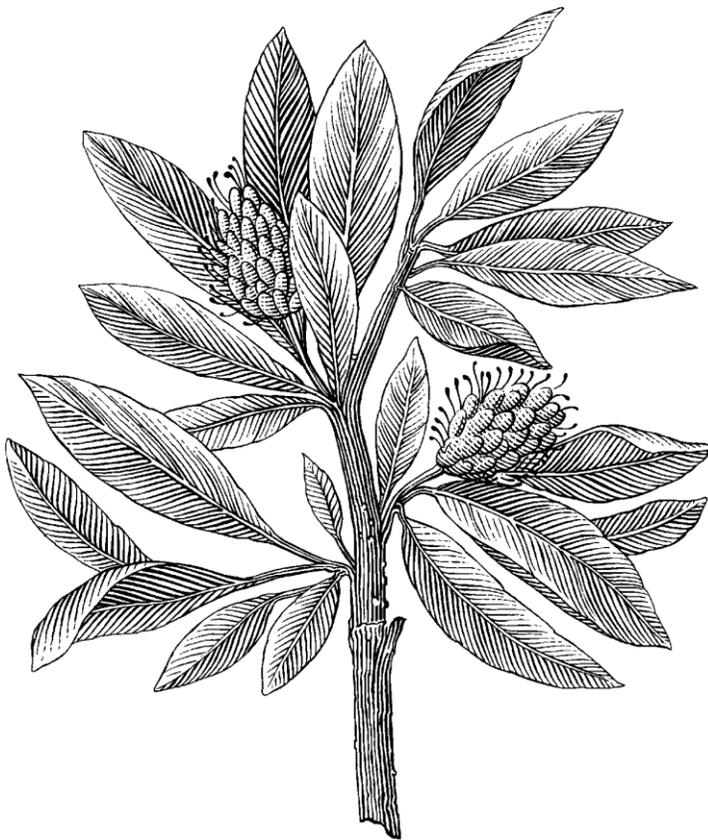




Linneuniversitetet
Kalmar Växjö

Child prostitution in Southeast Asia

- A qualitative case study on the factors that contributes to child prostitution in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and The Philippines



Author: Linnéa Johansson
Supervisor: Christopher High
Examiner: Heiko Fritz
Semester: Autumn 2017
Subject: Peace and Development
Course code: 2FU33E

Abstract

This study researches the issue of child prostitution in the Southeast Asia region. Child prostitution is a horrible phenomenon which is affecting millions of children worldwide and lives on despite the world's knowledge about it and a lot of actors fighting to end it. The study is questioning which factors that contributes to child prostitution in four different countries and the conclusion will show which factors that are present in all these countries.

The study is an abductive qualitative desk study with the method of structured focused comparison. The method was used by asking the same questions to the different cases for the purpose of finding similarities between them. The method by George and Bennet (2005) is especially used when the aim is to conclude a possible systematic comparison of different cases.

The research is based on primary, secondary and tertiary sources, most of them being peer-reviewed texts but some sources from media is used when looking for relevant events and numbers. The findings have been analyzed by an own created analytical framework, which was formed from earlier research findings and conclusion and were later tested on the different cases. This was done to establish which factors that drives child prostitution the countries have in common.

The analysis of the findings in this study suggest that there are various factors contributing to child prostitution, both cultural, political, socioeconomic and environmental. The countries problem with high corruption, norms and traditions posing women as subservient to men, widespread poverty and frequently natural disasters are all factors that contributes to child prostitution.

Key words: Child prostitution, Southeast Asia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, The Philippines, Sexual exploitation, Children

Table of content

1 Introduction and research problem	4
1.1 Relevance of topic	5
1.2 Previous research.....	6
1.3 Research objective and questions.....	8
2 Methodology	9
2.1 Limitations and delimitations.....	10
3 Analytical framework	11
3.1 Previous research.....	11
3.2 Framework of factors contributing to child prostitution.....	13
4 Findings	14
4.1 Thailand.....	15
4.2 Cambodia.....	19
4.3 Vietnam.....	22
4.4 The Philippines.....	25
5 Analysis	28
5.1 Legislation and corruption.....	28
5.2 History of war and armed conflict.....	29
5.3 Cultural beliefs.....	30
5.4 Poverty.....	30
5.5 Tourism.....	31
5.6 Environmental disasters.....	32
6 Conclusion	34
7 References	37

1 Introduction to topic and research problem

In the Declaration of Children's Rights from 1959 the human rights of children were adopted to special attention to children's living, protection, development and involvement rights (Humanium, 2017). Depending on the culture and communities that today's children belong to, they are regarded and treated differently. The welfare of many children is endangered because their society's social policies and structures discriminate against them based on factors such as their gender and social and economic situations. (ohchr, 2017) The worldwide use of children in different work forces is a violation against their human rights, because child labour involves work that do not let children have a childhood and attend and complete school without needing to perform heavy and prolonged work. Child labour is defined by The International Labour Organization (ILO) as work that threatens children's rights to a childhood, hurts their physical and mental growth and disturbs their potential and respectability. In the most gruesome forms of child labour, the children are living as modern-day slaves. They are exploited and perform hazardous work, facing illnesses and direct threats to their lives. ILOs Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, No. 182, defines the worst form of child labour for people under the age of 18:

- Slavery in all its forms
- Using children in child pornography and child prostitution
- Using children in illegal activities
- Work where the children's health, safety or morals are threatened
- (ILO, 2017)

In a 2017 ILOs report, it was estimated that 152 million children are involved in child labour worldwide, of which 73 million are in hazardous work, including situations where they are engaged in child prostitution (ibid).

Addressing child prostitution is an important part of addressing child labor. The United Nations have defined child prostitution as "the use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of consideration" (ohchr, 2017). Exact numbers of children in prostitution are not accurately known, the problem with the sensitivity of the subject and locating all the affected children makes the available statistic defective, but estimated numbers shows that as many as 10 million children are engaged in prostitution worldwide (Bang, Baker, Carpinteri and Van Hasselt,

2013). The different forms of sexual exploitation of children are frequently combined and a growing problem worldwide. The victims of sexual exploitation face life-long detriments, health problems and possible condemning and discrimination. (M'Jid, 2014)

This numbers shows that societies fail in their work to protect children and because of children's vulnerable situation it is important to bring forth research that can enhance their quality of living. Child prostitution is acknowledged in the literature, but as it is a controversial subject it makes it hard to know the real and exact spread of the problem, which shows that it must be continued advocated to increase the knowledge of the widespread and persistence of the problem. Studies which focus on the factors behind child prostitution have researched them either within one specific or a few countries but then just looked at the factors within that country, while this study will research the factors behind child prostitution levels in four different countries and compare if there is a relationship between these countries factors. The focus will be on child prostitution in Southeast Asia, with the aim of understanding which factors contributes to child prostitution in this region. In the region over 1 million children under the age of 18 years work as prostitutes and 35% of the regions sex workers are estimated to be under the age of 17 years (ICMEC, 2016). Thailand, Vietnam, The Philippines and Cambodia are all countries located in a region with countries at various stages of development, the Southeast Asia region. They were selected because the countries of Southeast Asia are at various stages of development but they all struggle with child prostitution (Hawke and Raphael, 2016). The countries Children Right's Index are either at Difficult situation, as in The Philippines and Cambodia, or at Noticeable problems, as in Thailand and Vietnam (Humanium, 2017).

1.1 Relevance of topic

Worldwide, one out of ten children are exposed to child labour, 62 million in just Asia and the Pacific with ages as low as five years old. Since the year of 2000 child labour have decreased but it is still a significant and worldwide problem, and research shows that the decreasing of it have slowed down compared to earlier years. (ILO, 2017)

One of the Sustainable Development Goals, number 8.7 are: "Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the

prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms” (Sustainable development, 2017).

The chance of achieving these goals will be a difficult task based on today’s numbers, but working against them must never stop as child prostitution today is an increasing and global issue. Child prostitution is a strong violation against human rights, and therefore the subject is of great relevance to contemporary peace and development studies. It is a constant relevance of researching the factors behind this violation to get a greater understanding of the problem, to acknowledge the problem to a larger extent and invest more resources into the issue of child prostitution. There is obviously still a long way to go to ensure every child their human rights, to end child prostitution there will be a need for representation of the root causes to the varied situations where it is practiced.

The most existing studies is conducted through small N-studies and focusing on a specific country’s problem with child prostitution, and often its following health problems. Hopefully, a deeper knowledge of the historic, cultural, economic and social factors of child prostitution can highlight the problem of its persistency in the Southeast Asia region. The result of this study can generate further research and be used in future policy making regarding the protection and rights of children.

1.2 Previous research

There exists a lot of literature on child sexual exploitation around the world with varied focus points of the studies, child prostitution is the most evident forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children. The related forms of child sex tourism, child trafficking for sexual purposes and child pornography are closely linked which makes the research of factors to child prostitution also linked to the other related forms. (Hounmenou, 2017)

M’Jid, Najat Maalla (2014) a former UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography, writes that the cause of prostitution are an effect of a country’s history and culture.

The most studies on the topic that have been done are different case studies on countries in Asia, and in Africa, these regions are researched a lot because of the high levels and persistently of

child prostitution. The growing problem with child prostitution in the Asia region were highlighted internationally in the mid-1990s, which started national and international work to end it. In Montgomery's (2015) study on child prostitution in Thailand, she writes about the legislation the government of Thailand in forced to reduce the problem, however this showed to not be enough as policies to protect women and children must be harder incorporated in the society. Other factors such as economic, political and social issues within the society were neglected. The sex industry in Thailand became widely known as the sex tourism arose when the tourism developed rapidly after the emerging of urbanization, industrialization and globalization in the 1970s.

