

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

This chapter aims to analyze the reintegration of Thai female returnees by examining case studies. The first section of the chapter will focus on the reason for migration. The second section will deal with the analysis of the living condition in Japan of Thai female migrant including their adaptation to Japanese society. Later return process will be observed in order to ground on understanding for the analysis of the reintegration process of Thai female migrants in the final section.

4. 1. The reason of migration

In order to respond to research questions set in Chapter I, push and pull factor will be used to analyze reason for migration of the Thai female in Chiang Rai province.

Push factor

It is said that migration can occur as a result of push and pull factor. The push factor implies that there is a force which causes a person to move. This can include draught, famine, lack of jobs, over population and civil war (Castles& Miller, 1993).

In this research, most of the women that I interviewed had described themselves as poor or coming from poor farming families. The women revealed that they farmed rice for their own consumption. However, rice farming could not yield sufficient means for them to survive as they need cash to pay for daily goods, agricultural supplies and education. Therefore, the demand for cash to pay for other means of living forced them to earn more money in which migrating to seek employment outside the village as one of their solutions.

"My family was very poor farmer and my father died when I was in 6th grade at school. Furthermore, my mother's health situation was also bad. I had four sisters, and the oldest sister was taking care of my mother. I could not go to the middle school since I had to help my family finance. I went to Bangkok to work to sell food on the street. But, I could not make enough money so I went back home. When the Thai agent from Japan visited her home, I agreed to go because I needed money (Mari)."

Base on the result of my filed research in Chiang Rai province, it could be argued that Thai migrants are generally from the lower economic classes. All of the interviewees in this research raised the economic problems and poverty as their reason to migrate to work outside the villages. Therefore, it could be argued that the poverty is one of the push factors for women to migrate in seeking a better income for their family.

Moreover, the education level is also a push factor for migration decision. Although the level of education of current Thai female migrant workers is getting higher, women's education in this study was relatively low. Only one completed a high school education in this study. Most of them finished only primary education or had no education. The lack of education prevents women from securing a better income.

Furthermore, the push factor can also be applied for the role of women in the villages. It is argued that daughters in northern Thailand are brought up to believe that it is their duty to support their parents and families by earning through any means available to them. This social value is fixed in the society, and it has created a concept of obligation to support the family. (Phongpaichit, 1982). Therefore, for many young Thai women, migration is motivated by the desire to repay their parents for raising them. As defining push factor is a driving force for women to move to another place, it can be said that the traditional role of women was revealed as one of the push factors in this research.

Pull factors

Pull factor is defined as force that encourage a person to move. These include a chance of a better job, better education, a better standard of living (Castles & Miller, 1993). The migration of Thai women in this research is also being able to explain by a pull factor since all of the women interviewed migrated to work in Japan, a country renounced for the better economic condition and higher income.

It is said that Japan's good economic conditions have motivated many Thai migrants to work there. Moreover, there have been demands for unskilled labors in Japan in which low educated Thai people can engage. This economic difference is a main pull factor for motivating Thai women to migrate to Japan. In this study, many interviewees regarded Japan as a rich and developed country and had heard of Japan from friend or someone in the village. However, their information about Japan was limited. They only knew about Japan's economic situation. They did not have any negative information about the life of Thai nationals in Japan. This image of Japan is also one of the pull factors of their decision to migrate.

As such, it could be argued that reason for migration for the Thai female women in this research are both pushed by severe economic condition, lack of education, traditional value of girls to repay their parent; there were pulled by good image of Japanese economic condition. Most of interviewees decided to migrate to Japan due to economic reason. They also had to take responsibility to take care of their parents. The family and community expected them to bring some economic contribution to the home society. This expectation from people in home society and economic contribution has relationship on women's reintegration psychologically. It will be discussed in the last section.

4.2. Living condition in Japan and integration into Japanese society

In order to respond to the reintegration of Thai female returnees, sub questions on the living condition of Thai female returnees and their integration into Japanese society has to be understood. Reintegration process will be affected by the experiences in the destination country because the migration experience gives some impacts on migrants physically and psychologically and would cause some effects to their life to some extent.

Examining living condition in Japan will assist us to understand the challenges of integration and whether they were vulnerable or they were benefit from living experience in Japan. One research indicates that female migrants in Japan tend to have high stress or psychological problems because of poor working condition (Chantavanich, 2001). This literature implies that the poor working condition has some effect on their psychological aspect.

In addition, their integration into Japanese society will be analyzed in this section to understand their returning process. Integration into Japanese society means that migrants learn something different in the destination country. It is necessary to know what they gain or lose from the migration experience to understand whether their migration was successful or failure. By analyzing this, it becomes possible to know how integration affects their return decision.

4.2.1. Vulnerability in Japan

As stated above, it is necessary to look at positive and negative experience in Japan to understand the challenges of integration and how it affects their return decision, as well as reintegration. Moreover, since all the women in this research entered Japan illegally, there is a need to examine vulnerability forced by them during their stay in Japan. It is said that illegal migrant women are vulnerable in destination countries because they tend to engage in low status job such as domestic work or entertainment work and there are risk to be involved in poor working condition.

The working condition

According to the previous researches about illegal migrants in Japan, the women who entered or stayed in Japan illegally and those who were sent to the snack bar were subjected to poor working condition, because these women tended to face a large amount of debt, no wages, no freedom to move alone, long working hours and violence from the customers, and since illegal migrants did not have access to social service such as health service, their health situation became worse. The interviewees in this study also described how they suffered from the severe working condition in Japan.

Freedom of movement

Freedom of movement is the first point that women whom I interviewed expressed in concerning with working condition. For instance, some did not receive any wages at the snack bar while paying off the debts. Noi's case revealed that she used her wages mostly for paying her debts. When it comes to Wipa, the boss at the bar took her wages all the time. They were under the control of snack bar owners and had to stay in an apartment with other snack bar workers. Noi said that she had no freedom at the bar and outside of the bar since the boss stayed at the same apartment and accompanied her whenever she went out. Wipa also agreed that she had no freedom to move unaccompanied as her violent boss would supervise her movements. These strict controls has therefore reduced their interaction with Japanese citizens outside of their working place and discouraged the women from interacting with other Japanese citizens.

