

# Sex tourism

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A Thesis Presented to the Department of Tourism Institute of Arts and Sciences ABE International Business College – Makati In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Science Major in Tourism Management By: Tacder, Judy Anne Atilares, Princess Mary Joy Toreja, Dominique Jane Gabinete, Christine Larah Ardeno, Lucile Mae March 2013

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Abstract This bachelor thesis is examining sex-tourism as a mean of economic development. The purpose of the paper is to examine how sex-tourism is being used as a mean for development and also why it can be considered to be a part of a countries development strategy. There are many different types of tourism and ways for a country to use tourism as an income source. Although sex-tourism probably not is considered to be a morally legitimate reason for tourism, it does, as we know, however occur and since it is an existing phenomenon it also becomes an income source for the country of destination.

This work has an overlapping theme; using dependency theory as a base it tries to connect the question of sustainable development to sex-tourism. While tourism in general is regarded as a private sector activity where market forces are predominating, the fact is that states are very much involved in the business of tourism. The involvement might vary from country to country but by far all governments are active in tourism and its development, which is why dependency theory has been chosen as the starting point for the thesis, it is also the reason why the concept of sustainability is being connected to sex-tourism.

The paper follows both a broad perspective and a detailed focus. The broad perspective evaluates tourism and sex-tourism in general while the detailed focus lie on Costa Rica. Costa Rica has been chosen as an empirical example <https://assignbuster.com/sex-tourism/>

for the paper due to its interesting affiliation with sex-tourism and tourism in general. Chapter I: The Problem and Its Setting Introduction Traveling in the sense of tourism is something that most enjoy and wish to experience more frequently. The phenomenon of mass-tourism is not an entirely new concept; however the tourism industry of today is growing at a rapid pace and is generating a huge amount of capital.

Tourism as defined by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO): “ the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited” ([http://www.unwto.org/statistiques/tsa\\_in\\_depth/chapters/ch3-1.htm](http://www.unwto.org/statistiques/tsa_in_depth/chapters/ch3-1.htm)), does not by far give us the whole picture of tourism. While tourism on the one hand is about pleasure and relaxing it is also about politics, power and about earning foreign exchange.

There are many different forms of tourism and ways for a country to use tourism as an income source. After visiting Costa Rica several times it became apparent to me that also sex-tourism can be an activity that has a great part of a country's economic development when using tourism as an instrument. Sex-tourism was of course something that I knew about from before, but the thought of it as a mean for development had never occurred to me. Therefore this paper will further explore sex-tourism as a type of tourism, as well as a mean for development when tourism is a part of a country's development strategy.

Connected with development lies the concept of sustainability, and although sex-tourism and the prostitution that sex-tourism implies probably cannot be considered to fall under a country's sustainable development, sex-tourism does as we know however occur and since it is an existing phenomenon it also becomes an income source for the country of destination, and hence therefore it is also a part of a country's economic development, whether it is considered to be sustainable or not.

The dilemma of sex-tourism and prostitution in general is that it involves a lot of complex issues, such as moral and legal questions concerning prostitution. In Costa Rica, which is the country that in this work will be used as illustration, prostitution is legal and the country is in fact a growing sex-tourism destination, which however does not necessarily imply that the country is using sex-tourism as a part of its development strategy although it might be a possibility.

Furthermore what does it exactly mean to use sex-tourism as a development strategy and what does it imply for the women working in the industry. Can sex-tourism change the conditions for women working in the sex-industry or is it just an expansion of an already existing prostitution. Questions like these are what made me wanting to further research the subject of sex-tourism. Background of the Study Sex tourism can be defined as tourism for which the main motivation or at least part of the aim of the trip is to consummate or engage in commercial sexual relations.

For the purpose of this paper I have chosen to follow this definition of sex-tourism and this because I believe that purchasing sexual services does not have to be the sole purpose of the trip for it to be called sex-tourism. Like all

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transactions, sex-tourism is both an economic and political phenomenon, this because it must have a market and the transactions must be considered indirectly or directly socially and politically legitimate. Studies indicate that in recent years, the number of men (and women) traveling to foreign destinations usually in the Third World seeking sex-tourism has increased tremendously.