This change in the world sought consequence in other countries in Asia, Thornbers (2013) article examines Somaly Mam's book *Silence of innocence* from 2005, which is the Cambodian human rights activist's memoir of her time as a sold child prostitute. Forced prostitution and the silence around it are deeply fixed in the Cambodian society and the government fail in their job to protect women and children from sexual exploitation.

Countries in Asia which are under development are highly dependent on the revenue from the sex industry in the country, in the Philippines tourism industry, 40% are men who comes for sex. The Asian sex industry contributes both to increased work opportunism and economic growth in the affected countries. (Empel and Wagner, 2012)

Poverty is one of the most evident factors that contributes to a culture which makes children vulnerable to prostitution, in many countries there is not unusual that parents sell their children to increase their financial standard, and the existing gender gap around the world makes the girls most exposed to this horrible life. (Hounmenou, 2017) Children who have experienced family abuse and neglect also have an increased vulnerability to be exposed to prostitution (Klatt, Cavner, Egan, 2014).

My research problem was constructed regarding this earlier research, which shows the lack of a study focusing on comparing different countries factors to child prostitution to see if there is common factors and a relationship between their struggles with child prostitution. The factors to prostitution varies depending on where the research is being made, the aim with this study is thus to identify possible similar comparisons between the countries in the Southeast Asia region.

1.3 Objective and research questions

The research objective in this thesis is to find out which factors the selected countries have in common to understand which factors contributes to child prostitution in the Southeast Asia region. Through a qualitative and abductive desk study, and by using a structured focused comparison, the aim will be to compare the countries factors of child prostitution and find possible similarities.

The research questions are therefore:

- 1. Which legislation regarding child prostitution exist in each country?*
- 2. Which historic/political factors contributes to the child prostitution in each country?*
- 3. Which cultural factors contributes to the child prostitution in each country?*
- 4. Which socioeconomic factors contributes to the child prostitution in each country?*

2 Methodology

In this thesis the research methodology will be an abductive qualitative desk study, as it will thoroughly examine existing research on the topic to get a greater understanding for the complexity of this problem and establish which factors that contributes to child prostitution in the area (Creswell, 2009, p.232). The idea of doing an abductive study is chosen because theory will be applied to the selected cases to achieve a greater understanding of them (Bryman, 2016, p.394). A desk study is more suitable for this topic as a field study would not be possible within the time-frame and the present possibilities given. As the research will be performed as a desk study no ethical consideration will therefore not be regarded.

As research method structured focused comparison will be used by creating questions in relation to the research objective, these questions are later asked to all the four selected countries to be able to compare the findings and conclude possible systematic comparison of the cases. It is focused as the method defines the relevant aspects of the cases when you must follow the set frame, and not derail to other details. This method is relevant to use when searching for similarities parallelly between cases. (George and Bennet, 2005, p.67-70)

The questions that will be asked to each country will seek to find out which existing legislation the countries have regarding child prostitution, together with which factors that contributes to child prostitution, and historical, political and socioeconomic factors will be in focus.

Case studies have the aim to research something for the possibility of getting a deeper understanding of it, by contrast, comparative case studies investigate two or more cases for the possibility of generalizing the researched questions (Goodrick, 2014). Case studies is a frequently used research approach that exist of three different types, with the third being used in this study, the collective (Crowe et al, 2011). The main purpose of comparative case studies is to detect similarities and differences in and between environments, hence they are useful when a greater understanding of the relationships between two or more cases is desired. (Goodrick, 2014) The cases that will be used are the countries Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and The Philippines. There are existing single case studies on these countries of the problem with child prostitution, and thus making a comparison study of these cases would be important to see possible similarities between these countries factors of child prostitution. The most important steps in the case study approach, and that will be used in this study, is to choose and define the cases, continue with retrieving and

analyzing the findings to finally be able to conclude them (Crowe et al, 2011). The thesis will primarily be based on information from scientific books and articles, and Internet sources obtained through search engines, such as LNU OneSearch, LNU Databases and Google Scholar.

2.1 Limitations and delimitations

The research will be limited to mostly secondary and tertiary sources as this is a desk study and not a field study. However, some primary sources were found and will be used too, such as government publications on the Philippines and M'Jid, Najat Maalla's (2014) information from the field.

Doing field research on this topic might be difficult because of the sensitivity of the subject and the problem of finding people willing to participate in the study.

The usage of structured focused comparison might be a limitation, when using this method, the most relevant questions must be asked the different cases based on the topic, thus a lot of other aspect will not be investigated. The pre-understandings of the researcher must be considered in this phase to be able to achieve an as objective study as possible.

This thesis will contribute to a higher understanding of the factors behind child prostitution, and help for future solutions. This thesis is delimited to only four different countries, the conclusions can therefore not be represented for all the cases in the world, but it will be able to give a greater understanding of the issue in the Southeast Asia region.

The other aspects of sexual exploitation of children, such as trafficking and sextourism will not be in focus, but though they are close related to the topic and often overlap each other, they will be present in the study.

3 Analytical framework

A pattern of common factors will hopefully be evident when the literature review on the selected countries are deeper and wider researched, and with this pattern an analytical framework will be created. This framework will be tested on each case and will succeeding show which similarities that exist between them. This will give a deeper understanding of which factors that contributes to child prostitution in the region.

The factors that contributes to child prostitution is many and compound of different factors, but they are often related. In my deeper research of the existing literature, a collection of factors returned throughout, which is presented here. The factors that contributes to child prostitution has been studied extensively around the world, here some peer reviewed articles and studies, as well as facts from NGOs and UN agencies will be presented.

3.1 Previous research

Lack of legislation and a weak government is a factor that contributes to child prostitution, as the perpetrators are not punished when laws to protect children is lacking. Corruption within the government system counteract the fight against child prostitution with bribes and other advantages, and therefore the exploitation is allowed to continue (ECPAT, 2017). In Montgomery's (2015) study on child prostitution in Thailand, she writes about Thailand's harder legislation, but that it still is somewhat deficient, as policies to protect children must be harder incorporated in the society.

A history of violence and unrest in the country and its political establishment contributes to children being exploited to prostitution. Expressly armed conflict and war makes people more vulnerable to sexual exploitation, and especially children. M'Jid, Najat Maalla (2014) writes that the cause of prostitution are an effect of a country's history and culture.

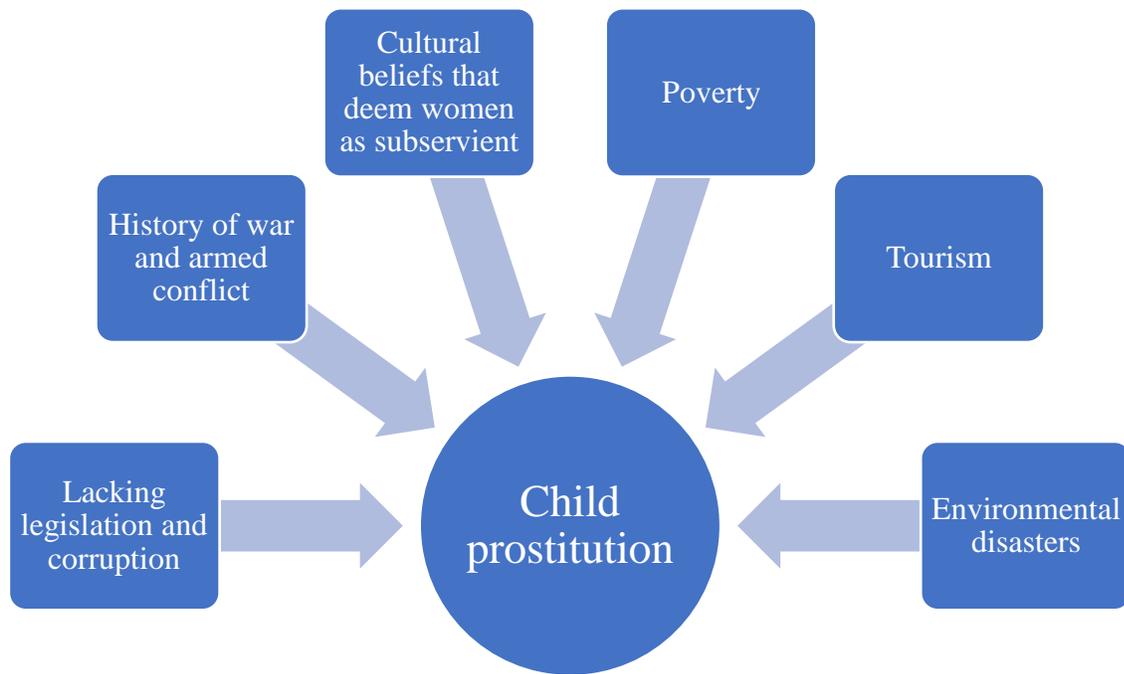
The cultural beliefs and values of society's increases the chance of young girls being exploited sexually, there exist values in many country's that puts girls in positions of abuse from men as they feel obliged to fulfill their duty and do what others tell them to (ECPAT, 2017).