Debt

Debt is another point that all the interviewees referred to when describing their vulnerability and limitations. Six out of seven women interviewed had a debt of between 2,000,000 to 3,500,000 yen. Although most of the interviewees were recruited by agents, they were not informed of this debt in advance. They were only told about the debt when they arrived in Japan. The amount of the debt was different

for each case. Mari said that she escaped from paying the debt since she thought it was impossible to repay. According to the interviewees, the time to repay the debt was dependent on the snack bar where they worked. If the owner of the bar was unkind and greedy to make a profit, they charged various fines to the women and it became even more difficult to pay their debts back over a short period of time.

According to the secondary information (Caouette & Saito, 1999), women who went to work at factories or restaurants had to pay the total amount of their travel fee to the agent before leaving Thailand, therefore most of them needed to borrow the money. In stark contrast, women who were sent to work in the snack bars were informed of owing their debt only after arrival in Japan. It is assumed that this is to prevent the women from escaping from the snack bars. Since all interviewees said that they did not like their job at snack bars, it seemed that the debt was a useful tool to keep the women under the snack bar owner's control.

Since they had provided sexual services to Japanese men until their debts were cleared, most of them said that they did not like their jobs at the snack bars. Most of respondents worked very hard at snack bars to repay the debt which they owed. They said that they had to work long hours a day and that they were given inadequate holiday periods. It was impossible to send remittances, because they were also not allowed to have contact with relatives in Thailand until the debt was repaid.

Therefore, debt appeared to be a limitation for all the women to economically benefit from their employment. Debt has also become a barrier for them to maintain the relationship with their relatives in Thailand since the means of communication was cut till they could pay off their debt as mentioned above.

Violence

The third point that interviewees expressed about their working condition in Japanese society is "violence". It is perhaps one of the most influential tool imposed by owner or agent to control the women, and has left many impacts on women's

physical and psychological aspects. Below are the extract of interview from Nam and Wipa who expressed their fear of violence.

"My boss always punched and kicked me even though I did nothing wrong. If I did not obey boss's order, I was tied up to a tree in the snow. He did not hear any excuse from me. He did not regard me as a human being. He always told about the debt (Wipa)."

"The customer tried to inject narcotics to me in the hotel where we went to have sex. I could not reject it because if I reject, the customer reported to the bar and the bar owner may blame me. I was also afraid that the customer might have been beaten me if I rejected. He injected it to me and his arm. We got excited and run around the forest near the hotel. The next thing I knew was that I was lying in the forest with naked (Nam)."

They were threatened with retribution by those operating and protecting the snack bars and by clients when they resisted or escaped. In the case of Wipa, she was always subject to violence from her boss who was in the Yakuza, it was this violence she claimed that had coursed her to have a mental illness. This violence was used to prevent her from escaping the debt. According to her, most of the women who were working at that bar received serious violence from the boss. This bar did not provide any contraceptive devices such as the contraceptive pill. In the case of Nam, she encountered violent customers. She was injected with narcotics by a customer in a hotel, where she was unable to refuse due to fear of violence. These women, who were deceived and sent to the bars in Japan, were beaten or subject to sadistic violent by their clients, were left with permanent psychological scars.

As such, the interviews with all the women in this research could lead to the explanation of the working condition in Japan as poor and severe in which women were socially and economically vulnerable. This situation did not allow them to earn money which was the first objective to come to Japan. The working conditions in Japan confounded the prediction of women. As Chen (2006) argued in her research

of Cambodian female migrants who were forced to be prostitutes, it was difficult for the women to be empowered by the migration experience economically and socially because of these severe working conditions. Similar situation was found in this study that the women in the snack bar were not being empowered socially and economically. Thus, it is necessary to examine how this vulnerability in Japan affects their reintegration process, and it will be discussed in the last section.

4.2.2. Integration into Japanese society

In order to understand women's return decision and their reintegration process, it is important to look at their integration into Japanese society since the degree of integration will influence their return and reintegration process.

In general, migrants will not be always welcomed by the destination country. They will encounter barriers to integration, such as prejudice and discrimination. For such barriers to be overcome, the destination society needs to engage in a shared process of integration. However, there is a difference between integration and assimilation. Assimilation is "the process whereby a minority group gradually adopts the customs and attitudes of the prevailing culture (IOM, 2005)." The assimilation is based on a monoculture definition of society. This approach requires migrants to adjust entirely to the values and the rights system of the host society. On the other hand, integration does not require them to adjust their whole values. Integration recognizes different value systems and cultural practices within society. The process of integration concerns all aspects of life in a society, and includes migrants as well as the host society. In this section, the integration approach was adopted to analyze their level of integration.

It was observed in this study that all of the women interviewed had tried to integrate themselves into Japanese society through different agencies. In this section, the analysis on Thai women's integration into Japanese society will be analyzed through the employment, language and their Japanese partner. These three were considered as agencies which facilitate their integration into Japanese society.

(1) Through employment

For migrants, the employment is the first step to be involved into the society of origin since they become a member of labor market and have many opportunities to interact with local people. As Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union (2004) stated, employment is a key part of the integration process and can be an important way for immigrants to make a social and economic contribution to their host society. This section will examine how women in this study used employment as a tool of integrating into the society.

All Thai women in this study were employed at the snack bar. As mentioned in the first section, the working condition at the snack bar was very poor. However, even though they worked under hard working conditions and did not like the job they were assigned, some women noted that they received recognition by the customers and highlighted this as a positive aspect to migrating.

Mii, for example was sent to the snack bar, but at first she did not know how to treat the customers. Her friend taught her how to treat and serve customers and she was about to acquire the skills needed, learning at a fast pace. The skills Mii learned from her friend and her high tolerance for alcohol made her popular at the snack bar and enabled Mii to earned as much as 3000 yen. It was observed that she succeeded in integrating herself into the working environment in the destination country through her level of performance at work. She also gained confidence since she was recognized by the Japanese customers.

In terms of their adaptation into the Japanese society, some who worked at the snack bar which did not have very strict controls also began to adapt themselves into the Japanese society.

In the case of Mari who escaped from the bar due to the heavy debt, while researcher took an interview with her, she was keen to show many pictures in Japan

including the pictures of the snack bars. The researcher observed that there were many stuffed dolls in her room and that other workers were smiling, it appeared that Mari had enjoyed her time.