In the past, destinations for sex tourism have mainly been the Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia. Today, sex-tourism has spread to other regions of the world including Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Costa Rica, Eastern Europe and a number of African countries such as Kenya, Tunisia, South Africa and Gambia. While most countries have prostitution, legal or not, certain destinations have, as stated above, become linked with sex-tourism.

What makes sex-tourism, in my opinion, so interesting to study is the complexity of the fact that tourism constitutes the main trading and source for foreign exchange for many of these “sex destination” countries. Within the tourism industry we find sex-tourism and whether or not prostitution is considered to be legal or morally defensible, the fact remains that sex-tourism is a source of income for many countries. Prostitution is an institution that states have tried to control throughout many historical periods; today most states have some kind of prostitution policy, even if it is not actively enforced.

Depending on the dominant definition of the issue, the control by governments is being done in different ways. The definition determines the goal of state intervention: is it about maintaining law and order, preserving

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morals, preventing the spread of sexual transmitted diseases<sup>14</sup> or is it about protecting women from exploitation. The dominant interpretation also determines in which political arena and policy system the politics of prostitution is fought, which actors are able to get in or are excluded, and what interest groups are formed around the issue.

Prostitution is often perceived by many authorities as a law-and-order problem, a phenomenon giving rise to disorderliness and drunken behavior, generally causing public annoyance in the surrounding neighborhood and threatening the peace. While this might be so, when it comes to tourism, prostitution seems to be a welcomed phenomenon as long as it draws tourists to the country and it does not create a bad reputation for the designated country.

The prostitution in Thailand for example, has for years drawn Western male tourist to the country, but as the country's status abroad started to decline the country was forced to recognizing the “ problem” of prostitution. The demand for sex-tourism of a particular destination is probably not a static one and although sex tourism remains a big draw among many travelers to certain destination, pressure from wealthier states that the country of destination is dependent has an impact on the constraints to which policymakers of the host country must respond.

Changes in government behavior toward the sex industry may not be happening in spite of tourism, but rather because of the changes in foreign pressure. Some tourism researchers go as far to say that tourism in itself in fact is prostitution. Poorer nations are encouraged to open their frontiers and their dwellings to the foreign visitors and are pressured to engage in

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commercial transactions of a very particular type in which they offer their culture, their heritage, their traditions and even certain members of their population to visitors.

Statement of the Problem Sex tourism and child sex tourism, it has become one of the most attractive type of tourism in this modern world. More and more people are going for sex tourism and they do not feel shy or embarrassing to admit they travel for sex experiences. Sex tourism and child sex tourism can bring a lot of money to the country and job opportunities to people directly or indirectly but however, due to the fast growing of the industry; sex tourism and child sex tourism have brought many misleading consequences and damages.

Sex trafficking, sex trade and diseases. Once the victims are traded or trafficked, the traffickers will make sure they have complete control over the victims, leave them no rights or freedom over their own bodies thus enslaving them to the sex industry world. Furthermore, they will leave the victims so psychologically and physically abused that they do not dare to run away. They put debt bondage on them and force them to pay back before they could leave the sex trade.

According to ECPAT, studies have shown that a child prostitute can serve between two to thirty clients per week, which can be estimated between 100 to 1500 clients per year and many of them are below 10 years old (Nair, no date). Most of them are still so young and they do not know what really is going on, all they know is listen to the orders else they would be beaten or left starve. The victims that are engaged in sex industry have both their mental and physical psychological affected.

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Their living condition is bad and their meals are irregular and not healthy and they rarely receive treatment when they are sick only until it gets too serious. Not to mention STD, HIV/AIDS, according to a research, HIV positive rates are 42% to 54% among sex workers and the percentage will increase in the future. Apart from that, they suffer from exhaustion, infections and violence. If they do not work hard and earn enough money they would be punished. Most of them would feel scared, hopeless, depression and low self-esteem since they do not know who to run to for help or protect.

Few are brave enough to run away but most of them will choose drugs and suicide to forget and reduce the suffering. Every problem has reasons behind it, so do sex trafficking, sex trade and the diseases. The demand with lenient laws on prostitution has pushed Thailand sex industries grow faster and stronger. The more unique demands pour in the better the services and the greater surprises would be provided. So there will not be any stop for it. Go in hand with it; it is the poverty and cultural perception. Thai believes in working as sex worker is their only choice and what their ancestor did so they keep faith in it.