According to Unicef (2017) child prostitution is caused substantially by the lack of financial means. Varying studies shows that socioeconomic factors are a key factor to child prostitution, and that poverty is one of the biggest factors that contributes to children ending up as prostitutes (Klatt, Cavner, Egan, 2014). Illiteracy, unemployment and defective education often leads to families selling their children or young girls leaving willingly to support their families financially and fulfill their duty. The existing gender gap around the world makes the girls most exposed to this horrible life. (Hounmenou, 2017) Thornbers (2013) article examines the forced prostitution and the silence around it in the Cambodian society and how the government fail in their job to protect children from sexual exploitation.

Globalization, industrialization and urbanization contributed to a boom in the tourism industry worldwide, which also lead to a considerable sex tourism and increased child prostitution (Davis, 2014, Spurrier & Alpaslan, 2017). Tourism development brings high profits and developing countries fight to increase their economic development, making the children vulnerable to foreign perpetrators (Hawke & Raphael, 2016). As countries which are under development is highly dependent on the revenue from the sex industry in the country, the child prostitution issue is somewhat neglected (Unicef, 2017).

M'Jid, Najat Maalla (2014) and Kamruzzan & Hakim (2016) also emphasize the importance of environmental factors, disaster prone countries constitute a higher risk of children being vulnerable to prostitution due to the mass displacement of people.

3.2 Framework of factors that contributes to child prostitution



There exist a lot of various theories and theoretical approaches to understand which factors that contributes to child prostitution, and as they point at different factors it shows that they all have some limitations, which this framework also has. The challenge of understanding which factors that contributes to child prostitution is complicated because the view about the nature of child prostitution differ around the world.

In this framework poverty is just one of six components, but it has shown to be a considerable factor to child prostitution, along with lacking legislation and corruption. The other determinants are frequently connected with one of these main factors, showing the complexity of the phenomena.

4 Findings

In the Southeast Asia region trafficking with humans are a widespread problem, and most of the trafficked children and women are exposed to sexual exploitation. Children and young adults are specifically vulnerable in this region, and the most of them are forced in to the prostitution sector. (Goldsamt, Clatts, Yu, Le, Colby, 2017, p.108) Thailand and Cambodia are the center of the regions trafficking industry with the most children ending up in the commercial sex industry. (Blackburn, Taylor, Davis, 2010, p.106) Vietnamese children are also vulnerable to trafficking and prostitution, in Cambodia alone, one third of the child prostitutes are estimated to be Vietnamese (Humanium, 2017). The Philippines is one of the world's countries with the most considerable and widespread problem of sexual exploitation of children, especially child prostitution (Plan International, 2017).

The rights of children were particularly set forth in The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) from 1989, and in 2000 The United Nations complemented CRC with a protocol which especially pointed out the need of protecting children from sexual exploitation, The Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography, also called the Sex Trafficking Protocol. This protocol points out the vulnerability of children, and particularly girls, with being sexually exploited. It forbids child pornography, the sale of children and child prostitution and enhance the importance of international cooperation towards improving the criminal justice against children. (Library of Congress, 2017). As of 2016, 173 countries have signed and made sanctions according to the protocol, additionally 9 countries have signed but not yet made sanctions (ICMEC, 2016).

Even though most countries have implemented national laws forbidding commercial sexual exploitation of children, a lot of children are still being victimized by horrifying sexual acts in countries around the world because of defective laws which does not match the international law of the protection of children (Burkhalter, 2012).

All the researched countries in this study are members of the organization Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Ramcharan, 2016), which has agreed on more than 80 different legislations. A lot of the legislations has focused on children's protection and rights, they passed the Declaration on the Commitments for Children in 2001 that aimed to fulfill the same standard as that of the CRC. In the years after the organization adopted a lot of declarations against trafficking and violence towards especially women and children, and in 2013 the Human

Rights Declaration was established which had a part that enhanced the importance of protecting the regions children from exploitation. Even though these legally binding agreements have been accepted by all the members, there still are states that have failed to implement them nationally and follow them effectively. (ICMEC, 2016)

In the following part the findings of the thesis will be presented, I have chosen to organize the cases by country and ask the research questions to each case to facilitate the succeeding analysis process. First the countries legislation regarding child prostitution is investigated and thereafter the different risk factors, historic, cultural and socioeconomic factors are presented. As environmental factors have been established by previous research to contribute to child prostitution that will also be present in the findings.

The employment of children in the sex industry in Southeast Asia has been quite extensively studied with various studies and reports, but the sources varies some depending on which country that is researched. In this study all the cases are based on six peer reviewed articles and studies, with additionally information retrieved from other media, UN agencies, NGOs and governmental organizations. Some sources are used in more than one case, as some of the sources are cross-sectional case studies on countries in Southeast Asia. The findings of Thailand and Cambodia were more easily accessible than that of Vietnam and the Philippines, where relevant sources took great more time to find. In addition, the child prostitution has been more investigated in Thailand and Cambodia as they have been seen for a long time as the countries with the most evident problem of child prostitution (Blackburn, Taylor & Davis, 2010).

4.1 Thailand

Here the current existing legislation and other contributing factors to Thailand's problem with child prostitution will be investigated.

Legislation regarding child prostitution

The problem of child prostitution in Thailand were becoming obvious by the world in the 1990s and following this there were changes to the country's legislation. These changes proved to not be enough however as other factors behind child prostitution were overlooked and neglected. (Montgomery, 2015). After the issue became known internationally, the pressure on the

government of Thailand increased to make efforts against their problem with child prostitution. They ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Child in 1992 and the UN Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography in 2006, which forbids child prostitution. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons were signed in 2001, but not ratified until 2013 (ICMEC, 2016), but in 2008 the government implemented the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act, a new anti-trafficking law to further protect women and children and strengthen the penalties against convicted traffickers (Blackburn, Taylor & Davis, 2010). Despite the harder implemented legislation and policies that Thailand have established to fight the child prostitution problem for many years the problem is still evident in the country, the Thai are very concern of holding onto their own standards, making them unwilling to implement global standards politically and also socially (Ramcharan, 2016).

Thailand's sex industry is wide and much developed but because the government have focused on the sexual abuse of children the child prostitution is more concealed and harder for the law enforcement to detect. (ibid) Even though child labor is prohibited there is still all too many children being forced to work, in a lot of cases they are forced by their families into prostitution for the family to survive (Humanium, 2017).

That Thailand have a lingering problem with human exploitation is evident through the ranking of a Tier 2 Watch List Country on US Department of State's Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Report) in 2017. Being ranked as a Tier 2 Watch List Country means that the government do not completely meet the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's (TVPA's) minimum standards, but that they are acting towards fulfilling them. Simultaneously the country's trafficking victims is very evident or increasing, there is a problem of showing the country's progress opposed from foregoing year, and the confirmation that the country has an objective to fulfill the minimum standards was set because of the country's determination of future progression in the matter. (U.S. Department of State, 2017)

Though Thailand have made changes to fight the corruption in the country, they were ranked on place 101 Of 176 in the Corruption Perceptions Index of 2016, with a score of 35. The scale goes from 0, highly corrupt, to 100, very clean, meaning that Thailand's score shows that the country's population face consequences of corruption in their everyday life. (Transparency International, 2017)

Historic factors

Thailand has had some violence in their history, in the 1900s, regions with different ethnic groups were forced together under the same rule with obligations to speak Thai and adjust to Thai values and traditions. The military regimes during the 1940s to the 1970s restricted the people even more with policies which increased the tension even further. In the 1960s to the 1980s the government also fought communists from the north, the Communist Party of Thailand, where tension have existed for a long time because of political and economic neglect, and ethnic prejudice. (Parks, 2008)

Thailand's sex industry has a long history, from the 1950s and up to the 1970s the country's income increased significant with foreign and especially American soldiers on leave from the Korean War and the Vietnam War (Spurrier & Alpaslan, 2017), disposing their incomes on buying sex in the neighborhood country (Montgomery, 2015). Before 1960 Thailand did not have organized sex operations and business (Blackburn, Taylor & Davis, 2010), and when the Vietnam war ended 1975 the American soldiers leaved but left an established sex industry which thrived because of the populations view on sex as something valuable that contributed much money. (Montgomery, 2015)

To develop the country, a tourism strategy to increase the economy were followed by the government which made tourism Thailand's biggest financial source, but this also lead to a parallel problem of an increased sex tourism. (ibid) The sex market with children in Thailand have a long history and the tourism increased children's vulnerability to commercial sexual exploitation and prostitution through tourist's opportunities to access places such as bars and nightclubs. (Lau, 2008) In 2016, 20,6% of Thailand's GDP came from tourism, and it's expected to grow considerably more in the years to come (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017)

Cultural factors

Thailand is a country with many traditions and deep culture which permeate the society. In the rural society a tradition of children owing a debt of gratitude to their parents, above all to their mothers exists, called bun khun. Getting children is a form of investment, the children owns a moral debt to their parents because they bear and raise them, which is to be reprehended with the children taking care of the parents when they get older and support the family financially until the children get married themselves.

Before the country modernized and became industrialized the earlier generations often worked with caring for elders, farm work or joining monasteries, but with the industrialization, urbanization followed. (Lau, 2008) Leaving home and work in cities became more common and prostitution became a popular available source for children to support their family economically, as a lack of education and resources limits the work possibilities. Prostitution is viewed safer and reasonably brings in more money than begging and dumpster diving. (Montgomery, 2015) The idea of children's moral debt to their family makes them vulnerable to prostitution, because as long as they can support and provide for their family the tradition is upheld and this is accepted in many areas.