Even though they were in the snack bars which were supposed to be very strict control, some of them did not face such situation in this study. Therefore, it could be said that employment did facilitate some women to integrate into Japanese society, and gave them some positive image towards Japan.

(2) Through Language

According to IOM (2005), Language is a fundamental basis for any interaction within society. Therefore, linguistic integration is among the first necessary steps, and the proficiency level of migrants in the language of the host country provides an important insight into this aspect of integration. This section tries to look at how Thai female migrants use Japanese language as an integration tool.

In this research, interviewees revealed that while working at the snack bar, they learned Japanese and were able to communicate with the customers more or less on their own. Some women acquired enough Japanese skills to speak quite well such as Noi, Mii, and Pui, even though they did not have much of an educational background. For instance, Pui obtained a command of Japanese that enabled her to work in a Japanese related work field when she returned to Thailand. She said she enjoyed staying and working in Japan because she could earn enough income, and her Japanese language skill was quite adequate when communicating with others in Japan. It was assumed that good commandment of Japanese language has lessened her feeling of displacement. Noi and Mii learned enough Japanese skill from their Japanese husband, and it helped them to be a member of social network.

As such, language played an important role for women's integration into Japanese society, as IOM (2005) defined. This Japanese language skill can be regarded as social capital which they gained from the experience of living in Japan. It

will be further explained in the last section how Thai female returnees make use of this language skill when they reintegrate into Thai society.

(3) Through Japanese partners

As stated in the previous section, women found their Japanese partner and received financial assistance and social protect. Thus, it could be considered that Japanese partner was one of the agencies which facilitate them to integrate into Japanese society. This section attempts to examine how women are involved into Japanese society through Japanese partner.

Prior to the analysis of Thai female returnees' integration into Japanese society through Japanese partner, some characteristic of women's position in Japan should be noted. As Miyajima(2003) argued, Japanese family structure regard women as the one who stay home, protect family and obey their husband. When women get marry to her husband, she is expected to be a member of the husband's family, and take care of them. These characteristics of women's position in Japan have certain influence on Thai female migrant workers in Japan.

Most of the women in this research found a certain partner in Japan. Many of them met their partners at the snack bars, but some woman also met partners through an introduction by the acquaintance. The women experienced integration through their Japanese partner and tried to receive social and economic protection by their Japanese partner. However, some could not integrate this traditional Japanese family style.

In the case of Nam, her sister already stayed in Japan and Nam came to Japan with the help of her sister. Considering the fact that she was introduced to a Japanese male on arriving in Japan, she was to be a "Bride" whose purpose of entering Japan was to get married. Nam had relationships with several partners. While she was dating with the partner who became a father of Nam's daughter, she and her child was recognized by his family, and accepted.

In Noi's case, after paying off her debt, she got married with a Japanese husband. She was recognized and accepted into Japanese society as being a housewife of Japanese husband. In her case, since Noi and her husband lived close by a mother-in-law, she had to understand the Japanese's view on marriage, which a bride has a role of taking care of a mother-in-law (Miyajima, 2003, p63). Considering the fact that she married legally and stayed close to the husband's family for eight years, she became quite familiar with Japanese life-style and Japanese perspective. Her husband was a cook at a Japanese restaurant and she said that he sometimes cooked Japanese food such as Sashimi⁵. She answered that she liked Japanese food and his cooking. However, in the end, she failed to integrate into Japanese society because she was not able to keep a good relationship with her Japanese mother-in-law. Noi expressed:

"Mother-in-law did not like me. Whenever I invited my Thai friend to the home, she said please be quiet because it is too noisy. She always says don't spend too much money, but she always go shopping. She loves shopping. Her daughter, my husband's younger sister, lives in close to our home and they always go shopping together. "

She failed to adapt herself into the role of a Japanese wife. She could not build a lasting relationship with her mother-in-law as she answers that her mother-in-law did not like Southeast Asian women. She did not become a real "bride" in Japan (Miyajima, 2003).

Therefore, it was observed that Thai women who stayed in Japan adapted into Japanese culture by staying with their partners closely, and broadened their social network through their partners. Once they were married and recognized as a legal wife, they were expected to be a housewife who has Japanese way of thinking by the husband family and his friends. Through these relationships, the women were integrated into Japanese society. However, many women experienced some

⁵ Sashimi is a Japanese delicacy primarily consisting of fresh raw seafood.

difficulties integrating into this traditional family structure in Japan.

To sum up this section, it could be said that all women had different experience in this study and adapted themselves into the Japanese society with different degree. Mii and Pui enjoyed the situation in Japan with their special skills, while others said that they did not want to go back to Japan.

From seven interviewees, their integration into Japanese society differed according to the situation. Mii succeeded in gaining a prominent position as a snack bar employee, and gained the recognition of her customers. Pui also learned Japanese skill and enjoyed working in Japan. Nam worked as an unskilled laborer after working at the snack bar, but she changed jobs often. Wipa, Mari and Rose were vulnerable economically and socially. Most of them stopped working after they found a Japanese partner.

Through conducting the interviews it could be argued that there are two important points which affected the women's integration into Japanese society: firstly the working condition and secondly Japanese partner. The women at the snack bar did not have much freedom and engaged in the entertainment industry, which was regarded as a job of low social value. Even after the women had left the snack bars the only job prospects available for illegal Thai workers were unskilled labor employment opportunities. Some also had received terrible violence.

In terms of their Japanese partner, having a relationship with a local partner seems a good way to receive protection. The Thai women interviewed faced difficulties surviving in Japan and needed to integrate into Japanese society, and a relationship with a Japanese male is one of the ways to assist them to prolong their stay and integrate into Japanese society. However, by becoming involved with a Japanese male the women tended to rely heavily and depend more on their relationship making them less independent and more subject able to their partners influence over their lives.

The following section will examine how these experiences and different level of integration into Japan affected their return decision and reintegration process.

4.3. Returning process

The decision of return

Although the focus of this study is reintegration, it is necessary to look at their returning process in order to assess their success or failure of migration experience. By looking at their returning process, it becomes possible to explain under what condition returnees can reintegrate into the home country.

