

Thai Teenage Prostitution Online

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Abstract—The purposes of this research are to investigate Thai teens' attitude toward prostitution on the internet, to discover the causes of teenage prostitution and to study the relationship between teenage promiscuity and the causes of teenage prostitution. This study is a mixed research which utilized both qualitative and quantitative approach. The population of this study included teenagers and early adults between 14-21 years old who were studying in high schools, colleges, or universities. A total of 600 respondents was sampled for interviews using a questionnaire, and 48 samples were chosen for an in-depth interview.

The findings revealed that the majority of respondents recognized that teenage prostitution on line was real. The reasons for choosing the internet to contact with customers included easy, convenient, safe, and anonymous. Moreover, the internet allowed teen prostitutes to contact customers anywhere and anytime. The correlation showed that promiscuity was related to the trend of teen prostitution. Other factors that contributed to increasing widespread teen prostitution online included their need for quick money to buy luxurious products and to support their extravagant behavior.

Keywords—Internet, Prostitutes, Online, Thai teens.

I. INTRODUCTION

PROMISCUOUS sexual behavior, swinging behavior, the use of illegal drugs, prostitution, rape, and other sex crimes in Thailand are becoming increasingly important modern social problems. Nowadays this social problem involves more teenagers and young adults than in the past. Online technology has exacerbated the widespread problems of teenage prostitution online. Among promiscuous teenagers, online prostitution has become ubiquitous along with daily exposure on Thai media. The finding from Somdech Rungsrissawat (2009) found that there was a relationship between teenagers who regularly visit sex related websites, the rate of having sex as well as the chance to behave in promiscuity [1]. It is not uncommon for teenagers to have sexual relationships during their high school and university years. More open sexual relationship reflects the changing view of sex in modern Thai society. Sexual relationship was a taboo topic of discussion in the past but has become a semi-trend topic of discussion of teenagers in high-schools, colleges, and universities all over Thailand. A sexually experienced teenager often becomes popular as well as becoming a group leader, while sexual inexperienced teenagers often become the subject of ridicule. Movies and music from western culture as well as Korean pop culture have intensified the belief that a one night stand is a common

thing for teenagers all over the world. Soon after sexual relationships become common, the emergence of teenage prostitution online becomes a serious and widespread problem. A one night stand or having sex with an unknown partner became the modern lifestyle and popular among teenagers. There are many risks involved in this kind of lifestyle but most of the teenagers are not aware of the risks. The promotion of drinking alcohol and night entertainment has also intensified the problem since teenagers need money to buy new clothes and other things. These lead them to look for an easy way to make a quick money. Soon they will find out from friends that prostitution is an easy option which can earn big money and have fun. The circle of close friends often has a high influence on the decision for these teenagers to engage in prostitution online. In addition, there is a new lifestyle for teenagers in Thailand in which teenage girls prefer to be a rich man's girl. This means that teenage girls or university students aim to sell their sex service to a rich client and if they can satisfy the rich client's need. Then, teenage girls will have a regular rich client and may lead to a permanent partner who is willing to pay for the girl luxurious lifestyle or pay for their education fees. The teenage boys often prefer to have a partner with younger girls. There is a false belief that young girls are free of diseases, and no risk. This false belief is the selling point for many clients and it often increases the demand for sex service from young girls. Moreover, the behavior of the modern prostitute buyers is also changing from buying the sex service from teahouses, massage parlors, and brothels to buying the sex service online. Therefore, it is imperative to study this modern social problem in order to better understand this widespread problem and recommend proper solutions.

II. METHODOLOGY

This research is aimed to study teenagers' attitude about prostitution online, to find the causes of teenage prostitution online, and find the relationship between teenage promiscuity and teenage prostitution. This study is a mixed research of quantitative and qualitative methods. A probability sampling technique was performed to get a sample group that included 600 teenagers and young adults with an age between 14-21 years old [2]. A questionnaire was utilized as a tool for collecting data. The questionnaire was tested with 40 respondents to get Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value of 0.92. There were three steps of sampling. First, a stratified sampling method was performed to separate the population into three groups: high-students, vocational students, and university students. Second, simple random sampling was performed to get six different high-schools, vocational

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colleges, and universities. Finally, the quota sampling was performed to get 300 male students and 300 female students.

The focus group interview was performed on six different groups of students. A total 48 students were interviewed with face-to-face technique. Focus group interviews included six different groups: group one were eight male students from high-schools, group two were eight female students from high-schools, group three were eight male students from vocational schools, group four were eight female students from vocational schools, group five were eight male students from universities, and group six were eight female students from universities.