Thailand is also mainly a Theravada Buddhist society where karma and making merit is important to the Buddhist practice. Supporting one's family economically fulfills these practices and a lot of girls sees prostitution as a purpose and solution to live up to this culture by joining the ever-demanding sex industry. (Lau, 2008)

Studies have shown that prostituted girls can return to their rural home and be welcomed back if they had successfully provided for their families during their time away, but those who had not were stigmatized and left outside of the community. Successful prostitution is obviously not seen as morally wrong as failing and not be able to send enough money home. (Montgomery, 2015)

In some regions, mostly the areas where Islam is predominating, female virginity is highly valuable which makes the demand of young girls elevated within the sex industry. (ibid) But there is also a growing demand because there is a widespread strong belief in this area that having sex with virgins and young girls brings strength, manliness, luck and can make you feel younger. The growing HIV/AIDS problem also contributes to this demand as young girls are thought to be able to cure diseases and/or incapable of catching the infection, thus making them safer to exploit sexually. (Lau, 2008)

Socioeconomic factors

Even though Thailand's industrialization and globalization under the 20th century improved the life of the population and the country's economy, it also led to an increased rural poverty. Poor education, illiteracy and lack of work often co-exist with poverty, and this make children vulnerable to prostitution as a solution for the family to survive or to be able to meet the increasing demand for buying and consuming goods. These social changes also led to the

increase of trafficking of women and children, and especially children for commercial sexual exploitation as borders were made more open and free to cross.

The low societal position as children possess also makes them vulnerable and allows certain adults to justify their exploitation of children. (Lau, 2008) A lot of family's in Thailand is still struggling with their financials, making the children exploited and all their rights not fulfilled, as their rights to health and education (Humanium, 2017).

In estimating the richest countries in the world according to GDP per capita, Thailand ranked on place 100 out of 230 countries in 2016, their GDP per capita was then 16,900 dollars (CIA, 2017).

4.2 Cambodia

Here the current existing legislation and other contributing factors to Cambodia's problem with child prostitution will be investigated.

Legislation regarding child prostitution

They ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Child in 1992 and the UN Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography in 2002, which forbids child prostitution. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons were signed in 2001, and ratified in 2004 (ICMEC, 2016). The Cambodian government did not start to prioritize the problem of child prostitution until 2004 (Blackburn, Taylor & Davis, 2010), with their criminal justice system being deficient and having problems with corruption (Keo, Bouhours, Broadhurst & Bouhours, 2014). The perpetrators are often those who works with law enforcement, thus making the reports deficient because of the high corruption within the country (Humanium, 2017) Cambodia is the most corrupt country in the region, being ranked on place 156 of 176 with a score of only 21 in the 2016 Corruption Perceptions Index. The public sectors restrict the society extensively which contributes to the low ranking. (Transparency International, 2017)

Cambodia's current law, the 1996 Suppression of the Kidnapping, Trafficking and Exploitation of Human Persons law forbids the kidnapping of persons for sale or prostitution inside the country and across borders. But the law is defective because the traffickers are criminalized based on the victims age, and it only criminalize the perpetrators if the victims are under 15 years old.

Cambodia's age of sexual consent is 15 and this contributes to the problem of justifying that a crime has occurred. (Rafferty, 2016) As the understanding of trafficking was deficient when implementing the law, the trafficking law was actually a law prohibiting organized commercial prostitution. The law did not take consent into account either, therefore making all sex workers victims, also the willing that had chosen to work as prostitutes. An additional human trafficking law was implemented in 2008, the Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation law, which did not fully reprimand the shortcomings of the 1996 law but instead further and wider focused on prohibiting adult and child prostitution, pornography and exploitation of children, and also willing prostitution. (Keo, Bouhours, Broadhurst & Bouhours, 2014). The 2008 law prohibited sex work in based institutions such as brothels, which made the sex industry more concealed and harder to detect. Consequently, making the possibilities to find exposed young girls harder as the methods of selling sex with children happens more underground than before. (Brody, Tuot, Chhea, Saphonn & Yi, 2016) Cambodia were ranked as a Tier 2 country in the TIP Report of 2017, meaning that they do not yet comply with the TVPA's minimum standards, but that the government are working towards a goal of achieving them (U.S. Department of State, 2017)

Historic factors

Like in Thailand, Cambodia had almost no organized sex industry before the 1950, soldiers from the Vietnam War and Korean War (Spurrier & Alpaslan, 2017) also came to Cambodia to dispose of their earnings. This increased the demand for sex workers which lived on when the war ended, and the soldiers left. (Blackburn, Taylor & Davis, 2010)

During the 1990s the globalization reached Cambodia as well, the social change made people from developing countries migrate to more developed countries. Girls migrating from Cambodia with hopes of better lives in more developed countries made them vulnerable to prostitution and other forms of exploitation. (Keo, Bouhours, Broadhurst & Bouhours, 2014). With the globalization Cambodia became known as a place with high levels of child sex tourism, and still men from all around the world travels to the country to exploit children sexually, and virgins are frequently requested in the sex industry (Davy, 2014). In 2016 12,2% of Cambodia's GDP came from travel and tourism, and it's forecast to continue to rise in the future (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017).

The horrendous problem of human trafficking and child prostitution in Asia had become known

internationally in the 1990s as well, and external actors, with the US in the front pressed the Cambodian government on harder legislation regarding their growing problem with sexual exploitation of women and children. As said before this law was defective as Cambodia's justice authority was under reconstruction and battling corruption after having a history of 30 years of armed conflict. (Keo, Bouhours, Broadhurst & Bouhours, 2014) Cambodia has a violent history with political unrest and armed conflict, the Khmer Rouge lead by Pol Pot stands for a bloody and awful time for the Cambodians, with suspicion of genocide and other horrendous acts. (BBC, 2017) Violence and poverty in the society was lingering after the conflict ended which made the needed resources of battling child prostitution ignored for other more pressing concerns according to the government. (Keo, Bouhours, Broadhurst & Bouhours, 2014).

Cultural factors

Paying for sex often goes against the cultural norms that exist in the Cambodian society, but despite this they have a flourishing sex industry. Within their sex industry there is always a demand for young girls, additionally, there are a belief among Cambodian men that sex with virgin girls will make you feel younger and purified. This belief and demand for young girls have contributed to an established trade of selling virgins in Cambodia.

Cambodia is dominated a Theravada Buddhist society, and norms of gratitude and duty towards the family are deeply rooted. Helping the family economically often contributes and makes girls vulnerable to prostitution and the virgin trade, which consequently are ratified as fulfilling their duty and gratitude towards their families. (Rafferty, 2016) One study on the Cambodian virgin trade showed that 51 % of the girls in the sex industry had been deprived of their virginity by outlandish customers or tourists, and children of just five years old have been known to work as prostitutes (Davy, 2014).

Socioeconomic factors

Cambodia is one of the world's poorest countries, according to the Human Right Index, they are placed 143th out of 188 countries (UNDP, 2017). They ranked as the 180th richest of 230 countries in 2016, with an estimated GDP per capita of 3,700 dollars (CIA, 2017).

The Cambodian people are struggling with poverty, illiteracy and possibility to educate, especially girls who often are neglected in the society (Rafferty, 2016). This makes the children vulnerable to human trafficking and prostitution performed by organized criminal businesses both

in and outside of Cambodia (Blackburn, Taylor & Davis, 2010).

A high percent of women and children from Cambodia sells sex voluntarily, often because they come from families that is desperate for money or deficient and sees prostitution as an easy way to survive (Keo, Bouhours, Broadhurst & Bouhours, 2014).

Cambodia is one of the worlds most affected countries by natural disasters, they are ranked as the eight most unsafe country in the world (Smith, 2017), which makes people on the run from their homes vulnerable to sexual exploitation and trafficking (Davy, 2014).

4.3 Vietnam

Here the current existing legislation and other contributing factors to Vietnam's problem with child prostitution will be investigated.

Legislation regarding child prostitution

Vietnam had signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Child in 1991 and the UN Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography in 2001, which forbids child prostitution. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons were not ratified until 2012 (ICMEC, 2016). Vietnam have taken further measures to protect children from commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking, and they have six crimes that are specified for this sort of crimes against children, all named under "Committing a crime against a child" (Nga, 2016) In Vietnam sex trafficking and selling sex are against the law (Goldsamt et al., 2017, p.112), but in the TIP Report of 2017 they were ranked as a Tier 2 country, meaning that they do not yet fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards, but that the government are working towards a goal of achieving them (U.S. Department of State, 2017) By being a member of the UN and recognizing children's rights in the protocols, Vietnams laws are closer to the existing international standards regarding the protection of children, as they are obliged to do. But despite this their legislation are deficient in some respects. Children are only people up to the age of 16, crimes against persons between 16 and 18 will therefore not be regarded as crimes against children (Rafferty, 2016, Nga, 2016).

According to the authority's in Vietnam they have increased their protection of children and their rights, but protecting them from being victimized by exploitation crimes are still an obstacle for the nation as abuses of children have increased and become more intricated. (Nga, 2016)

The fighting against child prostitution is further complicated by the country's problem with the government's accountability. In the 2016 index Vietnam was ranked on place 113 of 176, with a score of 33, showing that their public sectors are plagued by corruption. (Transparency International, 2017)

Historic factors

The Vietnam War between the communists in North Vietnam and the anti-communist South Vietnam backed by the US was long, expensive and bloody with more than 3 million deaths, with half of the dead being Vietnamese civilians (History, 2017).