Theoretically, there are two approaches to examine the return migration (Cassarino, 2004), neo-classical approach and New Economic Labor Migration approach (NELM). According to neo-oclassical approach, the return migration seems to be viewed as the outcome of a failed migration experience which did not bring the expected benefits. On the other hand, New Economic of Labor Migration approach regards the return migration as part of the migration project and it occurs once the migrants achieve their objectives in destination countries.

The return procedure can be broadly divided into two ways, voluntary return and forced return. The IOM's definition of 'voluntary return' is that "Return based on the voluntary decision of the individual (2005)." The concept of voluntary return requires more than an absence of coercive factors. A voluntary decision is not only defined by the absence of any physical, psychological, or material coercion but also implies that the decision is based on adequate, available, accurate, and objective information. On the other hand, "forced return" is meant by "Return that is not undertaken by the individual voluntarily." According to filed study, all of the interviewees came back by their voluntary decision since no one was arrested or deported by the authorities in this study. However, their return does not mean of absence of material coercive. The pregnancy and childbirth was the primary reason attributed by nearly all interviewees for their decision to return back to Thailand.

Since the medical fees and living costs in Japan were expensive for those who do not have national insurance, it was almost impossible to deliver and bring up a child in Japan without support from a Japanese partner.

The women also expressed their concerns about having a child in Japan. They were worried about giving birth with an illegal status since they were not familiar with any laws in Japan. They were not sure which nationality the child would be. Moreover, being illegal migrants in Japan means that they are always consumed by the fear of arrest.

Although the pregnancy was a primary motivating factor to determine their return decision, living condition in Japan and failure or success of migration is also a secondary factor to affect their return decision.

For example, neo-classical approach can be applied in the case of Nam and Wipa. As neo-classical approach argues that decision to return arises from the failure to achieve migration's objectives, these two women returned because they miscalculated the cost of migration and were not able to reap the benefits of higher earnings. As Wipa only worked at the snack bar and she was exploited by the owner of the bar, she was not able to save money as expected. Moreover, as neo-classical approach argues that return migration occurs when their human capital was not rewarded as expected, Wipa and Nam were not able to gain productive or useful skills which they would be able to utilize when they return. Since Wipa and Nam were subjected to the violence in the work site, they revealed that they were tired of staying in Japan, and wishing to come back to Thailand. Therefore, it could be said that their migration was a failure socially and economically since she was not able to achieve any migration goals. Under this condition, the pregnancy triggered the decision of return.

There was also the case that women made a decision of return because of several social factors. Noi responded that she did not want to stay with mother-in-law anymore, because Noi felt some discrimination feeling toward Southeast Asian

women from her mother-in-law. Moreover, Noi's father in Thailand was left alone since Noi's mother passed away. Noi wanted to take care of her father. In this case, one can argue that she met with the social failure of migration.

On the other hand, NELM approach can be applied for Mii, Pui and Rose case. This approach regards return migration as natural outcome of a successful experience abroad during which migrants met their objectives. These three women found their Japanese partner who provide financial support, and were able to save some amount of money. They answered that they wanted to stay longer if they did not become pregnant. It could be said that they were able to achieve their migration objectives which in these cases means economically successful. Although the pregnancy motivated them to return, the migration experience was successful for them, as NELM approach argued.

Other possible factors affecting their return decision are also argued in several literatures. The governmental support for voluntary return is considered as one of the affecting factor, and the return assistance from sending and receiving countries is important to make the reintegration process as successful as possible (IMO, 2005). However, according to the interviewees, there was no support offered by both Thai and Japanese government in the case studies. Interviewees in this study made a decision of return without any support from the government. Employment prospect in the country of origin is also considered as one of the factors affecting return decision (ibid). However, no one responded that they had employment prospect when they made a decision of return, since the decision to return for these women in this study were unexpected pregnancy.

It should also be noted that the reaction from Japanese partner can be attributed as one of the affecting factor of return decision. Many women expressed the feeling that their Japanese partner did not want to take the responsibilities to take care them. The pregnancy was a factor for the Japanese partner to determine whether he should get married or not. If their Japanese partner refuses to help them, women would fall into the vulnerable situation since it means women lose the social and

financial protection. Others who did not legally marry said that their pregnancy with a Japanese partner and his reaction had some common features. One of those who delivered a child in Thailand was told by her Japanese partner to go back to Thailand. Another interviewee said that her partner wanted to have a child but he did not want to marry her.

Matsui's study (2003) could assist in analyzing the attitude of Japanese men towards Thai women in this study. According to her, there are biases toward Southeast Asian women in Japan. Japanese men go out with Southeast Asian women asking for sexual activity. However, once the woman gets pregnant without marriage, the men lose sexual desirability toward them. In addition, Japanese partners regard Southeast Asian women as less responsible than Japanese women. This sense of discrimination makes it easier for Japanese men to abandon their Thai partners.

To sum up the return process of women in this study, it could be said that their return decision was made not only by the failure of the migration experience, but also when they achieve the migration goals, as Cassarino (2004) had argued. These factors were instrumental in the women's decision to return to Thailand.

Returning procedure

In terms of returning procedure, since all the women in this study were illegal workers, they were not able to go back to Thailand by legal procedures. There were two types of returns. In the first type, they reported to the Japanese immigration bureau directly. In the second type, they went to the Thai embassy asking for help. All of them were asked to pay the return air ticket by themselves. Except for Wipa's case, the Japanese partner helped to buy the air ticket to Thailand. Wipa went to the Thai embassy for help and she was sent to a shelter⁶ in Japan. She had to wait three months at the shelter before she could leave Japan. Another interviewee said that she had to wait a month in a similar shelter. There were no interviewees who were detained. Most were just asked by the immigration officers and allowed to leave on

⁶ House for Women "Saalaa" is the shelter providing the assistance to foreign women.

the passports they had.

To sum up the return process of women in this study, it could be said that their return decision was made not only by the failure of the migration experience, but also when they achieve the migration goals, as Cassarino (2004) had argued.

4. 4. The process of reintegration for Thai female returnees

The process of reintegration is the focus of this study, and as analyzed in the previous sections, their reintegration will be affected by the experience in Japan. Moreover, there are also possible facilitating factors for reintegration: Job opportunity, support from NGOs, family and community relations and individual feeling. In order to understand how women reintegrate into the society, it is necessary to investigate how these socio economic factors support their reintegration.