TABLE I
 TEENAGERS' ATTITUDE DESCRIPTIVE

teenagers' attitude	Mean	Interpretation
1. Teenage promiscuity	3.64	Effective
2. Teenage prostitution Online	3.67	Effective
3. Teenagers and young adults	3.64	Effective
Overall Mean	3.64	Effective

There were two main research tools. The first tool was focus group interview tool. Since the researcher aimed to obtain all important information, the tape recorder and question forms were used in this study. The tape recorder was important because there were so much detail information that the researcher needed to sort it out. The question form was designed to be an opened question which allows the respondents to answer the question straight forward, and exchange opinion. Most of the questions were clear, short, and not suggestive. The second tool was the Likert-five-scale questionnaire which was designed for accuracy, validity, and reliability. The questionnaire was tested by three experts in the field of sociology research.

Data collection was implemented by the researcher and assistant researcher. Since the study topic was about sex which was a delicate subject matter, it required time to break the ices with the respondents. First, it was important to make the respondents trust the researcher that the information they gave would not create problems for them, especially with the local police. After the respondents had trusted the researcher, they were willing to give all the information and sometimes even suggested more people who had detail information about the topic. For data analysis, the researcher performed a statistical program and consulted with the social research experts. Descriptive statistics utilized in this research includes percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

III. FINDINGS

The findings from the focus groups revealed eight different categories. First was teenage prostitution online real? The respondents confirmed that teenage prostitution online was real, and at least 7 respondents admitted that they used to buy teenage prostitution service online. Moreover, there was a clear evidence from the respondents that many teenage girls were online prostitute for many years and had many regular clients. The majority of teenage girls did not feel that they had

done anything wrong morally. They felt that it was just another way to have fun and earn money at the same time. Second was from what kind of websites can you buy a teenage prostitution service? The respondents provided the name of websites such as www.sexypostpic.com, and hi 5/Facebook.

TABLE II
 CHAT ROOM AND WEBSITES

Chat Room	Website
-Chat room	www.postjung.com
-Student room	www.mthai.com
-Student for sale	www.picpost18.com
-Teaching sex timely	www.siamside.com
-Zone 18	
-Lonely girls	www.sidelinethai.com
-Zeed room	www.91load.com
-Cram fog 18+XXX	www.sexypostpic.com
-Web cam	hi 5/ facebook
-Chat for partner	

Third, was how to buy the service? The respondents explained that they could get a phone number or e-mail address and watch the teenager via web-cam or cram fog. Then, it would be possible to call and make an appointment at a coffee shop or hotel. The payment could be cash, money wired to a bank account, or cell-phone deposit payment. In other words, it seemed easy to get customers since many of them knew how to search for, and the information was easy to obtain. The majority of customers preferred to change new girls online rather than to be a regular customer. There was almost no interference from the police or any Thai law enforcement. It seems like the police did not know its existence. In addition, there were an increasing number of foreign customers who were looking for young boys and girls in many tourist destination areas. Fourth was the reason teenagers prostitute online. The majority of respondents said the need for money to buy luxurious things such as an expensive cell-phone, computer, or brand name products. Moreover, the shocking answer was because it was an easy and fun way to make quick money. The majority of teen prostitutes came from low to middle class income family. Many of them had sex with their boyfriends before becoming a prostitute online. In other words, these teenage girls had a basic experience about sex and started to think that they could make money out of sex. Moreover, they felt that they could hide this act as a secret from friends and family. Fifth was the attitude towards the teenage prostitute online. The majority of respondents had mixed attitudes. Some said it was a bad and immoral thing, and others thought that it was just a way to make money, have fun, and self-support financially. The majority of respondents enjoyed visiting prostitution online websites even if they did not have money to buy the services. On the other hand, many girls who post their pictures online often felt like they were important as well as get notice and attention. Seventh was about the impact of teenage prostitution online. The majority of respondents thought that it had a negative impact on society, schools, and family. Eight was the prevention of teenage prostitute online. The majority

of respondents agreed that the government especially ICT ministry and police should enforce the law strictly. Nowadays, the police focus only on the traditional prostitution in teahouse, massage parlors, and brothels.

The quantitative findings revealed that the majority of respondents were male and female in the same proportion. The majority was between 15-21 years old. Their parents' occupation included for hired, small vendors, and government officials. The majority of respondents were living with their parents. The majority used internet for music, movies, and games. Only fifteen percent of the respondents admitted they visited the porn websites regularly, spending about half an hour each time, and for about 4 times a week. Also, it was found that the demographics of the respondents had no relation to their frequency of visiting pornographic websites.

In additions, the findings revealed that the chat rooms online allowed them to buy and sell sex service. The attitude of teenage prostitution online was that of being easy and common thing to be accepted by peers. The negative attitude was the fear of sexual diseases and becoming pregnant. About 20 percent of the respondents admitted they had experience either buying or selling sex online. The motive to prostitute online was money and the need to buy luxurious products.