The Vietnam War and the Korean War from the 1950s to the 1970s affected the Vietnamese society considerably (Spurrier & Alpaslan, 2017), inflation and corruption increased, and the sex industry exploded because of the presence of foreign soldiers. The increasing foreign and especially the western presence challenged the then two nations (South Vietnam and North Vietnam) culture and norms when the sex industry became a central point of the war's culture. With the staggering economy due to inflation the sex industry became an industry which converted much money and gave stability to a lot of people struggling to survive. Young girls were the most demanded in the industry, and children of only 15 years old were often forced to work as prostitutes. The young girls often lacked education, reading skills and came from very desperate, poor households (Boczar, 2015).

Around the same time as the social changes of globalization and industrialization reached other countries in Southeast Asia, Vietnam experienced the same and their change towards a market economy changed the society considerably (Voelkner, 2014). Negative consequences from these social changes were an increase of sextourism and prostitution. The sex industry together with HIV/AIDS, trafficking and drug use are named as a "social evil" by the government in a plan to direct people from these dishonorable dealings (Goldsamt et al., 2017). Vietnam society should be flourished with Vietnamese values and ideals but instead it has been destroyed because of the increasing foreign presence and trade, making prostitution seen as an industry of shame.

The marketisation of Vietnam society increased the migration inside the country and with the urbanization the rural work was deselected and work in the cities attracted more. With free enterprise and profitable work increasing, commercial sex was used in a way to land business deals, thus the sex industry in Vietnam grew into an even more essential part of the society than

before. (Voelkner, 2014) In 2016, 9,1% of Vietnam's GDP came from travel and tourism, and it's expected to continue to grow in future years (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017).

Cultural factors

Vietnam's society has a lot of traditions and a deep-rooted culture which imbue the society. The ethic and social philosophy of Confucianism, which is characterized by the traditional Chinese society, influences the Vietnamese society (Asiasociety, 2017). Values as filial piety, duty, loyalty, self-sacrifice and respect for elder are central, and this system of how one should behave toward others are evident in five different relationships, relationships between husband and wife, parents and children and brothers and sisters, being three of them. (CG, 2017)

This culture puts a lot of pressure on children, and makes them vulnerable to dangerous work and exploitation, especially girls. Prostitution is shameful work in Vietnam society, however, girls which does this to be able to support their family and make a living of it are seen to be doing this out of the duty and self-sacrifice towards their parents and family. A known Vietnamese poem from the beginning of the eighteenth century tells the story of a young and pretty girl who was forced to sell herself into prostitution for her brother and father to be saved from prison. The comfort of one's family must go before what's best for oneself in life. (Voelkner, 2014)

Socioeconomic factors

After the end of the Vietnam War Vietnam have experienced a considerable increase of their population, which led to inequalities in the society. Even though their poverty levels have decreased some the last 20 years, the poverty still lingers in the rural regions and the high population and the plague of natural disasters aggravates the poverty. (Humanium, 2017) Of 2016 estimates, Vietnam's GDP per capita was 6,400 dollars, ranking them on place 161 out of 230 countries (CIA, 2017). The poverty makes the children vulnerable to sex trafficking and child prostitution, which is increasing, it is estimated that 40,000 children works as prostitutes and an additional estimate of 65,000 children are street children. (Humanium, 2017) Vietnam is ranked as the 18th most unsafe country in the world due to various natural disasters that occasionally afflict them, and the following confusion and misplacement makes especially children vulnerable to exploitation (Smith, 2017).

4.4 The Philippines

Here the current existing legislation and other contributing factors to the Philippines's problem with child prostitution will be investigated.

Legislation regarding child prostitution

The Philippines had signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Child by 1990 and the UN Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography by 2002, which forbids child prostitution. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons were also signed and ratified by 2002. (ICMEC, 2016) After being ranked as a Tier 2 Watch List Country on US Department of State's TIP Report in 2010 (Hwang, 2017) the Philippine government took actions to prevent trafficking and fulfill the minimum standards of the TVPA, having the risk of millions of dollars of aid from the US being stopped if failing to do so. They established guidelines for an antitrafficking policy in 2010 and since 2012 they have an Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act in force (GOVPH, 2014). Their efforts to end trafficking made them an Tier 1 country in the TIP report of 2016, making the Philippines a country where the government meets the TVPA's minimum standards (U.S. Department of State, 2016). The legislation of 2012 makes the child victims of prostitution hard to determine, as any person under the age of 18 working in the sex industry is systemized as a trafficking victim. In Laura Tsai's (2017) study about sex trafficking survivors in the Philippines, all the interviewed women were adults when the study was conducted, but some conceded that they were trafficked into prostitution as children. As a lot of other countries in Asia, the Philippines has problem with their public sectors accountability, in the 2016 Corruption Perceptions Index they were ranked on place 101 of 176, with a score of 35, the same score as Thailand. This shows that the country's population is plagued by corruption daily. (Transparency International, 2017)

Historic factors

During the World War 2 the Japanese invaded the Philippines which led to that more than one million Filipinos died. After their independence in 1946 the Filipinos have met challenges and numerous crisis, in forms of coups, corruption, economic problems and opposition from communist and Islamic rebels. (iExplore, 2017) The Philippines, which has been democratic the longest in the area, has therefore experienced severe strokes against their democracy in their inefficiency to uphold rule of law and liberal democratic values. However, they are progressive in

establishing democratic liberal values and their political structure consists of diversities.
(Ramcharan, 2016)

The Philippines were also affected by the Vietnamese and Korean wars during the 1950s to the 1970s, when foreign soldiers came to the country on leave to buy sex, and children were exploited sexually (Spurrier & Alpaslan, 2017). This lives on still today, as the Philippines has a considerable sextourism industry, almost half of the Philippines male tourists comes to buy sex, and children are often requested (SBS News, 2013). In 2016, 19,7% of the Philippines GDP came from travel and tourism and in the future the number is estimated to continue to grow (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017).

Cultural factors

Cultural norms and traditions are strong influences of the Filipino society, loyalty towards one family and helping the family financially are rightful and appropriate demands. Having a debt of gratitude towards one's family is a central key, and failing in helping the family can lead to withdrawal and stigmatization by the family and society. Studies made in Southeast Asia have shown that the need to support one's family financially are an evident factor for women and children to end up in trafficking and sex work industries. (Tsai, 2017)

Because of the long Spanish and later American colonialism, the Filipino culture is a mix of western and eastern values. Muslims or believers of traditional Filipino religions stands for a very small part of the population, Christianity is the most dominant religion, with 80% of them being Catholics. But as the Philippines extensively is a secular country there is only a small part of the population that holds strong religious beliefs. (Embassy of Sweden, 2017)

Socioeconomic factors

The Philippines experience of conflicts and natural disasters have made their economic development rough, but they are now under development (Humanium, 2017). The Philippines is one of the most vulnerable countries to natural disasters, they are ranked as number three of the world's most unsafe countries (Smith, 2017). The misplacement and the unsafety when natural disasters strike puts the children in vulnerable places.

The Philippines economy experienced a considerable growth in 2016 (UNICEF, 2016), their GDP per capita was 7,700 dollars in 2016, ranking them on place 154 out of 230 countries (CIA, 2017). However, the widespread presence of poverty lingers for a lot of households (Humanium,

2017) and child poverty subsist (UNICEF, 2016). The child poverty has contributed to the country's vast problem with street children, which are evident in especially developing countries. The Philippines has an estimated of 250,000 street children, (Siagian, 2016) and these children are therefore increasingly vulnerable to prostitution and other forms of exploitation (Merrill, Njord, Njord, Read and Pachano, 2010). Street children who lives on the street is much more vulnerable to prostitution than them who still lives at home, which shows that being neglected and not receiving support from the family is a risk factor for children to be exposed to child prostitution (ibid).

Poverty contributes to people leaving the family and find better work elsewhere, trafficking victims, where especially women and children are exposed to prostitution, often leaves the family in the first place because of the duty of helping the family financially and alas be able to send money home to them (Tsai, 2017).

5 Analysis

In this part the findings will be analyzed by asking the countries the same questions and then compare them to see which factors that exist for all the researched cases. The questions that will drive the structured focused comparison are “Does the country have lacking legislation and corruption?”, “Does the country have a violent history of armed conflict and war?”, “Does the country have cultural beliefs that deem women as subservient to men?”, “Does the country have a poor population?”, “Does the country have much tourism?” and “Does the country have problem with environmental disasters?”

5.1 Legislation and corruption

The researched countries legislation regarding child prostitution is quite extensive, they have all ratified the most important international protocols with the aim of protecting children from different sorts of exploitation and additionally implemented laws against child sex crimes.

Thailand is the country which have fought against child prostitution the longest, and also have implemented the hardest laws against it, but despite this the child prostitution is still very high in the country. A reason for this is probably the widespread corruption within the country, no matter how hard and strict laws a country has, they are of no use if they are not being implemented fully in all sectors and followed in the right way. It’s the same situation in the Philippines, as they have fought their problem of child prostitution more in the latest years but without good results. They have laws implemented but they are not being followed enough due to the corruption in their public sectors.

A lack in Vietnam and Cambodia’s laws regarding child prostitution is that children are only seen as children up to the age of 16, respectively 15, making prostitution between these ages and 18 not seen as crimes against children, which they are by international standards in the CRC. As Thailand and the Philippines, Vietnam and Cambodia have severe problems with corruption, Vietnam is close to Thailand’s and the Philippines score. Cambodia however, is ranked as the most corrupt country in Southeast Asia, making their existing laws being followed by the public sectors very doubtful.