For returnees, job opportunity is important since most of them migrated abroad for economic reason. If they are not able to find job in the country of origin, they might choose the second migration option. Moreover, if NGO provide economic assistance or vocational training, returnees' condition could be better. In terms of family and community relations, if migrant's family and community accept them as before and there is no family disruption or stigmatization, this would lead their sustainable social situation. Individual feeling is also important to leads their social reintegration successful. Migrants tend to feel low self esteem because of no job opportunity or deskilling. This section tries to analyze how above factors support their reintegration.

4. 4. 1. Economic reintegration

It is said that migrants have difficulty reintegrating into their home countries because of joblessness and social maladjustment (Arowolo, 2000). Employment opportunities are one of the most important aspects to successful reintegration as they provide secure salaries to their families. Therefore, in order to respond the research

question, it is necessary to look at economic aspect of reintegration.

General overview of female employment in Chiang Rai province

Before examining the cases, it is necessary to look at the general overview of employment in Chiang Rai province in order to assess if returnees have less access for employment compared with local people who are not returnees.

According to National Economic and Social Development Board, the main economic activity in Chiang Rai in 1998 was agriculture, followed by wholesale and retail trade, and services. Major agricultural products are rice, maize, cassava, ginger and longon(NESDB, 1998).

Females are largely involved in the agricultural sector, followed by sales, craftsmen and laborers. There are also women who engaged in household work. It could be stated that many women work as unskilled labor in this region. There are some reasons why females are largely involved in unskilled sector. .

First of all, if women are born in farmer's family, they will soon recognize how difficult to earn enough money only by farming. It was known that life in villages where most of people engaged in agricultural work was extremely hard. This is because villages in North and Northeast of Thailand often suffered from droughts and floods. Moreover, agricultural families during this period often relied only on rainwater, so they were frequently hit by natural disasters such as floods and draughts (Kyoto YMCA, 2001, p42). Many farm products had low productivity and liquidity. Therefore, children who were born in farming family in this period had to help the family in farming rice.

In addition to that, according to Phongpaichit(1982), the educational opportunities for women are relatively low in this area, because many farmers were not able to afford to send their daughters to the school. The lack of education prevents women from securing productive jobs.

There are three reasons for this low education. As stated above, farming family were struggling against natural disasters and droughts so they needed more labor forces. Since these families counted their children as necessary labor forces, the children had to work instead of getting a higher education. The second reason is that although primary education was provided free or at low cost by the Thai government, the school fees at the secondary school were significantly higher at that time (Caouette & Saito, 1999, p29). In addition, secondary schools required high examination scores, the ability to pay the tuition fees, and other expenses for entrance. It is, therefore, considered that girls in Northern villages had quite limited access to education and this lack of educational opportunity prevents them to secure productive employment.

Under these conditions, women have few alternatives to earn income except migrating to the cities. Furthermore, daughter's obligation of taking care of their parents also motivates them to opt for the migration as an option.

Based on the above explanation of employment situation, the following section will further examine the economic situation of returnees.

(1) Job opportunity and occupation shift

As mentioned above, job opportunity is important for returnees when they returned to the country of origin. If there is enough job opportunity, women can make a living without re-migrating. Moreover, if women gain human capital in Japan, it might be possible to secure better or productive job than before their departure. Therefore, how employment opportunity support their reintegration and the use of knowledge acquired in Japan will be analyzed in this section.

According to the interview, when the women went back home, they all went back to their villages. But they did not work immediately, since the women in this study returned to Thailand with a small child or while being pregnant. Most of them

did not work for a few years. They lived with support from their Japanese partners or their savings from Japan, or support from the family.

After taking up the employment, only two respondents were back to work in the agricultural sector which they had previously worked before. Wipa began to help her family farming and Mari also helped within her families farming community.

Table 4. Occupation shift of case studies

	Family job	Former job before going to Japan	Job in Japan	Job after return
Noi	farming	laborer in Bangkok	entertainer house wife	No employment relied on the remittances
Mii	father migrating Middle East	seller in Bangkok	entertainer	owned small shop
Nam	farming	massage shop in Bangkok	entertainer factory laborer	accessory factory
Wipa	farming	laborer in Bangkok	entertainer	farming, but migrated Taiwan twice
Pui	farming	seller in Bangkok, married with Thai guy but divorced	entertainer service jobs	working at the guest house
Mari	farming	foodseller in Bangkok	entertainer	farming

	Family job	Former job before going to Japan	Job in Japan	Job after return
Rose	farming	entertainer in Hat Yai	entertainer	No employment relied on the remittances

The occupational shift was seen in three cases, Nam, Mii and Pui. Nam started to work at an accessory factory. Mii started her own small business in the village where she came from, and Pui started to work at a guest house which catered many Japanese tourists.

It was observed that only Pui used the skills which she learned from her experience in Japan. She began to work at a guest house where many Japanese tourists were guests. Although she only completed elementary school education, she was able to work because of her Japanese language skills. In her case, the experience in Japan helped her to gain employment. It can be said that she earned social capital in Japan. Other interviewees, who also had enough Japanese language skills, did not find Japanese related jobs because there were no such opportunities in their living environments. Moreover, Pui still receives the remittances from her Japanese partner as much as 50,000 yen every two months. She also had a child with her Thai ex-husband. Considering the fact that the salary in the guest house would not be high enough to bring up two children, if her Japanese partner stops sending remittances, she would be economically vulnerable.

Mii established a small stationary shop by using the money from her husband. She invested her savings and remittances from her Japanese partner into this business. It is assumed that she has enough financial management skill to secure her economic stability and has confidence to succeed based on her successful experience at the snack bar, but it is too early to tell how long the remaining businesses will survive. It has been about 11 years since she established her shop, and it seems her shop is in a

stable situation. She still receives a large amount of remittances from her husband in Japan. She said that he gave as much as 100,000 yen whenever she called. However, he is old and hospitalized now, so it is uncertain whether he can keep on sending the remittances. Thus, her experience in working abroad does not help her present business, because she has not learned some new skills. However, it was helpful to her since because she was able to secure the needed capital to start her own business and have the funds needed to pay for the start up costs.