In addition, there are too many poor families in Thailand and they have very little education and skills in them so they would not earn much if they work in factory or restaurant compare being as a sex worker. Hypothesis In this statement, a requirement to determine the significant relationship between the cause and effect of sex tourism is recommended. The hypothesis should be able to predict the relationship between the variables.

- Sex industry in Philippines increases the number of child prostitutes.
- The intercourse between sex worker and customer could cause STD and other diseases. The

existence of sex tourism does increase the number of STD patients. •Human trafficking will increase as the demand for sex tourism and child sex tourism increase. Significance of the Study The main reason why I choose this topic to write about is to alert the world and tell them what sex tourism and child sex tourism is all about. Many people have very vague ideas of the industry and how it actually works. Most of them only look at how they want sex industry to be and they totally ignore the bad effects behind it.

For instance, sex shows, do the tourists even think about the girls who are doing it, how they actually think or feel or whether they were forced to do it for something call ‘ money or threaten by the brothels or traffickers’. Does human right even exist in this context? And human trafficking, many women and children have been trafficked, traded or sold but no one seems to try to stop it but they just close one eye. ECPAT estimates there are more than one million children worldwide that are engaged in sex trade each year. Poverty, cultural perception and demand are the main reasons that make the industry grow faster and stronger.

Whenever there is a demand, there will be supply as many people are unemployed and most of them are in financial crisis. However, people are neglected what might hunt them afterwards, the diseases, the psychological effects and their unsure future. Theoretical Framework/Conceptual Framework Figure 1: The trafficking triangle. The conceptual framework above was designed by Phinney (no date), the author set up a relationship between supply, demand and impunity with human trafficking. The author shows a relationship between them which helps human trafficking activities develop and growth.

When there is demand, there will be supply since there are purchasers who demand for it and due to demand, supply and lenient law; the traffickers take it as their advantage to traffic more and more women and children. In another hand, supply is the most visible factors among the three. The drives behind it contribute significant reasons for more trafficking to happen, poverty, unemployment, threaten and dream of a better life, etc. And then impunity, since sex tourism injects a lot of money to the country economy, so the government often close one eye unless a victim is caught and agree to report, else they ould let the situation going on until it is getting out of control. Figure 2: Reasons/drivers for sexual activity along a continuum of volition. This conceptual framework was conducted by Weissman (2006). This research concentrates in the prevention of HIV among the youth, especially the girls and the reasons why young people engage in the sexuality activity. The framework above shows the drivers of 2 different points of view, one is by forced and the other is by volunteer. He believes there are reasons behind for young girls volunteer themselves in having relationship with older man or another boy her age.

It might due to emotional security, material security like gift or money, or for the pleasure during the intercourse or it was due to the ambition for power, social status, and an escape for a better life. Whereas for the young girls who are forced, the main reason is because of money, most of them have financial problems or they have been threatened by other to turn themselves as prostitute. Even though, his point here is to educate them, either they are forced or offered themselves willingly they should protect themselves to avoid HIV/AIDS or other STD infections.

Scope and Limitations of the Study Scope: I choose Thailand for my topic is due to its booming now in the world and of its unique nature services. Everyone knows about Thailand as one of the hubs for sex tourism and also the range of services they provide, as long there is a demand for it, Thailand will not disappoint the customers. Limitation: Being students, we have a lot of limitations, we do not get a lot of help and support that we seek for. Most of the time, we can only get the information through journals and perhaps people's opinion through internet and not directly from the source.

For instance, one of my research questions I ask about " Whether Thai government purposely promotes sex tourism to drive Thai national growth? " Due to my limitation, it is almost impossible for me to get a chance to have an interview with the government people. I will not be able to get an audience with them. Besides that, there are money issues, time restraints and limited resources, for research experiment, I need to conduct surveys or questionnaires to the people that are concerned include sex workers, pimps, traffickers, victims, etc but I do not have time, resources and money to go to Thailand to do so.