With this information the determinant *lacking legislation and corruption* contributes to child prostitution in these cases, despite the countries having good and detailed laws to protect children from exploitation, their problem with corruption counteract these policies as they are not being

followed effectively and both the society and the people in the public sectors do not fear accountability by their actions. Corruption and child prostitution has been proven to have a strong relationship as corruption counteracts the policies to protect children from sexual exploitation (International Council on Human Rights Policy, 2009).

5.2 History of war and armed conflict

The researched countries have all experienced violence in their nearest history, some more than others. Overall, the region has over the years experienced a lot of different armed conflicts with various objectives. Vietnam and Cambodia have endured bloody and destructive civil wars, which both originate in the fighting for and against communism. It is regardless difficult to know if their violent past in itself contributes to child prostitution, or if it's just the following consequences of armed conflicts that makes the exploitation of children more convenient. As armed conflicts destroy a lot of the functioning of a state, if not all, it is hard to single out the explicit factor. In the cases of Thailand and the Philippines, they have not been plagued by the same extent of civil wars and armed conflicts as Cambodia and Vietnam in the nearest past, and nevertheless they have high child prostitution. The Philippines has been democratic for a long time, but they have had extensively political unrest and tension. Thailand has been strictly ruled by the military for a long time and their lingering love and respect for the late king Bhumibol have been holding together the Thai society (Töpffer, 2010), leading to a relatively peaceful society, but they have had some unrest and violence with communist insurgents and corruption inside the society.

However, it is hard based on this research to confirm if the determinant *history of war and armed conflict* contributes to child prostitution, as only two out of four researched cases have experienced full out wars in their nearest history, since ca the 1900s. Despite the differences between the two countries which have experienced wars and the other two which have experienced some unrest and violence, but not to the same amount, all have lingering problems and high levels of child prostitution today. This is making it hard to know if it's the armed conflict itself that contributes to that or if it's one or more factors that arrives from the lack of an effectively and functioning society. A functioning society is often absent after a country have experienced armed conflict, but it can also be absent due to other aspects, such as corruption or

natural disasters.

5.3 Cultural beliefs

Even though the researched cases have different beliefs and religions, the huge significance of tradition and culture is evident in all countries. Thailand and Cambodia have both strong cultural beliefs that puts women in submissive positions against men. Their presence of Buddhist practice reinforces this even further, as it also advocates that supporting one's family and making merit is one of the most important, if not the most important, thing in life. Children get burdened with too much responsibility for the family's welfare and poor and often poorly educated girls do not have much to choose from. The value of female virginity forces girls into prostitution and make them serviceable to often much older men. In Vietnam the social philosophy of Confucianism is dominant, but it shares a lot of same values with the Buddhist practice. The Philippines is not a strong religious country, however, cultural norms and traditions holds an important role in the society which emphasize the significance of duty and loyalty towards the family.

Despite the modernization and globalization in the Southeast Asia region, their culture and traditions have lived on in the society, and all countries have strong influences of norms that puts much pressure and obligations on especially young girls. Therefore, the determinant *cultural beliefs that deem women as subservient* is shown to contribute to child prostitution based on these cases, as all the countries shows evidence of the factors relationship. Cultural beliefs and child prostitution has been proven to have a strong relationship in other part of the world as well, shown in studies conducted in Europe, Africa and the Caribbean. A lot of cultural beliefs and practices violets children's rights and makes them vulnerable to sexual exploitation. (Shafe and Hutchinson, 2015)

5.4 Poverty

The Southeast Asia region has long been known as a poor region but in the latest years a lot of countries in the region have experienced economic growth and decreased their poverty levels, however, some countries still faces severe poverty. Cambodia is the poorest country of the researched cases, and the population is forced to extreme solutions to survive. Selling sex is seen as an easy job, you do not have to have money, education or be able to read to work as a

prostitute. As poor countries, like Cambodia, often have a population that lacks these qualifications, they become vulnerable to prostitution and especially young girls which are not prioritized in the society.

Thailand is by far the richest country of the four cases, their economy has increased significantly by their extensive tourism industry. Vietnam and the Philippines both reached higher economic growth lately after plagues of war and natural disasters that has affected their economy negatively, but however, they still linger quite low down on the list of the world's richest countries according to GDP per capita, where they are ranked closely.

Despite the countries economic growth their problem with child prostitution has not turned to the better. A reason for this is most probably because of the poverty that still exist in a great deal parts of the countries, with them often being rural areas. Economic growth often benefits the already higher and richer classes of the society which can be a reason for children ending up in prostitution coming dominantly from the lower classes and households that still is very poor. The determinant *poverty* is alas shown to contribute to child prostitution as all of the countries shows evidence of poverty, even though Thailand's GDP per capita is more than double than all of the other cases, they have areas which still is plagued by poverty.

5.5 Tourism

All the researched countries have a large tourism industry, Thailand and the Philippines are the countries with the most tourism, and then Cambodia with Vietnam at last place. However, they all have much tourism and it's forecast to continue to grow for all the cases in the future years. Southeast Asia is one of the most traveled destinations in the world, in 2016 it was the fifth region in the world where the most total contributions to GDP comes from travel and tourism. In 2017 it was the region who experienced the most economic growth within the bounds of travel and tourism total contributions to GDP. (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017)

All the countries experienced a considerable growth with prostitution when foreign presence started to increase. The wars that plagued Southeast Asia in the 1950s and forward established the industry with western soldiers and then later tourists, coming to buy sex. Blackburn (2010) writes that western soldiers has contributed to an increasing sextourism in the past, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and the Philippines were all visited by soldiers during The Korean War and

The Vietnam War, thus the determinant *tourism* contributes to child prostitution based on these cases. Their sextourism has grown parallel with the increasing tourism, and as Davy's (2014) study on the extensively virgin trade in Cambodia showed, more than half of the Cambodian girls had lost their virginity to tourists. It's thriving even more as children from neighboring countries are ending up in the industry and men from both western and neighboring countries are frequent buyers (Lockett, 2017, Kay, 2016). Studies made in other parts of the world, for example in the Caribbean, has also showed the relationship of increasing tourism parallel with sextourism (Shafe and Hutchinson, 2015).

5.6 Environmental disasters

As shown in the findings part the researched countries are all at risk of natural disasters, the Philippines, Cambodia and Vietnam are ranked on Smith's (2017) list of the worlds' 20 most unsafe countries, based on the risk of getting hit by environmental disasters. The Asia-Pacific is the world most prone region to be hit by natural disasters (United Nations ESCAP, 2017) but Thailand does not land in the same category as the other cases, which is at the highest risk, with them being ranked in the middle of the scale, as a country with a general risk of natural disasters.

However, they still have an evident risk of getting plagued by different natural disasters, with more frequently disasters than a lot of other countries in the world. A reason for Thailand's lower ranking than the other cases can be the fact that they are the richest country of the four. In the estimation of countries being most prone to natural disasters the country's possibilities and opportunities to withstand and cope with them is also taken into account (Smith, 2017). As Thailand has more resources to survive the disasters they are being better ranked, therefore the determinant *environmental disasters* contribute to child prostitution in these cases, with Thailand's small deviation most probably being due to their higher financial position. Extensively studies made in different parts of the world has shown a relationship between child trafficking after natural disasters, and not especially child prostitution (Montgomery, 2011). However, trafficked children dominantly end up as prostitutes which makes natural disasters indirectly a factor to child prostitution.

With this analysis the factors behind child prostitution have been researched within four different countries and compared to see the possible relationship between the countries factors.

The analysis of these cases has shown that some of the factors in the theoretical framework works for all the countries. The factors of *cultural beliefs, poverty, tourism* and *environmental disasters* are present in all cases, these are the found similarities between the countries. The factor of *lacking legislation and corruption* showed when applied, that the countries do not have significant lacking legislation, but instead very high corruption which counteracts their implemented laws and policies. For the part of Southeast Asia, the factor would better serve as *corruption* contributes to child prostitution. Additionally, the factor *history of armed conflict and war* would serve better as *history of armed conflict and violence* as two out of four cases do not have the same history of armed conflict and war, but instead shows evidence of violence and political unrest.

Therefore, as a whole, the framework was applicable for all cases in this study, with just some minor changes in two of the factors.

6 Conclusion

This study's last part will emphasize the answers to the research questions, and tie them together with the research objective and problem. Alas, the important findings of the study will be highlighted.

The research questions that were aimed to be answered were *Which legislation regarding child prostitution exist in each country?*, *Which historic/political factors contributes to the child prostitution in each country?*, *Which cultural factors contributes to the child prostitution in each country?* and *Which socioeconomic factors contributes to the child prostitution in each country?*

The research objective for this thesis was to find out which factors Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and the Philippines have in common to understand which factors that contributes to child prostitution in the Southeast Asia region. The aim was to get a deeper understanding of the correlation between the countries factors of child prostitution by studying possible similarities. The purpose was to highlight the countries factors behind child prostitution by creating an own analytical framework based on earlier research findings and conclusions. The research problem and the used analytical framework, served the succeeding analysis to be able to answer the research questions. The emerging framework was aimed to be tested on the selected cases.

The analysis showed that the problem of child prostitution in the Southeast Asia region is very complex, a lot of different factors contributes to the phenomena in various ways. Most probably a lot of additionally factors that is not present in this study also contributes to child prostitution. However, this study presents some of those factors.

The countries have surprisingly good and detailed laws to protect children from exploitation, but their problem with high corruption counteract these policies as they are not being followed effectively and the public sectors lack accountability.