In the case of Nam, she used to work at a massage parlor in Bangkok before going to Japan, and she worked as an entertainer and factory labor in Japan. After she returned, she started to work at an accessory factory. However, she did not think she gained skill in Japan, as Macaranas (2004) argued that particularly for the women migrants in vulnerable occupations gained no values-added experience. She said that only jobs qualified for her were unskilled labor because she only completed 4th grade education. She had a disadvantage of finding employment because of low education. This fact shows that the employment situation for low education females is still inadequate. She expressed that it was very hard to work at the accessory factory because she had to work long hours and the location is far from her home. In addition to these problems her health situation was getting worse and she had a daughter who needs to be taken care of. Since Nam encountered financial difficult in sending her child to school she was able to receive a scholarship from the local group which helps returnees from Japan called SEPOM.

Considering from the human capital perspective, Pui has improved her market value in the workplace by using the skills which she learned, however the job she gained is not financially productive enough to enable her to bring up two children. Mii who seemed to have a stable economic situation was not totally independent. Nam did not gain the skill which could strengthen her economic condition. She was not able to secure the educational expense of her child. Many of them stated that there were only farming jobs or daily jobs in the villages available when they returned. In addition, since the education level of these women is low, it was difficult for them to find profitable jobs. The only jobs they could find were unskilled jobs.

It can be concluded that few returnees could make use of the experience in Japan to find a job in Thailand, and employment opportunity did not so much facilitate their reintegration because there were only limited number of job available for them. As conceptual framework suggested, it was because they gain no-value added experience in Japan. Most of them did not have useful experience in Japan and did not hold adequate qualification for productive job. Therefore, the women encountered difficulties when they try to seek employment.

(2) Second migration

According to the research of Asis (2001), those who are seeking employment overseas again have several commonalities: "they were poor prior to migration (i.e. poorer compared to the others); they worked as entertainers; and they were economically vulnerable upon their return (p63)." In this research, Wipa fulfills all these points as she has highlighted how her vulnerability and family's poverty have played decisive roles in shaping the destiny of her life.

It can be argued that Wipa could not achieve her migration goal. She did not receive any economic support from anyone and no saving. Upon her return, there was only farming job available for her due to her weak academic background. Under this condition, four months later she migrated to Taiwan. She said that since she did not bring any money from Japan, she needed to help her family more. She expressed her disappointment that she could not make enough money to stabilize the family finances even in Taiwan. As she said in her interview, contributing to the household finances was a desirable result for migrant workers. If it was not achieved during the first migration, then a second migration would occur. However, if women decided to re-migrate, then the children would be left behind in someone else's care. Wipa's case showed that re-migration did not always result in bringing economic success.

One can conclude that second migration occurred when the socio-economic condition of returnees was not sustainable, as IOM argued. However, unlike Asis's

research (2001), even though women in this study had worked as entertainers, only one decided to re-migrate again. Therefore, Wipa's case shows that economical situation upon their return would have more impact on their second migration decision than the occupation in the destination country, and this economic situation upon return was related to their success or failure of their migration experience.

(3) Financial support from Japanese partners

The new factor facilitating their reintegration was found through the interview. According to the interview conducted, most interviewees received some economic assistance from their Japanese partner in the beginning.

Through analyzing the data, this financial support from Japanese partner played a vital role in the women's reintegration whilst they were pregnant and in the early stages of child-bearing. The women interviewed in this research were not able to work actively due to the pregnancy and child-bearing upon their return. However, it was highlighted through primary research that the women could rely on the remittances from their Japanese partners and that by using this financial means they could survive without securing employment. This financial support helped the women to take a first step to resettlement. The women interviewed also highlighted how the remittance they received had helped them to overcome financial obstacles such as possible debt and of having to migrate again. The women also noted that the remittance helped them not to rely on family handouts or have to work in unskilled employment.

The amount of remittances from Japanese partners did cover a wide range economically. In most cases, the women would make a phone call to their partners asking for necessary money. Mii said her husband sent remittances of as much as 100,000 yen whenever she called. Pui said that her partner sent remittances of 50,000 yen every two month, which was not enough for her. The remittances from their partners were mostly used for expense of bringing up children. They did not work while being supported from their Japanese partners through remittances. Many of the

women interviewed hoped that their Japanese partners would continue to send money.

However, some lost contact with their Japanese partners for various reasons. Mari said that it was because of geographical reasons, such as no communication tools in the village; while Nam said that her ex-partner went bankrupt because of the Japanese economy recession. Other interviewees still receive some money, but the amount had decreased over time. All of the women interviewed said that communication between themselves and their ex-partners had decreased over time. Even Noi who legally married said that she had never received a phone call from her husband in eight years.

All women who still receive economic support said that they were also worried if their partners stop sending remittances. Even the legally married wife said that she was not able to contact him if he lost contact with her because the only tool which can connect to Japan was a telephone in her village. She said that she felt pressure to keep contact with him since he is the only source of income for her. Some returnees totally depend on remittances from their partners.

In sum, although the remittances sent by the women's Japanese partners did help the women reintegrate in the early stages, problems did arise after their partners stop sending the remittance. A number of the women were forced to seek employment once the remittances stopped coming; however, it was difficult for women to obtain productive and sustainable employment due to their lack of academic background.

4. 4. 2. Social reintegration: social and cultural change

According to the conceptual framework, the social aspect of reintegration can be crucial factor in the reintegration process, since they have to adjust their life into the home society. It was considered that the migration experience changed their psychical or psychological aspect more or less. In this section, how family and community relationship affect their reintegration will be analyzed, as well as the influence of migration experience.

(1) Family relations

Family relations play an important role in the reintegration process. It is often argued that returnees experience difficulties such as family disruption due to the long time absence from their family. Family acceptance is the first step when reintegrating into their home society. Since most of the women migrated to Japan in order to help family finance and also obligation of taking care of parents, the economic contribution from daughter is a long awaited result for their family.

In this study, all the women bore children to Japanese men; some gave birth to the children in Thailand whilst others had the children in Japan. When the returnees arrived back to Thailand they could not anticipate the reception they would received from their families. However, most of women in this study answered that their family accepted them and their child except in the case of Wipa.

Looking at all the cases and considering the commonalities, it could be argued that they were accepted by their families because most of the women had received economic support from their Japanese partners, even if only at the beginning of their return back to Thailand. In addition, those who stayed in Japan after working at the snack bars could save money; this also allowed the women to contribute toward their families.