In addition, a GDP is needed to prove the importance of sex tourism in Thailand economic but most of the time the country do not give fully information about it, because there are so many illegal parties going on in Thailand sex industry. Apart from that, I need to identify the location of the commercial sex markets and the places where all the activities occurred.

Chapter V: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendation Conclusion As the world becomes increasingly interconnected though the Internet and the

growing global economy, sex tourism may become an even more significant phenomenon.

Current literature studying sexual addiction describes sexual behaviors, compulsions, and obsessions that closely match some of the sexual behaviors described on sex tour websites. The types of sexual behaviors discovered in this study indicate the possible use of sex tourism to feed sexual addiction. In light of research showing that men are less inhibited while traveling, and the present study's findings that men are having anonymous sexual experiences, possible health risks may be increased.

Decreased inhibitions, combined with consumption of alcohol and an adventurous attitude toward sex, may create an increased rate of unprotected sex and thus increased risk for STDs. Sex tour advertisements stress the importance of being adventurous and experiencing sex like never before; these encouragements could increase the likelihood that consumers are reckless when it comes to not using protection during sex. Considering current literature pointing to the already increased risk of contracting HIV/AIDS for prostitutes and their customers, sex tourism appears to add multiple layers of risk.

Data from the present study also support the idea that foreign women are not the only one's being exploited by the sex tour industry. Data depicting men as looking for love, romance, and emotional connections with foreign women show that some men are under the impression they may find satisfying emotional connections with women when they realistically are participating in prostitution. The present study serves to explore sex tourism,

a topic that is scarcely studied. Helping professionals, academics, and public interests internationally can benefit from further research in this area.

Future research should focus on gaining more detailed accounts of erotic tourism by contacting those participating, a population that is difficult to reach and rarely studied. Studies should focus on interviewing male sex tourists to explore their self-image, self-confidence, ability to form relationships, health concerns, and social consequences experienced due to participation in sex tourism. Goals of future research should include identifying why men are participating in sex tourism, what underlying unmet needs are being met by participation, and ways to make the industry safer for those who continue to participate.

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like to thank our family for giving birth to us at the first place and supporting us spiritually throughout our life.

Chapter III: Research Methodology Research Design This article presents the findings of an exploratory, qualitative study using content analysis to observe common themes and patterns of sex tour websites. Through systematic observation of available sex tour websites, researcher's uncovered themes represented on sex tour sites. Inductively, researchers explored the text of sex tour websites looking for common categories. These categories were systematically coded and then analyzed to elucidate common themes and patterns.

Both authors served as coders to examine these themes to ensure inter-code reliability. As stated, once themes and patterns were established and labeled, researchers began culling data for the presence or variances of these themes, again to ensure maximum validity and reliability. In consistently reevaluating, redefining, and openly exploring the website material, researchers built theory by making comparisons, thus establishing the themes that are presented in the findings. In order to ensure trustworthiness of data, disagreements in data analysis were dealt with carefully.

Conflicts in interpretation were identified and placed to the side for a period of time. After a period of "cooling off," the researchers reevaluated data after having carefully explored our personal biases and issues related to the subject. The sample for this study included 20 sex tour websites used as texts for data analysis. The study employed five major search engines to conduct a comprehensive search, reviewing websites containing information

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on “ sex tours” and “ sex tourism. ” These search engines included: Yahoo, AltaVista, Ilor, Magellan, and Lycos.

As different search engines utilize different search criteria and methodology, utilizing various engines is a comprehensive search, and is especially important when research involve cross-cultural or transnational issues. Utilizing each of these search engines helped ensure that most available sites would be found. Upon running a search and locating sites, each website was printed and logged. Due to the vast number of sites and expected similarities among sites, data collection concluded when researchers achieved data saturation.

The information on each website was individually analyzed, and then its themes were compared with those of other sites until saturation was reached. Through content analysis, each sex tour website was thoroughly reviewed and topics and categories were separated and labeled. The analysis included two initial anticipated themes: the portrayal of male tourists and information referring to male tourists’ insecurities. The authors attempted to remain open to the emergence of new themes as they arose in data analysis.