The countries historic factors to child prostitution showed that two of the countries had experienced wars and the other two had experienced unrest and violence, but not to the same amount. Although, it's hard to determine if the armed conflict itself contributes to child prostitution or if it's one or more factors that arrives from the lack of an effectively and

functioning society.

Cultural norms and traditions holds an important role in the countries society's which emphasize the strong significance of duty and loyalty towards the family. These strong influences of norms put much pressure and obligations on especially young girls when they are being burdened with too much responsibility of the family's welfare.

Poverty exist extensively in various amounts in the countries, where the rural areas is mostly affected. Economic growth often benefits the already higher and richer classes of the society which can be a reason for children ending up in prostitution coming dominantly from the lower classes and households which still is very poor.

Considerable growth in prostitution occurred with increasing foreign presence. The countries sextourism has grown parallel with their increasing tourism, showing the relationships between increasing tourism and sextourism. Historic wars in the Southeast Asia region established the industry with western soldiers and then later tourists, coming to buy sex, with young girls being highly valued.

The Asia-Pacific is the world most prone region to be hit by natural disasters, and all the researched countries are at risk of natural disasters. Natural disasters have shown to contribute to child prostitution as the mayhem after disasters open windows to criminal activities, such as child sex trafficking and prostitution because of the children's more dependent and vulnerable position than adults in society.

The created analytical framework was applicable as a whole for all cases in this study, with just small changes to two of the factors. In this study, the Southeast Asia region have been researched, and therefore the findings and conclusions are based on this context. However, when returning to previous research, a lot of the factors researched in this study was found in other studies made in different parts of the world. This shows that the results are generalized by being present in other contexts in other parts of the world as well. On top of that, there is certainly additionally factors in both Southeast Asia and other parts of the world that is not present in this study and that possibly will show to be different depending on where the research is being made.

As shown in this study, the view and beliefs of children's rights in some of the world's society's must be improved, as a lot of children in the world is not being ensured their human rights by being exploited sexually. This phenomenon is rooted deep within their society's, and as traditions and norms often lives on through generations, they are hard to change rapidly. As the problem of child prostitution in the Southeast Asia region became known and were highlighted internationally already in the 1990s and it still exist in these high amounts today, the possibility of the phenomena becoming "normal" and just a part of how the world is, is lingering as a horrible insight. However, the phenomenon is still continuously researched in various angles today, contributing to advocate the exposed children's situation and spread knowledge of the problem.

A lot of factors have been established to contribute to child prostitution in studies made worldwide and additionally in this study on the Southeast Asia region. Therefore, future research should emphasize ways and solutions to end the child prostitution based on the research of which factors that contributes to it.

7 References

Books

Bryman, A. (2016) *Social Research Methods*, University Press: Oxford

Creswell, J. W. (2009) *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, Sage: Los Angeles

George, L. Alexander and Bennett Andrew, (2005) *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, MIT Press: Cambridge

Internet sources

Blackburn, A., G., Taylor, W., R. & Davis, E., J. (2010) Understanding the Complexities of Human Trafficking and Child Sexual Exploitation: The Case of Southeast Asia, Women & Criminal Justice, 20:1-2, 105-126, DOI: 10.1080/08974451003641099, Accessed 29 November 2017

<https://doi.org/10.1080/08974451003641099>

Asiasociety (2017) Center for Global Education - Confucianism, Accessed 7 December 2017

<https://asiasociety.org/education/confucianism>

Bang B., Baker P.L., Carpinteri A., Van Hasselt V.B. (2014) Child Prostitution. In: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. SpringerBriefs in Psychology. Springer, Cham, Accessed 25 October 2017

https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-01878-2_5

BBC (2017) Cambodia profile – Timeline, Accessed 28 December 2017

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-13006828>

Brody, C., Tuot, S., Chhea, C., Saphonn, V., Yi, S. (2016) Factors associated with sex work among at-risk female youth in Cambodia: a cross-sectional study, AIDS Care Vol. 28 , Iss. 3, Accessed 29 November 2017

<http://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lnu.se/doi/full/10.1080/09540121.2015.1096893?scroll=top&needAccess=true>

Boczar, A. (2015) Uneasy Allies: The Americanization of Sexual Policies in South Vietnam. *The Journal of American - East Asian Relations*, 22(3), 187-220, Accessed 16 December 2017

<http://booksandjournals.brillonline.com.proxy.lnu.se/content/journals/10.1163/18765610-02203003>

Burkhalter, H. (2012) Sex trafficking, law enforcement and perpetrator accountability. *Anti - Trafficking Review*, (1), 122-133. Accessed 28 November 2017

<http://proxy.lnu.se/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy.lnu.se/docview/1500821023?accountid=14827>

CG – Commisceo Global (2017) Vietnam Guide – A Look at Vietnamese Language, Culture, Customs and Etiquette, Accessed 7 December 2017

<https://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/vietnam-guide>

CIA (2017) Country Comparison GDP – Per Capita (PPP) Library, Publications, The World Factbook, Accessed 27 December 2017

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html>

Crowe, S., Cresswell, K., Robertson, A., Huby, G., Avery, A., Sheikh, A. (2011) The case study approach, BMC Medical Research Methodology, Accessed 4 January 2018

<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1186/1471-2288-11-100.pdf>

Davy, D. (2014) "Understanding the complexities of responding to child sex trafficking in Thailand and Cambodia", International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, Vol. 34 Issue: 11/12, pp.793-816, Accessed 17 December 2017

<https://doi-org.proxy.lnu.se/10.1108/IJSSP-10-2013-0103>

ECPAT (2017) What are the causes?, Accessed 20 December 2017

<http://ecpat.be/en/sexual-exploitation/what-are-the-causes/>

Embassy of Sweden Manila (2017) Landfakta Filippinerna 2017, Accessed 20 December 2017

http://www.swedenabroad.com/ImageVaultFiles/id_48831/cf_347/Landfakta_Filippinerna_2017-05-16.PDF

Empel, E., Wagner, G., C. (2012) The Future of the commercial Sex Industry, The Futurist; Washington Vol. 46, Iss. 3, 36-40, Accessed 31 October 2017

https://search-proquest-com.proxy.lnu.se/docview/1019030719?rfr_id=info%3Axri%2Fsid%3Aprimo

Goldsamt, A., L., Clatts, C., M., Yu, G., Le, B., Colby, D., J. (2017) Human Trafficking and Emerging Sex Risk Environments in Vietnam: A Preliminary Profile of a Sex Work “Shared House”, Journal of Human Trafficking, 3:2, 107-115, Accessed 14 December 2017

<http://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lnu.se/doi/pdf/10.1080/23322705.2016.1193343?needAccess=true>

Goodrick, D. (2014) Comparative Case Studies, Methodological Briefs: Impact Evaluation No. 9, UNICEF Office of Research, Florence, Accessed 4 January 2018

https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/brief_9_comparativecasestudies_eng.pdf

GOVPH (2017) Republic of the Philippines, Bureau of Immigration, Press Release March 2014,

Accessed 12 December 2017

<http://www.immigration.gov.ph/index.php/news/press-release/73-march-2014-issuances/510-bi-there-is-no-such-thing-as-offloading-policy>

Hawke, A., Raphael, A. (2016) Offenders on the move: Global study on sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism, Accessed 30 October 2017

<http://globalstudysectt.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Global-Report-Offenders-on-the-Move-Final.pdf>

History (2017) Vietnam War, Accessed 28 December 2017

<http://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/vietnam-war-history>

Hounmenou, C. (2016) Child Abuse & Neglect - Exploring child prostitution in a major city in the West African region, Volume 59, Pages 26-35, Accessed 26 October 2017

<http://www.sciencedirect.com.proxy.lnu.se/science/article/pii/S0145213416301429>

Hounmenou, C. (2017) Child Abuse & Neglect – An initial exploration of prostitution of boys in the West African region, Volume 69, Pages 188-200, Accessed 26 October 2017

<http://www.sciencedirect.com.proxy.lnu.se/science/article/pii/S0145213417301771>

Humanium (2017) Rights of the Child - The meaning of the child and the rights of the children, Accessed 30 October 2017

<https://www.humanium.org/en/child-rights/>

Hwang, M. C. (2017) Offloaded: Women's sex work migration across the south china sea and the gendered antitrafficking emigration policy of the Philippines. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 45(1), 131-147, Accessed 12 December 2017

<http://proxy.lnu.se/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy.lnu.se/docview/1883071175?accountid=14827>

iExplore (2017) Philippines – History and Culture, Accessed 17 December 2017

<https://www.iexplore.com/articles/travel-guides/south-and-southeast-asia/philippines/history-and-culture>

ICMEC (2016) Missing Children in Southeast Asia: Model Framework & Regional Review, Accessed 12 December 2017

<https://www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/SEAsiaMCRP-1.pdf>

ILO (2017) Global estimates of child labour: Results and trends, 2012-2016, Accessed 23 October 2017

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---ipec/documents/publication/wcms_575604.pdf

ILO (2017) Global estimates of modern slavery: Forced labour and forced marriage, International Labour Office, Geneva, Accessed 23 October 2017
http://www.alliance87.org/global_estimates_of_modern_slavery-forced_labour_and_forced_marriage.pdf

International Council on Human Rights Policy (2009) Corruption and Human Rights: Making the connection, Accessed 4 January 2018
file:///C:/Users/vr021_000/Downloads/2009-Intl-Council-on-HR-Human-Rights-and-Corruption.pdf