In the case of Wipa, however, her migration to Japan did not yield economic success and lead to her family being resentful about her return. As Wipa was not well accepted by her family she felt a feeling of displacement and argued that she found it hard to reintegrate into Thai society. Wipa stated that her social exclusion and feeling of being ostracized from her family increase when she returned to Thailand.

"The family problem increased after I came back from Japan. My sister owed new debts. Even though I worked very hard, my family did not understand me (Wipa)."

In Wipa's case the evidence gathered could lead one to argue that presence and acceptance by her family was a key factor in her reintegration in Thai society and also could be attributed to her present state of mind.

In the case of Mari she married a Thai man after three years of being a returnee. By marrying a Thai man she was able to reintegrate into her local social society. The attitude towards her and her child was positive and this new husband treated her child who was born with Japanese partner as his own daughter. Mari also gave birth to another child with her new husband and it could be argued that this helped the couple integrate as a family in their community.

Since the women returned to Thailand have spent much of their time bringing up their children and have devoted much of their time to ensure that their child's have happy lives. This study found that the presence of children helped facilitate the women's reintegration back into Thai society. Mii decided to teach Japanese to her child and so paid for her child to take extra Japanese classes. By putting her child into the Japanese classes Mii was able to increase educational opportunities for her child and this also helped integrate Mii with other members of the community who were undertaking the same tasks with their children.

Although some of the interviewees spoke positively about reintegrating with a child; others highlighted that it was an extra economic burden to the reintegration process. Nam and Wipa and Mari receive the scholarship from SEPOM and argued that they did not think they would be able to send their children to school without the financial help from the organization.

(2) Community relations

The relationship among the people in the community is an important factor when trying to secure the women's social reintegration. This is because returnees have to adjust themselves into the traditional society again. In this section, how community

relationship affects their reintegration will be analyzed.

Before examining the case, it is necessary to understand the value change in Thai society. The traditional culture is changing in the recent world as Singhanetra-Renard (1992) mentions, and a social class structure is appearing in rural parts of Thailand. He argues that there is now greater inequality between the rich and poor than in the past. To be influential in the village is now built on money and contracts, not on the charisma or kinship positions. According to him, capitalism, influence of money and "Exchange labour (farm family helping each other out during busy agricultural periods) and even religious obligations can now be fulfilled by monetary payments instead of the traditional personal services. (p202)"

As such, people began to migrate for higher incomes and have respect for the wealth of migrants when they returned. Therefore, migrants have live up to the expectations of villagers when they depart, and if they can not bring back a tangible result, which is "money", the migrants tend to be stigmatized or excluded from society.

This study also found that community acceptance was more successful when the returnees came back to their country of origin with financial capital. Some women interviewed complained about certain members of the community that had gossiped about their previous jobs in Japan. However, other interviewees also highlighted that they reintegrated into the communities with respected and even more if they were married and still gain remittance. Although it was observed through interviews that three out of seven woman felt that the community had gossiped upon their return to their native villages, the reason of gossiping was different each case (See Table 5).

For example, Wipa felt that the community she had returned had gossiped about her lack of financial gains and fail to receive remittance. Wipa felt that she was the victim of gossip because she returned to Thailand with a child and was not accompanied by the father of her child. Wipa also thought that some of the gossip was about her financial status and the fact that she did not return to Thailand with any kind

of remittance or financial savings. Wipa attributed this gossiping by the community to the fact that her family originated from a poor background and she felt that this was also one reason that she was ostracized by the community.

Rose, like Wipa, argued that she had also been the target of gossip because she had also returned to Thailand with a child born out of wedlock. Rose alleged that the community had victimized her because she was from a poor family and that most of the community knew that she used to work as an entertainer in Hat Yai as her family could not afford to even send her for primary education. Rose argued that because she is able to gain a remittance from her Japanese partner that able her to contribute to her family.

Mari felt that she was also the victim of gossip upon her return back to Thailand. However she argued that she felt the reason for the gossip was that the people in her community were jealous of her being able to travel to a foreign country. Mari also noted that the gossiping died down after she took an active role in community based activities, which helped to integrate her as a member of the community. She also felt that being active in the community had positive effects for her own education as it has allowed her to undertake classes to gain her 12th grade education.

Through conducting interviews with Wipa, who has alleged that she had been the targets of gossip, it could be hypothesized that her bad relationship with the community before she left for Japan made her a victim of gossiping on her return, regardless of her job in Japan, if she did not bring back any economic contribution. The important point is that the villages respect the achievement with money, and as long as they bring an economic contribution.

It was also found that stigmatization was not always the case for entertainers when they brought economic contribution. For instance, those who were legally married did not mention their problems with the community and argued that they were considered to be successful migrants. Mii felt that she had gained some respect

and influence in her community because she had a Japanese husband and she has her own business. Because some returnees obtained legal marriage status they were more likely to be accepted by their local community. According to the director of SEPOM, women who went to Japan were expected to provide financial support to their villages. Women who returned with large remittances were more successful in gaining community respect than those who returned with nothing. Noi said:

"There are too many Thai women who migrated to Japan, so the job they were engaged in whilst in Japan was not a major problem when returning to Thailand anymore. It is too common to migrate to Japan and being entertainer. There are still many women who are waiting to go to Japan (Noi)."

Her interview showed that the job in the destination country is not a major concern anymore. Instead villagers value the wealth of the migrants when they return to the community. As Singhanetra-Renard (1992) argued, the values of the village changed and the consumerism/capitalism now occupies the villages.

Phongpaichit(1982) also points out in her research that people in some northern villages who sent many entertainers to the cities regard these women as a respectable daughter if they are successful bringing back money. Her research was conducted in the early 1980s, and villagers already had thought that entertainment work was not so bad as long as it brought economic contribution. In my case studies, most of the women returned to Thailand from 1993 to 2000, so one can hypothesize that the value and perception toward entertainers have become more acceptable, and this perception of the villagers was one of the factors which facilitate women's reintegration.

It can be stated that overtime money has become a major concern of villagers in the current northern villages. Since the villagers had high expectations that the entertainers would bring back high economic contributions, if the returnees fail to do so, they have to face stigmatization as Wipa did. This stigmatization also had negative

impact on women's reintegration process as Wipa's case had shown.