The findings also revealed that the majority of respondents were satisfied with the money, fun, and thrill from prostitute online. However, they were afraid of diseases and pregnancy. The fear of trouble with police and law enforcement was not a serious problem for both buyers and sellers of the prostitution services. Moreover, 10 out of 100 respondents reported they had a tendency to prostitute online. They believed there was nothing wrong with it and their close friends and their boy-friends had the most influence on their decision to prostitute online. The most shocking part of the findings was that all male respondents reported that they had visited many websites of online prostitute. Twenty percent of the respondents reported that they had either buying or selling sex service online. The majority also reported that they would continue to visit these websites to update their information.

IV. DISCUSSION

From the study, the causes of teenage prostitution online can be concluded by using the Precede Frame Work, the Model of Somniek Patibut (2000) which was adapted from Herberg's Two Factors model [3]-[6]. The internal factors influenced the decision making included knowledge, attitude, value, perception, and hormone. The internal factors to prostitute online included the belief that online sex and prostitution was not very wrong but a trend. Most of the teenagers came from broken families and were under peer pressure that often leads to promiscuous sexual behavior and to prostitution online. The majority of respondents received most of the sexual information from pornographic websites. The negative behavior such as watching pornography, drinking alcohol, using illegal drugs, and promiscuity often leads to swinging behavior and finally, prostitute online to get

quick money. The external factor included social, culture and sub-culture, economy, and the influence of media and fashion. The modern western values are actually a strong influence, for instance, a one night stand with stranger is a thrill or losing one's virginity for the first love. Up to 71 percent of the respondents thought that it was common to have sex during their high-school or university years. Peer pressure also had a strong influence in terms of sexual promiscuity and prostitution online. These findings concurred with Edwin Sutherland and Donald Chessy (1982) which explained that human beings are social animals that need friends and the acceptance from friends [7]. Therefore, peer pressure can either be a positive or negative influence. The decision to choose online as the medium for prostitute is because of the convenience and the ability to reduce the need for pimps. This finding concurred with theory by E. Katz and J.G. Grevitch (1974) which stated that human beings use medium according to their own individual pressures and in a likewise manner modern teenagers use internet to prostitute online and because it is very effective for them [8] [9].

V. RECOMMENDATION

The problem of teenage prostitute online cannot be resolved by simply acknowledging the problem. This modern social problem required the participation from family, school, police, and society at large. Many people in Thailand still did not believe that it is a serious problem. The police still lack behind in terms of understanding the problem as well as the technology to investigate the problem. The society needs to set a clear moral standard of what is right and what is wrong. The first defense of this problem is at the family level. Parents need to supervise their children and be aware of the contents in the web sites that their children regularly visit. School needs to prescribe the modern standard of what is right and what is wrong. To get the money from selling their body should not be something teenage should be proud of. The university should have a campaign against student prostitute online. Explain to these students why it is wrong to do so and what are the risks involving in participating with prostitute online. Moreover, the minister of Information Communication Technology (ICT) should strictly regulate the pornography websites and chat room. The penalty for buying and selling sex services online should be heavy. The police need to set an example of arresting the teenage prostitute online. No important case has ever been brought into the news. This makes many parents think that teenage prostitute online is just a myth which never happens to their children.

The recommendations at the family level would include talking with teenagers directly and allowing them to trust the adults in the family as well as try to solve problem rather than try to find a person to blame. Parents need to understand the modern technology such as websites, facebook, and other new technology. The way parents keep monitoring and asking questions in a proper way help to deter the problem. It is imperative for parents to gain trust and teach their children

what is right and what is wrong. A school level recommendation would be to educate teenagers with correct knowledge of safe sex and proper values of society. The university should have a campaign to educate students about proper sex in the way that it is acceptable to the Thai society. There should be books, VDO, and other teaching material to allow students to study online. At the social level, recommendations would include protection from the pornography online. There should be a message from non-profit organizations to spread of the voice of concerns of this modern and serious problem and how to protect their children from this crime. The police should strictly enforce law to prevent prostitution online. The police and law enforcement need to do more than just observe and discard as a problem of teenagers who just want to have fun or labeling it is family problem. Police needs to take this problem seriously and set an example of arresting this crime on television. It should send a message that law enforcement is now serious about this modern problem. Finally, the media should be limited in regards to sex exposure on the television and movies according to proper to the Thai culture. Thai media needs to control their exposure of sex and indecent image and life style. They should not show the respect of people who become rich from illegal business including prostitution.

VI. FUTURE STUDIES

The major limitation of this paper came from the use of Likert five-scale that may not have the ability to distinguish the attitude and detail information from the respondents. It also does not take into account of other stakeholders such as parent, police, and teachers. Therefore, the findings may not be generalized to the big picture of this modern problem properly. Hence, future research should use more sample which includes other important factors such as parent, police, and teachers in the in-depth interviews. In other words, future studies should continue to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in order to effectively draw vital information to suggest guidelines to deter and resolve this problem.

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