Kamruzzaman, Md., Hakim, A., Md. (2016) Prostitution Going Spiral: The Myth of Commercial Child Sex, International Journal of Biomedical and Clinical Sciences Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 1-6, Accessed 20 December 2017
https://www.academia.edu/27533895/Prostitution_Going_Spiral_The_Myth_of_Commercial_Child_Sex?auto=download

Kay, P. (2016) The Asian men who buy sex with Cambodian virgins, Post Magazine, Accessed 30 December 2017
<http://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/long-reads/article/2040546/rich-asian-men-who-buy-sex-cambodian-virgins>

Keo, C., Bouhours, T., Broadhurst, R., & Bouhours, B. (2014). Human Trafficking and Moral Panic in Cambodia. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 653, 202, Accessed 24 November 2017
<http://proxy.lnu.se/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy.lnu.se/docview/1520008088?accountid=14827>

Klatt, T., Cavner, D., Egan, V., (2014) Child Abuse & Neglect – Rationalizing predictors of child sexual exploitation and sex-trading, Volume 38, Issue 2, Pages 252-260, Accessed 24 October 2017
<http://www.sciencedirect.com.proxy.lnu.se/science/article/pii/S0145213413002500>

Lau, C. (2008) Child Prostitution in Thailand, Journal of Child Health Care Copyright, SAGE Publications Los Angeles, London, New Delhi and Singapore Vol 12(2) 144–155, Accessed 29 November 2017
<http://journals.sagepub.com.proxy.lnu.se/doi/pdf/10.1177/1367493508090172>

Library Of Congress (2017) Children’s rights: International Laws, Accessed 28 November 2017
<https://www.loc.gov/law/help/child-rights/international-law.php>

Lockett, J. (2017) ‘He won my virginity’ How western pedophiles are buying virginites of Cambodian children as young as SEVEN – as victim reveals horrors of vile sex trade, The Sun, Accessed 30 December 2017
<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/3046876/how-western-paedophiles-are-buying-the-virginites-of->

[cambodian-children-as-young-as-seven-as-victim-reveals-horrors-of-vile-sex-trade/](#)

Merrill, M., R., Njord, L., Njord, R., Read, C., Pachano, D.R., J. (2010) The effect of family influence on indicators associated with street life among Filipino street children, *Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies* Vol. 5 , Iss. 2, Accessed 12 December 2017

<http://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lnu.se/doi/full/10.1080/17450121003615369>

M'Jid, Najat Maalla. (2014) Reflections on a Six-Year Tenure as UN Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography, *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*; Medford Vol. 38, Iss. 2, 39-48, Accessed 25 October 2017

<https://search-proquest-com.proxy.lnu.se/docview/1565808234?OpenUrlRefId=info:xri/sid:primo&accountid=14827>

Montgomery, H. (2011) Rumours of Child Trafficking after Natural Disasters, *Journal of Children and Media*, 5:4, 395-410, Accessed 4 January 2018

<http://www-tandfonline-com.proxy.lnu.se/doi/pdf/10.1080/17482798.2011.587142?needAccess=true>

Montgomery, H. (2015) Understanding Child Prostitution in Thailand in the 1990s, *The Open University*, Accessed 26 November 2017

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.proxy.lnu.se/doi/10.1111/cdep.12122/full>

Nga, P. T. T. (2016) THE PROTECTION OF CHILD VICTIMS IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM: IMPLEMENTATION IN VIETNAM. *Current Politics and Economics of South, Southeastern, and Central Asia*, 25(3), 141-170, Accessed 6 December 2017

<http://proxy.lnu.se/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy.lnu.se/docview/1898950057?accountid=14827>

OHCHR (2017) Convention on the Rights of the Child - Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989

entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49, Accessed 23 October 2017

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

Parks, T. (2008) In Thailand: Violent Conflict: Past and Present, The Asia Foundation, Accessed 28 December 2017

<https://asiafoundation.org/2008/04/30/in-thailand-violent-conflict-past-and-present/>

Plan International (2017) COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN IN THE PHILIPPINES, Accessed 20 December 2017

<https://plan-international.org/philippines/csec-philippines#>

Rafferty, Y. (2016) Challenges to the rapid identification of children who have been trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 52, 158-168, Accessed 20 December

[https://lnu-se-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=TN_sciversonsciencedirect_elsevierS0145-2134\(15\)00439-1&context=PC&vid=primo-custom-lnu&search_scope=default_scope&tab=default_tab&lang=sv_SE](https://lnu-se-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=TN_sciversonsciencedirect_elsevierS0145-2134(15)00439-1&context=PC&vid=primo-custom-lnu&search_scope=default_scope&tab=default_tab&lang=sv_SE)

Ramcharan, R. (2016) INTERNAL POLITICAL CONFLICT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: THE ROOT CAUSES OF CONFLICT DURING TRANSITIONS TO DEMOCRACY, *Geopolitics, History and International Relations*; Woodside Vol. 8, Iss. 2, 192-213, Accessed 20 December 2017

<https://search-proquest-com.proxy.lnu.se/docview/1816620013?OpenUrlRefId=info:xri/sid:primo&accountid=14827>

SBS News (2013) Blog: Reporting on sex tourism in the Philippines, Accessed 29 December 2017

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/blog-reporting-on-sex-tourism-in-the-philippines>

Shafe, S., Hutchinson, G. (2014) Child Sexual Abuse and Continuous Influence of Cultural Practices: A review, *West Indian Med J.* 2014 Oct; 63(6): 634–637, Accessed 4 January 2018

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4663956/>

Smith, O. (2017) Travel, Maps and graphics, Mapped: The countries where a natural disasters is most likely to strike, *The Telegraph*, Accessed 17 December 2017

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/maps-and-graphics/Mapped-Where-a-natural-disaster-is-most-likely-to-strike/>

Siagian, C. (2016) New Mandala, News Perspectives on Southeast Asia, Saving street kids in Duterte's Philippines, Accessed 12 December 2017

<http://www.newmandala.org/saving-street-kids-dutertes-philippines/>

Spurrier, K., J., Alpaslan, N., AH. (2017) Adult survivors' recollections and accounts of their involvement in child sex tourism by way of child prostitution, *Social work (Stellenbosch. Online)* vol.53 n.3, Accessed 20 December 2017

http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0037-80542017000300008

Sustainable development (2017) Knowledge platform – Targets & Indicators, United Nations, Accessed 24 November 2017

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg8>

Thornber, K. (2013) *Global Health and World Literature: Translating Silences in Cambodian Writing on Sex Slavery, Literature and Medicine*, Volume 31, Number 2, Accessed 27 October 2017

<https://muse-jhu-edu.proxy.lnu.se/article/536322>

Transparency International (2017) Corruption Perceptions Index 2016, Accessed 27 December 2017

https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016

Tsai, L., C. (2017) Family financial roles assumed by sex trafficking survivors upon community re-entry: Findings from a financial diaries study in the Philippines, Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment Vol. 27 , Iss. 4, Accessed 12 December 2017

<http://www.tandfonline-com.proxy.lnu.se/doi/full/10.1080/10911359.2017.1288193>

Töpffer, M. (2010) Därför protesterar Thailands rödskjortor mot regeringen, Expressen, Accessed 28 December 2017

<https://www.expressen.se/nyheter/darfor-protesterar-thailands-rodskjortor-mot-regeringen/>

UN (2017) Definition of child prostitution, Accessed 23 October 2017

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPSCCRC.aspx>

UNDP (2017) Human Development Reports, International Human Development Indicators, Accessed 1 December 2017

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries>

United Nations ESCAP (2017) UN report says natural disasters to become more destructive in Asia-Pacific without action on disaster resilience, Accessed 30 December 2017

<http://www.unescap.org/news/un-report-says-natural-disasters-become-more-destructive-asia-pacific-without-action-disaster>

UNICEF (2016) Annual Report 2016 Philippines, Accessed 12 December 2017

https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Philippines_2016_COAR.pdf

UNICEF (2017) Sexuell exploitering av barn - Sexuellt utnyttjande är ett allvarligt hot mot barns hälsa och välbefinnande, Accessed 20 December 2017

<https://unicef.se/fakta/sexuell-exploatering-av-barn>

U.S. Department of State (2017) Tier Placements, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, Trafficking in Persons Report 2017, Accessed 12 December 2017

<https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2017/271117.htm>

Voelkner, N. (2014) Affective Economies in the Governance of Trafficking and Sex Work in Vietnam, Global Society, 28:3, 375-390, Accessed 7 December 2017

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2014.900740>

World Travel & Tourism Council (2017) Travel & Tourism – Economic Impact 2017 Cambodia, Accessed 29 December 2017

<https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries->

[2017/cambodia2017.pdf](#)

World Travel & Tourism Council (2017) Travel & Tourism – Economic Impact 2017 Philippines, Accessed 29 December 2017

<https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries-2017/philippines2017.pdf>

World Travel & Tourism Council (2017) Travel & Tourism – Economic Impact 2017 South East Asia, Accessed 29 December 2017

<https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/regions-2017/southeastasia2017.pdf>

World Travel & Tourism Council (2017) Travel & Tourism – Economic Impact 2017 Thailand, Accessed 29 December 2017

<https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries-2017/thailand2017.pdf>

World Travel & Tourism Council (2017) Travel & Tourism – Economic Impact 2017 Vietnam, Accessed 29 December 2017

<https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries-2017/vietnam2017.pdf>