Table 5. Community relationship before and after migration

Cases	Community relations before migration to Japan	Marriage status to Japanese men after return	Remittances from Japanese partner	Reaction by community after their return to Thailand
Noi	Normal	legally married	Yes	Good
Mii	Normal	legally married	Yes	Good
Nam	Normal	Boyfriend	early remittances, but not anymore	Normal
Wipa	looked down by neighbor because of poverty	single	No	Gossiped
Pui	Normal	Boyfriend	Yes	Normal
Mari	Normal	Boyfriend	early remittances, but not anymore	Gossiped by neighbors because of jealous
Rose	looked down by neighbor because of poverty	Boyfriend	Yes	Gossiped

(3) Individual feeling

The level of integration into Japanese society would have some influences on the migrant's individual feeling after migration and reintegration. It is said that some migrants changed their value towards money so that they are not able to be satisfied with income generated in the country of origin. In this section, the focus will be how women changed their value and how it affects their life after return.

During the field research, the researchers noticed some women answered that they wanted to go back to Japan if possible, while some answered that they did not want anymore. The reason of these different answers is associated with success or failure of migration experience in Japan. It was revealed that this success or failure of migration affects their individual feeling, such as confidence.

Mii said that she would go back to Japan if she had a chance because she was able to earn higher money. However, she argued that this was now impossible due to her husband being sick and hospitalized. Pui also noted that she wanted to work in Japan again if she were given the chance to do so. Nam and Wipa commented that they held a disliking to Japanese people.

To sum up, Mii and Pui said that they want to go back to Japan if they have a chance. The commonality of Mii and Pui is that they could adapt and were integrated to the Japanese society, and gained self confidence. Mii became popular at the bar, and Pui obtained enough Japanese language skills to gain employment. They appeared to be accepted by the Japanese social circles that they were part of and the families they became involved in whilst in Japan. Unlike some of the other interviewees they felt that their experiences of Japan were not all bad and expressed some admiration for Japanese society and its people. Rose said that she wanted return to Japan, the reason being that she could be close to her boyfriend.

The changes of the social values could be observed in this study. Mii, who established a small shop and still receives a large amount of remittances, asked

SEPOM to provide a scholarship for her child, even though she can afford to provide it herself. She also expressed the distain towards other women who returned from Japan without being able to make large financial gains;

"Some women could not save money in Japan. I don't know why they could not do that (Mii)."

Pui also said that she wanted more money from her Japanese partner. She said that she received 50,000 yen every two month, but she felt that it was not enough to cover all her living expenses.

Mii and Pui, who increased their capacity whilst living in Japanese society seemed to have the most in common with Japanese lifestyle and held fonder memories of Japan than the other interviewees.

However, considering the reintegration situation of Mii and Pui, the reintegration situation seems well, as they still received their financial support from their partner. It could be concluded that those who enjoyed in Japan could gain confidence, and they were more active to reintegrate into the home society. It is because they were proud of their achievement of migration and regarded them as successful.

4. 4. 3. Support from NGO

It is said that reintegration assistance such as financial support or vocational training can facilitate returnees' successful reintegration (Perry, 2003). In this research, most of interviewees revealed that they did not receive any reintegration support from the governments of Japan or Thailand. SEPOM became the only support mechanism for the women when they returned to Thailand. However SEPOM was only established in 2001 and this meant that the women had already undertaken the reintegration process on their own. Therefore, SEPOM was only able to provide financial and social support to the women interviewed after the reintegration process.

The women were first introduced to SEPOM as the organization was conducting a survey of women who had returned from Japan. The organization offered the women advice and financial support, employed some of the returnees as permanent staff members. SEPOM also offered some of the women's children scholarships to help the women cover educational costs and also gave the women training on how to successfully gain employment. The organization also provided Japanese language classes for the women's children. Some children of these interviewees were recipients of the SEPOM scholarships and attended the Japanese lessons provided by SEPOM. Therefore, it can be argued that the reintegration assistance such as financial support for returnees is helpful at any stage of the reintegration process, and did facilitate their reintegration.

4. 5. The level of reintegration

This section attempts to sum up how the experience in Japan has influenced on their reintegration process. The level of reintegration can be analyzed by using economic and social factors, one is that whether the returnee managed to gain productive and sustainable employment prospects. Another measure of success was whether the returnee integrated well in their family group and the larger local community as a whole.

The success or failure of migration experience is related to their level of integration into the Japanese society, and it can be broadly separated into three categories, fully integrated, some problems with integration, and problems with integration, based on factors of integration such as language, employment and interaction with natives. If we look at the reintegration situation of fully integrated persons, Mii will be a good example. Mii enjoyed working at the snack bar, learned the local language, and married with a Japanese husband. After she came back, she established a small shop. The money she gained through remittance helped her to open her own business. In her case, she satisfied the expectation of family and the people in the community with a big economic contribution. Mii did acknowledge that

she was considered a rich and influential person in her community. As such, it could be said that Mii did achieve her migration objective by well integrating into Japanese society, and this experience facilitate her reintegration process.

On the other hand, Wipa can be categorized as having problems with integration into Japanese society which means that she was not able to achieve her migration objective. She was not able to integrate into Japanese society because of her working environment; she could not learn enough Japanese language skill, her employment conditions were not good, and she had no interaction with any natives. The situation after she returned is still problematic. She was not well accepted by family and the community people, as she sometimes stays in the NGO's office to be away from the village. Wipa was also unable to find productive and sustainable employment and had to rely on SEPOM help through scholarships to send her children to school. Wipa felt that her situation had even gotten worse as now she was subjected to gossip by her community. She came back in 1994 and it has been 13 years since she came back. However, she still feels that she is not reintegrated into the village society.

Considering all analysis, one can assume that violence and exploitation in the destination country can have a large negative impact for their reintegration. As violence deteriorates their self esteem remarkably, it leaves indelible scars in the heart of women. This scar is difficult to be recovered even after they return to their home community as the research implies that the passage of time does not facilitate women who were subjected to violence to successfully reintegrate back into society.

Yet, the reason that women have to face with violence is not under their control so that it is difficult to avoid. Those women in this interview were sent to the snack bar without any choice. Therefore, it is possible to argue that the factor which has influenced women's reintegration is the working condition in destination country, and presence of violence and also the amount of money they earn.