Using a method of constant comparative analysis, researcher’s coded data, reviewed codes, recoded data into new categories, and continued in a process until clear, specific themes became apparent<sup>181</sup> The Qualitative Report June 2004. Common themes and patterns were collected and compared with data from other websites. The second author reviewed the emergence of themes in order to ensure inter-coder reliability and reduce

researcher bias. The final study results include qualitative data describing emerging themes and their implications. Respondents of the Study

More than half of survey respondents believe that Thailand tourists abroad are involved in sex tourism with minors. The study on sex tourism and child pornography was commissioned by the Thailand branch of ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography & Trafficking of Children). The study consulted a representative group of 1, 007 people aged 18 or over who are resident in Thailand. While the majority categorically deemed sex tourism involving minors as unacceptable, some 56 percent nonetheless think that Luxembourg tourists are at least occasionally sex tourists abroad.

Respondents also had quite a clear picture of sex tourists, with the majority saying they are richer, older men with an average level of education, who are married with children. Meanwhile, 98 percent of respondents said it was important that tourism operators help fight sex tourism involving minors, for example by discontinuing co-operations with hotels tolerating sex tourism, alerting police, raising awareness among customers and distributing information material. Instrumentation This project required access to a computer; University of Nebraska-Omaha, Omaha, Nebraska, USA; The Human Trafficking Law Project; The Department of Justice websites. Data Gathering Procedure The quantitative data collected from the children have been categorized and simple statistical tools have been used to analyze the data. The detailed patterns and trends in the practice have been shown in the form of tabular data. The information from key informants has also been categorized in major thematic areas. These pieces of information were then put together to get a complete picture of the entire issue. | | | | | SN |

Background of children | Age Group | Gender | Total number present | | 1. | Children from slum areas and street | 8 - 18 | 5 - F | 25 | | | children, Philippines | | 20 - M | | | 2. Children from slum areas, Philippines | 8 - 16 | 20 - M | 20 |

Chapter II: Review of Related Literature and Studies

Literature on Sex Tourism While it is evident that sex tourism is a significant social problem, the current sex tour literature is scarce. Studies examining the links between travel and sex have explored a variety of topic areas, and report that people often are more willing to participate in increasingly risky sexual behaviors while traveling (Bloor, Thomas, Abeni, Goujon, Hausser, Hubert, Kleiber, & Nieto, 1998).

Other studies also find that people's sexual inhibitions decrease while on vacation. These studies help to uncover patterns that connect sex and traveling as two compatible leisure activities. However, during sex tours, sex and travel are more intentionally linked than coincidental sex with fellow vacationers. The tours focus specifically on having foreign sexual experiences that possess elements of gender inequality, male dominance, and the oppression of foreign women.

However, literature also suggests that many male tourists are also exploited through their false beliefs, propagated by sex tour agencies, that they may have emotionally satisfying relationships with female prostitutes' reports confusion by tourists as to whether they are participating in prostitution, friendships, flirtation, or love. Tourism varies as to whether tourists consider themselves seeking sex or romance, and often tourists ignore the fact they are paying foreign women for sex, in favor of viewing the interaction as an emotional involvement for both parties.

In reference to sex tourism through organized sex tour agencies, reports recent facts and figures of this growing industry in the United States. In her research on the sex tour industry, Abu-Nasr (1998) reports that typical sex tour clients are men aged 35-55. These men are described as ranging from questionable characters to respectable professionals such as judges, attorneys, school board members, clergymen, and even a father treating his son on his 18th birthday.

Abu-Nasr (1998) also describes a common sense of denial about HIV/AIDS and other STDs in sex tour countries, specifically Thailand. A brief description of male tourists' attitudes report that men view foreign women as a different class of human, often objectifying them, using them, and benefiting from their economic destitution (Abu-Nasr, 1998). 179 The Qualitative Report June 2004 Chutikul (2002), an advisor in the Office of the Prime Minister in Thailand, writes that sex tourism is growing amongst U. S. business travelers.

Chutikul (2002) states that companies are now including sex tours as part of fringe benefits for employees. These new surges of western and European tourists join local men, who regularly visit prostitutes in Thailand, making the sex market a very large industry. Chutikul (2002) reports that sex tourists often travel to Thailand to seek sexual experiences that have grave consequences in their own country. Thus, the sexual behaviors sought by tourists are characterized by a lack of sexual inhibitions and potential risks. While some literature does exist